

Our Customer Commitments



CUSTOMER



FOCUS ON DELIVERING RESULTS



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Welcome to...

Our Customer Commitments

Platform Housing Group is committed to providing customers with a good experience.

This document sets out the standards that we aim to deliver across all our areas of work. Customer feedback has been used to develop these service standards so we know what is important to you.

We are committed to meeting these standards.

We welcome your feedback to help us monitor what we do and further improve.





Our Guiding Principles

We will:

- Be polite and helpful and listen to you.
 - Communicate clearly with you.
 - Treat everyone fairly and with respect.
 - Tailor our services to meet your needs wherever possible.
 - Ask you to be polite to us too, and not be abusive or aggressive to our staff or partners.
 - Provide information and communications that are accessible and appropriate to your needs.
 - Have well trained and knowledgeable staff to deal with your queries.
 - Treat information we hold about you in confidence and in the right way and make sure the information we hold is relevant and meets General Data Protection Regulations.
 - Ensure we keep up to date with changes to regulatory standards and health and safety standards and ensure our policies and procedures reflect these changes.
- 



Keeping in Touch

Platform Housing Group is committed to providing customers with a good customer experience.

We deliver services to an increasingly diverse range of customers and community groups, with very different and changing needs.

We offer a range of methods in which you can interact with us, and we assure you of a personal and welcoming experience regardless of the method you choose. You can access all of our services by telephone, via our customer portal, by web chat, by e-mail or letter, on our website, or by requesting a home visit.





When you contact our Customer Services Team regardless of method, we will:

- Always aim to resolve your query at the first point of contact.
- Contact you within 3 working days if we are unable to resolve your query immediately and keep you updated on progress.
- Ensure your query is referred to the most appropriate team if you require specialist help.
- Make sure we update your information, including any particular needs you may have, and how you would like us to communicate with you.

When you write to us, email us or contact us through our website or portal, we will:

- Acknowledge your communication within a maximum of 3 working days.
- Provide a full response to your query within 10 working days, and let you know if we can't and when you can expect a full reply.

When you use our web chat facilities or social media facilities, we will:

- Aim to acknowledge your chat within 2 minutes.
- Let you know the name of the person you are chatting with.

When you visit our public office, we will:

- Ensure the office is welcoming and friendly and accessible for all.
- Make additional services available when needed, such as hearing loops and translation services.

When you phone our Customer Services Team, we will:

- Answer the call as quickly as we can and introduce ourselves by name.
- Aim to answer 85% of all telephone calls.
- Offer you the option of a call back during our busy times.
- Record our calls to help us to monitor and improve the quality of the service we deliver to you.

When we visit you at home, we will:

- Arrive on time or, if delayed, call you to let you know when we will arrive.
- Show you suitable identification and be happy to wait while you check it.
- Fully respect your home and all reasonable customs.
- Leave a card if you are out, telling you how to contact us.

Your Complaints

We try to give you the best service we can, but we know that things can go wrong and we make mistakes. If this happens, we want to know so we can try to put it right.

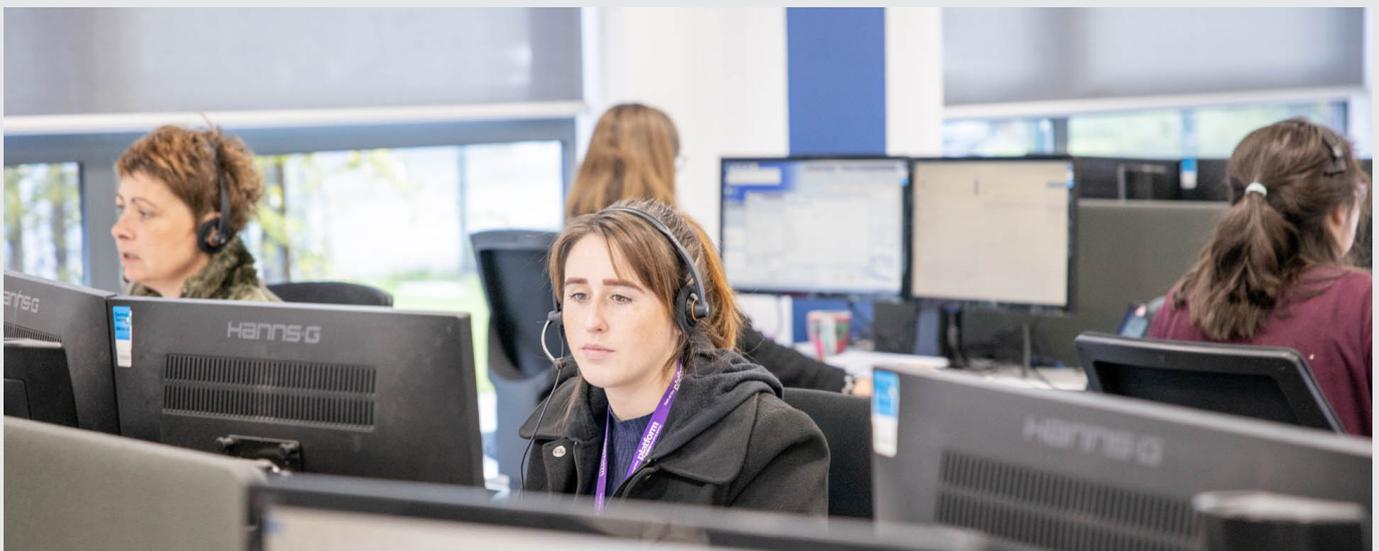
You can make a complaint using a variety of different methods - via our customer portal (where possible), by telephone, by email, by letter, via our website or in person. You can find further details about how we will manage your complaint in our Complaints, Comments and Compliments Policy and Procedures, available on our website.





