



TUNTUM HOUSING ASSOCIATION

DOCUMENT CONTROL	
Policy name:	Complaints Policy
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Customer facing:	Yes

1. Introduction

- 1.1 We recognise that, on occasion, we may fail to meet the standards that we set, and when this happens, this policy sets out how we will act when we receive a complaint.
- 1.2 This policy sets out Tuntum Housing Association's approach to dealing with complaints.

2. Policy statement and aims

- 2.1 We are committed to providing excellent services that meet the standards agreed upon with our residents.
- 2.2 We aim to resolve matters effectively at the earliest opportunity by putting things right when they have gone wrong. We do this by using clear communication, being polite and responding in a timely manner.
- 2.3 We deal with all complaints fairly, being transparent in our approach.
- 2.4 We are open and accountable, taking ownership of the matter and focussing on reaching a fair outcome.
- 2.5 We welcome complaints and seek to improve the service we offer by learning from the experiences of our residents. We regularly review the root cause of complaints and, where possible, implement changes to prevent repeat occurrences.
- 2.6 We report what we learned from complaints on our website, resident newsletter, and annual report.
- 2.7 We will make this policy available to our residents upon request. We will publicise the policy and how to make a complaint on our website and within our newsletter.

3. Legislation or regulatory requirements

- 3.1 The laws and regulations that apply to this policy are:
- Housing Act 1985, 1988, 1996 and 2004



- Localism Act 2011
- Landlord and Tenant Act 1985
- Equality Act 2010
- Tenant Involvement and Empowerment Standard 2017
- Data Protection Act 2018 Data Protection Act 2018
- The Regulator of Social Housing
- General Data Protection Regulation
- Housing Ombudsman Service Complaint Handling Code
- Social Housing White Paper

3.2 Should a complainant exhaust our internal complaints policy and be informed that they have been provided with our final response, external options are available to them.

3.3 Our residents have access to an Independent Complaints Panel, which comprises residents from Tuntum Housing Association and Places for People. This panel reviews complaints brought to them and provides a decision to a tenant; it is run independently and facilitated by Tpas. A resident can seek a review by informing the person who provided their Stage 2 response.

3.4 We are a member of the Housing Ombudsman Service (HOS), meaning a resident can seek their advice and guidance during their complaint. They will work with us to resolve the complaint; in some cases, they may decide to complete an investigation. Details about how to contact the HOS can be found on our website.

4. Scope

4.1 This policy applies to current tenants, licensees and leaseholders, including named household members. It also applies to former tenants, licensees and leaseholders, including named household members who are raising a complaint about an incident that occurred no later than six months prior to the ending of their relationship with us.

4.2 A representative of a person who has a right to complain may raise a complaint on their behalf if the person is unable to complain themselves or they have requested the representative act on their behalf. Evidence must be provided to substantiate why a representative is required, including consent.

4.3 **Definition:** A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction, however made, about the standard of service, actions or lack of action by the organisation, its own staff, or those acting on its behalf, affecting an individual resident or group of residents.

4.4 Our residents do not need to use the word 'complaint' for us to treat their concerns as a complaint under this policy. We will identify where a resident has expressed dissatisfaction and take the appropriate action.

4.5 We can receive complaints via telephone, email, in writing, via our website and social media. We can accommodate a meeting in person at our offices for concerns to be logged but would follow up with communication via telephone or in a written format.



4.6 Complaints made via social media will be responded to publicly with a request to move to a private message to maintain confidentiality and privacy.

4.7 Complaints that are covered by this policy include, but are not limited to:

- Failure to provide a service.
- Failure to meet the standards that we set in our policies and agreements.
- Attitude or behaviour of a member of staff.

4.8 **Exclusions:** There are some circumstances where we will not accept a complaint, we may decide to investigate the matter internally to ensure we continue to provide the best possible service. Such circumstances include but are not limited to:

- A request for a service or repair.
- A complaint regarding a repair, service, or action, where the timeframe we set to fulfil this is yet to pass.
- The complaint has already exhausted our policy and a Stage 2 response letter has been provided.
- Matters that relate to the wording of a policy.
- Insurance and personal injury claims; our insurers will handle these.
- Where the issue took place more than 6 months ago.
- The amount of Service Charge or Rent.
- Where legal proceedings have commenced and a court date has been scheduled.
- Demoted Tenancy or License appeals, along with matters that have already been determined under this policy or another policy appeal process.
- Anonymous complaints.

