

Customer Charter for Parks & Green Spaces

Corporate Customer Charter

How we work

Everything we do as a council, and as individuals working for the council, should be guided by our values. They sum up the type of council we want to be. They also help our customers know what to expect from us.

FRESH values

Lambeth Council's values have been identified in consultation with staff and customers – they are:

- Fairness
- Respect
- Excellence
- Service
- Honesty

Fairness means:

- Always treating our staff and our customers fairly and equally
- Never putting personal interests above public duty
- Allocating resources fairly and pursuing equal employment policies.

Respect means:

- Respect for the individual and the differences between individuals
- Treating everyone with equal courtesy at all times
- Consulting our communities so we understand their diverse needs
- Valuing our staff and aiming for the best possible terms and conditions, working environment and training.

Excellence means:

- Improving services to attain equally high standards for all customers
- Supporting and recognising staff who provide excellent services
- Members and staff working together to achieve excellence.

Service means:

- Commitment to public service
- Ensuring that customers receive the services they want and need
- Putting customers' needs before the needs of staff or members
- Recognising and responding to the concerns of our staff.

Honesty means:

- Being open with staff and customers about how we work and how we make decisions
- Fighting fraud, dishonesty and discrimination in the borough and in the council.

These values have meaning for all of us – members, staff, partners and the public. It is important that we take account of them in everything we do – from our business plans to our day-to-day contact with customers and each other.

Customer care – customers first

Your manager should clearly explain to you the range of services Environment and Culture provides and how your job fits into this, along with an overview of the council's other departments. You may have external customers, for example residents, or internal ones, such as colleagues, who use the service you provide. The council has a set of customer care standards that all staff must follow:

In our receptions and front line offices we will:

- Let customers know how long they may have to wait if they don't have an appointment
- See customers on time if they have an appointment
- Wear a name badge
- Publish our opening hours, telephone numbers, email addresses and website information for customers to contact us
- Have a supply of complaint leaflets available.

When we speak to customers we will:

- Be polite and courteous
- Welcome them
- Treat them with respect, as we would like to be treated
- Listen
- Give them our help
- Give our name.

When customers phone us we will:

- Answer the phone within five rings
- Return calls by the next working day if a message is left on an answer phone or voicemail
- Take a brief message for colleagues who aren't there. The message needs to include the name of the caller, their phone number, the date and time they called and a short note of what the call was about
- Provide an alternative number on our answer phone message if it is taking our calls.

When customers send us letters, faxes and emails we will:

- Provide a full response within ten working days. If we cannot reply in full, we will write and let them know why.
- We will also let them know when they can expect a full response – for emails we will let them know this within three working days of receipt of their original email.
- End emails with our name, job title, telephone and fax numbers, address, email address and website

Customer Charter for Parks & Green Spaces

To deliver a comprehensive management service for parks and green spaces that strives to meet the needs and aspiration of all our customers we will:-

- Aim to provide a helpful, friendly and courteous service to all our customers dealing promptly and courteously with all enquiries
- Aim to ensure all facilities provide equal access for all users.
- Aim to consult and involve customers in major decisions affecting your parks, including events and other activities.
- Through partnerships and in select locations, staff facilities in such a way as to deliver a high standard of customer care, cleanliness, courtesy and maintenance to ensure visitor safety, comfort and service.
- Seek to ensure appropriate designation and protection of important sites, including heritage features and nature conservation areas.
- Deal promptly and courteously with all enquiries, requests, correspondence and complaints from customers.
- Provide and assist community groups in delivering activities and events in your parks and open spaces.

Key Criteria for Parks and Green Spaces in line with the Green Flag Award Scheme.



1. A Welcoming Place

The overall impressions for any member of the community approaching and entering the park or green space should be positive and inviting, regardless of the purpose for which they are visiting. Features of particular importance are:

- Good and safe access
- Good signage to and in the park or green space
- Equal access for all members of the community

2. Healthy, Safe, and Secure

The park or green space must be a healthy, safe and secure place for all members of the community to use. Relevant issues must be addressed in management plans and implemented on the ground. New issues that arise must be addressed promptly and appropriately. Particularly important issues are:

- Equipment and facilities must be safe to use.
- The park or green space must be a secure place for all members of the community to use or traverse.
- Dog fouling must be adequately addressed.
- Health & Safety policies should be in place, in practice and regularly reviewed.
- Toilets, drinking water, first aid, public telephones and emergency equipment where relevant (e.g. life belts by water) should be available in or near the park or green space, and clearly sign posted.

3. Clean and Well Maintained

For aesthetic as well as Health and Safety reasons, issues of cleanliness and maintenance must be adequately addressed, in particular:

- Litter and other waste management issues must be adequately addressed.
- Grounds, buildings, equipment and other features must be well maintained.
- A policy on litter, vandalism and maintenance should be in place, in practice and regularly reviewed.

4. Sustainability

Methods used in maintaining the park or green space and its facilities should be environmentally sound, relying on best practices available according to current knowledge. Management should be aware of the range of techniques available to them, and demonstrate that informed choices have been made and are regularly reviewed. Specifically:

- An environmental policy or charter and management strategy should be in place, in practice and regularly reviewed.
- Pesticide use should be minimised and justified.
- Horticultural peat use should be eliminated.
- Waste plant material in the park or green space should be recycled.
- High horticultural and arboricultural standards should be demonstrated.
- Energy conservation, pollution reduction, waste recycling, and resource conservation measures should be used.

5. Conservation and Heritage

Particular attention should be paid to the conservation and appropriate management of:

- Natural features, wildlife and fauna.
- Landscape features.
- Buildings and structural features.
- These features should serve their function well without placing undue pressure on the surrounding environment.

6. Community Involvement

Management should actively pursue the involvement of members of the

community who represent as many park or green space user groups as possible. Management should be able to demonstrate:

- Knowledge of user community and levels and patterns of use.
- Evidence of community involvement in management and/or developments and results achieved.
- Appropriate levels of provision of recreational facilities for all sectors of the community.

7. Marketing

- Marketing strategy in place, in practice and regularly reviewed.
- Good provision of information to users, e.g. about management strategies, activities, features, ways to get involved.
- Promotion of the park or green space as a community resource.

8. Management

A Green Flag Award application must have a management plan or strategy in place which reflects the aspirations of Local Agenda 21, Local Area Agreements and other relevant policies, and clearly and adequately addresses all the above criteria and any other relevant aspects of the park or green space's management. The plan must be actively implemented and regularly reviewed. Financially sound management of the park or green space must also be demonstrated.