



Customer Charter Standards

delivering promises, improving lives

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Introduction from the Chief Executive



As an organisation Wakefield and District Housing (WDH) is committed to improving the lives of our tenants.

As part of this we have developed these Customer Charter Standards – our Local Offer – which clearly sets out the level of services you can expect from us.

It has been created in consultation with tenants and during the summer of 2010, employees hand delivered a copy to each and every property to ask for feedback on the draft document. As a result we received an overwhelming response - 95% of those who responded said it meets their needs as a Local Offer.

To ensure we meet the standards we have developed a robust monitoring framework which will clearly show our performance against each of the standards set – our pledges to tenants. Results will be published on a quarterly basis on our website www.wdh.co.uk, in our tenant newsletter, WDH News, and in our Annual Report

If you think we are not meeting any of the standards outlined or have any comments on the information contained in this Customer Charter Standards, please contact us on 0845 8 507 507 or email: communications@wdh.co.uk.

Kevin Dodd
Chief Executive

Customer Charter Standards

WDH aims to deliver the best possible services to meet your needs. To achieve this we have five principles for customer service which we apply to everything.

We will:

- complete everything right first time;
- make sure that all customers feel valued and respected, recognising individual needs and understanding differences;
- make sure that we and contractors we employ deliver our services in a way that does not discriminate against any individual or group either directly or indirectly;
- respect your confidentiality at all times and acknowledge your right to access the personal information we hold about you; and
- give you the opportunity to be involved in shaping the way we deliver our services and helping identify new ones.

All through this Customer Charter Standards you will see information boxes. These set out the standard of service delivery that you can expect to receive from us.

We will continually check to make sure that these service standard targets are being met. Our performance against these standards will be published in WDH News and on our website.

Contacting WDH

Our aim is:

- to enable you to contact us at a time, a place and in a way that is most convenient to you;
- to treat you with courtesy and respect;
- to deal with your enquiry promptly and efficiently;
- treat you fairly in line with our policies;
- take account of any special requirements you may have;
- respect your privacy and confidentiality; and
- make sure we provide you with the same high level of service however you contact us.

You can access all the services provided by WDH:

- by phone, to our OneCALL service;
- in person, by visiting one of our service access points (SAPs);
- electronically at one of our service information points;
- in writing, by either letter or email;
- through our Care Link service;
- by asking us to visit you at home; and
- through our website at www.wdh.co.uk

When you contact us we recognise that personal information is confidential and support the principles of data protection law.

If you wish to see the personal information we hold about you please send us your request in writing and we will tell you what the charges are and the steps you need to follow.

All requests for personal information will be dealt with within 40 days of receipt, in line with the current legislation.

through OneCALL

OneCALL is our central point for enquiries made by phone and all electronic means. It is available 24 hours a day, every day of the week and you can contact us on 0845 8 507 507 (calls to OneCALL may be recorded for training purposes).

The service provides advice and assistance, and aims to resolve most of your problems through a single phone call, on issues such as:

- reporting antisocial behaviour including contacting our out of hours visiting service;
- repairs reporting and enquiries about existing repairs;
- rent payments and rent account information;
- estate environment and grounds maintenance issues;
- property improvement programme;
- lettings enquiries;
- Homeseach expressions of interest for properties;

- general information on any WDH service.

You will not need to use another phone number unless you are dealing with a specific employee about your enquiry then you will be given a direct phone number to call.

When you contact us by phone we aim to:

- Answer your call within 20 seconds.
- Tell you the name of our organisation and the person answering your call.
- Resolve your enquiry there and then. If we cannot we will get the appropriate person to ring you by the next working day. If you are vulnerable we will make special arrangements to resolve your problem within four hours.

All calls will be answered within 20 seconds.

Other services that complement our OneCALL service include:

- online repairs reporting on our website at www.wdh.co.uk - choose **log a repair** on the home page and then the **online repairs reporting form**;
- online application forms for WDH services at www.wdh.co.uk - choose **feedback** on the home page and fill in the online form; and

- Homesearch, our choice based lettings service at www.wdhomesearch.co.uk

in person

To contact us in person you can visit any one of our SAPs. A list of addresses is on page 21.

