

BCHA CUSTOMER SERVICE POLICY

1. INTRODUCTION

We want to make sure that customers are top of our agenda and that we are committed to providing excellent services to all in an efficient, effective and economic way. Our customers include anyone who uses our services or who is affected by our decisions.

This customer service policy and our customer service strategy sets out what our commitment means in practice, what our customers can expect from us and what we expect of our customers.

Different services that we provide will have different customers but it is important that all are treated to the same high quality response. This policy and the standards within it and our strategy apply to everyone.

When our customers express any level of dissatisfaction with any of our services we will welcome and value the opportunity to address their concerns and continually learn from them. We aim to resolve their complaint as quickly and effectively as possible and this will assist us to identify any weaknesses in our service delivery areas, improve service delivery and thus improve our customer satisfaction.

BCHA is a member of the Independent Housing Ombudsman Scheme.

2. AIM

The aim of this policy is to establish guidelines for setting levels of customer service, monitoring performance, measuring customer satisfaction and dealing with complaints, comments and compliments. We aim to make clear our objectives and commitment to provide excellent services that offer value for money.

It is important that customers know what to expect from us in terms of service so that they can measure whether we are successful or not.

We provide a wide range of services and employ a number of staff. It is important that all of our staff understand and deliver the same high quality service irrespective of their role within BCHA.

Complaints dealt with under this policy will relate only to services we or our contractors deliver. It will not be used for complaints relating to tenancy matters for example complaints of nuisance or anti social behaviour; these will be dealt with in accordance to policies specific to those areas.

Claims for compensation payments will be dealt with as set out in our Compensation Policy.

3. SCOPE

This policy will affect all BCHA customers including tenants and their families, Beechdale residents including leaseholders, other landlords' tenants and homeowners. It will also

affect prospective BCHA tenants, our employees, Board and prospective Board members, contractors, other stakeholders and external agencies.

4. KEY PRINCIPLES

We are committed to delivering excellent services that meet customers' needs and to continually improving those services.

We promise to:

- Act in a professional manner and be polite at all times
- Deal with enquiries promptly or explain the reason for any delay
- Listen to customers and seek their views
- Keep our promises
- Be open and honest and explain our decisions
- Apologise when we make a mistake and put things right
- Accept customers' right to complain and guarantee a full investigation and considered response
- Treat customers and their homes with respect
- Collect profiling information from our tenants to determine their age, ethnicity, religion and other factors. We will use this information to understand customers' needs and to recognise that different customers have different needs and/or preferences.
- Tailor services in accordance to customers' specific needs/preferences
- Remove any barriers as appropriate that prevent customers from accessing our services.

5. RESPONSIBILITY AND LEARNING

The Board of BCHA has ultimate responsibility for customer service, ensuring that statutory and regulatory obligations are met and actively promoting excellent customer service irrespective of all our activities.

The Senior Management Team are responsible for developing the organisational culture in which this policy can operate effectively and ensuring that it is implemented.

The Operations Manager is the lead officer for the service and will ensure that all staff seek to deliver excellent customer service.

Managers and Team Leaders must recognise their responsibility to ensure the principles of this policy are implemented in all the work of their teams.

All employees are responsible for ensuring the policy is incorporated into their working practices.

We will ensure that all staff are aware of this policy and related procedures, are trained in its implementation and know where to direct customers and/or how to deal with complaints.

6. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

When dealing with complaints and delivering this policy we will be fair and accountable, ensuring that no individual is unjustifiably discriminated against on the basis of their

gender, race, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religious or political beliefs, disability (physical, mental or learning), marital or civil partnership status, social background, family circumstance, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, spent criminal convictions, age or for any other reason.

We will when requested make arrangements for this policy to be available in large print or on tape, will make arrangements for translation to assist an individual whose first language is not English or to talk through the policy with anyone who asks for help.

7. MONITORING AND REVIEW

We will maintain an accurate database to record all formal and informal compliments, comments and complaints. We will use this database to monitor outcomes, improvements to services, customer satisfaction and trends.

We will establish performance targets for all our service areas, including customer satisfaction, and will monitor our performance against those targets. We will regularly report on these targets to our Board of Management and publish them to customers.

An annual report dealing with our performance against our targets will be published and be available to all our tenants and other interested bodies for example, our funders and regulator.

We will monitor complaints to ensure we learn from our mistakes.

We will publicise our customer standards, monitor our performance against them and test our services by use of Tenant Auditor mystery shopping.

We will work with customers by means of service interest groups, Tenant Forum and any other appropriate means to ensure that services are shaped by users.

Train and support our staff in providing customer care.

Conduct a comprehensive satisfaction survey to all tenants at least once every three years.

This policy will be formally reviewed on a three yearly basis, or earlier in response to service demands and good practice guidelines. This policy is due for review in June 2012.

8. OTHER RELATED POLICIES/DOCUMENTS

Customer Service Strategy
Customer Service Improvement Plan (SIP)
Tenant Compensation Policy
Equal Opportunities and Diversity Policy
Resident Involvement Policy and Strategy
Data Protection Policy
Communications Policy
Continuity and Openness Policy