

Two Towers Housing Co-op Revised Management Complaints Policy and Procedure

(Chapter 7 Schedule 4 Clause 16)



1 Introduction

- 1.1 Two Towers Housing Co-op Ltd in its capacity as managing agent to Southwark Council is committed to providing a high quality service and has prepared this procedure to help any possible dissatisfaction be promptly resolved.
- 1.2 Two Towers' recognises the importance of customer complaints and considers them to be a form of feedback about the services we provide. We will endeavour to use the information gained from complaints to improve the service. We hope to resolve all complaints quickly and effectively. Our aim is to resolve any problems straight away where possible.

2 Scope of the Complaints Policy

- 2.1 The Complaints Policy and Procedure is linked with other TMO policies, including:
- Repair Performance Standards
 - Performance Standards for Estate Services
 - Tenancy Management policies
- 2.2 Any lawful resident of the TMO who has a complaint against the TMO, or those acting on its behalf, and has been unable to resolve the issue after discussion or correspondence with the TMO staff, may use this Complaints Procedure.
- ### **2.3 Complaints involving Southwark Council**
- 2.3.1 If the complaint is against LBS contractors, the Council, or those acting on its behalf, when the repair/ service has been commissioned by the TMO the resident should raise a complaint, in writing with the TMO who will pass it on to the Council within 3 days. The TMO will then feedback to the resident that a complaint has been passed on, the complaint will then be dealt with using Council's own complaints procedure.

2.3.2 If the complaint is against LBS contractors, the Council, or those acting on its behalf, when the repair/ service has been commissioned by the Council the resident should raise a complaint, in writing with the Council, the complaint will then be dealt with using Council's own complaints procedure (see 4.3).

2.3.3.1 If the complaint is about works/ services that involve both the TMO and the Council the resident should raise a complaint, in writing with the TMO. The part of the complaint that relates to the Council will then be passed to the Council and will be dealt with using Council's own complaints procedure, the Council will be notified that this is a 2-part complaint and that they should pass on their response to the TMO. Once received the TMO will advise the complainant of the receipt of the Council's response and investigation will proceed as per the procedure.

3 Types of Complaint Covered under this Policy

The Complaints Procedure is appropriate in the following circumstances:

- Complaints about any service provided by the TMO, such as;
 - repairs undertaken to a dwelling or the communal areas;
 - the standard of caretaking and cleaning
 - the rent collection service
 - how the TMO deals with tenancy management issues
- Complaints about the behaviour or performance of an employee of the TMO, or anyone acting on the TMO's behalf;
- Claims for compensation for disrepair or loss of services provided by the TMO
- Complaints about the behaviour or performance of a member of the Management Committee

4 Types of Complaint not Covered by this Policy

4.1 Complaints made more than 12 months after the resident first became aware of the issue they wish to complain about will not normally be considered.

4.2 Disputes between residents are not subject to the Complaints Policy, but are dealt with by the Residents' Disputes Policy and Procedure.

4.3 The following types of complaint, if not resolvable locally, should be referred to the Council:

- Complaints about rent levels or service charges;
- Complaints about the construction of service charges
- Complaints about services provided directly by the Council
- Complaints about the behaviour or performance of an employee of the Council, or anyone acting on the Council's behalf such as a contractor appointed by the Council;

- Claims for compensation for disrepair or loss of services provided by the Council

5 Making a complaint

5.1 Informal Complaints

5.1.1 If you are dissatisfied with some aspects of the service you have received and wish to draw it to the attention of the Co-op but do not feel that it is serious enough to warrant a formal investigation, you should contact the TMO staff and advise them that the complaint is informal.

5.1.2 Please give as much information as possible and your complaint will be dealt with within 7 working days.

5.1.3 If after that time you are not happy with the response or the issue has not been resolved you should then make a Formal Complaint.

5.1.4 On occasion staff may feel that the complaint warrants a formal investigation and in those cases may escalate your complaint to a Formal Complaint. You will be informed in writing if your complaint has been escalated to Formal. The process of the complaint will then follow the following procedure.

5.2 Formal Complaints

5.2.1 All complaints should be made in writing where possible by letter, email or on the printed complaints form however staff will assist by taking down the details of a verbal complaint.

5.2.2 The TMO's Manager will also provide assistance to those who require help in putting their complaint in writing.

5.2.3 If the Manager is the subject of the complaint, the complainant should be referred to the Secretary of the TMO who will investigate the complaint. If the complaint warrants it may then be dealt with using the Disciplinary and or Grievance Procedure.

