

# Solon Service Standards

Our levels of service agreed with residents



## Customer care

Customer care

Complaints

Equality and diversity

Resident involvement

## Repairs and maintenance

Aids and adaptations

Day-to-day repairs

Gas servicing

Major works

Working in your home

## Living in your home

Anti-social behaviour, domestic abuse and harassment

Communal areas

Moving in to your home

Rent collection

Tenancy support

# Contact us

**Office opening hours are  
Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm**

Our office is in the centre of Bristol, near Cabot Circus. Our reception is wheelchair accessible and we have installed hearing loops.

When you come into the office, the first member of staff you will see is usually the receptionist. They will answer your question or arrange for you to see another member of staff who can help you.

**To contact us outside office hours call 0117 924 4071**

If you need an emergency repair or need to contact us out-of-hours for another reason, please ring the main Solon number for information: 0117 924 4071. The message will give you another number to call.

## Solon South West Housing Association

1 Newfoundland Court  
St Paul Street  
Bristol BS2 8AN

**Telephone 0117 924 4071**  
(voicemail when office is closed)  
Fax 0117 924 8816

**Email [solon@solonswha.co.uk](mailto:solon@solonswha.co.uk)**  
**Website [www.solonswha.co.uk](http://www.solonswha.co.uk)**

**Maintenance 0117 916 7777**

### Emergency repairs

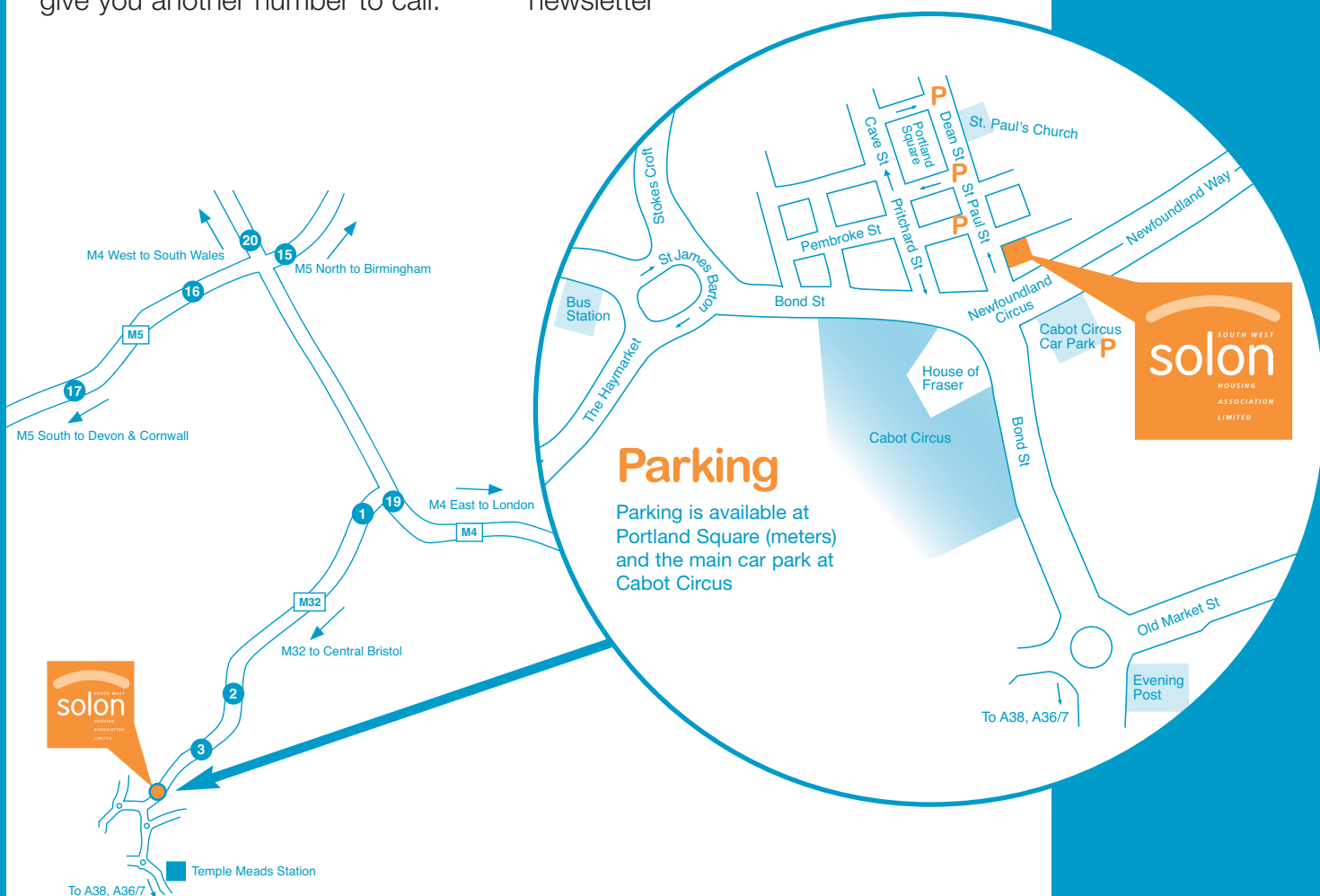
Office hours **0117 916 7777**  
Out-of-hours **0117 924 4071**  
(message gives contact number)

