



## **Clydebank Housing Association Ltd.**

### Customer Care Policy

Management Committee submission:	23 February 2010
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This policy can be made available on request in a variety of different formats, such as on tape, in large print and translated into other languages.

## **Clydebank Housing Association Ltd**

### **Customer Care Policy**

It is the aim of Clydebank Housing Association to provide its customers with the highest quality of customer care and therefore intends to fulfil the principles outlined in sections GS1.4, 3.1 and 3.2 of the Scottish Housing Regulator's guiding standards in relation to service delivery, which are: -

"We make the best use of our people and our physical resources to achieve efficiency, best value, continuous improvement and to deliver high quality services".

"We place the people who want to use our services at the heart of our work. We treat people with respect and are responsive to their views and priorities."

"We provide or secure effective information and advice, in line with the national standards for housing information and advice services."

Clydebank Housing Association has the following core values, which are integrated into our working practices and approach to interacting and dealing with people.

#### **Respect**

Listening to and treating our customers with respect at all times

#### **Customer Service**

Our customers deserve an excellent service - timely, responsive, proactive, meeting their needs and aiming to delight

#### **Honesty & Professionalism**

Being open, honest and reliable in all our dealings and maintaining the highest integrity at all times

#### **Excellence**

Always doing what we say we will and striving for excellence and quality in everything we do

The policy has been developed 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 through customer feedback, 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
- ◆ Ensure that tenants are clear about the level of service they can expect from staff
- ◆ Ensure that customers are clear about the response timescales 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 to the highest standard

### **Who are our customers?**

Our customers are anyone who we provide a service to and interact with to provide a service and include: -

- ◆ Tenants
- ◆ Sharing Owners
- ◆ Owners
- ◆ Housing Applicants
- ◆ Job Applicants
- ◆ Members of the Association
- ◆ Members of the public
- ◆ Contractors
- ◆ Consultants
- ◆ Local Authorities
- ◆ Other Housing Associations
- ◆ The Scottish Housing Regulator
- ◆ The Scottish Government
- ◆ Lenders; and so on

### **Customer Care/Service Standards**

At Clydebank Housing Association, we aim to offer the highest quality of service to our tenants, sharing owners, owners and other service users/customers.

#### **At all times**

#### **We will:**

- Be polite and helpful
- Treat everyone fairly and with respect
- Respond quickly to your enquiries

- Listen to you and ask for your view about our services
- Give information in ways you find easy to understand
- Not keep you waiting without an explanation; and
- Admit when we have made mistakes and try to put things right.

### **When you telephone us**

#### **We will:**

- Answer the call quickly – we aim to answer within six rings;
- Tell you who you are speaking to
- Offer to take a message or arrange to ring you back if the person you need to speak to is not available
- Reply to telephone messages within one day
- Use our answer machine only when it is necessary; and
- Arrange for a translation service if you do not speak English.

### **When you write to us**

#### **We will:**

- Reply to your letter, fax or email within 5 working days
- Let you know if we can't give a full reply within 5 working days, e.g. investigation of a complaint
- Use language that is easy to read and understand; and
- Try to provide information in the best format for you, such as large print, in another language, or on audio tape/CD

### **When you visit or call us**

#### **We will:**

- Open our offices at 77-83 Kilbowie Road, Clydebank, G81 1BL (Tel: 0141 9411044) from 9am - 5pm Monday to Thursday and 9am–4pm on Friday; with the exception of the first Wednesday morning each month between 9am-2 pm when the office will be closed for the purpose of staff training. The offices currently close between 1pm and 2pm every day for lunch. Details of public holiday closures will be notified to you through our Newsletter and website.
- Provide a telephone service for emergency repairs outside our opening times
- Make sure that our offices contain up-to-date information on our services; and
- Provide offices that are accessible as possible for people with disabilities.

### **When you want to make an appointment**

#### **We will:**

- Arrange an appointment at our offices or in your home
- Make the appointment for a time to suit you; and
- Tell you as soon as possible if we cannot keep the appointment.

