

# **Barking and Dagenham Council's Service Standards**

These are the Council's service standards which tell you what you can expect from Council Services. They also help us to meet the seven Community Priorities, which are:

- Promoting Equal Opportunities and Celebrating Diversity;
- Better Education and Learning for All;
- Developing Rights and Responsibilities with the Local Community;
- Improving Health, Housing and Social Care;
- Making Barking and Dagenham Cleaner, Greener and Safer;
- Raising General Pride in the Borough; and
- Regeneration the Local Economy.

We would like to hear from you if you feel any of these standards are not being met or you are unhappy with the service being provided. Should you wish to complain or comment on a service please contact:

Chris Bolton  
Corporate Complaints Manager  
Room 196  
Civic Centre  
Dagenham  
RM10 7BN

Tel: 020 8227 2127  
Fax: 020 8227 2471  
Textlink: 020 8227 2594  
Email: [chris.bolton@lbbd.gov.uk](mailto:chris.bolton@lbbd.gov.uk)

## **Complaints about Services**

We will:

- acknowledge a complaint within 5 working days;
- give a full response at Stage two (this is a formal complaint) within 20 working days; and
- give a full response at Stage three (this is an appeal to the Chief Executive) within 20 working days.

## **Street Lighting**

We will:

- check the street lights at night every 2 weeks to make sure they are working;
- carry out repairs to normal faults within 6 working days of you reporting the fault to us;
- have a contractor on site within 2 hours of an emergency situation being reported to us (an example of an emergency situation: a lamp column has been struck in a road traffic accident and is leaning across the public highway);
- carry out repairs within 24 hours should a report show that there could be a hazardous night-time situation (an example of a hazardous situation: a number of street lights are out in the same area); and
- restore supply within 15 days of notification in the case of a faulty underground cable.

## **Abandoned Vehicles**

We will:

- inspect an abandoned vehicle within 2 days of receiving details;
- stick a notice on the windscreen (if the officer considers the vehicle to be abandoned) giving any interested parties 14 days to remove it; and
- write to a registered keeper giving them a further 7 days to remove the vehicle, if the DVLA give us their details.

## **Domestic Waste**

We will:

- collect your household refuse weekly;
- let you know in advance, by letter or in the local press, of any planned change in your collection day (for example bank holidays); and
- pick up any missed collections by the end of the next working day.

## **Bulky Household Waste**

**Beds, furniture, fridges, cookers and up to 20 bags of household or garden waste**

We will:

- collect these items free of charge; and
- aim to remove them within 30 working days from the time you contact us and agree an appointment.

**Toilet and bathroom fittings, boilers, building rubble, garden sheds, fences, large DIY waste from households**

We will:

- collect these items for a nominal fee which will be estimated within 5 working days of your call; and
- make an appointment to collect the items within 30 days of us confirming that your payment has been made.

## **Clinical Waste**

**Clinical waste disposal from private households includes the safe collection and disposal of items like hypodermic needles, incontinence pads and dialysis waste.**

We will:

- provide you with yellow bin bags and boxes for sharp items; and
- arrange a first collection within 5 days of your first enquiry.

## **Street Cleansing**

We will:

- clean every road in the Borough at least once a week;
- deep clean every road in the Borough every 6 weeks; and
- clean areas in front of shops at least once a day.

## **Planning Services**

We will:

- acknowledge receipt of all planning applications and allocate them to a case officer within 3 working days;
- make a decision on at least 70% of all planning applications within 8 weeks;
- make a decision on at least 85% of all planning applications within 13 weeks;
- issue a decision notice and inform those who have submitted representations about an application within 5 working days of the decision being made; and
- carry out an inspection to investigate the nature of any enforcement complaint within 10 working days.

## **Building Control**

We will:

- acknowledge receipt of all plans and allocate them to a case officer within 3 working days;
- look at all plans and give a first response within 3 weeks;
- make a decision on all plans within 8 weeks of submission.

