



BLANDFORD FORUM TOWN COUNCIL

Community Engagement Policy and Customer Care Standards

Adopted on: August 2016
Reviewed on: January 2024
Review due: May 2025

Twinned with Preetz, Germany



Town Clerk's Office
Church Lane, Blandford Forum
Dorset DT11 7AD



Twinned with Mortain, France



Tel: 01258 454500
Email: admin@blandfordforum-tc.gov.uk
www.blandfordforum-tc.gov.uk

Our aim is to give you a high level of customer service, so that you can access our services in the way you want. We use a variety of ways to tell you about our services, see below, and are continually working to provide alternative methods of making our services available to you.

How the Town Council engages with you about services:

- A number of newsletters (at least two) throughout the year and also provides these in large print when requested;
- Regular contact with local schools about events and projects;
- Regular contact with the AONB partnership;
- Regular contact with the military camp in the adjacent parish;
- Regular contact with local organisations about events and projects;
- Publications in the local press, newspapers and magazines;
- Publications on the local radio about events and projects;
- The council's website provides a vast amount of information about how the council works and the services it provides. Visit www.blandfordforum-tc.gov.uk to find out more;
- An active, engaging and responsive Facebook page;
- Community Notice Boards in locations throughout the town;
- Using local venues that are hired out to the community as an opportunity for information, consultation and advertising;
- An A Frame in the town centre with regular updated information about events and projects; and
- Visits to business and shops in the town centre about events and projects.

Our staff are familiar with our Customer Care Standards and how to apply the standards to the way services are delivered to you.

Who are our customers?

Anyone who contacts the council, by whatever method. They may be resident or not, or people contacting us on behalf of public, private or voluntary agencies.

Our commitment to you

We work to a set of customer service principles which guide everything we do.

These include:

- Integrity
- Courtesy and fairness
- Equality of opportunity
- Responsiveness and reliability
- Clear communication

Getting it right first time for our customers

Three ways of making sure we get it right for you first time.

- We will ask you
- We will take action to improve
- We will listen to you

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Standard Target

We aim to

- Telephone – Answer calls within four rings (20 seconds)
- Face to Face – Seen within 1 minute at Town Council reception
- Email/letters – Full response within 10 working days
- Facebook posts/messages – Answer within 24 hours, excluding weekends

Overall Customer Satisfaction

- Set and aim to achieve high standards
- Be welcoming, polite and helpful
- Treat you with respect
- Say what we can and cannot do, so that you know what to expect from us
- Where we cannot help, try to find out who can
- Only ask for relevant information and explain why it is needed
- Respect your right to confidentiality, privacy and safety
- Use only plain English when speaking with you and in all our correspondence
- Not discriminate against anyone because of race, sex, marital status, age, disability, sexuality or religion
- Provide extra help if you need it to access our services
- Listen to any complaints you may have

You should

- treat our staff with respect at all times
- show respect to property, other customers, and for the health and safety of yourself and others when using our services

When telephoning any of our offices you can expect

- Your calls to be answered within 20 seconds or 4 rings
- A polite response
- A call back when we cannot deal with your enquiry immediately
- To be given the name of the person if we transfer you to someone else
- An informative voicemail message and the ability to leave a message outside of office opening hours

When you visit our offices you can expect our reception staff to

- Be welcoming, polite and helpful
- Keep to appointment times and let you know if appointments are running late or have to be rearranged
- Provide you with accurate, up to date information

When emailing our 'admin' email address you can expect

- Acknowledgment of your email within two working days and a full written response within ten working days
- Where very detailed replies are needed, we will provide you with a progress report with timescales

When emailing individual staff members' mailboxes you can expect

- The reply to give a name, title and email address

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When writing to us you can expect

- Acknowledgement of your letter within three working days
- A full reply to your letter within 10 working days or a progress report with timescales
- To be given the name and contact details of the staff member responsible for dealing with your enquiry

If we fail you on any of the above and you wish to make a complaint, you can expect

- Respect for your opinions and empathy for your views
- Staff and councillors to follow the council's Complaints Procedure

Contact address: The Town Clerk
Blandford Forum Town Council
Town Clerks Office
Church Lane
Blandford Forum
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