

Customer Service Standards Policy



<i>Purpose:</i>	To establish DPHA's Policy and standards and set out our position on the level of standards customers can expect from us.
<i>Review Date:</i>	2 August 2022
<i>Guidance:</i>	The Institute of Customer Services Standards - Setting Customer Service Standards - Jun 2015 The Scottish Social Housing Charter - April 2017
<i>Regulatory Standards:</i>	Standard 2: The RSL is open about and accountable for what it does. It understands and takes account of the needs and priorities of its tenants, service users and stakeholders. And its primary focus is the sustainable achievement of these priorities.
<i>Other Relevant Policies</i>	All customer focussed service delivery policies
<i>Date reviewed by Policy Review Working Group (PRWG):</i>	2 August 2022
<i>Date approved by Management Board (or PRWG if delegated):</i>	2 August 2022
<i>Date policy is next due to be revised:</i>	August 2025
<i>Publish on Website</i>	Yes

CONTENTS

PAGE NO.

1.	INTRODUCTION	5
2.	OUR COMMITMENT TO YOU	5
3.	YOUR RESPONSIBILITIES	7
4.	WHEN YOU PHONE US	7
5.	WHEN YOU CALL INTO THE OFFICE	8
6.	WHEN WE MEET YOU	8
7.	WHEN YOU WRITE TO / EMAIL US	9
8.	WHEN YOU APPLY FOR A HOUSE / TRANSFER	10
9.	WHEN YOU PAY US RENT	10
10.	WHEN YOU HAVE DIFFICULTY PAYING RENT	10
11.	WHEN YOU RECEIVE FACTORING	11
12.	WHEN YOU REQUEST AN ALTERATION OF IMPROVEMENT	11
13.	WHEN YOU REPORT A COMPLAINT OR ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR	11
14.	WHEN YOU REPORT A REPAIR	12
15.	WITH REGARDS TO ESTATE MANAGEMENT	12
16.	WITH REGARDS TO PLANNED MAINTENANCE	12
17.	WHEN OUR CONTRACTORS CARRY OUT WORK	13
18.	WHEN YOU RECEIVE A SHELTERED HOUSING SERVICE	14
19.	WHEN YOU RECEIVE AN OUT OF SCHOOL CARE SERVICE	14
20.	LISTENING TO YOU	15
21.	SUBMITTING COMMENTS / SUGGESTIONS	15
22.	COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE	16

23. RESIDENT CONSULTATION	17
24. RESIDENT PARTICIPATION	18
25. DATA PROTECTION	18
26. EQUALITY & HUMAN RIGHTS	18
27. GETTING IN TOUCH	19
28. POLICY REVIEW	20

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Dalmuir Park Housing Association (DPHA) provides a range of services to tenants, owner occupiers, housing applicants and other service users.
- 1.2 **We are customer focused** and aim to empower our staff and customers to fulfil their potential.
- 1.3 We are committed to providing the highest possible standards in all of our activities and this document sets out these standards so that you know what you can expect from us. If you feel we have not met a service standard in any way, then please see more information about our complaint's procedure at section 19.

2. OUR COMMITMENT TO YOU

- 2.1 We have our customers' needs at the heart of all that we do and have created a culture that reflects this; therefore our staff are committed to:
- Be inclusive and be there for you.
 - Listening and treating you fairly with care and respect.
 - Become advocates for you, working on your behalf to help you thrive in life.
 - Speak in a polite, friendly, and helpful manner that will make you feel at ease.
 - Give you confidence in our ability to deal with your enquiry efficiently and in a professional way.
 - Ensure that our staff are fully trained in order to provide you with the highest possible service.
 - Speak to you in a way you understand, avoid the use of jargon, and not use unnecessary legal terms.
 - View you as an individual and, where necessary, will provide the assistance you need to communicate effectively with us, including a loop system for people with impaired hearing and interpretation and translation services where required.
 - Treat all information you provide us with in the strictest confidence.
 - Deal with all matters promptly and not keep you waiting unnecessarily or without explanation.

- Always make ourselves known to you and wear identification.

2.2 We will keep you informed regularly to:

- Let you know you come first and are our number one priority.
- Keep you informed of any progress with matters (or even just to say there is no progress)
- Advise of any problems when we become aware of them.
- Let you know when we are available or not.
- Remind you that we are here and to offer our help.
- Let you know any news about us.
- Let you know how we are performing.