### Face-to-face visits

Come to our office or call us to arrange a home visit (translation and interpretation services available)

### Have your say 0117 916 7768

Resident involvement and communication, meetings, resident newsletter





## Setting our standards

In 2010 Solon began work to agree with residents a set of service standards. These explain the level of service Solon will aim to provide to all residents and what Solon can expect of residents.

All the service standards were agreed through working groups, with residents fully represented. The standards cover many different aspects of the tenancy, such as repairs, how contractors work in your home, what happens when you move in and how we collect rent.

## The detail about our service

The service standards also spell out important rules for our organisation – how we will treat people fairly and offer equal services to all, what support we give to residents, and how we will respond when things go wrong or residents have problems with neighbours.

This booklet sets out the full set of service standards in place at the start of 2011. These have been published and sent to all residents so that everyone can see the agreed standards for how we will work together.

## Feedback is always welcome

Residents are asked to comment on all aspects of our service. We hope that this booklet will help to explain what residents can expect from Solon and we welcome suggestions for how we can improve.

Solon has a Resident Involvement Co-ordinator who encourages feedback. We offer many ways that residents can get in touch and tell us what they think (see page 23). If you need a translation or prefer to have information in Braille, large print, audio or another format, please contact Solon and we can help.

## Customer care

- 5 Customer care
- 6 Complaints
- 7 Equality and diversity
- 8 Resident involvement

## Repairs and maintenance

- 9 Aids and adaptations
- 10 Day-to-day repairs
- 12 Gas servicing
- 13 Major works
- 14 Working in your home

## Living in your home

- 16 Anti-social behaviour, domestic abuse and harassment
- 18 Communal areas
- 20 Moving in to your home
- 21 Rent collection
- 22 Tenancy support



# Tell us how you want this information

Please tell us if you would like this booklet in a different way, for example in your first language, Braille or large print, or on audio tape or computer disc. Call **0117 924 4071** or email us at **[solon@solonswaha.co.uk](mailto:solon@solonswaha.co.uk)**

## ALBANIAN

Nëse anglishtja nuk është gjuha juaj amtare dhe keni nevojë për një përkthim, ne mund t'ua sigurojmë atë.

## BENGALI

ইংরেজী আপনার মাতৃভাষা না হলে এবং আপনার কোন অনুবাদের প্রয়োজন হলে আমরা তা প্রদান করতে সক্ষম।

## CHINESE

如果英文不是您的第一語言，而您需要翻譯的話，我們可以為您安排。

## GUJARATI

જો તમારી પહેલી ભાષા અંગ્રેજી ન હોય અને તમને ભાષાંતરની જરૂર હોય તો અમે તમને તે આપી શકીએ છીએ.

## HINDI

यदि अँग्रेज़ी आप की पहली भाषा नहीं है और आप को अनुवाद की आवश्यकता है तो यह हम आपको प्रदान कर सकते हैं

## KURDISH

Heke îngilîzî zimanê we yê yekem nîne û pêwîstîya we bi wergêr heye, em dikarin yekî ji we re bibînin

## POLISH

Jeżeli język angielski nie jest Twoim językiem ojczystym i wymagasz tłumaczenia, możemy to zapewnić.

## PORTUGUESE

Se o Inglês não é a sua língua materna e precisa de uma tradução, nós podemos obtê-la.

