

Making a complaint

What you need to know



“We value complaints and use them to improve our services”

Making you feel at home

We value complaints and use information from them to help us improve our services.

If something goes wrong or you are dissatisfied with our services, please tell us. This leaflet describes our complaints procedure and how to make a complaint. It also tells you about our service standards and what you can expect.

What is a complaint?

We think of a complaint as any expression of dissatisfaction about our action or lack of action or about the standard of service provided by us or on our behalf.

What can I complain about?

You can complain about things like:

- Delays in responding to your enquiries and requests.
- Failure to provide a service.
- Our standard of service.
- Dissatisfaction with our policy.
- Treatment by or attitude of a member of staff.
- Our failure to follow proper procedure.
- Contractors working on behalf of the Association.

Your complaint may involve more than one of our services or be about someone working on our behalf.

What can't I complain about?

There are some things we can't deal with through our complaints procedure. These include:

- A routine first time request for a service, for example reporting a problem that needs to be repaired or initial action on anti-social behaviour.
- Request for compensation
- Our policies and procedures that have a separate right of appeal, for example, if you are dissatisfied with the level of priority you have been given when applying for a house, you may have the right to appeal against the decision.
- Issues that are in court or have already been heard by a court or a tribunal
- An attempt to reopen a previously concluded complaint or to have a complaint reconsidered where we have already given our final decision following a stage 2 investigation.

If you are still not satisfied you can ask the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman for an independent review of the complaint.

If other procedures or rights of appeal can help you resolve your concerns we will give information and advice to help you.

Who can complain?

Anyone can make a complaint to us, including the representative of someone who is dissatisfied with our service. Please also read the section on "Getting help to make your complaint"

How do I complain?

You can complain in person at any of our offices, by phone, in writing, e mail or by using our online complaints form on our web site.

It is easier for us to resolve complaints if you make them quickly and directly to the service concerned. So please talk to a member of our staff at the service you are complaining about. Then they can try to resolve any problems on the spot.

When complaining, tell us:

- Your full name and address
- As much as you can about the complaint
- What has gone wrong
- How you want us to resolve the matter.

How long do I have to make a complaint?

Normally you must make your complaint within six months of:

- The event you want to complain about, or
- Finding out that you have a reason to complain, but no longer than 12 months after the event itself.

In exceptional circumstances, we may be able to accept a complaint after the time limit. If you feel that the time limit should not apply to your complaint, please tell us why.

We have developed a simple two stage process to make it easier for people to make complaints and for us to resolve them.

What happens when I have made a complaint?

We will always tell you who is dealing with your complaint.

Our complaints procedure has two stages.

Stage One Frontline resolution

We aim to resolve complaints quickly and close to where we provided the service. This could mean an on-the-spot apology and explanation if something has clearly gone wrong and immediate action to resolve the problem.

We will give you our decision at stage one within five working days, unless there are exceptional circumstances.

If we can't resolve your complaint at this stage, we will explain why. If you are still dissatisfied you can ask for the complaint to be investigated further through stage two. You may choose to do this immediately or some time after you get our initial response.

We can help you with making this request.

Stage two Investigation

Stage two deals with two types of complaint: those that have not been resolved at stage one and those that are complex and require detailed investigation.

When using stage two we will:

Acknowledge receipt of your complaint within three working days

If necessary discuss your complaint with you to understand why you remain dissatisfied and what outcome you are looking for.

Give you a full response to the complaint as soon as possible and within twenty working days.

If our investigation will take longer than twenty working days, we will tell you. We will agree revised time limits with you and keep you updated on progress.

What if I am still dissatisfied?

If, after we have fully investigated your complaint, you are still dissatisfied with our decision or the way we dealt with your complaint, you can ask the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO) to look at it.

The SPSO cannot normally look at:

- A complaint that has not completed our complaints procedure (so please make sure it has done so before contacting the SPSO)
- Events that happened, or that you became aware of, more than a year ago.
- A matter that has been or is being considered in court.

You can contact the SPSO:

In person:
SPSO
Bridgeside House, 99 McDonald Road
EDINBURGH
EH74NS

By Post:
Freepost EH641
EDINBURGH
EH30BR

Complaints about Factoring and Land Management

The SPSO does not normally look at complaints about our factoring service. From October 2012 the Homeowners Housing Panel will try to resolve complaints and disputes between home owners and property factors. So if your complaint is about a factoring service, and you still are dissatisfied after our investigation stage, you will be able to go to the Homeowners Housing Panel.

Housing Support Complaints

If your complaint relates to a Housing Support service we provide, you can choose whether to complain to us or the Care Inspectorate, or both. You can find out more about their complaints procedure, or make a complaint, by contacting the Care Inspectorate.

Information about the Care Inspectorate's procedure, contact details and offices around Scotland and information about how to complain are all on their website. WWW,scswis.com

Or you can contact them by telephone 08456009527

Reporting a significant performance failure to the Scottish Housing Regulator.

The Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR) can consider issues raised with them about "significant performance failures". A significant performance failure is defined by the SHR as something that a landlord does or fails to do that puts the interests of its

tenants at risk, and which the landlord has not resolved. This is something that is a systematic problem that does, or could, affect all of a landlords tenants. If you are affected by a problem like this you should first report it to us. If you have told us about it but we have not resolved it, you can report it directly to the SHR.

