

West Berkshire Council Customer Service Charter

We want our district to be a great place to live, work, learn and visit, as outlined in our Council Strategy, and for our customers to have the best possible experience. In our Customer Charter we let you know how we will interact with you when you contact us.

Our commitment to you and how we will work together

We will	In return, we ask that you
be polite and open	treat our staff politely
listen to you and respect your needs	inform us if you are unhappy with the service you receive and let us have feedback if we have done well
treat all customers fairly and equally	treat our offices with respect so that everyone can enjoy them
make sure that our employees are trained to give you the advice that you need	let us know in good time if you need to cancel or rearrange an appointment
use easy to understand language and provide information in other languages or formats on request	tell us if you need information in another language or format
deal with your personal information sensitively and in accordance with data protection requirements	ensure we have up to date details for you and your household
	make use of our online portal, if you can, to carry out transactions

When you write to us, we will:

- aim to respond within 15 working days by post dependent on mail providers.
- acknowledge receipt of your letter if you provide an email address or contact telephone number

When you call us, we will:

- answer calls to our switchboard within **2 minutes**
- greet you politely
- tell you who you are speaking to and the name of the service or place you are calling
- put calls through to the right place first time
- arrange a call back if we are not able to put you through
- return your messages within **24 hours**

When we visit you, we will:

- arrive on time
- wear name badges or carry identification
- provide our contact details and clearly explain follow up actions, where appropriate

When you e-mail us, we will:

- provide an automatic response to all enquiries received to generic email addresses
- We will respond **within the timescales laid out in this automated response**
- acknowledge your email within **2 working days** and confirm what will happen next when emailing all other council email addresses

When you contact us on social media, we will:

- provide an acknowledgement where requested
- give you details of who is dealing with your enquiry
- if you ask us a question, we will respond within **24 hours** when our offices are open'

When you visit us, we will:

- create an environment that is welcoming
- provide clear signage
- make sure you are greeted within **1 minute** of your arrival
- provide self service facilities where appropriate, including access to relevant IT equipment
- provide private areas where you can discuss confidential matters
- start meetings on time

When dealing with complaints, comments and compliments, we will:

- provide you with information about how to report a complaint, comment or compliment
- record your feedback and use it to improve our services
- respond to complaints within **15 working days**
- treat complaints confidentially and fairly
- inform you how you can take your complaint further if you are not satisfied
- apologise when we are at fault and work to put things right

We will keep customers informed and involved by:

- publishing accurate, useful and up to date information
- providing information in other languages and formats on request
- publishing customer service performance data
- reviewing our customer standards every year
- using your feedback to help us make decisions

Our services commit to these standards during their hours of operation. If your enquiry is an out of hours emergency, please call 01635 551111 where your call will be answered promptly.

