

The Rent Income Excellence Network

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HQN – a leading provider of information, training and consultancy for housing organisations – offering high quality services at outstanding value

- **The Housing Quality Network** – fast, high quality briefings, and everything you need to keep right up to date on all the latest housing policy and practice issues
- **Consultancy** – individually tailored mock inspections, financial appraisals, advice, research, mentoring and more
- **The Pool** – interim and project management, finding the expert staff you need for short- and long-term appointments at senior levels
- **The Source** – HQN's executive recruitment service, finding the right people for your organisation, saving you time, money and effort
- **Training and development** – delivering in-house courses and events at all levels to equip staff with the tools they need to do their jobs effectively
- **Specialist networks** – detailed information and events for practitioners with the chance to exchange ideas with top performers.

Maximise income, sustain tenancies, and deliver value for money

It is no longer enough just to collect the rent – landlords need to demonstrate that they can deliver an income management service which balances cost, quality and sustainability.

The Audit Commission and Housing Corporation expect landlords to take a more proactive approach to collecting rent: preventing arrears through effective support and financial inclusion initiatives, tailoring services to meet residents' needs, increasing customer satisfaction and reducing evictions, whilst keeping costs down. It's a juggling act, but one that can be achieved.

RIEN can show you how

Achieving excellence in income collection is a challenging task: all the more challenging if you are doing it alone.

Membership of RIEN can take some of the strain by giving you access to the information and contacts you need. Ideas come from over 200 members across the UK – year-on-year performance improvement by our members shows that you can be sure that what we say has a track record of success in the real world.

If you are serious about housing income management, can you afford to be without RIEN?

"RIEN is a reliable source of information for any manager who is responsible for income collection. We have used benchmarking data and information from the discussion forums to implement service improvements and to continually improve performance over a number of years now. Membership has helped Rotherham 2010 Ltd maintain its position as a top-performing ALMO at income management."
Simon Bell, Housing Income Manager, Rotherham 2010 Ltd

"I have for several years used RIEN as my main source of information and data on income management. The quarterly benchmarking data has proved invaluable in compiling reports and comparing performance. RIEN has helped me to make extensive contacts with other organisations, which has assisted me in improving our service through best practice." Andrew Latchem, Area Housing Manager, Cambridge City Council

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The RIEN package

- **Dedicated best practice website** – our database of practical best practice examples. This is constantly updated, giving members an invaluable resource centre (www.rien.org.uk)
- **Online Q&A and email support service** to answer your questions, solve problems and find out how others are tackling similar issues:
 - Instant support from a network of over 200 practitioners
 - We summarise the responses for all members.
- **Self-assessment toolkits** for rent collection, rent arrears, former tenant arrears and Housing Benefit – are you zero, one, two or three stars?
- **Email news round-up** on rent issues when they happen
- **In-depth best practice briefing papers** on rent issues – we ask members what these should cover. This year, members asked for papers on preventing arrears, getting the best out of the courts, dealing with vulnerable tenants in arrears and ensuring equality and diversity in service delivery
- **Quarterly PI tracking** to give you an up-to-date picture of how you compare with similar organisations and nationally
- **Reviews of case law** that affects rent collection
- **Quarterly mailing** – papers are sent via email and posted on the website
- **Income management self-assessment toolkit** – based on the Audit Commission's Key Lines of Enquiry
- **Events** – we also offer optional events (at additional cost but with substantial discounts for RIEN members). This includes our annual series of seminars and a national conference offering members a chance to listen to, debate with, and question top performers.

Additional support

RIEN is able to offer in-house bespoke consultancy support and training, tailored to meet your needs:

- **Training** – all on aspects of rent collection and negotiation skills
- **Two- to four-day inspection audits of income collection** – these are highly valued and increasingly popular. Our reviews are tailored to each organisation and are designed to critique your service with recommendations for improving performance and efficiency – an ideal external challenge to kick-start a service review and start planning for improvement. Income management reviews cover:
 - Performance management
 - Document reviews
 - Quality case audits, file checks and on-site interviews
 - Former tenant arrears
 - Current tenant arrears
 - Housing Benefit
 - Debt and money advice
 - Efficiency savings and Best Value reviews
 - Financial inclusion.

