

**SERVICE STANDARDS**

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| **Date of Policy** | **December 2021** |
| **Date approved by Management Committee** | **27th January 2022** |
| **Next Review Date**  | **December 2025** |

1. **INTRODUCTION**

This policy sets out the standards of service our service users can expect to receive from us.

 **2. DEFINITION OF ‘SERVICE USERS’**

Our service users include: tenants, owner occupiers in a factored property, sharing owners, housing applicants and any other individual or groups of individuals who seek or receive a service from us.

 **3. DEFINITION OF ‘SERVICE STANDARDS’**

Service Standards confirm how specific services will be delivered and explain to users the quality of service they can expect.

Service Standards are service commitments by Ruchazie Housing Association service users. They confirm how specific services will be delivered and explain to users the quality of service they can expect. We recognise the way we provide our services can be as important as the service itself.

**4. AREAS OF WORK COVERED BY SERVICE STANDARDS**

We have in place service standards to cover both general and specific parts of our work. We have listed key service areas and attached standards to them. These range from the timescales for responding to queries to how staff will deliver a particular service. Our Service Standards of Service (appendix 1) provides full details what you can expect from us.

**5. HOW WILL WE MONITOR OUR PERFORMANCE?**

We will review these standards on a three-yearly basis with our service users and report our performance on achieving the standards to our Governing Board on an annual basis.

Where we have not met our standards of service we will take steps to ensure the same issue does not arise again by reviewing service delivery, policy and practice.

 **6. EQUALITY & DIVERSITY**

Ruchazie Housing Association is committed to providing fair and equal treatment to all our customers and to comply with the Equality Act 2010. The Act established 9 protected characteristics (the grounds on which discrimination is unlawful). These cover age, race, sex, religion/belief, sexual orientation, pregnancy/maternity, gender reassignment, disability and marriage/civil partnership.

We will offer customers a range of options for communicating with us, since requiring to contact us may have to be in writing and this may be a deterrent, for example for people with poor literacy skills, visual impairment, or where first language is not English.

 7.  **GENERAL DATA PROTECTION REGULATIONS**

The Association will treat all personal data in line with our obligations under the current General Data Protection Regulations and our own Data Protection Policy Statement, Privacy Policy and Data Retention Policy.

Information regarding how your data will be used and the basis for processing your data is provided within our employee and tenant Fair Processing Notices.

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| **Our Targets for Responding to Different Communication Methods**   |
| **When you visit our office we *aim to*:**   | Acknowledge you when you arrive, and attend to you as quickly as possible. Ensure that, if you have made an appointment with a member of staff, you will be seen on time. Deal with your enquiry, even if you visit our office without an appointment Arrange an appointment with the relevant member of staff if they are not available when you call in; and Talk to you in a private interview room when one available   |
| **When you communicate with us in writing, including by email, we *aim* to:**   | Respond to you within 5 working days. We will write to you again in the event that we require further time to carry out more detailed investigations  When a staff member is out of the office, their email message will provide details of who to contact in their absence    |
| **When you telephone us, we *aim* to:**   | Answer all telephone calls promptly  Answer with the greeting “Good morning/afternoon, Ruchazie Housing Association, *<name of staff member>* speaking, how can I help you?”  Deal with all enquiries immediately without the need to pass on to another member of staff  Ensure that, when offices are closed, an appropriate answerphone or message service will be in operation.  Ensure that, if the person you wish to speak to is not available and you would rather not wait for them, you are passed to another staff member who will endeavour to deal with our enquiry.  Respond to any messages left on our voice mail within one working day (if we have not redirected our calls).  |
| **When you make an enquiry via our website, we aim to:**  |  Respond to your email within 5 working days.  We will write to you again in the event that we require further time to carry out more detailed investigations  |

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| **Complaints:**   |  |
| **Introduction:**  **In relation to Complaints we will always:**   | We have 2 internal stages of complaints which we aim to respond to within the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO) Model Complaint Handling Procedure (CHP) timescales.  There are 2 stages to our Complaints processes. These are:  **Stage 1: Frontline Complaint** Complaints that can be resolved quickly  **Stage 2: Investigation Complaint** Those complaints that have not been resolved at stage 1 or are complex and require more detailed investigation. * Make an information leaflet on our complaints policy readily available from our office and on our website.
* Investigate fully all complaints made by service users about our services, and use our findings to improve our services to you.
* Ensure that you are able to submit a complaint in a variety of ways, including directly via our website
* Deal with complaints promptly, courteously, systematically, fairly and in confidence
* Ask you how you would like the complaint to be resolved
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| **General:**   |  |
| **When dealing with the public we will always:** **When we are not in the office we will always:**  **When you make a complaint we aim to:**  **If you are not happy with our response we will always:**  | Introduce ourselves by name and show you our Staff ID badge whenever we meet with you outside our offices  Ensure that our telephone and email messages provide details of who to contact in our absence  * Respond to Stage 1 – frontline resolution complaints - within 5 working days
* Respond to Stage 2- investigation complaints - within 20 working days

