

Melville Housing Association



Policy : Customer Care

Subject:	Customer Care
Section:	HR & Corporate Services
Objective:	To set out a policy of working that delivers consistently high levels of service for all our customers
Scottish Social Housing Charter outcomes:	<p>1 Equalities</p> <p>Social landlords perform all aspects of their housing services so that:</p> <p>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.</p> <p>2 Communications</p> <p>Social landlords manage their businesses so that:</p> <p>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.</p>
Relevant Legislation	Policy developed to comply with Relevant Legislation.
Issue Date:	January 2020
Review Date:	January 2023
Policy Ref No:	COR 004

1.0 Policy

1.1 Melville Housing Association is committed to delivering a quality service in a professional manner to all our customers.

2.0 Our customers

2.1 Our customers are all those we come into contact with in the delivery of our day-to-day services. This includes:

- tenants
- anyone applying for housing
- owners to whom we provide a service and their nominated representatives

2.2 We also provide services to some local businesses, their employees and partner organisations.

3.0 Our Customer Care standards

3.1 Our staff

All staff will:

- be prompt, polite, helpful and courteous at all times
- introduce themselves and show identification when asked
- see to your phone call/enquiry as quickly as possible
- make every effort to comply with any request that our policies allow
- provide customers with the best advice and assistance possible
- make arrangement to visit you at home at a mutually convenient time

4.0 Our offices

4.1 Our offices will:

- be clean and tidy
- be free from health and safety risks
- provide privacy for personal discussions
- be clearly signed with opening hours on display
- have out of hours emergency numbers on display
- have up to date and relevant information readily available
- be accessible to anyone with disabilities as far as reasonably possible
- provide induction loops for those with hearing difficulties and interpretation services for those whose first language is not English

5.0 Organisation

5.1 As an organisation we will:

- provide comment cards to record your views on our services
- aim to acknowledge letters within five working days using plain English
- publish information about our services and performance
- protect the privacy of all tenants and treat all personal information in the strictest confidence and in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018 and the General Data Protection Regulation (EU) 2016/679.

6.0 Communication

6.1 We will communicate regularly and openly with our tenants, sharing all relevant Melville Housing information. We will:

- use plain English in all materials
- issue regular newsletters (three a year) to all tenants
- provide a helpful and easy-to-use website
- provide a range of clear and helpful leaflets to explain our services and policies
- consult tenants on key matters before a final decision is reached
- answer all queries on the work of the Association provided the information is not commercially sensitive or covered by the Data Protection Act

7.0 Feedback

7.1 We welcome all feedback (both positive and negative) as a way of improving our services. We will:

- deal with complaints immediately, wherever possible
- respond to all complaints within an agreed timescale, when an immediate solution is not possible
- inform you of, and assist you with, the full complaints procedure
- inform you of the outcome and decision, including any possible compensation
- if, following the completion of our internal complaints process you remain dissatisfied, we will inform how to take your complaint to the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman
- we will report on comments and complaints outcomes and the lessons we have learnt through our newsletter and on our website

Please contact us for full details of our complaints procedure.

8.0 Service

8.1 Our office is open from 9.00am to 5.00pm Monday to Friday, with the exception of Thursday when we open at 10am to accommodate staff training. When our office is closed we provide our tenants with:

- an answer phone service which is clear, concise and up-to-date and which is checked first thing every morning
- a dedicated 24-hour emergency hotline

When our office is closed an automated switchboard will transfer customers to their choice of emergency contractors. Should our phone systems be unavailable, alternative emergency contact for our main repairs contractors are shown on our website.

8.2 Melville Housing Association provides information in various formats

On request we will provide tenants and their families with alternative formats of leaflets, documents and other written information including:

- Large print
- Translation into other languages
- Audio files (MP3 or similar) or CD

- 8.3 Where customers visit our office or when our staff visit customers in their homes we can, on request, provide a translation service.
- 8.4 To assist customers with hearing difficulties we also have a portable loop system that that can be used in our reception, interview rooms and in tenants' homes.
- 8.5 Once a request has been made by a customer we will continue to use that method for all communications unless advised differently.

9.0 Awareness and training

- 9.1 We will ensure that all staff and Board members are aware of our customer care standards and their importance. We will also provide training to staff and Board members where appropriate.

10.0 Respect for staff

- 10.1 In return we expect **our customers** to:
- show respect and consideration to our staff.
- 10.2 We will not tolerate any customer who is:
- rude
 - abusive
 - violent
 - under the influence of alcohol or drugs
- 10.3 Where a member of staff feels a customer is behaving inappropriately we will terminate calls or meetings.
- 10.4 Where there has been unreasonable behavior, the Association may take steps to protect our staff and contractors. These may include restricted appointment times to allow additional staff involvement through to legal action.

11.0 Equality & Diversity

We are committed to Equality and Diversity and will not discriminate in the operation of this policy on the basis of age, gender, gender reassignment, race, colour, caste, ethnic or national origin, religion, marital status, family circumstances, political belief or affiliation, trade union membership, pregnancy, maternity sexual orientation, gender reassignment, medical condition or disability. We aim to promote equal opportunities and comply with all current legal requirements relating to equal opportunities.

12.0 Review of Policy

The Chief Executive will ensure this policy is reviewed every three years or earlier if there are any changes to legislation. The Senior Management Team have delegated authority to approve minor changes to this policy. Significant changes will be submitted to the Board for approval.