



Customer Service Standards



“Created by Tenants
for Tenants”

Introduction

These Customer Service Standards have been developed jointly by Tenants and team members of Scottish Borders Housing Association (SBHA) to ensure that all of our customers receive consistently high standards of customer service and that the diverse communities are able to access our services.



Meeting our commitments to:

- Put our Tenants and their communities at the heart of all we do.
- Take pride in delivering excellent quality services, with courtesy and respect.
- Earn the trust of all people we deal with.
- Strive to give value for money, whilst being focused on accountability, transparency, and honesty.

Scottish Borders Housing Association is committed to respecting Tenants' and communities' needs whilst always treating you with respect. Delivering these Standards is the responsibility of all SBHA teams, to meet our commitment to put Tenants at the heart of all we do.

Key Principles

We will:

- Listen to you, be polite, approachable, and helpful.
- Communicate clearly, and honestly, at all times.
- Use language that is easy to read and understand and is free of jargon and abbreviations.
- Aim to resolve your enquiry at the first point of contact, and where we are unable to do so, advise you of timescales and keep you informed of progress.
- Acknowledge when we have made mistakes, put things right and learn lessons to improve our service and performance.
- We welcome, listen to, and value comments, compliments and complaints and follow SBHA's corporate complaints procedure to address dissatisfaction and continuously improve our services.
- Treat all our customers fairly, equally and with respect.

These Customer Service Standards explain what level of service you can expect to receive from SBHA when you contact us, whichever way you wish to do so.

Disclaimer

Please note during emergency situations such as extreme weather conditions, fire, or floods out-with our control, the Association may have to suspend non-emergency services to deliver emergency services.

Contacting us

You can contact us by telephone, email, letter, via our website and by messaging our social media channels. You can also visit us at our Head Office, or a member of our Team can arrange to meet you in your own home. You can also use a video consulting service that enables people to attend appointments from home or wherever is convenient.

You can also download and use our Tenant App, MySBHA, to update your contact details, pay your rent or book a repair.



We will:

- Greet you and answer calls promptly introducing ourselves by name.
- Listen carefully to your enquiry and give you our full attention.
- Identify and address any specific needs with sensitivity, tact, and diplomacy.
- Ensure that the nature of your enquiry is clearly understood and accurately recorded.
- Take ownership of your enquiry and seek to resolve at the first point of contact whenever possible.
- Respond to all enquiries promptly and accurately and always offer to take a message if the team member you wish to speak to is unavailable.
- Acknowledge receipt of enquiries within 3 working days.
- Resolve enquiries within 10 working days and where a response is not possible within that time, advise you when your enquiry will be dealt with.
- Ensure that you can speak to the team member who can assist you with your enquiry when you visit our Head Office, where possible, or offer an appointment to meet another team member where this may be more appropriate.
- Treat all information we hold about you sensitively and in confidence.

Access and information

- Offer a range of ways to access our services when you need them including telephone, letter, email, website, the MySBHA App, social media, and meeting with our teams in person or virtually, using video consulting that enables people to attend appointments from home.
- Ensure you have access to advice and assistance during office opening hours.
- Ensure that our leaflets, offices and our main SBHA and SBHA Homechoice websites contain up to date information about our services.
- Take account of your individual needs and make our information available in other formats upon request, this may include working with your representatives and other service providers such as support workers and translators to help you use our services.
- When discussing personal information, always do so in a confidential environment.
- Help and support Tenants to access and use SBHA's online services.
- Continue to improve access to our services by using new technology

Visiting your home

We will:

- Make sure that team members and our sub-contractors greet and identify themselves by giving their name and showing their identity cards.
- Always leave a visiting card when a team member, or one of our sub-contractors has visited and you are not at home.
- Respect your home and your traditions.
- Aim to keep our appointments with you, but if we can't, we'll let you know as soon as possible and arrange an alternative appointment with you.
- Advise you about what a visit is for, and appointments will be made at a time suitable to the Tenant. We will also offer you a range of appointments, both physical and virtual.
- Make sure that all activities are done in accordance with safe working practice and procedures to keep both you and our team members safe.

In relation to works in your home, we will ensure:

Consultation with Tenants

- ✓ Tenants will be consulted on the work to be done in their homes and will be offered choices of finishes from agreed ranges and layouts, where possible.
- ✓ Tenants will be made aware that inspections, such as Asbestos Surveys, may be required before works commence as well as quality checks and possibly EPC Surveys after the works are complete.

