



CUSTOMER
 SERVICE
 STANDARDS

“What you can expect from us”

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We can provide translations of this document in various languages (using a translation service). We can also provide this document in different formats. If you would like a copy of this document in another language, in larger print, in Easy Read, in an audio format, on video in British Sign Language (BSL), on CD or in Braille, please ask us.



SECTION 1 - INTRODUCTION

Maryhill Housing Association is committed to providing an efficient and caring service and trains all staff to enable them to deliver a top quality service to tenants and factored owners.

We aim to meet all our customers' needs and wishes, and we will consult you regularly to make sure that we can listen and respond to our customer's needs.

This leaflet sets out the standards of customer care that every customer of Maryhill Housing Association can expect. Please note, we also report our performance against the Scottish Social Housing Charter to our customers.

How to contact us:

- Call our office on **0141 946 266**
- Phone our out of hours emergency repairs line on **0800 595 595**
- Visit our offices between 9am and 5pm, Monday to Friday at:
**45 Garrioch Road Maryhill or
29 Glenavon Road North Maryhill**
- Online at **www.maryhill.org.uk**
- Email: **enquiries@maryhill.org.uk**



SECTION 2 - COMMUNICATION

When you phone our staff will:

- Answer calls promptly Monday – Friday between the hours of 9am and 5pm
- Provide an alternative contact or facility to leave a message for all calls outwith these times (including if the office is closed for staff training)
- Respond to all out-of-hours telephone messages on our next working day
- Provide accurate information in response to all enquiries
- Make an appointment with a relevant staff member at a mutually agreed time
- Make sure that someone will always take responsibility to follow up and deal with your enquiry if it cannot be answered first time
- Keep you informed of the progress of your enquiry
- Provide a polite, friendly and informative service
- Arrange translation services where appropriate

When you write:

- We will respond within 5 working days or, for more complex items, we will acknowledge receipt and advise you of the progress of your enquiry. (For more complex enquiries we would aim to resolve these within 20 working days)
- We will reply in plain language
- We will reply in your preferred language where possible; if that is not English and you have told us your preference
- Acknowledge general e-mail enquiries received during normal working hours, and for those received out of hours, within one working day

When a member of Maryhill staff visits you in your home, staff will:

- Be punctual, arrive at the agreed time and contact you if we expect to be delayed
- Introduce themselves, present identification to you, and confirm their position
- Treat you with courtesy and patience
- Treat all information you give as confidential
- Any follow-up action required will be arranged within a reasonable time and you will be told about progress

When a member of staff visits you in your home, we ask that you:

- Keep the agreed appointment and let us know in advance if you need to change
- Treat staff with courtesy and respect
- Conduct yourself in an appropriate manner and don't use offensive or threatening language
- Be patient and allow staff time to understand your circumstances and explain what is going to happen next
- Kindly refrain from smoking during the visit

SECTION 3 - APPLYING FOR A HOME

We will:

- Offer different ways to get an application form, for example you can telephone us, download a form from our website or call into one of our offices
- Provide assistance in our office or over the phone if you are having difficulty completing a housing application form
- Process your form within 10 working days of receiving it and let you know in writing the number of points you have been awarded
- Provide you with information on how our points system works and your right of appeal
- Provide you with information on where we let houses during the previous year, to give you an idea of where our vacancies are more likely to occur
- Contact you once a year to confirm that you are still in need of housing and if there have been any changes to your circumstances
- Give you information about your new home when we offer you a property, including the rent and any service charges to help you make a decision about accepting it
- Ask you to view a property before asking you to sign a tenancy agreement and explain the conditions of tenancy
- Assess your situation & advise you on homelessness where appropriate
- Allow 2 working days to consider an offer of accommodation

In return we ask that you:

- Complete your housing application as fully as you can
- Tell us about any changes in your circumstances, for example if you move to a different address or find a suitable house elsewhere
- Return your annual review promptly to ensure that you remain on the waiting list
- Give us good clear reasons for refusing any offer of housing we make to you
- Provide additional information requested promptly.
- Let us know in 2 working days if you want to accept or reject your offer of accommodation

