



RESIDENTS HANDBOOK

YOUR GUIDE TO LEAP SERVICES

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WELCOME

Dear Resident,

Welcome to LEAP! We are a Registered Charity and Social Landlord, based in Lincoln & Gainsborough, priding ourselves on offering a range of housing with advice, guidance and support to individuals, couples, and households in need.

This Resident Handbook will give you useful information and guidelines to refer to during your tenancy with LEAP. It tells you about our values, what support you can expect moving in, LEAP's responsibilities as the landlord and your responsibilities as resident, as well as information about your rent and how to report any issues and repairs to our Housing Management Team.

While you live in LEAP accommodation you will have opportunities to gain skills through training & volunteering that will help you on the road to further independence.

We hope you will enjoy living in your new home.

With Best Wishes,

From all staff at LEAP

OUR VALUES

Mutual Respect:

LEAP has a set of values. These are for everyone who lives or works within LEAP. If ever you feel we are not keeping to our values, we ask you to tell us and we will tell you too.



SUPPORTIVE

To nurture and guide people to reach their full potential



EDUCATING

To promote a learning environment with opportunities for personal growth and development



CONSISTENT

To ensure we do what we say we will do; treating everyone equally and fairly



UNDERSTANDING

Listen to and act on opinions and views



RESPECTFUL

To tackle discrimination and promote inclusion; appreciate and celebrate diversity



EMPOWERING

To promote opportunities for people to be the best they can be



If you feel that you have not been treated with respect by our staff then you have every right to raise a service request and are encouraged to do so. There is more information on making a complaint in this handbook. Any complaint about staff should be made to the Operations Manager.



LEAP will not tolerate any abuse or offensive comments towards any of our staff or volunteers. Abuse may be reported to the police and your actions could result in you losing your home or being banned from our offices.

MOVING IN

Moving in



If you are living in one of our shared accommodation properties, you will be asked to sign a Licence Agreement. In this type of accommodation, LEAP provides all the furniture, fixtures and fittings and the utilities (gas, electricity, water rates), Council Tax, TV licence and internet. You will need to provide your own bedding, towels, crockery, cutlery, pots and pans etc.

If you live in our single occupancy flats at Adam Heath House, LEAP provides white goods, including oven, hob, fridge/freezer and washing machine. You will need to pay for all your utilities, TV licence, internet and council tax (where you are eligible to pay it).



I have just moved in and do not have any bedding, towels or cooking utensils. What do I do?

Don't worry! As part of wider housing-related support, your Supported Housing Officer will work with you to access the items, seek out funding or to work on a budget with you to purchase the items you require.

Housing-Related Support:

During the first week of your stay with LEAP, you will be introduced to your Supported Housing Officer who will help you to settle into your accommodation and make sure you have everything you need. There is a lot of paperwork to be completed and a lot of new things to learn, however we will stagger the information over a number of meetings with your Supported Housing Officer.

DAY 1

- Sign Licence Agreement and Housing Benefit
- Security, Health & Safety Induction

DAY 2-7

- Complete your Progression Plan
- Register with local GP, dentist & opticians
- Sign up for utilities and set up direct debits

MOVING IN

Your Progression Plan will determine the level of support you will need from LEAP to make sure you are able to manage and maintain a positive & mutually agreeable tenancy. We will also signpost you to other agencies that can help you based on the needs identified in your assessment and plan.



I have a question about my Licence Agreement?

Your Supported Housing Officer will meet with you on day 1 to explain all the details, rules and regulations of the agreement before you sign it.

How often will I meet with the Supported Housing Officer?

A Supported Housing Officers will visit each of our shared housing properties multiple times, while residents living at Adam Heath House or in family homes will meet with a Supported Housing Officer once a week. You can also book an appointment.



If you are unable to attend an appointment made with you it is important that you let staff know so it can be cancelled and rearranged. We would rather not record it as you failing to attend.

Your Progression Plan will be reviewed every 12 weeks or sooner if you would like it to be or if there has been a significant change.