## PUNJABI

ਜੇਕਰ ਇੰਗਲਿਸ਼ ਤੁਹਾਡੀ ਪਹਿਲੀ ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਨਹੀਂ ਅਤੇ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਦੁਬਾਸ਼ੀਏ ਦੀ ਜ਼ਰੂਰਤ ਹੈ ਤਾਂ ਤੁਹਾਡੇ ਲਈ ਅਸੀਂ ਇਸਦਾ ਪ੍ਰਬੰਧ ਕਰ ਸਕਦੇ ਹਾਂ।

## SOMALI

Haddii Ingiriisku aanu ahayn afkaaga kowaad oo aad u baahan tahay turjumaad, annagaa kuu samayn karra.

## URDU

اگر انگریزی آپ کی پہلی زبان نہیں ہے اور آپ کو ترجمہ کی ضرورت ہے تو ہم آپ کے لئے فراہم کر سکتے ہیں۔

## VIETNAMESE

Nếu quý vị không thạo Anh văn và cần bản dịch, chúng tôi sẽ giúp quý vị một bản.

## Need a large print version?

Call **0117 916 7768**

# Customer care

Customer service is at the heart of what we do, to make sure that all residents receive a high standard of service, good information and fast response when they ask for help. All our staff are committed to excellence in customer care.

## → We aim to provide excellent service and will:

- always be polite when responding to your queries
- publish information about who you should contact for help
- provide emergency contact details for when the office is closed
- always try to resolve queries the first time you contact us.

## → We will act quickly and will:

- respond to telephone messages within 1 working day or use our voicemail to tell you when we will be back
- always call you back when we say we will
- always give our name when we answer the telephone
- always leave our name and job title when we leave you a message
- respond within 5 working days to a letter from you.

## → When communicating with you we will:

- write to you using plain language
- give our contact details when we send you information
- give you information in the way that is best for you and in another language if you need it
- respond within 5 working days to an email message from you
- send an automatic acknowledgement for emails sent to the main Solon address, so that you know the email has reached us.

## → To help you use our service we will:

- make sure that the office is easily accessible and welcoming
- see you within 10 minutes of your appointment time
- see you within 30 minutes if you do not have an appointment, or make an appointment for you to come back
- provide a telephone in the office that you can use
- always wear name badges.

## → We will always:

- respect your right to confidentiality
- make sure that all personal information we hold is kept confidential and let you see the personal information we hold about you.

## → You will:

- be polite and reasonable when making requests
- tell us if you are not happy with our service.

# Complaints

Solon encourages all residents to get in touch if they are not happy. We deal with resident complaints as quickly and efficiently as possible. All our staff are trained in our complaints procedure, and we have a clear policy on how to respond and resolve problems.

## → For residents who are not happy we will:

- make it easy for you to complain (e.g. by telephone, email, etc.)
- make sure that all complaints are handled in a fair and honest way
- apologise if we get things wrong and put things right if we can
- give you a copy of our complaints policy if you ask for it, and put it on our website
- acknowledge your complaint within 3 working days and send you a copy of the complaints leaflet.

## → We will act quickly and will:

- tell you who will deal with your complaint, how to contact them and when they should respond by
- send you a full written response to your complaint within 10 days of the first letter
- if we cannot respond within 10 days, let you know when we will respond and give you regular updates
- pay compensation when required and give you information about our compensation policy
- give you details of the Housing Ombudsman Service if all attempts to resolve the complaint under our complaints procedure fail
- ask for your views on how we have handled your complaint.

## → To help us resolve complaints you will:

- tell us if we get things wrong and how it affects you
- tell us when you want to make a complaint
- give us feedback on how well we handled your complaint.



### Not happy?

If you want to complain or give us other feedback, contact us or ask for our leaflet.



# Equality and diversity

We all have the right to be treated fairly and equally. Solon works hard to make sure that all residents have equal access to our service and that we take account of all needs when we make changes and improvements to the way we work.

## → When providing our service we will:

- treat everyone fairly regardless of age, race, sex, marital status, disability, religion/belief, sexual orientation, pregnancy/maternity or gender reassignment
- make sure that we are flexible enough to provide services that meet the diverse needs of all our residents
- make sure that our office and reception are easy for you to get into and move around in, and that they are family-friendly
- give you the information you need in ways you find easy to understand (e.g. supply translations of documents, Braille, audio or large print) and provide an interpreter (including sign language) if you need one
- make sure that all our communications, including our website, are accessible.

