



Complaints Information Leaflet

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Quick guide to our complaints procedure

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

We have a two-stage complaints procedure. We will always try to deal with your complaint quickly. But if it is clear that the matter will need detailed investigation we will tell you and keep you updated on our progress.

Stage 1: Frontline Resolution

We will always try to resolve your complaint quickly, within five working days if we can. If you are dissatisfied with our response, you can ask us to consider your complaint at stage 2.

Stage 2: Investigation

We will look at your complaint at this stage and if you are dissatisfied with our response at stage 1. We will also look at some complaints immediately at this stage, if it is clear that they are complex or need detailed investigation.

We will acknowledge your complaint within three working days. We will give you our decision as soon as possible. This will be no more than 20 working days unless there is clearly a good reason for needing more time.

The Scottish Public Services Ombudsman

If, after receiving our final decision on your complaint, you remain dissatisfied with our decision or the way we have handled your complaint, you can ask the SPSO to consider it. We will tell you how to do this when we send you our final decision.

Complaints Service Standards

We aim to provide an excellent service but sometimes we do get it wrong. On those occasions we are committed to responding to complaints and putting things right as soon as possible. We know that we can't please everyone all the time, but whatever the outcome of your complaint, we hope you will be satisfied with the level of service we provide in responding to your complaint.

The following sets out the service standards we aim to meet in relation to our complaints handling process.

We will:

- * ensure ease of access to our complaints process for all, and provide any support required to register a complaint
- * communicate effectively, in plain English, taking account the needs of the complainant
- * treat all complaints confidentially, fairly and will be open and honest with you
- * let you know the name of the person handling your complaint
- * investigate your complaint fully and tell you the outcome
- * apologise
- * carry out a satisfaction survey with all complainants once their complaint has been resolved
- * regularly monitor complaints and report performance in dealing with complaints in your Tenants' Newsletter and on our website
- * value complaints and use them to improve our services
- * ensure that all staff are trained to recognise and deal with complaints

What is a complaint?

We regard 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
- 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

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 service, for example reporting a problem that needs to be repaired or initial action on anti-social behaviour
- requests 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 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 to 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 our office, by phone, in writing, by email or by using the contact form on our website.

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
- your preferred method of contact
- as much information 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.

What happens when I have complained?

We will always tell you who is dealing with your complaint. Our complaints procedure has two stages.

Stage 1: 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 1 in five working days or less, 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 your complaint to be investigated further through stage 2. 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 2: Investigation

Stage 2 deals with two types of complaints: those that have not been resolved at stage 1 and those that are complex and require detailed investigation.

When using stage 2 we will:

- acknowledge receipt of your complaint within 3 working days
- 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 20 working days

If our investigation will take longer than 20 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?

After we have fully investigated your complaint, if you remain 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, EH7 4NS

By Post: **FREEPOST SPSO**

Freephone: 0800 377 7330

Online: www.spsso.org.uk/contact-us

Website: www.spsso.org.uk

Mobile site: <http://m.spsso.org.uk>

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 landlord's 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 not, therefore, dealt with through this complaints handling procedure.

The SHR also has more information on their website:

www.scottishhousingregulator.gov.uk

Or you can phone on: 0141 242 5642

Getting help to make your 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: 0131 556 6443

Website: www.siaa.org.uk

We are committed to making our service easy to use for all members of the community.

In line 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.

If you would like this leaflet in another language or format please contact us.

Complaints Form

You can use this form to submit a complaint.

Name

Address

.....
.....
.....

Home Tel:

Mobile

Work Tel:

Email:

Which of the above is your preferred method of contact?

Nature of your complaint

(Please provide as much information as possible and continue on a separate sheet if necessary.)

Desired outcome to your complaint

(i.e. what would you like us to do to put things right?)

51 North Bridge Street
Hawick • TD9 9PX
T: 01450 364200
E: info@waverley-housing.co.uk
www.waverley-housing.co.uk

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