Your Supported Housing Officer will work with you to get you ready for the next stage of your journey and access longer-term accommodation for you (and your children if you have them).



CONSULTATION



Your voice matters! We welcome your views and ideas! We want you to tell us when things are going well and when you have any suggestions about how we can do things better.

You will be consulted whenever we need to make changes to your accommodation and the support you receive. We also ask for your views on a whole range of things such as any new services we plan to design.

How do we consult?

Your Supported Housing Officer will organise regular meetings, where you are able to discuss how your house is working and whether you have any issues with other residents, unwanted guests or the neighbourhood in general.

We send surveys out to residents to get your views on areas of our work and sometimes they will be on behalf of other agencies and organisations.

In addition to the meetings and surveys, you will be invited to join the LEAP Participation Group. These meetings are planned in every 3 months and provide opportunities for you to influence change and bring any ideas for consideration.



Please note that where changes relate to your licence or tenancy, we are required to give you formal notice in writing. This would usually be 28 days' notice.

CONSENT

As a charity, LEAP wants to raise awareness of the support we can provide to individuals in need of housing and help raise funding for the benefit of all our residents. For this we may want to share some examples of who we have supported.

Sometimes we take photographs at events or activities you take part in. If you would rather not have your image used in publicity of any kind, we respectfully ask you to remind us and decline to be in the photos. This ensures that the images we save on our systems can be used in publicity campaigns.

Where LEAP intends to use photographs and information about you for the purpose of raising awareness or funding, we will first seek your explicit written consent by asking you to complete a Consent Form. Nothing will be shared about you in this way if you do not consent to it.



What if my circumstances change or I change my mind?

Please note that you have the right to withdraw your consent at any time by informing us.

COMPLAINTS, COMPLIMENTS & APPEALS

Complaints & Appeals

Service Request

- If you are unhappy with a service LEAP has provided you can request that we rectify the problem.
- Your request will be recorded and acknowledged within 5 working days by your Supported Housing Officer and a full response given within 10 working days.

Stage 1

- If you are unhappy with the response to your service request or you state that you wish to complain we will manage your complaint at Stage 1.
- We will acknowledge your complaint within 5 working days.
- We will investigate your complaint and let you know the outcome within 10 working days, if we need longer, we will let you know but it should not exceed another 10 working days.
- If you are happy with the outcome your complaint is resolved.

Stage 2

- If you are unhappy with our response, you can ask for it to be escalated.
- We will contact you about why you are still unhappy and include this in a written acknowledgement within 5 working days.
- The outcome of the review and any resolutions agreed will be confirmed in writing within a further 15 working days, if we need longer, we will let you know, this should not exceed a further 10 working days.
- If you are happy with the outcome your complaint is resolved.

External Review

If you are still unhappy with the outcome of the complaint you can escalate this to the Housing Ombudsman - <https://www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk/residents/> or 0300 111 3000

SAFEGUARDING

What is safeguarding?

Safeguarding is the protection of those at risk from all kinds of abuse.

What is abuse?

There are many different forms of abuse, including:

- Physical Abuse – hitting, punching, biting, slapping
- Sexual Abuse – unwanted touching, being forced or pressured into sexual activity
- Neglect – withholding food, water, heating or personal care
- Emotional Abuse – humiliation, threats of harm, verbal abuse
- Financial Abuse – theft, fraud, being denied access to own funds



Everyone has the right to feel safe and secure in a home free from harassment, abuse and neglect. It is everyone's responsibility to ensure the well-being of others and report abuse. If you ever feel unsafe or you are concerned about another adult or child, you should speak out.

What do I do if I am not happy about a decision that has been made?

You have the right to appeal. Your appeal will be looked at by someone who did not make the original decision.

LEAP has a Safeguarding Lead who supports the staff team to keep everyone who lives and works in or visits our project is safe. You can seek advice or speak to any of the LEAP staff or you can report your concerns directly to the Safeguarding Lead. We promise we will listen to what you say and your concerns will be taken seriously. We will respond promptly and will share information only with the relevant professionals where needed.

