How to make a complaint, comment or compliment

We welcome your feedback, even if it’s letting us know when something has gone wrong as it helps us to improve our services.

This leaflet gives you a step-by-step guide to what happens when you make a complaint or give us feedback.

A complaint is where:

- There has been a failure of our published customer commitments and where action has not been taken within agreed timescales.
- We have not acted in line with our policies and procedures.
- There has been poor conduct by our staff or our partners and contractors.

A complaint must be made no later than 12 months after the date that the event occurred.

What is not a complaint?

- If you are making a first request for a service or making initial contact to report a fault; or
- Where you are requesting information about or a clearer explanation of our policies and procedures.

Please refer to our complaints policy for a full list of issues that cannot be dealt with through our complaints procedure. You can view the complaints and customer feedback policy on our websites.
Comments and compliments

We also welcome feedback regarding service improvement suggestions (comments) and where we’ve done something well and exceeded your expectations (compliments).

What happens to your comment or compliment?

- We will acknowledge your feedback by telephone or in writing within two working days of receipt;
- Pass on the comment or compliment to the individual and/or team about which it has been made;
- Let you know if we change something in the organisation as a result of your feedback.

Getting in touch couldn’t be easier

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Feedback form: Complete our online compliments, comments and complaints form.

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Feedback form: Complete our online compliments, comments and complaints form.
What happens to your complaint?

There are three stages to our complaints procedure. Our overall aim is to put things right at the first instance and we do all we can to resolve the matter at Stage 1.

If your complaint is more complicated and it is not possible to resolve the matter within the timescales below we will contact you and let you know when to expect an answer and why.

Stage 1

- Your complaint will be acknowledged within **two working days** of receipt and we will contact you to fully understand the nature of your complaint and what we can do to put it right.
- We will investigate and send out our findings and proposed solutions to you in writing within **ten working days** of receiving your complaint.
- We will provide details of how you can move to **Stage 2** if you feel your complaint has not been resolved.

Stage 2

- Your complaint will be acknowledged within **two working days** of receipt and we will contact you to fully understand the nature of your complaint and what we can do to put it right.
- Your complaint will be passed to a **senior manager** who will investigate and send their findings and a proposed solution to you in writing within **ten working days** of receipt of your request.
- We will provide details of how you can move to a **Stage 3 panel hearing** if you feel your complaint still has not been resolved.

Stage 3 panel hearing

- We will contact you within **two working days** of receiving your request to clarify the reasons why you wish to escalate your complaint and tell you what will happen next.
- We will send you written acknowledgement within **two working days** and a **Stage 3 form** which you must complete and return within **28 calendar days** of receipt to enable us to deal with your request.
- On receipt of your completed Stage 3 form a **director** will decide within **ten working days** whether to arrange a panel hearing to review your complaint.
  a) If a director decides a panel hearing should not go ahead we will contact you to explain why within **ten working days** of receiving your completed Stage 3 form.
  b) If a panel hearing is to go ahead we will:
     - Arrange and hold a panel hearing within **30 working days** of receiving your Stage 3 form. The panel comprising three Housing Plus Group board members and customers who serve on the scrutiny panel;
     - Invite you to attend;
     - Provide all relevant paperwork for the hearing to you and the panel members;
     - Write to you with the panel hearing decision within **ten working days**.
Complaint is still unresolved?

If you feel your complaint has not been resolved after it has completed our complaint process, an external review may be possible.

For housing-related complaints you can:

- Ask a designated person (an MP or local councillor) to review your complaint who can refer it to the Housing Ombudsman Service.
- Contact the Housing Ombudsman Service to review your case. You must wait eight weeks after the date of our final decision before contacting them. The service can be contacted on 0300 111 3000, email info@housing-ombudsman.org.uk or by visiting their website www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk.

We won’t review a complaint again after our process has completed unless asked to by the Housing Ombudsman Service.

For care-related complaints you can:

- Approach the Care Quality Commission (CQC) to request an independent external review. You can go straight to the CQC without the need to go through our complaints procedure.
- Contact the CQC on 0300 061 6161, email enquiries@cqc.org.uk or visit their website www.cqc.org.uk.

Monitoring and lessons learned

Using a variety of inputs we will monitor and report on:

- How we perform against our complaints procedure;
- The number of compliments we have received and why;
- Lessons learned and changes made.

Through our annual report to tenants we will provide feedback on the above.

We will also provide reports at least annually to the relevant boards within Housing Plus Group and provide updates in our tenant newsletters.

Further information can be found in our complaints and customer feedback policy which is available on our websites or by request from a member of staff.