2.3 We will do this by:

- Clearly displaying our own information leaflets as well as those provided by other relevant organisations and services.
- Publishing non-confidential agendas and decisions of meetings of the Board of Management on our website.
- Publishing our services policies on our website or provide copies by request.
- Publishing details of our performance in meeting both internal and external standards and targets on our website and via our Newsletters and Annual Reports.
- Maintaining a relevant, informative, and up-to-date website.
- Producing 3 newsletters and a Landlord Report annually.
- Providing Tenants and Owners with handbooks.
- Stay in touch regularly with all of our customers at least annually.
- Making sure we have accurate profile information about our customers.
- Knowing each customer and their needs.
- Help our customers through any changes in their circumstances.

3. YOUR RESPONSIBILITIES

3.1 We also expected you to conduct yourself appropriately when dealing with us. We have a policy of zero tolerance of verbal or physical abuse of any of our staff and you are therefore respectively asked:

- Not to use bad or offensive language or to be verbally abusive or aggressive.
- Not to threaten staff either verbally or physically.
- To treat staff courteously and with respect.
- To be patient and allow staff time to get the information you require.

3.2 You are also asked to recognise staffs' legal right to work in a safe environment and you are therefore asked to respect and co-operate with any request from staff not to smoke in their presence during any meeting in your home.

4. WHEN YOU PHONE US WE WILL ENDEAVOUR TO:

- Answer your call promptly, politely and efficiently within 6 rings
- Greet you with a corporate response in a friendly and professional manner.
- Speak clearly.
- Identify the Association and ourselves.
- If we cannot immediately answer your enquiry, we will call back within one working day or at an agreed time.
- If the person you need to speak to is not available, you will be given the choice of:
 - Speaking to another officer.
 - Leaving your contact details and the officer you wish to speak to will call you within one working day or at an agreed time.
 - Leave a message that will be attended to within one working day, or at an agreed time.

- Arrange an appointment to speak to the officer.
- Keep the time your call is put on hold to a minimum and advise you regularly of any delays in dealing with your enquiry.
- Provide an answering machine service for when our offices are closed.
- Respond to messages left on our voicemail within one working day.

5. WHEN YOU CALL INTO THE OFFICE WE WILL ENDEAVOUR TO:

- Immediately acknowledge you and attend to you as soon as possible.
- See you at the time of your appointment.
- Not keep you waiting longer than 10 minutes and to keep you informed of what is happening and the reason for any delays.
- We will identify the most appropriate person and if they are not available, we will give you the choice of:
- Speaking to another member of staff.
- Leaving your contact details and the appropriate officer will contact you within one working day or at an agreed time.
- Leaving a message that will be attended to within one working day or at an agreed time.
- Arranging an appointment to speak to the officer.
- Offer to speak with you in a private interview room.
- Clearly display information.
- Make the reception area and interview rooms comfortable and inviting.

6. WHEN WE MEET YOU EITHER AT HOME OR OFFICE, WE WILL ENDEAVOUR TO:

- Always be well presented and conduct ourselves professionally.
- Respect your home and your privacy.

- Introduce ourselves clearly and show you proof of identity (our contractors should also provide proof of their identity, preferably I.D. cards issued by their company). If you are in any doubt, please do not hesitate to call the office before letting anyone into your house.
- As far as possible, be adequately prepared for the meeting.
- Offer to help you with any forms that you need to complete.
- Respect your right to confidentiality and to seek your permission to discuss personal tenancy issues in front of anyone else present.
- Ensure our contractors are expected, as far as possible, to leave your home in a clean and tidy way.
- Try to make appointments that are convenient to you and where necessary arrange this out with normal office hours.
- Be punctual for the meeting.
- Let you know as early as possible if the officer is unable to make the appointment.
- We will never smoke in your house.

7. WHEN YOU WRITE TO US OR EMAIL US, WE WILL:

- Acknowledge receipt of your letter or email within 3 working days.
- Deal with your enquiry and send you a full written response within 5 working days or, if there is a delay, write to you with an explanation.
- Provide you with a clear, comprehensive written response to your enquiry.
- Where appropriate, advise you of your right to appeal if you are not happy with the response.
- Give you a contact name and number for further information or discussion.

8. WHEN YOU APPLY FOR A HOUSE OR TRANSFER WITH US, WE WILL:

- Assist with completing application forms.
- Process your application form within 5 working days.
- Provide you with comprehensive information and advice you may need or assist you in finding appropriate agencies to help your housing options.
- Ensure your application is processed accurately appropriately and is given a fair and unbiased assessment.
- Make the best use of our housing stock and allocate your property according to our Allocations Policy.
- Deal with any appeals or complaints fairly in line with time scales and policies.

