



Everyone Matters

Listening Locally. Understanding Diversity. Delivering Excellence.



Customer Care Policy: COR-POL-09 – v6.0

Introduction

At Southway Housing Trust we are committed to delivering excellent customer care. As a not-for-profit, community-based housing provider, it is central to our purpose and key to our success.

We are Inspired by our Communities and shape what we do and how we do things around the feedback we receive from our customers. In 2021 we undertook a major programme of engagement where our tenants told us about the things that mattered most to them. In terms of customer care this is: -

Effective communication

- communicating clearly with our tenants and with each other

Good customer access

- making it easier for tenants to contact us

Shaping Services around tenants

- respecting our customers

This customer feedback informs the way we work, our decision making and how we deliver our services. This Customer Care policy sets out the standards that our customers can expect when they access our services.

We measure performance around these standards and are held accountable to them by our Board and tenants.

Our commitment to delivering excellent customer care is reflected within our corporate vision & values.

Vision

Our vision is of **Thriving Communities**.

A thriving community is a place that people are proud of.

Homes are secure and good quality, and the neighbourhood is safe, clean and green.



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People choose to live in a thriving community because it has a sense of place and belonging.

People of all ages can access what they need to have a healthy and fulfilled life.

People look out for each other.

Our Values

The way we do things is determined by our values: We are **Caring, Committed** and we will be **Successful Together**.

OUR CUSTOMER CARE STANDARDS

Whenever and however our customers choose to contact us, we want them to have a good experience.

We have developed customer care standards with the help of our tenants.

Our standards are listed below.

1: Our staff will be friendly and polite, give their name and show you identification when visiting you at home.

- All our staff carry identification cards and will always show you these whenever they visit.
- All our staff will provide their name when they answer the telephone.

2: We will respond to your enquiry as quickly as possible and will always prioritise urgent issues.

- We aim to deal with 90% of enquiries within a single call and performance against this target is measured.
- If you need a written response to your enquiry, (for example, a response to a complaint) this will be issued as quickly as possible and always within 10 working days.

Telephone: We aim to answer calls within 5 minutes and measure performance against this target.



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- As waiting times can vary, the queue position is announced to all customers within the initial greeting so that customers know how long they may have to wait before their call is answered.
- If customers are waiting for 5 minutes or more, they are offered the option of leave a voicemail instead.

Email: We aim to respond to email enquiries within 3 working days. Performance is measured against this target.

- The response time that a customer can expect is included in the acknowledgement email
- This is automatically generated when customers contact us in this way.
- Urgent issues received by email will be prioritised and responded to as quickly as possible

3: If the member of staff you need to speak to is NOT available, we will provide you with a realistic timeframe for a call back.

- We respond to most call backs within 3 working days and performance against this target is measured.
- Urgent issues will always be given a high priority and we will aim to phone you back on the same day.
- As service levels vary, callers will always be provided with a realistic response time.
- Where possible, we will arrange a convenient date and time for you to receive a call back
- Appointments can be arranged where you wish to meet with a specific staff member.

4: We will ask for and respond to feedback, using what you have told us to continuously improve our services

- Following every conversation with our tenants, there is an opportunity to provide feedback



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- We will always try to deliver excellent services, but if we get things wrong, we we'll provide an explanation, say sorry and put things right as quickly as possible.
- We will learn from these mistakes and use this information to improve services. We will share this information via our website and publications under the heading YOU SAID WE DID.

We measure performance around these standards and have an auditable trail of accountability in our systems for every enquiry.

Whilst we will always aim to respond to our customers enquiries as quickly as possible, the speed at which we are able to answer telephone calls, respond to email enquiries or requests for call backs can vary. Our service Levels are affected by factors such as the volume of enquiries, the number of staff we have available or other external issues such as delays in materials.

We will always aim to provide an excellent service and respond to customers in the way that they wish to be treated.

We aim to improve our standards in areas where our customers tell us we could do better. These standards will be reviewed again in November 2023