



Customer Service Standards

We believe all our customers deserve excellent service. We are committed to providing a helpful, friendly and efficient service and making it easy for you to get in touch with us.

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We promise...

To be polite, helpful and respectful to all our customers.

We will:

- Treat all customers fairly.
- Give customers our names.
- Do our best to get it right first time.
- Listen to our customers and involve them in continually improving our services.
- Aim to make our services accessible to all our customers.
- Make sure staff have the training they need to provide a first-class service.

What you can expect from us

Availability

Our main office at the Grange is open from 8.30am to 5.45pm, Monday to Friday.

Our address is:

The Grange
100 High Street
Southgate
London
N14 6PW.

Our phone number is **020 3535 2700**.

We are available to answer calls between 9am and 5.30pm, Monday to Friday.

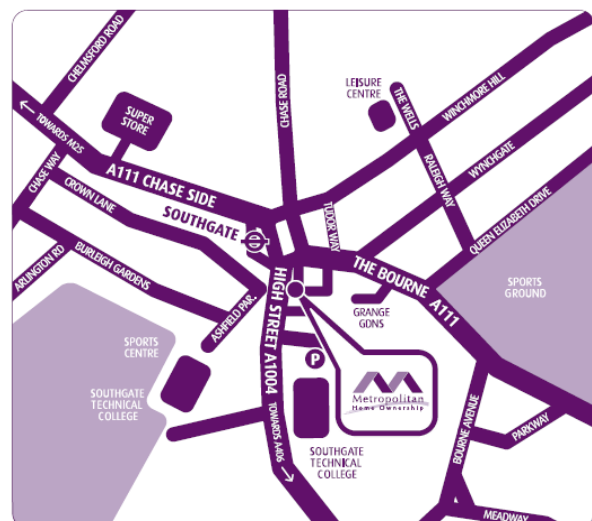
Our website is www.mho.co.uk

You can visit the website at any time or you can log on to www.firststepslondon.org to visit and view available properties. If you contact us through our website, we will reply between 9am and 5.30pm, Monday to Friday.

We want our service standards to be led by our customers and we will monitor our service standards by doing the following:

- Measuring our performance against our targets.
- Asking customers what they think about our service.
- Analysing complaints and compliments.
- Reviewing staff performance and asking for their views on the service.
- Regularly reviewing our policies and procedures.
- Comparing our performance with that of similar service providers.

There are a number of ways to tell us what you think of our services. If you would like more information on how to do this, phone us on **020 3535 2700** for a copy of our Menu of Involvement booklet or you can download a copy from our website, www.mho.co.uk



Phone calls

We will do the following:

- Answer the phone as quickly as possible and give our name when we speak to you. We aim to answer 95% of all calls and to answer 85% of calls within five rings.
- Greet you in a polite and friendly way.
- Follow up and deal with your enquiry if we cannot give you an answer straight away, and keep you up to date with our progress.
- Return your phone calls, and respond to voicemail messages, within one working day, giving you a direct number if possible.
- Keep our promises about contacting you, and get back to you within an agreed timescale.
- Aim to deal with 95% of enquiries at the first stage, which include transferring calls to another team.

Reception service

We will do the following:

- Make sure reception points have enough staff available at all times during our office hours of 8.30am to 5.45pm.
- Have welcoming reception areas with clear signs.
- See you on time if you have an appointment, or within 15 minutes of arriving if you do not have one.
- Wear name badges and give you our names.
- Have a comfortable waiting area with up-to-date information about our services.
- Aim to provide buildings with access for disabled people. Our office at the Grange has wheelchair access. We have a hearing loop for people who wear a hearing aid, and a 'lingua phone' with a translation service available.
- Provide our literature in large print, in Braille, on CD or in other languages.

Writing to you

We will do the following:

- Use plain English and avoid jargon when dealing with your enquiries.
- Aim to respond to 95% of general letters and emails within five working days, and include the name, direct phone number and email address of the person writing to you.
- If we cannot give you a full reply to your letter within five working days or to your email within three working days, we will send an acknowledgement within three working days and tell you when you will receive a full reply.
- Acknowledge complaints within two working days of receiving them and respond within the timescales set out in our complaints procedure. (Any member of staff will be happy to go through our complaints procedure with you or send you a copy of our 'Compliments, Complaints, Suggestions' leaflet. You can also download a copy of the leaflet from our website at www.mho.co.uk.)
- Only share your personal information as allowed by law and when this is

Visiting you

We will do the following:

- Arrange to visit you at a convenient time agreed with you, and be on time for appointments.
- Let you know as soon as possible if we cannot make an appointment.
- Show you ID before we come into your home.
- Leave a card with our contact details if you are out when we visit.
- Respect you and your home.
- Contact you within five working days of receiving your request to see any information we hold about you.

In return, we ask our customers to do the following:

- Be considerate to staff, other customers and neighbours.
- Treat others with respect and not to discriminate against anyone.
- Let us know if they cannot keep an appointment.
- Tell us how we can improve our services, necessary.

Extra standards for specific services

After Sales and Asset Management

We promise to do the following:

- Having received a request for information we will send out any relevant correspondence within five working days.
- If required, we will instruct a panel surveyor within four working days of receiving your instructions.
- Provide you with a copy of your valuation report within four working days of receipt from one of our panel surveyors.
- Where necessary, within four working days of receiving all required documentation we will confirm whether your transaction is approved or declined.
- If you are paying fees or rent, we will adjust your revenue account and refund any amount due to you within fifteen working days of your transaction completing.
- Where we need to instruct our solicitor we will do so within five working days of receiving all required information.
- Any documentation requiring execution will be provided to your solicitor within ten working days of receiving all required information.

