

Castle Point Borough Council: Our Housing Services



Tenants Handbook



Welcome to Castle Point Borough Council - we are pleased to welcome you as our tenant in your new home.

Castle Point Borough Council manages over 1500 homes in the areas of Benfleet, Thundersley, Hadleigh and Canvey Island. These include 8 sheltered housing schemes along with 450 garages.

We believe in working together with our residents to ensure that those in need have access to good quality and affordable housing.

Our Services

The Housing department sits within the Housing and Communities Service which is located in the Council Offices in Kiln Road, Benfleet. The services provided by our Housing Team include the following:

- processing applications to our Housing Needs Register and assessing the housing needs of those applicants
- processing Mutual Exchange requests
- letting empty properties to housing applicants including new and transfer applicants
- processing requests for repairs and answering maintenance queries
- undertaking planned repairs and improvements to individual properties and estates as a whole
- bringing empty properties up to a recognised standard in order to be offered for letting
- processing requests for aids and adaptations for elderly or disabled tenants
- supporting families with any tenancy queries
- enabling tenants to participate in the decisions that affect the management of their homes
- 365 days per year out-of-hours emergency service.

Please note that the administration of Housing Benefit claims and related enquiries are dealt with by the Benefits Service within Housing and Communities Service.

Our housing policies are developed together with representative tenants and leaseholders including Castle Point Council Tenants and Leaseholders Association and where appropriate agreed by elected Councillors and representatives. Meetings are open to the public and anyone is welcome to attend. **Details of the meetings can be obtained by telephoning 01268 882200.**

Customer Care Service Standard

We are committed to providing excellent services that are easy to access and use.

We will:

- always treat you politely and respectfully
- train our staff so they have the knowledge, information and expertise they need
- take your circumstances and needs into account when dealing with you
- tell you our names when we speak by phone, and wear our name badges when we meet in person
- answer the phone within 30 seconds when you call the Housing Office and do our best to deal with your query at the first point of contact
- tell you whom you are being transferred to if we need to refer your query to another person or team
- acknowledge any letters or emails you send us and give you a full reply within ten working days
- send you information about our service performance each year
- review our services at least every three years.

How to Contact Us

- by phone on 01268 882200 - Monday to Thursday 8.45am to 5.15pm and Friday 8.45am to 4.45pm
- in person at the Council Offices - Monday to Thursday 8.45am to 5.15pm and Friday 8.45am to 4.45pm
- by email at info@castlepoint.gov.uk
- through our website at www.castlepoint.gov.uk
- by post to: Housing and Communities, Castle Point Borough Council, Council Offices, Kiln Road, Benfleet, Essex SS7 1TF.

Visits and Appointments

If we can't deal with your enquiry immediately, we will offer you an appointment at a date and time of your choice - at home or at the Council Offices.

Customer Feedback

We are committed to improving our services, so we will listen to the information you give us.

If you want to give us a feedback, please:

- fill in the Comment or Compliment form on our website
- write to us at: Housing and Communities, Castle Point Borough Council, Kiln Road, Benfleet, Essex SS7 1TF
- call us on 01268 882200 Monday to Thursday 8.45am to 5.15pm and Friday 8.45am to 4.45pm.

Complaints

Our published **complaints procedure** deals with the way in which services are provided. A complaint is when you tell us you are dissatisfied with the quality of our housing services or with an action or lack of action by us.

If you wish to make a complaint, you should write to the Head of Housing and Communities.

Complaints should be sent to:

Head of Housing and Communities
Castle Point Borough Council
Council Offices
Kiln Road,
Benfleet
Essex SS7 1TF

If you are not satisfied, you can seek advice from the following

- your Ward Councilors
- your MP
- Castle Point Council Tenants and Leaseholder Group
- Castle Point Sheltered Housing Forum
- the Citizen Advice Bureau
- Shelter
- the Local Government Ombudsman.

Data Protection

We will only ask you for information that we need to obtain by law or that we need to provide services to you. We will store and use information only as allowed by the Data Protection Act 1998. You have a right to see information we hold about you if you give us reasonable notice and are able to confirm your identity.

Equal Opportunities

- we aim to provide equality of opportunity in all areas of our housing service
- we know that some groups of people and individuals in society face discrimination and we fully support all laws which aim to ensure equality for all
- we will not tolerate harassment or intimidation of or by any individual or group of people
- where an individual or group of people has a special housing need or is disadvantaged, we will aim to meet such needs or overcome the disadvantage they face.

How to contact us

Housing Services 01268 882200
(Housing Hot Key Press 0)

Housing Repairs 01268 882326

Housing Repairs (out of hours) . . 01268 758357

Housing Rents 01268 882481