

2019

Service Charter

Shian Housing Association Ltd

Giving BME people equality, dignity and hope.



Contents

A Service Charter



Approvals

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Contents

	<u>Page</u>
What is the Shian's service offers?	5
Our services	5
When you contact Shian what can you expect?	5
Rent	7
Rent arrears	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Service Charge	8
Report a repair	8
Repairs-contractors	8
Vacant Properties	9
Letting Property	10
Rent a Home	10
Applying for a Transfer	10
Valuing diversity in the community	10
Keeping you informed and involved	11
Resident involvement	11
Estate Services	12
Resolving anti-social behaviour and harassment problems	13
Complaint	13
Confidentiality	14
Disabled Adaptations	14
Improvement	15
Staff Behaviour	15
Consultation	15
New Developments	15
Equal Opportunities	15
Finally we ask customers to play their part	15



What is the Shian's service offers?

1. This local standard is designed to tell you about the main services that Shian Housing Association provides how you can access them and the standards you can expect from the association if you have applied for a home, or already live in a home managed by us.

2. The service offers can only provide an outline of our services. For further details:

- Refer to your tenants handbook
- See the newsletter and leaflets we send you
- Call us (see back page) or speak to staff
- Visit our website at www.shian.org.uk

Our services

3. Shian Housing Association Ltd (Shian) is committed to providing efficient, friendly and reliable services, which we will constantly work to improve.
4. Our aim is that the person who takes the details of your enquiry will be able to deal with the matter and deliver excellent customer service. We aim to achieve this by putting our customers at the centre of everything we do and having regards to the diverse needs of the communities to which they belong.
5. We will provide regular updates about how we are matching up to our promises, in our residents newsletters and on our website.
6. This service offer is intended to be used by staff, tenants and tenant representatives to work together to monitor and improve the services. It is not designed to assist individual tenants with individual concerns relating to service failure. The complaints procedure should be used for this.
7. Shian undertakes to meet the following standards when dealing with all our customers.

When you contact Shian what can you expect?

8. **Telephone:** Shian staff will:
 - Answer the telephone politely.
 - Respond or acknowledge telephone messages within 48 hours (2 working days).



- Ring customers back if requested within 48 hours (2 working days)

9. **Letters:** Shian staff will:

- Acknowledge letters within 3 working days.
- Aim to provide a full response within 10 working days. Our replies will be clear and easy to understand.
- If we cannot respond fully within 10 working days, we will either send a holding response, telephone back or call at your home within 10 working days of receipt of the letter.

10. **Office:** Shian staff will:

- Open our offices between the hours of 9.00 am to 4.30 pm Mondays to Fridays and 12.30 pm to 4.30 on Wednesdays except for Bank Holidays, Xmas Eve and between Boxing and New Year's Day.
- Staff will be friendly, professional and polite.
- If your query needs to be resolved by someone else, you will be provided with timescales so you know when you can expect a call back and who will call you.
- The person you are speaking to will always give their name.
- We will acknowledge e-mails within 48 hours or 2 working days giving timescales for a full response.
- We will provide an out-of-hours contact telephone number in order to provide emergency out of hours services.

11. **Appointments:** Shian staff will:

- Try to make appointments within 10 working days of a customer's request.
- Try to make the appointment at a time to suit, and if appropriate, out of office hours (not before 8.30 am or 6.00 pm on Monday to Friday).
- Give reasonable notice if we need to cancel or change an appointment we have made with you.

12. **If you come into the Office:** Shian staff will:

- See you as soon as possible and not keep you waiting more than 15 minutes if you do not have an appointment.
- Have a fair queuing system.
- Offer privacy, where available.
- In the event that you cannot be seen we will make an appointment at the earliest opportunity.



13. **If we visit customers at Home:** Shian staff will:

- Be on time or, if delayed, call to advise when they will arrive.
- Leave a note if they find that there is no-one at home.
- Respect the home and all reasonable customs (e.g. removing shoes before entering your property).
- A courtesy call before attending pre-arranged appointments.
- We may make unannounced visits in certain circumstances, where for example we are investigating reports of ASB, conducting Tenancy Audits or checks or investigating tenancy fraud.

14. To help us achieve a better service, you are asked to:

- Be considerate to staff and neighbours.
- To treat us all with respect, be polite and not discriminate against anyone.
- Let us know as soon as possible if you are not able to keep an appointment.

