

HORTON HOUSING ASSOCIATION

COMPLAINTS POLICY & PROCEDURE

SUMMARY

Please note: there are separate and specific procedures for dealing with complaints in relation to Abuse and Harassment. This procedure should not be used for complaints of this type.

If you are not happy please tell us.

- You just need to tell a member of staff or a manager.
- If you can - tell us the outcome you are looking for.
- They will try to sort things out straight away.
- If we can't sort things out straight away we will contact you within 3 working days to say we have received your complaint and tell you who is dealing with it.
- We will try our best to sort the complaint out within 10 working days. If we can't do this we will explain to you why and tell you when we think we have sorted things out.
- If you are not happy about the outcome of your complaint please tell us and a senior manager will look at your complaint again. They will give you a decision within 10 working days.
- Someone from Horton will offer to support you through every step of making a complaint or help you get an advocate if you prefer someone from outside.
- You can also complain to some organisations outside Horton for example, the organisations which fund or regulate the service Horton is delivering to you.

Everything is explained below and in the Client Handbook.

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Horton Housing Association (HHA) takes pride in offering high quality services. We believe we achieve this most of the time.
- 1.2 Feedback from clients and stakeholders helps us to improve in all areas of our work. We seek, welcome and act upon all kinds of feedback from many sources, including:

- Compliments, Comments, Complaints
- Suggestion Boxes
- Client Exit Questionnaires
- Annual Client Survey
- Stakeholder Surveys and Events
- Stakeholder Evaluation Forms
- Formal / Informal Complaints Log

- 1.3 Sometimes it may just be a passing comment, but all feedback is valuable to us.
- 1.4 When we do receive negative feedback or complaints we are committed to learning from them and using them to improve service delivery.
- 1.5 This Policy and Procedure is widely publicised and available to all clients and stakeholders e.g. client induction and handbook, notice boards etc.
- 1.6 Staff will explain the Policy and Procedure verbally to all new clients and anyone else who wishes to use it.
- 1.7 Alternative formats can be made available on request.
- 1.8 If a person making a complaint needs anyone with them to translate or interpret Horton will try to arrange this service with their agreement.
- 1.9 ‘Compliments, Complaints, Comments’ postcards are available to clients and other stakeholders to send back to us at any time.
- 1.10 **If we are getting it right please let us know.**
- 1.11 In order to ensure our services remain at a high and improving standard, we have a procedure through which you can let us know if for any reason you are not satisfied with your dealings with the organisation. We train our staff in how to recognise and respond to complaints.
- 1.12 **If you are not happy with Horton Housing Association please tell us.**
- If you are unhappy about any HHA service, please speak to the relevant staff member or manager.
 - If you are unhappy with an individual in HHA sometimes it is best to tell him or her directly. If you feel this is difficult or inappropriate then speak to the staff member's manager or another manager in the Association.
 - Making a complaint will not adversely affect a client’s support or the way they are treated.
 - Often we will be able to give you a response straight away. When the matter is more

complicated we will give you at least an initial response within 1 week. (See Stage 1 below)

- 1.13 Please tell us about your complaint as soon as possible to enable us to investigate it. Delays in telling us about complaints can mean that information and witnesses are no longer available and the investigation is unable to be concluded. For example, the Association only keeps paper records for a limited time and then they are destroyed.
- 1.14 In order to assist us resolving your complaint is a satisfactory matter, please tell us the outcome you are looking for.

2. AIMS OF THE COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

- 2.1 The procedure aims to provide clear and concise guidance to staff, clients and any other stakeholder on complaints handling. It aims to progress complaints in 3 stages each escalating to a more senior level of staff.

It aims to be transparent and accessible for everyone who has a stake in the Association – clients, applicants, referral and partner agencies, relatives and other stakeholders involved with the Association.

3. MAKING A COMPLAINT

3.1 Stage 1 - Informal Stage

This stage aims to sort out minor problems as quickly as possible. It involves informal discussion between you and staff. If you wish to bring someone with you to explain your problem or complaint please do. You should be advised of your right to make a formal complaint if you so wish and informed of your rights under the Complaints Policy & Procedure.

3.2 Stage 2 - Formal Stage

If you are not happy with the outcome of Stage 1, or if the informal stage is not appropriate, you should register a formal complaint. This can be done verbally or in writing. Staff can provide information and assistance or help to find someone else to do this. A list of advice and advocacy agencies is available (see paragraph 6 below).

The Manager of the scheme will have initial responsibility for dealing with your complaint and making sure proper records are kept. Where the complaint involves the Scheme Manager, their line manager will have responsibility for dealing with it.

All formal complaints will be logged and you will receive a written acknowledgement within 3 working days.

Our aim is to investigate your complaint properly and give you a reply within 10 working days, setting out how the problem will be dealt with. If this is not possible, an interim response will be made informing you of the action taken to date or being considered.

At the end of the investigation you will be told the reasons for the decision and action to be taken, if any.

3.3 **Stage 3 - Review Stage**

If you are not satisfied with the response to Stage 2, you can ask for the complaint to be reviewed.

A senior manager who has not previously involved will undertake the review.

The review must investigate the complaint and report in writing to you within 10 working days.

You will be told the reasons for the decision and action to be taken, if any.

