

Giving you our word

Service standards





Our word

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We are committed to providing the highest level of customer service to all of our residents at all times.

The promises we make in this leaflet are our commitment to you and you can expect to receive this level of service whenever you have contact with us.



Our staff will always do their best to meet our service standards and we're always looking at how we can make our service even better. We're really keen for you to let us know how we can improve our services and your feedback is really valuable.

Sometimes we get things wrong and if we fail to meet our own standards we'll make sure we say sorry and put it right as soon as we can.

The standards that we can measure performance against are all followed by a coloured tick ✓. We check these regularly to make sure we're delivering what we've promised and to see if we need to improve any of our services.

If you'd like any further information about service standards or our services in general please get in touch with us.

Our word on...

Access and customer care

We are committed to providing all our customers with equal access to our services and providing a high quality service at all times. We will make sure that whatever method of communication you use to contact us our response will be polite, professional and within set timescales.



Access and customer care

What you can expect from us

- If you call our Contact Centre we'll pick up 80 per cent of phone calls within 30 seconds. ✓
- If you need a call back we'll respond by the end of the next working day. ✓
- If you write to us and need a response in writing, we'll do it within ten working days. If we can't we'll contact you within the first three days to let you know and how long you can expect to wait. ✓
- We will provide translation and interpreting services if you need these to help you communicate with us.
- We can provide information in Braille, large print or on an audio CD on request.
- If you need someone to visit you at home, we'll arrange an appointment within ten working days. If it's an emergency we'll come and see you within 24 hours.
- If you visit one of our reception areas you will be seen within five minutes. ✓
- If you are reporting something serious like harassment or domestic abuse we'll investigate it within 24 hours. ✓
- If you email us we'll respond within five working days.

Our word on...

Access and customer care



Complaints

What you can expect from us

- We will treat all complaints seriously, sensitively and in the strictest confidence.
- We will make sure every complaint is dealt with quickly and thoroughly and keep you informed throughout the process.
- We will always phone first to try and resolve the complaint.
- We will use a two stage complaints procedure.
- We will offer a resolution within ten working days and do all we can within this first stage to fully investigate and agree an outcome. ✓
- If we're unable to resolve the complaint at stage one, and you contact us within 28 days of our response, we'll arrange a stage two appeals panel. ✓
- We will aim to hold the appeals panel within 28 days and contact you within ten working days with the panel's decision. ✓
- We will acknowledge complaints where you're not happy with a policy. Where a clear trend of dissatisfaction emerges we will review policies. ✓
- We will educate our staff in the best methods of complaint handling.
- We will involve an independent mediator if appropriate.
- We will use lessons learned from complaints to improve our policies and service. We'll let you know about these through regular updates in our Shine magazine.

Our word on... Antisocial behaviour

We are committed to tackling antisocial behaviour (ASB) in the neighbourhoods we manage. Our priority is to protect those who are suffering from ASB and to hold the perpetrators accountable for their actions. We will also support and protect those who are victims of domestic abuse or hate crime.



General antisocial behaviour

What you can expect from us

- Every report of ASB will be investigated where appropriate by the local neighbourhood team.
- Every report of ASB will be classified and formally acknowledged within set timescales. ✓
- We will investigate, try to identify and interview all interested parties. Neighbourhood housing officers will, in the first instance, assume that the complaint, and any counter complaint, is made in good faith.
- When needed we will offer advice, mediation and support. Where appropriate, we will use 'acceptable behaviour contracts' (ABCs).
- We will work and co-operate with other agencies, including the Police and local authority departments.
- Formal legal remedies will be used where necessary and appropriate, including injunctions, committal proceedings, possession proceedings and demoted tenancies.
- We will take action to design out ASB where possible in all our new estates.
- We will keep residents informed about ASB successes.
- We will help to provide activities for young people to reduce ASB where we've identified that this will work. ✓

Our word on...

Antisocial behaviour



Domestic abuse

What you can expect from us

- We will respond to all reports of domestic abuse within 24 hours. Following this initial response, where the victim confirms they are not at immediate risk, an appointment will be offered within five working days. ✓
- We will provide an investigator of the same sex as the victim, if this is requested.
- Residents will be offered enhanced security measures, where appropriate.