LEAP SAFEGUARDING LEAD

Shannon Parker – 01522 563530

You can also talk to the Lincolnshire County Council Safeguarding Team. You can find the telephone numbers in the back of this handbook.

LEAP will not tolerate bullying, harassment and discrimination. Every action possible will be taken to make sure that this is addressed when it is reported to us or witnessed by staff.

We will always keep you informed of the process and the outcome when we deal with safeguarding concerns.

If you feel that you need extra support yourself then we can refer you to an appropriate service.

Our safeguarding policy is available on our website or by requesting a copy from the office.



If you report a safeguarding concern, we cannot always guarantee your confidentiality because it might be obvious to the person where the information came from. Where this is the case, we will always make every effort to ensure that you are safe before we deal with the matter, though this might not be possible straight away in emergency situations.

YOUR PERSONAL INFORMATION

The information we collect about you and how we process it is regulated under the Data Protection Act 2018 and we follow strict rules as set out in the law. This means that we can only keep records relevant to our work with you and that the information we hold is correct, up-to-date, held securely and only kept for a limited time.

What & why we record:

We record basic information about who you are, where you have lived, why you have been referred to LEAP and keep records of the work we do with you. We keep files to help the team to work together and decide how best to help. Our files also help us evidence the work we have completed and assess how successful we have been in supporting you.

Who can see my record:

Confidentiality at LEAP is within the team, meaning your records can be seen by all managers and staff at LEAP. We will seek permission from you before sharing your information with other services that work with you. We will respect your wishes on sharing your information except:

- Where sharing information with another agency is part of a contract or delivery agreement
- Where we believe you and/or someone else may be or are at risk
- If it is legally required to share the information. For example, following a Court Order.

All information that is recorded is shared securely.



If you disclose any information to us about abuse or criminal activity, we must assess whether it is in everyone's best interest for us to share this. We will discuss our reasons for sharing with you beforehand and seek your consent, unless to do so would put you or other people at increased or further risk in which case we may share without your consent.

What happens with my information when I move out:

Your file will be closed and kept for a defined number of years depending on the circumstances. Under the law, LEAP has the responsibility to not keep information longer than legally required.

LEAP has a Data Protection Policy with further details available on our website and at our office on request.



You have the right to see information we keep about you. You can make a formal request by asking a manager and we will respond within 40 days. The team will arrange for you to look through your file in the presence of a member of staff who will answer any questions and take note of any changes you think should be made to your record.

We will give you as much information as possible, but we are allowed to withhold certain details if:

- it is deemed that giving you the information may harm you or another person
- your file contains information provided by, or about, another person and it is not possible to get their consent to disclose that information.

If you are not satisfied about how we handle your information or your request to see your files, please use LEAP's complaints procedure.

RENT

When you moved in you will have paid one months' rent in advance. This is because we aim to always keep you in front to ensure that if the worst were to happen and you were to lose your income that your accommodation would be secure whilst we support you to resolve this.

Because most people get paid wages and/or benefits once every calendar month, we collect rent on a monthly basis. You can however also pay your rent weekly if that is preferred or helps with budgeting.

There are several ways that you can pay your rent to LEAP:

- By standing order – Our bank details are:

Sort Code: 60-13-15

Account Number: 29464250

- By card payment – You can come into the office and pay using LEAP's card machine
- By cash – either at the office or to one of the Supported Housing Officers when they visit the properties. Please make sure if you are paying in cash that you are given a receipt



Where you live in a shared property with a Licence Agreement, you will have to pay LEAP a top-up rent for things which housing benefit does not pay. Where you live in a non-shared property, you will pay for the utilities yourself.



I am not confident around finances and concerned about living on a budget. What do I do?

Our Supported Housing Officers are there to support you in managing your finances, supporting you to set up a bank account and help you create a budget. We can also signpost you to other organisations should you need more support.