When you visit one of our SAPs we will:

- treat you as an individual with respect and courtesy;
- make sure you are seen within 10 minutes and your enquiry is dealt with by the right person; if we are busy and cannot not see you within this time we will apologise and give you the reason;
- see you in a private interview room if you ask;
- make sure that the office is comfortable and accessible to all and will advertise the operation of a hearing loop to assist people with hearing impairments;
- make sure there is easy access to Language Line if you wish to speak to us in a language that is not English;
- offer a full range of factsheets about all services that we provide and any services we provide on behalf of Wakefield Council, such as access to Housing Benefits;
- provide a freephone service so you can phone other WDH services free of charge;

- clearly advertise our opening times and display notices about holiday closures;
- offer a range of methods for you to pay your rent or any charges you may owe us;
- display up to date information about community activities on a Community Notice Board; and
- provide access to computers for online ordering of repairs and access to Homesearch.

In our SAPs all our customers will be attended to within 10 minutes.

in writing, by letter or email

When you contact us by letter we will:

- date stamp it with the date it arrived;
- provide you with a reply within seven working days; if we cannot meet this deadline we will let you know and tell you when you can expect one;
- make sure the reply does not contain any 'jargon' and can be easily understood; and
- give you a response in larger type, a different language or a different format if you let us know what you require.

When you contact us by email through the internet we will:

- deal with your enquiry in seven working days; if we cannot meet this deadline we will let you know and tell you when you can expect one;
- make sure the reply does not contain any 'jargon' and can be easily understood; and
- give you a response in larger type, a different language or a different format if you let us know what you need.

We will respond to you within seven working days.

through our Care Link service

Care Link is our telecare personal alarm service that is available at all times. If you are connected to this service we will provide you with a security system to enable you to live a more independent life in your home. It will allow you to access emergency services and other services WDH provide.

When you contact us through our Care Link service we will:

- have specially trained employees answering your call;
- answer your call 24 hours a day, every day of the week, within 15 seconds of your call coming through; and

- contact the emergency services, the doctor or another person or service you may need help from.

To enable us to maintain a high level of confidence in our Care Link service and make sure they are working correctly we will:

- test the equipment before we let a new tenancy;
- test links to each Care Link scheme every evening; and
- review the details we hold about you every year and ask you to comment on the level of service you have received.

All Care Link calls will be answered within 15 seconds.

by asking us to visit you at home

When we visit you at home we will:

- respect your home and culture;
- arrange a mutually convenient time for the visit - if we have arranged a time with you for a visit, and due to something unforeseen, we cannot make it we will contact you to let you know;
- visit you out of office hours if there are special circumstances;
- carry and show you our identity badge when we meet you;
- explain things in a clear way that does not contain any 'jargon' and can be easily understood;

- help you to arrange for someone to be present with you; this could be a friend or family member to help and support you or interpret where English is not your first language;
- leave you a card telling you how to contact us to make another appointment if you are not at home when we call; and
- carry a portable induction loop system for people we know have hearing difficulties.

at a service information point

To contact us electronically you can use one of our service information points. A list of where they are located is shown on page 21.

When you use one of our service information points you will be able to access all WDH services by either a freephone or by using a touch screen monitor to access our website.

Also available at the service information point are a range of up to date factsheets and news letters.

Service information points are located in community centres. Centre employees have been trained and will offer you help if you experience any difficulty.

through the internet

You can contact us through our website www.wdh.co.uk on the 'feedback' link and selecting one of the following.

- **General enquiries**
If you have a general enquiry about our services.
- **Complaints**
If you are dissatisfied with our standards of service, something we have done or something we have failed to do. We would welcome your comments, as they help us make changes so that we can serve you better. We are committed to offering the best services possible to our tenants and to residents of Wakefield and the surrounding district.
- **Compliments**
If you think we're doing a good job, or if there's an aspect of our service you particularly like.
- **Website feedback**
If you would like to tell us what you think about our website. Can you find things easily? Is anything confusing? Is there some information you think we might have missed?
- **Reporting antisocial behaviour**
If you want to report antisocial behaviour or nuisance in your area. Include as much information as you can, including date, time, description of the incident and so on. The more you tell us, the easier it is for us to help you.