Hate crime and harassment

What you can expect from us

- We will provide continuous support for the victim after the incident. ✓
- We will take initial action within 24 hours of receiving the complaint.
- We will conduct a prompt and thorough investigation into all alleged cases.
- We will adopt a victim centred approach, responding sensitively and confidentially to all cases.
- We will always take action against the perpetrator where evidence is available which could result in eviction if the allegations are proven.

Our word on...

Repairs and gas servicing

You can report a repair directly to the contractor for your area. To help us provide an efficient repairs service we will not carry out a preinspection of your repair unless we are unable to diagnose your repair when you report it to us.



Repairs and gas servicing

What you can expect from us

- We will tell you the category the repair falls into. This will either be emergency, urgent, routine or programmed.
- We will deal with repairs within the following timescales:
Emergency repairs: 24 hours ✓
Urgent repairs: 7 calendar days ✓
Routine repairs: 28 calendar days. ✓
- We will confirm the works order number. This can be used if you need to contact us about the repair.
- We will offer you an appointment if your repair is classified as urgent or routine. We can only carry out these repairs if a responsible adult is in the home.
- In some circumstances we may be able to offer an appointment in the early evening or on Saturday, but we cannot guarantee that this service will always be available.
- If you ask us to, we will send you written confirmation of your repair. This will include the works order number, the time and date of the appointment, the contractor and the target completion date.
- If you're not in when we call to carry out the repair we'll call you to see if you're nearby and able to return to the property immediately. If we can't contact you we'll leave a card for you to rearrange the appointment.
- All our operatives and contractors will tell you who they are and will always show you their identity card.
- Our operatives and contractors will be polite, respect your home, cause minimum inconvenience and clean up after the work is finished.
- We will inspect a ten per cent sample of work completed to check the quality of the repair. We may also telephone you to check that you're satisfied with the repair. ✓
- We will check and service gas appliances that we own in your home every 12 months. This is a legal requirement and you must give us access to your home. ✓
- Our emergency service will operate 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

Our word on... Planned maintenance

When planned maintenance is carried out to your home, or the surrounding area, we and our contractors are committed to minimising disruption. We are aware that we're working in your home and consideration and respect will be shown at all times, to you, your home and personal belongings.



Planned maintenance

What you can expect from us

- All operatives will wear identification badges. They will only work between 8am and 5pm Monday to Friday (not Bank Holidays) unless in exceptional circumstances when two weeks prior notice is given. ✓
- We will make sure that our operatives are considerate to individuals' needs and show extra care and consideration to any of our vulnerable residents.
- We will keep properties secure, clean and tidy and maintain a high professional standard whilst works are carried out. We will minimise noise and dust levels.
- We will tell you about any issues that affect you or your home.
- We will make sure your home is not left without essential services overnight.
- We will make sure that you have a telephone number of a liaison officer should any query arise that the operatives are not able to resolve.
- We will consult you on the scope of works and choices, where applicable.
- All personnel will have the necessary skills and training.
- We will respect confidentiality at all times.

Our word on... Leasehold and shared ownership

We are committed to providing a dedicated specialist service to give advice and assistance to all our leaseholders and shared owners.



Leasehold and shared ownership

What you can expect from us

- We have a dedicated Leasehold Team who will respond to any queries about the service.
- We will send all leaseholders and shared owners a quarterly newsletter.
- Our Leasehold Service Review Panel meet regularly to discuss the issues that have been raised by leaseholders. Feedback and the outcomes from these meetings are reported in the newsletter.
- If you want to sell your property let us know. On receipt of the appropriate fee, we'll send you a sellers' information pack within ten working days.
- If you think that you're going to have difficulties paying your service charge following major works contact the Leasehold Team who will be able to talk through options with you. We may be able to agree a repayment plan with you.
- We can help you if you want to decrease or increase the share of your shared ownership property. Let us know and we'll give you an information pack within ten working days.

Service charges

What you can expect from us

- We will send you a statement of your service charges every year.
- You can request a copy of a statement at other times of the year by calling our Contact Centre.
- We will send you invoices for service charges in line with the timescales and conditions set by your lease.
- We will offer a variety of payment methods that you can use to pay your service charge.

Our word on...

Neighbourhood and estate management

We will deliver a consistently high quality and responsive neighbourhood management service.