When we offer you a home, we will:

- Provide you with two sets of keys
- Explain your rights and responsibilities as set out in your Tenancy Agreement
- Describe the standard of accommodation you should expect to receive when you move in
- Carry out an accompanied viewing with you and show you how to operate the appliances in your new home
- Provide information on the services we can offer, including money and welfare rights advice
- Tell you who your Housing Officer will be and provide you with their contact details
- Tell you about your local Residents Association (where applicable) and give you details of when and where they meet

SECTION 4 - PAYING YOUR RENT



We will:

- **Offer you a choice of ways to pay your rent including:**
 - At any Allpay pay point or by phone: 0844 5 578 321
 - Online: www.allpayments.net
 - At any Post Office
 - Direct Debit
 - Standing Order
 - In our office by Chip & Pin machine
- Provide you with advice on welfare benefit, household budgeting and personal financial issues; including help
- Advise you promptly of any rent arrears on your rent account and work with you to help resolve the matter
- Advise you at least 28 days in advance if there will be any changes to your rent or service charge
- Provide you with a statement of your rent account every 3 months or within 2 working days of receiving a request
- Promote access to money and welfare rights advice services
- Encourage you to maintain regular contact with our staff should you fall into arrears
- Visit you at your home where necessary to provide relevant assistance with any issues
- Consider eviction as a last resort

In return we ask that you:

- Pay your rent on time
- Get in touch with us if you have difficulty paying your rent
- Check your rent statement when you receive it and let us know if you think it is wrong
- Keep any claims that you have made for Housing Benefit up to date
- Let us know of any changes in your circumstance which could affect your entitlement to Housing Benefit, for example if you start working or if a partner moves in

SECTION 5 - REPAIRS & MAINTENANCE



When you report a repair we will tell you what category it falls into and the target time for us to respond:

- Emergency – within 4 hours and where there is a serious risk to tenant or property. Examples, gas leaks, serious electrical faults. Also, where a 3 – 5 day wait is too long. eg. heating breakdowns in winter where no other source of heat is available
- Urgent – within 3 working days. Where possible we will offer a morning or afternoon appointment for the repair to be completed: e.g. plumbing or roof leaks
- Routine – within 10 working days. If we need to pre inspect a repair we will do so within 5 working days
- Programmed – we will group together certain types of non urgent jobs and tackle them as part of a programme and provide at least 20 days notice: e.g. replacement kitchens
- Provide an emergency repairs service 24 hours a day, 365 days a year
- **Offer a range of ways you can report a repairs to us:**
 - In person at our offices
 - Directly to our staff
 - By letter
 - By telephone during office hours on: 0141 946 2466 outwith office hours, emergency repairs should be reported on: 0800 595 595.
 - Online through our website

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SECTION 5 - REPAIRS & MAINTENANCE (CONTINUED)

We will:

- Provide smoke detectors to all houses
- Inspect and service gas heating appliances every year
- Keep your building in a good condition by repainting the outside windows, doors and shared areas as and when necessary
- Consult you when major work is to be carried out within our planned maintenance programme
- Ask you how satisfied you are with any maintenance completed and use the information to improve our service

Right to Repair

Scottish secure tenants and short Scottish secure tenants have the right to have small urgent repairs carried out by their landlord within a given timescale. The scheme covers certain repairs up to the value of £350. These 'qualifying repairs' are those that might affect your health, safety or security and need to be done quickly, such as heating repairs or water penetrating into your house.

If we do not start the repair within the legal maximum time scale, you can instruct one of our 'approved contractors' to carry out the repair. Contact the office for details on this scheme.



Right to Compensation for Improvements

Maryhill Housing Association welcomes tenants who want to make improvements to their home although, permission to do so is subject to certain conditions. This scheme is covered by the Housing (Scotland) Act

2001 and means you may be entitled to compensation for certain improvements you made to your home when you move out. Contact the office for more details on this scheme.

