

# MP and Councillor Enquiries Policy

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| <b>Audience:</b>         | Stakeholders, Colleagues, Board Members             |
| <b>Policy Owner:</b>     | Executive Director, Housing and Customer Experience |
| <b>Policy Lead:</b>      | Director of Customer and Insight                    |
| <b>Approved by:</b>      | Senior Leadership Team                              |
| <b>Approved date:</b>    | August 2026                                         |
| <b>Next review date:</b> | August 2029                                         |

## 1. Context, purpose and scope of the policy

### Context

Members of Parliament (MPs) and Councillors play a critical role in representing our customers and communities. They regularly contact us on behalf of constituents regarding repairs, safety concerns, housing management issues and requests for support.

We have identified the need for a clear and consistent organisational approach to managing MP and Councillor enquiries. Without defined standards and ownership, responses can vary in timeliness, coordination and clarity. This creates organisational risk, including potentially reputational impact, increased scrutiny from regulators and stakeholders and reduced confidence from customers and elected representatives.

Strengthening our approach supports our organisational basecamp 1 priorities to stabilise core landlord services, reinforce safety accountability and ensure stakeholder engagement is timely, transparent and consistent.

### Purpose

This policy sets out our organisational commitments and standards for responding to MP and Councillor enquiries.

It ensures enquiries are handled consistently, within defined timescales and escalated appropriately where there are safety, safeguarding, or service risks. It also strengthens organisational accountability, coordination and oversight of stakeholder engagement.

### Scope

This policy applies to all MP and Councillor enquiries relating to our homes, customers, services and communities.

This includes:

- Formal enquiries submitted via email or letter
- Informal enquiries, including requests for updates, clarification, or intervention
- Enquiries relating to individual customer cases or wider service matters.

This policy applies to all colleagues responsible for managing or responding to MP and Councillor enquiries.

This policy does not replace our Complaints Policy, safeguarding policies, or Repairs Policy, which continue to apply where relevant.

Operational detail is set out in the MP and Councillor Enquiries Procedure.

## 2. Definitions

- **MP enquiry:** A request received from a Member of Parliament on behalf of a constituent or relating to our services or homes.
- **Councillor enquiry:** A request received from a local Councillor (including Parish & Town Councillors) on behalf of a constituent or relating to our services or homes.
- **Formal enquiry:** A written enquiry submitted via email or letter requesting a formal response. These enquiries require coordinated investigation and a written response and are recorded centrally for monitoring and oversight.
- **Emergency enquiry:** An enquiry that identifies an immediate risk to health, safety, safeguarding, or property requiring urgent intervention. This includes issues such as fire safety risks, structural safety concerns, urgent safeguarding risks, or significant hazards in the home.
- **Working days:** Monday to Friday, excluding bank holidays and any planned company-wide closure days (for example, during the Christmas period).

### 3. How this policy supports our strategy

#### Corporate Strategy

This policy strengthens stakeholder confidence by ensuring elected representatives receive timely, clear and consistent responses. This supports trust in our services and reinforces accountability as a responsible landlord.

#### Customer Strategy

By ensuring enquiries that raise immediate risks to health, safety, safeguarding or property are identified, prioritised and addressed appropriately, this policy supports safe, stable and well-managed homes.

#### Customer Influence Strategy

MPs and Councillors provide an important route for customer voice. This policy strengthens our responsiveness to customer concerns raised through elected representatives.

#### Basecamp 1 priorities

This policy supports basecamp 1 by:

- Embedding clear stakeholder engagement signals supporting safety and landlord accountability.
- Strengthening proactive engagement in complex or high-risk cases.
- Improving clarity, ownership and consistency of communication.
- Supporting stabilisation of core landlord services through stronger oversight.

### 4. Policy principles

- We recognise MPs and Councillors as key partners representing our customers and communities.
- We provide clear, accurate and honest information.
- We take ownership of enquiries and ensure appropriate follow-through.
- We respond within defined timeframes and communicate clearly where further investigation is required.
- We prioritise enquiries based on risk and urgency, particularly where safety concerns are raised.
- We apply a clear and consistent organisational approach.
- We will only collect, use and disclose personal information where necessary, proportionate and in accordance with data protection legislation and our internal policies.