We will do everything we can to make sure that our neighbourhoods are clean, tidy and well cared for. We will work with you to identify issues with your local environment and, wherever possible, will take steps to address these.



Neighbourhood and estate management

What you can expect from us

- We will provide clear and relevant information to residents regarding your rights and responsibilities.
- We will review the support requirements of all residents who are not able to maintain their tenancy conditions and link them to the support they need.
- We will consult residents and involve them in the introduction of any new tenancy management policy. ✓
- We will make sure our staff are fully trained in the use of our policies and procedures.

Looking after your environment

What you can expect from us

- We will maintain internal and external communal areas on estates to an excellent standard: free from disrepair, clean and with no graffiti or rubbish.
- We will remove offensive graffiti within 24 hours of it being reported. ✓
- We will have clear and well-publicised local service standards.
- We will make sure estates and blocks are clean and tidy with bulk refuse removed quickly and no abandoned cars.
- We will inspect our estates at least once every two months. ✓
- Estate inspections will be well advertised and open to all residents. You will receive feedback and improvements will be fed into planned works programmes.
- Grounds maintenance, including gardening will be carried out well.
- Estate services will be accurately costed, fully understood and demonstrate value for money. Residents will be able to tailor some services locally, and have choice over some of the services we offer.
- We will agree a plan for the level and frequency of services on an estate following consultation with you.
- Where estate costs are covered by a service charge, we'll make sure that you are aware of the services received and the cost of those services.

Our word on...

Neighbourhood and estate management



Improving services where you live

What you can expect from us

- We will develop links and partnerships with other agencies and service providers to provide you with sustainable communities.
- We will carry out neighbourhood appraisals in key areas to identify the quality and type of services needed for each neighbourhood. 🗳️
- We will offer advice on where to find services offered by others.
- We will make sure local staff and residents take part in meetings with local authorities, the Police, other service providers and local voluntary agencies.
- We will identify, deliver and develop new ideas and projects that will benefit local neighbourhoods.
- Our staff will work with local residents to establish and support voluntary groups that benefit the community.

Our word on... Resident involvement

We will involve residents in shaping our services, in the management of the organisation and in creating safe, strong and sustainable neighbourhoods where all of you can enjoy living.



Resident involvement

What you can expect from us

- We will make sure all residents have the opportunity to have a say in the way we deliver services and give us feedback on the strategic direction of the business.
- We will measure and provide clear evidence of how you have influenced our services and we will let you know how many service improvements have been put in place. We will aim to have at least ten service improvements each year as a direct result of your input. ✓
- We are committed to increasing the number and diversity of the residents who are involved in influencing our services. ✓
- We will provide training for involved residents and we will make sure this works by carrying out post-training surveys. ✓
- We will measure the costs and benefits of involvement activity and make sure that this provides good value for money. ✓
- We will support local residents' groups by attending meetings, assisting with accessing grant funding and providing training. ✓
- We will make sure that you have access to information about our performance at a local level and benchmark this performance with other organisations.
- We will give you the opportunity to agree local offers and to scrutinise those offers to provide an accountable and excellent service.
- We will increase resident choice in the services you receive.
- We are committed to working in partnership with other agencies and service providers especially at a local level.
- We will improve communication and feedback with all residents to help you to understand how Affinity Sutton operates, what decisions are taken and why.

Our word on... Community investment

We believe in doing more than just being a good landlord. Our mission is to 'help people put down roots' and we are committed to helping you improve your social and economic circumstances and improve your community.



Community investment

What you can expect from us

- We will provide specialist staff and funding for community investment work.
- We will focus on areas and residents who need the most help.
- We will provide a range of opportunities to help you find work and training if needed.
- We will work with agencies to help give you access to appropriate and affordable financial products and services such as low cost home insurance.
- We will provide small grants to help you improve your communities.
- We will work with partners to help them provide services which we can't provide ourselves.
- We will seek to raise funding from the government and other agencies so we can run more activities.
- We will monitor what we do.
- We will publicise opportunities and keep you informed.

Our word on...

Paying your rent and service charge (tenants)

We will take all reasonable steps to prevent rent arrears. We have a dedicated income recovery team and welfare benefits advice service who can help you with any aspect of your rent account.



