



Access to Services Policy

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1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 The customer experience chapter of our business strategy, Plan A sets out a vision to provide “services that are seamless, reliable and convenient that customers can influence and trust”.

2.0 Purpose

- 2.1 This policy has been developed with help from our customers and sets out how we will:
- Provide easy access to services including how we provide information on our services and how to access them
 - Arrange appointments with customers to complete repairs, home improvements, tenancy visits, surveys, and safety compliance checks
 - Provide information about our performance levels
 - Provide information on the standards of service that customers can expect
 - Provide information on the rights and responsibilities of Livin and our customers

3.0 Principles

- 3.1 The principles underpinning this policy are aligned to the customer experience vision set out in Plan A and our corporate values of trust, respect, innovate, work together, and own it.
- Trust – we build trust with our customers by being inclusive, responsive and supportive and do what we say we will do
 - Respect – we listen to customers and respond in a fair, respectful and caring way when they access and receive our services
 - Innovate – we are committed to improving access to our services using customer insight and innovation
 - Work together – our teams and partners will work together and are skilled at providing services that deliver a consistent service

- Own it – our employees are empowered to make sure the right customer experience and standard of service is provided to customers

4.0 Definitions

4.1 The key terms used in this policy are defined below.

Customer	For the purpose of this policy customers are defined as tenants, prospective tenants, for those living in our homes and residents in our communities.
Reasonable adjustment	<p>Reasonable adjustments are specific to an individual. Under the Equality Act 2010 public sector organisations must make changes in their approach or provision to ensure that services are accessible. A reasonable adjustment aims to remove or reduce any disadvantage faced by the person, but in a way that is reasonable for the organisation. Key considerations for reasonable are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - It is effective in removing or reducing the disadvantage - It is practical to put in place - It is affordable/sustainable
Service standards	Service standards define the quality and performance that can be expected from our services. They ensure consistency, reliability and customer satisfaction.

5.0 Scope

- 5.1 This policy applies to all Board members, employees and contractors of Livin.
- 5.2 The policy is aimed at all customers and applies to the delivery of all services that sit within our scope of responsibilities and legal/regulatory obligations as a registered provider of social housing for general needs.

6.0 Contribution to Plan A

- 6.1 This policy supports the achievement of our customer experience vision set out in Plan A which is: “seamless, reliable and convenient services that customers can influence and trust”.

7.0 Legislative and regulatory framework

- 7.1 The Transparency, Influence and Accountability (TIA) Standard sets out the following required outcomes for social housing providers to deliver:

Fairness and respect:

Registered providers must treat tenants and prospective tenants with fairness and respect.

Diverse needs:

In relation to the housing and landlord services they provide, registered providers must take action to deliver fair and equitable outcomes for tenants and, where relevant, prospective tenants.

Information about landlord services:

Registered providers must communicate with tenants and provide information so tenants can use landlord services, understand what to expect from their landlord, and hold their landlord to account.

8.0 Policy statements

Accessing our services

- 8.1 We will treat all tenants fairly and with respect when they access and receive our services.
- 8.2 In line with our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy and Customer Vulnerability Policy, we will ensure that customers, regardless of their protected characteristic and/or vulnerability can access services in a fair and equitable way.
- 8.3 We aim to make our services convenient for customers and in doing so, we provide a range of ways to access services and provide appointments that are mutually convenient.
- 8.4 We aim to acknowledge customer contacts promptly and keep them informed of progress when they access a service.
- 8.5 We will implement and monitor a range of service standards to ensure our customers receive a consistent service.

Digital

- 8.6 Customers can access digital services 24 hours a day, seven days a week using the MyLivin app and portal, available free by downloading from app stores and on our website respectively. Digital services provided outside of normal opening hours provided on a self-serve basis.
- 8.7 Other digital channels include LiveChat, Email and Facebook/Instagram Messenger. These are monitored by the customer service centre which is open 8.15am to 6.00pm, Monday to Friday (excluding bank holidays).
- 8.8 We provide support to customers to help them get online. Customers can request this support by contacting us. Support can be provided one-to-one in the home, in a group setting, or via telephone.

Other methods (non-digital)

- 8.9 Customers can access our services by telephone through our customer service centre which is open Monday to Friday 8.15am to 6.00pm or by making an appointment to visit our headquarters Monday to Thursday 9.00am to 5.00pm, and until 4.30pm on Friday (excluding bank holidays).
- 8.10 Emergency repairs can be accessed by telephone 24 hours a day.

Appointments

- 8.11 To deliver our commitment to providing a good customer experience, we will occasionally need to visit customers' homes. We will give reasonable notice when we intend to visit homes to carry out repairs or maintenance, safety compliance checks or to view the internal condition and state of repair of the home. We will provide clear information on the purpose of the appointment.
- 8.12 In line with our Customer Vulnerability Policy, we will make reasonable adjustments to provide notification of the visit in a fair and equitable way.
- 8.13 Where an appointment is required, we aim to provide customers with an appointment that is mutually convenient. Where possible and reasonable to do so, we will work around other commitments. For example, school runs.

