

Housing Competence and Conduct Policy: Consultation Feedback and Our Responses

Thank you to all residents and members of our Tenant Panel and Reading Group whose feedback helped to shape the Housing Competence and Conduct Policy. Below are some of the key points raised and the Council's responses showing how your views have shaped the policy and our service.

We asked: What respectful treatment means to you?

Tenant feedback: *When a service provider listens to a tenant, is polite and respectful and tries his/her best to satisfy the housing needs of the tenant.*

Tenant feedback: *Being listened to and also listening to others without raising my voice, using appropriate language, taken seriously by the person I am communicating with if I have a problem that is causing trouble with my everyday living, likewise I feel we must be respectful to others, being kind and not interrupting when another person is trying to explain their side of the conversation.*

Tenant feedback: *That both Council employees and tenants should be polite and respectful. Council workmen should keep the property at a safe standard for tenants while working in the property.*

Tenant feedback: *Being spoken to with respect and being treated with respect in my home.*

Tenant feedback: *1) Polite telephone manner. Please identify yourself to the caller. A degree of empathy when discussing a problem. 2) Update actions taken with ongoing caller. 3) Polite manner by contractors. 4) Satisfaction survey once any work carried out.*

Tenant feedback: *Manifesting tact, empathy, a willingness to learn and trying to put oneself in the other person's shoes (which can only be done metaphorically of course) it all takes time.*

Tenant feedback: *Timely communication - proactive always. Zero stereotyping - equality. Active listening - people persons. Dignity in maintenance - get it right. Community investment - all areas matter.*

Our response: Thank you for sharing such thoughtful and comprehensive feedback. We recognise how important it is to feel heard, respected and treated with dignity whenever you contact us or welcome staff and contractors into your home. Your comments clearly show that respectful treatment means listening carefully, communicating politely, showing empathy, avoiding assumptions, keeping you informed and taking the time to understand your individual circumstances. We will embed these expectations in the Housing Competence and Conduct Policy, staff and contractor training, and the way we deliver and review our services. We will use your feedback to reinforce that respectful behaviour is not simply an aspiration, but a standard that residents should consistently experience.

We asked: What does good communication look like to you?

Tenant feedback: *Both parties listening and speaking honestly with patience and respect no intimidation or veiled threats*

Tenant feedback: *When emails/phone calls are responded to, being assured that when there's correspondence being sent out the wording is easy to understand and not too long and drawn out, more straight to the point.*

Tenant feedback: *Tenants should be kept updated. Tenants should let the Council know as soon as possible of any issues.*

Tenant feedback: *My repair/enquiry responded to in the time and regular updated on a repair. Repairs keeping to appointment times and resident informed if there is a delay or rebooking.*

Tenant feedback: *1) Discuss and agree any plan of action. 2) Regular feedback on any problem or matter discussed. 3) No ducking and diving discussed, accept ownership of a problem.*

Tenant feedback: *Being a good listener I would say and most importantly not possessing an inflated ego.*

Tenant feedback *Clarity without technical jargon, Promptness with positive action plans. Listening to tenants as valued society. Being honest when mistakes happen and not hiding behind closed doors. No I in Team.*

Our response: Thank you for being clear about what good communication should look and feel like. We understand how frustrating and isolating it can be when enquiries are not answered, updates are not provided or information is difficult to understand. You have told us that you expect staff and contractors to listen with patience, communicate honestly and in plain English, agree clear actions with you, provide regular updates and take ownership when something goes wrong. We accept these expectations and will build them into the behaviours set out in the policy and into our day-to-day service standards. We will also reinforce the importance of acknowledging mistakes, explaining what will happen next and keeping you informed until the matter is resolved. Our aim is to communicate in a way that helps you feel valued, involved and able to trust us as your landlord.

We asked: What would give you greater confidence in the professionalism of the housing service?

Tenant feedback: *To get repairs right first time.*

Tenant feedback: *Follow ups to repairs that have been reported to make sure there's been a successful outcome or not as the case may be.*

Tenant feedback: *That tenants are kept informed of any work to be carried out on the property and updates on work, or any delays. At the moment I am waiting for a wet room to be put in at my flat, The Council came to measure up my bathroom, I was told work should be done by August since then no work done, no updates from the Council, no word from Council about any delays.*

Tenant feedback: *To be taken seriously if there is an anti-social behaviour problem and dealt with quickly as it stops escalation of a situation.*

Tenant feedback: *An effective communication strategy.*

Tenant feedback: *On the job training for those joining the service I would say/and of course evidence of it.*

Tenant feedback: *Qualified and competent and accountable trades people - getting the job right first time. Openness, proactive inspections and clear plans to maintain and prevent. Breaking down barriers between departments and communicating within. Getting away from the bureaucracy of (us and them). Becoming (people persons).*

