

Other help available

Benefits Team, East Lothian Council

John Muir House, Haddington

T: 01620 827 730

E: benefits@eastlothian.gov.uk

www.eastlothian.gov.uk/benefits

Welfare Rights, East Lothian Council

John Muir House, Brewery Park, Haddington

T: 0131 653 5320

www.eastlothian.gov.uk

Citizens Advice Bureau, Haddington

46 Court Street, Haddington

T: 01620 824 471

www.haddingtoncab.co.uk

Citizens Advice Bureau, Musselburgh

141 High Street, Musselburgh

T: 0131 653 2544 or 2748

www.musselburghcab.org.uk

Shelter Scotland

Ground Floor, Brunton Hall, Ladywell Way
Musselburgh

T: 0344 515 2490

scotland.shelter.org.uk

Money Advice Scotland

www.moneyadvicescotland.org.uk

Department for Work & Pensions

www.gov.uk/dwp



Rent Income team contact details

If you wish to arrange an appointment about your rent, please don't hesitate to contact a member of our Rent Income team:

Telephone: 01620 827 528

Email: rentincome@eastlothian.gov.uk

Website: www.eastlothian.gov.uk/paytostay



It is your responsibility to ensure that your rent is paid on time and to contact the Rent Income team if you are experiencing financial difficulties.

Failure to deal with your rent arrears could result in legal action being taken against you and you could be at risk of losing your home.

**Make paying your rent
a priority, you could lose
your home if you don't.**



When is your rent due?

Paying rent is the most important part of your tenancy agreement. It is important that you pay your rent on time and in full and that you are aware of the consequences if you do not pay.

Rent is charged each fortnight and is payable in advance by the first Monday of each rent period. Any payment not made on time will be treated as rent arrears.

How to prevent rent arrears and get the help you need

If you are having problems paying your rent or want to speak to someone about rent arrears, the Rent Income team at East Lothian Council can help you.

Don't be afraid to ask for help and don't delay. Friendly and experienced Rent Income Officers are available to deal with your concerns confidentially and sensitively and will make sure you get the help you need.

A Rent Income Officer will:

- make sure you are receiving all benefit you may be entitled to
- help you to complete application forms
- refer you to other agencies for a financial assessment if you have multiple debts
- if you are unable to pay your rent arrears in full, a Rent Income Officer may discuss an affordable repayment arrangement with you.



Direct Debit – the safest and most convenient way to pay your rent

Direct Debit offers an easy and hassle-free way to manage regular outgoings, helping to avoid rent payments being forgotten. It's no surprise that Direct Debit is the preferred way to pay regular bills for 64% of the British public. Customers are protected by, and should be reassured by, the Direct Debit Guarantee, offered by all banks involved in the Direct Debit Scheme.

How do I start to pay by Direct Debit?

Call 01620 827528 during office hours and we can set up your Direct Debit over the phone or alternatively download a Direct Debit instruction from our website www.eastlothian.gov.uk/paytostay

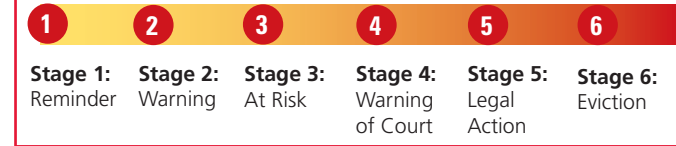
Other ways to pay your rent

- Call 01875 824301 and pay by debit or credit card
- Pay online at www.eastlothian.gov.uk/payforit
- You can pay at any local council office
- You can pay at any Post Office or PayPoint outlet using your payment card. Payments may take up to four days to reach us
- You can send a cheque to Customer Services, East Lothian Council, PO Box 13252, Haddington, EH41 3HA. Please make cheques payable to East Lothian Council and quote your name, address and tenancy number on the back of your cheque. Do not send post dated cheques or cash.

Please note that if you pay by credit card a surcharge will be added to cover the bank charges incurred by the council.

What happens if you don't pay your rent?

East Lothian Council operates a six-stage rent arrears recovery process:



If you have rent arrears or are concerned about paying your rent, don't delay. Contact the Rent Income team now. You don't have to deal with this alone.

What happens if you are evicted from your council house?

An eviction could have a very serious impact on your rehousing options and you cannot assume that you will be re-housed by East Lothian Council. The circumstances of each eviction will be considered in accordance with the homelessness legislation contained within the Housing (Scotland) Act 1987.

If you apply to be re-housed by East Lothian Council after an eviction, the council would assess whether or not it had any housing responsibilities towards you. The council cannot assess homelessness until it occurs but it is possible that you could be seen to be intentionally homeless. This would mean the council would have to provide you with advice and assistance but would have no permanent re-housing responsibilities towards you.