- **Engagement and partnerships**
If you would like to contact the Engagement Team or tell us about a new idea for a future Tenant Challenge Day.

When we receive your contact we will deal with it in the appropriate timescale highlighted in this Charter.

Keeping you informed

We believe it is important that we keep you informed about the services we provide for you and how we are performing. We will do this in a range of different ways to make sure that the information we provide is meaningful and easy to understand.

We will be open and honest in all our information. We will:

- send out WDH News, our tenant magazine, three times a year, or more if there are specific things we need to tell you – this would include information about our Care Link service and information on the areas where work on the improvement programme will begin;
- provide a range of information at our SAPs and through our website, www.wdh.co.uk;
- produce an annual report of our performance and deliver a summary to every tenant and leaseholder;

- increase access to our website through the provision of computer equipment in independent living schemes, community facilities and tenants' and residents' groups;

Our Customer Charter and Annual Report will be published every year.

Our tenant newsletter will be published three times a year.

- send you a new Rent Information Card at the end of March each year, which will tell you how much rent and any service charges including your water rates, you will have to pay for the next financial year and when the 'rent free' weeks are. You can use this card to mark on when you have paid your rent. This card will not be used to receipt any payment you make;
- send you a Rent Statement three times a year showing you how much rent you have been charged, what you have paid, and any you still owe;
- tell you what help is available should you fall into arrears and the actions we will take to recover the debt; and
- send you a letter in March each year letting you know what your new payments will be if you pay by Direct Debit.

Help and advice is available on our dedicated money matters website at www.askted.org.uk

All tenants will receive a Rent Notification and Rent Information Card once a year and a Rent Statement three times a year.

If you are a leaseholder or an owner occupier we will:

- contact you before any improvements or repair work over the value of £250 that will affect your service charges is carried out - this is in line with statutory requirements;
- provide you with copies of supporting invoices and repair orders when you ask;
- keep you informed of future expenditure plans for your area; and
- encourage you to take an active role in monitoring the standards of service we provide, including the services provided by our grounds maintenance contractors.

If we are planning to carry out estate improvements in an area we will:

- consult and involve you in any work we plan to do that could affect your home; and
- undertake community consultation in advance of any regeneration or new housing schemes within the local area.

If you are the tenant of one of our shops we will:

- consult and involve you in any work or proposal that may have an impact on your business.

involving you in the service

WDH is committed to enabling everybody who uses our services to give their views and get involved. We are continually looking at how we can improve the way we consult and involve people using innovative ways to publicise these events.

There are a range of opportunities for customers to get involved including:

- giving you the opportunity to apply to be a member of WDH's Board or an LMC;
- responding to our tenant or leaseholder annual survey;
- holding local engagement events for individuals to discuss local issues with LMC members;
- organising service review groups enabling you to participate in reviewing WDH policies, procedures and services;
- arranging tenant challenge days and other events to consult on any changes proposed for services and to help us continuously improve existing services;
- holding one Leaseholder Forum each year;
- using new technology as a consultation and involvement tool to give you more opportunities to have your say; and
- holding one off sounding board events.

When holding events we will:

- where possible make sure that the place where it is being held is suitable for people with mobility problems and caters for special requirements; and
- inform you of any results from consultation.

One Leaseholder Forum will be held every year.

We provide help and advice to our tenant and resident groups, in line with our Partnership Agreement. This includes:

- start up grants;
- help with printing facilities; and
- legal, financial and other advice.

More information can be found on our website www.wdh.co.uk or by phoning the Engagement Team on 01977 724668.

Making a complaint

WDH will do everything possible to get things right first time. In the event that we get it wrong or you are unhappy with the service provided, we have a clear three stage complaints procedure. If you need any help to make a complaint our employees will offer you any help you may need.