9. WHEN YOU PAY US YOUR RENT, WE WILL:

- Offer a variety of easy methods of rent payment.
- Provide advice and assistance with completing Housing Benefit and Universal Credit online applications.
- Process payments by rent payment card to the rent account by next working Day (excluding weekends).

10. IF YOU ARE HAVING DIFFICULTY PAYING YOUR RENT, WE WILL:

- Make sensible and realistic arrangements for repayment of your arrears based on your circumstances.
- Confirm in writing any arrangement you have made to repay your arrears.
- Refer you to West Dunbartonshire Council, Works 4 U or the Citizen Advice Bureau (CAB) to ensure that you receive appropriate advice on welfare benefits and debt advice.

11. WHEN YOU RECIEVE A FACTORING SERVICE FROM US, WE WILL:

- Issue you with an annual invoice detailing service charges, building insurance premium and management fee. New owners will be provided with a pro-rata invoice within 4 weeks of us being made aware of a change of ownership in a property.
- Issue invoices detailing common charges following completion of works
- Process all electronic factoring payments by next working day.
- Offer a variety of easy payment options including regular payments via direct debit.
- Provide owners with a copy of our 'Written Statement of Service', Building Insurance Summary of Cover and our Owners Handbook within 4 weeks of us being made aware of a change of ownership in a property we manage.
- Post inspect a sample of common repairs.

12. IF YOU ARE A TENANT AND WANT TO ALTER OR IMPROVE YOUR HOME, WE WILL:

- Request that you apply to us for permission before any work it done.
- Not unreasonably withhold permission for requests to alter or improve a property.
- Compensate you for certain improvements at the end of the tenancy (as long as we agreed to them being done).

13. WHEN YOU MAKE A COMPLAINT ABOUT ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR, WE WILL:

- Not ask for complaints to be made in writing before investigating.
- Where necessary complete our neighbour/anti-social behaviour complaints form on your behalf.
- Visit you (or contact you by phone) within 24 hours if an incident is very serious or serious (Category A and B cases) such as drug dealing from the property or excessive persistent noise disturbance.

- Visit you (or contact you by phone) within five working days if the incident is of a relatively minor nature (Category C cases) such as infrequent disturbance.
- Make regular contact with you during ongoing complaints.
- Make clear to all tenants that any form of harassment of a neighbour will be viewed as a serious breach of the Tenancy Agreement.
- Make information on our anti-social behaviour policy readily available from our office and on our website.

14. WHEN YOU REPORT A REPAIR, WE WILL:

- Respond to emergency repairs and make safe within 4 hours.
- Urgent Repairs: our Contractor will agree an appropriate time suitable with you and these repairs will be complete within 2 working days.
- Routine Repairs: our Contractor will agree an appropriate time suitable with you and these repairs will be completed within 10 working days.
- Post inspect for quality a proportion of all jobs.

15. WITH REGARDS TO ESTATE MANAGEMENT, WE WILL:

- Inspect all gardens monthly during the growing season.
- Inspect closes and common areas on a monthly basis, or more frequently where there is an issue.

16. WHEN CARRYING OUT OUR PLANNED MAINTENANCE SERVICES, WE WILL:

- Ensure that programmes of work are detailed in our newsletters.
- Where applicable carry out tenant consultation regarding planned maintenance.
- Advise you at least two weeks before work commences, that a contractor has been appointed to carry out works in your home.
- Visit you with the contractor to discuss the works and any specific requirements prior to works commencing.

- Post-inspect all works.
- Issue a tenant satisfaction survey within three months of completion of the works.

17. WHEN OUR CONTRACTORS CARRY OUT WORK FOR YOU, THEY WILL:

- Greet you and show you their identification, explain the purpose of the visit and the expected time required to perform the work.
- Must not smoke inside houses whether occupied or vacant, or in the vicinity.
- Ensure if the tenant is elderly, disabled or infirm that there is always at least one room where they can be warm and have privacy or advise us if this is not possible.
- Advise if a return visit will be necessary and agree the extent of further work with us.
- Be pleasant to you and refrain from discussing their employer or the Associations business adversely.
- Perform their work exercising caution for their safety and that the safety of you or others is not endangered in any way.
- Ensure that your furniture, carpets, and personal items are protected from damage during the visit.
- Be advised by us a customer has special requirements e.g. disabled, elderly, non-English speaking.
- Refer to their supervisor and then to us if the job is poorly or under specified; has implications for other components; or may affect other tenants.
- Immediately contact their supervisor and DPHA for assistance if they experience any difficulties as a result of the behaviour of a tenant.
- Not accept any gift or enhancement to induce him/her to provide additional work not specified or authorised by DPHA.
- Obtain a completed acceptance and questionnaire from the tenant which should be forwarded to us on completion of the work.