## 5. Aims and objectives

**Aim:** Ensure MP and Councillor enquiries are managed consistently, transparently and within appropriate timescales, strengthening stakeholder confidence and supporting effective landlord service delivery.

**Objectives:**

1. Provide clear and consistent response standards.
2. Ensure urgent safety and safeguarding enquiries are prioritised.
3. Strengthen ownership and coordination of responses.
4. Strengthen stakeholder confidence through clear and transparent communication.
5. Strengthen organisational oversight and learning.

## 6. Policy actions

**Objective 1: Provide clear and consistent response standards**

- We will provide a full written response to formal MP and Councillor enquiries **within 10 working days wherever possible**.
- Where a full response cannot be provided within 10 working days, we will provide an interim update explaining the reason and expected response timeframe.
- We will respond to informal enquiries within appropriate and proportionate timescales, depending on the nature and complexity of the request.

**Objective 2: Ensure urgent safety and safeguarding enquiries are prioritised**

- We will assess MP and Councillor enquiries on receipt to identify any immediate safety, safeguarding, or property risks.
- We will escalate emergency enquiries immediately to the relevant service area for urgent intervention.
- We will prioritise actions required to ensure customer safety in line with our landlord and safeguarding responsibilities.

**Objective 3: Strengthen ownership and coordination of responses**

- We will assign a clear owner responsible for coordinating each formal enquiry and ensuring a complete response is provided.
- We will coordinate responses across relevant teams to ensure accuracy and consistency.

- We will ensure responses clearly explain actions taken, planned next steps and responsibilities.
- We will ensure personal information is disclosed only where we are satisfied MPs/Councillors are authorised to act on the constituent's behalf.

#### **Objective 4: Strengthen stakeholder confidence through clear and transparent communication**

- We will provide clear, factual and professional responses to MP and Councillor enquiries, ensuring that only information necessary to respond is disclosed.
- We will provide updates where issues are ongoing, complex, or dependent on third parties.
- We will communicate openly about our role, actions and any limitations on our responsibilities.

#### **Objective 5: Strengthen organisational oversight and learning**

- We will maintain a central record of formal MP and Councillor enquiries.
- We will monitor response performance, themes and trends to identify improvement opportunities.
- We will use insight from enquiries to inform service improvement and strengthen landlord performance.
- We will maintain appropriate records of authority checks, information sharing decisions and responses to support accountability and compliance.

## **7. Monitoring, reporting and review**

We will monitor performance against this policy through defined KPIs and regular review.

- Percentage of formal MP and Councillor enquiries responded to within 10 working days.
- Average response time for formal MP and Councillor enquiries.
- Number of overdue MP and Councillor enquiries.

Performance against these KPIs will be monitored monthly and reviewed by the relevant leadership team(s) to identify trends, risks and opportunities for service improvement.

This policy will be reviewed every three years, or sooner if required.

## 8. Equality, diversity and inclusion

This policy will be delivered in line with our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy. An Equality Impact Assessment was completed for this policy and considered as part of the approval process.

## 9. Data protection

We use a risk-based approach to processing personal data to ensure that we assess any risks to privacy or to the rights and freedoms of people before commencing, commissioning or changing data processing activities. Our Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) process was completed as part of the approval process.

## 10. Related legislation and regulations

- Housing Act 1996
- Local Government Act 1972
- Awaab's Law
- Regulator of Social Housing: Transparency, Influence and Accountability Standard

## 11. Related policies and procedures

- Complaints Policy
- Safeguarding Adults at Risk Policy
- Safeguarding Children Policy
- Repairs & Maintenance Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- MP and Councillor Enquiries Procedure

## 12. Customer engagement

This policy has been developed in response to organisational learning and stakeholder engagement requirements.

As this policy relates primarily to stakeholder and organisational processes, formal customer consultation was not required.

Learning from customer feedback, complaints and stakeholder engagement has informed this policy.

### Document revision history

| Date | Changes approved by | Details of changes made |
|------|---------------------|-------------------------|
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