

A close-up photograph of a woman with long brown hair and a young boy with light brown hair. The woman is smiling with her eyes closed, and the boy is kissing her on the cheek. They are both wearing casual clothing; the woman is in a white top and a brown and white checkered shirt, and the boy is in a grey t-shirt. The background is a plain, light-colored wall.

# Our service standards



watford  
community  
housing

These service standards set out what you can expect from us, and what it should feel like to be a Watford Community Housing customer.

Our aim is to deliver good-quality services, consistently, because our customers have told us that their top priority is that we get the basics right.

## Our service standards

### *Your experiences matter*

These standards have been put together in consultation with customers and our Gateway Membership Team (GMT), which is made up of residents.

If you want to get involved and help to shape our services, go to [wcht.org.uk/gateway](http://wcht.org.uk/gateway)

### *Who these standards apply to*

These service standards apply to our 'social rent' and 'affordable rent' customers.

We are committed to providing good-quality services to all our customers, although your individual terms may be different if you are a leaseholder or shared owner, or if you live in one of our independent living, supported housing or temporary accommodation properties.

[Find out more on page 14.](#)





## How we will support you

### We will:

- Work with you to understand your individual needs around how we engage with you, such as using your preferred language or format for communications
- Understand any support you or a member of your family might need because of your personal circumstances
- Offer you a personalised service and a named contact to support with your queries
- Carry out home visits and a customer review with you upon your request

### You can help us by:

- Letting us know about anything that might affect your tenancy or your ability to pay your rent – such as changes to your circumstances, your family, your health or your finances
- Letting us know about things happening where you live, so that we can provide support
- Working with any partners that we recommend for additional support, to help keep your tenancy on track





## Reliable repairs

### We will:

- Let you know how long you can expect to wait for your repair, when you book it
- Communicate with you before we make an appointment, to make sure it works for you
- Keep you updated if anything we have agreed has changed
- Send you a reminder about your appointment to ensure we don't miss each other
- Deal with emergencies within 24 hours, making sure that homes are safe and that our most vulnerable customers' needs are met
- Carry out proactive maintenance of your home and a stock condition survey every five years, to keep on top of any future repairs that might be needed

- Be consistent in our approach, whether your repair is carried out by a contractor or our in-house repairs team
- Operate a fair system for charging customers that misuse our out-of-hours and repairs services

### You can help us by:

- Giving us detailed descriptions, supported by photos and videos where possible, of the repairs needed at your home
- Being home and ready for us to carry out the repair
- Clearing the area where work is needed, so it is ready for our operatives
- Letting us know if you cannot keep an appointment, so we can give it to another customer





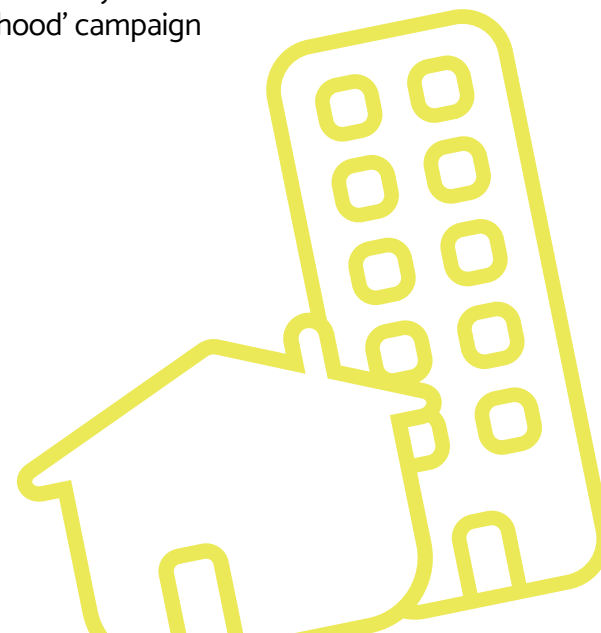
## Attractive neighbourhoods

### We will:

- Work with Neighbourhood Champions to make sure that our neighbourhoods are clean and well managed
- Prioritise the security of our blocks and ensure communal areas are well maintained
- Work with local partners to deal with issues such as fly-tipping and dumped rubbish
- Encourage people to take pride in their local area through our 'Love your neighbourhood' campaign

### You can help us by:

- Disposing of rubbish responsibly and appropriately, to help us manage your neighbourhood well
- Volunteering to be a Neighbourhood Champion and giving us feedback on where you live
- Providing ideas and energy to the 'Love your neighbourhood' campaign





## Safe and friendly communities

### *We will:*

- Work co-operatively with partners in the area where your home is managed to create safe and great places to live
- Take time to understand any concerns that you have about your local area
- Take action where it is our responsibility to, and encourage our partners such as the police and local authorities to support you when it is an issue outside of our control
- Visit and support customers where there are concerns with safeguarding or welfare
- When you report anti-social behaviour, we will let you know at an early stage what kind of support we can offer and whether the concern could be managed through mediation with your neighbours

- Take a zero-tolerance approach to tenancy fraud and recoup any money generated from fraudulent use of our homes

### *You can help us by:*

- Reporting issues as soon as you notice there is a problem
- Reporting any suspicions that you have about tenancy fraud
- Being a good neighbour and looking out for others in the local area
- Reporting crime to our partners such as the police