5.2.4 Complaints should normally be addressed to the Co-operative Manager at the TMO's office. Where appropriate, the complaint should be addressed to the Secretary of the TMO at the same address and marked Private and Confidential.

6 Investigation of Complaints

6.1 Complaints will be investigated by the Co-operative Manager or, where appropriate, the Secretary of the TMO or a person appointed by the Secretary.

- 6.2 The person responsible for investigating a complaint may use face-to-face interviews, and other evidence – such as police, medical, environmental health records, surveyor reports, referrals to/from other authorities – in order to reach a fair decision on the complaint.
- 6.3 The person responsible for the investigation will compile a detailed report with the following contents:
- The nature of the complaint(s) and how it/they relate(s) to the TMO's responsibilities and standards of performance;
 - Details of those providing evidence about the complaint
 - The evidence or statements provided;
 - The conclusion and recommendations of the investigating officer
 - A document summarising the complaint, investigation and conclusion
- 6.4 The Co-op Manager/Secretary will acknowledge all complaints within 5 working days of receipt.
- 6.5 In acknowledging the complaint, the TMO will provide you with the contact details of the investigating officer and the deadline for the completion of the investigation.
- 6.6 The TMO will notify you in writing of its conclusions within 15 working days of receiving the complaint or advise you of the progress of the investigation and provide a revised deadline.
- 6.7 The outcome of all complaints, together with outstanding complaints, must be reported to each meeting of the Management Committee

7 How Decisions will be Taken and Communicated

- 7.1 When the response to the complaint has been decided, it will be included in the summary document sent to you.
- 7.2 The summary should state whether or not the complaint has been upheld.
- 7.2.1 If the complaint has been upheld, the summary should state:
- What action will be recommended to the relevant Sub Committee to rectify the cause of complaint;
 - What compensation, if any, will be recommended to the relevant Sub Committee.
- 7.2.2 If the complaint is not upheld, the summary document should state: The main grounds on which the complaint has not been upheld and (if applicable) the main grounds on which the claim for compensation has not been upheld.

8 How the Complaint will be remedied

- 8.1 Once the complaint is resolved you may receive 1 or more of the following:-
- A face to face discussion / appointment
 - An apology
 - An explanation giving a full answer to all points raised in the complaint;
 - Action to put things right e.g. completing an outstanding repair
 - A commitment to review processes to avoid the same thing happening again
 - Issuing guidance to staff or providing training

9 Taking Your Complaint Further

- 9.1 If you are dissatisfied with the response you have received or feel your complaint has not been remedied, you can ask that your complaint is raised with the Sub Committee responsible for that area of service.
- 9.2 The Sub Committee Chair will acknowledge your complaints within 5 working days of receipt. The Sub Committee Chair will notify the complainant in writing of its conclusions within 15 working days of receiving the complaint.

10 The Complainant's Rights

10.1 Confidentiality

All complaints made about the TMO's services, or those acting on its behalf, will be treated in the strictest confidence. The full report of any investigation will only be available to the Manager or, if it relates to the manager or actions of the Management Committee, it will be available to the Chair/Secretary of the TMO.

10.2 Rights of Representation and Support

- You may be represented by any person of your choice.
- You may be accompanied during any interview or investigation by a friend, witness or advocate.
- You have the right to the assistance of a translator or interpreter, if required
- Where you require the help of a translator or interpreter, a contribution may be made to any costs at the discretion of the Management Committee of the TMO.

10.3 Right of Appeal

If you are not satisfied with the response to your complaint, you may appeal in writing to;

Southwark Council
Corporate Complaints,
PO BOX 64529,
London, SE1P 5LX.
0207 525 2209

CCU@southwark.gov.uk

The appeal will be dealt with in line with Southwark Council's Complaints Procedure

11 Record Keeping and Monitoring

11.1 A record of the investigation will be kept on the tenancy file of the resident making the complaint and is confidential to the tenancy file

11.2 The Co-operative Manager will keep a summary sheet of each complaint showing

- The nature of the complaint
- How it was dealt with
- The response time
- The service area complained about
- The outcome of the complaint
- Whether the decision was appealed, and outcome

11.3 A report outlining all complaints will be presented to each Management Committee meeting.

11.4 The Co-operative Manager will include Complaints information in the Monitoring information provided to the Council.

11.5 A quarterly review of performance will be carried out by the Management Committee.

11.6 A review of the Complaints Procedure will be carried out every 3 years by the Management Committee. A copy of this review will be sent to Southwark Council.

Adopted at the Management Committee meeting dated 12th June 2013