

Letting Homes



Service Standards

What you can expect from Luminus



Our 2020 Vision: The Road to Renewal is a focus on positive change that transforms our communities to mend “broken Britain”. Since March 2000 we have been building a team of people who, daily inspired in their work, seek consistently to give excellent service to our customers. This energises our residents, business partners and the wider community and helps us all find a sense of purpose, hope and fulfilment. As we change, transformation occurs and a brighter future becomes reality.

Letting Homes Service Standard

- Our lettings service will be fair and easy to use
- Our homes will be clean and in a good state of repair
- We will give information to all new tenants on their rights and responsibilities
- Empty homes will be made ready for new tenants as quickly as possible

Giving you choice through Home-Link

Home-Link is the way homes are let across Cambridgeshire, including Huntingdonshire. Council and housing association homes are advertised every fortnight in the Home-Link magazine and on the internet.

The full guide to how Home-Link works is available at www.homelink.org.uk, or you can pick up a copy from our offices or from Huntingdonshire District Council's offices. If you need help getting your copy, or have any queries on how Home-Link works please call us on 01480 428345.

Using Home-Link

The first step is to register with the Home-Link Service. This can be done by logging on at www.homelink.org.uk, by contacting us on 01480 428345 or by calling into our offices at Brook House, Ouse Walk, Huntingdon. You can also register by contacting Huntingdonshire District Council on 01480 388222/388223 or by calling into Centenary House, St Mary's Street, Huntingdon.

When you register you will receive a Home-Link welcome pack which includes information on the service and how to make a bid. This includes contact numbers to call if you need help.

Finding out about available homes

Homes are advertised every two weeks in the Home-Link magazine. Once you have registered with Home-Link you are also entitled to your own personalised sheet. The list contains homes which meet your own criteria.

Your Home-Link magazine

You can get your Home-Link magazine in a number of ways

- Download it free from www.homelink.org.uk or click on the link from our website at www.luminus.org.uk.

- Arrange a subscription, where Home-Link will be sent direct to your home every two weeks for six months, at a cost of £10. To subscribe send your Home-Link number and mailing address, along with a cheque or postal order for £10 payable to 'Locata Housing Services Ltd' to:
Locata, Home-Link, PO Box 399, Ruislip, HA4 4EQ
- Collect it from one of the distribution points, listed overleaf.

Your personalised free-sheet

You can get your personalised sheet from the Home-Link distribution points which have access to the internet (listed overleaf), or by accessing the Home-Link website direct at www.homelink.org.uk. If you are vulnerable and unable to get to a distribution point or the internet to obtain your personalised sheet, please let Huntingdonshire District Council know and a copy will be sent to you every two weeks, free of charge.

Home-Link distribution points

(Distribution points with internet access are marked with *)

- Luminus Group,
Brook House, Ouse Walk, Huntingdon*
- Huntingdonshire District Council,
 - i) Centenary House, St Mary's Street,
Huntingdon*
 - ii) Civic Centre, the Priory Centre,
Priory Lane, St Neots
 - iii) Town Hall, Market Hill, St Ives
- Huntingdon Library,
St Johns Street, Huntingdon*
- St Neots Library,
Priory Lane, St Neots*
- St Ives Library,
Station Road, St Ives*
- Ramsey Community Information Centre,
39 Great Whyte, Ramsey*
- Ramsey Library,
School Lane, Ramsey*
- Yaxley Community Information Centre,
Broadway Shopping Centre, Yaxley*
- Yaxley Library,
Lansdowne Road, Yaxley*

Support available from Luminus in applying and bidding for homes

We understand that some people may find it more difficult than others to register and make a bid for a home. We want to make sure that no one is prevented from making full use of Home-Link and we will give as much help as is needed.

If you need any help or advice relating to Home-Link please call us on 01480 428345, contact us by email at homes@luminus.org.uk or visit us at Brook House, Huntingdon. You can also contact Huntingdonshire District Council on 01480 388222/388223 or by calling into their offices at Centenary House, St Mary's Street, Huntingdon. Staff will be on hand to help. We can arrange for interpreters where English is not your first language, or we can arrange for other types of help, including someone to act on your behalf throughout the bidding process.

The bidding process

- We will accept a maximum of three bids from each household every two weeks
- When the bidding time has closed we will contact all bidders within five working days to tell them if they were successful
- We will give feedback to unsuccessful bidders on request so that they are able to make informed choices next time they bid
- We will publish information relating to the bids received for each home in the next Home-Link magazine

Making an offer

If you are the successful bidder:

- We will confirm all offers within five working days. The offer will tell you about the rent/other charges and the date the tenancy will start
- We will arrange for you to view the home you have been offered and confirm the date it will be available
- We will ask you about any disability which you or a member of your household has, and whether you think you may need any aids and adaptations. Where this is the case we will discuss the types of assistance which Luminus can provide and tell you how you can apply to the Homes Improvement Agency for help. More information can be found in our Service Standard leaflet 'Aids and Adaptations'.

