

COMPLAINT HANDLING PROCEDURE



This procedure has been developed to complement our Complaints Policy and explains how we manage our complaints process from start to finish by aiming to resolve complaints quickly and have set out clear guidance for colleagues to follow to ensure that we are fair, consistent, and open in the way we deal with complaints.

Every complaint is different but by following the same clear steps, we can ensure you feel your complaint is being taken seriously and will be resolved.

Definition of Complaint

At Alliance Homes we take complaints seriously and assess individually whether this is a complaint or a service request. We define a service request as where we have failed to provide a service that has not met your expectations and can be resolved immediately, for example chasing up a missed repair appointment.

As defined by the Housing Ombudsman, 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'*.

Complaints Process

We will acknowledge all complaints within 3 working days in a method of communication that has been agreed with you.

We have a two stage complaints procedure to manage matters where we are unable to agree a resolution with you at the first point of contact.

Stage 1

The matter will be coordinated by the service manager of which that complaint falls into.

Our ambition is to resolve all formal complaints at this stage within 10 working days because we want to put things right without undue delay. We will communicate with you through your agreed method and if required, may arrange to meet with you in person to resolve efficiently.

If we are unable to resolve your complaint within this time we will:

- Aim to keep you informed of the details and progress of your complaint.
- Explain the reasons of why we are unable resolve your complaint.
- We will agree a suitable extension of the timescale with you, which would not normally be more than a further 10 working days.

Upon completion of the investigation into the points raised we will confirm our response to you which will include all actions taken to resolve the complaint. If there are any subsequent actions to be taken, we will give you clear timescales of when these will be completed and close your complaint at this point.

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Escalation

If you are not satisfied with the outcome at stage 1, or any agreed actions have not been completed satisfactorily, you have the right to request that your complaint is escalated to a stage 2.

At the point of escalation, we will need to understand what issues remain unresolved and specifically, what desired outcome you are looking for. As part of the escalation process, we will review all previous correspondence and actions, to ensure that nothing remains outstanding.

Stage 2

This stage is coordinated by our Feedback Manager. A full investigation will be undertaken and a complete review of the previous response and subsequent actions of stage 1. We will agree method and frequency of contact with you, so that we keep you updated in a way that is easy for you.

We aim to respond within 20 working days, but again, where there is added complexity, we will agree a suitable extension of the timescale with you directly. Any extension would not normally be more than a further 10 working days.

In order to provide a quality check of the complaint and the proposed solution, the matter will be reviewed at a regular case conference, which is a group of managers and senior managers who look at all complaints to ensure they have been fairly and consistently handled.

You will be given the opportunity to comment on any adverse findings before we determine our final response. We will then confirm our response to you.

This is the final stage of our internal complaints process

Housing Ombudsman

If you remain dissatisfied with the outcome of your stage 2 complaint you can choose to contact the Housing Ombudsman Service.

The Housing Ombudsman Service is set up by law to look at complaints about the housing organisations that are registered with them and the service is free, independent, and impartial.

The Housing Ombudsman Service can be contacted as follows:

www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk

0300 111 3000

info@housing-ombudsman.org.uk