Rent

15. Shian will:

- Keep rent increases in line with Government Guidelines.
- Provide an annual rent statement.
- Provide you with accurate and up- to-date information about your account on request within 3 working days.
- Provide access to "My Tenancy" where customer can access information regarding their rent account online at www.mytenancy.co.uk.
- Provide, on request details of accounts and invoices relating to any charges.
- Review our services to reflect what residents want, and are willing to pay for.
- Make it as simple as possible for you to pay your rent and other charges, by providing a number of different ways to pay.
- Contact you if your account goes into arrears, so we can agree a payment plan to get you back on track.

You should refer to your tenants hand book for more details about how to pay your rent and service charges, and the steps we will take if you owe us rent or other charges.

16. To help us achieve a better service, you are asked to:

- Pay rent and/or complete benefit applications on time.
- Keep a record of your completed benefit application.
- Contact us and seek advice immediately if you have a problem paying your rent.



- Inform the DWP or Housing Benefit office promptly if there is any change in your or your households circumstances

Shian will:

- Take prompt action to deal with rent arrears for the benefit of all our residents.
- Take all reasonable steps, including legal action, to recover any money we are owed.
- Give you an opportunity to make an agreement to clear arrears before taking legal action.

Service Charge

17. Shian will:

- Provide you with a clear explanation of your service charge upon request.
- Provide you with a service charge statement within 6 months of the end of the financial year upon request.
- In delivering services Shian will aim to achieve Value for Money.

Report a repair

18. Shian staff will:

- Arrange a suitable appointment time between the contractor and you. This will be during normal working hours.
- Aim to get our contractor to complete your repair request on their first visit
- Send written confirmation of the repair order containing the contractors name and a maximum time in which the repair should be completed.
- Carry out the repair according to the following time scale:
 - Emergency repairs within 1 working day
 - Urgent repairs within 5 working days
 - Routine repairs within 20 working days

Repairs-contractors

19. If we send a contractor round to carry out the repair, the contractor will usually:

- Ring if the appointment cannot be kept and arrange a suitable alternative time.
- Leave a calling card if no-one is at home.
- Wear suitable identification when visiting.
- Respect the home.



20. In addition we will also:

- Let you know if the repair is your responsibility.
- Provide a 24-hour service for emergency repairs when our offices are closed (this will normally be a make safe service)
- Meet our legal obligations to provide an annual gas safety and service check (LGSR) to all rented properties where a gas boiler is in place.
- Consult and/or advise you about any major repairs or improvements we plan to make where you live.

21. You will find more details about our repairs service in your repairs handbook.

22. We aim:

- Deliver cost-effective services to meet your needs and look after the long-term maintenance and improvements of our properties.

23. To help us achieve a better service, you are asked to:

- Look after your property to avoid unnecessary repairs and undertake any repairs which is your responsibility.
- Report any repair for which Shian is responsible as soon as you are aware.
- Keep appointments for repair and gas servicing or let us know if you are unable to do so.
- Allow access at all reasonable times and for all agreed appointments
- Ensure an appropriate adult is at home to keep the appointment.
- Ensure that there is clear access to carry out the repairs or gas servicing.
- At all times observe and not breach your tenancy agreement, licence or lease with us

Vacant Properties

24. Shian staff will:

- Inspect vacant properties within 2 working days of receiving the keys.
- Complete any work required as soon as possible.
- Ensure the property is clean and tidy before new residents move in.



Letting Property

Rent a Home

25. Shian staff will:

- Provide you with a summary of our transfer policy within 10 working days of your request.
- Allocate our homes fairly.
- Contact you within 5 working days if you have been put forward by your local authority for one of our homes.

Applying for a Transfer

26. Shian staff will:

- Give you advice about moving and what your housing options are.
- Send transfer application forms within 5 working days of request.
- Provide the outcome and/or acknowledge a transfer request within 20 working days of receiving a completed application.
- Give advice about the banding awarded if an application is accepted.
- Respond to any changes in circumstances that we are notified of within 20 working days and send written confirmation of the revised banding, if any.

