

NEXT STEP HOMES LIMITED

COMPLAINTS POLICY

1. Preamble

Next Step Homes aims to deliver a first-class service to all its customers, whether they be tenants, sharing owners, people on our waiting list, contractors, consultants, members of partner organisations or anyone else with whom we deal. We do recognise however that sometimes things can go wrong and it is important to us that we offer our customers a clear means of raising complaints if and when things do go wrong and that we explain how we will deal with such complaints.

2. Access

The Complaints Policy and the attached Procedure are not intended to replace normal contact between our customers and staff of our managing agents with whom they normally deal. We would encourage people to resolve any difficulties with them in the first instance. If however a complainer is not satisfied with the outcome of that, or if the system has failed in any way, we will provide clear and rapid means of complaining. Such complaints will normally be addressed to the Chief Executive of Langstane Housing Association and dealt with by a Senior Manager of the organisation and a full written explanation setting out the action to be taken where appropriate to remedy the complaint will be issued within 14 days. If the complaint is against the Chief Executive, it will be dealt with by the Chairman of Next Step Homes' Management Committee usually with the assistance of one or more members of the Committee.

3. Appeals

If the complainer appeals against the outcome of the initial complaint, he/she may lodge an appeal with the Chief Executive of the managing agents, who will report the matter to the Committee of Management. The Committee will, in turn, appoint a Sub-Committee to investigate and deal with the complaint. If the complaint involves the Chief Executive, the Sub-Committee will not include the Chairman, or any other member of the Committee who has investigated the original complaint.

4. Publicity

Next Step Homes shall produce, review and update a leaflet introducing the Complaints Policy and explaining the way in which it operates. It will also explain the role of the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman, and how the complainer may contact him. This leaflet will be available at all Langstane offices and will be carried at all times by staff working in the field. In addition, one copy of the leaflet will be issued to each tenant or sharing owner at the launch of the Complaints Policy and thereafter on a regular basis.

5. Timescale

Next Step Homes will deal with complaints in accordance with the procedure and timetable set out in the attached Procedure note. This note is intended as the basis for the leaflet which will be issued to tenants and sharing owners, advising them of the Policy and Procedure.

6. Monitoring and Review

A Report will be submitted to the Committee of Management on a quarterly basis in each year, summarising the complaints received, the manner of resolution and the performance against timescale targets set.

7. Whistleblowing Policy

This Policy is separate from the Whistleblowing Policy which was set up to provide a means of raising concerns on matters of confidentiality, propriety or honesty.

8. Scottish Public Services Ombudsman

Next Step Homes will at all times publicise in any correspondence or leaflets or publications issued in connection with the Complaints Policy, the services of the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman and will co-operate fully with any investigations carried out by the Ombudsman into the activities of the Committee, its servants or agents. The Committee of Management will monitor and review any cases referred to the Ombudsman.

Date Approved by Committee of Management:	04.02.09
Review Period:	2 Years
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