## → We aim to ensure equality and will:

- take into account any particular needs you have before you move into one of our properties and while you are living there
- work to include those who find it difficult to access our service
- only work with contractors and suppliers who share our commitment to equality and diversity
- collect and keep up-to-date information about our residents' language, physical, religious and cultural needs
- treat all your personal details with complete confidentiality, as the Data Protection Act requires.

## → To improve our service we will:

- monitor satisfaction with our service according to diversity, to make sure that everyone is getting the same level of service
- when we change or add a policy, procedure or document, check whether it has any impact on anyone's ability to access our service
- give training on equality and diversity to all staff, Board Members and involved residents.

## → To help ensure equality for all you will:

- treat Solon staff, contractors and other residents fairly
- tell us if you feel we are not treating people fairly for any reason.



## Ways to have your say

To find out more about how residents can get involved in Solon, ask for our leaflet or call 0117 916 7768.



# Resident involvement

Solon residents have many different ways to tell us what they want from our service. We work to enable all residents to have a strong voice, be involved and give us feedback on the service we provide.

## → To help you have your say about us we will:

- keep you informed in a variety of ways, including via the resident newsletter, the annual report and the website
- offer a range of ways for you to get involved in shaping, monitoring and delivering our service, so that you can be involved in the way, and for the amount of time, that suits you
- make sure that you are effectively involved in decisions at an early stage and act on what you say, or tell you why we cannot act
- involve you in producing and reviewing the Resident Involvement Strategy, the ways to get involved, the resident newsletter, policies and procedures and other key documents
- support new and existing residents' groups
- have at least 2 (we aim for 3) Board Members who are residents.

## → To improve resident involvement we will:

- continue to develop ways you can become involved and work with all sections of the community, especially under-represented groups
- give you support, training and quality information so that you can be involved in a meaningful way
- pay expenses (travel, childcare, etc.) so you are not out of pocket
- tell you how your involvement has influenced or changed our service – we will let you know personally and provide details of changes in the resident newsletter
- keep up-to-date records of all residents who have expressed an interest in getting involved, and consult them regularly
- monitor how happy residents are with our key services, including opportunities to get involved and influence the organisation
- set targets for how many residents will be involved in each way.

## → To help us to hear your voice in Solon you will:

- tell us if you want to become more involved
- tell us what you think we could do to improve our service
- respond to satisfaction surveys and other requests for feedback.



# Aids and adaptations

Some residents need to have their homes adapted for their individual needs. Solon helps to identify and meet the needs of all residents for living in their home and we support anyone who needs to access further help.

## → When responding to a request we will:

- acknowledge requests for aids or adaptations within 5 working days
- approve or reject your application within 10 working days
- involve you in deciding the best solution for you
- help you to get assessment by an occupational therapist if needed
- tell you where you could get help if we cannot provide an adaptation.

## → For adaptations we make we will:

- make sure that our contractor makes an appointment for the work
- let you know when we plan to do the work
- keep you informed about your application
- inspect all adaptation work
- pay for adaptation costing less than £2,500 from our budget
- carry out minor adaptations within 20 days of a request
- contribute 50% towards major works that cost £2,500-£10,000 and help you to access local authority grants where needed
- if needed, support you to move to a more suitable home.

## → After the work is complete we will:

- ask you if you are satisfied with our service
- make sure that any equipment is serviced annually where needed, if agreed in advance
- work in partnership with specialist agencies to support your individual needs.

## → You will:

- tell us if your circumstances or your needs change
- tell us if the local authority adapts your home
- make sure that we have agreed to maintain any equipment before it is installed
- help us to improve our service by completing the satisfaction questionnaire once the work is finished.

### Do you need your home adapted?

Details of the Aids and Adaptations Service are given in the Repairs section of the website.

[www.solonswha.co.uk](http://www.solonswha.co.uk)

# Day-to-day repairs

We are responsible for many different kinds of repairs, so we explain exactly what service you can expect, what level of co-operation we need from residents to carry out repairs and how we deal with the unexpected.