If you are in receipt of state benefits your full rent (excluding top up) is usually covered by Housing Benefits. However, if you work or have savings above a certain amount you might not be entitled to the full housing benefit for your property and will need to pay some of this yourself. Your Supported Housing Officer will give you a rent calculation sheet which is a guide to rent payments if you work.



Have your circumstances changed?

It is important to tell us every time your circumstances change so that we can support you to make sure that you do not get behind with your rent.



More tenancies in this country are lost due to non-payment of rent than for any other reason and we will therefore support you to prioritise your rent payments.

MAINTENANCE & REPAIRS

LEAP is proud to offer high quality accommodation and would welcome your support in keeping up with maintenance of the property.



We accept that at times things will need to be replaced due to general wear and tear and in those circumstances, we will cover the cost of repair or replacement. If you find something that needs fixing it is important that you tell us as soon as possible so that we can arrange the repair.

Please do not attempt to fix repairs yourself or arrange for a trades person to do the repair on your behalf. LEAP will organise all repairs that are required and has a register of trusted contractors who offer a good standard of work at a reasonable cost.



Please note that if damage has been caused by you, your household or your visitors, then you may be charged for the repair. We will get an estimate and tell you what the cost is before the work is carried out. If you are responsible for the cost, you will receive an invoice, and a payment plan will be arranged with you.

For emergency repairs see the section in this handbook on 'what to do in an emergency.'

Keys and Fobs:

LEAP has a master suite of keys which is used on all our properties and uses fobs for the door entry system at some of the properties. Replacement keys and fobs are only available from LEAP and cannot be purchased elsewhere.

You cannot change or fit any additional locks, chains, or bolts.



Oh no, I have lost my key. What do I do?

If you have lost your key, you must inform LEAP immediately and if a replacement is issued you will be given an invoice for the costs and a payment plan will be arranged with you.

Here are some examples of costings for repairs or replacements required following malicious damages or the loss of keys:

Replacement key	£15.00	Chest of Drawers	£150.00
Replacement lock on door	£60.00	Single wardrobe	£180.00
Replacement internal door	£220.00	Double wardrobe	£250.00
Mattress	£95.00	2-Seater Sofa	£300.00
Bedside Cabinet	£130.00	Fridge/Freezer	£139.00

On top of the above charges, repayments may also include rates for contractors to do repair work, which will be charged at £25 per hour.

TENANCY BREACHES

If you breach your licence or tenancy agreement, you will be putting your home at risk.

LEAP is a homeless charity, and it is our aim to break the homelessness cycle not to make people homeless. We do however have a duty of care to all our residents, want good relationships with all of the neighbours at each of our properties and generally have responsibility for the smooth and safe running of our projects.

Breaches are treated very seriously, and actions could include meetings with senior LEAP staff or getting other agencies, such as Council or Police, involved to put in place plans for improvements.

One of the most common breaches of tenancy is non-payment of rent. If you are struggling to pay your rent you must tell us, please do not wait until you start to receive warning letters. We can help you budget to sort the matter out and stop it from escalating to the point where you lose your home.

If you are concerned about other circumstances that put your tenancy at risk, it is important that you discuss these with your Supported Housing Officer as soon as possible. We will do everything we can to support you to keep your home.



Every licence or tenancy is reviewed in line with our timescales and when a review takes place all breaches will be taken into consideration when we decide whether or not it is suitable for you to remain in our accommodation.

If you are in receipt of a Tenancy At Risk Notification the support you are provided with will be increased and will involve other agencies that are working with you so that we can put a plan together to turn the situation around.



Please note that tenancy breaches can affect your future move-on plans as LEAP will be asked by landlords to provide a reference. We are here to help you build a positive future so please do not ignore our attempts to contact and support you.

Visitors:

In LEAP shared accommodation you are not allowed to have visitors overnight. This is so that we can keep everyone safe in the property. Your visitors must leave by 10.00pm and should not return before 9.00am.