During the course of any investigation into your complaint we will keep you informed of our progress.  Provide you with details of how to take your complaint to the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO)  |

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| **Housing Applications & Allocation of Property**   |
| **When you apply for a house or request a transfer we aim to:**   | Offer assistance, or an appointment, to complete your application form.  Process your completed application form within 5 working days of receiving all the information required to process your application. .  Ensure that all information provided to us by you will remain confidential and only used for the purposes intended, in accordance with our fair processing notices  Allocate available property fairly according to our Allocation Policy (a copy of which is available on request).     |
| **Your Rent**   |
| **For rent Payments, we will aim to:**  **When you are having difficulty paying your rent, we will aim to:**   |  Offer a variety of easy methods of rent payment and this include* Standing Order payments
* Payments by bank transfer
* Paypoint
* Payment via our website
* Cash payments in extreme circumstances..

Offer advice and assistance in completing Housing Benefit & Universal Credit online application or, where necessary, provide full details of local agencies that provide digital facilities.  Credit all payments to tenant accounts within two working days.  Make practical and realistic arrangements for repayment of your arrears based on your circumstances.  Offer to refer you to our Welfare Rights Service to ensure that you receive appropriate advice on welfare benefits advice.       |

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| **Factoring Service**   |
| **If you are an owner and receive our factoring service we aim to:**    | Issue you with an account giving details of charges 2 times during the year.  Offer you a variety of easy payment options including regular monthly payments.  Provide you with a ‘Written Statement of Service’ within 4 weeks of us being made aware of a change of ownership in a property we manage.  Post inspect all common repairs over £500  Process all factoring payments within 5 working days of receipt of payment into our bank account.  Carry out an annual inspection of your building every year  Carry our an owners satisfaction survey every 3 years covering at least 40% of our customers  Ensure that our website contains a range of helpful and up to date information    |
| **Alterations & Improvements**   |
| **If you are a tenant and want to alter or improve your home, we aim to:**   |  Not unreasonably withhold permission for requests to alter or improve a property.  Compensate you for certain improvements at the end of the tenancy, provided we had agreed to them being carried out.  Ensure that any application for an improvement or alteration is responded to within 20 working days          |
| **Estate Management**   |
| **We aim to:**   |  Undertake weekly internal and external checks of the area as appropriate.  In accordance with our Estate Management Policy timescales, instruct the removal or safe storage of any items within our closes/common areas that pose a fire/health and safety risk to our residents        |
| **Neighbour Disputes & Anti-Social Behaviour Complaints**   |
| **When you make a complaint about anti-social behaviour we aim to:**   | Allow you to make a complaint in a variety of ways - through letter, email or via our website  Visit you (or contact you by phone) within the timescales contained within our anti social behaviour policy  Provide you with a copy of our policy on request  Make contact with you during ongoing complaints by phone or email, as appropriate  Make clear to all tenants that any form of harassment of a neighbour will be viewed as a serious breach of the Tenancy Agreement.  |

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|  **Our Planned Maintenance Services**   |
| **When carrying out the renewal of major items in your home we aim to:**  **When carrying out servicing and cyclical works we aim to**:  | Ensure that detail of planned programmes of work are detailed in our quarterly newsletters and in the “news” section of our website  Where there are options or choices to be made, carry out appropriate consultation with affected customers  Provide you, at least 2 weeks prior to work commencing, with detail of the contractor, works required, and access necessary and any additional requirements related to the works.  Offer to visit you with the Contractor if this is necessary. Inspect all works carried out once completed, and take up any issues with the Contractor  Issue a tenant satisfaction survey within three months of completion of the works.  Give you as much notice as possible of works commencing  Where appropriate, inspect works once completed    |

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| **Repairs Service**   |
| **When you report a repair we aim to:**    | Attend Emergency Repairs within 4 hours and make safe. Attend non-emergency urgent repairs within 5 working days. Attend non-emergency routine repairs within 10 working days Inspect a sample of completed jobs to check for quality Ask you to complete a customer satisfaction survey on completion of your repair.  |
| **General Information**   |
| **Newsletters we will:**  **Website we will:**  **Happy to Translate we will:**  **Staff Training:** **Consultation & Review we will:**       **General Data Protection Regulations. We will:**   | Issue 4 newsletters to residents each year.  Post regular news information on our website when it happens. Update the website regularly   Display the logo and use the tools provided to help identify a service user’s language. We will make effective and efficient use of language service provision through professional language companies.  We will provide regular staff training to ensure a consistency of approach in delivering our service standards   Provide you with opportunities to become involved in shaping and monitoring our services in a range of ways to suit your needs and lifestyle.  Consult with you on changes to services which might affect you.  Carry out regular surveys to find out your views on our services  Learn from your feedback and make positive changes based on feedback received  Publish an annual report to tell you how we are doing.  Issue all applicants with a Fair Processing Notice when they obtain a housing application form from us  Ensure that your data is managed in accordance with our General Data Protection Policy and Policy Statement  Remove any data from our systems in accordance with the relevant timescales within our Data Retention Policy.  |