



Customer Standards Guide



Caring, Committed, Connected, Creative

CUSTOMER STANDARDS GUIDE

Eildon is always keen to improve its customer services. We listen to what standards you expect from us and use what you tell us to develop and review these Customer Service Standards.

When you use our services you have the right to be treated with respect, dignity and courtesy. Customer Service is at the heart of everything we do and we want to do it well, all the time. This document sets out minimum service standards against which we can be measured.

By giving us valuable feedback we can report back to you on how you feel we are measuring up. Compliments and complaints are both welcome!

First Impressions

We will:

- Treat everyone who uses our services fairly and equally
- Be honest and courteous at all times
- Respect your right to confidentiality
- Ensure, by listening to you, that your needs are identified and understood
- Wherever possible, see things from your point of view
- Keep any personal information secure, confidential and in accordance with data protection legislation
- Always identify ourselves by name or by name badge
- Make sure we take into account the needs of people with disabilities and those whose first language is not English.

Office Opening Hours

Monday, Tuesday and Thursday:

8.45am - 5.00pm

Wednesday:

10.00am - 5.00pm

Friday:

8.45am - 4.00pm

Customer Service Tel No:

03000 200 217

Contacting Us

When we answer the **phone** we will:

- Answer promptly
- Identify and introduce ourselves
- Only transfer your call if this is necessary - we will tell you who you are being transferred to and tell the person taking the call who you are and the nature of your call
- If we are unavailable to deal with your enquiry when you call, your call will be returned within one working day.

Outside our opening hours, you can report an emergency using the Customer Services Number: 03000 200 217.

When you **write** to us we will:

- Respond within ten working days or, for more complex issues, we will acknowledge receipt and advise you of the progress of your enquiry within two weeks
- Reply in plain English, in a standard format and avoid using technical terms and jargon where possible
- Ensure all letters have the name and job title of the person sending the letter.

When using **email** send your message to: **enquiries@eildon.org.uk**

You will receive an automated acknowledgement and the email will be sent to the most appropriate person.

We will:

- Respond by email within ten working days of receiving your first email
- OR for more complex items / issues, acknowledge and aim to write advising you of the progress of your enquiry within two weeks.

Visiting you at home

Our Housing and Property Maintenance staff spend the majority of their time out-and-about in your local area, bringing services to you. Most of the time they will make an appointment to visit you at a convenient time which suits you and our staff. They may also pop in to see you from time to time without an appointment, to make sure you are happy with our services or to ask for your views and ideas.

When we visit you at home we will:

- Arrive within 10 minutes of a pre-arranged appointment, or telephone to advise of any delay
- Leave a calling card when contact has not been possible
- Tell you in advance if we need to cancel an appointment
- Identify and introduce ourselves and show you our ID card
- Treat your home with respect
- Request that you do not smoke during our visit (this is in line with legislation banning smoking in the workplace)
- Be sensitive if we are discussing awkward issues such as rent arrears or neighbour disputes.



Visiting us in the office

While we are most likely to visit you at home, there may be occasions when you have an appointment to visit our office in Selkirk.

You may also request an appointment to speak to a member of staff there.

When you visit us in the office we will:

- If you have a pre-arranged appointment with a member of staff, they will meet you within five minutes of the agreed time
- If you do not have a pre-arranged appointment, we will tell you how long you may have to wait to see the person you want to see, so you can decide whether to stay or make an alternative appointment
- If the person you want to see is not in the office and there is no alternative member of staff who can help, you will be given an appointment to return to the office or a date and time when we can visit you at home
- We will discuss confidential matters with you in a private area
- We will provide a comfortable environment (with disabled access)
- We will provide you with details of our name and job role.



Repairs & Maintenance

We want to ensure that we carry out any repairs quickly and efficiently. How quickly we carry out a repair depends on what kind it is. Definitions and examples are given in the Tenants' Handbook (including "qualifying repairs"). The two main categories are:

Emergency Repair - 2 hours

Routine Repair - 10 working days

We will:

- Take repairs requests by telephone, in person, by letter or email or through the online form on our website: **www.eildon.org.uk**
- Take note of as many details as possible in order to diagnose the problem and arrange for the correct work to be carried out
- Contact you in advance to re-arrange the appointment if we are not able to attend on the original date agreed with you
- Aim to complete the repair within one visit
- Aim to meet your expectations about the quality of work and carry out regular satisfaction surveys
- Aim to inspect 10% of completed repairs
- Ensure that gas safety inspections are carried out at least annually.