When you make a Complaint, we will:

- Always aim to resolve any problems at the earliest opportunity.
- Provide you with easy access to our Complaints Policy on our website.
- Try to resolve your complaint at an early stage by offering a Quick Resolution (QR) option, where the member of staff taking the complaint feels that the issue is something that can be resolved in 2 working days.
- Aim to resolve all QRs within 2 working days.
- Escalate the QR to a Formal Complaint if it cannot be resolved.
- Acknowledge all Formal Complaints and Final Review Complaints within 3 working days.
- Respond to all Formal Complaints and Final Review Complaints within 15 working days.
- Always keep you informed if we are unable to respond fully to your complaint within these timescales, tell you why, and provide you with regular updates until the complaint investigation is complete.
- Aim to achieve a high level of satisfaction in our complaints handling process and review this annually.



Maintaining Your Home

The repair and maintenance of your home is as important to us as it is to you. Your home should feel well-maintained and safe. If something goes wrong, we want to put it right first time.

Repairs and Planned Improvements for Rented Homes

We will:

- Keep the exterior and interior of the building in good repair.
- Deliver a prompt and efficient repairs service.
- Provide a variety of ways to easily report a repair, including being able to request an emergency repair by phone at any time, every day of the year.
- Explain whether the repair work is our responsibility or yours.
- Allow you to book the majority of your own repairs and appointments via our customer portal where possible.
- Offer you a choice of repair appointments wherever possible, and let you know if we are unable to keep them.
- Use text messaging wherever possible to keep you informed about your repairs.
- Expect you to keep the appointment we have agreed with you, or let us know if you need to rearrange.
- Aim to complete repairs at the first visit wherever possible.
- Aim to achieve high customer satisfaction ratings with our repairs service.

- For any planned improvement works, usually carry out an inspection of your home, and wherever possible, confirm to you what works we will be carrying out, and arrange them at a time convenient to you.





Repairs and Planned Improvements for Leaseholders and Shared Owners Homes

We have shown the standard for leaseholders and shared owners homes separately as there are some differences between the two tenures in terms of the repairs and maintenance services we deliver.

For leasehold and shared owners homes we will:

- Provide and maintain communal areas such as hallways or flat windows, to a high standard.
- Deliver a prompt and efficient communal repairs service.
- Provide a variety of ways to easily report a communal repair, including being able to request an emergency repair by phone at any time, every day of the year.
- Explain whether the repair work is our responsibility or yours.
- Consult you about any planned improvements which affect your home and give you clear timescales for these planned works.



Repairs to New Build Homes

If you:

- If you move into a brand new property, or one that has been completely refurbished, repairs to your home may be covered by a guarantee.
- The guarantee lasts for 6 or 12 months and is known as the 'defects period'.
- The defects period starts from the date we accepted the property from the builder, not from the date you moved in.
- If any work is required to your home during the defects period, we will ask the original builder to do it.
- If you are reporting a repair to your new build home, we will tell you if your property is under guarantee, and which builder the work has been passed to
- The builder may want to repair small defects, such as plaster cracks, at the end of the defect period, or repair all affected homes at the same time, so we can't offer you an appointment date when you contact us to report any defects - the builder will contact you direct to confirm the appointment details.