Applications and Enquiries

We promise to do the following:

- Send you information and documents within four working days of you asking for them.
- Provide accurate information about schemes, eligibility criteria, property availability (where appropriate and possible) and the stage your application is at.
- Make an appointment for you to see a member of the Applications Team.
- Process your application within four working days of receiving all the information we need.
- Help you find housing as quickly as possible.
- Check our records twice a year to make sure information we hold is accurate and keeps to data protection laws.

Equity loans

We promise to do the following:

- Arrange an independent financial assessment (IFA) interview within five days.
- Transfer cash electronically within one working day of receiving the necessary paperwork and entering the details onto our database.
- Exchange contracts within two working days of receiving all of the necessary documents.

We ask customers to do the following:

- Provide information as quickly as possible.
- Complete the transaction within the specified timescales.

Shared ownership sales

We promise to do the following:

- Put details of all shared ownership sales opportunities onto relevant websites at least six months before the developer hands the property over to us.
- If you want to buy, arrange for an independent financial advisor (IFA) to interview you within five working days of receiving your confirmation of interest.
- Instruct our solicitors to send legal packs to your solicitor within three days.
- We will aim to exchange contracts within 28 days of your acceptance to offer
- Meet you on the day of completion to hand over keys, take final meter readings and go through instructions for mechanical and electrical items in your new home.
- Let you know about any unforeseen circumstances that affect the sale.

We ask customers to do the following:

- Return the 'Acceptance of offer' letter to us within five working days, with a cheque for £400.
- Exchange contracts within 28 days if possible. By working closely with your chosen solicitor and IFA to progress your purchase.
- We will ask customers to reserve a Shared Ownership home with a £100 deposit.



Intermediate rent

We promise to do the following:

- Put details of all Intermediate Rent homes onto relevant websites at least three months before the developer hands the property over to us.
- If you want to rent, we will carry out eligibility and reference checks within five working days of your application.
- We will aim to move you into your new rented homes within three weeks of your application.
- We will meet you on your moving in day to hand over keys and complete appropriate documentation and direct debit forms.
- We will make sure that your new home is clean, today and ready to move into.

We ask customers to do the following:

- Reserve a home with a minimum deposit which includes referencing charges.
- Complete the reference application forms to enquire required tenancy checks to take place.
- Move in within three weeks of application.

Resales

We promise to do the following:

- Request details of interested applicants from the Local HomeBuy Agents.
- Update lists of available properties within two working days.
- Arrange for an independent financial advisor (IFA) to interview you within five working days of us receiving your confirmation of interest.
- Tell you the outcome of your offer within five working days of receiving it.
- Instruct our solicitors to start the selling process within 48 hours of receiving your 'Acceptance of Offer' letter.
- Discuss progress with you each week.

We ask customers to do the following:

- Return the confirmation of interest letter to us within five working days.
- Exchange contracts within 28 days. If possible by working closely with your chosen solicitor and IFA to progress your purchase.

Tenants purchase incentives

For Right to Buy (RTB), Right to Acquire (RTA) and Social HomeBuy (SHB) customers, we promise to do the following:

- Send you the relevant application pack within three working days of you asking for it.
- Acknowledge that we have received your application within three working days of receiving it.
- We will send you a notice telling you whether you have the right to buy your own home. We will do this within four weeks of receiving your application or within eight weeks if we need to contact another landlord.
- If we tell you that you have the right to buy your home, we will send you an offer within eight weeks (if your home is a house) or within 12 weeks (if your home is a flat).
- Review your case once a week and keep you up-to-date throughout the process.

Data Services

We promise to do the following:

- Keep an up-to-date list of home ownership opportunities on relevant websites.
- Send you information and instruction letters within four working days of you asking for them.
- Produce lists of applicants who match the criteria the housing association has set for a particular property or scheme.
- Produce HomeBuy agent reports within four working days.

Relationship Management (FIRST STEPS)

We promise to do the following:

Registered Providers (RPs)

- Meet with the RPs at least once a year.
- Provide monthly updates, by email, by the 10th of each month.
- Arrange a marketing meeting with the marketing manager quarterly.

Local authorities

- Schedule meetings at least quarterly.
- Put the Registered Provider feedback report on the Business to Business (B2B) section of our website by the 30th of each month.
- Upload the FIRST STEPS newsletter onto our website by the second week of the following month.
- Upload regular FIRST STEPS reports onto our website.
- Put urgent information on our website as soon as possible.

Finance

We promise to do the following:

- Claim equity loans from the Homes and Communities Agency within one working day.
- Produce weekly cash reports for internal cash meetings.
- Process all approved invoices within five working days.

What to do if you are not satisfied with the service you receive from us

If things go wrong, we want the opportunity to put the matter right. We have a complaints procedure that you can follow if you want to make a complaint.

You can find details of the procedure on our website - www.mho.co.uk - and you can download our 'Compliments, Complaints, Suggestions' leaflet, or we can send you a copy of this leaflet, if you prefer. If you are not satisfied with the way we handle your complaint, you can contact the Housing Ombudsman. The Ombudsman will review your complaint if it has been through our complaints procedure. (Our 'Compliments, Complaints, Suggestions' leaflet has contact details for the Housing Ombudsman.)



If you need this information in another language or format (such as on audio tape or in Braille), please contact us.

To give us your feedback on this guide or any of our other documents, email the marketing team at mho_marketing@mht.co.uk

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The Grange
100 High Street
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Metropolitan Home Ownership is a trading name of Metropolitan Housing Trust Limited. Metropolitan Housing Trust is a charity, registered under the Industrial & Provident Societies Act 1965, registration number 16337R, and registered with the Homes and Communities Agency, registration number LO726. Consumer credit licence number 557055.

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