A complaint between an individual tenant and a landlord is not a significant performance failure. Significant performance failures are now, therefore, dealt with through this complaints handling procedures. You can ask us for more information about significant performance failures.

The SHR has more information on their web site. www.scottishhousingregulator.gov.uk

Getting help to make a complaint.

We understand that you may be unable or reluctant to make a complaint yourself. We accept complaints from the representative of a person who is dissatisfied with our service. We can take complaints from a friend, relative, or an advocate if you have given them your consent to complain for you.

You can find out about advocates in your area by contacting the Scottish Independent Advocacy Alliance or Citizens Advice Bureau.

Scottish Independent Advocacy Alliance
Tel: 01312605380

Citizens Advice Scotland

Web Site: www.cas.org.uk

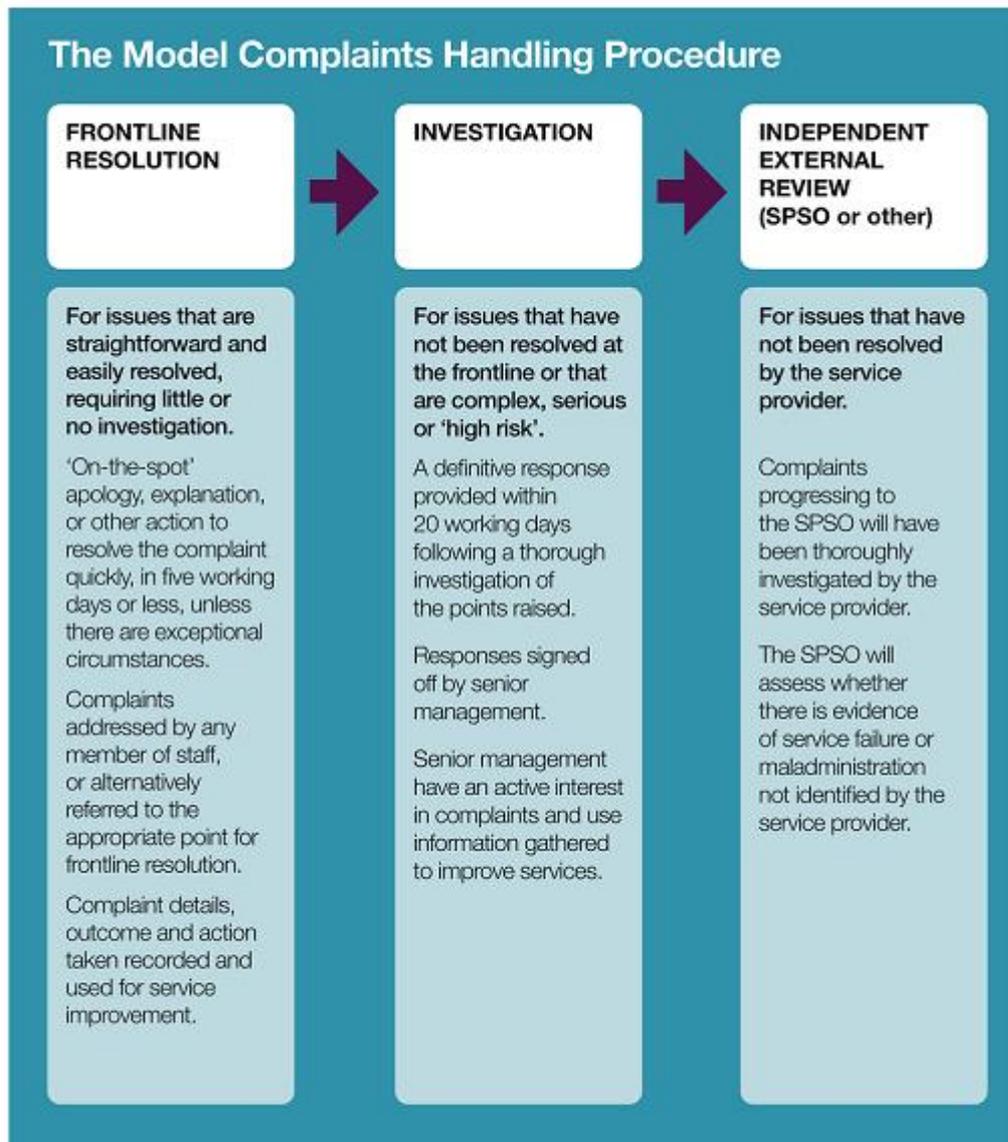
Quick Guide to our Complaints Procedure

Complaints Procedure

You can make your complaint in person, by phone, by e mail or in writing.

We have a two-stage complaint procedure. We will always try to deal

with your complaint quickly. But if it is clear that the matter will need a detailed investigation, we will tell you and keep you updated on our progress.



We are committed to making our services easy to use for all members of the community. In accordance with our statutory equalities duties, we will always ensure that reasonable adjustments are made to help customers access and use our services. If you have trouble putting your complaint in writing, please tell us.

Contact details:

Visit our website: www.bridgewaterha.org.uk

Call us: 01418122237

Visit us at: First Floor, Bridgewater Shopping Centre, Erskine, PA87AA

Email us: admin@bridgewaterha.org.uk