

## Pentland Housing Group

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<b>Website</b>	No
<b>Secure Area of Website</b>	No

## CUSTOMER SERVICE CHARTER

At Pentland Housing Association our aim is to provide:

- Professional services that are easy for you to use
- Information and support you need, when you need it
- High quality and affordable services
- A partnership approach with other organizations
- Courtesy and respect when dealing with your enquiries
- A fair service that provides equal access and treats all members of our community appropriately
- A confidential service and interview rooms if requested
- Choices on how and when to contact us
- A consultation process that listens to and takes into account your views
- An easy to understand complaints service when things go wrong
- Well trained and motivated staff

From these core values there are a range of service standards that we hope to achieve. These are as follows:

**If you telephone us:**

We will:

- Respond to telephone messages within 2 working days.
- Provide the name of the person answering the call.
- Tell you who will be dealing with your enquiry

**If you send us letters and emails:**

We will:

- Respond to or acknowledge your letter or email within 5 working days.
- If we cannot respond fully within 5 working days, we will either send you a holding reply or telephone you back and explain why.
- We will write to you using plain English.

**Our offices:**

We will open our offices between the core hours of 9am to 5pm Mondays to Fridays, except on public holidays.

- We will publicise when our opening times change
- Outside our opening times, we will provide a telephone service for emergency repairs.
- We will make sure that our offices contain up-to-date information about our services and other services available in the local community.
- We will provide offices that are as accessible for people with disabilities.

#### If you make an appointment to see us:

We will:

- Make an appointment and see you within 5 working days of your request.
- Make the appointment at a time to suit you, and if appropriate, out of office hours.
- Notify you as soon as possible if we cannot keep the appointment.
- Try to arrange for a signer, interpreter or translator if you need this, provided you let us know before your appointment.

#### If you come to the office:

We will:

- See you within 5 minutes of your appointment time. If you do not have an appointment we will endeavour to see you within 20 minutes.
- Offer you an interview room if you request it.

#### If we visit you at home:

We will:

- Be on time, or, if delayed, call you to let you know when we will arrive.
- Leave a card if you are out.
- Respect your home and all reasonable customs.
- Show you suitable identification.

#### If you order a repair:

We will:

- Send you written confirmation of your repair order, containing the contractor's name and a maximum time in which the repair should be completed.
- Send you a customer satisfaction questionnaire.
- Carry out the repair according to the following time scale:
  - Emergency repairs = 24 hours
  - Urgent repairs = within 2 working days
  - Routine repairs = within 10 working month
  - Garage Repairs = within 21 working days

Further information about the types of repair covered by the above time scales can be found in your tenant's handbook.

**If we send a contractor to carry out a repair:**

If we send a contractor to carry out the repair, the contractor will usually:

- Ring you if the appointment cannot be kept, and arrange a suitable alternative time.
- Leave a calling card if you are not home.
- Wear suitable identification when visiting your home.
- Respect your home and all reasonable customs.

**Your rent:**

We will:

- Provide you with a rent statement at the end of every quarter.
- Provide you with a rent statement within 3 working days of your request.

**If you have rent arrears:**

We will:

- Take prompt action to deal with arrears, for the benefit of all our residents.
- Give you an opportunity to make an agreement to clear your arrears before serving Notice on you.

**When we let properties:**

We will:

- Aim to let our empty homes within 4 weeks.
- Prepare properties to a 'Lettable Standard' including safety checks to all services when they become vacant.
- Ensure the property is clean and tidy when you move in.
- Provide you with a decoration allowance, in accordance with our Decorations Policy.
- Explain the conditions of tenancy to you before you sign your tenancy agreement. We will also give you a copy of our tenant's handbook.
- Visit you in your new home within 6 weeks of you moving in.
- Offer vulnerable tenants resettlement and support services by working with our partners.

**If you want to move home:**

We will:

- Be clear about your realistic chances of moving.
- Give you details of Mutual Exchanges and other schemes to swap homes.

- Tell you the points you have been awarded if your application is accepted.
- Respond to any changes in your circumstances within 10 working days.
- Visit you before making an offer, to ensure you have kept your home in good repair.
- Advise you of any repairs that you are responsible for and must carry out before we agree to transfer you.
- Process your application for Mutual Exchange within 28 days.
- Forward medical assessments to medical advisors within 5 working days.

#### When we deal with anti-social behaviour:

We will:

- Treat all reports of anti-social behaviour seriously and confidentially.
- Deal with incidents in accordance with our policy and procedure.
- Adopt a victim-centred approach.
- Work with the Police and Highland Council to seek solutions to the problems

#### If you make a complaint:

We will:

- Acknowledge all complaints within 2 working days of receipt.
- Investigate and respond to all complaints in full within 10 working days, or provide a holding reply.
- Fully supporting the Ombudsman Service in their enquiries
- Apologise to you in writing if something has not been done correctly and compensating you where service provision has failed in line with our procedures.
- Regularly monitor complaints, learn from our mistakes and use complaints to improve our service delivery.

#### Confidentiality:

We will:

- Treat all information you provide in confidence in accordance with the Data Protection Act (1998).
- Give you access to view your tenancy file within 15 working days of a written request.

#### If you need aids and adaptations:

We will:

- Visit you within 15 working days of a request to carry out adaptations to a home because of disability, or refer your case to the council's Occupational Therapist.

- Try to secure funds to effect as many adaptations as possible.

#### If you wish to carry out an improvement:

##### We will:

- Respond to your application to carry out your own improvements to your home within 15 working days.

#### Staff behaviour:

##### We will:

- Be friendly, polite and helpful at all times.
- Respond promptly and sensitively to your reasonable requests.
- Show you identification and wear identification badges.
- Provide our names.

#### Consultation:

##### We will:

- Consult with you on significant proposals to change the way we provide service to you.
- Consult you fully where major works are proposed to your home or the area you live.
- Consult you on any increases to your rent.

#### New developments:

##### We will:

- Ensure all properties are suitable for habitation before you move in.
- Explain how to operate the services in your home, eg heating systems.

#### Equality and diversity:

##### We will:

- Treat all people fairly, professionally and with respect.
- Provide services that are accessible to all.
- Ensure that our offices offer facilities for customers who have disabilities
- Regularly monitor our services to ensure they provide equal opportunities for all.
- Provide translations and use an interpreter (where we are able) where English is not your first language.
- Work to promote equality, and eliminate institutional racism.

#### Customer First:

##### We will:

- Put customers at the heart of service delivery and find out what you think about the quality of the services we provide.

- Identify where we are weak on resident involvement and improve things.
- Provide a website.
- Produce tenants' newsletters every three months.
- Organise focus groups to review key service areas.
- Encourage residents to become involved in strategic matters as board members.
- Work with our partners to improve local services, tackle financial exclusion and regenerate communities.

### Playing your part:

These service standards are designed to give our customers the highest possible quality of service, based on the money available and the reasonable expectations of our customers. There will be times when we cannot meet the standards because of, for example, staff sickness.

Furthermore, it is only reasonable to expect that customers play their part in helping us achieve these standards. If customers are abusive or use offensive or racist language, we cannot deliver these standards.

Your responsibility to help us to achieve these standards includes:

- Paying your rent regularly and on time.
- Living in your property as your main home.
- Taking reasonable care of the property.
- Promptly reporting any items of repair.
- Behaving in a responsible manner towards neighbours, visitors and others.