

<b>KNOWES HOUSING ASSOCIATION LIMITED</b>	
<b>Policy Name</b>	Customer Care
<b>Policy Category</b>	Committee Governance
<b>Policy Number</b>	G21
<b>Date to Management Committee</b>	October 2019
<b>Previous Review</b>	October 2016
<b>Next Review Date</b>	October 2022
<b>Links to other Policies</b>	Customer Engagement Strategy, Complaints Policy
<b>Consultation</b>	Committee, staff, tenants.

## 1. Policy Aims and Objectives

- 1.1 Knowes Housing Association strives to be a customer focused organisation and aims to achieve the standards set out in The Scottish Social Housing Charter.
- 1.2 Charter outcome 1 notes: every tenant and other customer has their individual needs recognised, is treated fairly and with respect, and receives fair access to housing and housing services.
- 1.3 Charter outcome 2 notes: tenants and other customers find it easy to communicate with their landlord and get the information they need about their landlord, how and why it makes decisions and the services it provides.
- 1.4 Charter outcome 3 notes: tenants and other customers find it easy to participate in and influence their landlord's decisions at a level they feel comfortable with.
- 1.5 We will achieve these standards through:
  - Ensuring our Core Values are adopted, these are:
    - **Respect and Equality of Opportunity** We treat everyone with respect and recognise and respond to their individual needs
    - **Customer Focused:** We will ensure that our customers are at the core of everything we do
    - **Continuous Improvement:** We are committed to review, develop and improve
    - **Communication:** We communicate effectively with our customers and colleagues
    - **Honesty and Professionalism:** We will behave in a professional manner displaying honesty and professionalism at all times
  - Making the best use of our people and our physical resources to achieve value for money

- Monitoring our customers views on our performance and involving our customers in our decision making.
- Implementation of our Customer Engagement Strategy and Communication Policy which details our commitment to consultation, provision of information and the support the Association will provide to residents.
- Achievement of the Customer Service Excellence Standard.

## **2. Commitment to Customer Care**

Our customers in relation to this policy include all people who have a wish or need to use the association's services, and any person or organisation that wishes or requires to conduct business with the association.

- 2.1 Knowes Housing Association Limited is a customer-focused organisation. With this in mind, the Association is committed to providing our customers and prospective customers with quality information and service delivery. We aim to provide appropriate training for our staff and develop effective methods of seeking customer feedback and appropriate methods of reporting this information.
- 2.2 As we shall endeavor to ensure the treatment of customers is always courteous and helpful. It is expected that staff, in return, are treated with dignity and respect at all times.
- 2.3 An important element of our customer care policy is our commitment to seek to identify our customer's needs and expectations and take them into account in determining services and standards. If customers are not happy about something it is important that they tell us. To this end our complaints policy details how we will gather information on complaints and take the appropriate action.
- 2.4 We will always treat people fairly when they complain or challenge decisions, and if appropriate provide effective redress.
- 2.5 We will promote ways for our customers to make complaints or challenge decisions made by us.

### **3. Communication**

- 3.1 We will effectively communicate our performance targets and standards to ensure our customers know what to expect.
- 3.2 We will develop a strategic framework, developed in consultation with our customers, for deciding how to approach the gathering of views on quality and service, this will be detailed in our Customer Engagement Strategy.
- 3.3 We will regularly seek feedback on the services we provide.
- 3.4 We will consult and obtain feedback about changes to services.
- 3.5 We will inform our customers about the feedback we receive and what has changed as a result.

### **4. Our Staff and our Offices**

As part of our commitment to customers we will also:

- 4.1 Be courteous at all times. Visitors to our office will be greeted with a smile and referred to by name as soon as possible after it is known.
- 4.2 All staff members will introduce themselves by name and position in the organisation.
- 4.3 If a visitor is kept waiting for any reason then apologies will be given.
- 4.4 Staff will ask questions in a fair and polite way.
- 4.5 As far as is reasonably practical there will always be a member of staff covering reception during office opening hours 9.00am – 5.00pm
- 4.6 Telephones will be manned during normal office hours from Monday to Thursday 9.00am – 5.00pm and Fridays 9.00am – 4.45pm (to allow for cashing up), and with the exception of public holidays and training days. A telephone answer machine will be in use outwith office hours, public holidays and during training.
- 4.7 Telephones will be answered quickly and politely, our target being to answer within 2 rings.
- 4.8 On answering the telephone, staff will give their names, establish reason for call, and take appropriate action or pass on call to the relevant staff member to deal with.
- 4.9 When making visits to a customer's home staff will always wear their identity badges to identify themselves.

- 4.10 Staff will dress in a neat, tidy and business like fashion at all times.
- 4.11 Our reception area will be kept clean and free of debris and unnecessary clutter at all times.
- 4.12 Our notice boards, Office TV and Web Site will display current and up to date information. Information leaflets on our service provision, policies and procedures and welfare benefits are either on display or available on request.
- 4.13 All staff will undergo customer care training with follow up refresher courses throughout their employment with Knowes Housing Association.
- 4.14 Regular customer satisfaction survey forms will be sent out to customers throughout the year.
- 4.15 A customer satisfaction survey will be carried out no less than every three years.
- 4.16 Suggestion/Comment forms will be readily on display in the reception area and may be deposited in the box provided.
- 4.17 We will respond to letters and email from customers within 3 working days, and where the matter cannot be resolved in the first communication we will aim to respond with a conclusion within a further 5 working days.
- 4.18 We will record and publish our performance in responsiveness to customers.

## **5. Risk Management**

This policy through its implementation reduces the risk of our customers becoming dissatisfied with the services provided by Knowes. Clearly the risk of customers becoming dissatisfied could result in customers seeking housing elsewhere.

## **6. Equal Opportunities**

Through this policy, nobody will be discriminated against on grounds of sex or marital status, on racial grounds, or on grounds of disability, age, sexual orientation, language or social origin, or of other personal attributes, including beliefs or opinions, such as religious beliefs or political opinions

## **7. Policy Review**

The Customer Care Policy shall be reviewed every three years or sooner as deemed necessary by the Management Committee.