



**STROUD
DISTRICT
COUNCIL**

Our Service Standards



Our commitment to you:

Everyone who contacts Stroud District Council should receive excellent service.

We will ensure we put you at the heart of everything we do, learning from the feedback you provide us, to help us continuously improve and shape the future delivery of our services.

Whenever and however you contact us, we will aim to ensure you receive the highest standards of service.

This document sets out what you can expect from us.





Our customer care principles:



Helpful

We will:

- aim to get it right first time.
- try to achieve what we said we would and keep you updated until your enquiry is resolved.
- explain our decisions and the reasons for them using easy to read and jargon-free language.
- listen to and act on your feedback to improve our services.



Fair and honest

We will:

- treat you fairly and with respect.
- apologise if we get things wrong, do our best to put them right and learn from any mistakes.
- protect your privacy and confidentiality by handling your information sensitively and securely.



Friendly and understanding

We will:

- be polite and attentive.
- ensure you feel confident that we've listened to you, understood your needs and take the necessary action.
- be positive and proactive, demonstrating through our actions that your issues matter to us.



Accessible to everyone

We will:

- provide clear and up to date information about our services and provide help accessing them if you need assistance.
- make sure Council services are available to all and information is provided in an accessible format, including different languages, audio, braille and easy to read. Our accessibility statement for our website is available [here](#).

In return we ask you to:

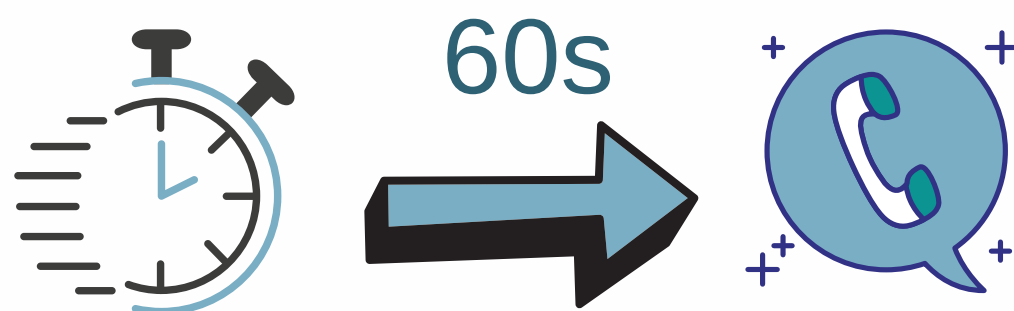
- provide us with the correct information at the right time and let us know if anything changes.
- tell us as soon as possible if things go wrong, so we are able to take action.
- let us know in good time if you can't make an appointment.
- treat everyone using or providing our services politely and with respect and understand that we will not accept offensive, or discriminatory language, or threatening behaviour.
- let us know if you have any feedback on the services we provide.





When you call us:

- Our telephone lines are open during office hours Monday to Thursday 8.45 a.m. to 5.00 p.m. and Friday 8.45 a.m. to 4.30 p.m.
- When calling our main SDC phone number, once a service area has been selected, we aim to answer all calls within 60 seconds. There may be times when we cannot achieve this due to demand.
- We will introduce ourselves in a professional manner, clearly stating our first name and team so that you know who you are speaking to.
- If we need to transfer your call to someone else we will pass on your details with your permission so you don't have to repeat yourself.
- At the end of our conversation with you, we will ask you if there is anything else we can help you with and explain what will happen next if further contact is required.
- Where an officer is not available to accept a transferred call, we will offer you the choice to either leave a voicemail message or arrange a call-back.
- Voicemail messages will be responded to by the end of the next working day. If an officer is not available, a voicemail message will provide an alternative number or email address for you to contact.
- When we leave you a message, we will tell you our name, department and what number to contact us on.