## → When responding we will:

- complete emergency repairs (attend and make safe) within 24 hours
- complete urgent repairs within 5 working days
- complete routine repairs within 20 working days
- respond within 2 working days to queries about repairs that have not been done
- tell you if any repairs you ask us to do will be charged to you and how much it will cost, before we do any work.

## → To make it easy to report a repair we will:

- give you a Repairs Handbook that tells you how to report a repair and what your responsibilities are in your home
- give you a choice of ways to report repairs (e.g. by telephone or via the website)
- provide an out-of-hours emergency repairs service
- offer appointments for urgent and routine repairs, including times in the early evenings and on Saturday mornings
- make an appointment for you at the time you report a repair.

## → When we make an appointment we will:

- send you a letter to confirm what the work is, which contractor will be doing the work and when it must be completed
- attend at least 98% of the appointments we make
- give you at least 24 hours notice if we have to change an appointment
- carry out as many repairs as we can without inspecting first
  - complete 85% of repairs the first time we visit to carry out work
  - tell you if a job will take longer than planned and keep you informed about progress.



### → After the repair is complete we will:

- make sure that your home is left clean and tidy
- inspect 10% of repairs to make sure that we are providing a good service
- send a satisfaction form to you for your feedback.

### → For work you want to do we will:

- respond within 10 working days to a resident who wants to carry out their own improvements to their home.

### → You will:

- be polite and respectful to Solon staff and to our contractors
- report any repairs needed to your home as soon as you know about them
- give us as much detail as you can about the problem
- co-operate with Solon and our contractors to arrange access to your home to do repairs
- keep appointments with Solon staff and our contractors or you may be recharged
- tell us as soon as possible if you cannot keep an appointment
- use the out-of-hours service only for emergency repairs
- return the satisfaction form we send you to help us monitor and improve our service
- do any repairs that you are responsible for (as listed in the Resident Handbook)
- agree to pay for any repairs that are needed because of damage caused by you, your family or your friends.

### Now you can go online to report a repair

Our online service is available direct from the home page. The website even allows you to upload a picture of the problem. Or you can call the maintenance line on 0117 916 7777.

[www.solonswha.co.uk](http://www.solonswha.co.uk)





# Gas servicing

Solon is responsible by law for the annual servicing and maintenance of all gas appliances in your home. We have clear rules in place for our contractors and need resident help make sure that all service appointments are carried out in good time.

## → For gas maintenance we will:

- service your gas fire and carry out a gas safety check on your gas boiler once a year
- make sure that you have a copy of your gas safety certificate
- give you at least 14 days notice that your gas service is due and offer you a convenient appointment, including during the early evening and on a Saturday
- make sure that all engineers are Gas Safe registered and suitably trained
- inspect and service your smoke detectors while we are servicing your gas appliances
- inspect 10% of all gas servicing work
- keep a record of each gas safety certificate for at least 2 years
- make sure that you know how to use your heating control.

## → For gas service appointments you will:

- be polite and respectful to Solon staff and contractors
- return the satisfaction form we send you, to help us to monitor and improve our service
- keep appointments with Solon staff and contractors
- tell us as soon as possible if you cannot keep an appointment
- co-operate with Solon and contractors to arrange access to your home to carry out gas services.

### Want to know more about gas safety?

Ask for our leaflet or read the 'Safety in your home' pages in the Repairs section of the Resident Handbook.



# Major works

Cyclical decorating, large-scale works and improvements such as kitchen and bathroom replacements are planned months in advance and residents are notified of when and how the work will be done.

## → To communicate with residents we will:

- publish our Decent Homes Standard and the cyclical programme of works on our website
- write to you at least 20 working days before any planned maintenance, and tell you which contractor will be doing the work
- discuss your individual needs with you, including accessibility and health and safety issues, before starting any work
- consult you about the work and offer you as much choice as possible about the layout, design and colour of kitchen units and worktops and the colours for the outside of your home
- make sure that you and the contractor are clear about what work will be done
- provide a Resident Liaison Officer for all long-term major works and give you daytime and out-of-hours contact details.

## → During major works we will:

- make sure that our contractors stick to the Working in Your Home service standard (see page 14)
- work in your home between 8am and 5pm and only carry out weekend or evening work if it has been agreed with you
- leave your home with heating, light and water each day
- do a 'spot inspection' part-way through the works
- inspect all work to make sure that it is completed to a high standard and deal with any issues you have before we sign the job off as finished
- inspect all new boilers after they have been fitted.

