



<b>CUSTOMER SERVICE</b>
<b>CUSTOMER CARE POLICY</b>
<b>MARCH 2022</b>
<b>MARCH 2025</b>



# CUSTOMER CARE POLICY

This document can be made available in large print, on audio tape or translated into another language

Please contact the Association if you wish to discuss this.

March 2022

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## **1. INTRODUCTION**

It is the aim of Paisley Housing Association to provide customers with the highest quality of customer care possible. The policy sets out the standards and quality of service the customer can expect to receive from Paisley Housing Association.

### **This policy aims to fulfil the principles outlined in Regulatory Standards 2**

The RSL is open 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.

### **The Scottish Social Housing Charter**

#### **1: EQUALITIES**

Social landlords perform all aspects of their housing service so that:

Every tenant and other customer has their individual needs recognised, is treated fairly and with respect, and receives fair access to housing and housing services.

#### **2: COMMUNICATION**

Social landlords manage their business so that:

Tenants and other customers find it easy to communicate with their landlord and get the information they need about their landlord, how and why it makes decisions and the services it provides.

#### **3: Participation**

Social landlords manage their business so that:

Tenants and other customers find it easy to participate in and influence their landlord's decisions at a level they feel comfortable with.

## **2. EQUALITIES**

In line with the Association's commitment to equalities, this policy can be made available free of charge in a variety of formats, including large print, translated into another language or on audio file.

## **3. GENERAL PRINCIPLES OF CUSTOMER CARE**

We have developed this policy to:

- Ensure our customers believe that they have experienced the highest standard of customer care in their dealings with us.
- Ensure that all service users are treated as a valued and respected customer.
- Ensure that no customers are excluded from any area of service delivery.
- Promote and increase awareness of service standards so customers have criteria to measure performance.

- Maintain and continually improve our service to ensure that customers are receiving the highest possible standards of customer care.
- Provide clear, concise information and assistance from assured, pleasant and well informed members of staff.
- Provide relevant, accurate and accessible information.
- Communicate with customers in the format best suited to the customer ie telephone, email, text, whatsapp, Teams, Zoom, etc.
- Ensure that tenants are clear about the level of service they can expect from staff.
- Ensure that customers are clear about the response timescale for dealing with their enquiries.
- To ensure that staff members are clear about the level of service they are expected to provide.
- Ensure staff members are fully informed about their roles and responsibilities and have the support to carry these out in an exemplary manner.

#### **4. WHO ARE OUR CUSTOMERS?**

Our customers are anyone who we provide a service to or interact with to provide a service.

#### **5. CUSTOMER CARE STANDARDS**

##### **Contacting Us**

When you contact us we will:

- Treat you with dignity and respect at all times.
- Try and get you to the right person to deal with your query first time.
- Listen to you and respond to your needs as quickly and efficiently as possible
- Be friendly, professional and accessible to you and take a pride in what we do on your behalf.
- Say when we can and cannot help and explain what action you can expect from us.
- If we cannot deal with your enquiry by return, we will acknowledge your contact within 1 working day and respond within 5 working days. If it is a complex matter we will respond within 10 working days. Some areas of business have set times attached to them for eg complaints, FOI requests, allocation appeals. This might mean we have a different response time in dealing with your request.
- Do what we say we will and keep you informed at all times.
- Let you know what you can do if we fail.

Some areas we deal with have set timescales that are either set down in model documents such as the Complaints Policy and some come from legislation such as a request to assign a tenancy. If your query has a response timescale that is different from those above we will let you know.

## **Office Opening Hours**

The Association's office opening hours are as follows:

Monday – Thursday 9 am to 5 pm

Friday 9 am to 4 pm

We are also available Tuesday evenings until 7pm for an appointment with our Welfare Benefits Service. This is likely to be a virtual or telephone meeting.

We close two afternoons per month for staff training and meetings and at other times for public holidays and other staff events. Any closures are advertised in advance on our website.

## **Visiting Our Office**

When you visit our office we will:

- Make sure our reception is adequately staffed.
- Make sure your query is dealt with as quickly as possible to minimise waiting time and disruption to you.
- Not keep you waiting when you have arranged an appointment.
- Keep you informed if there is a delay in your appointment.
- Provide you with a comfortable accessible waiting area in our reception.
- Provide an interview room so that you may talk to a member of staff in private.
- Strive to make sure there is information available for you to take away.
- Provide a mini loop system to assist with interviewing deaf and partially hearing customers
- Provide meeting and toilet facilities for wheelchair users.