4. **THE ROLE OF THE REGULATORY BODIES**

If you wish to make a complaint outside Horton Housing Association's internal Complaints Policy & Procedure or if you have exhausted it and are still not satisfied you can complain to a relevant outside body (see below for contact details of relevant outside bodies). If you are not sure which outside body to complain to please ask, or get an advocate to ask, any member of staff or contact Head Office;

Tel: 01274 370689

Email: head.office@hortonhousing.co.uk

Write: Horton Housing Association, Chartford House, 54 Little Horton Lane, Bradford BD5 0BS

4.1 **Services Registered by the Care Quality Commission (CQC)** (e.g. Oak Mount or Supported Living)

You can complain directly to the:

CQC National Customer Service Centre
Citygate
Gallowgate
Newcastle upon Tyne
NE1 4PA

Phone: 03000 616161

Email: enquiries@cqc.org.uk

Web: www.cqc.org.uk

4.2 Services Involving a Contractual Relationship with Bradford Social Services
(e.g. Community Support Agency)

If you are not satisfied with the outcome of the Complaints Procedure you can contact:

Customer Care & Complaints Unit
Department of Social Services
5th Floor Britannia House
Hall Ings
Bradford
BD1 1HX

Fax: 01274 432916
Speak to the Customer Care & Complaints Staff on 01274 436820
Email: sscomplaintsunit@bradford.gov.uk

4.3 Services Involving a Contractual Relationship with Calderdale Council
(e.g. Upper Valley Older Person's Support Service)

If you are not satisfied with the outcome of the Complaints Procedure you can contact:

Calderdale Council,
Customer Services and Communications,
Complaints and Compliments Unit
19 Horton Street
Halifax
HX1 1QE

Tel: 01422 392279 and the e-mail is complaintsandcompliments@calderdale.gov.uk

Alternatively you may contact Calderdale's Adult Social Care Department:

Contracts.team@calderdale.gov.uk
Tel: 01422 393936"

4.4 Services Involving a Housing Association registered with the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) – Housing Management Related Issues Only
(e.g. Accommodation based schemes)

If you are not satisfied with the outcome of this procedure you can complain to the appropriate Registered Provider (RP).

Complaints must be in writing and are limited to breach or non-performance of obligations set out in the Occupancy Agreement supplemented by the HCA's Consumer Standards¹.

If still dissatisfied after the RP's Complaints Procedure has been exhausted, you have the right to refer the matter to the Housing Ombudsman Service:

Housing Ombudsman Service
81 Aldwych
London
WC2B 4HN

Telephone 0300 111 3000
Fax 020 7831 1942
Email info@housing-ombudsman.org.uk

4.5 Services funded by Supporting People

Bradford	Kirklees
Supporting People Commissioning Team Department of Adult & Community Services City of Bradford Metropolitan District Council 6th Floor (North), Jacob's Well Nelson Street Bradford, BD1 5RW Tel: 01274 434500 Fax 01274 437320 Supporting.people@bradford.gov.uk	Kirklees Supporting People Team Supporting People Team 3rd Floor, Gateway to Care 30 Market Street Huddersfield HD1 2HG Tel: 01484 221096 supporting.people@kirklees.gov.uk
Calderdale	North Yorkshire
Supporting People Adults, Health and Social Care 1 Park Road Halifax HX1 2TU Tel: 01422 393956 spteam@calderdale.gov.uk	Supporting People Team North Yorkshire County Council Adult and Community Services Adult and Community Services Room 207, County Hall Northallerton DL7 8DD Tel: 0845 034 9498 Fax: 01609 532025 supporting.people@northyorks.gov.uk

¹ Homes & Communities Agency (March 2012). *The Regulatory Framework for Social Housing in England from April 2012*

4.6 Services involving a Health body e.g. Primary Care Trust etc.
(e.g. Some services within the Community Support Agency or Bevan House)

You can complain to Patient Advice and Liaison Services (PALS) by contacting NHS Direct on 0845 46 47 or contacting your local hospital, GP surgery, or health centre. Alternatively contact Independent Complaints Advocacy Services (ICAS) Yorkshire and Humberside 0845 120 3734

5. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

- 5.1 The Association will maintain a log of all formal complaints and produce regular reports on complaints received for the Management Board.
- 5.2 This procedure will be evaluated annually. This will include asking whether there is sufficient awareness of the Policy & Procedure and any barriers to complaints being made.

6. ADVICE AND ADVOCACY

- 6.1 Horton has compiled a list of advice and advocacy agencies that may be willing to assist a person wishing to make a complaint. If you would like a copy of this list please ask any member of staff or contact head office:

Tel: 01274 370689

Email: head.office@hortonhousing.co.uk

Write: Horton Housing Association, Chartford House, 54 Little Horton Lane, Bradford BD5 0BS

7. OAK MOUNT

At Oak Mount Care Home we want to ensure we provide a welcoming, flexible, safe and caring environment. There may be times when you are unhappy about the service you have received at Oak Mount and may feel that this warrants a complaint.

What is a complaint?

A complaint is a statement that a situation is unsatisfactory or unacceptable. You may feel dissatisfied with some aspect of the service we provide to you at Oak Mount, if this is the case we encourage you to raise your concerns and make a complaint in accordance with the Horton Housing Association complaints procedure.

Oak Mount is a care home regulated by the Care Quality Commission (CQC), if you wish to make a complaint outside Horton Housing Association's internal Complaints Policy & Procedure or if you have exhausted it and are still not satisfied you can complain to CQC about the service at Oak Mount, CQC's contact details are:

CQC National Customer Service Centre
Citygate
Gallowgate
Newcastle upon Tyne
NE1 4PA

Phone: 03000 616161
Email: enquiries@cqc.org.uk
Web: www.cqc.org.uk