

## Our commitment to you

Our mission is to **‘provide and maintain a high standard of specialised housing and support services for older and vulnerable people, delivered through a strong brand, a culture of service excellence and meaningful partnerships.’** We aim to get things right – but when something doesn’t go as expected, we want to hear about it so we can put it right and improve. Your feedback - whether good or bad – helps us learn and improve what we do for you and for all our residents.

## Why compliments are important

Finding the time to say ‘well done’ provides a great boost to our teams. Compliments also help us monitor what works well and recognise when colleagues have gone the extra mile. You can give a compliment in person, by email or by phone.

## Why feedback matters

We need to know when something hasn’t met your expectations. It gives us the opportunity to put things right and improve. If you tell us that you’re unhappy with our service, our priority is to resolve the issue quickly and informally, apologising when we’ve got things wrong and putting it right where we can.

We work in **partnership** with our residents, and your voice helps shape how we deliver housing and support that meets your needs.

## What is a complaint?

The Housing Ombudsman defines a complaint as:

**‘An expression of dissatisfaction, however made, about the standard of service, actions, or lack of action by the landlord, its own staff, or those acting on its behalf, affecting a resident or group of residents.’**

We’ll ask you to explain what when wrong and what you’d like us to do to resolve it. You can use our complaint form (available online, by email, or over the phone). If you contact us via social media, we’ll respond directly but not discuss the complaint on public platforms.

If you prefer, you can ask someone to speak to us on your behalf. We’ll check we have your permission and keep you informed.

## What isn’t a complaint?

Sometimes you just need to let us know something needs fixing – this is called a **service request**. For example, if you have a damp issue or a missed appointment, let us know so we can respond. If we don’t resolve it, we will treat it as a complaint.

Other issues that aren't complaints include:

- Requests for information or explanations.
- Neighbour disputes or ASB reports (unless the issue is how we responded).

We generally only accept complaints about incidents within the last 12 months, unless there's a good reason or a health and safety concern.

If we decide something isn't a complaint, we'll explain why – and if you disagree, you can contact the Housing Ombudsman.

### Putting things right

We'll do our best to resolve your concerns quickly and fairly. If we can't take the action you request, we'll explain why and offer alternatives if possible. We share lessons across our teams and stay within our policies and legal responsibilities.

We won't make promises we can't keep or take actions that would be unfair to other residents.

### Formal complaints process

#### Stage 1 – Formal complaint

We'll acknowledge your complaint within **5 working days** (not counting weekends or bank holidays).

We'll respond within **10 working days** of acknowledgement. If we need more time, we'll ask – this won't normally exceed an additional 10 days.

If you're unhappy with the outcome, we'll talk with you to understand if further action can help.

If we believe we've done all we can, but you remain dissatisfied, you can request a Stage 2 – Complaint review.

#### Stage 2 – Complaint review

This is the final stage of our internal process.

It reviews how we handled the complaint and whether we followed policy fairly.

We'll acknowledge the request within **5 working days** and respond within **20 working days**. If needed, we may ask for a further 20 days with your agreement.

### The Housing Ombudsman Service

You can contact the Housing Ombudsman at any time for free, independent advice. They can help resolve disputes and ensure we've handled your complaint correctly.

PO Box 1484, Unit D, Preston, PR2 0ET

Phone: 0300 111 3000.

Website: [www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk](http://www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk)

Email: [info@housing-ombudsman.org.uk](mailto:info@housing-ombudsman.org.uk)

They recommend using their online form or email to avoid delays.

We follow the **Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code**, and our self-assessment is available on our website.

### Learning lessons

We treat complaints as a valuable source of learning, and we're committed to making improvements when we fall short of the standards you rightly expect.

We publish a **Complaints Performance and Service Improvement Report** (from June 2024), which is reviewed by our Board and shared publicly.

One of our Board members is the **Member Responsible for Complaints (MRC)**, ensuring complaint learning and accountability stays visible at the highest level.

Our Director of Operations is the **Senior Lead for Complaints**, ensuring we follow the Complaint Handling Code and embed learning into policies, systems and service design.

### Our place, your voice

We're proud of our place as a leading provider of housing and support for older people – and we know we hold that place because of the trust you put in us. Your feedback helps us build better places to live, better partnerships with our communities, and better outcomes for all residents.