Keeping You Safe

Making sure you are safe in and around your home is essential. We are committed to doing all we can to ensure it happens.

You must allow us access to your home to complete all service and safety checks.

Gas Servicing and Maintenance for Rented Homes

We will:

- Carry out yearly service and safety inspections on all gas, oil, open fire and solid fuel appliances in your home.
- Expect customers to maintain and have their own appliances serviced and checked for safe use.
- Contact you in good time before the due date of your annual service and offer you an appointment.
- Ensure all engineers carrying out work on your property are appropriately qualified.
- Provide you with access to your safety certificate via our customer portal, where possible.

Electrical System Servicing and Maintenance for Rented Homes

We will:

- Carry out a 5-year periodic electrical safety inspection of your home.
- Contact you in good time before the due date of your 5 yearly electrical safety inspection and offer you an appointment.
- Make sure our contractors are NICEIC register approved.
- Provide you with access to your safety certificate via our customer portal, where possible.





Fire Safety in Your Home

We will:

- Carry out fire safety inspections in our blocks and ensure we complete any required works or actions following the inspection.

You must:

- Report a fire to us, no matter how small it is.
- Seek permission from us before altering or changing any wall, floor or doors.
- Keep communal areas clear and clean if you live in a flat, and not leave any items in these areas. If you find items are being stored or have been left in communal areas please report these items to us immediately.
- Allow us access to undertake fire safety inspections of your home if required, for which we will give you reasonable notice.
- Refrain from smoking, lighting barbeques and candles, or using naked flames in any common areas.

We strongly recommend that you:

- Follow the fire safety plan if you live in a block or scheme.
- Devise a Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP) so you and the occupants of your home know how to evacuate in the event of an emergency such as a major fire. We will assist you if you require help in developing a PEEP.
- Test the smoke detectors in your home regularly and report any defects immediately.
- Take care of any lit candles in your own home, for your own safety.
- Take extreme care if you smoke by ensuring these are fully extinguished.
- Never leave naked flames unattended.



Anti-Social Behaviour, Hate Crime or Domestic Abuse

We will:

- Provide different ways for you to easily report an issue.
- Acknowledge all reports of hate crime and domestic abuse with 24 hours.
- Use a range of ways to help prevent and deal with anti-social behaviour.
- Acknowledge all reports of anti-social behaviour within 3 working days.
- Investigate all reports quickly and efficiently.
- Deal with all reports confidentially, consistently and professionally.
- Take appropriate action against people who cause a nuisance to their neighbours, and work with other agencies where necessary to resolve this.
- Discuss with you any steps we plan to take to deal with the problem and keep you informed of progress.
- Produce an action plan to deal with on-going problems that we need to monitor and review.
- Guide you towards any other relevant sources of help and support and focus on your needs and concerns.





Your Local Community

We want you to enjoy living in your home and neighbourhood, without fear from others. It should feel like a place where people get along and you are proud to call home.

In Your Neighbourhoods

We will:

- Ensure that neighbourhoods are clean, safe and well maintained.
- Ensure that communal grounds are kept tidy and well maintained.
- Remove bulk rubbish and graffiti that is our responsibility or work with partners, to do so.
- Regularly inspect your neighbourhoods and check the standard of services we provide.
- Provide ways for you to be involved in our inspection processes.
- Establish good working relationships with local partner agencies.
- Ask for your views on your neighbourhood, including our communal cleaning and gardening services and ideas for improvements.
- Aim to achieve high satisfaction ratings with your neighbourhood as a place to live.



Letting and Selling Our Homes

We want to help as many people as we can to live in an affordable home. When you want or need to move, we will make it as easy as we can for you by selling and reletting our empty homes as quickly as possible and ensure they meet our standard.

Empty Homes

We will:

- Work with our local authority partners and relevant choice based lettings schemes to advertise our empty homes.
- Let and sell our homes as quickly and as fairly as possible.
- Aim to make the best use of properties that have been adapted.
- Make sure all homes meet our agreed lettable standard.

Finding A Home

We will:

- Give you help and advice if you are looking to buy a new shared ownership home
- Tell you how to apply for housing and the options available to you.
- Give you information about how we work with local authorities to provide housing, including how the housing waiting list or choice-based lettings scheme operates in your area.