When you report a repair:

- You will be told what priority your repair is, whether it is covered by the Right to Repair Scheme and give you a timescale for completion of the work
- We will tell you (wherever possible) if your repair may be a rechargeable repair
- We will re-connect and test all services such as water, gas and electricity as soon as possible and wherever practical at the end of the working day
- If required, offer a portable heater if your central heating breaks down and it cannot be repaired the same day
- Remove any repair rubbish from outside your home within one working day
- Ask you if you are satisfied with your repair

SECTION 5 - REPAIRS & MAINTENANCE (CONTINUED)



PLANNED MAINTENANCE

We will:

- Consider the need for providing welfare facilities during disruptive works
- Review the programme of planned works annually and discuss with Registered Tenants Organisations prior to approval by Maryhill Housing Association.
- Provide you with clear information on any impending major repairs
- Give you a minimum of 20 days notice before carrying out any planned internal works to your home which may cause disruption, for instance installing central heating and 14 days for any external work such as re roofing of your property
- Give you a named officer to deal with customer queries on all contracts
- Consult with you and give you a choice of fittings where possible, when installing new kitchens, bathrooms etc
- Ensure that every contractor who carries out work on our behalf will ensure to put the customer first, provide a consistent high quality service and ensure the tenant knows what to expect (including level of disruption) when the contractor is in their home
- Agree the level of decoration allowance that you may be entitled to, where applicable

In return we ask that you:

- Carry out internal decoration to your home as required and ensure your home is kept in clean and tidy condition
- Carry out the minor repairs that you are responsible for e.g. cracked toilet seats or other minor fixtures and fittings
- Ask our permission before making any changes to your home
- Keep any appointments you have agreed with our contractors or surveyors. Give us as much notice as possible if you are not able to keep the appointment
- Repair any damage you, your family or visitors have caused. If we have to repair the damage we will have to charge you

SECTION 6 - MANAGING YOUR NEIGHBOURHOOD

We will:

- Visit you in your home within 4 weeks of moving in
- Respond to any concerns you may have with our estate management services within 2 working days
- Consult you about any proposed changes to the services provided in the communal areas
- Let you know when we will carry out the annual inspection of your estate and invite you to join us in inspecting the estate
- Carry out regular estate inspections to gardens and common areas and spaces, including footpaths, taking appropriate remedial action where required
- Remove all racist or offensive graffiti on estates within 24 hours of being told of it and other graffiti with 5 working days
- Notify tenants and residents whose gardens are untidy to remind them of their agreement to maintain their gardens
- Provide you with updates on actions required following the annual estate inspection
- Let our homes in a way that promotes balanced and sustainable communities, whilst taking account of the legal framework which governs the allocation of social housing
- Meet regularly with customers via residents groups to discuss the issues that are important to you
- Develop Estate Action Plans and take part in estate walkabouts with residents as required
- Advise you how long repairs and maintenance issues are likely to take



In return we ask that you:

- Take a pride in your estate and pick up your litter and dog fouling where appropriate
- Do not keep a dog if you live in one of our multi storey properties
- Contact us promptly if you have any concerns about the estate management services
- Report any maintenance required in communal areas
- Report any incidents of vandalism on your estate
- Ensure that your garden and the external area around your home is maintained to a clean and tidy standard
- Park considerately where car parking is provided and consider your neighbours at all times
- Reporting problems such as abandoned vehicles, litter or rubbish dumping to Glasgow City Council quickly. You can report illegal dumping by phoning GCC on: 0800 027 7027

SECTION 7 - DEALING WITH NEIGHBOUR DISPUTES & ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR



We will:

- Treat every complaint seriously and impartially
- Ensure that when new tenants sign their Tenancy Agreement they are aware of their responsibility to keep to the terms of the agreement, to treat others with respect and to be a good neighbour
- Visit all new tenants within 4 weeks of them moving into their home to discuss and deal with any concerns as well as reinforcing the good neighbour message
- Respond to reports of anti-social behaviour within 1 working day, and reports of neighbour nuisance within 3 working days, in line with our Anti-Social Behaviour Policy
- Keep anyone reporting an issue informed at all stages of the investigation
- Use a range of measures to deal with anti-social behaviour, disputes or harassment. e.g. home visits. Acceptable Behaviour Contracts, mediation and legal action as appropriate. This includes using expert third party organisations where required
- Liaise where necessary with agencies such as the police, social work or Glasgow Community Safety Services to bring cases reported to us to a satisfactory conclusion
- Offer mediation services to tenants in dispute, where this is appropriate

