

Complaints, Compliments and Comments Policy

Summary Statement

We aim to deliver the best services possible to our customers and stakeholders. We positively encourage feedback in the form of complaints, compliments and comments. This information is extremely valuable as it can tell us how well we are doing and how we can improve our services.

Matters that meet the definition of a complaint (as set out by the Housing Ombudsman) will be dealt with under this policy and associated procedures, even where another process is being followed. For example, a complaint about Home Group's failure to deal effectively with a report of Anti-social behaviour, should be dealt with under the provisions of this policy, as well as the original report being simultaneously dealt with under Home Group's Tackling Anti-social Behaviour policy and procedures.

There may also be circumstances where we need to handle complaints differently if complainants are behaving in a way we consider to be unacceptable. In these situations we follow the 'Managing unacceptable behaviour' procedures in line with our Person-centred Service Delivery policy.

Our policy standards set out our commitment to:

- Taking a positive approach to complaints and welcoming feedback on our services.
- Providing a range of different ways for customers and other people to give us feedback on our services. This includes making every effort to communicate in ways our customers and other stakeholders prefer.
- Providing a named contact who is responsible for keeping the person who made the complaint informed of progress, any problems encountered in completing investigations and writing to them on conclusion.
- Handling information in line with our Information Security Policy, Data Protection Policy, associated resources and Data Protection legislation.
- Responding fairly, politely and in a timely manner to all complaints in accordance with relevant laws, regulations and our complaints handling process.

- Letting people know how they can escalate their complaint to the next stage in our complaints handling process if they feel the desired outcome has not been achieved, and signposting customers to relevant external agencies, designated persons or groups for further advice when our complaints process has come to an end.
- Keeping clear records and using complaints, compliments and comments to learn about, celebrate, monitor and compare our performance in order to improve our policies, procedures and the quality of our services. It also reduces the likelihood of the same mistakes being repeated, contributing to value for money.
- Working with people who raise a complaint to find solutions to put things right and only offering discretionary compensation where it is appropriate to do so. Using this compensation to offset any rent or other housing related debt owed to us except in exceptional circumstances, including those described in Housing Ombudsman guidance on remedies.