



**Drumchapel
Housing**

Co-operative Limited

Customer Service Standards policy

This document can be produced in various formats, for instance, in larger print or audio format and it can also be translated into other languages, as appropriate.

Approved date:
Review date:

January 2021
January 2023

Customer Service Standards policy

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Drumchapel Housing Co-operative Limited is a customer-focused organisation and is committed to providing our customers and prospective customers with quality information and service delivery. We aim to provide appropriate training for our staff members and develop effective methods of seeking customer feedback and appropriate methods of reporting this information.
- 1.2 As we shall ensure treatment of customers is always courteous and helpful it is expected that staff, in return, are treated with dignity and respect at all times.
- 1.3 The Co-operative's contact details, and opening hours are as follows:

Address: 4 Kinclaven Avenue
Drumchapel
Glasgow, G15 7SP

Telephone: 0141 944 4902

Main E-mail: enquiries@drumchapelhc.org.uk

Website: www.drumchapelhc.org.uk

Opening Hours: **Monday to Thursday**
9.00 am – 5.00 pm
Friday
9.00 am – 4.00 pm

2. Legislative and regulatory framework

- 2.1 **Standard 2** of the Scottish Housing Regulator's Regulatory Framework states: "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." More specifically and in relation to this Customer Service Standards Policy, **Standard 2.3 states**: "The RSL seeks out the needs, priorities, views and aspirations of tenants, service users and stakeholders. The governing body takes account of this information in its strategies, plans and decisions."

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3. Risk management

- 3.1 The Co-operative has considered the potential risks of providing information to customers. We regularly update public access information, such as summary information to housing applicants. In order to ensure correct information is provided at all times, all staff are made aware of information contained within these documents (via informal and formal training). Failure to do so could damage the Co-operative's reputation.
- 3.2 We also ensure consultation is undertaken to include views and feedback from tenants when reviewing policies. This is carried out in a variety of ways such as social media, community events, questionnaires, Tenants' Panel meetings, and encouraging feedback via newsletters.

4. Equality and Human Rights

- 4.1 The Co-operative's Equality and Human Rights policy, which was approved by the Board in April 2021 following tenant consultation, outlines our commitment to promote a zero tolerance to unfair treatment or discrimination to any person or group of persons, particularly on the basis of any of the protected characteristics. This includes ensuring that everyone has equal access to information and services, and, to this end, the Co-operative will make available a copy of this document in a range of alternative formats including large print, translated into another language or by data transferred to voice. The Equality and Human Rights policy is programmed for the next review in April 2024.
- 4.2 We are also aware of the potential for policies to inadvertently discriminate against an individual or group of individuals. To help tackle this and ensure that it does not occur, best practice suggests that organisations carry out Equality Impact Assessments to help identify any part of a policy that may be discriminatory so that this can be addressed (please see section 6 of this Policy for more information).
- 4.3 In line with the Equality and Human Rights policy, the Co-operative will apply a screening process based on that recommended by the Equality and Human Rights Commission to ascertain whether each policy requires an Impact Assessment to be carried out. The screening process was applied to this policy, and it was decided that an impact assessment is required. Please refer to Appendix 1.

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5. Core values

5.1 Our commitment to customer care is underpinned by the Core Values adopted by both staff and Board members:

Excellence - We are committed to providing a quality, customer focused service that demonstrates value for money, delivered by great staff. We will publicise information on how we are performing, welcoming challenge and feedback to continuously improve the effectiveness and relevance of the service we provide.

Accountability - Our Board and senior staff team will provide strong strategic leadership and oversight, with non-senior staff at the forefront of delivery, ensuring tenants' interests are protected in all that we do. We will ensure that our actions are transparent.

Partnership working - We will work collaboratively with all sections of the local community. This includes working collectively and individually with our customers, other registered social landlords, and statutory and voluntary sector partners working in Drumchapel to improve the lives of our residents. We will continue to be a proactive member of the local community, seeking out new, innovative ways to address issues that impact our residents.

6. Definitions

6.1 The following is a list of who we consider to be our 'customers' and with whom we interact or provide a service to:

- a) Tenants
- b) Applicants
- c) Staff
- d) Other private, public and voluntary sector organisations and agencies we work with (e.g., the Scottish Housing Regulator, local authorities, contractors, consultants and other Registered Social Landlords)
- e) Other members of the public and anyone else who interacts with us

7. Service level objectives

7.1 Overall objectives

- a) We will deliver excellent services making the best use of our resources.

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- b) We will keep you advised of our activities and consult with you when major changes to services are planned.
- c) We will use your views to improve the quality of our service.
- d) We will treat you fairly and with respect.
- e) We will respond to your enquiries and complaints.
- f) We will always be approachable and professional.

