**Housing Delivery Customer Care Standards – Working in and around tenants homes and in blocks of flats**

For issue to contractors during tender process so they are clear on minimum customer care expectations. Also as a check list to contractors getting one off orders.

This does not replace any health and safety regulations or guidance – this is focussing on customer care for our tenants.

**1] General:**

All tenants to be treated professionally and with respect. Tenants come from all walks of life and their various lifestyles may cause you and your staff to form judgements / opinions. This must be managed professionally and all tenants treated with respect, while following equalities advice around different religions and cultures.

Contractors staff who deal with tenants both in the office and in the homes are all to receive equalities and customer care training – and records kept to show this.

**2] Working in tenants homes**

* Contact with tenants to be made giving at least 5 working days notice of any visit for non- urgent repairs, or via appointment made with tenant or as stated in contract documents.
* Appointments to be morning or afternoon, preferably 3 hours slots for minor repairs.
* Appointments to be kept, and tenants advised if there is a problem.
* All visitors to tenants homes to have identification
* Contact to be in tenant preferred format – data to be supplied
* Letters and leaflets to tenants must be agreed with BCC before sending for non-urgent repairs, unless a contractor has permission to draft and send without prior approval.
* Where there are many trades involved in a project – the work is to be co-ordinated by the contractor over the shortest period of time, keeping the tenant informed of who is coming when to do what, an in out board used to record who has been when and for how long.
* All tenant data supplied and all tenant data gathered in pursuance of delivering works to be treated confidentially, respectfully and in full accordance with the data protection act (GDPR).
* For major works appointments made to suit tenants wherever practical (working around holidays / medical appointments), while allowing for enough time to carry out the work. Advice and agreement sought from BCC where this impacts completion time.
* Every care must be taken with tenants belongings and furnishings. In order to prevent claims for damage / loss, contractors need a managed process of recording conditions before works start (e.g. test of electrical goods before moving, photographs taken). And after works finish.
* Contractors to wear overshoes in tenants homes
* If tenants cannot move their own carpets / flooring then a disclaimer will be required, but every care taken to take back and relay
* Only take tea / coffee / refreshments if offered
* Only use toilet if tenant is happy for you to do so, and leave it clean / as you found it.
* No shouting, swearing, wolf whistling, derogatory remarks about any equalities groups while on site and working for BCC.
* No expressing opinions to tenants on previous works by other contractors / BCC, any concerns are to be reported to contact person in BCC
* All bulky waste that is to be removed from the property to be cleared to an area agreed with the tenant (be careful not to inadvertently place on neighbours gardens), and removed within 24 hours.
* Keep access to the property, and neighbouring property clear and safe
* Balconies – a tenants balcony is part of their home. Work to balconies must not take place without a prior appointment or agreement to access with the tenant. Tenants will need time and possibly help to clear their balconies in order to allow access for the work. Similar for access to gardens.
* No tenants possessions to be removed from the home, balcony, gardens, stores etc without tenants express agreement – and this must be recorded.
* Do not enter a property if there are children under 16 present and no adult. In cases where it is an emergency repair contact BCC for advice.
* Leave tenants with operation and cleaning instructions on any products fitted in their home.

**3] When on site or in tenants homes - Do Not:**

* Play radios / music
* Use offensive language or swear, ever.
* Smoke, drink alcohol or use illegal substances
* Eat food, unless agreed with tenant, or leave any wrappers etc in tenants home
* Bring any unauthorised visitors animals or pets
* Use driveway, block paths without tenants permission
* Leave a tenants home insecure
* Leave a home unsafe or unliveable at the end of the day.

**4] Neighbours**

Where work will generate noise, dust, waste affecting neighbouring properties – neighbours to be informed and given contractors contact details

**5] Working in blocks / communal areas**

The blocks, communal areas and gardens form an extension of the tenants home. Even though a contractor can “take possession” of the site (a block) this does not mean that tenants are dispossessed. They still live there.

* No work to take place without tenants being informed
* Major works to be advised via open day events/ tenants meetings, newsletters, coffees morning etc.
* Regular newsletters to advise on progress
* Use notice boards in communal entrances to update tenants on work plans / progress – especially if there are delays and changes
* Liaison with caretaker over use of communal areas, stores, lifts etc etc
* Clear up after works cause a mess – by the end of that working day
* No access to balconies without tenants permission – see above
* Car parking for contractors lorries / compound etc to be arranged with contractors BCC contact, otherwise tenants parking areas are not to be used. No private contractors cars to be on site. Arrangements for disabled access to be preserved.
* Bulky waste storage to be secure, any unsecured waste must be collected by the end of the day
* Tenants to have a contact person and tel number
* BCC and ECO to have out of hours contact for contractor and contractors scaffolder

**6] Working with vulnerable tenants:**

We are a social housing provider – the largest in Bristol providing much needed housing for the most needy citizens of our City. This often means our tenants have health, welfare, other issues adding to the complexity of managing the work required in their homes.

Where contractors have a concern about the welfare of a tenant / child they have observed in carrying their work for us, this **must** be reported to the BCC contact so that it can be acted upon.

* Appointments may need to be made around tenants medical appointments
* Additional protection against dust / disturbance may be required on health grounds
* A different working day may need to be agreed
* Some additional work may be needed for helping tenants move belongings / floor coverings / furniture
* Some homes may be cluttered and unclean. An assessment of whether this causes a safety risk to contractors that can’t be mitigated with operational methods and PPE needs to be made and agreed with the BCC contact. Respect and professional conduct is required at all times. Concerns about welfare reported to the BCC contact.

**7] Hours of Work**

Normal hours of operation must be between 8am and 5pm, unless agreements made for exceptional circumstances.

**8] Complaints / conflict:**

* There may be occasions where tenants are not happy. Good communication and regular contact prevents these. There needs to be regular customer liaison to establish any complaint as soon as it arises. Contractors to resolve as soon as possible to prevent escalation. Liaison with BCC contact may be necessary in order to reach a solution.
* The contractor to have a complaints process - recording complaints received, dates, addresses and response details
* If a tenant is becoming agitated / aggressive – the staff to be skilled in diffusing the situation and assessment when to remove themselves from site. Contractors staff never to lose their temper or shout, remain calm and professional at all times. Contact their office and BCC asap, and record details of incident for BCC.

**9] Customer satisfaction surveys**

At the end of projects at a suitable time satisfaction surveys will be conducted by BCC, with the forms being returned to BCC office. Contractors will be asked to distribute forms, to encourage a high return rate, but not to help complete forms.

 Our aim is to have over 96% customer satisfaction.

There may be occasions where interim surveys are required.

G Durden December 2017