27. For more information about your moving options as an existing tenant/resident visit www.shian.org.uk.

28. You are asked to:

- Give us 4 week's notice of your intention to terminate your tenancy.
- Ensure that all furniture and other belongings including carpets, laminated flooring, white goods and rubbish are removed, prior to moving.
- Notify all utility companies of your move and arrange with the post office to redirect your mail
- To provide information and supporting documents to help process your transfer application.
- Clear any arrears of rent or other charges before you end your tenancy.

Valuing diversity in the community

29. Shian value all sections of the community and will:

- Work to provide access to our homes, employment and services equally to all.
- Be honest with you and deal with you fairly.



- Try to deliver services in ways you can access easily.
- Recognise that different groups of people may want to communicate with us in different ways.
- Collect and monitor information to make sure no-one is treated unfairly.
- Handle any personal information that is given to us, confidentially and securely.

30. To help us achieve a better service, you are asked to:

- Participate in our tenant satisfaction surveys, so that we can capture and ensure our services are responsive to your needs.
- To treat our staff and contractors fairly and with respect.

Keeping you informed and involved

31. Shian staff will:

- Involve residents by carrying out regular surveys and discussion groups.
- Produce regular customer feedback reports.
- Consider these feedback reports at Board meetings and advise residents, through newsletters, of the action we propose to take.
- Provide you with a hand book, containing information about our services and your rights, when you move into your home.
- Produce regular newsletters.
- Set clear policies and performance standards.
- Produce annual reports to compare our performance against expected standards.
- Be open in our work and seek your opinion using a range of consultation and research methods.
- Make sure we show you how your views have improved our services.

32. To help us achieve a better service, you are asked to:

- Participate in service satisfaction surveys.
- Provide feedback and suggestions on how we may improve our service delivery and service provisions.
- Contribute articles to newsletters.
- Participate in service reviews and review/development of our policies and procedures.

Resident involvement

33. Shian will:



- Hold regular meetings with tenant's consultative forums.
- Provide you with written information on how you can become involved in tenant participation in Shian within 10 days of your request.
- Support tenant's requests to explore the possibility of setting up a tenants group, where 25% of the tenant's living in the proposed area wish to do so, for their neighbourhood within 30 days of a request.
- Provide resources and guidance to such groups so they can give an informed view on the services they receive.
- Recruit resident board members to involve residents in decision making and policy developments.
- Recruit a residents scrutiny panel to involve residents in decision making and policy development.

34. To help us achieve a better service, you are asked to:

- Attend local consultation meetings where required.
- Take part in surveys we carry out.
- To be considerate and respect other people's point of views at meetings and never behave in an aggressive manner.

Estate Services

35. Where we provide communal cleaning and grounds maintenance services, we will:

- Monitor estate service contracts where they exist to ensure services are delivered as specified and achieve value for money.
- Involve and engage residents in monthly estate inspections so that you can highlight any failings, shortcomings, communal repairs or discuss estate issues.
- Keep copies of estate inspection reports and send out a copy within 5 days of a request.
- Respond to a request to review estate service provisions and carry out a consultation exercise to undertake the review.
- Where a majority of tenants reach an agreement on the nature and cost of changes to estate services. We will alter the service and charges accordingly.
- Provide you with information on the frequency and standards of grounds maintenance and cleaning of communal areas for your block/estate within 10 working days of request.

36. To help us achieve a better service, tenants are asked to:

- Make sure all communal areas are free from your belongings.
- Ensure the communal area is not used by your dog for fouling.



- Ensure that you dispose of your refuse and rubbish appropriately and do not create a hazard.
- Contact the bulky refuse section of the relevant local authority to dispose of large items e.g. washing machine, fridge etc
- Take part in any consultation exercises that may be undertaken to review your communal services and service charges.
- Play an active role in monitoring the delivery of the service when the opportunity arises.

Resolving anti-social behaviour and harassment problems

37. Shian staff will:

- Respond to reports of anti-social behaviour in line with our ASB policy and procedure.
- Where we have evidence, take action against tenants who breach their tenancy conditions.
- Investigate reports of nuisance and harassment inline with our ASB policy and procedure.
- Give you advice on how to resolve minor anti-social behaviour problems for yourselves.
- Offer support to victims, inline with our ASB Policy, of harassment. We will involve the police, social services and victim support, where appropriate.
- For more details about how we handle problems with anti-social behaviour, refer to your tenant's handbook.
- If you are experiencing a problem you need help with, call us to tell us what is happening.