@ When you email us:

- We will acknowledge all email enquiries:
 - ➔ If you email a service area mailbox (for example a generic mailbox, such as planning@stroud.gov.uk), you will receive an automatic acknowledgement, so you know this has been received.
 - ➔ If you email a member of staff directly, you will receive an acknowledgement as soon as possible, and no longer than 3 working days.
 - ➔ If a member of staff is absent, you will receive an automatic reply which will provide their return date, and alternative contact details.
- We will respond to all email enquiries as soon as possible, and no longer than 10 working days. In most cases this will be a full response. If the enquiry will take longer to resolve, we will tell you the reason for the delay and when we will be able to respond.



When you you send us a letter:



Response time

We will respond as soon as possible, and no longer than 10 working days. In most cases this will be a full response. If the issue will take longer to resolve we will tell you the reason for the delay and when we will be able to respond.



Contact details

The reply will give the name and title of the person dealing with your enquiry, along with the relevant contact details.



Accessible format

We will make arrangements for leaflets, letters or other information to be available in an alternative accessible format, upon request.

Making an enquiry online:



Available 24 hours

You can access a full range of information and complete transactions on our website, 24 hours a day, including applying for services, submitting enquiries and making payments.



Response time

Your enquiry will be directed to the relevant service area and a response, if needed, will be provided as soon as possible, and no longer than 10 working days.



Online contact form

If you are unsure which service you need to contact, you can use our customer service [online contact form](#).

Contacting us via social media:

- We read all of the messages and comments we receive. Though we may not reply to every comment, we will always listen to what you have said, and act as appropriate.
- General comments on our posts will not receive a response.
- We will aim to provide a response to a direct question as soon as possible, and within 5 working days.
- Repeated questions about a particular subject matter will not receive a response where we consider we have already provided a response.
- If we feel your enquiry would be better handled by a service area, we will direct you to the appropriate area.
- Depending on the nature of the enquiry, we may ask you to send us a direct private message with further details.
- We will never ask you to share your personal details publicly over our social media channels.



When you visit us:

- Our offices will be clean, safe, and accessible to all.
- If you have made an appointment you will be met at that time, but if there is a delay, we will keep you updated and provide an explanation.
- If you do not have an appointment, an officer will aim to see you within 15 minutes of your arrival. If an officer is not available, we will book an appointment for you to see someone within 5 working days.
- Private space will be provided to discuss confidential issues.
- We will always do our best to accommodate everyone's needs. Please let us know what assistance might be needed when you book so we can ensure we have the appropriate facilities in place.



When we visit you:

- If we have agreed a time and place with you in advance, we will arrive on time or let you know if we are delayed. If we need to rearrange an appointment, we will contact you using the details you have given us.
- If you are out we will let you know we have visited and tell you how to contact us by leaving a calling card or contact you directly using the details you have given us.
- We will always treat your home or other premises with respect.
- We will always identify ourselves as being from Stroud District Council by wearing and showing you our identity card.
- We will explain the reason for the visit.

When you give us feedback:

- We welcome feedback from you and we will use it to shape and improve the future delivery of our services.

- We will acknowledge any complaints we receive, in writing, as soon as possible, and no longer than 3 working days.



- All complaints will be treated with respect and in confidence. A copy of our policy can be found [here](#).



- We will provide a full response as soon as possible and no longer than 10 working days. If your complaint requires significant investigation, then we will let you know and agree a response date.

When you submit a request for information:

- Before you submit any request, you should check our **Freedom of Information register** to see if the information you require is already published.
- You can submit your request for information via email or letter.
- We will acknowledge your Freedom of Information request within 3 working days and provide you with a full response within 20 working days.
- We will acknowledge your Subject Access Request within 3 working days and respond within 1 month of receipt, except in exceptional circumstances.



SDC Councillors' enquiries:

When an enquiry is received from a SDC Councillor, we will:

- acknowledge receipt as soon as possible, and no longer than 3 working days.
- provide Councillors with a dedicated telephone number for general council enquiries and an alternative number for contacting Democratic Services.
- respond as soon as possible, and no longer than 10 working days. In most cases this will be a full response but if the issue will take longer to resolve we will tell you the reason for the delay and when we will be able to respond.