## **Births, Deaths and Marriages**

We will:

- meet requests for copies of certificates within 24 hours.

You can:

- register a birth or death in the Borough, in person, while you wait; and
- declare a birth or death outside the Borough, in person, while you wait.

For more information about any of these services, please contact:

Matthew Whiddet

Telephone: 020 8227 3190

Email: [matthew.whiddett@lbbd.gov.uk](mailto:matthew.whiddett@lbbd.gov.uk)

## **Street Warden Service**

We aim to improve people's quality of life by making our streets and public spaces cleaner. We also aim to reduce crime and the fear of crime in our communities.

We will:

- respond to urgent complaints immediately;
- give free advice to residents and traders on how to dispose of rubbish responsibly;
- provide high visibility patrols in a selected areas; and
- take enforcement action against those who abuse our streets and public places.

For more information about the street warden service, please contact:

Tony Chapman

Telephone: 020 8227 5652

Email: [tony.chapman@lbbd.gov.uk](mailto:tony.chapman@lbbd.gov.uk)

## **Housing Benefits**

We will:

- process your claim for Housing Benefit within 42 days of receiving it;
- process your claim following a change in your circumstances within 25 days of you notifying us;
- aim to deal with your enquiry within 40 minutes when you visit our offices (our office is open Monday to Friday between 8.45am and 4.15pm); and
- give advice and answer your queries over the phone between 8.30 am and 4.15 pm, Monday to Fridays.

For more information about housing benefits, please contact:

Telephone: 020 8227 2970

Email: [benefits@lbbd.gov.uk](mailto:benefits@lbbd.gov.uk)

## **Council Tax and Business Rates**

We will:

- give you 14 days notice of any new amount if we need to make a change to your payments;
- contact you and let you know within 25 days if you miss a payment;
- tell you of any change in your Council Tax or Business Rates within 10 days of the change being notified to us; and
- take legal action to make you pay any overdue Council Tax or Business Rates within 1 month of reminding you that you have missed a payment.

For more information about Council Tax services, please contact:

Telephone: 020 8227 2926

Email: [ctax@lbbd.gov.uk](mailto:ctax@lbbd.gov.uk)

For more information about Business Rates, please contact:

Telephone: 020 8227 2934

Email: [nndr@lbbd.gov.uk](mailto:nndr@lbbd.gov.uk)

## **Cashier's Services**

You can:

- visit our Cashier's offices at Barking Town Hall and at the Civic Centre between 9 am and 4.15 pm, Monday to Fridays;
- expect a cashier to take your payment within 5 minutes; and
- make payment by telephone using our automated payment service or on-line at [www.barking-dagenham.gov.uk](http://www.barking-dagenham.gov.uk) 24 hours a day.

For more information about the cashiers services, please contact:

Telephone: 020 8227 2049

Email: [cashiers@lbbd.gov.uk](mailto:cashiers@lbbd.gov.uk)

## **Rent Accounts**

We will:

- credit payments made at the Post Office to your rent account within 4 working days;
- let you know within 10 days if you miss a payment;
- send you a new payment card (if you need one), within 10 working days;
- let you pay weekly, fortnightly or monthly by direct debit: and
- take action to end your tenancy if you are more than 4 weeks in arrears with your rent.

For more information about rent accounts, please contact:

Telephone: 020 8227 2922

Email: [rent@lbbd.gov.uk](mailto:rent@lbbd.gov.uk)

## **Social Services - Children and Families**

When you first contact us concerning a problem about a child or young person we will:

- ask you some questions to make sure that we understand the problem; and
- write to you within 3 working days if the case concerns a matter of child protection.

To understand your needs better, we will:

- treat you, and others we speak to with respect;
- listen to your opinions carefully and make sure we take account of them;
- record what you and others have to say and make sure you know what we have decided (you can see this record if you give us notice);
- complete our initial assessment within 7 working days;
- complete a more detailed assessment within 35 working days, where the needs are complicated; and
- make sure that the child or young person, and their family, have a written statement which will explain what services we intend to provide and why.