If any customers are unable to come to the office, it can be arranged for a member of staff to visit them at home to deal with their enquiry. If you would prefer we can send a male or female staff member.

## **Telephone Our Office**

When you telephone our office we will:

- Answer the telephone promptly.
- Let you know who you are speaking to.
- Let you know when we are putting you on hold.
- Let you know when we are transferring calls and who your call is being transferred to.
- Take clear messages and email the appropriate member of staff immediately.
- Return all calls by the end of the day (unless you have been advised otherwise).
- Make the answering machine available for the times when the office is closed or the phoned is engaged. If you leave a message for a member of staff who is not available, we will phone you the same day or the next morning.

- Respond to a request for a call back through our text service the same day.

### **Written Correspondence**

When writing to you we will:

- Provide you with information which is written in plain English and is jargon free.
- Respond to written correspondence within our target timescales which are 3 working days unless it is a complex issue requiring investigation in which case it will be 7 working days.
- Provide you with clear and accurate explanations about decisions which have been made.

### **Information and Openness**

When providing you with information we will:

- Publish comprehensive and accurate information about the services we provide to you.
- Respond to requests from you to see information held about you promptly and no longer than 20 working days.
- Only gather information about you if we need it for a specific purpose.
- Treat information about you in confidence.
- Respond promptly to provide information in a range of formats and languages.

### **In Your Home**

When visiting you at your home we will;

- Make sure all frontline members of staff visiting your home wear their name badge and have some form of identity.
- Never enter your home uninvited unless we have appropriate authority to do so.
- Behave in a professional and courteous manner
- Always explain the reason for visiting you.
- Let you know what will happen following on from the visit.

House visits are normally carried out within office hours. Please let us know if this is a problem for you.

### **Customer Consultation**

Your views are important to us. We encourage you to tell us what you think about our services and will:

- Consult with our customers regarding key service user policies and service plans.
- Make sure the consultation timescale makes it possible for you to get involved.

- Use a variety of methods of consultation including, focus groups, interested individuals, the Association's website, Residents Surveys, Development Surveys, Texting, Calling, Settling In Visits and any other suitable mechanism which suits your needs;
- Use the feedback you provide to improve our services and to influence policy making.
- Publish the results of any consultation process on our website.

### **Performance Management**

We will set targets which are challenging but also realistic and let you know what these are and what you can expect from us. We will:

- Provide you with information on targets we set to improve our efficiency in key areas of our service delivery and publish these on our website.
- Continue to ensure our staff members are being trained and developed to provide you with the best possible service.
- Be committed to the principle of continuous improvement in the services we deliver to you.

## **6. OUR EXPECTATIONS OF YOU, OUR CUSTOMERS**

We appreciate that the relationship between our customers and ourselves is a two way process built on mutual trust and respect. We expect that our customers will appreciate the standard of care extended to them and respond in a positive manner.

We think it is reasonable to ask our customers to:

- Be polite, courteous, non-abusive and non-threatening always.
- Treat our staff with respect.
- Come prepared and bring all necessary documentation with you.
- Comply with all reasonable requests made by our staff.
- Appreciate that from time to time we may not be able to help you.

## **7. COMPLAINTS**

Paisley Housing Association aims to provide a first class service in all aspects of our service delivery. Despite our best efforts, errors and mistakes do happen, complaints are inevitable. If you feel we have let you down, the complaints system serves as a safety valve for you to tell us about it and try to put it right.

The complaint procedure also gives us the chance to keep an eye on the quality of services we provide. We aim to:

- Provide an easy and straightforward framework for service users to obtain information and record a complaint.
- Keep people informed about how their complaint is progressing.
- Provide a means to resolve the complaint whenever possible.



- Improve service delivery by learning from and acting upon information obtained.

With your help we can identify problems, resolve them quickly and prevent them from happening again.

Copies of the Complaints Policy and Procedure are available on request from the office and on our website.

## **8. REVIEW OF CUSTOMER CARE POLICY**

The Association will review its Customer Care Policy every 3 years to ensure that it continues to meet the Association's aims and objectives. The policy may be reviewed earlier subject to legislative, regulatory or best practice requirements