Our response: Thank you for sharing the changes that would give you greater confidence in our housing service. We appreciate that missed appointments, repeated repair visits, unexplained delays and a lack of updates can cause significant inconvenience and anxiety, particularly when the work affects your health, safety or ability to use your home comfortably. We are committed to improving the quality and reliability of repairs, with a clear focus on getting work right first time. Where more than one visit is needed, work is delayed or plans change, we will strengthen our approach to keeping residents informed, explaining the reasons and setting out the next steps. We also recognise the serious impact that anti-social behaviour (ASB) can have on individuals, families and communities. Residents who report ASB should be listened to, treated with empathy and kept informed while we take proportionate and effective action in line with our policies. Alongside the Housing Competence and Conduct Policy, our transparent Action Plan will map the training, qualifications and development needs of housing staff. This will help us hold ourselves accountable and support the delivery of safe, respectful, fair and consistently high-quality services for tenants and residents.

Other key feedback

Tenant feedback: *The policy is easy to read and understand with very good explanations for each objective and outcome.*

Our response: Thank you for your positive feedback, we understand that clear and accessible information helps tenants know what they can expect from us and how to hold us to account. We have reviewed the policy to make it clearer and easier to navigate. We will also support any resident who needs help to understand or access it. Alternative formats, including large print and translations, will be available on request, and we will make this support more visible through our website and quarterly tenant newsletters.

Tenant feedback: *The policy looks good to me on paper now let's improve. Will be looking forward to seeing how much has been improved in a years' time.*

Our response: Thank you for your honest and constructive feedback. We agree that the value of the policy will be demonstrated by the improvements tenants experience, not simply by what is written on paper. We have built an annual review into the policy, but we will not wait a full year to report progress. We will provide regular, meaningful updates through our tenant involvement channels, including quarterly newsletters, focused Tenant Panel Sub-Groups and Tenants Panel, so tenants can see what has changed and continue to challenge us where further improvement is needed.

Tenant feedback: *One of the most transparent policies I have read recently.*

Our response: Thank you for this encouraging feedback. We know that transparency is essential to building trust, and we are pleased that this comes through clearly in the policy. We are committed to involving tenants not only in shaping the Competence and Conduct Policy, but also in reviewing how effectively it is being delivered. We will continue to share progress openly and invite tenant scrutiny as the work develops.

Tenant feedback: *I want to see more details of the action plan status tracker?*

Our response: Thank you for asking for greater visibility of the Action Plan status tracker. We understand that tenants need enough detail to judge whether commitments are being delivered and where further work is required. We are working with our Human Resources Team to finalise the Action Plan and tracker as soon as possible. Once ready, we will review them with our three Tenant Panel Sub-Groups, the Tenant Panel, and share progress with all tenants through the quarterly Tending Report newsletter. We will ensure updates clearly show completed actions, work in progress and any areas where timescales have changed.

Tenant feedback: *Is there a communication strategy and as a background to this strategy?*

Our response: Thank you for raising this. We recognise that a clear communication strategy is important so tenants understand why we are making changes, how progress will be reported and how they can remain involved. We have a

Communications Plan, which has been shared with our Tenant Panel and is available on our website. We will review how widely it is promoted, provide clearer background and context, and assess whether it is achieving its intended outcomes. Tenant feedback will form an important part of that review.

Tenant feedback: *This policy is very detailed, it appears that everything has been covered according to the regulations, hopefully when the draft is finalised and approved it will be implemented and carried through as promised, it would create a better partnership between Housing Officers and Residents.*

Our response: Thank you for your positive and constructive feedback. We share your view that a strong partnership between residents and Housing Officers is essential. We are committed not only to finalising and approving the policy, but also to embedding it consistently in day-to-day practice. Its implementation will support meaningful partnership working, strengthen accountability and help us work together to provide safer homes and safe, thriving communities.

Tenant feedback: *Undertaking a gap analysis to identify staffing levels and support mechanisms such as IT.*

Our response: Thank you for highlighting the need to consider staffing capacity and practical support, including IT. We agree that staff cannot consistently deliver a high-quality service unless they have the right skills, resources and systems. As part of our Action Plan, the Housing Service is working with our Human Resources Team to map training needs, identify gaps in capacity and consider the support required across each area of the service. We will use this work to inform priorities and will report progress through our tenant involvement channels.

