

## **Service promises – the eight main areas**

### **Our services to you**

We aim to provide the best possible customer service at all times. To help us do this, we have set ourselves standards in eight main areas. These standards are our ‘service promises’. They let you know what you can expect from us. We will set targets for each of the service promises so that we can check and report on our progress every year.

#### **1 Equal opportunities**

**We will make sure that everybody has full access to our houses and services where possible.**

We will improve equal opportunities by:

- keeping to equal opportunities laws;
- making sure our offices have access for wheelchair users and facilities for people who are deaf or hard of hearing, or have speech difficulties, or do not use English as their first language;
- making sure we are fair when granting tenancies;
- providing and managing homes for people in need of housing; and
- collecting and monitoring information to make sure that nobody is treated unfairly.

#### **2 Keeping in touch**

**We will set standards and time limits for handling your enquiries.**

We will:

- make sure our offices are always clean and welcoming, with areas where customers can speak to us in private;
- deal with you in a polite, friendly and professional way;
- answer phone calls quickly during office hours;
- take a message if the person you want to speak to isn’t available, and make sure you get a response to your messages on the same day or the next working day;
- contact you within five working days to confirm that we have received your letter or email;

- send you a full reply to your letter or email within 10 working days, or tell you when we will be able to give you a full response;
- keep any appointment we arrange with you, and call you straight away if we need to make new arrangements; and
- arrange for you to see someone within 15 minutes of you calling into the office (although this may not always be the person you want to see if you do not have an appointment).

### **3 Rent and service charges**

**We will keep you well informed and take action quickly.**

We will:

- give you a statement, showing a breakdown of your rent and service charges at least once a year;
- answer questions about your rent or service charges as quickly as possible;
- take prompt action when you have not paid your rent or other charges;
- take all reasonable steps, including legal action when necessary, to recover overdue rent;
- give you information about where you can get advice from when you get into debt; and
- make sure you have up-to-date information about what we and other relevant local organisations do.

### **4 Repairs and maintenance**

**We will set and check standards, act on your feedback, and offer advice.**

We will:

- carry out all repairs, and our planned and regular maintenance work, in line with our repairs policy;
- meet our legal duty to make yearly gas-safety checks and service gas appliances in our homes;
- ask you to fill in and return repair satisfaction slips, and get back to you as quickly as possible if your slip shows that you were unhappy with our performance;
- monitor our services by visiting and phoning 10% of the homes that have had repairs or maintenance work done to check the standard of the finished work;
- make sure all the contractors we use keep to our code of conduct;
- carry out a programme of major repairs to make sure our homes meet the Scottish Housing Quality Standards; and
- offer you advice on simple home repairs that you are responsible for.

## **5 Offering new tenancies and transfers**

**We will make it clear how we offer properties, make sure you know about other housing options, and rent out our empty homes as quickly as possible.**

We will:

- produce clear guidelines for the way we decide who moves into our properties and how we prioritise transfers;
- let out empty homes as quickly as possible;
- publish details of our lettings in our annual report; and
- provide you with information about other housing opportunities.

## **6 Supporting our communities**

**We will respond to complaints quickly, and work with community groups and other organisations.**

We will:

- respond to neighbour disputes quickly by taking appropriate action or offering advice;
- help community groups to assess the needs of their communities;
- help communities to meet identified needs through our housing activities; and
- help communities get access to funding or support from other organisations that will support projects that benefit them.

## **7 Keeping you informed and involved**

**We will offer you more ways to be involved and make it easier for you to let us know what you think.**

We will:

- set up various ways for you to be involved in what we do;
- provide practical support and training to community groups who want to be more involved with housing issues;
- hold meetings with tenants' or residents' groups every year;
- try to involve under-represented groups;
- make sure all our information is in plain English;
- make information available in other formats and languages if you ask us to;
- make sure you can get access to interpretation and translation services during office hours;
- produce two newsletters for our residents each year;
- give all our tenants and homeowners a handbook; and
- produce an annual report that sets out our performance.

## **8 Complaints and appeals**

**We will make it easier for you to understand our complaints procedure and make sure you know how to make a complaint.**

We will:

- have a clear and understandable complaints procedure;
- make sure you can get information about our complaints procedure;
- put things right if we have not followed our own rules properly; and
- give details of how we have dealt with complaints in our annual report.

### **What we expect from you**

**We expect you to be polite, let us into your home to carry out repairs, let us know about any problems you have, respond to our letters, respect your community, and know what your responsibilities and rights are as a tenant.**

We expect you to:

- be polite and friendly with us;
- turn up for meetings when arranged, or let us know when you can't make them;
- respond to our letters, emails or texts as quickly as possible;
- let us know if you are getting into problems so that we can help you sort them out;
- pay your rent in full and on time;
- keep your home in a good condition, and report repairs that need doing;
- let us into your home to carry out urgent repairs and carry out any inspections we need to make;
- not cause a nuisance to anyone living near you; and
- know what your responsibilities and rights are as a tenant.