

Housing Services Complaints Procedure

Housing Services follows the City of London's corporate complaints procedure for all our complaints. This chart shows each stage to be followed and the individuals responsible for these stages in Housing Services.

EM - Estate Manager

AD H&N - Assistant Director Housing & Neighbourhoods

AHM - Area Housing Manager

PIM - Projects & Improvements Manager

In the majority of cases, complaint responses will be co-ordinated by Housing Management staff. However, there may be some complaints which are solely related to other aspects of service, such as Property Services or Benefits. In these cases, the appropriate managers would be substituted for the EM and AHM and the AD Barbican & Property would take the place of the AD Housing & Neighbourhoods.

STAGE	THE ISSUE	WHO DEALS WITH IT AND HOW?	TIME SCALE
<p>Informal stage</p> <p>(May be made in person, by phone or in writing through email, Facebook or letter)</p>	<p>Resident has a problem which they wish to be resolved.</p>	<p>Local estate staff do everything they can to resolve the issue, within the parameters of our policies and resources. EM must have seen and/or spoken to the resident to try and address the problem before it is taken further. If the complaint is made in a public arena such as Facebook, the estate staff should contact the complainant and ensure that further dialogue takes place which is not publicly accessible.</p> <p>A 'Resident Issues' record should be opened and all actions taken in connection with the issue recorded with dates and times of all contacts, names of staff involved etc. This record should be placed on the house file for the tenant and also kept electronically.</p> <p>Full details of all contact with the resident should also be logged on Orchard throughout the issue.</p> <p>If the issue cannot be resolved to the satisfaction of the resident, the EM should provide a copy of the Complaints leaflet and contact details of the AHM. Resident should be informed that formal complaints must be made within six</p>	<p>1 week</p>

		<p>months of the issue occurring.</p> <p>If the issue relates directly to an Estate Manager, then it should be directed to the AHM in the first instance. If the complainant is dissatisfied with the response from the AHM, the complaint will skip stage 1 and go straight to stage 2.</p>	
<p>Stage 1</p> <p>(in person or by phone but usually in writing)</p>	<p>Resident dissatisfied with the action taken by estate staff.</p>	<p>A formal complaint must be made within six months of the event which is the subject of the complaint.</p> <p>AHM acknowledges complaint within two working days. AHM sends copy of complaint to housing.complaints@cityoflondon.gov.uk and includes details of response deadlines so the PIM can monitor the complaint and add it to the Housing Complaints Log.</p> <p>AHM may convene a meeting of all staff involved in the matter. At this meeting the case is discussed and possible ways of resolving the complaint considered. This should include the use of Southwark Mediation Centre to provide an independent perspective and approach to resolving the complaint.</p> <p>The AHM then completes the investigation, examining correspondence and other paperwork, and does everything possible to resolve the issue – meeting or speaking to the resident and responding in writing to ensure there is a record of the response.</p> <p>In the written response, the AHM should cover:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What the investigation has involved; - What the AHM has found; - What resolution is proposed and by when; - That if the resident is dissatisfied with how their complaint has been handled and wish to move to Stage 2, they should write to the AD H&N within 30 days, stating their desired outcome to resolve their complaint. <p>AHM sends copy of the full response to housing.complaints@cityoflondon.gov.uk</p>	<p>10 days* from receipt of complaint</p>

