

Customer Charter – Putting you first...



**Shetland
Islands
Council**

We will:

- Respond promptly when you contact us
- Resolve issues as quickly as possible
- Be polite, helpful and professional at all times
- Treat everyone with equity and fairness
- Communicate clearly, avoiding jargon
- Maintain confidentiality, ensuring only those who need to see your information do so
- Take responsibility and rectify any mistakes we make
- Use your views to help us improve the way we do things

Please help us by:

- Giving us all the information we need to help you
- Letting us know if you need assistance or support
- Attending appointments on time, and calling us if you can't make the appointment
- Asking us to explain anything you're not sure of
- Being polite and respectful to our staff
- Providing feedback and suggestions to help us improve the way we do things

SIC Standards of Service – what you can expect of us

When you contact us online, we will:

- Make sure information on our website is user-friendly and easy to read
- Enable you to help yourself by providing services online where possible
- Display alternative ways to contact us

When you telephone us, we will:

- Answer your call as quickly as we can
- Divert calls to a voicemail message or another member of staff if we're not available
- Make every effort to respond to voicemail messages within a day
- Try to action requests or resolve your enquiry the first time
- Put you in touch with someone who can deal with your enquiry if we can't, or explain how and when we'll find you an answer

When you write to or email us, we will:

- Acknowledge your letter or email within three working days of receipt
- Action your requests promptly
- If we can't respond fully within ten working days, we'll contact you within this time frame to explain why and let you know how long a response is likely to take*. We'll also keep you up to date on progress.
- Write to you in plain English and explain any technical terms
- If your letter is a formal complaint, this will be dealt with through our Complaints Handling Procedure

*The timescale for responding to a Freedom of Information request is 20 working days.

Shetland Islands Council is committed to open government and freedom of information. The information we publish is, wherever possible, available on our website. If we are unable to provide you with information you ask for, or if we remove or edit information before publication, we will explain why.

www.shetland.gov.uk/about_freedom_of_information/

When we visit you, we will:

- Be on time, and if we are delayed, we'll call you to let you know when we'll arrive
- Show suitable identification
- Respect your home
- Help you complete any forms
- Let you know that we have been, if you were not at home
- Give you as much notice as possible if the appointment needs to be changed

If you visit us, we will:

- Respond to you promptly in a polite and professional manner
- Help you complete any forms
- Try to provide the advice or information that you need, or put you in touch with someone who can
- See you at the agreed time if you have an appointment. If there is a delay, we will tell you.
- Offer you a private interview room where available and if this is requested
- Publicise our standard business hours and any changes to them

We want to work with you to give you the best possible service within the resources we have. It is reasonable to expect that our customers also play a part in helping to achieve these standards. If customers are unreasonable, aggressive, abusive, or use offensive language towards our staff then we cannot deliver these standards.

Compliments and complaints

We value all comments, whether compliments or complaints, and use information from them to help us improve our services. You can get in touch with services direct or contact us at www.shetland.gov.uk/feedback/ to share your feedback.

There may be times when you feel you have not had the service you expect from us. We will always try to resolve these issues as quickly as possible. If something goes wrong or you are unhappy with our services, please tell us. Details of our complaints process can be found at www.shetland.gov.uk/comments_complaints/

Please refer to the Shetland Islands Council Complaints Handling Procedure and Social Work Complaints Handling Procedure for timescales for dealing with complaints. www.shetland.gov.uk/comments_complaints/