

# Complaints and compensation

Our service  
promise



# Why we value complaints

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We aim to provide you with good quality services at all times and we are constantly working to improve them.

Your complaints are very important to us and we genuinely want to hear from you if you feel that we have got something wrong or failed to deliver a service to a high enough standard. The feedback you give us when you make a complaint helps us to improve our service in future.

This leaflet explains how you can make a complaint and what you can expect from us if you do.

We have also drawn up a list of service promises, to make it clear how we will work to provide you with a reliable, consistent and high quality complaints service. You will find our service promises on page 4.

## How to make a complaint

You can make a complaint in the most convenient way for you. You might want to:

- talk to a member of staff
- phone the Service Centre
- send us an email
- contact us via our website
- write to us.

We still have a complaints form for people who prefer to write things down (call the Service Centre if you would like a copy), but we are just as happy to hear from you in any other way you choose.

We want to make it as easy as possible for all our residents to complain when they aren't happy with our service.



## What we will do

When we receive your complaint, we will contact you within two working days to let you know who will be handling the complaint and how long we think it will take to investigate and resolve it. We will ask what you would like us to do and give you contact details. We will confirm these things in writing.

If investigating your complaint is taking longer than expected, we will explain why. We will talk through our findings with you, either in person or over the phone. We will discuss the action we intend to take and confirm the details in writing.

We will take the agreed action and arrange to pay any compensation. We will then contact you to find out if you are satisfied and, if you aren't, offer you the opportunity to take your complaint further.

At the next stage, we will see you in person to review the case and agree what to do next. We will confirm the details in writing. If you're still unhappy, you can ask us to refer your complaint to the Group's appeals panel.

When we believe your complaint is resolved, we will contact you to confirm that you agree, before closing the case and confirming this in writing.

This is the last stage of our complaints process, but if you are still unhappy you can refer the matter to the Housing Ombudsman Service.

## Housing Ombudsman Service

If we fail to resolve your complaint to your satisfaction, you have the right to take it to the Housing Ombudsman Service. Please note that the Ombudsman expects you to work through our complaints process first.

Housing Ombudsman Service  
81 Aldwych, London WC2B 4HN  
Phone 020 7421 3800  
Lo-Call 0845 7125 973  
Minicom 020 7404 7092  
Fax 020 7831 1942  
Email [info@housing-ombudsman.org.uk](mailto:info@housing-ombudsman.org.uk)

# Our service promise

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We will:

- accept complaints in writing, by phone, in person, via the internet, by email, or on your behalf from another person
- when we are communicating with you, make it as convenient for you as possible, meet your individual needs and try to contact you in person
- assign a member of staff to manage your complaint and contact you within two working days to confirm:
  - the content of the complaint
  - the outcome you would like to see
  - their name and contact details
  - what will be done and how long it will take to investigate or resolve your complaint
- agree with you a timescale for investigating and resolving your complaint as quickly as possible
- discuss with you the way we plan to resolve the complaint and, if we are planning to give you a goodwill payment, agree a figure that recognises the level of inconvenience or disturbance caused
- contact you to check if you are now satisfied and, if you aren't, offer you the opportunity to take your complaint further
- improve any service shown by your complaint to have shortcomings, write to let you know what we have done about it and promote the change to all residents
- ask you to tell us whether you were satisfied with the way we handled and resolved your complaint
- promise always to apologise when we've got it wrong.



# Acceptable behaviour when you complain

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We are committed to dealing with all complaints fairly and efficiently, but we don't expect our staff to tolerate people who make unreasonable demands or who constantly harass them.

If, after taking into account the individual circumstances and the seriousness of the complaint, we decide that someone is behaving inappropriately, we will let them know their behaviour is unacceptable and ask them to stop. If they don't stop, we will take action to restrict their access to our offices.

Any decision to limit someone's access to our offices will be made by one of our directors. The decision will be designed to protect our staff, without over-reacting to the situation. For example, we might:

- ask that someone contacts us only in a particular way (for example, in writing)
- require that the person meets only with a named member of staff when visiting the office
- restrict phone calls to particular days and times
- ask the person to make an agreement with us about their future behaviour.

In every case, we will write to tell the person why we believe their behaviour is unacceptable, what action we are taking and how long it will last. We will also tell them how they can challenge the decision if they disagree with it.

If someone continues to behave unacceptably, we may decide to suspend all contact with them temporarily and stop investigating their service request or complaint. We will also seek legal advice.

When we take action against someone, we will always review it after a set period. Once someone's behaviour has improved, we will remove any restrictions and treat the person exactly as we treat all our other residents. We won't apply any sanction indefinitely.

For help with translations, or if a large type, Braille or taped summary would be useful, please contact the Service Centre.

### Arabic

لمساعدتك في الترجمة يرجى الاتصال بمركز الخدمة على هاتف 0300 303 1771.

### Bengali

অনুবাদ সাহায্য পেতে হলে সার্ভিস সেন্টারে 0300 303 1682 নম্বরে ফোন করুন।

### French

Si vous souhaitez recevoir de l'aide avec vos traductions, appelez le 0300 303 1771.

### Somali

Wixii ah caawimo turjumaan ka soo wac Xarunta Adeegga telefoonka 0300 303 1771.

### Spanish

Si necesita que le ayudemos con alguna traducción, llámenos al 0300 303 1771.

### Turkish

Tercüme konusunda yardım için 0300 303 1683 'den Hizmet Merkezi'ni arayın.

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## Contact us

Service Centre opening hours, 8am to 8pm, Monday to Friday

If you live on the UK mainland, phone **0300 303 1771**

If you live on the Isle of Wight, phone **0300 303 1772**

Email [servicecentre@shgroup.org.uk](mailto:servicecentre@shgroup.org.uk) Website [www.shgroup.org.uk](http://www.shgroup.org.uk)

Write to **Service Centre, Southern Housing Group, PO Box 643, Horsham RH12 1XJ**

