



COMPLAINTS POLICY

1. Introduction

ng homes is committed to delivering a high quality of service to all our customers within the Springburn, Balornock, Possilpark and Parkhouse areas. If something goes wrong or you are dissatisfied with our services, please let us know.

This policy will advise on what a complaint is and how you can make a complaint. It will also advise you on our service standards and what you can expect from us.

We are committed to achieving Customer Service Excellence and we value complaints as an opportunity for the organisation to learn and improve. We will use the information from complaints and our actions taken to resolve them to help us to continually improve our service delivery to our customers.

2. 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.

3. What can I complain about?

You can complain about things like:

- Delays in responding to your enquiries and requests
- Failure to provide a service
- Our standard of service

- Dissatisfaction with our policy
- Treatment by or attitude of a member of staff
- Care homes failure to follow proper procedures

Your complaint may involve more than one of our services or it may be about someone working on our behalf.

4. What can't I complain about?

There are certain things we cannot deal with through our complaints procedures, 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.
- Request for compensation only.
- Issues relating to 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 a 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. In such circumstances, if you are still not satisfied, you can ask the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO) for an independent review of the complaint.

If other procedures or rights of appeal can help you resolve your concerns, we will give information and advice to help you.

5. Who can complain?

Anyone who receives, requests or is affected by our services can make a complaint. This includes tenants, homeowners and any member of the public who has access to or is affected by our services.

Representatives can complain on your behalf however under normal circumstances we would respond to you. If you wish us to respond to the person who has contacted us on your behalf, you would be required to sign a mandate form to allow us to correspond with the third party and deal with the complaint effectively that way. Further information on this can be found in section 10 "Getting help to make your complaint".

6. How do I complain?

You can complain in person at either of our offices listed below:

50 Reidhouse Street, Springburn G21 4LS

Or

139 Saracen Street, Possilpark G22 5AZ

Tel No: 0141 560 6000

Email: info@nghomes.net

Alternatively, you can submit your complaint in writing, email, telephone or via our website www.nghomes.net

When complaining it can assist us to resolve the complaint if you provide all the following information:

- Whether you are a tenant or homeowner
- Your full name and address
- Your contact telephone number and email address
- As much as you can about the complaint
- What has gone wrong
- How you want us to resolve the matter

7. How long do I have to make a complaint?

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

8. What happens when I have complained?

We will advise you who is dealing with your complaint. Appendix 1 provides a quick guide flowchart showing the staff process for dealing with complaints.

Our complaints procedure has two stages:

- **Stage one – Frontline resolution**

We aim to resolve complaints quickly; 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 one within 5 working days or less, unless there are exceptional circumstances which can allow us an additional 5 days to resolve the complaint.

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 two. You may choose to do this immediately or some time after you get our initial response.

- **Stage two - Investigation**

Stage two deals with two types of complaint; those that have not been resolved at stage one and those that are complex complaints that require detailed investigations.

When using stage two we will:

- Acknowledge receipt of your complaint in writing within three working days
- Discuss your complaint with you to understand why you remain dissatisfied and what outcome you are looking for
- Give you a full written response to the complaint within 20 working days or less.

We will advise you if our investigation will take longer than 20 working days. We will agree revised time limits with you and keep you updated on progress.

9. What if I am still dissatisfied?

After we have fully investigated your complaint, if you are still 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 will not normally look at:

- A complaint that has not exhausted our full 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 for court.

Contact details for the SPSO are:

In person: SPSO, Bridgeside House, 99 McDonald Road, Edinburgh EH7 4NS

By Post: FREEPOST SPSO (this is all you are required to write)

Freephone: 0800 377 7330

Website: www.spsso.org.uk

10. 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 advocate, if you have given them your consent to complain for you.

If you wish us to respond to the person who has contacted us on your behalf, you would be required to sign a mandate form to allow us to correspond with the third party and deal with the complaint effectively that way. Mandate forms can be obtained from your housing officer or from the above address.

You can find out about advocates in your area by contacting the Scottish Independent Advocacy Alliance – www.siaa.org.uk or Telephone: 0131 510 9410

Citizens Advice Bureau – www.citizensadvice.org.uk or check your phone book for your local office.

We are committed to making our service easy to use for all members of the community. In line with our statutory duties and legal obligations under the Equality Act 2010, 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 and we can ensure that your complaint is received in a format that is suitable for you.

11. Dealing with unacceptable behaviour

We understand that people may act out of character in times of trouble or distress. The circumstances leading to a complaint may result in the customer acting in an unacceptable way. Customers who have a history of challenging or inappropriate behaviour, or have difficulty expressing themselves, may still have a legitimate grievance.

A customer's reasons for complaining may contribute to the way in which they present their complaint. Regardless of this, we must treat all complaints seriously and properly assess them. However, we also recognise that the action of customers who are angry, demanding or persistent may result in unreasonable demands on staff time and resources or unacceptable behaviour towards our staff. We will, therefore, apply our policies and procedures to protect staff from unacceptable behaviour such as unreasonable or persistent demands, threats or offensive behaviour from customers.

We have a zero tolerance approach to this type of behaviour and where we decide to restrict access for a customer in relation to the above, we have a procedure in place to communicate that decision, notify the customer of a right of appeal, and review any decision to restrict contact with us. We will review this decision where appropriate to allow the customer to demonstrate a more reasonable approach. We will also make clear to the customer that they can still request other services such as repairs while their access is restricted.

12. Further information and contact details

Complaints about factoring

The SPSO does not normally look at complaints about our factoring service. If a factoring customer is still dissatisfied after our investigation stage, they can contact:

Housing and Property Chamber
First-tier Tribunal for Scotland
Glasgow Tribunals Centre
20 York Street

Glasgow

G2 8GT

Telephone: 0141 302 5900

Email: HPCAdmin@scotcourtsribunals.gov.uk

Website: www.housingandpropertychamber.scot

The above body can provide relatively informal and flexible proceedings to help resolve issues that arise between homeowners and property factors.

Reporting a Significant Performance Failure to the Scottish Housing Regulator

The Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR) can consider issues highlighted to them about significant performance failures. This 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 the 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 their landlord is not a significant performance failure. The SHR has more information on their website: www.housingregulator.gov.scot

13. Other Related Policies

- Customer Care
- Data Protection
- Equality and Diversity
- Unacceptable Behaviour
- Anti-Social Behaviour

14. General Data Protection Regulation

The organisation will treat your personal data in line with our obligations under the General Data Protection Regulation and our own Data Protection Policy. Information regarding how your data will be used and the basis for processing your data is provided in our Fair Processing Notice.

15. Policy Review

This Policy will be reviewed every three years or earlier in line with regulatory or legislative guidance/changes or good practice guidelines.

16. Equality Impact Assessment

This Policy is equally applicable to all and has no impact on protected characteristic groups as specified within the Equality Act 2010.

Quick guide flowchart: staff process for dealing with complaints