In return we ask that you:

- Act in a considerate and reasonable way towards your neighbours and make sure that members of your family and visitors do the same
- Continue to report incidents to the Police and to the Housing Association
- Keep a diary of incidents if we need you to collect evidence

SECTION 8 - INVOLVING CUSTOMERS



We will:

- Offer a range of ways and opportunities for tenants to become involved in the planning, delivery and monitoring of all our key services: including our Tenant Scrutiny Group
- Give customers information on the Registered Tenants Organisations in their area (if there is one) and encourage them to become involved
- Continue to look for new and different ways for customers to become involved in the Association
- Consult with the customers who have expressed an interest in giving us their views in particular areas, taking their views into account
- Consult all customers on issues which affect their homes and local area, taking their views into account
- Consult customers regularly on their satisfaction with our key services and use the feedback to improve our services
- Carry out a customer satisfaction survey every 3 years with all our tenants and send them a summary of the results
- Publish the results of our customer satisfaction survey and an action plan to address any issues in the tenants' newsletter
- Provide appropriate funding and support to tenants' groups
- Meet with Registered Tenant Groups
- Hold a residents' conference every year
- Encourage customers to join our board of management

In return we ask that you:

- Get in touch if you want to know how you can become more involved
- Let us know if you have any good ideas how to get other tenants involved!
- Let us know what you think we could do to improve our services
- Consider getting involved in your local group
- Tell us if something is stopping you from getting involved in your local group

SECTION 9 . RECOGNISING EQUALITY & DIVERSITY



We will make sure:

- That the services we provide are fair and free from discrimination and provide them in a way that recognises that everybody is different, with different needs and aspirations
- All our staff work in line with our Equality & Diversity Policy
- Our offices are accessible to anyone with a disability
- Written information is available in alternative formats such as large print, audio formats and Braille on request
- Translation services and interpreters are available when required
- The Equal Opportunity information that you give us is used to develop and deliver our services

In return we ask that you:

- Contact us if you need help to understand any information we send you
- Tell us about any help you may need to access our services

SECTION 10 - CONFIDENTIALITY



We will make sure:

- Ensure that all information about customers or applicants is kept strictly confidential
- Provide you with access to the information we hold about you on request. There will be an administrative charge for this
- Reserve the right to withhold information that is confidential, may refer to a third party and may be detrimental to the third party
- Not pass information about you on to other agencies without your permission, unless there is a legal requirement to do so

In return we ask that you:

- Give at least 20 working days notice if you wish to access the information we hold about you

SECTION 11 - FEEDBACK & COMPLAINTS

We will:

- Aim to resolve front line (Stage 1) complaints within 5 working days
- Deal with Stage 2 complaints quickly and effectively in line with our Complaints Policy (20 working days)
- Let our staff know of any compliments you may have about them or the service we provide
- Monitor our complaints and use the learning outcomes to improve our services



In return we ask that you:

- Let us know when you are unhappy with our services and tell us what you believe we should do to help resolve your issue
- Let us know when we have given you excellent service
- Only contact the Scottish Public Sector Ombudsman having exhausted our complaints procedure

If our investigation is going to take longer than 20 working days, we will tell you and agree revised time limits with you.

After we have fully investigated, if you are still dis-satisfied with our decision or the way we dealt with your complaint, you can ask the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO) to look at it.

CONTACT DETAILS FOR SPSO:

Freephone advice line **0800 377 7330**

Advice line (if calling from outside the UK) **0131 225 5300**

Online form **www.spsso.org.uk/online-contact**

In person **4 Melville Street, Edinburgh, EH3 7NS** (see a map)

By post **FREEPOST EH641, Edinburgh, EH3 0BR**

Fax **0800 377 7331**

SPSO Scottish
Public
Services
Ombudsman



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