Paying your rent and service charge (tenants)

What you can expect from us

- We will send you a statement every 13 weeks. If you would like one at any other time please call our Contact Centre. ✓
- We will offer a wide range of payment methods including direct debit.
- If your account falls into arrears we will let you know how much money you owe us and will advise you on how to pay this.
- If you owe us money we will clearly explain what action we will take if you don't clear your arrears.
- If there are going to be any changes in your rent or service charges we will give you at least one month's written notice. ✓
- We will provide advice and support to help you obtain your maximum entitlement to welfare benefits. This includes helping with back dated benefit claims. ✓
- We will only pursue eviction when we consider that all reasonable steps have been taken to avoid this.
- We will make sure all residents have access to good quality welfare benefit advice.
- If your account is in credit, we can refund this if you let us know. ✓

Our word on... Supported housing

We're committed to giving support and help to vulnerable people to help you live as independently as possible in your home and your community. We aim to help provide a better quality of life for the people we support.



Supported housing

What you can expect from us

- We will encourage you to take responsibility for your health and help you organise access to health care services.
- We will talk to you about safety in your home, and help you to get extra security for your home if you need it.
- We will give you information about services and activities in your community.
- We will work with you to help build your confidence.
- We will help you to manage your money and make sure that you have access to financial services.
- We will contact you within five days of receiving a referral.
- We will carry out a comprehensive needs and risk assessment with you.
- We will complete a support plan with you within three weeks of you receiving a service and give you a copy of your plan. ✓
- We will carry out a review of your support plan every 12 months, or more frequently, if you wish. ✓
- We will involve other agencies in your support if this is required.
- We will agree with you when your support will come to an end.
- We will provide help to make sure that you can manage your home and remain independent.
- We will write to you giving you ten days notice that your support will end if you miss two pre-arranged appointments.

Our word on... Moving home

We aim to make the process of moving into one of our homes as quick and easy as possible. We will make sure that we provide you with all the information that you need and listen to your feedback about the service.



Moving Home

What you can expect from us

In areas where we operate our own transfer list:

- We will process your application and let you know the outcome of this within five working days.
- If we need you to provide any further information relating to your application or we have to carry out further tenancy checks we will do this within two working days of your application going on our system.
- When a home becomes vacant we'll make a provisional offer within two working days of the previous resident sending in a termination form.

In areas where we use a local authority 'choice based lettings' system:

- If you bid for one of our properties and are successful we will contact you within one working day of the closing date.
- We will make sure all new residents are aware of their rights and responsibilities when they start their tenancy. ✓
- We will give all new residents a welcome pack and resident handbook.
- We will carry out a welcome visit within four weeks of your tenancy start date. ✓
- We will consult you on the development of a local lettings plan for your neighbourhood.

Your commitment to us...

We expect all our residents to keep to the terms of their tenancy agreement or lease and, when this doesn't happen, we may take action to deal with this.



There are some key things which we expect from all our residents:

- To behave in a neighbourly way and to make sure that other household members and visitors do not cause any problems.
- To give us or our contractors access to carry out repairs when requested.
- To give our contractors access every year to carry out a gas safety check.
- To keep front and back gardens in good condition.
- To pay rent and service charges on time.
- To take good care of your home and let us know when repairs are needed.

How to contact us

Telephone

0300 100 0303

8am to 8pm, Monday to Friday

Text relay

18001 0300 100 0303

Email

customerservice@affinitysutton.com

Or you can write to us at

157-159 Masons Hill,
Bromley, Kent BR2 9HY

Website

www.affinitysutton.com

This leaflet is available in large print or audio CD on request.

To request a translation please speak to a member of our reception team or call us.

Ücretsiz tercüme için, telefon idin:

Para obter uma tradução, ligue para:

Ako vam treba prevod, molimo vas nazovite:

Turjumaad ma u baahan tahay?

On offre un service de traduction téléphonique.

Nous disposons également de nombreuses brochures d'informations pouvant être traduites si vous le désirez.

如果需要将其翻译，请致电：

अनुवाद के लिए कृपया फ़ोन करें:

उत्तममे लयी बित्ता बरवे देन बटे:

ترجمه کلمے براہ کرم فون کریں:

هل تريد الحصول على ترجمة؟

আপনার অনুবাদের প্রয়োজন আছে কি ?

需要翻譯嗎？

ଏକ ଆଧିକାରୀଙ୍କ ସହ ଓ !