Notification of work content and timescales

Tenants will be provided:

- ✓ 3 weeks advance notice of works commencing.
- ✓ Details of how the work will be carried out and the anticipated date of completion, which will be no longer than 15 working days from the start date on-site.
- ✓ Advice in person and in writing on the level of disruption to be expected and the steps that will be taken to minimise this.
- ✓ Adequate notice of any changes or delays in carrying out the works.

Provision of high-quality advice

- ✓ High quality advice will be provided to Tenants prior to, during and on completion of the work.
- ✓ Advice and user-friendly information will be provided for all new and replaced installations.

Provision of temporary services

- ✓ All necessary services will be restored in a Tenant's home at the end of each working day, including:
 - Running water in the kitchen and a temporary work surface.
 - A connected WC and running water in the bathroom.
 - Temporary heating where required.
- ✓ Where this is not possible, high-quality alternative temporary accommodation will be provided.

Attending to defects

- ✓ Contractors will provide responses to defects within agreed time limits

Health and Safety

- ✓ Works will be carried out in accordance with all current legal requirements and regulations.
- ✓ SBHA contractors must hold the relevant Health and Safety Certification to ensure they have satisfied a registered body on all criteria



Performance and customer feedback

We will monitor achievement of these standards through:

- Regularly asking customers for feedback about our customer service and use this feedback to help shape the services we deliver.
- Review of customer compliments and complaints received.
- Reporting on how we are doing quarterly in our Tenants Newsletter, on our website and in our Annual Performance Report.
- Ensuring all teams are trained and competent to deliver expected standards of customer service.

Following completion of a repair or planned works to your home, you may receive a phone call inviting you to take part in a phone or online survey. These surveys are carried out by SBHA or by an independent research company we employ to gather feedback on SBHA's behalf. You can also give us feedback by calling 01750 724444, or Freephone 0800 0193 222, or by emailing enquiries@sbha.org.uk.

Visiting your home

SBHA is committed to providing the best possible service that it can, and our teams value your feedback. If you are happy with the service you received from us, please let us know. We are always interested to hear suggestions on how we can improve our service.

If something goes wrong or you are not satisfied with our service, please tell us. You have the right to complain if you feel we are not meeting our Customer Service Standards. Copies of the Complaints Procedure are available on request.

To help us deliver these Customer Service Standards, please:

- Let us know about any changes in your circumstances, including changes to your contact details, such as your telephone number.
- Keep agreed appointments with us or let us know in advance if you are unable to do so.
- Treat our team members and contractors with respect and remain polite and courteous when speaking with us.
- Honour your tenancy conditions and pay your rent on time and where you are having difficulty in doing so, contact us to discuss.
- Provide us with the information we need to deliver services.
- Allow access to your home as agreed in advance and enable our team members and contractors to carry out their work without interruptions.
- Please take the time to read any information we send you.



Opportunities to Get Involved

We offer many opportunities for you to become involved in the decision-making and shaping of our services, such as:

- Focus Groups - take part in discussions on service areas which are of interest to you, to share your opinion and expected standards.
- Questionnaires & Surveys - take part in service consultations by returning surveys and questionnaires.
- Estate Walkabouts - you can take part in an estate walkabout in your area with your Neighbourhood Housing Officer.
- Tenant Information Days & Roadshows - organised to give Tenants the opportunity to meet with SBHA teams and other agencies on an informal basis.
- Registered Tenant Organisation (RTO) - setting up a local group and applying to become registered with SBHA, so you can deal with local issues within your area.
- Scottish Borders Tenants Organisation (SBTO) - become a member of SBTO, which is the constituted Tenants Group of SBHA.
- Board of Management - be elected on to SBHA's Board of Management.
- Customer Board - promote and monitor the delivery of good customer care and Tenant satisfaction in all areas of service delivery.
- Shareholding Membership - become a Shareholding member of SBHA.
- Reading Panel - Tenants can participate from the comfort of their home by reading revised policies for our services and providing feedback.
- Tenant Newsletter - complete 'Tear-off and Tell us' pages, giving Tenants the opportunity to provide feedback.
- Digital & Social Media - promotes consultation and provides information about local events and initiatives.
- Scrutiny - join a Customer Audit Team (CAT) and assess SBHA's Performance Standards against Service Standards.

Influencing decision making

SBHA is committed to ensuring our Tenants and customers are actively involved to influence SBHA's decision-making at a level you feel comfortable with and to help improve the services we deliver. If you have any comments on this document and its contents, or would like to be more involved with SBHA, we would like to hear from you. For further information, please contact:

SBHA's Tenant Engagement and Communication Team
communications@sbha.org.uk

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This leaflet is available in other formats, including Braille, larger print, audio, and other languages, upon request.



**SCOTTISH BORDERS
HOUSING ASSOCIATION**

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