



PEOPLE

Venture Service Standards



Venture Service Standards

At Venture, we care about our customers. We want to keep you informed and make sure you are involved in the services we deliver. To allow you to monitor our performance, this document brings together all of our service standards in one place. We have also included some new service standards which have not been published before.

We hope this demonstrates our commitment to delivering the highest standards of customer care and to placing customers at the heart of everything we do.

Our Customer Care Standards

General

- staff will be polite and respectful at all times and deal with queries in a positive and helpful way
- we will always respect the privacy and confidentiality of our customers
- all offices will be clean, tidy and welcoming with space for private interviews
- an experienced housing officer will be available from 9-5 Monday to Friday
- translation services will be provided to ensure customers fully understand the information given to them
- staff will wear name badges at all times
- we will introduce ourselves by giving our name when answering the telephone and when meeting you in our office or in your home
- we will listen to all comments and suggestions and wherever possible will act on them to improve services.



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Telephone Calls

- all calls will be answered within 10 seconds
- all calls will be answered in a courteous and polite manner
- if transferring a call we will inform the caller of the name of the person they are being transferred to
- if the person you ask for is unavailable you will be given the choice to leave a message or speak to somebody else.
- messages will be passed to a manager if a member of staff is away from the office for 24 hours or more
- all telephone calls will be returned within 24 hours.

Visitors to Venture Offices

- visitors with an appointment will be seen on time
- if you do not have an appointment you will not be kept waiting any longer than five minutes to speak to someone who can help you
- appointments can be made with staff at times and places that are convenient to customers and, when necessary, outside normal working hours
- special arrangements can be made for tenants with individual needs who may have difficulty accessing our services
- we will pay compensation of £10 if we fail to keep a confirmed appointment and we have made no attempt to rearrange it.

Letters and e-mails

- all leaflets and letters will be written in plain English
- tenants will be consulted on the content of leaflets, newsletters and other information
- all letters will contain the name, telephone number and email address of the staff member dealing with the query

all written queries will be acknowledged within two working days

all written queries will be responded to in full within 10 working days

all replies will either deal with the query, or state a date by which the information will be given.

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Home visits

- appointments can be made for a member of staff
- this appointment will be within two days of your request
- if we visit you and you are not at home, we will leave a card notifying you of this
- all staff will wear identity badges
- we will pay compensation of £10 if we fail to keep a confirmed appointment and have made no attempt to rearrange it.

Lettings Standards

- requests for housing application forms will be actioned within one working day
- fully completed application forms will be registered with PropertyPool within 10 working days
- Wirralhomes applications will be processed by Wirral Metropolitan Borough Council
- all written requests for information will be acknowledged within two working days and answered in full within 10 working days
- all telephone calls will be returned within 24 hours.

Rents Standards

We will:

- send you an accurate rent account statement four times a year
- write to you at least one calendar month in advance to tell you of any changes to your weekly payment
- offer you help and advice to sort out any arrears
- provide welfare benefit and debt counselling if requested or when needed
- help you to deal with difficulties in paying rent through an affordable payment plan
- provide a copy of your rent account statement on request
- offer you a range of rent payment options including a rent payment card and direct debit.

Repairs Standards

We will:

- provide 24 hour access to our repairs reporting service on **0800 169 2988**
- attend to all repairs within the published priorities
 - emergency** – within 24 hours
 - urgent** – within three days
 - non-urgent** – within three weeks.
- wherever possible, complete the repairs on the first visit to your home
- provide you with an appointment for all works reported to the repairs line during normal working hours
- send you a letter confirming:
 - your repair order
 - when it will be done
 - who will do the work
 - contact details for the contractor
- provide you with an opportunity to tell us what you think of the quality of the repair service provided
- work with you to develop and improve the service
- be fair and consistent in the way we deliver the repairs service
- keep you informed of progress and tell you when follow-up works are to take place
- deal with your queries in line with our customer care standards
- always respect you and your home.

Contractor

Our operatives and contractors working on our behalf will:

- carry identification at all times
- respect your home, provide dust sheets to protect your floor coverings and furniture where necessary, and clean up after themselves, taking their rubbish with them when their work is complete
- be skilled and competent in the tasks they are asked to perform
- take every care for security in your home, and will follow your instructions concerning locking up
- manage and control noise, keeping it to a minimum
- pay attention to Health & Safety at all times
- not use your gas, electricity, phone or water without your permission, and will reimburse you if they do
- keep their working activities free from foul, abusive or racist language or actions, and be courteous at all times.