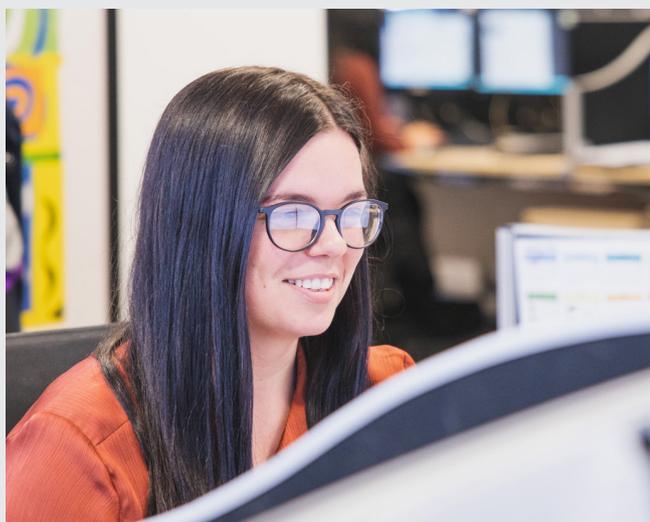




Offering a Home

We will:

- Let you know that you have been selected for an offer within 7 days of the property advert closing.
- Ask you to complete an online application form, so that we can assess your personal circumstances and assess your ability to maintain and sustain a tenancy. This will include a pre-tenancy assessment to confirm that you accept the terms of the tenancy agreement and make sure that the offer is suitable for your needs.
- Offer you a viewing of the home you are being considered for, accompanied by a member of staff, and give you at least 24 hours' notice of your viewing appointment.
- Ask you to make a rent payment in advance (based on your current financial circumstances) and set up a direct debit to pay your rent.
- Tell you the date that your tenancy will start and arrange for you to sign for your tenancy as part of the viewing process.



Moving In

We will:

- Explain your tenancy agreement outlining your rights and responsibilities.
- Tell you about our services as your landlord, together with other information to help you settle into your home, including information on how to use the heating system and other relevant appliances.
- Provide information on registering for our customer portal and the services that can be accessed online.
- Provide details on how to contact the utility companies for your services and explain how to get your utilities connected.
- Arrange a settling in visit approximately 6 weeks after you move into your new home.
- Ask you for feedback on the standards of your new home and aim to achieve a high satisfaction rating.

Home Exchange

We will:

- Take part in online mutual exchange schemes to help you if you want to move home by exchanging with another tenant.
- Arrange for relevant gas, electrical and oil checks in your home and expect you to pay for these checks.
- Make a decision on your mutual exchange application within 42 days.



Paying Your Rent

Paying your rent is an essential condition of your tenancy. We want to help and encourage you to pay on time.

We will:

- Give you four weeks/one months' notice in writing of any changes to your rent or service charges.
- Offer and publish a range of payment options, including direct debit, which is our preferred way for you to pay your rent.
- Give timely information to you about your rent account, with support for those who need it.
- Provide a number of ways for you to check your rent account, including 24/7 access via our customer portal.
- Keep rent arrears low by taking firm but fair action, and keeping you informed of any action we are planning to take.
- Offer help with budgeting and dealing with debt.
- Contact you promptly if you fall into arrears with your rent.
- Take steps to avoid court action if you fall into debt and work with you to sustain your tenancy.
- Take appropriate legal action against you if you repeatedly fail to pay your rent, which could lead to eviction.
- Let you know about any help we can offer you to apply for any related welfare benefits.

Leaseholders

We will:

- Send you information on any actual costs incurred at the end of the financial year, if your service charges are not fixed and charged annually.



