



Your guide to our

CUSTOMER SERVICE STANDARDS



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The Association is committed to delivering high quality services that provide value for money to our customers. We have consulted with residents and staff to set standards for our services. These standards are about meeting the needs and expectations of our customers and creating a service of which we can all be proud.

If we fall below these standards we will apologise and try to put things right. This leaflet sets out the main service standards that customers can expect. We will monitor the key standards and publish the results in our residents' newsletter.

1. Equality & Diversity

All customers will be treated fairly and equally irrespective of race, gender, gender reassignment, disability, sexual orientation, religion or belief, age, marriage and civil partnership and pregnancy and maternity.

We can provide information in large print, Braille, audio and language translations on request. An interpretation service is also available.

We will ensure that our public offices are accessible and meet the requirements of the Equality Act 2010.

2. Customer Care

We will:

- Aim to be easy to contact, helpful, responsive and efficient
- Provide a clean, safe, accessible, comfortable, user friendly office environment providing appropriate levels of information and service
- Treat all customers with courtesy and respect at all times
- Treat all enquiries and information confidentially, in accordance with our Data Protection policy

- Clearly and honestly explain the reason(s) if unable to help a customer; and if applicable, direct them to other organisations who may be able to help
- Ensure that all staff carry photographic identification to show when visiting residents
- Offer a range of methods for customers to contact us including face to face, by letter, email, telephone, text, social media and via website
- Provide telephone lines open between 8.30 am and 4.30 pm Monday to Friday with an out of office hours service for reporting of emergency repairs. Occasionally, it may be necessary to use an answerphone during office hours. However, this will only be used during exceptional circumstances and will be checked for messages within the next working day
- Acknowledge letters, emails and social media enquiries within 2 working days and reply in full within 10 working days
- Ask all residents for their preferred method of contact and find out if they have any particular needs or vulnerabilities that need to be taken into account when delivering services
- Use plain language when communicating with customers.

3. Applications For Housing & Re-Letting Homes

We will let homes to those applicants in greatest housing need making best possible use of properties and where possible creating balanced communities.

We will:

- Aim to assess new applications for housing within 14 days
- Contact all applicants each year to check if their circumstances have changed.
- Provide an annual summary to each applicant about our waiting lists and lettings
- Set and monitor a target time for the reletting of homes
- Set and monitor a target for the number of homes that are relet each year to Black and Minority Ethnic applicants
- Ensure each home meets our lettable standard before being relet
- Provide an energy performance certificate to each new resident
- Provide a gas safety certificate to each new resident moving into a home that has a gas supply and gas heating appliance
- Aim to visit each new resident within 6 weeks of the start of their tenancy.

4. Mutual Exchanges

In response to a request to carry out a mutual exchange, we will reach a decision and notify the applicant(s) within 42 days of receiving the application.

5. Contact With Residents

To keep residents informed we will:

- Issue an information handbook to new tenants and leaseholders
- Hold twice yearly residents' meetings at each sheltered scheme
- Hold leaseholders' meetings twice a year at each leasehold scheme
- Send a newsletter to tenants four times each year, including an annual report
- Include details of our key policies and other useful information on our website and in the residents' newsletter
- We will visit each resident at least once every two years.

6. Complaints

We will try to resolve complaints effectively and as quickly as possible.

We aim to:

- Acknowledge receipt of a complaint within 2 working days
- Contact complainants to discuss their complaint and how they would like it to be resolved
- Reply to a complaint within 10 working days of receipt at the first stage; and within 20 working days at the second stage of our complaints process
- Monitor the level of customer satisfaction with our complaints procedure
- Monitor the level of customer satisfaction with the outcome of complaints
- Inform residents of any changes that are made to policies and procedures as a result of a complaint.

7. Disabled Adaptations

We are committed to the provision of adaptations in order to restore or enable independent living, privacy, confidence and dignity for individuals and their families.

We aim to:

- Provide minor adaptations (for example, grab rails or lever taps) within 4 weeks of receiving a request
- Provide minor adaptations within a shorter timescale if the applicant is waiting to be discharged from hospital or other exceptional circumstances
- Make a referral to the appropriate local council within 2 weeks of receiving a request for a major adaptation (for example, level access showers or stairlifts)
- Monitor resident's satisfaction with newly installed adaptations.