Major Works

We will:

- tell you if your home is included in major repairs programme as soon as the programme is agreed
- give you plenty of notice of when the programme is likely to start
- provide you with a specific start date at least two weeks before work begins
- offer you as much choice possible e.g. colour schemes, layouts, fixtures and fittings, and record your choice once agreed
- help you to find suitable temporary accommodation in the rare cases when it is necessary to re-house you to complete the work
- ensure that if you need to be re-housed we keep you informed throughout.

Planned (cyclical) Works

We will:

- tell you in April if your home is included in the planned maintenance scheme that year
- give you plenty of notice of when the programme is likely to start
- offer you as much choice as possible and record your choice once agreed
- give you at least two weeks' notice before the work begins.

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Gas Safety

We will:

- only use contractors from the Gas Safe Register (formerly CORGI)
- carry out a service and safety check on all gas appliances each year
- write to arrange a suitable appointment for your annual gas safety check
- offer out of hours appointments until 8pm weekdays and 1pm on Saturdays
- give you a copy of the completed Landlord Safety Certificate.

Aids & Adaptations

We will

- acknowledge all applications within 10 working days
- make a decision within 40 working days of an adaptation request
- complete minor adaptations within 28 days of a decision being made
- complete high priority work within 83 working days of a decision being made
- complete low priority work within 259 working days of a decision being made
- review all of your housing options with you (including alternative accommodation) before making a decision.



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Tenancy Management Standards

We will:

- investigate all breaches of tenancy in line with our anti social behaviour policy
- inspect all of our neighbourhoods, communal areas and landscaped areas on a monthly basis
- produce an action plan to address any issues found during monthly inspection within five days
- clean communal areas in blocks of flats weekly
- maintain landscaped areas on a regular programmed basis agreed with tenants
- work with police and other agencies to control unsupervised or dangerous dogs
- respond within 24 hours to reports of abandoned properties
- investigate all cases of illegal occupation and take swift action to remove unlawful occupants
- remove hate graffiti (racist, homophobic etc) within 24 hours
- remove other graffiti within two working days.

Anti Social Behaviour

We will:

- act to prevent and discourage anti social behaviour (asb)
- respond in a sensitive, proportionate and consistent manner
- make the process easy to use by accepting reports of asb by telephone, letter,
 - e-mail or in person
- provide an interpreter and translate documents where necessary to ensure equality of access to services
- acknowledge all cases of asb and log them into our asb database within 24 working hours of receiving the report
- offer you the choice to speak to an officer of the same sex
- respond within 24 working hours where there is a risk of violence and/or damage to property
- respond within five working days to all other reports of asb
- interview the alleged perpetrator, with your permission, within five working days
- discuss and agree a plan of action within two working days of this and confirm this in writing
- provide an incident diary or Dictaphone for recording of all incidents
- investigate objectively and consider all possible remedies for resolving asb including independent mediation, legal action, family intervention tenancies, possession proceedings and work with other agencies
- enhance security where necessary and in exceptional circumstances provide a mobile phone for emergency calls

- keep you informed throughout
- offer support and advice to victims and witnesses along with other agencies
- ask for your feedback through a satisfaction survey
- measure our compliance with the RESPECT standard for housing management through an annual compliance statement and action plan.

Racial Harassment and Hate Crimes

We will:

- respond to all reports of racial harassment or hate crime within 24 hours of receiving the report
- support any tenant experiencing harassment and take appropriate action against those committing harassment
- improve security to the property, when necessary,
- when required, issue a mobile phone with access to emergency services
- work with other agencies to prevent harassment occurring
- arrange counselling if required with other support organisations
- provide a fortnightly confidential hate crimes surgery.

Domestic Abuse/Violence

We will:

- offer a private interview with no appointment necessary
- offer same sex staff to give advice and conduct interviews
- keep everything discussed confidential at all times
- provide details of other support agencies
- give advice on emergency accommodation.