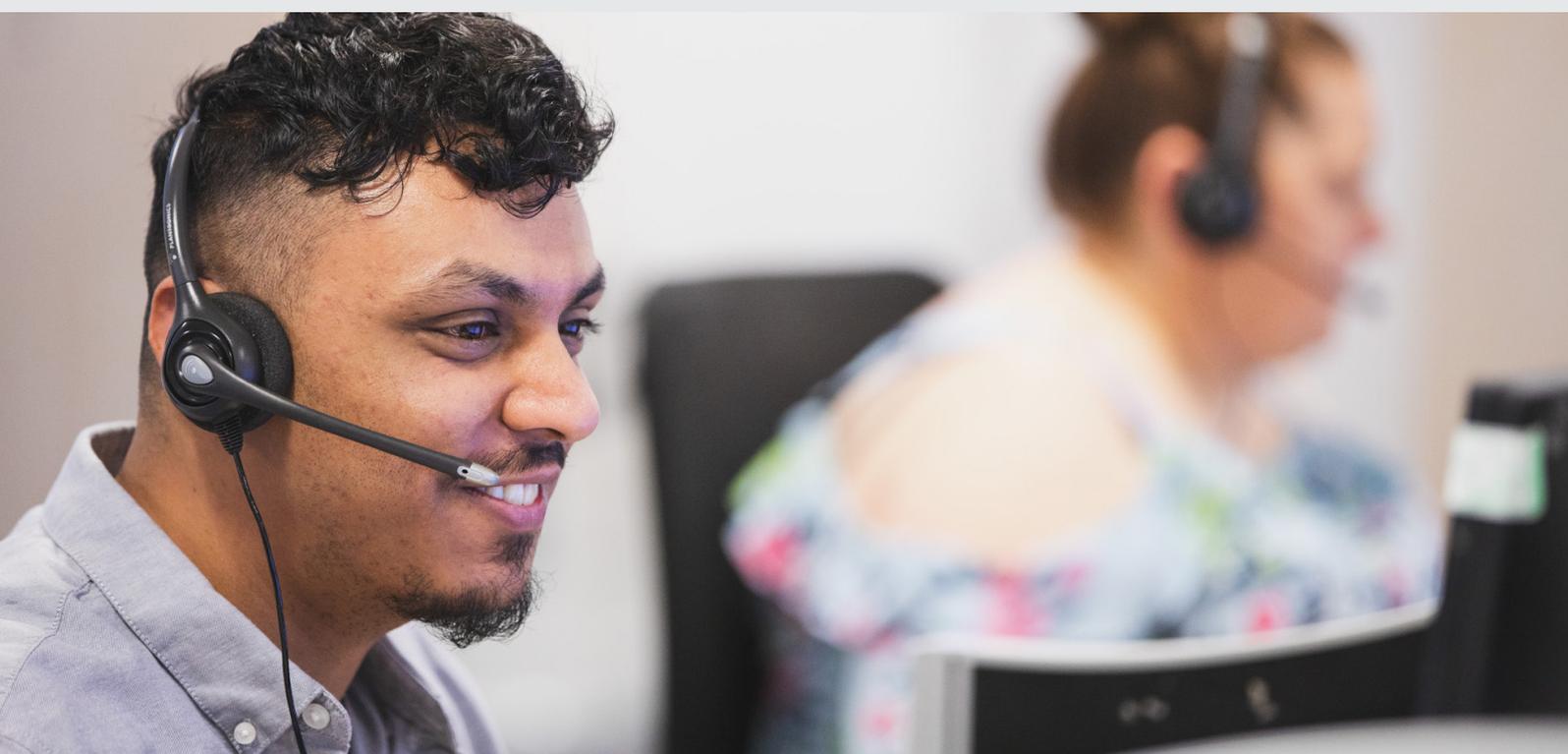


Involving You

We want to be open to your feedback and we are always interested in what you have to say. Your involvement influences our decision-making and helps us to improve your services.

We will:

- Offer many different ways for you to get involved or give feedback and help improve and develop our future services.
- Collect your feedback on our services and use the information provided to make changes to how services are delivered.
- Listen to you and take your views into account wherever possible.
- Consult with you as soon as we are able to on changes that directly affect you.
- Tell you the outcome of your involvement and what changed as a result of it.
- Encourage and assist customers from under-represented groups to get involved.
- Encourage and promote, mystery shoppers and involvement in our customer Scrutiny Panels.
- Provide regular online news updates and an annual customer report.





Measuring Success

We will:

- Record telephone calls to our Customer Service Team for training, monitoring and feedback purposes.
- Work with our customer Scrutiny Panels, mystery shoppers and use other customer feedback to check and test our services.
- Monitor and record all complaints and implement associated learning outcomes.
- Carry out customer satisfaction surveys using a variety of methods to check how you rate the services we provide.
- Gather and collect feedback on our services and identify trends and service improvements that happen as a result.
- Benchmark our services with other comparable housing organisations.
- Deliver customer service training for all our staff and a number of contractors who work with our customers.
- Ensure that we achieve value for money in all the services that we provide.
- Report key areas of our performance to our Group Executive Team and Platform Housing Group Board.

Keeping You Informed

We will:

- Publicise our performance on our website.
- Produce an annual customer report.
- Provide regular online news updates via our website.
- Use our customer portal wherever possible, to provide feedback to customers on our services.
- Involve customers in our service reviews.



Here to help

Call: **0333 200 7304** | Mail: **info@platformhg.com** | Visit: **www.platformhg.com**