38. To help us achieve a better service, tenants are asked to:

- Show respect for your neighbours and ensure that you, your household and visitors behave in a considerate manner and in a responsible way.
- Report serious incidents of anti-social behaviour to the police and other relevant agencies, providing us with the relevant details when you make a report to Shian.
- Complete incident diary sheets detailing the nature of the incident(s), whether any other agency were involved , details of perpetrator(s) if known and whether there were any other witnesses, to assist us in tackling anti-social behaviour effectively.

Complaint

39. We will:

- Acknowledge all complaints within 3 working days of receipt.



- Investigate and respond to all first stage complaints in full within 10 working days, or provide a holding reply
 - Regularly monitor complaints learn from mistakes and use complaints to improve our service delivery.
 - Accept complaints in writing, by phone, in person, via the internet, by e-mail, or on your behalf from another authorised person.
 - Assign a member of staff to manage your complaint and contact you within 5 working days to confirm:
 - The content of the complaint
 - The outcome you would like to see
 - The member of staffs name and contact details
 - What will be done and how long it will take to investigate or resolve your complaint
 - Discuss with you the way we plan to resolve the complaint and, if we are planning to give you compensation, agree a figure that recognises the level of inconvenience or disturbance caused.
 - Improve any service shown by your complaint to have shortcomings and write to let you know what we have done about it.
 - Promise always to apologise when we've got it wrong.
40. Call us for further information about making a complaint. You can also ask for a complaints form. Alternatively you may complete and download one from our website at www.shian.org.uk.
41. To help us achieve a better service, you are asked to:
- Give Shian a chance to resolve your complaint in-line with our stated timescales and stages.
 - Tell us whether you are satisfied with the way we have handled and resolved your complaint.

Confidentiality

42. Shian staff will:
- Treat all information provided in confidence in accordance with the relevant Data Protection Act.
 - Give access to view customer's files within 1 calendar month of a request.

Disabled Adaptations

43. Shian staff will:



- Visit within 20 working days of a request to carry out adaptations to a home because of a disability or refer cases to the council's Occupational Therapist.
- Try to secure funds to effect as many adaptations as possible.

Improvement

44. Shian staff will:

- Respond and/or acknowledge applications from residents to carry out their own home improvements within 20 working days.

Staff Behaviour

45. Shian staff will:

- Be friendly, polite and helpful at all times.
- Respond promptly and sensitively to reasonable requests.
- Show identification and wear identification badges.
- Provide their names as part of the telephone call answering procedure.

Consultation

46. Shian will:

- Consult with customers on significant proposals to change the way we operate.
- Consult you where major works are proposed to your home.

New Developments

47. Shian will:

- Develop new homes to a high standard.
- Explain to you how to operate the services in your home, e.g. heating systems.

Equal Opportunities

48. Shian staff will:

- Provide our services to all members of the community irrespective of race, sex, creed, sexual orientation or disability.
- Regularly monitor our services to ensure they provide equal opportunities for all.

Finally we ask customers to play their part



49. These Services are designed to give you the highest possible quality of service based on the money we have available and what we consider should be your reasonable expectations.
50. There will be times when we cannot meet the standards because of, for example, staff sickness.
51. Furthermore, it is only reasonable to expect that you pay your part in helping us to achieve these standards, if you are abusive or use offensive or racist language we cannot deliver these standards. Shian will take legal action against anyone using or threatening violence towards its staff.
52. You are asked to help us to achieve these standards by:
- Paying rent regularly and on time.
 - Living in your Shian property as your main home.
 - Taking responsible care of the property.
 - Promptly reporting any items of disrepair.
 - Behaving in a reasonable manner towards neighbours, visitors and others.
 - Fully observing and not breaching your Tenancy Agreement, Licence or Lease with us

Contact us:

In Writing: **Shian Housing Association Ltd**
76 Mare Street
Hackney
London
E8 3SG

E-mail: info@shian.org.uk

Website: www.shian.org.uk

Phone: **0208 985 7120** (Monday to Friday (9.00 am-4.30pm and Wednesday 12.30 pm – 4:30pm)

Skype: Shianha

Facebook: Shian HA

Twitter: Shian Housing



In event of a maintenance emergency, when the office is closed a message will indicate which number you will need to contact.

