



Complaints Policy

Revised: December 2020

Next Review: December 2023

Approved by:

Board: 14th December 2020

Responsibility:

Chief Executive & Housing Services Manager

1. Policy Objectives

The aim of our complaints policy is to:

1. Ensure that complaints are dealt with efficiently and effectively
2. Aim to resolve all complaints at Stage 1
3. Ensure a high quality service and to improve customer satisfaction
4. Learn from feedback in order to improve our services

2. Legislation

Legislation	Relevance to Complaints
Localism Act 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Introduced a new system for addressing complaints creating the role of designated person / panel.• 'Designated tenant panels' must be recognised by the landlord and are made up of tenant representatives.

3. Regulatory Framework

This policy operates within The Regulatory Framework for Social Housing in England from April 2017.

The main relevant standard is outlined below:

Tenant Involvement and Empowerment Standard

Customer service, choice and complaints

- We offer a range of ways for people to make a complaint
- We have clear standards for responding to complaints
- We use complaints to improve services
- We will publish information about complaints each year which includes the number, nature and outcome
- We will accept complaints made by advocates authorised to act on a tenants behalf.

4. Fairness

We will ensure that this policy does not discriminate against any complainant on the grounds of gender, age, ethnic origin, disability, religion or sexual orientation by monitoring our complaints and responses every year.

We will ensure that where possible we provide information and communication appropriate to support the diverse needs of our tenants in line with our Equality and Diversity Policy

To ensure openness and transparency the Complaints Policy will be published on our website.

5. Definitions

A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction, however made, about the standard of service, actions or lack of actions by us , its own staff, or those acting on its behalf, affecting an individual tenant or group of tenants.

For example:

- Not receiving satisfactory service from our staff or contractors
- Not acting in accordance with our Policies and Procedures
- Dissatisfaction with a decision that has been made.

6. Making a Complaint

Anyone who is receiving or seeking a service from us may make a complaint. Tenants who are unable to make a complaint themselves can ask another person to do so on their behalf. Before we can disclose any information to a representative, an Authority to Act form must be completed and signed by the tenant. <..\..\Policies, Procedures & Plans\Housing Management\Complaints\Authority to act.doc>

Complaints can be made by telephone, in person, electronically by email or in writing to the Housing Office.

The complaint does not have to be made formally nor use the word complaint for it to be treated as such. It is therefore important that staff are able to recognise when a tenant is dissatisfied and to resolve the issues promptly.

We will not normally consider complaints regarding a problem that occurred more than 3 months ago, unless it concerns a safeguarding or health and safety issue.

We will not consider complaints where court proceedings relating to any aspects of the complaint have begun.

All complaints will be recorded and where possible dealt with there and then. Where this is not possible, the complaint will be passed to the person who can best respond to it and make sure the issues raised are dealt with.

7. The Complaints Process

All complaints will be acknowledged in writing within 3 working days and we will aim to complete all investigations in no more than 10 working days.

The complainant will be kept informed of the progress of the investigation and the action taken to resolve the problem. If the investigation has not been completed, within the target timescale the complainant will be informed of progress and the revised timescale for completing the investigation.

If the complainant is not satisfied with the outcome of their complaint, they must contact us within 20 working days, (the deadline date will be specified in the correspondence), advising of the reasons why they are not satisfied with the outcome. The complaint will then be investigated at Stage 2 of our complaints process which is usually dealt with by our Chief Executive. If the Chief Executive has been involved in the investigation of a complaint, the investigation will be dealt with by one or more of our Board members

If the person making the complaint is dissatisfied at any stage of the complaints process, they will be advised of their right to refer their complaint to the Housing Ombudsman.

All information including the investigation report and outcome will be kept on file for the duration of the complainant's tenancy.

8. Abusive and persistent complaints

Complaints must be made in a reasonable manner. We will not accept the complaint where the behaviour of the customer has become unreasonable e.g. if they are being threatening or abusive in any way or where a complainant makes repeated complaints about the same issue with little or no new information.

We will ensure any reasonable adjustments have been considered when making a decision to not accept a complaint, including but not limited to considering other means of representation.

Please see the Managing Unacceptable Behaviour Policy for further details
<K:\Policies, Procedures & Plans\HR\Managing Unacceptable Behaviour\Managing Unacceptable behaviour - indicators.docx>

9. Monitoring

We aim to learn from complaints and use this information to improve what we do.

We will monitor timescales for responding to complaints.

The Chief Executive will monitor complaints via a detailed quarterly performance report.

The Board will monitor complaints performance via a quarterly key performance indicator report.