

Our Service Standards and Customer Golden Rules

Service Standards

Our Service Standards explain the level of service you can expect from Alliance Homes.

They are clear, practical promises about how we look after your home and neighbourhood, and how we support you as a customer.

Customer Golden Rules

Our Customer Golden Rules are the principles that guide how we work with you, as a customer.



1. Treat you with respect

- We will treat you, your family, and your home with respect.
- We will show identification before entering your home.
- We will be polite, communicate clearly, and act professionally.



2. Keep you safe

- We will act quickly on your safety concerns – whether about your home, your neighbourhood, or our colleagues and partners.
- We will support you if you experience anti-social behaviour, intimidation, hate crime, or domestic violence.



3. Take action and keep you updated

- When you raise an issue, we will act quickly, agree actions with you, and keep our promises.
- We will keep you updated – even if there is no news.
- We will be open and honest about what we can and cannot do. We will always explain the reasons why.
- We will keep accurate records of all your contact with us.



4. Adapt our services to meet your needs

- We aim to understand your circumstances so we can adapt to your individual needs.
- We will check the information we hold about you on our systems and make reasonable adjustments, where needed.
- We will provide services in a fair and equitable way.



5. Listen to your feedback

- We welcome all feedback and will use it to improve our services.
- We will promote different ways for you to get involved in shaping the services you receive.
- We will offer support to make engagement accessible to everyone.
- We will keep you informed about how your feedback and involvement have made a difference.

Our services

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**Our
communication**

Contact and queries

We will:

- Be available Monday to Friday from 8am to 5pm on **03000 120 120**, with an emergency response outside these hours.
- Aim to answer 80% of calls within 20 seconds and provide a call back-service during times of high-call volumes.
- Aim to answer all messages within five working days, including letters, emails, messages sent through our online customer portal, Connect, and social media.
- Try to resolve your query without passing you on to someone else. If we can't, we'll make sure the right colleague gets back to you within five working days.

Communications

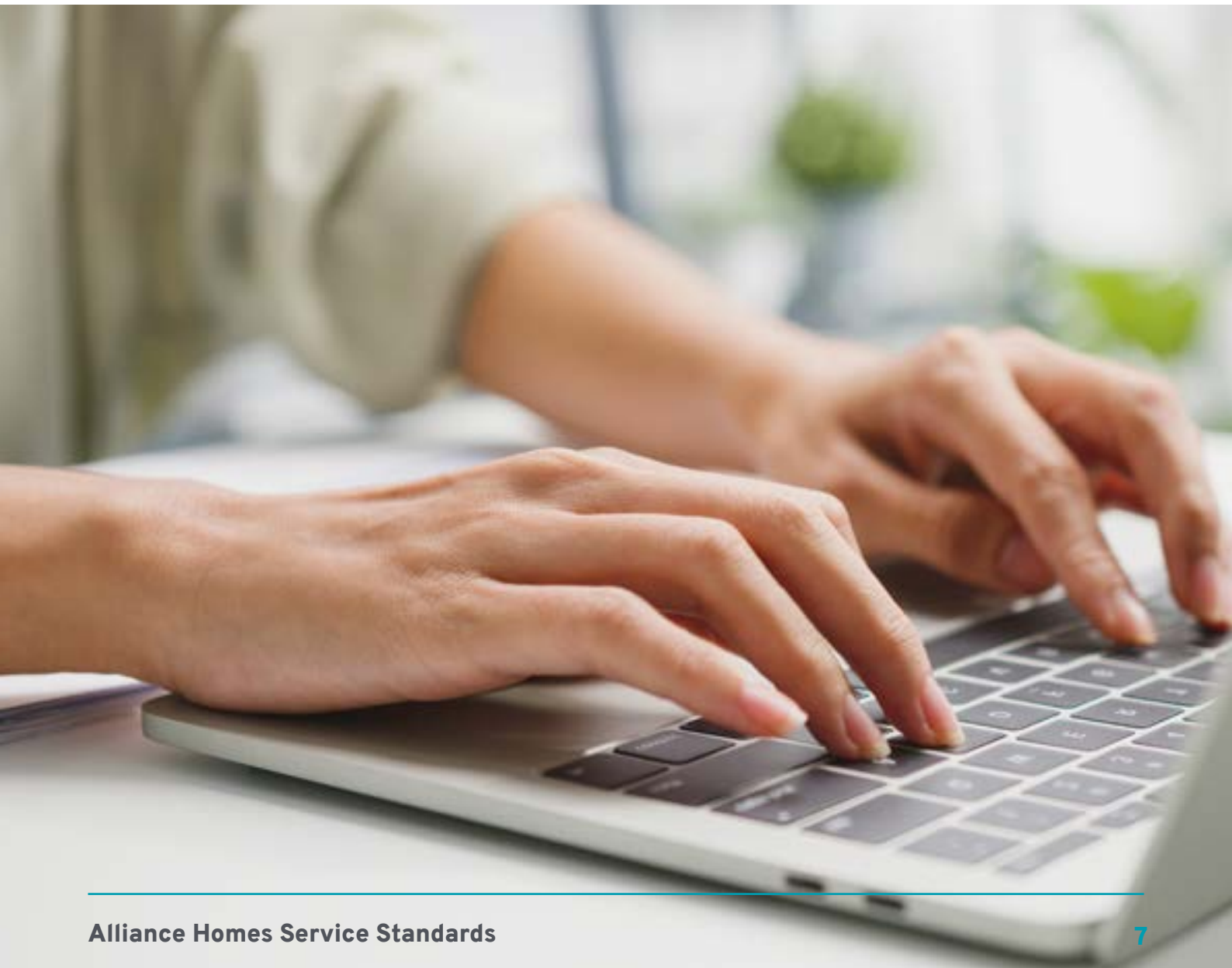
We will:

- Communicate in a way that's easy to understand and accessible for everyone.
- Use the channels that work best for you, whether digital, print, or face-to-face, and review and adapt them to make sure they meet your needs.
- Offer alternative formats (such as large print, braille or translation into a different language), and reasonable adjustments (such as communicating through a support worker), when you need them.
- Use our corporate communications channels to give you clear, accurate and timely updates about what's happening, including changes or issues that affect our services, homes or communities, and to keep you informed in a crisis.
- Keep our tone, style and brand consistent wherever you see our communications.
- Regularly review our communications, monitor trends and new technologies, and make changes so we stay relevant and effective.

Complaints

We will:

- Be clear on our **Customer Complaints Policy** and **Complaint Handling Procedure**.
- Work in line with **Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code**.
- Log and acknowledge all complaints within five working days of being received.
- Send a full response to your stage 1 complaint within 10 working days of the complaint being acknowledged.
- Send a full response to your stage 2 complaint within 20 working days of the complaint being acknowledged.
- Please note this is a summary of the key points from our Complaint Handling Policy.
- For more information, read the **full document**.





Your tenancy

Lettings

We will:

- Let you a safe, secure and clean home that meets our Empty Homes Standard.
- Let homes in an open, fair and transparent way to meet your needs.
- Give you a named Lettings Officer throughout the lettings process, with other colleagues available to assist if they're on leave.
- Attend all viewings with you, explain your rights and responsibilities, and discuss any adaptations.
- Provide all important information (such as the tenancy agreement) in an accessible format (such as large print, braille or translation into a different language) at least three days before you need to sign it.
- Give you information specific to your home such as meter and energy supplier, water supply locations, and waste collection services.
- Contact you within the first month to check you've settled in your new home.
- Offer referrals if you need extra support.

Tenancy management

We will:

- Aim to resolve tenancy change applications within 20 working days.
- Aim to give you a decision on Succession applications within 20 working days.
- Give you a decision on Mutual Exchange applications within 42 calendar days.
- Investigate any concerns about tenancy fraud.
- Provide clear guidance on [how to end your tenancy](#).
- Arrange a visit within your four weeks' notice period to have a quick look around and answer any questions you may have.