8. Anti Social Behaviour

We aim to ensure that all residents enjoy their right to peace, quiet and security in their homes.

We will:

- Respond to complaints of anti social behaviour within 1 working day if the complainant may be at serious risk; within 5 working days if no one is considered to be at immediate risk but serious and/or criminal anti-social behaviour may be involved; or within 10 working days if a nuisance may be being caused but it does not present any, or a low, risk
- Take prompt and appropriate action
- Contact complainants each month (or weekly if the complaint is of a more serious nature) until the case is resolved or closed

- Monitor resident's level of satisfaction with our response to complaints of anti social behaviour.

9. Harassment, Hate Crime & Domestic Abuse

The Association will not tolerate any form of harassment, hate crime or domestic abuse and will take prompt and effective action.

We aim to:

- Respond to complaints of harassment, hate crime or domestic abuse within 1 working day if the victim may be at serious risk; or within 5 working days if no one is considered to be at immediate risk.
- Monitor resident's level of satisfaction with our response to complaints of harassment, hate crime and domestic abuse.

10. Repairs & Maintenance

We are committed to providing safe, comfortable homes that are well maintained.

We will aim to:

- Complete emergency repairs within 24 hours
- Complete urgent repairs within 7 days
- Complete routine repairs within 31 days
- Aim to complete repairs at the first visit
- Carry out annual safety inspections of all gas appliances that are owned by the Association.
- Consult with residents before carrying out any planned maintenance or improvement work
- Monitor residents' satisfaction with the repairs service and any improvement works
- Inspect 10% of repairs and any repairs that cost more than £750 to check the quality of the work.

11. Estate Management

We will carry out inspections of each scheme, including any communal areas, at least twice yearly. Communal gardens will be well maintained.

12. Rents And Other Charges

We will: -

- Offer a number of different ways for residents to pay their rent and other charges
- Provide a breakdown of rent and service charges at the start of new tenancies
- Give 28 days notice, and an explanation, of any change in rent or service charges
- Send annual rent statements
- Aim to collect 100% of the rent due
- Offer advice on welfare benefits and debt advice; and direct residents to specialist advice organisations
- Minimise rent arrears and recover all debts including service charges, court costs and rechargeable repairs by taking prompt, effective and sympathetic but firm action.

13. Access To Information

Under the Data Protection Act customers have the right to ask to see, correct, erase, restrict, transfer or object to the use of, their personal data that is held by the Association. We aim to respond to requests within one calendar month, in accordance with the legislation.

14. Resident Involvement

We are committed to the rights of residents to be involved in the management of their homes. Opportunities will be promoted to encourage involvement in all aspects of service delivery to a level that is appropriate to the wishes of both individuals and residents' groups.

We will: -

- Consult with residents about any major changes to our services
- Regularly survey residents for feedback on the quality of our services and use this information to ensure that we are meeting the aspirations of current and future residents
- Monitor the level of residents' satisfaction with the types of activity we offer for involvement in the management of their homes. These currently include surveys and questionnaires, residents' associations, focus groups, Scrutiny Panel, Resident Forum and Board membership
- Encourage involvement by offering practical support such as child care costs, travel expenses, interpretation and translation services, hearing loops, accessible venues and refreshments
- Inform residents how their views have been taken into account and used to improve our services.

Information can be made available in other languages, or other formats such as Braille or Audio Tape, on request. Please ask a member of our staff for more information, or if you need any other help or advice. (They can arrange to speak to you in your own language if you need them to.)

L'information peut être rendue disponible dans d'autres langues, ou en d'autres formats tels que braille ou bande magnétique audio, sur demande. Veuillez demander à un membre de notre personnel pour plus d'information, ou si vous avez besoin de tout autre aide ou conseil. (ils peuvent organiser de vous parler en votre propre langue si vous avez besoin qu'ils le fassent.)

Bilgiler istenildi_inde di_er dillerde de temin edilebilir ayrıca görme özürümlerinin kullanabilece_i kabartma alfabesiyle veya Teyp kaseti_eklinde de hazırlanabilir. Daha fazla bilgi için veya herhangi bir konuda yardım ve tavsiye ye ihtiyacınız varsa lütfen görevli personelden birisiyle konu_unuz. (E_er ihtiyacınız varsa personelimiz sizinle kendi dilinizde konu_abilmek için bir tercüman ayarlayabilir).

