



CITY OF
Lincoln
COUNCIL

Our vision is:

“A well-run Council, creating a City of strong and equitable local neighbourhoods, recognised for their enviable quality of life and range of opportunities for local people”

Service Standard

CUSTOMER CARE

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1. What is a Service Standard?

We want to deliver excellent services to everyone.

We want your help to make our services better. We want you to let us know if you've got a comment to make, whether it's good or bad on any of our services.

To help us achieve this, we set ourselves high standards of service and stretching performance targets and we monitor how we do against these to make sure we continue to improve the quality of the services we provide to our customers.

All City of Lincoln Council staff have a responsibility to ensure that the services provided to our customers meet the highest possible standards at all times.

These standards have been set because this is what our customers have said are important to them. Customers have been involved in agreeing the standards and will also be involved in monitoring our performance against the standards set.

For more information on our other standards, please contact our office or go to our website www.lincoln.gov.uk

2. What can you expect from City of Lincoln Council?

We have developed Service Standards that set out the general standard of service you can expect when you contact the Housing Service:

We will:

- Greet you politely;
- Treat you with respect;
- Tell you who you are speaking to;
- Listen to your views and seek to improve our services;
- Try to resolve your problem if we can when you first contact us;
- If it is not possible to resolve your problem immediately we will, wherever possible, call you back or make an appointment for an officer to call at your home;
- Aim to ensure our offices and information are easily accessible for everyone;
- Call you back when requested and where possible at an agreed time;

- Aim to ensure that all our written communication is easy to understand;
- Provide telephone-based language interpretation for customers who need it;
- Ensure all our customer facing staff [wears](#) a name badge.

3. What does City of Lincoln Council expect from you?

We have set out standards to provide you with the best service we can. In return, we expect you to do the following:

- To treat all staff politely, courteously and with respect;
- Provide any information we ask for when we ask for it or as soon as possible thereafter;
- Read all the information we send to you;
- Ensure that you are at home when we have made an appointment to visit you;
- Out of courtesy to our officers when visiting your home we would respectfully ask you to refrain from smoking. Failure to do so could result in the visit being terminated.

4. Equality and Diversity

The Council is committed to service and employment practices that make sure no one is treated less favourably, disadvantaged or discriminated against because of their:

- | | |
|--|---------------------------------|
| • disability | • religion or beliefs |
| • race including ethnicity, national origins, colour or custom | • marital or partnership status |
| • gender including gender identity | • political affiliation |
| • sexual orientation | • trade union activities |
| • age | |

The Council has a dual role as an employer and as a service provider, and will tackle equality issues appropriately in both of these roles.

This policy covers councillors, employees, job candidates, contractors working on our behalf and service users. The principles of the policy underpin all our other policies, service plans, procedures and practices.

To eliminate all forms of unfair and unlawful discrimination, we believe that:

- We recognise that people are different, with different needs and preferences;
- All people have the right to be treated with dignity and respect;
- All people have the right to be treated fairly with regard to our policies, procedures and practices;
- All people have the right to have equality of access to opportunities in the provision of our services
- Information should be made available in other formats, languages, large print, Braille and audiotape and that translators or British Sign Language users will be available if appropriate;
- You should be able to speak to a member of staff, on request, who is the same sex as you;
- Our housing office and interview rooms will have access to hearing induction loops.

5. Customer Care

The City of Lincoln Council aims to provide a service to residents which meets the highest possible standards at all times.

We aim to ensure that we deal with all your enquiries respectfully and courteously by doing the following things:

- Training our staff to deal with your enquiries;
- Staff giving their name when answering a call;
- Aiming to answer telephone calls within 30 seconds;
- Calling back when we promise to;
- Making clear to you the outcome of your enquiry;
- Sending out all leaflets and forms you request by the end of the working day. Information can be found on our website, www.lincoln.gov.uk, or you may request a leaflet by phone or through emailing customer.services@lincoln.gov.uk
- Aiming to answer correspondence within 10 working days;
- Seeing visitors to our offices who call without an appointment, within 20 minutes of their arrival;

- Offering personal interviews and appointments at a mutually agreeable time within 10 days (a separate standard exists for repair appointments)
- Being polite at all times;
- Being tidily dressed and wearing name badges;
- Allowing our services to be accessed through our website: www.lincoln.gov.uk;
- Offering telephone interpreting service if you have difficulty understanding English, and translations of documents if requested;
- Offering a Minicom service if you have hearing difficulties;
- Providing information in large print or on tape if requested;
- Ensuring our offices are accessible to people with disabilities;
- Treating all customers equally and not discriminating unlawfully for any reason;
- We aim to answer your enquiry to the best of our ability in a clear and accurate way, giving simple explanations;
- Letters and information will be clear, accurate and written in plain English;
- At your request, we will provide a written confirmation of any verbal answer;
- If we cannot help you with your enquiry, we will assist in finding others who may be able to.

6. Monitoring

We will monitor our Customer Care performance in the following areas:

- The percentage of telephone calls answered in 30 seconds;
- Number of written enquiries dealt with and responded to in 10 working days;
- Number of formal complaints received and responses made within 15 working days.

7. Performance

The results of our monitoring of performance against our Service Standards can be found in either your 'Homelink' magazine, performance posters in our reception areas and on our website at www.lincoln.gov.uk.

8. What do I do if I wish to comment on a service provided?

We aim to get it right first time. But we deal with thousands of housing enquiries each year, and occasionally things go wrong. If they do, we want you to know that we will take action to put them right as quickly as possible.

Dealing with Complaints

We will:

- Aim to provide the best possible services that meet customers' needs;
- Welcome all comments on service delivery and view complaints as constructive feedback;
- Aim to resolve complaints efficiently and effectively within set timescales and to the customers' satisfaction;
- Arrange for an officer to write down your complaint if you are unable to put your formal complaint in writing;
- Advise you if your complaint should be more appropriately dealt with by way of statutory review or appeal and explain how to apply for any such review/appeal;
- Try to resolve initial complaints informally and arrange for the responsible Manager to write to you within 15 working days of receiving your complaint with a written explanation for the decision/action taken in response to your complaint;
- Give you an opportunity to submit a formal complaint if you remain dissatisfied and arrange for the responsible Service Manager or Head of Service to investigate your complaint and respond to you with their findings within 15 working days of receiving the full details of your complaint;
- Give you a right of review by an independent Complaints Officer appointed by the Chief Executive or a right of appeal to the Housing Appeals Panel as appropriate.

9. Contact Us

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Email: customer.services@lincoln.gov.uk