### **When we provide longer term services**

From time to time, we will need to review the services we provide to make sure that they are still appropriate. You, your family and others who look after you or know you well, will always have an opportunity to be involved in this review.

We will:

- always listen to your opinions about what you need and the services you receive;
- sometimes charge for some of our services; and
- take every opportunity to help you to develop confidence and to celebrate your achievements.

For more information about Children and Family Services, please telephone:  
020 8227 3852 – during office hours  
020 8594 8356 – at all other times

### **Social Services - Older Peoples Services**

We will:

- work together with you to understand your needs and decide how best to help (this is called an assessment);
- begin your assessment within 48 hours of a first contact being made with Social Services;
- complete your assessment within 4 weeks;
- work with health colleagues to make sure that your assessment takes account of all your needs and saves you time and effort;
- always offer carers an assessment; and
- give you a written copy of your care plan which sets out what help you may need.

### **When we provide longer term services**

We will:



- always consider with you whether rehabilitation or recovery services are appropriate before starting long-term care services;
- review your care plan within 3 months, and afterwards at least once each year;
- provide community equipment (aids and minor adaptations) within 7 days;
- offer you a choice of hot meals from our Meals on Wheels services, and offer meals that meet any cultural or health requirements you may have;
- deliver your meal to your home between 11.30 am and 2.30 pm;
- provide you with good quality, reliable, timely and non-intrusive home support services;
- make sure all our home support assistants wear a uniform and name badge; and
- make sure that if you are assessed as needing residential or nursing home care, you can choose to have a short stay in a home, and after you move in, a time to see if you like it before making a permanent decision.

## **Social Services - Adult Services**

We will:

- publish information in plain language about our services, how we make decisions, who we can help and any services for which there is a charge; and
- make sure that our information is available in other formats.

### **When you contact us**

We will:

- work with you to understand your needs and decide how best to help (this is called an assessment);
- carry out your assessment which may be completed by a Health or Social Services professional;
- listen and respond to matters relating to your language, religion or culture;

- always offer carers an assessment; and
- give you a written copy of your care plan which sets out what you may need.

### **When we provide longer term services**

We will:

- work with you to develop a care plan which promotes your independence, rehabilitation and individual aims and supports you having control over your life;
- try to make sure your care plan puts together the range of health, social care and other services provided;
- make sure your care plan is reviewed whenever there is a significant change in your circumstances or at least once a year; and
- consider with you how you can be supported to stay in your own home before considering alternative supported accommodation.

For more information please contact the Initial Contact Service:

Telephone: 020 8227 2915

Minicom: 020 8227 2462

Email: [ics@lbbd.gov.uk](mailto:ics@lbbd.gov.uk)

Social Services have published more detailed standards in the “Better Care Higher Standards” Charter. For a copy of this document, please contact Elaine Crawford at the Civic Centre on 020 8227 2420 or email your request to [elaine.crawford@lbbd.gov.uk](mailto:elaine.crawford@lbbd.gov.uk)

### **Public Meetings**

We will:

- make sure that agendas for all Council meetings can be looked at, at least 5 working days before the meeting at our Civic Centre offices;
- make sure that the Forward Plan (a plan which sets out when key Council decisions are to be made) is available in paper form from our Civic Centre offices, and on our website;
- give a written response to questions arising from the Community Forums and BAD (Barking and Dagenham) Youth Forum forums within 10 days of a

meeting, when we are required to do so;

- make sure that a response is available at the next forum meeting when a written response is not required; and
- we will respond to all enquiries or complaints within 2 working days.

## **Pest Control**

We will:

- respond to an enquiry within 2 working days;
- give free advice about controlling common pests; and
- sometimes make a charge for the removal of certain pests.

## **Noise and nuisance**

- our late night nuisance patrol will respond to urgent complaints within one hour.