Service standards and performance

- 8.14 In line with the commitments set out in this policy, we will:
- Treat customers fairly and with respect
 - Aim to acknowledge customer contacts with us within two working days
- 8.15 We also have service standards in place across our customer facing policies. We will publish our collective service standards and report performance against them to customers on the website and in other formats on request, where needed.

- 8.16 The performance management framework, Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSM) and data dashboards will capture and evidence that performance is being met.
- 8.17 This will be monitored and reported on in accordance with the table in section 11.1 of this policy.

Rights and responsibilities

- 8.18 We will provide relevant accessible information to tenants about their rights and responsibilities and our rights and responsibilities in relation to the management of their tenancy in the following ways:
- Tenancy agreements (digital and non-digital formats)
 - Livin's website (digital)
 - The MyLivin App (digital)
 - Livin life your way (information about services offered) (digital and non-digital)
 - Welcome to Livin information pack (digital and non-digital formats)
 - Individual Policies (digital and non-digital formats)

Customer expectations

- 8.19 We expect you to:
- Treat all our employees and contractors with respect
 - Keep contacts to a reasonable level to allow us to provide a fair level of service to all customers
 - Give us reasonable and timely access to your home when required

- Refrain from smoking and keep any pets under control while our employees, representatives and contractors are in your home
- Be open and honest about your reasonable adjustment needs
- Keep us updated with any changes in your personal circumstances and needs

Customer data and voice

8.20 We commit to making the best use of data and customer insight to develop, implement and monitor the policy and its associated interventions.

Diverse needs

- 8.21 In line with our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy and Customer Vulnerability Policy, we will ensure that customers, regardless of their protected characteristic and/or vulnerability can access services in a fair and equitable way.
- 8.22 Where there is an identified vulnerability, we will work with customers to understand how this affects their access to services, then find and agree reasonable and practical ways of adapting our services to meet their needs.

Feedback and complaints

8.23 We define a complaint as:

“Any expression of dissatisfaction, however made, about the standard of service, actions or lack of action by the organisation, our own employees, or those acting on our behalf, affecting a resident or group of residents.”

8.24 Customers can provide feedback about the services they have received in respect of this policy. If a customer is dissatisfied with the service they have received from us, they can make a complaint to us in line with our Customer Complaints, Compliments and Feedback Policy.

9.0 Roles and responsibilities

9.1 Roles and responsibilities under this policy are outlined below.

Board	The Board has overall responsibility for this policy including approval and receive assurance via quarterly performance reports.
Housing and Communities Committee	The HACC is responsible for receiving assurance on how service standards are being delivered.
Director of Customer Experience and Insight	The Director of Customer Experience and Insight has the strategic responsibility for overseeing the implementation of this policy, as well as providing compliance assurance to the HACC and the Board.
Heads of Service	All heads of service are responsible for implementing this policy in their service area, ensuring all customer facing services and related policies and procedures are compliant with this policy.
Customer Experience Manager	The Customer Experience Manager has operational responsibility for the overall implementation and monitoring of this policy.
Managers	All managers are responsible for ensuring they and their teams apply this policy in their day-to-day work.
Employees	All employees are responsible for applying this policy in their day-to-day work.
Contractors	All contractors who visit customer's homes are responsible for applying this policy in their day-to-day work and ensuring any sub-contractors apply this policy.

- 9.2 This policy will be communicated to employees via the Intranet and to customers via the website and in other formats where needed. Those who have responsibilities under this policy will be required to formally accept and confirm understanding of the policy following appropriate training, advice, and/or guidance.

10.0 Related policies

- 10.1 This policy should be read in conjunction with the following documents:

Transforming Customer Experience and Digital Services Strategy	Plan A, our business strategy sets out our vision and plan to deliver 'seamless, reliable and convenient services that customers can influence and trust'.
Customer Vulnerability Policy	This policy sets our commitment and approach to how we listen to, understand, and respond to customers' diverse needs or circumstances in relation to any vulnerabilities they have.
Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy	This policy sets out how we provide treat people with fairness and respect, ensuring we respond to diverse needs in line with the Equality Act 2010.

11.0 Monitoring and review arrangements

11.1 Assurance on compliance with this policy will be gained via a range of methods, as set out in the following table:

Type of assurance	Key source	Frequency
Management assurance	Performance Metrics:	
	Percentage of customers satisfied with the overall customer experience (internal and TSM)	Monthly
	Satisfaction that the landlord keeps tenants informed about things that matter to them (internal and TSM)	Monthly
	Percentage of homes where access is gained at the first visit – tenancy visits and damp and mould (internal)	Monthly
	Percentage of customers with vulnerabilities that are satisfied with the overall service provided (internal)	Quarterly
	Access to services dashboard	Monthly
	Appointment access dashboard	Monthly
Corporate oversight	Performance report, board	Quarterly
	Service standards dashboard, HACC	Quarterly
Independent assurance	N/A	N/A

11.2 This policy will be reviewed no less than every three years.