

# Kingston Churches Housing Association

## *The Caring Professionals*

### CUSTOMER SERVICE STANDARDS

KCHA aims to provide you with the best possible service at all times. To help us achieve consistently high standards, we have set ourselves performance targets in key areas.

These are the main standards you can expect from us.

#### **If you telephone us:**

- We hope you will never have to wait for more than 5 rings before being answered.
- We will deal with your calls in a polite, friendly and professional way.
- We will always identify ourselves so that you know who you are talking to.
- We will ensure that you are transferred to the person you wish to speak to. If they are not available a message will be passed to the person upon their return or, if appropriate, an appointment will be made for you.
- When the office is closed there will be an answer-phone on to take messages. We will respond to these within one working day.

#### **If you write to us:**

- We will reply to all letters within 5 working days.
- We will reply to all emails within 3 working days.
- We will write in plain language.
- When we cannot give you an answer immediately, we will give you a reason for the delay, and a time scale for when you can expect an answer or decision.

#### **If you visit this office:**

- We will ensure you are seen by someone as soon as possible.

- If the person you wish to see is not available, an appointment will be made for you on their return to the office.
- We will display useful, up to date information about our activities and events, other housing information and office opening times.

### **If we visit your home:**

- We will always give you the option of a home visit if this is more convenient for you.
- We will make every effort to keep appointments. Where this is not possible we will always let you know as far in advance as possible.
- We will behave professionally and courteously at all times and always treat you, other household members, and your possessions with respect.

### **Equality and Diversity:**

- We will provide services that are equally accessible to all our customers, and that are fair and free from discrimination.
- We will try to provide information about our services in the best possible format for you, including large print and audio tape.
- We will try to arrange for an interpreter to be available if you need one.
- We will always act fairly when we deal with you, and treat your personal details with confidentiality.
- You have the right to see personal information that we hold about you (subject to the provisions in the Data Protection Act 2018 with the Implementation of General Data Protection Regulation 2018 (GDPR) )

### **If we receive a complaint:**

- We will explain our formal complaints procedure which has clear time-scales for responding.
- We will aim to put your problem right as soon as possible.
- We will keep you informed at all times.
- We will apologise if your complaint is upheld.
- We will aim to learn from our mistakes so they don't happen again.

### **If you report a repair:**

- We will tell you what the timescale is for completing your repair.
- We will aim to complete emergency repairs within 24 hours and urgent repairs within 5 working days.
- We will send you a copy of the repair order by post or email.
- We will offer an out of hours repairs service for emergencies.
- We will inspect 10% of all repairs to check that the work has been done to a good standard.

### **Decent Homes and planned maintenance:**

- We have set ourselves the target that all our homes should at the least meet the government's Decent Homes Standard.
- This means that they should be in a reasonable state of repair, have reasonably modern facilities and services, and provide a reasonable degree of thermal comfort.
- We will carry out planned repairs to properties and consult with tenants about such work.
- We will inform you in advance of planned improvements to your home (e.g. new bathrooms) and give you a choice of style, colour and layout where appropriate.
- For your safety we will carry out an annual gas safety check and quarterly maintenance on fire safety equipment.

### **Keeping you informed and involved:**

- We will produce documents that are clear and easy to understand.
- We will identify the best way of hearing your views, e.g. surveys, issue based meetings
- We will consult with you and take your views into account on the services we provide.
- We will keep in contact with you through quarterly newsletters, and an annual report, where we will tell you how we are performing against our standards.
- We will regularly update our website [www.kcha.org.uk](http://www.kcha.org.uk) where you can find a wide range of information about us and our work.
- We will offer all necessary support to tenants wishing to form a Tenants Group or Association.

### **Rents and rent collection:**

- We will ensure that rent payments are recorded accurately and any queries dealt with within 5 working days.
- We will supply you with rent statements on a quarterly basis.
- We will calculate your rent according to government requirements.
- We will give you the required notice when your rent and/or service charges increase.
- We will offer you a range of ways to pay your rent.
- We will give you help with benefit and Universal Credit forms online.
- We will deal with tenants in rent arrears firmly and fairly.
- We will give you advice about managing your rent account if you do fall behind with your rent.
- We will take all reasonable steps, including legal action if necessary, to collect any rent owed to us.

### **If you suffer anti-social behaviour, harassment or nuisance:**

- We will investigate all reports of anti-social behaviour, harassment or nuisance promptly, fairly and sensitively, within published timescales.
- We will clearly explain any limitations we might have when dealing with anti-social behaviour.
- We will treat any report of racial harassment as a serious matter.
- We will take prompt and appropriate action against any tenant whose behaviour adversely and unreasonably affects the quality of your life or your home.
- We will offer mediation whenever this may be appropriate or useful and if agreed by both parties involved.
- We will consider legal action against any tenant who continues to behave in an anti-social way.
- We will work with tenants, voluntary agencies, the police, local authorities and community groups to combat anti-social behaviour.
- We will work with all parties to try to resolve the problem and explain clearly what is happening at each stage.
- We will respect all tenants' rights and take full account of their circumstances, but be firm in dealing with all tenancy matters.
- We will remove any racist or offensive graffiti within one working day of being reported and all other graffiti within 10 days of being reported. We will repair any vandalism damage to your property as a priority.

### **In return we will expect you to:**

- Be polite and courteous to our staff and contractors at all times.
- Identify yourself and provide your name and address and any contact details.
- Give us full details of any complaint or concern, and provide us with the information we need to be able to assist you and explain how you would like it to be resolved.
- Update us on any changes in your circumstances to ensure that our information is accurate and up-to-date.
- Always try to make an appointment to see us and let us know if you are unable to keep an appointment with us.
- Contact us if you do not understand any information we send to you.
- Pay your rent promptly.
- Keep to the terms of your tenancy agreement at all times.

***We will not continue to deal with any tenants who are, or become, violent and aggressive to staff or our contractors, or who are persistently rude, threatening or aggressive, or who use racist, sexist or homophobic language. Threats made towards staff will be reported to the Police and legal action taken if necessary.***