## **Environmental Protection**

The Environmental Protection Team investigates complaints regarding commercial and industrial premises, monitors the quality of the environment and responds to requests for information about the environment. The team issues permits for specified industrial processes as defined by the Integrated Pollution Prevention Control Act (formerly Environmental Protection Act).

We will:

- respond to complaints about pollution from commercial or industrial premises within 2 working days;
- issue permits to specified processes within 4 months of receipt of an application; and
- respond to requests for Environmental Searches within 10 working days.

## **Trading Standards**

We will:

- give free advice to businesses to help them comply with legal regulations; and
- give free advice on any civil complaints you may have.

## **Food Safety and Health and Safety**

We will:

- give free advice to businesses on areas of good practice;
- give a hand written report on inspecting a business before we leave; and
- provide a full report of our visit within 5 working days.

## **Licensing**

We will:

- send you an application pack on the same day as we receive a license application;
- acknowledge completed application forms within 2 working days; and
- Send you a license within 2 working days, if the license is granted.

For more information any of these services contact Health and Consumer  
Customer Services:  
Telephone: 020 8227 5640

## **Applying for a Council property**

We will:

- register your completed housing application within 5 working days;
- register any completed request for a housing transfer within 5 working days;
- offer you an appointment to view the premises within 1 working day of being allocated a council property; and
- provide you with a handbook on your rights and responsibilities when you have signed a tenancy agreement.

## **Dealing with problems relating to your housing needs**

We will:

- investigate reports of neighbour nuisance and anti-social behaviour within 2 working days;
- investigate reports of racial harassment within 1 working day;
- remove racist graffiti within 1 working day; and
- give you initial advice on the day that you contact us, if you are experiencing domestic violence.

For more information about housing needs, please contact:

John Evans on 020 8227 2725 if you live in Heath, Eastbrook, Alibon, Chadwell Heath or Whalebone wards

Bill Jennings on 020 8227 5024 if you live in Village, Goresbrook or River wards

Joan Prior on 020 8227 3820 if you live in Abbey, Gascoigne or Thames wards

Anthony Alexander on 020 8227 2210 if you live in Longbridge, Mayesbrook or Eastbury wards

Thomas Oyetunde on 020 8227 5029 if you live in Valence, Becontree or Parsloes wards

## **Housing Repairs**

We will:

- record your repair requirements immediately you contact us;
- make appointments for urgent repairs that require access to your property and have to be completed within 3 or 7 working days; and
- keep a check on tenants' satisfaction of the repair service.

For more information about repairs, please contact:

Thames Accord

Telephone: 020 8592 7388

Email: [repairs@thamesaccord.com](mailto:repairs@thamesaccord.com)

## **Council Property Renovations**

- our site manager will visit the site every day during the refurbishment;

- all rubbish caused by the work will be cleared away by the contractors every day;
- you will receive 14 days notice if it is necessary to put up scaffolding; and
- you will not be left without cooking, water or toilet facilities overnight.

For more information about Council Property Renovations, please contact:

Keith Harriss  
Telephone: 020 8227 5259  
Email: keith.harriss@lbbd.gov.uk

## **Tenant participation**

We will:

- hold open Community Housing Partnership meetings every 2 months;
- advertise these meetings within the borough and through the local press;
- encourage tenants to become involved with their local Community Housing Partnership; and
- post an application for board membership to you within 1 working day if you are a tenant and would like to apply to sit on the board of your Community Housing Partnership.

For more information about tenant participation, please contact:

Paul Dawson  
Telephone: 020 8227 2845  
Email: paul.dawson@lbbd.gov.uk

## **Home ownership**

**If you are thinking of buying your Council home, we will:**

- send you a 'Right to Buy' application pack within 1 working day; and
- process your 'Right to Buy' application within 4 weeks of receiving your completed form.

For more information about buying your Council home, please contact:

Dave Carter  
Telephone: 020 8227 2453  
Email: dave.carter@lbbd.gov.uk

## Private Sector Housing

- if you have a complaint against your landlord and you live in rented accommodation that isn't Council owned, we will respond to your complaint within 2 working days;
- if you are facing eviction which we consider is illegal, we will respond on the same day; and
- we will inspect all houses that are in multiple occupation.