Throughout this process we will:

- apologise instantly if we have made a mistake;

- undertake thorough investigations into your complaint;
- keep you informed at all times;
- consider a range of options to resolve your complaint;
- view your complaint as an opportunity to learn and make service improvements in the future; and
- make sure that confidentiality is maintained at all times in line with the Data Protection Act 1998.
- allow you to apply through our website, www.wdhomeSearch.co.uk
- provide individual help and advice in completing the application form when you ask;
- register you on the Homesearch scheme within three working days after we have received all the necessary information;
- write and let you know your membership number and banding;
- publish the results of the previous weeks allocations so you know how long members have waited for properties;
- contact you after six months if you have not made an expression of interest in one of our properties during that time to see if you need help making an expression of interest;
- cancel your membership of the scheme if after six months you have not made an expression of interest and failed to reply to our letter;
- bring all WDH properties that become available for reallocation up to the agreed letting standard before they are advertised; and
- advertise all our available properties at SAPs and on our website at www.wdhomeSearch.co.uk

All formal complaints will be dealt with within:

- 10 working days for Stage 1;
- 15 working days for Stage 2; and
- 30 working days for Stage 3.

Finding a home

Our aim is to advertise our available properties through Homesearch our choice based lettings scheme. This enables individuals to make informed choices about where they want to live.

general applications

To achieve this we will:

- have applications forms available at our SAPs; you can also request one to be posted to you by phoning OneCALL on 0845 8 507 507, Homesearch on 0844 9 020 202 or through our website at www.wdhomeSearch.co.uk

The period when you can express an interest in an advertised property closes on Wednesday evenings.

All Homesearch applications will be registered within three working days.

All results will be published weekly.

sign up process

If you have been successful in being allocated a property we will:

- offer you the opportunity to view it;
- advise you of the standards the property will be let to;
- give you information about any work that is still to be done to the property and answer any other questions you may have; and
- tell you how things work such as the central heating, where the water stop tap and gas and electric meters and turn off valves are.

We will also ask you what format you would like to receive information about your tenancy. This could include:

- CD;
- internet; and
- printed copy.

We will try to help you if you have any other specific requirements due to disability or language barriers.

If you accept the property we will make you a formal offer in writing. This will include details of the rent and any other charges and the date the tenancy will start.

If you accept the offer we will make an appointment for you to sign a tenancy agreement and complete any other documents that may be necessary.

When you come to sign the tenancy agreement we will also confirm:

- **Who you are**

This will include checking the documents you provided when you applied to become a Homesearch member and taking a photograph of everyone who is signing the tenancy agreement. These will be held and used to detect future tenancy fraud.

- **Any lifestyle issues**

It is important that appropriate support is available at the start of your tenancy. To enable us to meet any requirements we will ask you a few simple questions about any:

- health issues;
- financial worries;
- training and employment opportunities; and
- support and development of young people in your household.

- **Any help needed to improve your independence**

Offer you advice about our Care Link service if you are looking for increased independence in your new home.

We will provide you with:

- a copy of our Tenants Handbook, in a choice of formats, which tells you what WDH expects from you along with a range of handy hints to help you with your tenancy.

Before we ask you to sign your tenancy agreement we will explain your rights and responsibilities. We will help you if you have any questions.

When you have signed your tenancy agreement you have become the tenant of your new home.

We will then help you to complete and sign a range of other documents including a Direct Debit application to pay your rent, a Housing Benefit application if appropriate and consent forms to help us support you with this application. These and any other documents you will be asked to complete and sign are explained in your 'Welcome to Your New Home' booklet.

We will also make an arrangement for an estate officer to visit you at your new home within 20 days of the start of your tenancy.

This introductory visit gives both you and us the opportunity to discuss any issues about your tenancy.

All new tenants will be visited after 20 days of becoming a tenant and a further three times during the first year.

moving to a different home

You may wish to move to a different home. You can do this in two different ways.

- Apply to become a member of our Homesearch scheme, this process is explained on page 10.
- Apply for an assignment by way of exchange. Please ask at any SAP as they will have a register of people who also wish to exchange their property to see if there is a suitable match. When you have found someone suitable please complete and return the appropriate documents to us and we will let you know our decision within 42 days.

The outcome of all applications for assignments by way of exchange will be given within 42 days of receiving the request.

Money matters

paying your rent and any other service charges

To make it as easy as possible to make payments we can arrange a Direct Debit straight from your bank. This can be done on either a monthly, fortnightly or weekly basis.

