



Guide to making a suggestion, comment, compliment or complaint



This leaflet explains what to do if you wish to make a suggestion, comment, compliment or complaint about our services, how we will deal with it and our commitment to dealing with it fairly and promptly.

Suggestions, comments, and compliments

We genuinely welcome any suggestions or comments you may have. For example, you may not wish to complain but think we could improve one of the services we provide or wish to pass on a compliment for good service. Please feel free to write, telephone, email or speak in person to the Court Manager, Housing and Care Manager or Housing Manager.

Do you have a complaint?

If you are not certain if your issue is a complaint, this is our definition:

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

Tell us if you are unhappy with:

- **The quality of our service**
- **Something we have done**
- **Something we have not done**

We will not treat you any differently if you make a complaint.

We commit to:

- Responding quickly and effectively to resolve issues as an informal complaint in the first instance
- A two-stage formal complaints process
- Applying a consistent approach and monitoring complaints carefully so we learn from them and develop good practices for the future

What to do if you have a complaint

Please tell us about it...

Informal Complaint: Contact the Court Manager, Housing and Care Manager or Housing Manager and explain fully the nature of your complaint. You don't need to fill in a specific form and we aim to respond within 10 working days.

If we cannot respond informally, or you are not satisfied with the outcome, we will escalate your complaint to our Formal Stage 1 and let you know who is dealing with it. We will check the details of your complaint and acknowledge your complaint within five working days. A formal response will be sent within 10 working days. If it looks like the complaint investigation may take longer, we will discuss and agree an extension of 10 working days with you.

You will receive a full response answering all the issues and giving details of any actions to be taken, and compensation if appropriate. All responses will be reviewed by a Head of Service before being sent.

If you are not satisfied with the Stage 1 response you can escalate to Stage 2, undertaken by the relevant Executive Director. There is a 20 working days response time. Again, if the investigation may take longer, we will discuss and agree an extension of 10 working days with you.

Complaints about care services

If you or someone else has concerns about care, in the first instance, you should contact the Housing and Care Manager. If the care is funded or arranged by a local council, you can also complain to them about your issue.

What if your issue isn't a complaint?

There may be certain cases where we think the issue would not be best dealt with as a formal complaint, for example, it might be around anti-social behaviour or a safeguarding concern. We will contact you within five working days and explain how we are going to deal with your issue.

What if you aren't happy with the response to your formal complaint?

There are two options you may wish to consider.

Referral to Ombudsman

If you remain dissatisfied, or you do not receive a response in the timescale we have agreed with you, you may refer a complaint about care to the local government (Social Care) Ombudsman or a complaint about housing to the Housing Ombudsman Service (Refer also to the Designated Person scheme below). When referring to the Ombudsman we will co-operate fully during any investigation and comply fully with the resulting decision which will be binding on us.

Referral to a 'Designated Person'

Once our internal complaints procedure is complete, you can ask for your complaint to be looked at by a Designated Person.

Designated Persons were introduced with the aim to resolve housing complaints locally, for example, by involving people such as a local councillor, an MP or Housing 21's Residents' Panel. The Designated Person can make recommendations but we are not obliged to follow them.

The Care Quality Commission

Care services are regulated by the Care Quality Commission (CQC). You can tell CQC about the good or poor care that you have seen or experienced. CQC are not able to take forward complaints on your behalf but do use all information given to them to understand the quality of care being provided.

They can also refer the complaint to the Housing Ombudsman prior to the current eight-week minimum waiting time.

(Please note that this arrangement will change during 2021 when new legislation is expected to remove this arrangement).

Residents' Panel

If, at this stage, you choose to take your complaint to the Residents' Panel (as a designated person), we will convene a panel from the pool of residents trained to work with us on complaints.

The Panel will be made up of three residents including a Chair. They will then discuss the complaint at a telephone meeting.

Following this a letter containing the decision made by the Panel will be sent to you with an update on any further action that has resulted from the complaint, for example, a review of a policy.

The purpose of the Panel is to either:

- Fast-track a complaint to the Housing Ombudsman within the eight-week cooling off period
- Advise us that the decision should be reconsidered. The Panel cannot actually change the decision themselves
- Advise us that they felt the complaint was handled well

The Panel Members will only consider housing-related complaints that have been through our complaints process, and will meet twice a year to review a sample of complaints, offer feedback and suggest improvements to our services.

We welcome your **suggestions, comments, compliments or complaints** so we can learn from them and improve our services.

How to contact Housing 21:

0303 123 1622

feedback@housing21.org.uk

Freepost RTJE-LEHY-SGLJ

Tricorn House | 51–53 Hagley Road | Birmingham B16 8TP

Contacting the Ombudsman:

Housing Ombudsman Service

0300 111 3000

info@housing-ombudsman.org.uk

PO Box 152 | Liverpool L33 7WQ

Local Government (Social Care) Ombudsman

0300 061 0614

PO Box 4771 | Coventry CV4 0EH

www.lgo.org.uk

Contacting the Care Quality Commission (CQC)

National Customer Service Centre

03000 616161

enquiries@cqc.org.uk

Centre Citygate | Gallowgate | Newcastle upon Tyne NE1 4PA

A copy of our full complaints policy is available on request.

This document can be provided in a different format, such as large print, Braille or another language. **Please contact 0370 192 4000.**



Tricorn House | 51–53 Hagley Road | Birmingham B16 8TP

housing21.org.uk    

Regulated by the Social Housing Regulator Reg. No. L0055
Community Benefit Society FCA Reg. No. 16791R

INVESTORS IN PEOPLE
We invest in people Platinum