For your copy visit www.luminus.org.uk, call us on 01480 428777 or collect one from our offices

- We will be with you during your viewing and give you information on the local neighbourhood
- We will give you a copy of the Energy Performance Certificate for your home. This will tell you how much it will cost you to run your home. This may influence your decision on whether or not to accept it
- We will give you information on any major improvements which will be carried out to the property in the near future
- After you have viewed the property we will ask you to confirm that you are still interested. If you have changed your mind you can bid again in the next round. (We will then offer the property you refused to the next eligible bidder from the current bidding round)
- If you have accepted the property and you are already a Luminus tenant we will inspect your home to make sure it is in a good condition before you move out. We will give you a list of the things you need to do before you move out. (We will not allow you to move unless your home is in a good condition and your rent is up to date)

Before you move in

- We will be happy to deal with any queries or concerns you have about your new home or your tenancy, including practical assistance or advice on paying your rent and other charges
- If you think you may need any help either during or after your move we will discuss this with you. The type of support we may offer includes referring you to our Tenancy Support Service, Income and Benefits Advisor or a specialist agency. For more information please see our Service Standard Leaflet "Tenancy Support Services" and our leaflet "Income and Benefits Advice". For a copy of these leaflets either visit www.luminus.org.uk and download them from our publications section, call us on 0845 266 9760 or 01480 428777 to have one sent to you by post, or collect one from our offices.

Your new home

Set out below is the standard that you should expect when you move in to your home

- New locks will be fitted to your front and back door. (Minimum of 2 keys per door and where there is a secure communal area, a minimum of 2 entry door fobs will be issued).
- All gas installations will be checked and a landlord's certificate issued

- All electrics will have been checked and will be working safely
- Your home will be secure and watertight
- Hot water will be available
- All plumbing will be working and not leaking
- Your home will be clean
- Your home and garden (where available) will be clear of rubbish
- Grassed areas will be tidy
- All garages and sheds will be secure and lockable.
- Your home will be redecorated or decoration vouchers will be provided to allow you to do the work.

Moving in

At the time your tenancy starts we will:

- Explain your Tenancy Agreement, your rights and responsibilities
- Tell you about the rent and other charges that you will have to pay and explain how you can make payments
- Ask you to complete a Customer Needs Survey. This ensures that any specific requirements you may have are known at the beginning of your tenancy. Examples can include providing additional assistance for people with a disability or arranging translation services where English is not your first language

- Tell you about opportunities to get involved in the way we manage your home
- Tell you about any non-urgent repairs that are due to be carried out
- (For gas heating) Give you a copy of the gas safety Certificate, and make an appointment for us to call and get the heating system working
- Provide a copy of the Electrical Safety Certificate
- Tell you any other information that you need to know about the property and the surrounding area
- Provide you with a Home Pack - containing information that will be useful to you during your tenancy

After you have moved in

We will aim for a member of our Neighbourhood or Community Services Team to visit you in your new home within two weeks of moving in. They will make sure you have settled in and deal with any queries you may have about your tenancy, including rent payments and housing benefit claims.

Measuring our performance

We will do all we can to make sure that users of our lettings service are happy with the service.

Satisfaction with the standard of new homes

- We aim to ensure that at least 95% of customers are satisfied with the standard of their home when they first move in
- Where customers express dissatisfaction with the standard of their home we will ask them for their reasons, and ensure that issues are dealt with by our Maintenance Services and Lettings Teams

Satisfaction with the helpfulness of Luminus staff during the lettings process

- We aim to ensure that 95% of customers find Luminus staff helpful throughout the lettings process.
- Where customers state that staff were not helpful we will ask for their reasons. We will bring the issue to the attention of the Head of Neighbourhood Services for further investigation

Performance Monitoring

We monitor performance regularly to make sure our Lettings Service is of the highest standard. We also monitor the way we manage empty homes to ensure we are able to make them available for another household as soon as possible.

Managing the Home-Link scheme

The Home-Link scheme began in February 2008 and we are working with our partners in the scheme to agree additional performance targets. Customers will be included in the consultation process and the outcome will be included in our future Service Standards.

'HomeSwapper'

Our continued subscription to the national mutual exchange service HomeSwapper continues to give customers the opportunity to find other tenants to swap homes with.

Your feedback is important to us. If you feel that Luminus services are not meeting the standard we have set out in this leaflet, please contact our Customer Services Team by either:

- Calling 0845 850 9994 or 01480 428333
- Calling any other Luminus number, where you will put through to our Customer Services Team

- Coming in person to our offices at Brook House
- Completing an 'Online feedback' form which you can access through our website at www.luminus.org.uk
- Putting your issue in writing to us at Luminus Group, Brook House, Ouse Walk, Huntingdon, PE29 3QW.
- Completing a Comments, Compliments and Complaints form – available to download from our website or by requesting one by phone, or in person

More information on how to get in touch with us and make a comment about our services can be found in our 'Customer Service' Service Standard.

We will work with customers to review our Service Standards each year, to ensure we continue to meet them and to look at how we can improve services for the future. If you would like to be involved in reviewing our Service Standards please call our Performance Review Officer on 01480 428728.