Sales and homeowners

We will:

- Sell shared ownership homes to qualifying applicants in a fair and transparent way.
- Support you if you choose to resell your home, buy additional shares, or wish to exercise your Right to Acquire or Right to Buy.
- Provide clear and easy to read information about our eligibility criteria, our homes, services, fees and our responsibilities to you as a homeowner.
- Guide and support you through the buying process and check in with you once you have moved in.
- Make sure that adequate buildings insurance is in place for your home.
- Provide estimated service charges before the start of each financial year, so you can plan your finances with confidence.
- Produce accurate and transparent service charge final accounts within six months of the end of the financial year.



Rent and service charges

We will:

- Send you notification of your latest rent and any estimated service charges annually, with contact details if you need more information or to raise a concern.
- Provide accurate and transparent service charge final accounts for you within six months of the end of the financial year.
- Make it easy to check your rent and service charge information online via the Connect portal.
- Give a clear break down of what your service charges cover.
- Offer different ways to pay your rent and service charges, with flexible payment options if you fall behind.
- Contact you promptly if you do not make your payments on time. A named Officer will work with you to agree realistic payment plan based on your situation.
- Give you support and advice on claiming benefits and maintaining your tenancy and direct you to extra help if needed. Refer you to our Housing Support, Money Advice services or external agencies if you need specialist support. **Support | Alliance Homes**
- Only take legal action when all other options have been tried, and support offered. We will provide clear information about the legal process, timescales and potential outcomes.

To help us provide the best service, we ask you to:

- Contact us as soon as possible if you are struggling with money or need help to manage your tenancy. Early engagement means we can support you before things become overwhelming.



Your home

Repairs

We will:

- Provide you with a variety of ways to report repairs.
- Attend emergency repairs within 24 hours to make your home safe.
- Attend routine repairs within 7 days, 30 days or 90 days depending on the priority.
- Be clear on **how repairs are prioritised.**
- Be clear on **which repairs are our responsibility, and which are yours.**
- Offer a choice of appointment times, including morning, late afternoon, and weekend options where possible.
- Confirm your appointments by your preferred method (e.g. text, email, phone call)
- Call ahead to let you know we are on our way.
- Let you know if there are any delays or changes.
- Send only qualified and accredited trade colleagues or contractors to complete your repair.
- Aim to complete repairs on the first visit.
- Not close a job until the repair has been completed. Agree any follow-up work with you.



Home safety

We will:

- Service your gas boiler every year. Where a different type of heating is provided, this will also be inspected every year.
- Inspect the safety of your home electrics every five years.
- Give you a copy of the latest Gas Safety Record (where gas is present) and the Electrical Installation Condition Report.
- Carry out regular Fire Risk Assessments on blocks of flats with shared communal spaces.
- Carry out regular Water Risk Assessments and testing on communal water supplies.
- Service and inspect all lifts in line with best practice, including passenger, through-floor and stair lifts.
- Manage asbestos in line with best practice by carrying out asbestos surveys and doing the work needed based on recommendations.
- Manage our higher-risk residential buildings in line with the Building Safety Act 2022.
- Complete all recommended actions identified during servicing or inspections within the required timeframes.



Damp and mould

We will:

- Always take reports of damp and mould seriously. We will not blame you for the problem.
- Check if anyone in your home has health problems (such as respiratory conditions), is elderly, or if there are young children. If so, we will treat your case as an emergency.
- If it's urgent (for example, black mould in bedrooms or a serious leak), we will treat it as an emergency and visit within 24 hours. For all other cases, we will arrange a visit within 10 working days.
- Send a trained surveyor or repairs colleague to look at the problem and explain what we find.
- Give you a written report of the inspection within three working days of completing the survey.
- Take action to fix the problem:
 - Clean and treat affected areas to remove mould safely.
 - Carry out emergency repairs to make your home safe within 24 hours. If this isn't possible, we will discuss temporary housing options with you if your home is unsafe to live in.
 - Usually complete all other repairs within 5 working days.
 - If a major replacement or complex building work is needed, we will give you a clear plan and timescale to start work within 12 weeks of the first inspection.
- Check back within 6–8 weeks after the work is finished to make sure the problem has not returned.
- Give clear advice on how you can help reduce condensation and put you in contact with our Home Energy Advice Team for support if needed.