		<p>so the PIM can update the Housing Complaints Log.</p> <p>AHM to record details of all actions and contacts on the 'Resident Issues' record and on Orchard. A copy of the complaint and the response should be placed in the house file.</p> <p><i>If the complaint relates directly to an Area Housing Manager, then it should be taken straight to the Assistant Director, Housing & Neighbourhoods (AD H&N).</i></p>	
<p>Stage 2 (written)</p>	<p>Complaint not resolved and resident dissatisfied with the way in which it has been handled.</p>	<p>AD H&N receives complaint and forwards to housing.complaints@cityoflondon.gov.uk so progress can be monitored.</p> <p>AD H&N investigates complaint - through discussions with staff, examination of correspondence and documentation. If complaint relates to property issues, it is passed to the AD Barbican & Property Services to investigate. A response letter is then written to the complainant and copied to housing.compalints@cityoflondon.gov.uk.</p> <p>The letter will state that if the resident remains dissatisfied with how the complaint has been handled, they should write to the Town Clerk within 30 days and state the resolution they seek.</p> <p>PIM updates Housing Complaints Log with outcome of complaint.</p> <p>AD H&N will record details of all actions and contacts on the 'Resident Issues' record and on Orchard. A copy of the Stage 2 complaint and the response should be placed in the house file.</p>	<p>10 days* from receipt of Stage 2 complaint</p>
<p>Stage 3 (written)</p>	<p>Complaint not resolved & resident dissatisfied with how it has been handled at Stage 2.</p>	<p>Town Clerk's department receives the letter and nominates a Chief Officer to investigate.</p> <p>Nominated Chief Officer to email housing.complaints@cityoflondon.gov.uk so it can be logged locally and progress can be monitored.</p>	<p>15 days* from receipt of Stage 3 complaint</p>

		<p>Investigation is carried out in liaison with the Stage 1 and Stage 2 investigators. TC representative reaches a judgement and communicates this to the AD H&N. Any suggestions for resolving the complaint are discussed.</p> <p>A letter is sent from the Stage 3 investigator, communicating the findings. The letter closes by saying that our process is now at an end and that if the resident remains dissatisfied, they should contact the Housing Ombudsman for advice on what they can do next.</p> <p>TC representative sends copy of the full response to housing.complaints@cityoflondon.gov.uk so the PIM can update the Housing Complaints Log.</p> <p>The PIM will produce a short, confidential briefing summarising any stage 3 complaints. This will be presented to the Chairman and Deputy Chairman of the Housing Management & Almshouses Sub-Committee as the complaints arise.</p>	
<p>Using Southwark Mediation Centre (SMC)</p>	<p>In any case where it is felt that the services of professional mediators may be useful to resolve a complaints.</p>	<p>Any possible mediation use should first be discussed with the AHM. The complainant should be contacted and asked for permission to have their details referred to an independent complaints resolution service. If they agree, a referral form should be completed and SMC contacted.</p> <p>If mediation is to take place, the AHM should email housing.complaints@cityoflondon.gov.uk so the Complaints Log can be updated.</p> <p>During mediation, the complaints process is paused, to allow every opportunity for the issue to be addressed. The complaints process can be reactivated at any time if, for example, mediation breaks down.</p> <p>The PIM will meet with SMC every six months to discuss how the process is working and to ensure both parties remain satisfied with the arrangements in place.</p>	

<p>Vexatious Complaints</p>	<p>In any case where it is felt that the complainant is demonstrating unreasonable behaviour which meets the criteria of the DCCS Vexatious Complainants Policy</p>	<p>The situation should be brought to the attention of the AHM, who will discuss the case with the AD H&N, providing evidence of why the complainant's behaviour is felt to be unreasonable.</p> <p>If the AD H&N agrees, a meeting will be convened, involving the AD, the appropriate AHM and EM, the Departmental Complaints Officer and the PIM. A representative from the Town Clerk's Dept may also be invited.</p> <p>The case will be discussed at the meeting. A recommendation will then be made to the Director of Community & Children's Services to invoke the Vexatious Complaints policy. If so, appropriate sanctions will be agreed.</p> <p>The AD H&N will write to the complainant, informing them of this decision, the sanctions and any timescales. A copy of this letter will be placed on the complainants file and sent to both the Departmental Complaints Officer and the Town Clerk's Dept.</p> <p>A briefing will also be sent to the Chairman and Deputy Chairman of the Housing Management & Almshouses Sub-Committee, and the appropriate Allocated Member(s).</p>	
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* Unless a longer investigation is required, whereupon the Manager should write to the complainant to inform them of the revised response target.