



Complaints policy

1.0 Purpose and scope

This policy sets out Notting Hill Genesis's (NHG's) approach to receiving and handling complaints, ensuring that they are dealt with in a consistent and transparent way.

We aim to always give excellent customer service, but know that we don't always get things right. This policy outlines what our residents can do to let us know when they think something has gone wrong, and what they can expect from us in response.

This policy applies to all complaints received from residents and other customers (including prospective residents), and third parties making a complaint on their behalf. This policy also applies to complaints from MPs and local councillors on behalf of their constituents.

We view complaints as a valuable source of feedback and learning for our services, helping to drive improvement and maintain a positive relationship with our residents.

This policy applies to all residents who live in our homes, applicants for a property owned or managed by us, and any person acting on behalf of a resident with their consent.

The policy does not apply to complaints about corporate services such as finance, IT and HR, unless it is directly related to the delivery of a service to a resident, although we will follow the principles of the policy in responding to these.

This policy complies with the following regulatory and good practice standards:

- Housing Ombudsman [Complaint Handling Code](#)
- Regulator of Social Housing Regulatory Standards: [Transparency, Influence and Accountability](#).
- Localism Act 2011

2.0 Aims

This policy aims to ensure:

- We provide clear and transparent information about our approach to managing and responding to complaints.
- We provide a good and reliable service to all our residents and to treat all feedback as a learning opportunity to improve services in the future.

3.0 Definition of a complaint?

We define a complaint as:

An expression of dissatisfaction, however made, about the standard of service, actions, or lack of action by Notting Hill Genesis, its employees, or those acting on its behalf (such as contractors), affecting an individual resident or group of residents. An expression of dissatisfaction does not need to include the word complaint to be handled in line with this policy.

Our residents drive the complaints process (all complaints are initiated by residents raising concerns with us) and we are responsible for managing the process. Our colleagues will proactively engage in our complaint process. If further enquiries are needed to resolve a matter and at the resident's request, the issue is always logged as a complaint and treated as a complaint according to this process.

4.0 What we deal with through this policy

Residents can complain about our standard of service, actions, or lack of action by us or anyone working for us (such as contractors).

There may be times when an issue can be put right 'there and then' and with an apology. These won't be dealt with through our formal complaints process unless a resident asks us to do so.

There are some things that we will **not** deal with through our complaints policy.

The following are **not** covered through this policy:

- Neighbour dispute or reports of anti-social behaviour (our approach is set out in our anti-social behaviour policy), unless residents are unhappy with our response to these.
- Complaints that are already being managed. This includes where legal proceedings have started. This is defined as details of the claim, such as the Claim Form and Particulars of Claim, having been filed at court.
- Situations where legal or regulatory action has already been taken and a determination has already been made, including through our complaints process or through the Housing Ombudsman.
- Insurance claims and appeals including damage to personal possessions and personal injury accidents which should be referred to the relevant insurers. However, a complaint about Notting Hill Genesis's standard of service can still be made.
- If the complaint is disputing the service charge we have set, residents may resolve the dispute either directly with Notting Hill Genesis or through the courts (First Tier Tribunal). However, this does not prevent customers raising their complaint with the Housing Ombudsman.
- The complaint does not relate to the actions or omissions of Notting Hill Genesis which have affected the resident in respect of their application for, or

occupation of, property as outlined in the Housing Ombudsman Scheme, such as resident engagement or involvement.

- Anonymous complaints. However, we will record these to help us to improve our services. If the complaint raises a safeguarding or a whistleblowing issue, this will be dealt with under the relevant policy.

If a resident's complaint cannot be dealt with through this policy, due to it being listed as one of the exclusions above, we provide a detailed explanation setting out the reasons why a matter is not suitable for the complaints process. We also provide information on the resident's right to take that decision to the Housing Ombudsman.

Anyone can make a complaint about the services that we, or anyone working for us (such as contractors), provide. We have two stages to our complaints process, as described below: stage 1 and stage 2. Non-residents can access stage 1 only of our process in the spirit of openness and good will, but do not have access to the Housing Ombudsman Service. If they are unhappy with the outcome, their recourse is the same as other private individuals, for example, through legal challenge.

Representatives or third parties can act on the behalf of a resident with the resident's approval. We deal with the complaint in the same way as if the resident had raised it directly.

5.0 How to complain

Complaints can be made in several ways:

- Through our online resident portal [My Account](#) which is available on our website (www.nhg.org.uk)
- By telephone on 020 3815 0000
- By email at complaints@nhg.org.uk
- Through our online Live Chat (Monday- Friday) service on our customer website (www.nottinghillgenesis.org.uk)
- Through our social media channel/s
- To a member of staff, for example a local housing officer
- In writing to:
Complaints Service
Notting Hill Genesis
1-3 Sussex Place
London W6 9EA
- All complaints should be made within 12 months of the issue happening.
- Notting Hill Genesis will provide a complaints service that is accessible to all residents. We retain the right, where we consider resident actions to be

unacceptable to restrict or change access to our service. See our Unacceptable Actions by Complainants policy for more detail.