Home improvements

We will:

- Survey your home once every five years to see what needs improving.
- Proactively replace things like heating systems, bathrooms, kitchens, windows and doors within our target timescales. [Improving homes | Alliance Homes](#)
- Bring forward home improvement works when the item's condition means that replacement is necessary.
- Consult with you before doing any planned work. For some types of work, we'll visit beforehand so you can choose from a selection of colours and finishes.
- Give you a direct point of contact to keep you updated and answer any questions.
- Monitor contractor performance using customer feedback.
- Make adaptations to your home if your mobility is affecting your ability to live independently, the process usually takes 4 weeks for minor adaptations. Timescales for large adaptations will vary as they depend on your local authority's grant process. We will communicate the timescales to you during process.
- Act as your agent to help you access any disability grants that may be necessary for large adaptations.

New build homes

If you are moving into a new build property, we will:

- Provide a new home that meets all building regulations and planning permissions in place at the time it was built.
- Appoint an independent Clerk of Works to check the quality of your new home before handover.
- Make sure your new home is clean and tidy when it is handed over.
- Make sure there is safe access to your new home, even if wider estate building works are still ongoing.
- Give you a New Home Welcome Pack when you move in, including details of how to report defects during the defect period (the first 12 months after build completion).
- Support you to resolve defect issues, working in partnership with the developer.
- Offer an inspection at the end of the defect period with the developer to discuss and fix any outstanding issues.



Your neighbourhood

Neighbourhood environment

We will:

- Visit blocks of flats and access ramps every three months to check if there are any health and safety concerns.
- Clean communal areas and windows in blocks of flats every month, as per the service charge.
- Maintain the open communal grounds and green spaces we own. This includes:
 - Cutting the grass 16 times a year
 - Cutting back hedges twice a year
 - Checking the health of trees every year, with a full report every five years.
- Be clear on which **communal repairs** are our responsibility, and which are yours.
- Work with local authorities and communities to reduce litter and fly-tipping.
- Work with customers to resolve issues relating to untidy gardens.

Community investment

We will:

- Work with community members, stakeholders, suppliers and partners to help create local plans to support community activities and investment.
- Run a full and varied programme of activities in our **Community Hubs** and promote these to our customers and communities.
- Make sure our community hubs are safe and well maintained.
- Give all community volunteers a full induction programme and ongoing support and development.

Community safety

We will:

- Support customers who experience anti-social behaviour, hate incidents or domestic violence. This may include access to specialist agencies or charities.
- Understand the risk of harm and respond accordingly when receiving reports of anti-social behaviour. This will be within 24 hours or 5 working days, depending on the severity of the situation.
- **Respond to all reports of domestic abuse within 24 hours.**
- Provide guidance on what is and what isn't consider **anti-social behaviour**.
- Allocate a named officer to each anti-social behaviour case. They will investigate, work with you to agree an action plan and be in regular contact with you.
- Only close your case in agreement with you, once all actions have been taken, or if there have been no further reports/incidents for 90 days.
- Before taking legal action against the person responsible, confirm if you are happy to support us with a witness statement and attendance in Court if needed.





Your voice

Customer engagement

We will:

- Offer multiple ways for you to get involved, making sure your voice is heard at all levels of the organisation. Please see our **“Get involved”** page for the latest information.
- Make sure everyone has a fair and equal opportunity to take part.
- Pass all agreed suggestions for improvement to the right Business Lead to review and answer within 10 working days.
- Keep you informed about how your involvement has influenced decisions and made a difference, through our InTouch newsletter, **“You said, we did”** webpage, and **“Buzz from hive”** newsletter and webpage.





Support

Support services

If you have been referred to our support services, we will:

- Confirm your referral and confirm waiting times within five working days.
- Look at your individual needs and provide support that builds on your strengths and helps you make your own choices.
- Be clear from the start about what our service can offer. If we can't help, we'll try to refer you to a specialist who can.
- Offer advice, guidance and practical support in person, by phone, or online to suit you.
- If you are an Adult or Young Carer, we'll keep you updated about events and activities we are delivering in North Somerset so you can get involved.



If you need this document in another format, such as large print, please let us know.

You can contact us by calling 03000 120 120, emailing act@alliancehomes.org.uk or writing to us at 40 Martingale Way, Portishead, BS20 7AW.