Major Repairs & Improvements

We are committed to maintaining your home to a high standard. We will replace items such as kitchens, bathrooms, windows and central heating in a planned programme. We will ensure that the outside of your property is kept in good condition by carrying out regular maintenance to roofs and external doors and by painting communal and external areas when required.

When we plan maintenance work in your home or communal areas we will:

- Write to you to give notice of what we want to do and tell you when we intend to carry out the work
- Give you the opportunity to make choices where possible, such as about the style of a new kitchen or the colour of paintwork
- Give you a contact phone number to report any problems with any work that is being carried out
- Take care of your property and possessions and protect them to the best of our ability from damage, dust and paint
- Reconnect and test all services such as water, gas and electricity as soon as possible at the end of the working day
- Supervise the work to make sure it is going well and is being carried out both to our and your satisfaction
- Ask your opinion when the work is complete to ensure you are happy with it.



Renting a property from us

Our income is also affected by the length of time it takes us to re-let our properties and the amount we need to spend on vacated properties to bring them up to a standard suitable for re-let.

To make sure that our houses are let as quickly and as fairly as possible;

We will:

- Carry out regular inspections to gardens and common areas, including footpaths, and take appropriate action where required
- Where possible, offer tenants the opportunity to accompany us on our inspections
- Record our findings and check to ensure that any work carried out is up to our standard
- Remind tenants whose gardens are untidy of their agreement to maintain their gardens
- Remove offensive graffiti within 24 hours of it being reported to us
- Where provided, ensure that cleaning and grounds maintenance services are delivered to the agreed specification
- Liaise with the police, and local authority environmental health and cleansing teams, where required.



Managing our developments

Making sure our developments are maintained to a high standard is very important to us.

It influences how they are perceived and valued, both by our tenants and by the wider community.

In order to create and maintain a safe and secure environment for all those living in our properties;

We will:

- Set annual targets identifying how long it should take us to let a house - these targets will be published and we will let you know how we are performing
- Inspect properties, when a tenant advises us they wish to end their tenancy.
- Inspect all empty properties within three days of receiving the keys from the previous tenant
- Ensure all properties meet our minimum “lettable” standard before the new tenant moves in
- Ensure that new registrations for housing are processed within two working days.



Money Matters

We put most of the income we receive from rents into providing a high quality management and maintenance service, and to improving existing properties.

When tenants do not pay their rent it means we have less money to provide these services, so we work to ensure that all tenants pay their rent in full and on time.

We will:

- Offer a wide range of ways to pay rent, including by Direct Debit and online, through Allpay
- Give you 28 days' notice of any increase to your rent
- Offer you help and advice if you have difficulty paying your rent
- Make early contact with you and maintain contact should you fall into arrears
- Give you advice on claiming Housing Benefit/Universal Credit
- Set up realistic repayment schedules to enable you to pay any arrears
- Offer you the service of our Tenancy Sustainment Team for help with money management and welfare benefits advice
- Take legal action against you if you do not make sufficient regular payments
- As a last resort, consider eviction when all other attempts to resolve the situation have failed.



Complaints & Compliments

Our commitment is to provide high quality services. Occasionally, however, things can go wrong. If this happens, we want you to tell us about it. Complaints are an important source of information on how we are performing so we encourage you to let us know if our service has fallen short of your expectations.

Compliments are also an important source of information to us and when we receive these we will acknowledge them.

When handling complaints we will:

- Treat every complaint seriously and impartially
- Log your complaint and try to resolve it quickly and to your satisfaction within five working days
- If your complaint is more complex and requires detailed investigation, we will acknowledge it within three working days, provide a decision as soon as possible and aim to do so within twenty working days from receiving your complaint
- Let you know about any improvements we have made to our services as a result of your complaint
- Publish the number of formal complaints in our tenants' newsletter and report where we have made a change or improvement to our services as a result of a complaint.



Equal Opportunities

Eildon is committed to actively promoting diversity and equality of opportunity, and rejects all forms of discrimination.

To ensure we achieve equalities we will:

- Monitor the ethnic background of tenants and those who apply to us for housing
- Monitor the disabilities of our tenants
- Use plain English in our leaflets and publications and provide them in other languages if necessary
- Provide information in alternative formats if required
- Provide the services of interpreters and signers for the deaf and hearing impaired.



If you have any questions or would like further information, please do not hesitate to contact us.



The Weaving Shed, Ettrick Mill,
Dunsdale Road, Selkirk TD7 5EB



Customer Services: 03000 200 217



enquiries@eildon.org.uk



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