You can only have 2 visitors at any one time. We have not risk assessed your visitors and they could potentially be a risk to other residents that you share the property with.



There are no visitors under the age of 18 allowed in our properties unless they are part of your household or if they are being supervised by a suitable adult. If staff suspect that a visitor is under 18, they will be asked to provide identification and if they cannot, they will be asked to leave.

Please note that in all our properties you are responsible for the behaviour of your visitors.



Can visitors stay in the house while I have a support session with the Supported Housing Officer?

If staff come to your home for a planned appointment and you have visitors present, you may be asked to get them to leave and return once the staff visit is over. This is because the work we do with you is confidential. If you refuse to do so the support session may be cancelled and be marked down as a missed appointment.

Alcohol:

We are not here to judge you if you drink alcohol, however it is our responsibility to keep all our residents, staff and neighbours safe from harm or disruption. Therefore, if your behaviour - caused by drinking alcohol - is unacceptable, this will be seen as a tenancy breach and dealt with accordingly.

There is support available to you if you feel you have an unhealthy dependency on alcohol, and we can support you to access this.

Smoking:

One of the biggest causes of house fires that result in death is smoking, along with candles and incense sticks that are left unattended. All LEAP properties are non-smoking, not just because of the risk of fire but also because it makes the property smell unpleasant and ruins furnishings and decoration. You are respectfully asked to smoke outside.

If you wish to put up fairy lights etc. you can only do so if they are battery operated. You can also use battery operated candles.

Drugs:

If you use illegal substances, it is not our place to judge you. However, it is our responsibility to support you. We can signpost you to an external support agency if this is what you want.



You must not use, possess, supply, cultivate or produce illegal substances in or around our properties, it is against your agreement with LEAP and is against the law. LEAP will report all instances of drug use, possession etc. to the police for intelligence.

If during property inspections we find any evidence of illegal substances, whether that is the substance itself or drug paraphernalia, we will report this to the police as intelligence and we will remove the items from our property.

Substances will not be returned to you under any circumstances and any used paraphernalia such as grinders, pipes and bongs will be disposed of immediately. We are not prepared to store these due to the offensive smell. Unused paraphernalia will be stored and returned to you when your agreement with LEAP ends providing you are over the age of 18.

MOVING OUT & MOVING ON



Throughout your stay at LEAP you will be working on your Progression Plan with your Supported Housing Officer so that we can support you to get appropriate accommodation when it is time for you to move to more independence.

Most people moving on from LEAP do so in a positive way. The notice you are issued with is to make sure you get the right priority. Do you need more support to help you achieve your end goal? Whatever your goal, we are here to support you.

When you are ready to move, we will help you with applying for accommodation and getting the items you will need for your new home. Please engage in this process to help us to help you.



I have been issued with notice. What happens next?

When you are issued with your notice you will need to take this to Housing Solutions at your District Council so that they can reassess your priority for housing. Under the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 your council has a duty to advise and support you to secure alternative accommodation and this process can start 56 days before your notice is due to end.

Depending on your circumstances and how you have kept your tenancy at LEAP you may have several options:

- Move-on within LEAP to more independence
- Rehousing by District Council
- Private Rented Accommodation
- Adult Support Contract
- Returning to your family home
- Move-on to student accommodation if you are planning to go to university for example



The day that you move out a Supported Housing Officer will come to your home to check the inventory for your property and make sure everything is in order and to collect your keys. Please make sure that you have packed your belongings, removed all your rubbish, and left your accommodation in a clean and tidy state. Your occupancy agreement in Part 1 of this handbook explains more about your obligations when moving out.



Please remember, we can only keep anything you leave behind for up to 28 days.

IN AN EMERGENCY

What to do in an emergency:

LEAP operates an on-call service out of office hours which is for emergencies only. If you need to contact us after 5.00pm and before 9.00am and at all times over the weekend and on Public Holidays, you should call the On-Call number for your project.