If you do not have a bank account we can help you to set one up through our partnership with White Rose Credit Union.

using your debit or credit card you can pay:

- over the phone to our OneCALL service 24 hours a day, every day of the week on 0845 8 507 507;
- through our website at www.wdh.co.uk; and
- using phone banking at your own bank.

using your rent swipe card you can make payments:

- by cash, cheque or debit card at any Post Office;
- by cash or debit card at any retail outlet displaying the PayZone logo; and
- by cash at most of our SAPs;
- by cheque or by debit or credit card at all our SAPs.

If you ask us to check your rent we will tell you:

- how your rent has been worked out;
- what you have paid; and
- what you owe.

If you have paid too much rent, we will refund it within 10 working days of approval or hold it against any arrears or debts you owe.

Any agreed overpayments will be refunded within 10 working days.

You can request a copy of your Rent Statement to be sent to you by phoning OneCALL.

You can also collect a statement at any of our SAPs if you have proof of identity, otherwise we will post it to you within one working day.

money management

WDH expects you to pay the rent charged for the property you live in. As well as the rent for the property, you will be expected to pay any service charges, water charges or any other amounts, shown on your Rent Information Card.

We are working towards reducing financial hardship by promoting alternative low cost credit, affordable home contents insurance and other financial services including basic bank accounts and credit unions. These services are promoted through our widely advertised 'Money Matters' sessions held in our SAPs and other convenient locations.

We will work towards providing alternatives to the high cost credit lenders, including loan sharks and other doorstep lenders targeting our estates.

If you are having problems paying your rent we will:

- help you by doing a financial assessment to make sure you are making the most of your income and receiving correct benefit entitlements;
- advise you of all the alternative methods of payment;

- make sure that you are paying the correct amount of rent;
- help you to claim Housing and Council Tax Benefit;
- explore ways in which you can reduce your outgoings; and
- with your consent, make referral to an appropriate agency or service to arrange for additional support and see if you are entitled to a hardship grant.

If you are in arrears with your rent we will:

- contact you by various means including letters, phone, text message or home visits;
- advise you of how much you owe and the action we intend to take;
- provide you with appropriate levels of support and guidance throughout the process;
- treat you in a fair and consistent manner;
- consider making an appointment for you to attend an office interview to discuss any arrears and problems you are experiencing;
- where instalment arrangements are agreed, continually monitor and review the payments being made;
- put you in touch with various debt advice and counselling agencies in the district; and
- engage with specialist partnering agencies to try and make sure you sustain your tenancy.

If legal action is required to recover the debt you could lose your home.

The costs of carrying out this action will be added to your rent account.

We will continue to recover the debt even if you leave the property or are evicted. This could include the appointment of external debt collection companies.

Taking care of your home and environment

our repair service

We will provide you with a well maintained home. Wherever possible, we will try to complete the repairs you order on the first visit to your home and on a convenient day and time.

To help us maintain your home we will provide you with a Repairs Handbook.

You can use this to help identify, in sufficient detail, the work that is needed when you report a repair.

You can request a repair:

- 24 hours a day, every day of the week through our OneCALL service (0845 8 507 507);
- at one of our SAPs; and
- online at www.wdh.co.uk

When you have requested a repair we will:

- tell you approximately how long you will have to wait for the repair to be completed;

- contact you on the phone number you have given us, to ask when it is convenient for us to do the work;
- complete your repair within 24 hours if it is an emergency; and
- complete all other repair requests within an average of 10 working days.

If you are dissatisfied with the service you can ring OneCALL on 0845 8 507 507 or call in at one of our SAPs or you can report it through our website at www.wdh.co.uk

We will offer the following resolution to any issues you may raise by:

- taking immediate action to resolve your problem where we can;
- making an appointment if it can wait for the next working day; and
- arranging for a team leader to visit you within three working days if you are not satisfied with our repairs service - we will let you know the outcome of their visit within 10 working days.

All repairs will be completed within:

- 24 hours for emergencies;
- an average of 10 days for routine.

All repairs will be completed right first time.

gas servicing

We will service gas appliances in your home every 12 months. As your landlord we have a legal requirement to carry out this work.

We will contact you before our visit and arrange a convenient time for the annual service.

WDH is an official member of 'Gas Safe'. This is the national body regulating all work undertaken in the gas industry.

