

Compliments, Complaints and Comments

Having a positive approach

Together Housing Group will adopt a positive culture towards complaints (and other feedback) throughout the organisation. We recognise all feedback as a learning opportunity to improve services to our customers.

We will treat people fairly and aim to find appropriate and satisfactory resolutions to complaints, and will seek to remedy situations where we have got things wrong. We will aim to learn lessons from both positive feedback (what we get right) and negative feedback (where we get it wrong) in order to improve the services we deliver. We accept feedback from a wide range of sources, including advocates acting on behalf of another person.

Definition

“Where a customer is dissatisfied with the service they have received from Together Housing Group, or one of our contractors and want us to respond or take action.”

What we DON'T class as a complaint:

- An initial request for service (reporting a repair or defect).
- Reports of anti-social behaviour (ASB) – see our ASB Service Standard.
- About services not provided by us
- Insurance and personal injury claims.

What we DO class as a complaint:

- Failure to provide a service.
- Failure to provide a service to a standard that could reasonably be expected.
- Failure to follow a policy or procedure.
- The unhelpful attitude of a member of staff.

When you contact us

We will:

Find out what it is you are contacting us about, apologise and aim to resolve this as soon as possible to avoid costly escalation. If you feel we have not addressed the issue, you can ask for a review.

General comments or suggestions can be noted for analysis, but you will be advised of this as there will be no further contact from us.

We ask that you remain calm and treat our staff with respect. Persistent or unreasonable behaviour will not be tolerated and will be managed appropriately.

Service Standards

- We can demonstrate that our staff are trained in identifying, logging, responding to (and learning from) compliments, comments and complaints.
- We have an agreed policy and procedures that support the promises made in this Service Standard.
- Analysis of what we do will help us to improve the services provided by both ourselves and our contractors.

Getting it sorted

The majority of complaints can be resolved quickly. The key to quick resolution is to find out what it is we can do that would resolve your problem.

First of all we will always aim to resolve the complaint by putting things right as quickly as possible. We call this process “Getting it sorted” and aim to find a resolution within 5 working days at this stage. This could include agreement for work to be undertaken later than this.

You may not get a formal response at this stage, but we still analyse these to find out where we can improve.

Stage 1 Investigating your complaint

If a more detailed investigation is needed or if we were unable to resolve it within 5 working days then you can request that this is investigated under the more formal stage of our complaints process “Investigating your complaint”.

This will involve allocating a unique reference number and carrying out a full investigation by a service manager, with the outcome and agreed resolution set out in writing within 10 working days. We will tell you who is looking into your complaint or if the investigation will take longer than 10 days.

Stage 2 Reviewing your complaint

Should you feel that Together Housing Group has failed to fully address your complaint, you may request a review of the case and the relevant decision by a senior manager. Please be clear as to why the complaint (and decision) has not been considered fully and what you believe we can do to resolve the problem.

The outcome from this review will be set out in writing within 15 working days and forms the last internal stage of the complaints process. You would then have the option (after all our stages have been completed) to contact a local mediation/arbitration service, MP or local Councillor. Only an MP or Councillor can refer your case to the Independent Housing Ombudsman. If 8 weeks have passed since the final stage, you can go direct to the Ombudsman.

Compliments

We also value and capture positive feedback in order to understand what we do right (it's also nice to let people know when their work has been appreciated!).

Contact us to let us know and we will pass this on and also use this feedback to reinforce positive behaviour across the Group.

How can you be sure that the Together Housing Group is meeting these standards of service?

We will:

- Share the outcomes of our analysis (including improvements made as a result) with both staff and customers
- Regularly check all service standard promises with tenant representatives and as part of our scrutiny function
- Update Board on progress relating to Comments, Compliments and Complaints;
- Report progress in the Annual Reports to customers and stakeholders.

Please note: - Complaints raised on Social media (Facebook, Twitter etc.) will be handled within the standard timescales and processes and will not be looked at outside of our normal office opening hours.

Housing Ombudsman Service address: -

Exchange Tower, Harbour Exchange Square, Isle of Dogs, London E14 9GE. Tel: 0300 111 3000

Contact us

(If there is a threat of violence or serious criminal activity you should contact the Police immediately on 999; or non emergency calls on 101).

In the first instance, please use our website www.togetherhousing.co.uk

Or call:

0300 555 5561	Wakefield
0300 555 5556	Rossendale
0300 555 5559	Colne
0300 555 5557 0300 555 5558	Calderdale Sheffield
0300 555 5560	Blackburn
Office hours are 9am-5pm Monday to Friday	

Please note: - We have a complaints process that is quick, clear and accessible. Please refer to our Complaints Service Standard for details.