

1 INTRODUCTION

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

This policy aims to fulfil the principles outlined in sections GS1.4, GS 3.1 and GS3.2 of the Performance Standards for Registered Social Landlords by Communities Scotland in relation to Service Delivery, which state: “We make the best use of our people and our physical resources to achieve value for money, 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.” And “We provide or secure effective information and advice, in line with the national standards for housing information and advice services.”

2 EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

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

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
- 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 and include:

- Tenants
- Sharing Owners
- Owners
- Housing Applicants
- Members of the Association
- Members of the public
- Contractors
- Consultants
- Local Authorities
- Other Housing Associations
- Communities Scotland
- Lenders

5 CUSTOMER CARE STANDARDS

Contacting Us

When you contact us we will:

- Treat you with dignity and respect at all times.
- 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.
- Do what we say we will and keep you informed at all times.
- Let you know what you can do if we fail.
- All frontline staff will wear their uniforms and name badges.

The Association operates an Absence Management Policy to ensure the availability of staff, even if the requested member of staff is unavailable an alternative staff member will be offered. It is never acceptable to dismiss a customer without offering options.

Office Opening Hours

The Association's office opening hours are as follows:

	AM	PM
Monday	9.00am to 12.30pm	1.30pm to 5.00pm
Tuesday	9.00am to 12.30pm	1.30pm to 5.00pm
Wednesday	Closed for Training	1.30pm to 5.00pm
Thursday	9.00am to 12.30pm	1.30pm to 5.00pm
Friday	9.00am to 12.30pm	1.30pm to 5.00pm

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 of 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.
- Make sure there is interesting and informative information available for you to take away. For example our information leaflets which are displayed in our reception.
- Provide a mini loop system to assist with interviewing deaf and partially hearing customers.

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.

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. 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 to let you know.

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 ???
- 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 within the timescales set out which are ?????
- Not gather excessive information about you.
- 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 home we will:

- Make sure all frontline members of staff visiting your home wear their uniform and name badge.
- Never enter your home uninvited.
- Behave in a professional and courteous manner.
- Always explain the reason for visiting you.
- Let you know what will happen following on the visit.

House visits are normally carried out within office hours; however staff are willing to visit your home outwith these times where necessary.

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 newsletters, focus groups, interested individuals, the Association's website, Residents Surveys, Development Surveys, 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 using one of the methods detailed above.

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.
- Continue to use the Investors in People performance management framework 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.

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 at all times.
- 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

Cordale Housing Association aims to provide a first class service in all aspects of our service delivery. Despite our best efforts, errors and therefore, 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. Its key aim is 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 redress 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.

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.