

Our Customer Service Standards

Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs

This leaflet tells you about the core customer standards of service that you can expect to receive from us. Where appropriate, our business units have developed other standards that relate to the particular programmes and services they deliver.

If we do not meet these standards, please let us know. Your feedback is very important to us and helps us to improve.

Our commitment to accessible services

- We will take all reasonable steps to make sure our services and facilities are accessible to everyone, including people with particular requirements and those whose first language is not English. Printed materials produced by us can be requested in alternative formats, such as large print and/or in other languages.
- Where possible, you should let us know in advance if you need assistance, so that appropriate arrangements can be put in place. We will also make sure that our website complies with disability access requirements.
- Our online services and information on our programmes and other services are available on our website, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week at www.daera-ni.gov.uk. You can also find information at the NI Direct website <https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/>
- Most of our offices have computers that will allow you to access our online services.
- Private facilities can be made available for you in some of our offices if you ask. Please give us as much notice as possible if you need private facilities so that we can make the necessary arrangements.
- You can telephone our offices between the hours of 9.00am and 5.00pm, Monday to Friday. The opening times of our public offices are displayed on our DAERA website. Our offices are closed on most bank holidays and public holidays. Different opening hours apply to our public facilities such as

forest and country parks, and information is available locally and on our website.

Our service standards

Seeing Callers

- If you have a pre-arranged appointment, we aim to see you within 10 minutes of the agreed time. If we have to cancel an appointment, we will explain why, give you as much notice as possible and arrange a new time to suit you.
- If you have not made an appointment with us, we aim to see you within 15 minutes of your arrival. If you are waiting longer, we will explain why and keep you informed. A queuing system may be introduced in our public offices at busy periods.
- Our field staff have to enforce regulations which may sometimes mean that unannounced visits have to be made. When this happens, our field officers carry documents such as warrant cards and will identify themselves, explain what has to be done when they arrive at your premises and act reasonably when asking for your help.

Answering telephone calls

- We will answer telephone calls as quickly as possible. The person answering will give you their name and their work area. If we are unavailable, our telephones will be diverted to another member of staff or to voicemail.
- We will try to answer your query immediately. If this is not possible we will advise you why there is a delay and return your call within one working day.

Answering correspondence

- We will acknowledge your emails and letters requiring a response within 3 working days of receiving them.
- We will respond in full to your emails and letters within 15 working days of receiving them*. If this is not possible, we will let you know why a response may take longer and when you can expect a full response.
- In our responses to you, we will provide contact details of the person dealing with your query including his/her name, office and email address and telephone number.

*This target does not apply to the following

Legislation	Information will be made available within
Freedom of Information Act	20 Working Days
Environmental Information Regulations	20 Working Days
Data Protection Act	40 Calendar Days

Informing our customers

- You can obtain information on our programmes and services on the DAERA and NI Direct websites, and from the office providing the service.
- Information provided will be clear and straightforward so that it is easily understood, and up to date.
- This information will contain relevant contact details including an email address, a telephone number, and an office address.

Comments and Complaints

- We realise that sometimes things go wrong. If you are unhappy with the quality of service you receive please let us know so that we can try to put it right.
- Our Customer Service Complaints procedure is simple and straightforward.
- You can make a complaint informally to the person you have been dealing with. If you still feel dissatisfied you can use our formal complaints procedure.
- We take all complaints about our service seriously. We will fully and fairly investigate your complaint, keep you informed of progress, offer a full explanation of the circumstances and take appropriate action.
- You can get more information about how to make a complaint if you are unhappy with the quality of service you receive in our **Customer Service Complaints Procedure** leaflet. You can get this leaflet on our website or from any of our offices.

We welcome your comments or suggestions on how we can improve the quality of our service. Details of how you can contact us are available on Page 5 of this leaflet.

We will carefully consider your views and ideas, and will regularly review and evaluate our performance. Each year, we will publish details of the complaints we have received, and the steps we have taken to improve our services.

Our values – we will:

- be polite and helpful;
- treat you fairly, with respect, patience and understanding;
- respect your privacy and treat confidential issues in an appropriate way;
- only use information about you in a lawful and fair way as required by the Freedom of Information Act, the Environment Information Regulations and the Data Protection Act;
- ensure we safeguard your data;
- use clear and appropriate language and explain any unfamiliar technical terms;
- take responsibility and be accountable for the accuracy and quality of our work;
- be open and honest in all our dealings with you;
- act professionally and with integrity at all times.

What we ask is that you:

- treat our staff and other customers politely and with respect and understanding;
- be on time for pre-arranged appointments;
- give us relevant, accurate, timely and up to date information to help us resolve your queries as quickly as possible;
- fill in applications accurately and fully, attaching any supporting papers that may be needed and apply on time;
- tell us immediately about any changes that may impact on the services you received from us;
- quote your relevant reference number and use the contact details you were given in any correspondence to us;
- respond to our emails and letters as quickly as you can.

Please note that abusive behaviour towards our staff, other customers or our property is unacceptable.

Contact Details:

Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA)
Clare House
303 Airport Road West
Sydenham Intake
Belfast
BT3 9ED

Contact details for our offices are available on NI Direct website: www.nidirect.gov.uk
or on the DAERA website at: www.daera-ni.gov.uk

A series of helpline numbers for specific queries or assistance has been established in order to provide you with help and advice based on your area of interest:

<https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/contacts/daera-helpline-numbers>

If you have a hearing difficulty you can contact the Department via Text Relay using the Next Generation Text Service (NGTS). Making a call from a textphone dial 18001 + number. Making a call from a telephone dial 18002 + number.

There are also various Text to Speech applications available to use.

Northern Ireland Environment Agency

The NIEA can be contacted by email, telephone and post as follows:

NIEA
Clare House
303 Airport Road West
Sydenham Intake
Belfast
BT3 9ED

Email: nieainfo@daera-ni.gov.uk

Telephone: 0300 200 7856

Forest Service

The Forest Service can be contacted by email, telephone and post as follows:

Forest Service Headquarters

Inishkeen House
Killyhevlin

Enniskillen
Co. Fermanagh
BT74 4EJ

Tel: +0044 2866 343165
email: customer.forests@daera-ni.gov.uk

**This leaflet can be made available in other formats and languages if you ask.
Please use any of the contact details listed above.**

Sustainability at the heart of a living, working, active landscape valued by everyone.

If you are deaf or have a hearing difficulty you can contact the Department via the Next Generation Text Relay Service by dialling 18001 + telephone number.

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We invest in people Standard