



**Plymouth Community Homes
Customer Service Standards
June 2017**

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Plymouth Community Homes Customer Charter:

Introduction

Everyone at Plymouth Community Homes is committed to:

Work for ***Plymouth***
Strengthen each ***Community*** and
Improve the quality and services in your ***Homes***

To achieve this vision we have developed a customer charter and set of customer service standards in consultation with our residents.

These standards are about meeting the needs and expectations of you, our customers, and creating a service of which we can be proud.

We will provide fair, equitable and consistent delivery across all our services whilst recognising the diverse needs of our customers.

Our aim is to be a 'best in class' performer, be customer focused and provide value for money.

The service standards that we have set out will be monitored, recorded and reported on. We will use this information to assess how well we are meeting our commitments and to improve on areas that do not deliver our customers' expectations.

The Charter will initially cover three key areas:

- Communicating with you
- Accessing Our Services and Keeping you Informed
- Fairness and Equality

Through the work of our Continuous Improvement Groups, we will expand the services covered under this Charter.

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Communicating with you

- We will respond to all enquiries within 3 working days. If you make a complaint we will give a full written response within 10 working days.
- We will answer any social media / Facebook queries within our office hours.
- We aim to respond to Text messages within 48 working hours.

- We will only use voicemail when necessary and messages will be personalised. We will call you back within 1 working day.
- All written correspondence from us will have a named contact with their email address and telephone number on it.
- We aim to answer all telephone calls within 6 rings and our staff will always offer you their name.
- We will greet you promptly and deal with you courteously.
- We will listen to you and we will make sure we identify the correct person to deal with your enquiry.
- If you call at our offices and wish to discuss something privately, we will offer you an interview room. If no room is available, we will try to make an alternative arrangement at that time or offer an alternative appointment within our business hours.
- If you request a home visit, we will arrange this at a time that is convenient to you within our business hours.

Accessing our Services and Keeping you Informed

- We will clearly display our office opening times.
- When visiting our offices, we will not keep you waiting for more than 10 minutes, or 5 minutes where an appointment has been made.
- We will ensure that our offices have easy access for prams, pushchairs, wheelchairs and for people with mobility difficulties. We will provide induction loops to communicate with hearing-impaired customers.
- So you can access our services with ease, we will provide a list of low-cost and local telephone numbers for services, and departmental email addresses.
- We will clearly display our customer service charter in all of our offices and on our website.
- Staff and contractors working on our behalf will introduce themselves clearly and will carry and clearly display identity cards when they call at your home.
- We will send you a quarterly newsletter with news, views and information about our services.

- We will carry out follow-up surveys of users across our services. Information will be fed back and used for service reviews.

Fairness and Equality

- Our staff will treat all customers equally and with respect.
- We will provide support for customers with learning, language, sight or hearing difficulties.
- We will, with your consent, ask you for details about your age, ethnicity, gender, religion, sexual orientation and whether you have a disability to ensure that our services take account of you as an individual.
- We will ensure that our Board, Committees and staff understand the diverse needs of our customers and use this information when planning and delivering our services.
- We will continue to provide a variety of consultation opportunities so that all of our customers can have a say in determining our services.
- We will challenge and review our services to make sure they are fair and equitable.
- We will challenge and act on all kinds of harassment, hate crime, and domestic violence with partnership agencies.
- We will provide or recommend support to help customers manage their tenancies.

Service Standards – Your New Home

Plymouth Community Homes is committed to providing you with the highest quality of service and this is why we're telling you about what you can expect from us whether you are moving into one of our homes for the first time or whether you are existing customer who is moving to another home.

Advertising our Homes

- We will publish information about available homes using the following:
 - Devon Home Choice website;
 - At all Plymouth Community Homes' offices;
 - Gumtree
- All adverts will contain the following information about our available homes:
 - A photograph of the home;
 - Address, number of bedrooms and the type of property;
- All properties will be advertised until they are under offer or until they are accepted by the new resident.

Keeping you Informed

- When you make a successful bid for home, we will usually contact you to let you know within 3 working days after the advert has closed.
- We will arrange for you to view the property, usually before it is ready
- We will arrange for you to have a Pre Tenancy Assessment/Home Visit to be conducted as part of the allocation process
- We will write to you to confirm a provisional offer
- We will arrange a time and date for you to collect the keys to the property.
- Once you have moved in, we will contact you within 5 working days to check that everything is to your satisfaction.
- We will also arrange a home-visit within 4 weeks following the date you moved in so we can check that you are settling into your new home.