### **When you visit our office**

#### **We will:**

- Greet you straightaway
- Make sure our reception area is easily accessible and welcoming
- See you within 5 minutes of your appointment time
- Try to see you within 10 minutes if you do not have an appointment, however, if unsuitable an alternative appointment can be arranged
- Offer translation service if required
- Offer you a private interview room

### **When we visit your home**

#### **We will:**

- Be on time or, if delayed, call you to let you know when we will arrive
- Show you suitable identification
- Explain the reason for the visit
- Respect your home and all reasonable customs; and
- Leave a card if you are out, telling you how to contact us.

### **When you make a complaint**

#### **We will:**

- Acknowledge receipt of your letter within 3 working days of receiving it and advise you who is dealing with your complaint
- Investigate and reply to your complaint within 14 days, except where further investigation is required but we will let you know of the up-to-date position
- Tell you how to take the complaint further if you are not satisfied; and
- Monitor complaints to help us learn from them and improve our services
- If we get it wrong we will:
  - Apologise
  - Make every effort to put it right
  - If we are at fault, offer compensation in line with our policies and our legal requirement to do so

### **When you give us information**

#### **We will:**

- Treat all information we hold about you sensitively and in confidence
- Work to make sure the information we hold about you is correct
- Only hold information about you that is important for our work
- Let you look at your tenancy file as soon as possible, but no longer than 10 working days of receiving a request from you; and
- Work within the rules of the Data Protection Act.

## **When you want information from us**

### **We will:**

- Provide information which is useful and easy to understand;
- Write in plain English with no jargon
- Publish information about our services and policies, available free from our office, on our web site or if you ask;
- Send a newsletter to you at least four times a year and an Annual Report once a year;
- Produce other newsletters, when we have any new information to give you; and
- Keep our Website up to date with information; and
- Provide you with a statement of your Rent Account, annually and factoring invoices twice a year for those tenants not in receipt of housing benefit
- Respond to information requests within 20 days, this being more challenging than the 40 days required by Data Protection law.

## **When you report a repair**

### **We will:**

- Provide professional, competent maintenance contractors who will:
  - Be polite, professional and respectful whilst in your home
  - Provide you confirmation of their identity; and
  - Where possible offer a morning or afternoon appointment
- Provide an out-of-hours service by way of an answering machine or by calling an emergency number
- Complete jobs with set times unless agreed otherwise with you:
  - Emergency – within 4 hours
  - Urgent – within 3 working days
  - Routine – within 10 working days
- Operate the Right to Repair
  - Where we fail to do the repairs within the set timescales we will pay compensation

## **When providing information about your payments**

### **We will:**

- Consult with Tenants over annual rent increases
- Give Tenants at least one month to respond to consultations
- Give at least 4 week's written notice before payment amount is changed
- Provide you with a statement of your rent account, factoring account on request
- Offer you a variety of ways to pay your accounts
- Advise you on where to seek advice on Housing Benefit or debt counselling
- Provide you with the opportunity to clear arrears by agreed instalments
- Maximise income from all service users by taking a firm action on arrears

## **What can you do to help us?**

**Your responsibilities to help us achieve these standards include:**

- Being polite when speaking to us
- Paying your rent, service charges and factoring management charges on time
- Taking reasonable care of your home
- Reporting to us any repairs we are responsible for as quickly as possible
- Giving us access to your home to carry out repairs and safety checks
- Repairing things you are responsible for as quickly as possible
- Behaving in a responsible way towards your neighbours and other people
- Keeping an appointment we made with you, or telling us if you can't keep it
- Read the information we send you; and
- Give the information we ask you for, when we need it.
- Give feedback in order that we can improve our services to you

## **Customer Consultation**

Your views are important to us and we encourage you to tell us what you think about our services. We will consult with our customers regarding key policy reviews and matters which affect them and use a variety of methods for consultation such as newsletters, website, surveys, etc. Feedback will be used to improve our service and influence policymaking and results will be published via our quarterly newsletter and on our website.

## **Performance Management**

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

- ◆ Provide you with information (through our quarterly newsletter) on targets we set to improve our efficiency in key areas of our service delivery
- ◆ Continue to use the Investors in People performance management framework and other training opportunities to ensure our staff members are being developed to provide you with the best possible service
- ◆ Be committed to the principle of continuous improvement in the services we deliver to you