



Definition of a complaint

- **Does the complaints process use the following definition of a complaint?** • YES

An expression of dissatisfaction, however made, about the standard of service, actions or lack of action by the organisation, its own staff, or those acting on its behalf, affecting an individual resident or group of residents.

- **Does the policy have exclusions where a complaint will not be considered?** • YES
- **Are these exclusions reasonable and fair to residents?** • YES

The following are not considered to be a complaint:

- A request for service, such as to carry out a repair, or a report of anti-social behaviour. We will however investigate service failures in the cases of these requests.
- Claims for compensation outside of those relevant to a complaint (all claims are dealt with in accordance with our Compensation and Payments Policy)
- Insurance claims. These will be dealt with in accordance with our Insurance Policy.
- The issue giving rise to the complaint occurred more than 6 months ago. This does not apply in instances relating to health and safety or safeguarding.
- We will not consider a matter where legal proceedings have commenced, or a letter before action has been issued.
- We will not consider a matter which has been previously considered under this policy.

Other routes are, or have been available for these issues.

The policy has been reviewed and approved by our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Panel, Tenant's Forum and Operations Committee.



Accessibility

- Are multiple accessibility routes available for residents to make a complaint? • YES
- Is the complaints policy and procedure available online? • YES
- Do we have a reasonable adjustments policy? • NO

We have built this into a diversity and inclusion policy and accessing services.

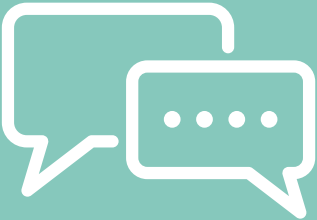
The policy was presented to the Equality and Diversity Panel, with an equality impact assessment undertaken on this.

- Do we regularly advise residents about our complaints process? • YES



Complaints team and process

- Is there a complaint officer or equivalent in post? • YES
- Does the complaint officer have autonomy to resolve complaints? • YES
- Does the complaint officer have authority to compel engagement from other departments to resolve disputes? • YES
- If there is a third stage to the complaints procedure are residents involved in the decision making? • N/A
- Is any third stage optional for residents? • N/A
- Does the final stage response set out residents' right to refer the matter to the Housing Ombudsman Service? • YES
- Do we keep a record of complaint correspondence including correspondence from the resident? • YES
- At what stage are most complaints resolved? • ONE



Communication

- Are residents kept informed and updated during the complaints process? • YES
- Are residents informed of the landlord’s position and given a chance to respond and challenge any area of dispute before the final decision? • YES
- Are all complaints acknowledged and logged within five days? • YES
- Are residents advised of how to escalate at the end of each stage? • YES
- What proportion of complaints are resolved at stage one? • 91%
- What proportion of complaints are resolved at stage two? • 9%

- What proportion of complaint responses are sent within Code timescales?
 - Stage one • 93%
 - Stage one (with extension) • 98%
 - Stage two • 89%
 - Stage two (with extension) • 100%

- Where timescales have been extended did we have good reason? • YES
- Where timescales have been extended did we keep the resident informed? • YES
- What proportion of complaints do we resolve to residents’ satisfaction • 91%



Cooperation with Housing Ombudsman Service

- Were all requests for evidence responded to within 15 days? • YES
- Where the timescale was extended did we keep the Ombudsman informed? • N/A



Fairness in complaint handling

- Are residents able to complain via a representative throughout? • YES
- If advice was given, was this accurate and easy to understand? • N/A
- How many cases did we refuse to escalate? • 0
- What was the reason for the refusal? • N/A
- Did we explain our decision to the resident? • N/A



Outcomes and remedies

- Where something has gone wrong are we taking appropriate steps to put things right? • YES



Continuous learning and improvement

- **What improvements have we made as a result of learning from complaints?**
- Used insight from complaints to inform tenant's repair offer
- Used complaints data (why complaints had been made) in forming our new repairs 'offer'
- Changed how we communicate with tenants (there is an upcoming scrutiny review on this subject too)
- Informed our new ASB process, especially around managing expectations, as a result of complaints on this subject
- Worked with the contractor to improve the appointments system for gas servicing
- Complaint responses have led to inquiries by Performance and Scrutiny Panel.

- **How do we share these lessons with:**

- a) **residents?**

Information is available on our website, with information featuring periodically in the resident's magazine. Moving forward, this information will be included in the magazine more frequently.

- b) **the board/governing body?**

Tenant's Forum and Operations Committee receive a six-monthly report, with any concerns escalated to the Strategic Board. Moving forward these will be presented quarterly, with an annual report going to Strategic Board. Concerns will continue to be escalated in between this period.

- c) **In the Annual Report?**

This was not included in the 2019/20 annual report. But this will be included in future reports, including lessons learned and changes made as a result.

- **Has the Code made a difference to how we respond to complaints?**

- **YES**

- **What changes have we made?**

1. We now have complaints officers as part of existing roles.

2. We've changed who responds to the two-stage process. Stage 1 is now managed by the complaints officer, with stage 2 being a review panel of an exec director and up to 3 members of the Complaints Review Panel. These are members from the Tenants Forum and Operations Committee. Previously this panel would review a selection of complaints and responses, after they had been resolved.

3. We will increase the frequency of complaints information publication (see above) We include advice on accessing the Housing Ombudsman Service at all levels of a complaint.