نستطيع توفير المعلومات بلغات اخرى وصيغ اخرى مثل البريل (لفاقدي البصر) والشرائط الصوتية، حسب الطلب. يرجى الاستفسار من احد موظفينا للحصول على المزيد من المعلومات او للحصول على المساعدة او الارشاد. (يستطيع موظفونا توفير وسائل اخرى للتحدث معكم بلغتكم اذا احتجتكم الى ذلك.)

该资料已被翻译为其它的语言，也有诸如盲文或录音磁带的其它形式供选。请询问我们的职员以便获得进一步的资料、其它帮助或建议。(如果你有需要，他们可以安排用你自己的语言来和你交谈。)

در صورت درخواست، اطلاعات به زبانهای دیگر در دسترس قرار خواهد گرفت و یا به هر شکل دیگر از قبیل خط برجسته و یا صدا. جهت دریافت اطلاعات بیشتر و یا دریافت راهنمایی و کمک، لطفاً از یک کارمند سؤال کنید. (آنها میتوانند ترتیبی بدهند که در صورت لزوم با زبان خودتان با شما صحبت کنند.)

ز انباریانه به زمانی خواتن ده ست ده که ویت، و یا به شیوه کانی دیکه، له وانه به خه تی گه وره و یا به ده نگ. نه گه ر پیویسنت به ز انباری زورتر، یارمه تی و یا ناموزنگاری هه یه، تکایه پرسپار بکه له یه کیک له کارمه نده کان. (نه وان کاریکی واده که ن بکه به زمانی خوت له گه لئا قسه بکه ن.)

ਬੇਨਤੀ ਕਰਨ ਤੇ, ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਦੂਸਰੀਆਂ ਬੋਲੀਆਂ, ਜਾਂ ਹੋਰ ਰੂਪਾਂ ਜਿਵੇਂ ਕਿ ਬਰੇਲ ਜਾਂ ਆਡੀਓ ਟੇਪ ਤੇ ਵੀ ਦਿੱਤੀ ਜਾ ਸਕਦੀ ਹੈ। ਹੋਰ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਵਾਸਤੇ, ਜਾਂ ਜ਼ੋਰ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਹੋਰ ਸਹਾਇਤਾ ਜਾਂ ਸਲਾਹ ਦੀ ਲੋੜ ਹੈ ਤਾਂ ਕ੍ਰਿਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਸਾਡੇ ਸਟਾਫ਼ ਦੇ ਕਿਸੇ ਮੈਂਬਰ ਨੂੰ ਪੁੱਛੋ। (ਜੇਕਰ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਚਾਹੁੰਦੇ ਹੋ ਤਾਂ ਉਹ ਤੁਹਾਡੇ ਨਾਲ ਤੁਹਾਡੀ ਆਪਣੀ ਬੋਲੀ ਵਿਚ ਗੱਲਬਾਤ ਕਰਨ ਦਾ ਪ੍ਰਬੰਧ ਕਰ ਸਕਦੇ ਹਨ।)

یہ معلومات گنڈارش کرنے پر دیگر زبانوں یا دیگر صورتوں، جیسا کہ، بریل (بھری ہوئی کھائی، ہینڈاٹماخس کے پڑنے کی کھائی) کی آڈیو ریپ پر بھی فراہم کی جاسکتی ہیں۔ مزید معلومات یا اگر آپ کو کسی مدد یا مشورے کی ضرورت ہو، تو براہ مہربانی ہمارے عملے کے ممبر سے بات کریں۔ (اگر آپ کو ضرورت ہو تو وہ آپ سے اپنی زبان میں بات کرانے کا انتظام کر سکتے ہیں۔)

Contact us

Our office in Darlington, Maple House, 11 Tillage Green, Westpark, Darlington, DL2 2GL is open between 8.30 am and 4.30pm Monday to Friday.

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www.railwayha.co.uk

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Registered Social Landlord: A1855 | Registered Charity: 1188450

Member of the Housing Ombudsman Service

