



CUSTOMER SERVICE STANDARDS

At Midlands Rural Housing, we want to ensure that we offer the best possible customer service we can. We have developed these Standards of Service, so that you know what you can expect from us.

Please read these Standards and keep safe. If you have any ideas how we can improve our service, please tell us.

Contact with Midlands Rural Housing

- External calls will be answered using the corporate greeting. All internal calls should be answered by staff giving their name.
- We will always give you our name and be polite at all times. We will provide you with our full name if you wish.
- We aim to answer your call within 20 seconds.
- We will try and return your call within 24 hours, although it may sometimes take longer if we are out of the office or to deal fully with the matter. If this is the case, we will give you an estimate of how long we think it will be.
- We will keep our personal answer phone message up to date, making it clear when a member of staff is on leave or not likely to be able to respond to your messages within 24 hours.
- We will acknowledge emails and letters within three working days. If for any reason we cannot answer your query we will let you know the expected timescale.
- Our Customer Care Team will be available to answer general queries from 9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday. Occasionally we may need to change these hours to accommodate training and we will leave a clear message telling you when the office will re-open.
- Our Staff and Contractors will show identity badges when visiting you.
- If you request a visit from an Officer, they will make an appointment and aim to visit you within 10 working days.

Privacy and Confidentiality

- **Personal information about you or your family will only be kept on file, and/or disclosed to other agencies in line with Data Protection legislation.**
- **If you wish to see the information we hold about you, we will make arrangements for you to be given access to your file within 40 days of receiving payment of a £10 administration charge for this service.**

Information Services

- **We will use plain language and avoid the use of jargon.**
- **We will send all residents a newsletter at least 4 times a year.**
- **We will publish all printed information to residents in accessible print size, and make it available in large print/other requirements on request.**
- **We will send residents performance information on an annual basis via the newsletter/annual report and make this available on our website.**

Complaints

- We will try and resolve any service failure at first point of contact.
- If we can't we will acknowledge your formal complaint within 24 hours.
- We will send you a letter explaining the outcome of your complaint within 10 working days.
- We will tell you your rights of appeal if you are not satisfied.
- We will monitor service failures on a monthly basis and formal complaints on a quarterly basis.

Anti Social Behaviour

- We will listen to your reports and take it seriously. We will not get involved in tit for tat arguments.
- We will investigate all reports and keep you informed about progress.
- We will not reveal your identity without your agreement.
- We will let you know when your complaint has been investigated and tell you what we have done.
- We will measure the number of cases we receive and assess resident satisfaction.

Rent Accounts

- **We will tell you the balance on your rent account over the telephone if you provide proof of identity.**
- **We will send you a rent account statement 4 times a year.**
- **We will send you an up to date rent statement within 48 hours, on request.**
- **We will offer you different ways to pay your rent so you can choose the one that is easiest for you.**
- **We will contact you promptly if you get behind with your rent payments and will take legal action to recover outstanding rent payments.**
- **We will be sensitive and supportive if you are having genuine financial difficulties and work with you to find a manageable way for you to pay off your rent debts.**

Maintenance

- We will carry out repairs within the target time we have published (24 hours for emergencies; 7 days for urgent; 28 days for routine)
- We operate an all year round, 24 hour service to deal with emergency repairs.
- We will confirm your repair order within 48 hours of you reporting it. This will tell you the Contractor and target time for completion.
- Our Contractors; Engineers; Surveyors and Officers will provide a mutually convenient time to call and undertake the repair/inspection.
- We will meet our legal duty to service/ check gas boilers and appliances (where our responsibility) annually.
- We will ensure our Contractors follow our Code of Conduct.
- We will consult with you before any alterations to your home are carried out and give you at least 5 days notice before we start any major works at your home.
- We will carry out external decorations to your home every 4 to 5 years if necessary.
- We will ensure that grounds maintenance work is carried out in accordance with the Specifications of the Contract and supply a copy of the service schedule to residents.
- We will carry out inspections on a sample of repairs to check that our contractors are meeting the standards we expect.
- We will give you two weeks notice before work starts on all planned improvements and cyclical works.

What you can do to help us to meet these Standards of Service by meeting the following customer standards:

- **Keep to all the responsibilities outlined in your Tenancy Agreement**
- **Treat our staff and contractors with respect and be polite. Our staff have a right to discontinue conversations/terminate meetings where they feel that they are being treated rudely or feel in any way threatened by our customers. If they feel the need to do this, they will warn you once that this is their intention, and if you continue to be rude, they will terminate the call or meeting.**
- **Keep to appointments made.**
- **Report any repairs to your property we are responsible for promptly.**
- **Carry out repairs to your property which you are responsible for.**
- **Let us in when we need access to your home especially to carry out annual gas servicing.**
- **Look after your home and any areas you share with your neighbours.**
- **Make an effort to sort out differences with neighbours. We take anti social behaviour seriously, but we will not get involved in tit for tat arguments.**
- **Give us 4 weeks notice and a forwarding address if you are intending to give up your tenancy.**
- **Keep your handbook in a safe place and check with the relevant sections when you have a query concerning your tenancy.**

- **We would appreciate your help by completing feed back forms or surveys so we can monitor our services.**
- **We would like you to get involved and work with us to help us improve our service. You can do this by joining our Resident Involvement Board.**
- **Take out Home Contents Insurance as it's your responsibility to replace any of your belongings that may get damaged.**

If you have any queries/questions about our Service Standards please contact us.

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