All gas heating appliances will be serviced every year.

taking care of the environment

We will strive to make sure that we take a range of actions to deal with environmental issues that affect the appearance of our estates as quickly as possible even if we do not own the land.

We aim to create environments that are clean and tidy. To achieve this we will:

- inspect all gardens and land regularly and take appropriate action; if you are struggling to maintain your garden we may be able to help;
- provide estate impact teams to make sure estates are kept clean and tidy;

- provide a range of caretaking and cleaning services to keep communal areas in multi storey apartments clean;
- report abandoned vehicles to Wakefield Council immediately requesting their removal;
- hold an annual garden competition to encourage tenants to maintain their gardens;
- reglaze damaged windows in properties and only use other methods where this is not possible; and
- offer 'Estate Walks' to LMC members and tenant groups.
- work with other agencies to make sure appropriate action is taken against those who commit nuisance and antisocial behaviour;
- arrange all visits at a location of your choice;
- keep you informed of the progress made to resolve your complaint;
- involve our partners who provide support to help both tenants and witnesses;
- investigate all hate incident reports received at SAPs within 24 hours; and
- remove racist and offensive graffiti within 24 hours and repair vandalism to WDH property as quickly as possible.

antisocial behaviour and nuisance complaints

Our aim is to provide you with a clean, safe and secure environment that you are proud to call home. If you experience antisocial behaviour or wish to make a complaint about nuisance we will:

- offer a 24 hour, every day of the week support service and access to our out of hours Antisocial Behaviour Team through OneCALL on 0845 8 507 507;
- react immediately, in a location of your choice - if your complaint is serious we will contact West Yorkshire Police to report the incident if needed;
- contact you within 24 hours to agree an appropriate course of action if there is no immediate threat;

All antisocial behaviour complainants will be contacted within 24 hours and then reviewed to ensure that they are kept informed of progress.

All racist or offensive graffiti will be removed from WDH properties within 24 hours of being reported.

fire safety

WDH recognise the importance of fire safety in your home. To reduce the risks to you and any other person who lives in your home we will:

- arrange for a fire safety check on your home; West Yorkshire Fire Service can be contacted on a 0800 587 4536 their 24 hour freephone number - the local fire station will contact you within one week of a phone call to arrange a visit to your property;

- fit a smoke alarm in all properties brought up to the 'Wakefield Standard';
- inform all tenants of multi storey apartments of what to do in case of fire and how to prevent it - leaflets will be given to all new tenants and posters prominently displayed in the foyer of each block; and

All fire safety equipment in multi storey apartments, including fire doors, signage and dry risers, will be checked every week.

A full test and inspection is carried out on dry risers every six months.

- inform all residents of independent living schemes of what to do in case of a fire and how to prevent it and carry out a full fire safety practice evacuation every six months.

A full practice fire evacuation of each independent living scheme will be carried out every six months.

Improvements to your home

major improvements

We recognise that when we carry out major improvements to your home this will cause disruption to you whilst the work is being completed. To make this as easy as possible for you, we will:

- give you 12 months notice before the work is due and at least three weeks notice before the work starts;

- contact you individually so we can cater for any special needs you may have;
- give you a choice of certain fixtures and fittings and in some instances give you the chance to pay for enhanced features;
- discuss with you possible arrangements if you cannot live in your home while the work is done or if you need respite during the day; this will include special provision for families;
- correct any defective work or damage we cause within two working days of being notified;
- discuss the decoration service and allowance that is available when the work is complete;
- involve you in planning any environmental works to your area that complement the work to your home; and
- visit you when the work is completed to see if you are happy with it; if you are not we will do our best to put it right and we will learn from any errors we have made.

All tenants will be given 12 months notice before work is due and at least three weeks notice in writing before improvement work starts.

All properties will be handed over successfully first time.

If any defective work is identified it will be corrected within two days.

improving or altering your home yourself

If you want to make improvements or alterations to your home and have completed an application to do so we will:

- let you know our decision within 10 working days whether or not you can go ahead;
- visit your home to check the work you want to do if we need to - we will contact you and arrange a mutually convenient time;
- not unreasonably refuse to let you carry out improvements or alterations to your home;
- request that you tell us when the work is finished so we can inspect what you have done to see if it is alright; and
- confirm within five working days that the work is completed satisfactorily.

