



## Customer service standards

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### Introduction

Alamo Housing Co-operative aims to provide services that our members can be proud of. Our Customer Service Standards set out the standard of service that we intend to deliver.

We expect everyone who works for our co-operative to abide by these standards, including staff, agents and contractors.

Officers of the management committee will also aim to meet these standards when handling complaints and dealing with any other matters raised by the membership.

### Communication standards

#### When you contact us by telephone – we will:

Answer your call promptly and identify ourselves by name, or ask you to leave a message.

Return your call by the end of the next working day if you have left a message.

Aim to deal with your enquiry in full during the call.

Be polite and helpful when dealing with your enquiry.

#### When you send us a letter or email – we will:

Acknowledge your correspondence and write back to you within seven days. If we need more time to give you a full response, we will let you know.

Write to you in plain English.

#### When you visit the office - you will find:

It will be clean and tidy.

Access requires climbing a flight of stairs. If you are unable to manage stairs we will always make arrangements to visit you at home.

#### When we visit you at home – we will

Make appointments that are convenient for you.

Contact you if we are running late, have to cancel or make a return call.

Always respect your home and your beliefs.

#### If you are dissatisfied and make a complaint – we will:

Investigate and provide you with an explanation.

Respond within the time-scales set out in our *Complaints Policy*

Apologise if we have got things wrong.





### Participation standards

**We want all our members to take part – so we will:**

Write to you to give you adequate notice of general meetings.

Offer training to members to help them acquire the skills they need to participate.

Make sure that all our meetings are open and inclusive.

**Even if you aren't able to come every meeting, we will:**

Carry out surveys to establish your views.

Send you the minutes of meetings, new policies and other important information.

Consult with you about any repairs and improvements that may affect you.

### Privacy standards

**We will always:**

Respect your right to quiet enjoyment of your home.

Maintain strict confidentiality when you tell us something private.

Disclose personal information only to bodies that have a legal right to it.

Keep your personal details and other private information secure and provide you with access to the information we hold on you as required by the Data Protection Act.

### Equality standards

**We may ask you some questions so we know how best to get in touch:**

If there is any reason that we should contact you in a particular way. For instance if you prefer larger print, or if you don't hear well.

Whether you speak and read English. If you don't feel confident talking to us in English, we can arrange for an interpreter.

If your reading skills are poor we can explain things to you in person rather than sending you a letter.

**We record other information about members so we can be sure we are acting fairly:**

Your age and gender.

Whether you have any disabilities.

Your ethnicity, religion and sexual orientation (but only if you want to tell us).



### Repairs standards

The repairs standards apply to members living in permanent accommodation. We regret that we cannot guarantee that the homes of members living in shortlife housing will always meet these standards.

Our intention is that every member's home should be:

Secure, warm and weather-tight.

Equipped with a modern kitchen and bathroom.

Energy efficient and affordable to heat.

When you report a repair - we aim to:

Complete it within the time-scales set out in our *Repairs and Maintenance Policy*

Ensure that you can arrange an appointment with the contractor at to visit at a time of your convenience.

Carry out a quality job.

Maintain high standards of health and safety.

Where we are responsible for the common areas of buildings - we will:

Carry out regular inspections to make sure that everything is as it should be.

Identify and order repairs promptly.

Maintain any large trees.

If we are responsible for gas safety – we will:

Carry out an annual gas safety check on all the appliances in your home

Give you advance notice of the annual safety check

Provide you with a copy of the *Gas Safe* certificate.

The contractors we and our agents employ will:

Be reputable, honest and polite.

Provide identification when they arrive at your home.

Explain what work they are there to do and how long it will take.

Leave your home clean and tidy.

Ask you to sign the works order to say that they have completed the work satisfactorily.



### Rents standards

**We aim to make it easy for members to pay their rent - so we will:**

**Give you at least four weeks notice of the annual rent increase.**

**Send you a paying in book within 14 days of your request.**

**Accept payment by cheque, BACS or standing order.**

**Provide you with a rent statement four times each year.**

**If you fall behind with your rent - we will:**

**Contact you promptly to tell you how much you owe and what action we will take.**

**Agree a practical repayment plan.**

**Give you advice on income maximisation and how to obtain debt counselling if you need it.**

**Help you work out which welfare benefits you may be able to claim and explain what Universal Credit will mean for you.**