We also offer bespoke reviews of financial inclusion initiatives, designed to help landlords evaluate the effectiveness of their services in this increasingly important area of social housing.

Membership fees

Details of the RIEN membership fees for 12 months' subscription can be found in the enclosed joining form. Discounts are available for organisations that are already members of other HQN networks. If you would like further details please email: rien@hqnetwork.co.uk or call us on **0845 4747 004**. We believe that by introducing some of the tips of top performers, membership will pay for itself.

The RIEN team

Tony Newman
Manager and Associate

Tony has been working with RIEN since 2005. He has extensive practical experience of managing rent collection performance improvement in both a local authority and housing association context. Tony manages the Network, keeping members up to date with best practice, innovation and change.

Mark Henderson
Lead Associate

Mark has worked with RIEN since it started in 2002. He is Director of Housing Operations at Wolverhampton Homes. He is an expert in rent income collection and specialises in performance management. He analyses, collates and comments on the quarterly performance information.

Claire Turner
Associate

Claire is Head of Network Services at HQN, managing the Housing Quality Network. She holds an MA in Housing Policy and Practice. Claire has worked with RIEN since 2003. Previously she worked for Sheffield City Council and Sheffield Homes, where she was the Assistant Rent Recovery manager. She specialises in maximising income from Housing Benefit and the recovery of former tenancy arrears.

The rest of the team

Specialist practitioners giving you access to expertise across the field of rent income, from rent arrears to Housing Benefit and from debt counselling to performance management. Our current team includes:

Bob Newton
Arrears Manager, Helena Partnerships

Bob is experienced in all aspects of current and former tenants arrears, with special emphasis on preventative measures and early intervention. Bob is also heavily involved in financial inclusion and has just gained the Certificate of Professional Development in promoting financial inclusion in low income communities from John Moores University.

Andrew Latchem
Area Housing Manager, Cambridge City Council

Andrew has worked in housing with Cambridge City Council for 26 years. He started as a rent collector, and is now an Area Housing Manager providing a comprehensive local housing service to tenants of City Homes. He retains a specialist role as the lead on income management. He has a particular interest in performance management and how teams can use this to reduce rent arrears.

Sue Stavers
Assistant Director of Income Management, Circle Anglia

Sue has extensive experience in managing rent arrears and delivering income management services and continuous improvement across wide geographical areas. Sue holds a postgraduate diploma in housing studies.

Lesley Healey
HQN Associate

Lesley's areas of expertise are around the approaches to calculating service and support charges for supported housing and dealing with income collection from, and prevention of arrears for, people who are especially 'vulnerable', in particular working with and through support to reduce arrears issues (tenancy sustainment).

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JOIN NOW!

RIEN – one of a range of specialist networks run by HQN, offering information and advice to practitioners working in rent arrears and collection. The Network draws together and shares best practice from the country's top performers in the field.

Name	
Job title	
Organisation	
Address	
	Postcode
Telephone no.	
Email address	

How did you hear about the network?

RIEN membership – 12 months' subscription is £820 plus VAT at the applicable rate and I understand that I will be invoiced for this amount upon receipt of my joining form.

Signature

RIEN is one of a range of specialist networks run by HQN, a leading provider of consultancy and training, designed to help you to achieve real and lasting improvements in your services.

Discounts are available for organisations that are already members of other HQN networks. If you would like further details, please email rien@hqnetwork.co.uk or call us on **0845 4747 004**.

Please return to: HQN Limited, Rockingham House, St Maurice's Road, York YO31 7JA

Please note that network membership is for individual organisations (or groups) and the staff employed by those organisations (or groups). Tenants and board members/councillors linked to the organisation/group that holds network membership can also access all member benefits, including the website password and published briefings. Members must not share any member benefits with other organisations who are not network members, as this devalues the benefits of membership for paying members. This includes sharing the password and the forwarding of emails, briefing papers or other documents to non-member organisations. HQN reserves the right to terminate network membership in cases of a breach of this code. We are, of course, happy for members to refer to network publications at meetings, etc. If further clarification is required, please contact hqn@hqnetwork.co.uk and your enquiry will be forwarded to the relevant network manager.

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