## → Once works are complete we will:

- check how satisfied you are
- involve you in monitoring the contractor service by providing satisfaction surveys, site meetings and other communication.

### What's in the pipeline?

Our programme of major works and cyclical maintenance is published on the website.

[www.solonswha.co.uk](http://www.solonswha.co.uk)

## → You will:

- keep appointments with Solon staff and our contractors
- give us access to your home to carry out work
- tell us if there are any problems with the work or the contractor
- complete the satisfaction form to help us monitor the service
- look after your home and garden.

# Working in your home

For day-to-day repairs, cyclical maintenance and annual gas servicing we need to gain access and work in your home. Solon is committed to being as flexible, efficient and considerate as possible, and we give clear instructions to our contractors on how to behave.

## → Our contractors will:

- keep appointments with you and be on time, or phone to let you know if they cannot be there
- always introduce themselves and show their official identification
- be polite, patient, professional and sensitive to your cultural values
- be tidy and appropriately dressed
- communicate with you in a way that you can understand, listen to any concerns you have and, if necessary, tell Solon
- work on weekdays between 8am and 5pm and only carry out weekend or evening work if you have agreed.

## → While working in your home our contractors will:

- let you know if they are doing external work, even if they do not need access to your home, by calling at your door and leaving a card if you are not home
- respect your home and your privacy, protect your belongings while they are working and always knock before entering a room
- help you to move furniture if you cannot do this yourself
- wear shoe covers to protect your floors, if needed
- make sure that your home is secure at all times – if doors and windows have to be left open, they will tell you
- tell you if they need to leave the job, why and for how long
- co-ordinate their work with other contractors and make sure that the job is finished
- carry out work in a safe way and always leave the work area safe
- tell you about any dangers and how you can stay safe while they do the work, and use warning signs if needed
- tell you if they need to disconnect your services and for how long
- be extra careful and considerate if you are vulnerable, elderly, disabled or have small children or pets.

### → To improve the service you receive our contractors will:

- do other small repairs that are needed if they can, or tell Solon about any repairs they cannot do
- contact Solon to discuss any queries that you or they have about the work
- leave the work area clean and tidy and remove any rubbish from your home
- work to a good standard.

### → Our contractors will not:

- smoke, swear or play a radio in your home
- use, move or remove any of your possessions or appliances (e.g. vacuum cleaner, telephone, etc.) or use your electricity without your permission
- leave tools in your home overnight
- carry out noisy work outside normal working hours, except in an emergency
- enter the property unless there is an adult (over 18) at home
- enter a neighbouring property to do work to your home without the neighbour's permission
- continue to work in your home if this might put them at risk
- continue to work if you are abusive or violent towards them.



### Repairs and maintenance online

The Solon website publishes information about repairs and maintenance and includes online forms to report a repair and give feedback. Find out more in the My Home pages of the website.

[www.solonswha.co.uk](http://www.solonswha.co.uk)

# Anti-social behaviour, domestic abuse and harassment

Everyone has the right to live safely and peacefully in their home and their local community. Solon is committed to resolving problems of anti-social behaviour, abuse or harassment and will represent residents where necessary.



## Need some help or advice?

Our leaflets on anti-social behaviour and domestic abuse explain what help and protection we can offer.



### → We act quickly and will:

- respond within 24 hours on working days to all reports of hate crimes and domestic abuse, or where there is an immediate threat
- respond within 5 working days to all other reports of anti-social behaviour or nuisance
- give you information to explain about anti-social behaviour, harassment and domestic violence
- listen to your concerns and take action as soon as possible
- do our best to predict problems and take steps to prevent them.

### → When acting on your behalf we will:

- agree an action plan with you so that you understand what Solon will do and what you need to do, to try to resolve a problem
- agree with you how you would like Solon to contact you and how often
- keep you informed about progress until the problem is resolved
- use a range of different strategies to deal with anti-social behaviour.
- work with other agencies that help resolve problems and can give you support
- support you fully if your case goes to court, and help with transport and costs.

### → After your case is finished we will:

- talk to you about closing your case and confirm this to you in writing before we close the case
- send you a satisfaction form to fill in once the case is closed
- publish the outcome of successful cases, but only with the agreement of those affected.



