

This complaints policy and procedure applies to the Herefordshire Housing Group which includes its subsidiary, Independence Trust

COMPLAINTS POLICY

Introduction

The Herefordshire Housing Group, which includes the Independence Trust, is committed to providing the best possible service that we can. However, we do recognise that sometimes customers will feel that they have cause to complain about the service they have received.

We encourage all feedback from customers, including complaints, and have developed this Complaints Policy along with an associated Complaints Procedure. This Complaints Policy explains our broad approach to handling all complaints, the Complaints Procedure provides clear information on how your complaint will be handled by colleagues once received.

Reports relating to Anti-Social Behaviour and Hate Incidents will be responded to in accordance with our Anti-Social Behaviour and Hate Incidents Policies and Procedures. If you are then not satisfied with the way we have handled your reports about Anti-Social Behaviour or Hate Incidents, this will be dealt with as a failure of service and handled under the terms of our Complaints Policy.

Aims

Herefordshire Housing and the Independence Trust, aims to resolve complaints quickly, fairly and effectively. We will:

- Aim to put things right quickly for our customers when they go wrong;
- Keep you informed of the progress of your complaint and the results of any investigation;
- Seek to learn from each complaint to improve future performance;
- Set performance targets for responding to complaints and monitor our performance against these targets;

- Advise you of your right to complain to the **Housing Ombudsman Service** if you remain dissatisfied after you have been through all the stages of the internal Complaints Procedure;
- Where you receive **CQC regulated care** services from us we will advise you of your right to complain to the Local Council if you remain dissatisfied after you have been through all the stages of the internal Complaints Procedure. Information on the CQC and Local Council can be found later in the document; and
- For those customers using our services which are regulated by the **Financial Conduct Authority**, and who may remain dissatisfied after exhausting the internal Complaints Procedure, you have the right to complain to the **Financial Ombudsman Service**. Full contact information is published in the Complaints Procedure for both of these services.

Implementation

Herefordshire Housing's Group Complaints Policy and associated Procedure will be available to all customers. Together, they detail how to make a complaint and the time scales for a response.

I. What is a complaint?

A complaint is when a customer tells us that they are not happy with something that we have done or not done, and we have not put things right.

II. Who is a customer?

A customer is anyone who contacts us to request a service, or is in receipt of a service.

III. How can a complaint be made?

Any customer wishing to make a complaint can do so in person at any of Herefordshire Housing or Independence Trust offices, by telephone, e-mail, website, private Facebook message or letter. We also have a complaint form which can be completed and returned to any of our offices.

IV. What is the process for making a complaint?

The process for making a complaint is detailed in the Complaints Procedure. This is a single document for use by Herefordshire Housing Group colleagues and customers.

Monitoring

The Herefordshire Housing Group is committed to continuous improvement in service delivery.

- We will make it easy and straightforward for you to make a complaint
- We will endeavour to respond to your complaint within the published timescales and keep you informed
- We will ensure you have a full explanation to your complaint in your preferred format
- We will publish any learning from complaints
- We will review our Complaints Policy at regular intervals.

Equality and Diversity

Customers have a right to express dissatisfaction with the services they receive from the Herefordshire Housing Group. Customers using this policy can expect to be treated fairly and without discrimination.

The Company has an Equality and Diversity Policy that covers all aspect of equalities. This policy has been subject to an Equality Impact Assessment. The company will ensure that this policy is accessible to all customers and service users.

POLICY ISSUE DATE

Approved by:	
Effective date:	1st July, 2015
Review date:	1st July, 2018
Policy developed by:	Group Governance Manager
Associated Procedure:	Complaints Procedure
Associated documentation:	Compensation Policy & Procedure Anti-social Behaviour & Hate Incident Policy Housing Ombudsman Service - Making a Complaint Financial Ombudsman Service - Complaints and Compensation - How to Complain Local Government Ombudsman Service - Making a Complaint Care Quality commission - How to Complain