4.9 When we decide not to accept a complaint, we will write to the complainant explaining why the matter is unsuitable for the complaints policy and inform them of their right to access the HOS.

5. Roles and Responsibilities

5.1 Frontline staff are our first point of contact to log complaints and provide a quick fix where appropriate.

5.2 Frontline staff and managers will handle complaints at Formal Stage 1 of our Complaints Policy, carrying out a timely investigation and reviewing the complaint fairly and transparently.

5.3 Managers will handle complaints at Formal Stage 2 of our Complaints Policy, responding to the reasons for the appeal and reviewing the handling of the complaint fairly and transparently.

5.4 The Customer Excellence Leader is responsible for:

- Facilitating complaints being logged and responded to within the timescales set within the policy.
- Providing support and advice to all staff to maintain a consistent approach in handling our complaints.
- Being the representative to our Independent Complaints Panel compiling any information that may be requested.



- Being the direct contact for the HOS to aid the effective resolution of complaints, and provide the information requested to aid investigations.
- Leading on reviewing the policy and bringing any review forward should a regulatory change occur that requires an amendment for compliance.
- Leading on facilitating the Association's learning from its complaints and reporting performance to the Customer Experience Committee.

5.5 The Director of Community Services will monitor performance, oversee complaint handling, and lead on how we learn from our complaints.

5.6 The Customer Experience Committee will monitor, review and scrutinise performance through key performance indicators.

5.7 The Board will monitor overall performance.

6. Monitoring, including audit and review

6.1 Performance related to this policy will be reported to the Customer Experience Committee.

6.2 Monthly performance reports will be provided to the Director of Community Services and weekly performance snapshots will be available to the senior management team.

6.3 The Director of Community Services will provide quality assurance by auditing the performance.

7. Procedure

7.1 All our frontline staff can help customers who want to make a complaint. They will log the complaint and provide a quick fix where appropriate, effectively resolving the problem without a lengthy investigation.

7.2 Should a quick fix not be appropriate, we will log the complaint at Formal Stage 1 and provide a written acknowledgement letter within five days of receipt. A written response will be sent to the complainant within ten working days. We may need to extend this timeframe by ten working days; when this happens, we will communicate and agree to the extension with the complainant.

7.3 A Formal Stage 1 response may be appealed up to six months after the date of the response letter.

7.4 To appeal the outcome of a Formal Stage 1 complaint and escalate it to Formal Stage 2, the complainant should let us know why they remain unhappy with the response provided. Should we accept the appeal, we will provide a written acknowledgement letter within five days of receipt containing the contact details of the person responsible for reviewing the complaint at Formal Stage 2. This person is different to the person who responded to the complaint at Formal Stage 1.

7.5 At Formal Stage 2, a written response will be sent to the complainant within 20 working days of the complaint being escalated. The letter will respond to the reasons for the appeal, address whether the



manager agrees with the Formal Stage 1 response, and outline our final response. We may need to extend this timeframe by a further ten working days; when this happens we will communicate and agree the extension with the complainant.

7.6 We may decline a request for an appeal to the outcome of a Formal Stage 1 complaint; reasons for this are listed but not limited to those in section 4.8 Exclusions of this policy. Where we decide to decline a request for an appeal, we will write to the complainant within five working days to explain why we have come to a decision. This letter will clearly communicate that the response at Formal Stage 1 is our final response on the matter.

7.7 All acknowledgement and formal response letters will inform the complainant of their right to access the HOS.

7.8 If we cannot agree on an extension to the timescales we need, the complainant can contact the HOS to discuss the timescale for managing the complaint.

7.9 Our internal Complaints Procedure will aid the resolution of complaints by expanding on this policy and guiding staff.

8. Equality Impact Assessment

8.1 We will handle all complaints in accordance with the Equality Act 2010, ensuring that making a complaint is accessible and easy for all.

8.2 Should a complainant need support to raise concerns, we will consider the request and, where possible, act to aid them by making reasonable adjustments to suit their needs. Some examples of the support we can provide include providing information in alternative formats, adapting our communication method, and allowing more time for a complaint to be brought to our attention.

9. References

RELATED EXTERNAL DOCUMENTS	
Reference	Link to reference
Housing Ombudsman Service – Complaint Handling Code	www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk/landlords-info/complaint-handling-code/
RELATED INTERNAL DOCUMENTS	
Reference	
Complaints Procedure	
Compensation Policy	
Compensation Procedure	

10. Contacts

If you have any queries on this policy please contact our Customer Excellence Leader.



Internal control not for publication:

Policy changes	
Policy version	Proposed changes