

Customer Service Standards – Housing Rents

Our Corporate Customer Care Standards are:

We aim to deliver the following standards (and any other customer care standards that we are legally obliged to follow) whenever and however you contact us. This includes services that may be provided by us, or by another partner or agency on our behalf. We aim to try to ensure that partners and other agencies also deliver services to a similar high standard. We will measure our performance against these standards and take action if necessary.

We want to:

- Be polite and treat you with courtesy, fairness, honesty and respect
- Make sure that services are accessible to everyone
- Listen to you carefully and use plain English when we speak or write to you
- Explain our decisions and the reasons for them
- Respect confidentiality

We will do our best to provide services and information in ways that make them accessible for everyone, including the provision of:

- An interpreter face to face or over the phone, including a British Sign Language (BSL) interpreter.
- Information in a number of formats on request - for example, audio tape, Braille, large print or an appropriate language – as quickly as possible.
- A text phone (minicom) number.
- Public meetings in accessible venues and the use of an induction loop or other suitable system for deaf and hard of hearing people.
- Our aim is to have contact details provided in all our published documents.

If you contact us by telephone:

- We will aim to answer your call within 15 seconds and if your call is in a queue we will try to keep you informed by recorded messages while you wait.
- We will greet you courteously and let you know which service you are through to.
- Whenever possible, a member of staff will deal with your telephone enquiry during the normal working hours of the office or service you are calling (these vary - check our website at uttlesford.gov.uk).

- If a person is not available, we will use voice mail and check these regularly so that we can respond within 24 hours.
- If we have to pass on your call, we will try to make sure it goes to the right person and we will explain your call to them before we pass it on.
- We will take any messages with care and hand them on with out delay.
- We will try to give you a full answer to your telephone enquiry immediately, or respond fully within 3 working days. If we can't answer you fully within that timescale, we will give you the name and telephone number of the person who is dealing with your enquiry and the date by which we hope to give you a full answer. Mostly we expect to give a full answer to enquiries no more than 10 working days after you contact us. Should it take longer than 10 days to resolve your enquiry, we will keep you informed of progress.
- When we telephone you, we will give you our name, tell you we are calling from Uttlesford District Council and explain clearly why we are phoning.

If you contact us by letter, e-mail, text phone (minicom) or fax:

- Letter or fax - we will try to give you a full answer as soon as possible. This should be no more than 10 working days after you contact us. If you can give us a phone number or e-mail address to respond to, it could help to speed up our reply email or text phone - we will try to give you a full answer as
- soon as possible. This should be no more than 5 working days after you contact us.
- If we can't answer you fully within those timescales, we will let you know we are dealing with your query and give you the name and telephone number of the person who is doing this.
- There will be some circumstances when we are not able to give you a full answer in 10 working days - for example with some complex enquiries or where we need to make a visit or request information from someone else. If so, we will keep
- you informed of what we are doing, including the date by which we hope to give you a full answer.
- We will use plain English and printed text in typeface Arial 12 point size or larger in our letters, emails and faxes.

If you visit us:

- We aim to see you within 5 minutes of your appointment time. It is very helpful if you arrive a few minutes early and let us know if you are delayed or have to cancel.
- If we are delayed, we will explain why, tell you how long you may have to wait and give you the option of coming back on an alternative day and time.
- We will provide a clean, tidy and comfortable waiting area, with information about our services and, where possible, facilities for children.

- Whenever possible, we will provide a place to discuss matters in private, if you wish.

If we visit you:

- We will normally agree a time with you in advance and if not, we will be happy to return at another time if our visit is not convenient. If necessary, we will let you know as early as possible if we are delayed or have to cancel the visit.
- We will say who we are, where we come from and why we are calling. We will show you our identity card before you invite us in.
- We will give you the opportunity to make a phone call to check our identity before we come in. (Please do not let any one into your home unless you know them or have checked their identity).

Housing Rents

About your rent

- Statements of your rent account will be issued at least two time a year
- we will advise you in writing of any change in your gross rent at least 28 days before any change is implemented.
- We will keep you informed of any changes to the service that will affect you.
- We will work with you to improve the rent service by monitoring your comments, compliments and complaints.
- If you request a home visit to discuss your rent, we will arrange to see you within two working days.
- If for any reason we cannot keep an appointment with you we will rearrange an alternative appointment straight away.
- We will offer help and advice on debt management and benefits if you get into difficulty with paying your rent.
- We will provide a range of payment methods to make it easier for you to pay.

Contact Details

Uttlesford District Council
Housing Services Department
Council Offices
London Road
Saffron Walden
Essex
CB11 4ER

Tel: 01799 510510

Fax: 01799 510550
Minicom: 01799 510429
Email: housingrents@uttlesford.gov.uk
uconnect@uttlesford.gov.uk
Website: www.uttlesford.gov.uk