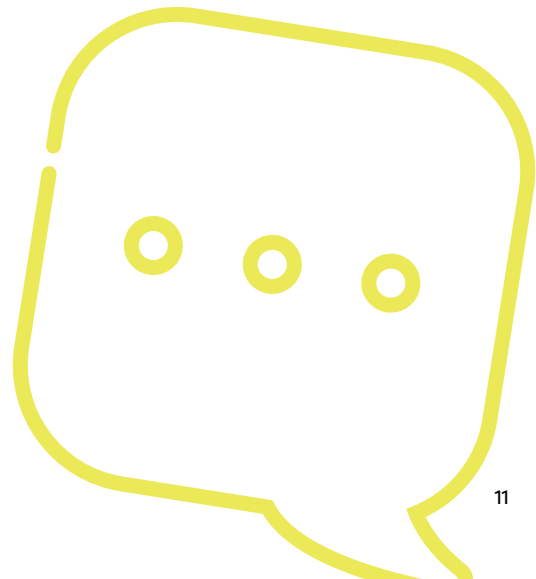
## Listening and learning

### *We will:*

- Deal with complaints fairly, while treating you with respect
- Take your complaints and feedback seriously
- Apologise and put things right
- Learn from our mistakes and communicate the improvements we make, so that other customers do not have the same experience
- Keep detailed notes of our interactions with customers and our partners
- Offer all customers the opportunity to become members of Watford Community Housing and shape the way that the organisation is run

### *You can help us by:*

- Raising complaints when things go wrong, so we can put them right
- Letting us know if something has gone well, so that we can give feedback to our teams
- Making other residents aware of how to raise complaints or concerns
- Joining as a member and engaging in membership events that influence our work





## Meeting regulatory requirements

As well as keeping the promises that we have made to customers, we are committed to meeting the requirements set by our regulators. This includes the Regulator of Social Housing, the Building Safety Regulator and the Housing Ombudsman.

More information about these standards can be found [here](#).

### We will:

- Ensure that all homes meet the latest version of the Decent Homes Standard
- Respond to concerns relating to repairs and safety hazards in the appropriate timescales, in line with legislation such as Awaab's Law
- Comply with our legal responsibilities as a landlord, including for gas, electrical, fire safety, water hygiene, asbestos management and lift equipment
- Manage and let our homes in a fair and transparent way, setting rents in accordance with government guidance
- Be transparent and accountable in the way we deal with you and collect anonymous feedback via an annual tenant satisfaction survey
- Let you know how we are performing as a landlord



### You can help us by:

- Making us aware as soon as possible of any hazards in your home
- Not making any structural changes to your home without our formal consent
- Raising any complaints or concerns with us
- Working with us to hold us to account when we don't meet these standards



## Leaseholders, shared owners and other tenures

We have customers across a range of different tenure types. The information in this document applies to customers who pay 'social rent' or 'affordable rent'. Some of your terms may be different if you are a leaseholder or shared owner, or if you live in one of our independent living, supported housing or temporary accommodation properties.



### *Finding the right information for you*

Because some customers have different terms and conditions, your tenancy, lease or licence document is always the best place to start if you have a question about your home. We can provide you with a copy of this and help you understand what this means for you.

If you need further support, we can direct you to third parties who can help you understand your lease obligations, such as the leasehold advisory service.

### *Guidance for leaseholders and shared owners*

Leaseholders and shared ownership customers can find comprehensive information about their rights and responsibilities in our dedicated handbook, at [wcht.org.uk/guides](http://wcht.org.uk/guides)

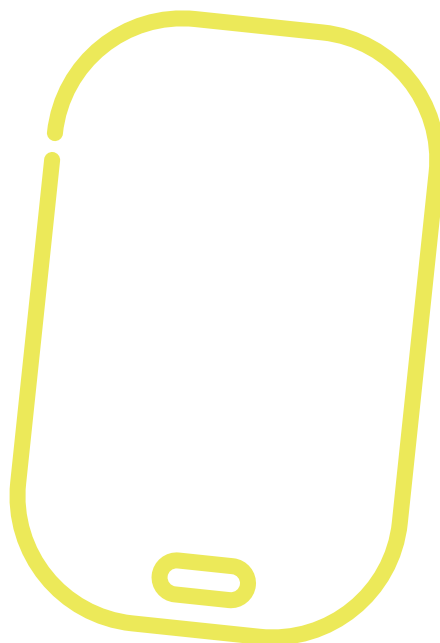
This includes detailed information on service charges, your rights around any works that you may be charged for, buying and selling your home, and how communal areas around your home are managed.



## Getting in touch

**We will provide a range of ways for you to get in contact with us.**

- Our offices and staff can be contacted between 8.30am and 5.30am, from Monday to Friday – call **0800 218 2247**
- We will visit you at home or you can visit us at our offices and community hubs
- We provide access 24/7 for customers to call us by providing an out-of-hours emergency service for repairs and urgent matters
- You can email us at [enquiries@wcht.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@wcht.org.uk)
- You can contact us, access information, book repairs, view your rent account and more through your online account at [wcht.org.uk](http://wcht.org.uk)
- We will look to adopt additional communications channels where they make it easier for customers to contact us



## Keeping you updated

We recognise that some queries can take longer than others to respond to, while some contacts such as complaints have set timescales. When you contact us, our team will keep you updated and set timescales for the next steps, so you know what to expect.





**watford**  
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housing

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Watford Community Housing is a  
registered society (30183) and is regulated  
by the Homes and Communities Agency.