



Ongo Homes

Complaints & Feedback Policy

May 2017

Led by:	Karen Cowan, Head of Customer and Support Services
Written by:	Louise Usher, Policy and Performance Manager Emma Garland, Policy & Research Officer
Date Agreed:	Health Check – 4 th May 2017
Agreed by:	HOST
Next Review date:	May 2018

Contents

		Page
1.	Our policy is...	2
2.	It applies to...	2
3.	Making a Complaint...	3
4.	Making sure we do what we say...	4
5.	Other things to bear in mind...	5
6.	We'll look at this again...	6

1. Our policy is.....

- 1.1 To do our best to get things right and provide an excellent level of service. However, we recognise that things can go wrong and that there may be reason to complain.
- 1.2 To welcome all feedback to ensure that we improve our services.
- 1.3 To learn from complaints to prevent similar problems in the future.
- 1.4 To recognise any dissatisfaction with the level of service you receive as a complaint. However, if we can help resolve your problem straight away we will, without you having to make a formal complaint.
- 1.5 To support you to make a complaint by making the process as easy as possible.
- 1.6 To ensure you know who is dealing with your complaint and when they will be contacting you. We will keep you informed of what is happening until we have resolved the problem.
- 1.7 To resolve your complaint quickly and completely, ensuring we listen to your opinion and understand fully what your complaint is about.

2. It applies to.....

- 2.1 All customers of Ongo Homes (OH) and those who may have been affected by a service we have provided. Someone can make a complaint on your behalf or as part of a collective complaint, providing you give your consent.
- 2.2 Only our staff and companies providing a service on behalf of OH are included in this policy. We cannot take complaints that are outside of our control (for example complaints about other landlords, Government Policies or external companies).
- 2.3 We cannot take complaints about damage to personal property unless it has been caused by something we have done. We advise you take out Home Contents Insurance in the event of any unforeseen incidents.
- 2.4 We will only look at complaints if they are within 2 months of when you first became aware of the problem, unless there are exceptional circumstances (i.e. hospital stays).
- 2.5 Any complaints regarding your neighbours will be dealt under our Anti Social Behaviour Policy. Although complaints about the way we have handled your anti-social behaviour case can be dealt with under this policy, reviews under the Community Trigger are subject to North Lincolnshire's Safer Neighbourhoods external process.
- 2.6 Any complaints regarding Compensation will be dealt with under our Compensation Policy.
- 2.7 Initial appeals against an allocation decision will be dealt with under the Choice Based Lettings Policy.

3. Making a complaint.....

3.1 If we cannot resolve your complaint when we first speak with you, we will let you know who will be dealing with your complaint and agree a convenient time for them to make contact with you. We aim for this to be within 3 working days of receiving your complaint.

3.2 Stage 1 Complaint investigation

3.2.1 The person dealing with your complaint will contact you within 2 days to make sure they understand what your complaint is about and what your expectations are. They will agree a timescale with you for the complaint investigation to be completed. We aim for the investigation to be completed within 10 working days from when you first report this to us (dependent on the nature of the complaint). They will keep you informed throughout the investigation and agree any extensions to timeframes with you.

3.2.2 They will discuss their findings with you and where required, agree with you what we will do to make the matter right and when you can expect the matter to be fully closed. We will provide you with a written summary.

3.3 Stage 2 Complaint review

3.3.1 If you are unhappy with the outcome or handling of the complaint, you can ask for your complaint to be looked at again. You will be asked to explain the reason why you are still unhappy and what your expectations are. We will let you know who will be dealing with your complaint within 3 days and agree a convenient time for them to make contact with you. They will need to review your initial complaint, but we aim to contact you within 14 working days of you asking for your complaint to be escalated. They will keep you informed throughout the review and agree any extensions to timeframes with you.

3.3.2 They will discuss their findings with you and where required, agree with you what we will do to make the matter right and when you can expect the matter to be fully closed.

3.4 If you are still unhappy

3.4.1 Although we will make every effort to resolve your complaint, if you are still unhappy with the outcome you have the following options:

- If you are a tenant or a resident leaseholder, you can contact a Designated Person or wait 8 weeks from the date the complaint was closed and then contact the Housing Ombudsman directly.
- If you are a non-resident leaseholder, you can contact the First Tier Tribunal Service.

