

Customer Services

Useful information guide

How can we support you?



Working together we will make Sedgemoor a safer, cleaner, more pleasant and vibrant District to live, work, learn, invest and to visit.

Within Sedgemoor's Corporate Strategy we are committed to delivering excellent customer service, whether that is by delivering our services ourselves, or by working with partners.

Sedgemoor aims to deliver services, which are:

- Of good and consistent quality;
- Responsive to the needs and expectations of customers;
- Accessible by all customers;
- Value for money.

In order to achieve these aims Sedgemoor District Council has produced a set of service standards for a range of services that we provide. They are designed so that you as a customer of ours will know what service you can expect from us. We will monitor our performance against these standards to ensure that we are providing you with excellent customer service, and if, for some reason, we are unable to meet the standard we will let you know and keep you informed.

Service standards are about the service that we provide to you in order to ensure that we have the right standards in place. We need and welcome your feedback. You may wish to see changes, or may have ideas about improvements that we could make, if so, please let us know. Details of how to do this are contained later in this leaflet.

Quality service from Sedgemoor means:

1. Service Standards

Sedgemoor District Council has published a set of Service Standards that will set out a level of service you can expect from each service.

2. Equality and Diversity

Sedgemoor District Council will work towards promoting equality of opportunity, promoting equality of access and fair treatment. The council will work to eliminate barriers to access for all communities.

3. Physical Access

Sedgemoor District Council will provide clean, accessible public offices that ensure privacy, comply with occupational and safety standards, and as part of this, facilitate access for people with disabilities and customers with specific needs in accordance with the Equality Act 2010.

Privacy policy

Sedgemoor District Council is committed to protecting the privacy of the personal information you provide in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998.

What information do we collect?

The personal details collected are dependant on the service you want. In some areas it may just mean entering your name and e-mail address, however, online forms may need more details to ensure all the right elements of your service request can be dealt with.

What do we need it for?

There are various reasons why we need to collect personal data. For example, we may need to ask for your contact details for correspondence purposes. Similarly, we may need information in order to fulfil our statutory obligations and regulatory responsibilities. We aim only to collect the information necessary for what we do.

What we ask of you

In return we ask that you give us accurate information, and that you tell us as soon as possible if there are any changes, such as a new address. Any request for personal information must be in writing along with a £10 fee, this is in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998.

Your rights

Whenever possible we will let you see the information we hold about you and we will correct it if it is wrong. We have an obligation to supply the information to you within 40 calendar days, or provide a reason why we cannot.

Your personal information will not be passed on to a third party unless supported by a formal agreement, or we are required to do so by Law.

There are many ways to contact us here at Sedgemoor District Council

Vist our website: www.sedgemoor.gov.uk
E-mail us: customer.services@sedgemoor.gov.uk
Telephone us: *9:00am to 5:00pm Monday to Friday (excluding Bank Holidays)*

General enquiries.....	0300 303 7800
Council Tax enquiries.....	0300 303 7801
Benefit enquiries.....	0300 303 7802
Waste & recycling enquiries.....	0300 303 7803
Voter & Councillor information.....	0300 303 7804
Planning enquiries.....	0300 303 7805
Environmental services enquiries.....	0300 303 7806
Building Control Partnership.....	0300 303 7790
Anti social behaviour hotline.....	0800 298 2009
Reporting a stray or lost dog.....	0800 917 6520
Out of hours emergency only.....	0800 917 6520
Homes in Sedgemoor.....	0800 585 360 / 01278 552400

Visit us: Bridgwater House, King Square, Bridgwater TA6 3AR
9:00am to 5:00pm Monday to Friday (excluding Bank Holidays)

Write to us: at the above address. Please mark your letter for the attention of the relevant service.

Feedback

Sedgemoor District Council encourages and welcomes feedback on the services that we provide, and are always looking for ways to improve our services.

Your ideas, suggestions, comments, compliments and complaints provide us with valuable information, which we can use to make improvements to our services and put things right for you if we can.

Please tell us if you:

- have an idea to improve the services we provide;
- have a comment to make about our services;
- feel that we could improve by doing something differently.

Please complain if we:

- failed to provide a service;
- failed to act in a proper manner;
- have made a mistake in the way we provide a service.
- delayed in providing a service;
- provided an unfair service;

4. Access to services

Sedgemoor District Council will maximise the use of computer, telephone and internet technology to ensure choice in accessing services, and improve speed and accuracy of response. The aim is one-stop customer satisfaction, **getting it right first time, every time.**

5. Information

Sedgemoor District Council will take a proactive approach in providing information that is clear, timely and accurate, ensuring it is available at all points of contact and meets the requirements of people with any special or additional support needs.

6. Timeliness and courtesy

Sedgemoor District Council will deliver quality services with courtesy, sensitivity and the minimum delay, fostering an environment of mutual respect between provider and customer. In return we will expect customers to treat staff with equal respect and courtesy.

7. Complaints

Sedgemoor District Council will maintain an accessible, transparent and simple to use system for people to feedback or formally complain about a service that they have received.

8. Appeals

We recognise that some services have a formal appeal process that can be used when a customer is dissatisfied with the decision made. In all cases an accessible, transparent and simple to use system will be developed in line with guidance for the service concerned and is well publicised to the public.

9. Consultation and engagement

We have made the consultation of customers integral to continually improving our services and we advise customers of the results and action taken.

10. Working with partners

We will work with partners and other providers to offer and supply co-ordinated services.

Meeting the needs of our customers

Sedgemoor District Council is committed to meeting the needs of vulnerable people when seeking information or services from us.

In order to achieve this, the Council commits to the following:

- Providing disabled access to all our public receptions
- Provide any literature in the following formats if a request is made
 - large print
 - Braille
 - audio tape, CD, daisy disc
 - other languages
- Provide private interview facilities for those who require it when visiting our offices
- Providing help and advice in the completion of any forms and written documentation if requested, including providing translation support where necessary

For those people within our communities who are unable to visit our offices as a result of incapacity or illness, we will offer:

- Telephone advice and support
- A home visit if appropriate for specific services

If we are unable to meet your specific needs we will:

- Provide you with contact details of an agency that can help
- Make contact with that agency if required

Helping us achieve our objectives

To help us achieve our objectives we ask that you:

- are courteous and respectful toward us;
- provide the information we need as soon as possible;
- let us know if you need a service to be provided in a different way to meet your individual needs;
- make suggestions on improving our services;

Contacting Sedgemoor District Council

When you contact Sedgemoor District Council we will:

- Respect all customers and always be polite, helpful and professional
- Ensure that all our customers are treated fairly and will try to provide, wherever possible, different ways to deliver our services to meet the needs of individual customers such as different languages, Braille, audio tape, large print or home visits
- Ensure your enquiries are dealt with promptly and efficiently and, wherever possible, ensure that your enquiry is dealt with by the first person you contact

To deliver on our commitment we set timescales in which to respond to your enquiry, regardless of the service you contact.

When you contact us	We will	Within
By telephone	Ensure an advisor will answer your call	Within 6 rings or 20 seconds
In writing by letter, e-mail or fax	Reply* to you	Within 10 working days
Complain about a service	Reply* to you in writing	Within 10 working days
Request to speak to an officer within a specific service	If no one is available to see you immediately we will arrange an appointment, or for the officer to call you back	Within 5 working days

Reply usually means a full reply, but in complex cases this may be a holding response*

Sedgemoor District Council will take a zero tolerance approach to behaviour which is offensive or threatening to staff or Councillors.