18. WHEN YOU RECEIVE A SHELTERED HOUSING SERVICE FROM US, WE WILL:

- Provide an induction to develop and agree your Care Plan/Risk Assessment with you. This will be tailored to your housing support needs to ensure your safety and wellbeing.
- Contact you daily, at a time suitable to you, over the intercom system to ensure your welfare.
- Work in partnership with other agencies, carers, and Support Networks to help you access services you need to live independently.
- Assist with the security of your home.
- Assist with personal care and medication prompts in the event of an emergency.
- Assist in security/emergency situations, (24 hours), by staff support or our Telecare provider through you using the pull cord or Trigger pendant.
- Liaise with your relatives and emergency services in the event of accident or emergency. If there is no emergency you should contact GP, relatives etc. yourself, or ask the Support Worker to phone on your behalf.
- We have a duty of candour to you. This means that if things go wrong, we will apologise to you and put a plan in place to improve on the service issue.
- Arrange social events with consultation with you and other tenants.

19. WHEN YOU RECEIVE AN OUT OF SCHOOL CARE SERVICE FROM US, WE WILL:

- Ensure that your child's best interests and welfare are our primary concern.
- Conform to the principles within the Health and Social Care Standards "My Support, My Life". It is paramount that staff safeguard every child/parents' rights to dignity, privacy, choice, safety, equality and diversity realising every child's potential.
- Respect the rights and responsibilities of parents/guardians and work in partnership with you to care for your child; we will share appropriate information with you to promote positive relationships.

- Provide your child with the right to play in a safe secure environment which is child-led and actively promotes anti discriminatory practice ensuring consultation is maintained in line with UN Convention of the Rights of the Child.
- Follow DOSCG Child Protection Guidelines to further ensure that all the children in our care are safeguarded.
- Provide you with the facility to pay by Direct Debit or childcare vouchers and allow flexibility to tailor the service (with two weeks' notice) to your needs including use for in-service days or playscheme.

20. LISTENING TO YOU

We are committed to providing the best service we can and welcome all opinions and comments on how we can make improvements. We will therefore:

- Carry out surveys of on various aspects of the services and information we provide.
- Encourage comments, opinions, and views about all of our services.
- Promote the right to appeal decisions and the process to follow.
- Promote the right to complain about our services and the process to follow.
- Carry out consultation exercises on all policies that directly affect the services and the service delivery provided to you.
- Make use of the information we gather in surveys, comments, or suggestions to improve the range and standards of services we provide.
- Encourage you to actively participate in the shaping of the services provided by us by joining our tenants panel meetings.

21. SUBMITTING COMMENTS AND/OR SUGGESTIONS

21.1 If you wish to make any comment about the services provided by us or would like to make a suggestion on how we can improve the services we offer you, can do so by:

- Telephoning the office.
- E-mailing or writing to the office direct.
- Using the website link or Tweet us.

- Talking directly with a member of staff.
- Using our suggestions boxes at the sheltered complexes.
- Coming along to one of our Tenant's Panel meetings.

21.2 You can also make your comments and/or suggestions anonymously, but this means that we will not be able to respond to you to let you know what action we are taking. If you do provide your name and address, we will endeavour to:

- Acknowledge receipt of your comment within 3 working days.
- Respond to you in full within 5 days advising you how we intend to action your proposal.

21.3 You can be assured that all comments and/or suggestions received will be:

- Treated confidentially.
- Treated with respect and given proper consideration.
- Where appropriate, presented to our Board of Management for consideration.

22. COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

22.1 We understand there may be times when we get things wrong or you may not agree with a decision we have made, or you may feel aggrieved at the way you have been dealt with by a member of staff. Although we hope these occasions are rare, we want to be given the opportunity to investigate what went wrong and if necessary, take steps to put it right.

We have a 3 stage complaints process:

Stage 1: Frontline Complaint: Complaints that can be resolved quickly and close to where the service is provided.

Stage 2: Investigation Complaint: Those complaints that have not been resolved at stage 1 or are complex and require more detailed investigation.