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Resident Involvement

We will:

- provide easy to understand information on your home, our services and our business
- actively promote resident involvement and consultation and offer a range of options to become involved
- seek your views on how our services affect you, your home, and neighbourhood and how these can be improved
- provide you with opportunities to directly influence the way we work and shape our future services
- share decision making with you, our staff and Board
- provide support, advice and funding for local tenants and residents groups in our neighbourhoods
- pay out of pocket expenses, including child care costs, to all tenants and residents attending our meetings or consultation forums
- measure customer satisfaction with our overall services and individual services – including anti social behaviour, rents and complaints handling.

Support Service

We will:

- ensure that we offer accurate and up to date service information
- respond to all service referrals within five working days
- confirm in writing the outcome of all referral decisions
- refer you to appropriate, alternative services.



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Equality & Diversity

We will:

- publish a single equalities scheme and action plan which complies with our statutory and regulatory duties
- carry out equality impact assessments on our services to prevent unintentional discrimination
- monitor our services to ensure that all customers receive equal access to our services irrespective of race, gender, disability, sexual orientation, religion or age
- ensure that Board members and staff receive regular training on equality and diversity, cultural awareness, hate crimes and racial harassment to ensure they are equipped to meet customers' special needs
- make our published information available upon request in a wide range of formats, including large print, Braille, audio tape and other languages
- make interpretation and translation services available and use interpreter or signer services where English is not the first language
- make our buildings accessible and compliant with the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA).



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Complaints

We will:

- operate a three stage complaints service
- acknowledge your complaint within two working days at each stage, with a summary of your complaint, the name of the investigating officer and confirmation of the stage your complaint is at
- respond in full within 10 working days at each stage. If we are unable to meet this deadline for reasons outside of our control we will write to tell you why and to confirm when you may expect a full response
- promote the complaints policy and procedure in newsletters, the tenants handbook, annual reports, and on Venture's website
- make the process easy to use by accepting complaints by telephone, letter, e-mail or in person
- welcome customer complaints and learn from them
- use plain language so the complaints process is easy to understand
- translate information (for those whose first language isn't English) and promote this service in leaflets
- provide information in a range of formats including Braille and audio recording (on request)
- visit you at home if you can't come to us for any reason
- offer confidential advice on how to make a complaint
- keep you informed of progress at all stages of the Complaints Procedure
- provide you with contact details for the Housing Ombudsman and Tenant Services Authority.

Monitoring and Responsibility

Performance against all standards will be measured and closely monitored through quarterly reports to our Customer and Property Services Committee. Performance against key standards will be published and reported to customers on a monthly basis in our office receptions and in our quarterly newsletter.

All Directors are required to produce performance information against targets within their own business area on a regular basis for the consideration of Committee, Board and customers.



Translation, braille, audio tape and large print available on request



0151 261 2100

ستترجم عند الطلب

ব্রাহ করলে এর অনুবাদ করানোর ব্যবস্থা করা হবে

若有需要時將會翻譯成中文。

अनुसोध करने पर अनुवाद करने की व्यवस्था की जाएगी।

ਬੇਨਤੀ ਕਰਨ 'ਤੇ ਤਰਜਮਾ ਕਰਵਾਇਆ ਜਾਵੇਗਾ

درخواست کرنے پر ترجمہ فراہم کیا جائے گا۔

Marka la sooda codsado ayaa laturjumi doona.

Si vous voudriez cette information dans une autre langue, ou dans un autre format tel que Braille ou grande copie svp contactez-nous sur **0151 261 2100**.

Si usted quisiera esta información en otra lengua, o en otro formato tal como Braille o ampliación de foto por favor éntrenos en contacto con en **0151 261 2100**.

Se você gostar desta informação em uma outra língua, ou em um outro formato tal como Braille ou a cópia grande por favor contate-nos em **0151 261 2100**.

Jesli Chcialbys otrzymac ta informacje w innym jezyku lub formacie np. jezyku Braille/teks napisany duza czcionka. Zadzwon pod numer **0151 261 2100**.

Contact details

Venture Housing Association Limited, Venture House
212H Boaler Street, Liverpool L6 6AE

Tenant helpline: **0151 261 2100** (Lines are open Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm)

www.vha.org.uk Email: **info@ventureha.co.uk**

Please note, if you call our helpline outside these hours a trained operator will offer advice and take a message which will be passed on to the Venture team on the next working day.

Repairs hotline: **0151 261 2199**

Rent payment helpline: **0800 389 4438**