Emergency Repairs



If you identify an issue that cannot wait until the next working day, such as a broken window or external door to your property, or an electrical fault or water leak then you should ring the LEAP On-Call number for your project.

Where it is safe to do so, it is important that you stay at the property until the fault is resolved because a contractor will require access.

Fire



If something is on fire, has not yet taken hold and you believe that you can safely put it out, then you should do so.

Your safety is the most important thing, and you should never tackle a fire where you would be at risk to do so. Instead:

- Sound the alarm
 - Leave the building closing all doors behind you, do not stop to collect your belongings
 - As you are leaving the building shout FIRE as loudly as you can to alert other people
 - Ring the fire brigade on 999
 - Only when the fire brigade has been called, phone LEAP
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Gas Leak



If you discover a gas leak do NOT ring LEAP first, you must report this directly to the **National Grid on 0800 111 999** and follow their advice.

Health



On moving in, a Supported Housing Officer will have helped you & your child(ren) register with a local GP, dentist and optician. You may get additional support from a Health Visitor depending on the age of your child(ren).

If you are feeling unwell, your first point of call is the GP or dentist you are registered with.

If you are unable to get hold of your GP ring 111 and follow their medical advice.

If it is a life-threatening emergency, dial 999!

IN AN EMERGENCY

Mental Health



If you experience difficulties with your mental health your first point of call is your GP who can assess and refer you to mental health services if required. If you need additional support, you can make a self-referral to Steps 2 Change.

If you experience a mental health crisis you can self-refer to mental health services by ringing the Single Point of Access (SPA) on 0303 123 4000 or in an emergency visit A&E.

For advice you can also call Lincolnshire Mental Health Support Line on 0800 0014331 24hour/7 days a week.

Power Cuts



If you have a power cut first make sure that the problem is not because of something within your property such as a plug that is tripping your electrics, you can do this by:

- Checking your consumer unit to see if any of the switches are turned off (tripped)
- If they are tripped turn the switch back on, if it goes off again immediately then you will need to find the source of the problem
- Turn off all the electrical items in your property and put the trip switch back on, if it stays on this time, plug each individual electrical item back in until you find the one that is tripping the system. Unplug this item and reset your electrics. Do not use the item again until you have had it checked to make sure it is safe

If the electric is also off in other properties in your street you should report this directly to **Western Power 0800 6783 105 or call 105** they may already be aware and be working on the problem and should be able to give you advice on when the power will be returned.



NUMBERS YOU MIGHT FIND HELPFUL

Your GP

Your Dentist

Your Optician (where applicable)

Your Health Visitor (where applicable)

Samaritans	116 123
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MIND	0300 123 3393
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Single Point of Access (for referral to Mental Health Services)	0303 123 4000
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Lincolnshire Mental Health Support Line - 24 hour/7 days a week service	0800 001 4331
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Child Line	0800 1111
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Lincolnshire Rape Crisis	0800 334 5500
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National Domestic Abuse Helpline	0808 2000 247
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Beat: Eating Disorder Helpline	0808 801 0677
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CRUSE Bereavement Care	0808 808 1677
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We Are With You (Drug and Alcohol support)	01522 305518
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GamCare (Gambling Support)	0808 8020 133
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Lincolnshire CC Safeguarding Team:

During Office Hours	01522 782155
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Out of Hours	01522 782333
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Step 2 Change National Debt Helpline	0800 138 1111
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CAB	03444 111 444
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Lincolnshire Police:

In an emergency	999
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For Non-Emergencies	101
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YOUR NOTES





GAINSBOROUGH OFFICE

**LEAP COMMUNITY HUB
142 TRINITY STREET
GAINSBOROUGH
DN21 1JD**

LINCOLN OFFICE

**HOMER HOUSE
MONSON STREET
LINCOLN
LN5 7RZ**

WEBSITE: WWW.LEAP.UK.COM

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Lincolnshire Employment Accommodation Project Limited
Registered Address: Homer House, Monson Street, Lincoln, LN5 7RZ