



**DARLINGTON**  
Borough Council

# Darlington Borough Council Customer Standards



# Our Commitment

---

We are committed to delivering excellent customer service to you across all Council services and to ensure you receive a consistent standard of service. We put our customers at the heart of everything we do.

Our standards set out the timescales and standards you can expect from all Council services when you contact us. These standards apply however you contact us.

## Respect

We will be respectful towards our communities, residents, the Council, each other as colleagues as well as our service users, stakeholders, and wider partners.

## Innovative

We will be innovative in everything we do and continually look for improvements to ensure we offer quality services.

## Collaborate

We will act collaboratively and ensure our successful journey of partnership working continues to ensure that we maximise opportunities to achieve success.

## Deliver

We will aim to deliver quality services to all and strive to always deliver the best we can with the resources available.

## Access to Our Services

We offer a variety of ways for you to contact us.

We're available:

- Online.
- Via email.
- In person at the Town Hall via appointment.
- By phone\*.

\*an emergency service is available 365 days each year by phone

# Our Standards

---

## General Standards

We will:

- Treat everyone fairly and respectfully, always showing courtesy and sensitivity.
- Be polite, helpful, open, and honest.
- Listen to you and explain decisions and outcomes clearly to you.
- Respect your rights to privacy and confidentiality and provide private areas for confidential enquiries.
- Ensure our information is easily accessible and in plain English.
- Aim to solve as many queries as we can at first point of contact.
- Avoid using jargon or technical terms when explaining things to you.
- Display our photo ID and staff will provide you with their full name and contact details if requested.
- Encourage feedback and use this to improve services.
- Provide interpreters on request.

## Online standards

We will:

- Make it easy for you to find what you want online.
- Enable you to report issues, pay, book, update, apply for safely and securely.
- Allow you to register for customer accounts which can offer personalised information.
- Provide access to Council news, information, and consultations.
- Ensure appropriate support is available for you to access and use the self-serve elements of our website.

## Telephone standards

We will:

- Provide all callers with a standard greeting, consisting of a greeting, the section name and the name of the person answering the phone.
- If we pass you onto another person, we will give them your details and the nature of your query, so you don't have to repeat it.
- Where appropriate, we will provide you with a reference number should you need to contact us again.

## Correspondence standards

We will:

- Treat emails and letters in the same way.
- Ensure all emails and letters provide you with the full name of the person responding and their direct contact details.
- Ensure we use a standard out of office message and auto signature to ensure consistency.

## Face to Face standards

We will:

- Offer all visitors to the Town Hall a specific timed appointment.
- Aim to attend to you at your appointment time.
- Ensure we have appropriate levels of staffing to assist customers as quickly as possible.

## Performance standards

We will:

- Measure our performance through customer feedback, complaints and comments. Providing this information annually so you can see how we are doing and what we are doing to ensure we achieve our targets.
- Encourage customers to give us feedback on our performance either online, in person, by telephone or in writing and use this to improve our services.
- Provide annual reports on complaints, compliments and comments received corporately.
- Provide annual reports on average call waiting times.
- Aim to answer all internal and external calls through our telephone system within an average of 5 minutes.
- Respond to all letters and emails within 7 working days of receiving them. If we cannot provide a full response to you in that timescale, we will contact you to agree a response time.



# Feedback

---

Please tell us if you are happy or unhappy with our services. We want to know what works well and what doesn't so we can continue to improve and share good practice across the Council.

Please go to the Complaints, compliments and comments section for details

[www.darlington.gov.uk/your-council/complaints-compliments-and-comments](http://www.darlington.gov.uk/your-council/complaints-compliments-and-comments) or phone us on **01325 406777**.