For more information about private sector housing, please contact:

Martin Davies

Telephone: 020 8227 5079

Email: [martin.davies@lbbd.gov.uk](mailto:martin.davies@lbbd.gov.uk)

## Schools

Schools will:

- provide an annual report on each pupil; and
- hold parent teacher evenings once a term.

We will work with schools to raise standards:

- at Key Stage 2 so that by 2004 83% and 85% of 11 year olds within the borough achieve level 4 or above in English and maths respectively.

For more information about Key Stage 2 standards, please contact:

Roger Medhurst

Telephone: 020 8227 4827

Email: [roger.medhurst@lbbd.gov.uk](mailto:roger.medhurst@lbbd.gov.uk)

- at Key Stage 3 so that by 2004 73% of 14 year olds within the borough achieve level 5 or above in English and maths; and
- at Key Stage 4 so that by 2004 99% of 16 year olds achieve at least one GCSE and 48% achieve at least five GCSEs, or equivalent, graded A\* -C.

For more information about Key Stage 3 and 4 standards, please contact:

Steve Rowe

Telephone: 020 8227 4820

Email: [steve.rowe@lbbd.gov.uk](mailto:steve.rowe@lbbd.gov.uk)

## **Children's Information Service**

- every 3 and 4 year old will have access to a free education place within the borough;
- we will provide accurate information to parents about early year's education and childcare provision in the Borough free of cost through our website and information in libraries. This range of information applies to children between the ages of 0 and 14;
- we will ensure that all childcare providers are registered with the government in line with The Children Act and will ensure that any changes to this status are updated with 2 working days upon receipt of this information; and
- we will ensure that accurate information on childcare provision is available specifying opening hours, fees and ability to cater for children with particular learning needs.

For more information about the Children's Information Service, please contact:

Christine Prior

Telephone: 020 8270 5552

Email: [Christine.pryor@lbbd.gov.uk](mailto:Christine.pryor@lbbd.gov.uk)

## **Additional support or needs for Students**

- all statements of Special Educational Needs (SEN) will be reviewed on an annual basis;
- all parents and schools will be provided with a named casework officer during the Statutory Assessment process;
- we will aim to complete the statutory assessments within the prescribed timescales (18 weeks);
- all schools will be provided with named specialist officers to deal with cases as part of the area inclusion teams. These officers will include an advisory teacher, educational psychologist, SEN assessment and review team, an access and attendance officer and where necessary, a social worker; and
- parents and schools will receive a response to urgent referrals within 3 working days.

For more information about support or needs, please contact:

Liesel Batterham



Telephone: 020 8270 3282  
Email: [liesel.batterham@lbbd.gov](mailto:liesel.batterham@lbbd.gov)

## **The Adult College**

We will work to ensure that we:

- give you comprehensive information about the courses we offer and the fees we charge via the prospectus and course information sheets;
- deal with all applications fairly and efficiently;
- provide high standards of teaching from appropriately qualified teachers; and
- give fair and impartial feedback on your progress and performance.

For more information about the Adult College please contact:

Nick Hatch

Telephone: 020 8270 4730

Email: [nhatch@adult-collegebardaglea.org.uk](mailto:nhatch@adult-collegebardaglea.org.uk)

## **Admission to schools**

- parents and schools will be notified of pupils allocated a place in reception class at local primary schools by the end of the spring term;
- parents and schools will be notified of pupils allocated a place in Year 7 at local secondary schools by the end of the first half of the spring term;
- parents and schools will be notified of pupils allocated a place after the start of the school year within 10 working days of receipt of the appropriate documentation at the Town Hall; and
- we will consult with school governing bodies annually on the admissions criteria in the Borough by 1st March and will update the parents' brochures, Road to Learning and The Right Secondary School, by 15th April each year.

