

Customer Complaints Policy

Introduction

Herefordshire Housing is committed to providing the best possible service that we can. We 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 a Complaints Policy and an associated Complaints Procedure. Our Complaints Policy explains our broad approach to handling all complaints. Our Complaints Procedure provides clear information on how individual complaints will be handled.

Report 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 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 under the terms of our Complaints Policy.

Aims

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

- Aim to put things right quickly for our customers when they go wrong
- Keep our customers informed of the progress of their 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 our customers of their right to complain to the Independent Ombudsman if they remain dissatisfied after their complaint has been through all stages of the internal Complaints Procedure

Implementation

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

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.

The Housing Ombudsman describes a complaint as “*an expression of dissatisfaction about an action or lack of action or about the standard of service.*”

II. Who is a customer?

A customer is anyone who contacts Herefordshire Housing 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’s offices, by phone, e-mail, website, letter or by completing the Complaints Form.

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 colleagues and customers.

Monitoring

Herefordshire Housing is committed to continuous improvement in service delivery.

Our Service Standards for Complaints are:

- § 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 tell you if changes have been made to services following your complaint
- § We will publish on a quarterly basis the learning from complaints

As part of this commitment a quarterly monitoring report will be prepared for the Board of Management and details published on the website. We will also ask for your feedback on how we handled your complaint and use this information to improve our services.

We will review our Complaints Policy at regular intervals.

Equality & Diversity

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

The Company has an Equality & 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:	Board
Effective date:	31 March 2009
Review date:	31 March 2012
Policy developed by:	Sue Embrey, Executive Support Manager
Associated Procedure:	Complaints Procedure
Associated documentation:	Compensation Policy & Procedure Anti-social Behaviour & Hate Incident Policy Housing Ombudsman Good Practice Guidance Audit Commission KLOE Customer Care and Access