→ **To help us to represent you as best we can you will:**

- help us to try to resolve issues informally if possible (e.g. through mediation)
- keep a record of what happens in case Solon needs this for evidence
- help us by giving us evidence that we need to deal with anti-social behaviour successfully
- understand that a problem can sometimes take a long time to deal with because of the legal process for gathering evidence and waiting for court dates
- avoid taking any action yourself that might make legal action more difficult.



## Communal areas

For properties with shared areas, it is important that all residents understand how communal gardens, hallways and estates will be managed, how neighbours are expected to behave and who is responsible for maintenance.

### → For inspections we will:

- carry out quarterly walkabouts of our communal areas with residents and other agencies as appropriate
- inspect communal areas once a year
- publicise dates for walkabouts in the newsletter and on the website
- feed back the results of walkabouts and scheme inspections.

### → For general maintenance we will:

- undertake cleaning of communal areas at a frequency and to a standard agreed with you
- repair faulty lighting within 5 days of a report
- repair faulty communal doors within 24 hours where there is a security risk
- repair intercom systems within 5 days
- provide a schedule of landscape maintenance to all our schemes and make the contracts for grounds maintenance and cleaning available on request.

### → For outside areas and gardens we will:

- remove litter from our communal grassed areas, cut grass during the growing season (1 April – 30 October) and maintain shrubs and flower beds
- sweep or blow away all grass cuttings on footpaths and walkways immediately after cutting
- maintain trees and shrubs on our communal areas and ensure they are not likely to risk damage to property or the health and safety of people.

### When are we going to inspect your estate?

The Solon website and the resident newsletter carry information about the planned dates for inspections. Residents are encouraged to come on the walkabouts with us when we inspect.

[www.solonswha.co.uk](http://www.solonswha.co.uk)



**→ For communal decoration and repairs we will:**

- carry out communal decorations on a regular basis in consultation with you
- remove offensive graffiti within 24 hours and all other graffiti within 5 days
- respond within 1 day to reports of vandalism to any of our properties
- remove fly-tipping within 20 days of notification (24 hours if there is a health and safety risk)
- put a sticker on any untaxed and abandoned vehicles on our land within 3 days of being notified
- recharge any tenant when they (or their visitors) are responsible for causing damage, leaving property in communal areas that we then remove, or dumping rubbish
- make random checks on the performance of our contractors.

**→ You will:**

- report any works you think are needed
- look after your garden, hedges and fencing in accordance with your tenancy agreement or lease conditions
- park your vehicle responsibly and considerately (not on the pavement or blocking driveways) and ask your visitors to do the same.



# Moving in to your home

The start of your tenancy is an important time and residents need good information and advice about their new home. Solon Housing Officers provide immediate and ongoing support for all residents and supply information about all aspects of the Solon service.

## → Before you move in we will:

- give you advice and support from the time you are offered one of our properties
- arrange a convenient date and time for you to view the property with a Housing Officer
- tell you how much rent and other charges you will have to pay for the property
- tell you the date you can pick up your keys and move in to your new home
- make sure that your new home meets the relet standard and tell you what that standard is (see our leaflet 'Your new home')
- tell you about any minor repairs we need to do after you have moved in and when the repairs will be done
- offer you decoration vouchers where needed
- explain what you can expect from us as your landlord
- explain your tenancy agreement and your responsibilities as a tenant
- give you a copy of the Resident Handbook, which includes advice and useful information on living in a Solon property
- give you the gas safety and electrical test certificates.

## → When you move in we will:

- give you a welcome pack
- visit you within 6 weeks of moving.

## → Once you have moved in you will:

- make sure that we have your up-to-date contact details
- contact the gas, electricity, water and TV licensing companies and tell them that you have moved in.



### What to expect when you move in

Most residents move in to a home that has been let before. Solon prepares properties to a standard agreed with residents. We give all new residents a leaflet about this.



# Rent collection

Solon sets the rent at the start of each tenancy and the amount is reviewed every year in line with government guidelines. We offer many different ways to pay and we offer support to residents who are in difficulty or need help to apply for housing benefit.