6.0 Our complaint handling standards

Our Complaints Service is responsible for handling complaints. The person handling the complaint will have appropriate skills and no conflict of interest with the complaint they are investigating.

We have a two-stage complaint process. The table below sets out our timescales for responding to complaints:

Activity	Timescale
We acknowledge and log the complaint	Within five working days
We provide a response to the stage 1 complaint	Within 10 working days of a stage 1 complaint being logged
We acknowledge and log the complaint at stage 2	Within five working days
We provide a response to the stage 2 review	Within 20 working days of a stage 2 complaint being escalated

6.1 Stage 1: initial complaint

When a complaint is made, we acknowledge and log it within five working days.

We carry out a non-biased investigation and we aim to share a comprehensive answer within 10 working days of the complaint being logged.

Where we're unable to respond to a stage 1 complaint within 10 working days, we will agree any extension with the person raising the complaint. We will then respond within 20 working days and provide regular updates.

6.2 Stage 2: Escalating a complaint

If a resident is not happy with the way we've dealt with a complaint or our decision at stage 1, they should let us know within 20 working days of the stage 1 decision if they wish to move to stage 2. (For contact information, see [section 5](#) on how to complain.)

We accept a request to escalate the complaint to the next stage unless an exclusion applies (see [section 4](#)) We do not add new information on the complaint at stage 2. New information may be treated as a new complaint.

When a complaint is escalated, we acknowledge and log it within five working days.

We aim to provide a response to complaints escalated to stage 2 within 20 working days of the complaint being escalated.

Where we are unable to respond to a stage 2 complaint within this time, we agree an extension with the person raising the complaint. We will respond within 30 working days and provide regular updates.

If the resident is unhappy once the complaints process has been exhausted, we signpost them to the Housing Ombudsman Service.

7.0 Appropriate remedies

Where something has gone wrong, we acknowledge this and share the actions already taken, or those we intend to take, to put things right. These may include:

- Apologising
- Explaining what happened
- Reconsidering or changing a decision
- Amending a record
- Changing policies, procedures, or practices

We consider compensation if it is found that service delivery did not meet our expected standards.

Compensation will reflect the extent of any service failures and the level of detriment caused to the resident as a result. We also consider any out-of-pocket expenses caused by the complaint event. Please see our [compensation policy](#) for further detail.

Where appropriate, we may consider discretionary compensation for damage to personal belongings, in addition to signposting to our insurers.

8.0 Housing Ombudsman Service

A complaint can be raised with the Housing Ombudsman Service at any stage of the process for an independent review of the case.

The Housing Ombudsman service can be contacted in the following ways:

- Online: www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk/residents
- Telephone: 0300 111 3000
- Email: info@housingombudsman.org.uk
- In writing to:

Housing Ombudsman Service PO Box 152

Liverpool L33 7WQ

9.0 Learning and improvement

We promote a positive complaint handling culture. We have processes in place to make sure we gather learning from complaints and use this insight to make positive changes to our services.

We will share our learning from complaints with our customers, colleagues and through our customer annual report.

We complete an annual complaints self-assessment sharing how well we think we're performing against the Housing Ombudsman complaint handling code. Complaint self-assessments can be found on our [website](#).

10.0 Our approach

In writing this policy we have carried out a diversity and inclusion impact assessment. There have been no changes as a result of this assessment.

This policy complies with the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code. You can find a copy of our self-assessment at our [website](#).

11.0 Data protection statement

The protection of personal data is of great importance to us and more than just a legal obligation.

Notting Hill Genesis and affiliate organisations are the data controllers registered with the Information Commissioners Office (ICO). Our data protection policy and procedures are governed by the Data Protection Act 2018. We collect and process personal information in order to provide housing services and meet our contractual and legal obligations. All persons authorised to receive personal data are obliged to handle personal data in accordance with applicable laws and regulations at all times.

For information on how we collect, store, process, and use customers' personal data, please visit our [website](#).

You can also contact the Data Protection Officer / Data Compliance team at dataprotection@nhg.org.uk.

12.0 Associated documents

- Compensation policy
- Complaints procedure
- Unacceptable Behaviour policy
- Anti-social behaviour policy

Document control

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Policy owner	Director of Customer Experience

Version Control

Date	Amendment	Version
1/7/2024	This is a new policy that replaces the complaints and compliments policy	1.0