

## Customer Communications & Behaviour Policy

We are committed to working with our clients to make places better. Every year we deal with thousands of customer contacts quickly, professionally and without incident. We understand that people are emotionally invested in their homes and that it can be frustrating if there is an unexpected problem. We know that the service charge is a considerable expense and that sometimes people may experience difficult financial circumstances. We are prepared and have tools to enable us to ease such conversations and provide effective resolutions to these problems.

Occasionally however, there may be instances when we deal with an individual whose behaviour is considered unreasonable. We have a duty to ensure that our staff are properly protected, in accordance with our health and safety obligations and our general responsibility to safeguard their welfare. We do not expect our staff to tolerate unreasonable behaviour.

### **Our commitments to you**

- We will treat you with respect and courtesy
- We will be helpful and clear
- We will make every effort to explain things in a straight-forward way
- We will always be polite and professional
- We will work with you to find resolution
- You can contact us in a variety of ways (phone, email, in person)
- We will respond within a reasonable timeframe

When things break down, we will work diligently to resolve the problem. This generally relies on third-party contractors and having the right parts and sufficient client funds. Sometimes it's not an instant fix.

### **What we expect from you**

We trust you will treat us with mutual respect and politeness when you contact us by phone, email/letter or face to face. We will be polite to you in all circumstances. However, we will not tolerate unreasonable behaviour.

### **Unreasonable behaviour**

Unreasonable behaviour is any behaviour that is deemed unacceptable; the various forms of which are detailed below. We do not view behaviour as unreasonable just because a person is forceful or determined. However, we do consider behaviour that results in unreasonable demands of our staff, or unreasonably distresses our staff, to be unacceptable. Unreasonable behaviour may include:

- Being unreasonably persistent - for example, contacting frequently to raise points already addressed and not accepting the outcome; sending voluminous repetitive or irrelevant emails/letters; expecting immediate responses to complex queries or those needing further investigation.
- Rudeness - swearing (generally or directed at a member of staff), persistent interruption, name calling or general discourtesy.
- Anger - in volume or tone of voice, such as shouting.
- Aggressive behaviour - abusive, intimidating, bullying or threatening behaviour or threats of physical harm to person(s) or property; behaviour which indicates that physical harm to person(s) or property is imminent or actual physical aggression.
- Insulting or disparaging remarks or comments - especially on the grounds of an individual's sex, marital status, sexual orientation, disability, race, colour, national or ethnic origin, religion, belief or age.
- Inflammatory remarks or personal remarks directed at staff.

We operate a zero-tolerance policy on the bullying of any member of our team, including the use of unacceptable language or personal attacks. If any of these instances do occur, we will take appropriate action.

We may choose to deal with unreasonable behaviour by any one of the following means:

- **Call termination:** Where a person behaves unreasonably during a telephone call to a member of staff, we will ask them to change their behaviour. If they persist in behaving unreasonably, we will warn them that we will terminate the call. If they persist further, we will follow through. The staff member who terminates the call may report this to a senior figure within the company, and a written note of the telephone conversation will be made.
- **Limiting contact:** Where a person is unreasonably persistent, for example by telephoning us several times a day for a number of days in succession, or by sending us voluminous or repetitive emails or letters, we will ask them to reduce their contact with the office to that which is absolutely essential. If our request is ignored, we will take steps to limit their contact with the office. Such steps might include requiring contact in a particular form - for example by letter only; requiring telephone contact on specified days or at specified times; or insisting that contact is only made with specific staff member(s) or through a third party to contact us on the person's behalf.
- **Terminating contact:** In exceptional circumstances, we may refuse to have further contact with individuals who are unreasonably persistent or abusive. Where we put limitations on contact with the office, this will be sanctioned by a senior figure within the company.
- **Informing the Authorities:** In extreme cases, if we receive any threats against individual staff members, immediate action may be taken including informing the police or other emergency services.

Through the above measures, we have taken steps to recognise and safeguard our people from unreasonable behaviour.

**Lets work together with mutual respect, kindness and politeness**

## Why is this important?

Property management relies on people. Delivering a friendly, professional service to customers requires the individual providing the service to be mentally healthy. Our industry bodies (ARMA & IRPM) conduct an annual survey of individual practitioners to understand the health and wellbeing of people in the residential management sector ('Industry Wellbeing Survey Report').

Worryingly, it shows that nearly a quarter of industry practitioners don't see themselves staying in the sector for the next 3 years, while nearly a quarter are unsure. More than 90% of respondents reported being verbally abused (shouted or sworn at) while at work. We owe it to our people that this doesn't happen. It's in everyone's interest that the sector attracts and retains professionals with long, fulfilling and rewarding careers. We support the industry initiatives to improve the health & wellbeing of its members.



**PLEASE RESPECT YOUR PROPERTY  
MANAGER - THEY'RE PEOPLE TOO**

It is our mission to offer the very best service, but service is rarely improved by abuse and blame. We work on a kindness policy and believe we can all do our bit by being considerate and respectful towards one another.

**DID YOU KNOW?**

Every week a property manager is threatened with physical violence! Help us help you - we hold a zero tolerance policy, there is no excuse for abuse.