Signing Your Tenancy and Moving In

- When you sign your tenancy, we will provide you with a signed copy of your tenancy agreement.
- We will hand you all keys we hold for your home, which you will be asked to sign for.
- We will accompany you on sign up to your home before you move in which will include:
 - Demonstrating how to use the heating in your home;
 - Location of the stopcock;
 - A final check if any further repairs are required. If repairs are necessary, the officer accompanying you will ensure these repairs are booked for you.
- We will leave the following in your home when we sign it over to you:
 - A property information pack which will include:
 - a name and contact number for your housing officer;
 - a list of important contact telephone numbers including our emergency out-of-hours repair number;
 - details of the gas and electricity suppliers for your home
 - Details of any follow-up repairs and a dedicated contact number if you experience any problems with your home in the first two weeks of your tenancy.
 - A welcome pack containing basic items to help you on your first day in your new home such as tea, coffee, milk and sugar plus basic cleaning materials.
- When you move into your new home, it will meet our lettings standard. The property will be clean and all wall surfaces will be ready for future re-decoration, if you should wish to.
- We will ask you for feedback on your experience with getting a new home with Plymouth Community Homes within 12 months of you moving in.

Service Standards – Living In Your Neighbourhood

We aim to provide a quality neighbourhood service to enable you to live in a safe, secure and pleasing environment.

We will:

Environmental Services

- Keep communal areas clean, tidy and free of litter.
 - Complete bi-annual supervised checks in accordance with the Housemark Caretaking & Cleaning Standards methodology
- Keep all communal services for security and lighting in good working order.
 - Complete bi-annual supervised checks in accordance with Housemark Caretaking & Cleaning Standards methodology.
- Ensure that each resident is informed of the Rangers' role and how frequent these services are provided.
 - A list of duties to be completed by the Ranger will be sent to every resident in each block, the service provision will vary block to block
- Consult with all residents on changes to service or charging.
 - Consult in a variety of ways on changes to services or charging

Estate Inspection

- Complete regular inspection of your neighbourhood, in conjunction with residents.
 - A timetable of inspections will be recorded on our internal system.
- Publicise all actions taken following the inspections.
 - Actions published via PCH News, website and PCH offices.
- Take action against residents or visitors who do not respect your neighbourhood.
 - Publicise all legal actions taken against tenancies in PCH News & website

Anti-Social Behaviour

- Set clear guidelines for responding to the differing levels of anti-social behaviour.
 - Print guidelines for residents on how PCH will deal with incidents of anti-social behaviour.
- Treat all contacts with respect and confidentiality.
 - Provide a robust monitoring and reporting system to record incidents of anti-social behaviour.
- Provide updates at agreed timescales to residents until the issues are resolved.
 - Provide a robust monitoring and reporting system to record incidents of anti-social behaviour.
- Inform residents how they can report incidents.
 - Print guidelines for residents on how PCH will deal with incidents of anti-social behaviour
- Work towards a full 24 hour response helpline.
 - We will provide a system whereby residents can report ASB outside of normal working hours

Environmental Improvements

- Consult with residents to identify and prioritise improvements to their neighbourhoods.
 - Carry out consultation through resident open days on targeted service areas
- Ensure that the improvements are co-ordinated with the estate inspection programme.
 - Involve residents in all estate inspections
- Ensure that each project provides benefit for the whole neighbourhood.
 - Publish details of which neighbourhoods have had projects completed in PCH News and website

Resident Involvement

- Have lots of ways to be involved and ensure that everyone who wants to be involved can be.
- Tell you what has changed as a result of involvement.
 - Publish stories of changes through PCH News & website.
- Promote and publicise all aspects of Resident Involvement.

- We will ensure that we continue to be inclusive and representative.
 - We want all residents to be involved regardless of age, ability, working status, family commitments or background.

Service Standards – Living In Your Home

- We will let you know who your Housing Officer is and how they can help you with managing your tenancy.
- All offices will open at their published times, which will be clearly displayed.
- You may use any office to make enquiries in relation to your tenancy, regardless of where you live.
- We will provide you with a well-maintained home and give you a professional repairs service.
- We will investigate any breaches of tenancy agreement reported to us.