Specific objectives

- a) We shall ensure all staff receive regular training on customer care throughout their employment.
- b) We shall prepare and review policies and procedures in consultation with staff, Board and tenants to maximise opportunities to meet the needs' identified as well as working within the Scottish Social Housing Charter's guidance. This policy was revised in consultation with the Tenants Panel.
- c) We shall undertake a variety of customer satisfaction surveys:
 - i) Reactive repairs – we shall seek 100% customer feedback following the completion of the work to gauge satisfactions levels and inform service development.
 - ii) Settling in visit – we shall visit every new tenant within six weeks of their tenancy start date to obtain feedback on the quality of their home and standard of service.
 - iii) Satisfaction Survey – we shall carry out a satisfaction survey every 3 years to ascertain how we are performing and obtain feedback in relation to services provided by the Co-operative.
 - iv) The Depute Director shall ensure that key information from the Satisfaction Survey is published in the Co-operative's newsletters, Annual Report and on our website: www.drumchapelhc.org.uk
- d) In order to continually improve the quality of service we provide to you, we shall set realistic, yet challenging targets.

8. Customer service standards

8.1 In order to ensure that everyone is clear about the acceptable standard of service, the Co-operative has prepared the following Customer Service Standards.

8.2 Visiting the Office: We shall:

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- a) Ensure the office is open during the published hours.
- b) Make sure our office is adequately staffed.
- c) Make sure the staff members have name badges identifying themselves to you.
- d) Wear either a uniform or be dressed in a neat, tidy and business-like fashion at all times.
- e) Promptly greet you with a smile.
- f) Provide a translator service if required and requested with reasonable notice.
- g) Deal with your query as quickly as possible to minimise your waiting time.
- h) Arrange an appointment that suits you if you require.
- i) Not keep you waiting when you have arranged an appointment, wherever possible.
- j) Keep you informed if there is a delay in your appointment.
- k) Ensure that our waiting area is accessible and comfortable.
- l) Provide useful information in relation to our services, local events and opportunities that you can take away.
- m) 'Sign-post' you to an appropriate agency or person who can help if we cannot.

8.3 Home Visits: We will:

- a) Never enter your home uninvited except where we have a statutory duty, or we have given prior notice of a forced entry in conjunction with sheriff officers.
- b) Always explain the reason for the visit.
- c) Arrange a date and time that suits you.
- d) Contact you if there is a delay or if we cannot attend the appointment, giving you a reason for this.
- e) Wear a name badge to identify ourselves to you.
- f) Ensure a translator is present if required and requested with reasonable notice.

8.4 Telephone Calls: We will:

- a) Ensure the telephone is answered during the published office opening hours, and staff answer in a friendly, courteous and professional manner.
- b) Ensure the answer machine is switched on during office closure times and that it clearly indicates that the office is closed with accurate information for reporting a repair or leaving a message.

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- c) Ensure that answer machine messages are responded to within 24 hours or the next available working day where the message is left during a public holiday break.
- d) Confirm you have called Drumchapel Housing Co-operative and let you know who you are speaking to.
- e) Establish the reason for your call and either take appropriate action or pass your call onto the relevant staff member.
- f) Ensure that where the appropriate person is not available to take your call, they will call you back within a reasonable timeframe.

8.5 E-mails & Letters: We will:

- a) Ensure the 'out of office assistant' is set to inform you when the staff member you have e-mailed will be back in the office (e.g., confirming a period of annual leave). This will inform you to contact another member of staff if the nature of your message is urgent.
- b) Ensure your correspondence is passed to the appropriate person for action.
- c) Contact you within 5 working days (depending on the nature and urgency of your correspondence) to either discuss or provide a written response to your query. This response will set out clearly the explanation about decisions that have been made.
- d) Ensure we write in plain English and avoid jargon.
- e) Where identified, we provide correspondence in varying text size or alternative language formats.
- f) File the correspondence in your electronic Tenancy File on our Housing Management System and manage your data in accordance with current data protection legislation.

9. Our expectations of you

9.1 The relationship built between us, and our customers is based on trust and respect. We expect that our customers will appreciate the standard of care extended to them and respond in a positive manner.

9.2 With this in mind, we think it is not unreasonable to ask you to:

- a) Treat our staff with respect.
- b) Not be abusive or threatening in your attitude, words or actions.
- c) Provide information requested within the timescales indicated.
- d) Meet the terms of reasonable requests made by our staff.

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- e) Let us know of any adjustments you require in relation to office accessibility or language format.
- f) Understand that sometimes we just simply cannot help you. Where this is the case, we will try to direct you to the most appropriate agency.

10. Breaches of the customer service standards policy

- 10.1 Breaches of the Customer Service Standards Policy should be actioned through our Complaints Handling Policy & Procedure. A complaint is any expression of dissatisfaction by one or more members of the public about the Co-operative's actions or lack of action, or about the standard of service provided by or on behalf of the Co-operative. This allows the Co-operative to investigate your concern and where possible take remedial action.
- 10.2 This assists the Co-operative in its strive for continual improvement, which in turn should improve the service delivery to our customers. You can obtain a copy of the Complaints Handling Policy & Procedure upon request or download it from our website: www.drumchapelhc.org.uk

11. Policy review

- 11.1 This policy shall be reviewed every three years or sooner as deemed necessary by the Management Board.

12. UK General Data Protection Privacy Statement

- 12.1 The Co-operative will gather and use certain information about individuals in accordance with UK GDPR. Staff members have a responsibility to ensure compliance with the terms of the privacy policy and to collect, handle and store personal information in accordance with relevant legislation. The Fair Processing Notice (FPN) details how personal data is held and processed.