Stage 3: If you are still dissatisfied with our decision or the way we dealt with your complaint, you can ask the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO) or if you are an owner the First Tier Tribunal for Scotland (Housing and Property Chamber) to look at it.

22.2 Should you wish to complain to us, we will:

Dalmuir Park Housing Association can provide this document on request, in different languages and formats, including Braille and audio formats.

- Provide a leaflet that details the procedure you should follow, this will be available at our offices, on our website or on request by phoning our office.
 - Investigate fully all complaints made and use our findings to improve our services to you.
 - Deal with complaints promptly, courteously, systematically, fairly and in confidence.
 - Discuss your complaint with you to understand how you would like the complaint to be resolved.
 - Deal with Stage 1 complaints within 5 working days.
 - Acknowledge receipt of your Stage 2 complaint within three working days.
 - Give you a full response to a Stage 2 complaint within 20 working days.
- 22.3 Anyone receiving care services from us has the right to either complain directly to us or The Care Inspectorate.
- 22.4 Customers may also receive care or support from other agencies under a contract with us. They may complain about these services either to us (just like complaints about any of our other services) or directly to the Care Inspectorate.

23. CONSULTATION

- 23.1 Under the Scottish Social Housing Charter, the Association is obliged to consult with customers on any new or reviewed policies that directly affect their housing and/or the services they get from the Association. This will include owners, sharing owners and applicants for housing where appropriate.
- 23.2 The Association will therefore aim to:
- Consult with service users on any new or reviewed policies that deal with the services they receive from us.
 - Work directly with any tenants' groups/tenants' panels within our stock on the development of our services.
 - Present all comments or suggestions received as part of the consultation exercise to our Board of Management for consideration.
 - Present findings and improvements from complaints to our Board of

Management.

- Where appropriate, incorporate how you can complain into our policies.

24. PARTICIPATION

24.1 The Association is committed to working with you to define and shape the services we provide. We will therefore:

- Promote and encourage participation.
- Provide information on setting up a residents' group and how to become a Registered Tenants' Organisation.
- Support residents' groups.
- Ensure that adequate funds are available for tenant participation.
- Arrange for interested parties to get further independent advice, guidance and training from external organisations.
 - Use the Health and Social Care Standards "My Support, My Life".
 - Hold Tenants Panel meetings.

25. DATA PROTECTION

We will treat all personal data in line with our obligations under the current data protection regulations and our Privacy Policy. Information regarding how data will be used and the basis for processing data is provided in our Customer Fair Processing Notice.

26. EQUALITIES AND HUMAN RIGHTS

- 26.1 We are committed to promoting an environment of respect, understanding, encouraging diversity, and eliminating discrimination by providing equality of opportunity for all. This is reflected in our Equality and Human Rights Policy.
- 26.2 Contractors or consultants employed by us will also be asked to provide evidence of their commitment to equalities and non-discrimination and to have procedures in place for dealing with incidents of discrimination or harassment by their staff toward

our service users.

26.3 To ensure that every individual has access to the information and services provided by us, we will:

- Provide translation and interpretation services.
- Provide information available in other formats including tape, Braille, and large print.
- Provide these services free of charge.
- As with all our information leaflets, application forms and other documentation available, we are happy to make any of our information available in other formats and languages.
- We will also ensure that public meetings arranged are accessible to all.
- We will provide assistance such as transport and childcare to attend meetings.

27. GETTING IN TOUCH WITH US

27.1 Our offices are open:

Monday - Friday: 9.00am – 5pm (except on a Thursday)

Thursday our office is closed from 10.00am to 12.30 for staff training/meetings

27.2 You can write or visit us at:

Beardmore House,
631 Dumbarton Road,
Dalmuir,
Clydebank
G81 4EU.

27.3 Other ways of contacting us:

Telephone: 0141 952 2447

Email: admin@dpha.org.uk

Website: www.dpha.org

X/Twitter: @dalmuirha

27.4 Out with our office opening hours, contact details and a message can be left on our voicemail service or you can send us an e mail to admin@dpha.org.uk

27.5 If you need any more help or advice, our staff will be happy to help.

We are committed to equality and diversity, valuing people's differences and aim to provide a service to all of our customers. We are happy to make any of our information available in other formats and languages. If you need this information in braille, audio tape, in large print or in a different language, please let us know. We will also be happy to arrange a sign or language interpreter on request. If you need any more help or advice, our staff will be happy to help.

28. POLICY REVIEW

This Policy will be reviewed by the Board every 3-years or earlier if required.