Tenant feedback: *The policy has achieved its outcomes quite well. Apart from the time a senior employee threatened me with eviction and towered over me saying intimidating things during an unscheduled surprise visit. This was many years ago - I did write to TDC to complain and heard nothing back*

Our response: Thank you for sharing this experience. We are sorry to hear that you felt threatened and intimidated during the visit, and that you did not receive a response after raising your concerns. We recognise how distressing this must have been and that a lack of acknowledgement could have compounded the impact. Although you say the incident occurred many years ago, the conduct described is not the standard residents should expect from us. Our current approach is to ensure that visits and difficult conversations are planned and handled sensitively, respectfully and professionally. Eviction is used only as a last resort, after appropriate support and other reasonable options have been considered. The policy and supporting arrangements are intended to reinforce these standards, strengthen accountability and help ensure that residents are treated with dignity and that concerns are properly heard and addressed.

Tenant feedback: *Telephone/switchboard extends to repairs etc... for some tenants this is the first interaction with the Council so it's very important that it is a positive experience.*

Our response: Thank you for raising this important point. We understand how frustrating and discouraging a poor first contact can be, particularly when a tenant is trying to report a repair or seek urgent help. Every interaction whether by telephone, through the switchboard, with repairs staff or with another team should be respectful, helpful and consistent. We will reflect this in our training plan, covering both frontline staff and colleagues who may be a tenant's first point of contact behind the scenes. We will also use tenant feedback to identify where further service improvements are needed.

Tenant feedback: *Ethical approach of some staff towards tenants and obvious (misuse of positions) does cast doubts on progress. All calls should be recorded and monitored proactively if complaints rise then clear and transparent. Apologies should always be made (quite often this isn't the case).*

Our response: Thank you for sharing these concerns. We are sorry to hear that some experiences have led to doubts about whether meaningful progress will be made. Tenants should always be treated fairly, respectfully and professionally, and we take concerns about conduct or misuse of position seriously. Where we get things wrong, we should acknowledge this, apologise and explain what will be done to put matters right. We encourage tenants to report specific concerns so they can be properly investigated through our Corporate and Housing Complaints Policy. Information about making a complaint is available here: [Corporate complaints](#). We will also consider how call monitoring, complaint trends and learning can be used proactively to improve transparency and service standards.

Tenant feedback *Other local authorities commonly have comprehensive codes of conduct that explicitly advise employees about personal use of mobile phones. Examples of improper use of mobile devices could include the storage of personal details of tenants, data protection and GDPR breaches, reputational damage by social media and in extreme circumstances the distribution between employees inappropriate comments concerning tenants.*

Our response:

Thank you for highlighting your concerns about mobile phone use and the protection of tenants' personal information. The Council's Staff Handbook applies terms and conditions to employees relating to mobile phone and telephone use and makes clear that employees must not use hand-held mobile phones while driving at work and the use of telephones for private purposes.

Employees are not authorised to use personal devices for any Council-related work or to access Council information. Council-issued phones and tablets have security measures in place so that, if they are lost or stolen, they can be tracked, blocked and remotely wiped to protect Council information. Users must change their device password every 90 days; if this is not completed, the device will become non-compliant and will no longer receive new Council data. Council laptops are also protected by a wide range of security measures aligned with National Cyber Security Centre (NCSC) standards and, if lost or stolen, can similarly be tracked, blocked and remotely wiped.

The Council takes its responsibility to protect tenants' personal information seriously and recognises that data breaches can cause distress and undermine trust. We handle tenants' personal information in accordance with the UK GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018. We take all suspected data breaches seriously. Further information about how we handle suspected breaches is available on our website [Data Protection Complaints](#).

We also recognise your concern that inappropriate social media use can damage tenants' reputations, undermine trust in the housing service and harm the Council's reputation. The same expectations of confidentiality, dignity and respect apply online as in any other setting, including when employees use personal accounts. Employees must not disclose confidential tenant information or publish derogatory or inappropriate comments about tenants. Reported concerns about work-related social media activity can be raised through the Councils Corporate and Housing Complaints Policy. [Corporate complaints](#)

Tenant feedback *My first thought is that the font is very small*

Our response: Thank you for letting us know that you find the font too small. The Council's standard font for this type of document is Arial, size 11, but we recognise that this does not meet everyone's reading needs. We can provide the document in alternative formats, including larger print and different languages. Your feedback will also help inform any review of the Council's standard font size.

Tenant feedback *In the case of contractual conflict is it obvious who the person should go to?*

Our response: Thank you for highlighting the importance of knowing who to contact in the event of a contractual dispute. The appropriate contact will depend on the nature of the issue and the parties involved. If you are unsure who to approach, please contact one of our Housing Managers for guidance. If your concern relates to the Council's housing service, you can also raise it through the Councils Corporate and Housing Complaints Policy. [Corporate complaints](#)

Tenant feedback *Clear wording, no jargon so anyone can understand and no mistakes can be made.*

Our response: Thank you for your positive feedback on the policy's clear wording and use of plain language. Our aim is to make the policy accessible and easy to understand, so that tenants are clear about what it means for them.