All requests for improvements or alterations will be responded to within 10 working days and an inspection of completed works within five working days of notification.

Special services

living in a multi storey apartment

We recognise that our tenants who live in multi storey apartments, above three storeys, will have particular needs. We will meet these needs by:

- providing you with a caretaker who can give you advice and help in an emergency and give you information about services such as milk and postal deliveries - the caretaker will also keep the shared areas clean and equipment working correctly;
- maintaining an entry phone system to the main entrance so residents are in control of who they allow into the block; and
- making special arrangements with you when you are moving in or out of the block.

independent living schemes

This service aims to help people keep their independence, with support in a safe, secure and clean environment.

If you are an independent living scheme tenant you can expect that:

- before we offer you a tenancy we will give you the chance to meet and talk to the scheme manager and look around the property;
- we will provide support 24 hours a day, seven days a week through our Care Link service and individually agreed Support Plans;

- if you are vulnerable and would like a visit at the weekend, you can ask for a visit from our mobile scheme manager service, through your scheme manager;
- you and your visitors may be able to use available guest rooms for a small charge; and
- you will be able to use the shared laundry with washing and drying facilities, if there is one in your scheme.

All residents of independent living schemes will have access to appropriate support 24 hours a day.

extra care housing

This accommodation offers additional services to independent living such as:

- a three course midday meal, every day; and
- domestic assistance for tasks such as vacuuming and laundry.

adaptations

If you have a disability, long term medical condition or difficulty doing everyday tasks such as bathing or climbing stairs, we may be able to help you by providing adaptations to your home.

If you need a minor adaptation, such as a grab rail or additional stair rail, an occupational therapist will assess your needs. We will aim to do this within 28 days.

If you need a structural alteration to your home, such as the installation of a shower or a ramp to your main entrance, Wakefield Council will carry out the assessment. They will aim to carry out this assessment within 28 days.

When the adaptation requirements have been agreed with Wakefield Council, we aim to complete the work within 12 weeks of the referral being made to us. Where this is not possible we will aim complete the work in six months. We will keep you informed of the progress at all stages.

If it is not possible to make the alterations to your home we will discuss alternative options including re-housing.

WDH do not fit equipment such as stair lifts and lifting hoists. However we will help you to apply to Wakefield Council for a Disabled Facilities Grant to pay for the installation through an approved contractor.

All adaptation applicants will be assessed within 28 days of application.

All work Wakefield Council recommend will be completed within six months of the referral.

buying or leasing homes or land

If you have a preserved right to buy or right to acquire and you wish to purchase either the freehold or leasehold of a home we will:

- provide you with detailed information and an appropriate application form within seven working days of your request; and
- make a decision on your application within four weeks from when we receive all relevant information and are allowed access to your home.

If you make a request to us to purchase or lease a piece of land we own, we will:

- respond to your application within four weeks.

Application forms for buying or leasing homes or land will be provided within seven working days.

All applications for preserved right to buy or right to acquire will receive a decision within four weeks of request providing we have all the relevant information.

Useful contact information

OneCALL

Merefield House, Whistler Drive,
Castleford WF10 5HX
Phone:0845 8 507 507

email

onecall@wdh.co.uk

service access points

Lupset, Ossett and Horbury

Lupset Service Access Point
2-4 George a Green Road,
Lupset, Wakefield WF2 8HN

Ossett Service Access Point
Town Hall, Ossett WF5 8BE

Castleford, Airedale and Normanton

Airedale Service Access Point
Stansfield Road, Airedale,
Castleford WF10 3BY

Castleford Service Access Point
23 Carlton Street, Castleford
WF10 1BG

Normanton Service Access Point
10 High Street, Normanton
WF6 2AB

Pontefract, Knottingley and Featherstone

Pontefract Service Access Point
1 Horsefair, Pontefract WF8 1PE

Hemsworth, South Elmsall and Crofton

South Elmsall Service Access Point
Exchange Street, South Elmsall,
Pontefract WF9 2RD