For more information about admissions to schools please contact:

Janet Mitchell

Telephone: 020 8270 3032

Email: [janet.mitchell@lbbd.gov.uk](mailto:janet.mitchell@lbbd.gov.uk)

## **How to Appeal about a School Place**

### **We will:**

- acknowledge an appeal within 2 working days of receiving it;
- make sure that parents receive an invitation to an appeal hearing at least 10 working days before the date given for the appeal to be heard;
- make sure that parents receive the agenda for the hearing at least 5 working days before the date given for the appeal to be heard;
- send an initial decision letter to parents within 2 working days after the appeal hearing; and
- send a detailed decision letter to parents within 20 working days after the appeal hearing.

For more information about school appeals or public meetings, please contact:

John Dawe  
Telephone: 020 8227 2135  
Email: [john.dawe@lbbd.gov.uk](mailto:john.dawe@lbbd.gov.uk)

## **Permanent exclusions**

- we will arrange a Governors Discipline Meeting within 15 days of a pupil being excluded by the school;
- we will provide post exclusion advice to parents at the Governors Discipline meeting; and
- we will provide individual pupil files within 2 working days to the Tuition Service where alternative tuition for pupils whose exclusion has been upheld will be arranged.

For more information about permanent exclusions, please contact:

Bal Gill  
Telephone: 020 8270 3024  
Email: [bal.gill@lbbd.gov.uk](mailto:bal.gill@lbbd.gov.uk)

## **Pupil and Students Services**

we will ensure that:

- applications for the Education Maintenance Allowance are processed within 3 weeks;
- applications for the Disabled Student allowance receive a response within 24 hours;
- free school meals are provided on a temporary basis from the day after a request is made;
- applications for a school clothing grant are processed within 2 weeks and you will receive a cheque before the start of the school term;
- applications for 16+ travel allowance are processed within 2 weeks;
- applications for home to school transport are processed within 2 weeks;
- applications for incapacitated travel receive a response within 24 hours; and
- applications for student support are processed within 6 to 8 weeks.

For more information about pupil and student services, please contact:

Yvonne Benjamin

Telephone: 020 8270 3414

Email: [Yvonne.benjamin@lbbd.gov.uk](mailto:Yvonne.benjamin@lbbd.gov.uk)

## **Eastbury Manor House Heritage Centre**

We will work to ensure that:

- the house is open to members of the public with a guided tour every Monday and Tuesday between March and December; and
- a themed visitor day open to the public is held on every first Saturday of the month between March and December.

## **Valence House Museum**

We will work to ensure that:

- the museum is open to the public between 9am and 4.30pm Monday to Friday and 10am to 4pm of Saturdays;
- the Local Studies Centre is open to the public from 10am to 4pm Monday and Tuesday, from 10am to 7pm on Thursdays and 10am to 4pm on Friday and Saturday; and

- a variety of events and courses open to the public are staged regularly as advertised at the museum and on the website.

For more information about Eastbury Manor or Valence House, please contact:

Kirsty Briody  
Telephone: 020 8270 6769  
Email: [kirsty.briody@lbbd.gov.uk](mailto:kirsty.briody@lbbd.gov.uk)

## **LIBRARIES**

We will work to ensure that:

- all households in Barking and Dagenham are within 1 mile from a static library;
- all libraries are open during the published opening hours and that 25% of opening hours are outside of the normal working week of Monday – Friday, 9 a.m. to 5 pm;
- all libraries provide free access to an online catalogue and the internet;
- books are issued for three weeks and at least 12 items can be borrowed at any one time;
- our services and stock are continuously reviewed and updated to respond to the needs of all library users and potential users;
- library staff are trained to support library users in the use of ICT; and
- library users and potential users are regularly surveyed to establish their views of the library service.

For more information about the Library service, please contact:

David Bailey  
Telephone: 020 8270 3610  
Email: [david.bailey@lbbd.gov.uk](mailto:david.bailey@lbbd.gov.uk)