3.5 The Designated Person

- 3.5.1 A designated person can be your MP, Local Councillor or a Tenants Panel. We will provide you with a list of possible contacts, including any recognised Tenant Panel. Your chosen designated person will either try to resolve the complaint themselves, contact the Housing Ombudsman or if they refuse to take your complaint you can contact the Housing Ombudsman directly.
- 3.5.2 We will co-operate fully with the designated person and work with them to come to an agreeable outcome. If you are still unhappy you can request that your designated person refers your complaint in writing to the Housing Ombudsman.

3.6 Housing Ombudsman

- 3.6.1 The Housing Ombudsman will only consider complaints if they have been through our complaints process and have either been referred by a designated person (or the designated person has refused the complaint) or you have waited 8 weeks following your complaint appeal.
- 3.6.2 We will co-operate fully with all requests from the Housing Ombudsman to support them in their findings.
- 3.6.3 Contact details for the Housing Ombudsman are:

Housing Ombudsman Service
81 Aldwych
London
WC2B 4HN

Telephone: 0300 111 3000 (lines open Mon-Fri, 9.15am-5.15pm)

E-mail: info@housing-ombudsman.org.uk

Online complaint form: [Getting help from the Housing Ombudsman.](#)

4. Making sure we do what we say.....

- 4.1 Our customer facing staff and those involved in complaint investigations will receive full complaints training, with periodic refresher training. Each manager will receive regular reports on complaint handling in their service area.
- 4.2 We will monitor that we keep to agreed timescales through various performance reports to our management teams.
- 4.3 We will monitor that we have kept you informed, resolved your complaint fully and how happy you are with the handling of your complaint. We will do this via a satisfaction survey carried out by an independent body. This information will be reported to our management teams.
- 4.4 Our overall performance will also be monitored by our Tenant Complaints Monitoring Group which provides us with a customer perspective on the quality of our complaints handling, what trends are emerging and what we've done to prevent similar complaints

happening again. The Group will also quality check that any remedial action agreed with customers has been completed.

- 4.5 We will report on our performance and how we have improved our services through complaints to our customers at least once a year.

5. Other things to bear in mind....

5.1 Your Responsibility

- 5.1.1 We can only resolve your complaint if you provide us with all the relevant information and are clear about what you want us to do to resolve the matter. We cannot investigate anonymous, unsigned complaints but these may be kept on record.
- 5.1.2 You must co-operate with the person investigating the complaint and allow them access where necessary to help resolve the complaint.
- 5.1.3 We cannot investigate complaints where behaviour is abusive or threatening.
- 5.1.4 There are some customers that make unreasonable demands on our time and make repeat complaints about the same problem. This behaviour impacts on our ability to provide a high level of service and can disadvantage other customers. Where a customer makes repeat complaints we reserve the right to stop the complaint investigation and close the complaint. Depending on the circumstance, the customer maybe referred to a support service or contact will be restricted to a named person or method of contact.

5.2 Compensation

- 5.2.1 We may feel that compensation can be offered in some circumstances. Compensation can take a range of forms - a financial payment, a gesture of goodwill, or replacement of an item. There is a separate compensation policy which explains how we decide where compensation may be payable and in what form.

5.3 Other policies and legislation

Document or legislation	What it is
Anti-Social Behaviour Policy	Any complaints from one resident about another are dealt with under the Anti-Social Behaviour Policy. We will only investigate complaints about the Ongo Homes Anti Social Behaviour service. We cannot investigate complaints that refer to the Safer Neighbourhoods Community Trigger.
Compensation Policy	Any compensation offered as part of a complaint will follow the guidelines set out in the compensation policy.
Choice Based Lettings Policy	Initial appeals against an allocation decision are dealt with under the Choice Based Lettings Policy.
Customer Charter	We will ensure we follow the principles of the customer charter whilst investigating complaints.
Equality and Diversity	We believe everyone has the right to fair and equal treatment and

Policy	recognise that people who use our services come from diverse backgrounds. We ensure we follow the principles set out in this policy.
Housing Ombudsman Service	The Housing Ombudsman is set up by law to look at complaints about housing organisations. The service is free, independent and impartial. Only tenants and resident leaseholders can use this service.
First Tier Tribunal	The First-tier tribunal – Property Chamber (Residential Property) provides an independent service for settling disputes involving leasehold property.

6. We'll look at this again.....

6.1 In a year's time to make sure it still meets our needs.