## → For rent collection we will:

- make sure that your rent is in line with government guidelines
- issue a payment card within 7 days of the start of your tenancy
- let you pay in a range of ways, including at post offices and other payment points, on the internet and by telephone with an Allpay payment card, or by standing order direct from your account
- help you to fill in a housing benefit form if necessary and verify the evidence needed for your claim
- help you to understand any letters or forms.

## → During the year we will:

- send you a rent statement 4 times a year
- tell you the balance on your rent account over the phone if you provide your rent account number and answer a security question
- send you an up-to-date statement of your account within 5 working days of a request
- give you detailed information about changes to your rent and give you at least 28 days notice of any change
- send you information once a year about our average rents compared to other registered social landlords in your area.

## → When managing your payments we will:

- refund credit on your account within 28 days, if you ask us to (if you do not owe us money)
- give you support and advice if you get into difficulty with your rent, and provide access to welfare benefit advice, debt counselling and information about local agencies
- explain to you what will happen if you do not pay your rent or charges, or if you fail to keep to an arrangement
- if you are over 60, where appropriate, make a referral, with your permission, to the pensions service to make sure that you get entitlements
- make arrangements with you to repay arrears, taking your circumstances into account, and confirm this in writing
- take action against residents with serious arrears.



## Finding it hard to pay the rent?

Get in touch immediately and we can help – or ask for our leaflet.



## → To make sure that your rent is paid you will:

- pay your rent and service charge on time
- keep your housing benefit claim up-to-date
- tell us immediately if you are having trouble paying
- keep to any arrangements we make with you to pay off arrears.

# Tenancy support

Sometimes we all need a little extra support in our day-to-day lives, whether to live independently, manage our money or get help with emotional or physical needs. The Solon Tenancy Support service is here to help.



## Need some support? Just ask us

You can talk to someone on 0117 916 7769, ask for our leaflet or find out more information on the Solon website.



### → If you make a request for support we will:

- acknowledge your application or referral within 5 working days
- meet you within 3 weeks of your application or referral
- provide you with a Support Officer and make sure that they are trained to give you a professional service
- treat you fairly and with respect.

### → If we offer you tenancy support we will:

- agree a support plan with you and give you a copy
- review your support plan every 3 months (or on request from you)
- be open and honest when we communicate with you
- keep you, or a member of your family, informed about any actions we have taken and any information related to your support plan and assessments
- make sure that our support helps you to develop your own skills and become more independent
- help you to deal with issues relating to your tenancy and to stay in your home
- help you to make decisions and act on these
- do the things we agree to do
- help you to access other services that might be able to help you more than we can (we will only contact other agencies with your permission unless someone's safety is at risk)
- help you to deal with risks you face and review these with you.

### → To provide a good service we will:

- keep appointments, be on time or let you know if we cannot make it
- make sure that Support Officers respect professional boundaries in working with you
- respect your right to confidentiality
- make sure that you know you can complain and tell you how
- consult you before we make changes to the Tenancy Support service.

### → If you request or receive Tenancy Support you will:

- tell us if you cannot keep an appointment
- respect professional boundaries.

## The different ways to get in touch with Solon

<b>Suggestion box</b>	You can drop a suggestion into our box in reception, telephone us on <b>0117 924 4071</b> , use the form on the back of the newsletter or send an email to: <b>suggestionbox@solonswha.co.uk</b>
<b>Contact our staff</b>	You can do this in writing, by telephone or by arranging to speak face-to-face with a member of staff. You can come to our office or we can visit you in your home. Translation and interpretation services can be provided.
<b>Resident meetings</b>	We let residents know when our meetings will take place via the newsletter and on the website. Contact our Resident Involvement Officer if you want to discuss things before the meeting.
<b>Email us</b>	<b>solon@solonswha.co.uk</b>
<b>Use our website</b>	<b>www.solonswha.co.uk</b>
<b>Use the works order</b>	When work is carried out at your home, a works order is sent to you. This has a section for any comments you might have about the contractor or the work carried out. A prepaid envelope is included. We really appreciate your feedback via the works order because it also helps us assess the contractors we use.
<b>Tell a Board member or tenant representative</b>	Call the Solon office on <b>0117 924 4071</b> and we can arrange for you to speak to the right person.
<b>Arrange a petition</b>	Collect signatures and present them to Solon.
<b>Ask a solicitor, advice centre or other advocate to contact us</b>	See the Useful Contacts section of the Resident Handbook or ask Solon who might be able to help.



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