Wakefield City and Rural

Eastmoor Service Access Point
Stanley Street, Eastmoor,
Wakefield WF1 4NB

Wakefield Service Access Point
19-25 Wood Street,
Wakefield WF1 2EL

service information points

Havercroft and Ryhill Community
Learning Centre
Mulberry Place, Ryhill WF4 2BD

Cedars Business Centre
Barnsley Road, Hemsworth
WF9 4PU

Kinsley and Fitzwilliam Community
Resource Centre
Wakefield Road, Kinsley, Pontefract
WF9 5BP

Glossary of terms for Customer Charter Standards

Care Link

Care Link is an emergency community alarm service, which is available 24 hours a day, for tenants and residents in the Wakefield district.

Homesearch

WDH's new lettings service where members can express an interest in available WDH properties every week.

Leaseholder

A person who does not own the land their home is built on, and pays a ground rent for a fixed number of years. Tenants who live in apartments and buy them from their landlord are called leaseholders.

Leaseholder Forum

An annual event for people who have bought their flats to meet WDH employees and ensure that their views are taken into account when looking at service improvement.

Local Management Committees (LMCs)

There is an LMC in each of WDH's five management areas. Tenants, council representatives and independent members have equal representation on the LMC. They consider local spending priorities and issues of concern to the local community and feed their views to the WDH Board.

OneCALL

OneCALL is WDH's central contact point through which tenants can order a repair, pay a bill, report problems such as antisocial behaviour or make any general enquiry about housing.

PayZone

PayZone outlets are available at retail outlets where you can use your rent swipe card to make payments by cash or debit cards.

Preserved Right to Buy

Preserved Right to Buy is a scheme, which protects the benefits eligible secure tenants had at date of transfer, 21 March 2005, if they choose to exercise their right to buy their home.

Right to Acquire

Right to Acquire is a scheme, which gives eligible new, assured tenants, the legal right to buy their home, that is, you became a new tenant after the date of transfer, 21 March 2005.

Scheme Manager

The scheme manager is responsible for specific independent living scheme and is available in an emergency. The scheme manager is in daily contact with all tenants and is responsible for organising social activities.

Secured by Design

This is a standard, recognised by police forces throughout the country, for new homes and estates. It seeks to design and build in features to deter intruders and reduce the fear of crime.

Service Access Points (SAPs)

These are local WDH offices, many of which are based on WDH estates, where customers can make enquiries, seek advice and pay bills.

Service Information Points

These are WDH information points based in local community centres.

Service Review Groups

Service review groups help develop and monitor performance, and cover most service areas of WDH. Information from these meetings will be used to write reports for our Board to recommend changes to policies to improve service delivery.

Sounding Board

One off event to review policy or procedure or introduce proposals for a new policy or service.

Tenant Challenge Day

A large scale tenant consultation event in which a number of key issues/policies are discussed and reviewed.

How you can comment on our Customer Charter Standards

Are we getting it right?

We're always trying to improve the quality of our service. You can help us by using the form on the next page to tell us what you think about our Customer Charter Standards.

You can



Hand your form in
at any WDH SAP



Post it to
OneCALL, Merefield House,
Whistler Drive, Castleford
WF10 5HX



Fax it
on 01977 724445



Email your comments to
onecall@wdh.co.uk

If you would like this information in another format please ask us.



In large type



CD



Any other format



Braille

call OneCALL on 0845 8 507 507 Text Relay calls welcome
(calls to OneCALL may be recorded for training purposes)

Customer Charter Standards Consultation Form

Please tick (✓) whichever applies

If you need more space, please use the back of the form

What do you think about this publication overall?

Good Average Poor

What part(s) of it should we improve?

What do you think about the Customer Charter Standards?

Good Average Poor

How can we improve them?

Do you understand the information in the Customer Charter Standards?

Yes No

If not, please say what you didn't understand

Do you think the layout of the Customer Charter Standards is

Good Average Poor

How could we improve it?

How would you prefer to have this information?

as it is on CD by email

on our website in Braille

in another format which format _____

in another language which language _____



Vision

to create confident communities

Mission

to inspire, transform and promote excellence

Values

to be creative, inclusive and work with integrity

Wakefield and District Housing
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delivering promises, improving lives