

HS 004A



**THE HAVEBURY HOUSING PARTNERSHIP
POLICY**

**CUSTOMER CARE
FOR
CONTRACTORS**

CUSTOMER CARE

1. Purpose

1.1 The aim of this policy is to ensure that Contractors working on behalf of Havebury Housing Partnership (hereafter called Havebury) reflect good practice and have a clear customer focus. This Policy is a version of Policy HS004 applicable to contractors undertaking work or providing services on behalf of Havebury.

1.2 Customer Care will be described as:

- Treating customers and colleagues with respect and courtesy
- Ensuring that the people who pay for the services provided by Havebury through their rents or leasehold service charges, receive an efficient and satisfactory service
- Ensuring that other organisations who have an interest in Havebury also receive an efficient and effective service
- Involving the customer, listening to and considering their views with regard to the provision of services
- Understanding customers and meeting their needs whenever possible
- Providing clear and concise information and explanations to customers
- Providing clear methods for customers to communicate with the contractor

1.3 All contractors will inform tenants about the services they receive and the standards of these services.

1.4 Contractors will adhere to Havebury's Service standards that have been set and publicised to tenants. They are important to the organisation so that performance can be measured against them.

1.5 Contractors should operate a complaints procedure aligned to Havebury's complaints procedure.

1.6 Discrimination in any form will not be tolerated by Havebury.

2. Scope

2.1 This policy extends to all Havebury's customers. Havebury views its customers as being "individuals, groups of people, or organisations who pay for, receive services from, and hold expectations of Havebury as a service provider". Customers are defined as being:

- tenants
- leaseholders
- shared owners
- licensees
- housing applicants
- local authorities with whom Havebury works
- organisations and their clients to whom a service is provided
- partner agencies

3. Responsibilities

3.1 Day to day responsibility lies with the Chief Executive and the Management Team. The Director of Operations will be nominated "Controlling Authority".

3.3 Issue control: The management of duly authorised policies and procedures and amendments will be the responsibility of the Director of Operations who will ensure they are circulated to appropriate individuals and they are kept updated with the current versions.

4. Method

- A contractor delivering services on behalf of Havebury will deliver customer care as outlined in 1.2 by ensuring its employees are trained and committed to providing excellent customer care.
- All employees will be trained to deliver excellent customer care.
- Training will be delivered to new employees at induction and at regular intervals throughout their employment.

- Contractors will recognise that there are tenants and customers who have specific needs relating to communication and service delivery. All employees will receive training to raise their awareness to allow them to deliver services appropriately.
- Contractors employees must be uniformed and wear identity badges upon which the company name and employee's name are clearly visible.
- Contractors are expected to inform tenants in writing at least 10 working days in advance of any planned works being undertaken.
- Contractors will provide an out-of-hours telephone service, for emergencies as appropriate.
- All contractors will be required to adhere to the Customer Care Policy.

5. Appointments

- Contractors are expected to make appointments with customers which as far as is practicable are convenient for the tenant. If necessary appointments out of normal working hours will be available.
- If, due to unforeseen circumstances such as employee illness, an appointment cannot be kept, the customer will be notified as soon as possible.
- If a visit is made to a customer's home, and access cannot be obtained, a card will be left indicating the time the contractor called and how to contact them.
- Where customers are on the Lone Working Register, any home visit will be carried out in accordance with Havebury's Lone Worker Policy.
- Compensation of actual earnings lost up to a **maximum of £70 per day** will be paid where a tenant or leaseholder has taken time off work to allow access and where an appointment has been made the appointment for the same repair has been not kept by the contractor **on more than two occasions.**

6. Confidentiality

All interviews, correspondence and personal information will be treated in strictest confidence and in accordance with the Data Protection Act.

7. Customer Service Standards

7.1 Havebury has a set of customer service standards which all contractors delivering works or services on its behalf are expected to adhere to. The current service standards for 2014-15 are as follows:

- Answer telephone within 6 rings/10 seconds
- Call customers back within 2 working days of their call
- Give name of company and name of employee when answering telephone
- Acknowledge letters within 2 working days
- Acknowledge emails & website enquiries within 1 working day
- Respond fully to all queries within 10 working days
- Make appointments with customers that are convenient to them
- Keep appointments within 10 minutes of agreed time

(Or notify customers in advance if the visit is going to be earlier or later than 10 minutes of agreed time.)

8. Home visits

Contractor's employees, when undertaking visits to customers homes will:

- Show identity card to customer before entering property
- Wear an appropriate uniform with contractors name clearly displayed
- Treat the customer's home, household members and possessions with respect being sensitive to any special needs within the household
- Not play radios or use the facilities (e.g. toilet) without first seeking the consent of the customer
- Park vehicles at or around the property with consideration for the customer and other residents

- Behave appropriately at all times whilst at the property, refraining from any actions or language which may be deemed offensive
- Take necessary precautions to avoid damage to possessions, furnishings decorations etc. - if it occurs, to make good
- Use “overshoes”, dust sheets and protective sheeting to minimise dirt and inconvenience as far as is practical
- Clean up and leave property as found
- Observe Health & Safety requirements including the use of relevant PPE and advise the customer of any Health & Safety requirements applicable to them
- Report back to Havebury on any damage which could not be resolved on site to be considered for other remedies or an insurance claim
- Report back to Havebury’s Contract Manager any cause for concern relating to the property (e.g. any defects noted) or household (e.g. vulnerable adult, or unsanitary conditions)
- Act in accordance with any Lone Worker notifications provided by Havebury

9. **Equality & Diversity**

The contractor shall at all times observe the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 and shall provide the services in a manner consistent with Havebury’s Equality and Diversity Policy.

10. **Monitoring**

- Havebury will test customer care and service standards by a variety of appropriate methods, e.g. mystery shopping, telephone surveys, ad hoc surveys of service users, STAR survey
- Contractors will operate a feedback and complaints policy which allows customers and tenants to comment both positively and negatively on services/work provided.