

700 Club Landlord Services Complaints Policy and Procedure

Purpose

The 700 Club is committed to providing high-quality housing services and learning from feedback. We welcome compliments, comments, concerns, and complaints as opportunities to improve our services.

This policy applies to complaints made by tenants and residents in relation to housing management services provided by the 700 Club as landlord. It supplements the 700 Club's wider Compliments, Comments and Complaints Policy.

This policy will be published on our website and made available in alternative formats on request.

How to Contact Us

Complaints can be made:

- Through our website
- By email: 700Club@700Club.org.uk

In writing to:

Complaints Officer
700 Club Head Office
Roadway House
Beaumont Street West
Darlington
DL1 5SX

Complaints may be made by a resident, their representative, advocate, family member, support worker, or any person acting in their best interests where appropriate.

Feedback and Compliments

We welcome feedback about our services. Where we have provided a good service, compliments help us recognise good practice and share positive feedback with staff and contractors. Where our service has fallen below expectations, we want to know so that we can put things right and improve services for all residents.

What is a Complaint?

A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction, however made, about the standard of service, actions or lack of action by the 700 Club, its staff, or those acting on its behalf, affecting a resident or group of residents.

Residents do not need to use the word "complaint" for us to treat the matter as a complaint.

Service Requests and Complaints

We aim to resolve issues as early as possible. Where a resident reports a problem for the first time, such as a repair, maintenance issue, missed visit, or request for action, this will normally be treated as a service request.

The following will normally be treated as service requests rather than formal complaints unless there is dissatisfaction with our response, delay, failure to act, or an identified service failure:

- Initial requests for repairs or services
- Requests for information
- Insurance claims
- Matters that are subject to ongoing legal proceedings where the legal process is the appropriate route

Where dissatisfaction remains after a service request has been considered, the matter will be treated as a complaint.

Our Commitment

We will:

- Be fair, impartial and objective.
- Treat residents with respect.
- Keep complaints confidential where appropriate.
- Investigate complaints thoroughly.
- Put things right when we have made mistakes.
- Learn from complaints and improve services.
- Keep residents informed throughout the process.
- Make reasonable adjustments where required.

Complaint Stages

The 700 Club operates a two-stage complaints process.

Stage 1 Complaint

A complaint will be investigated by a senior member of staff who has not previously been involved in the matter.

We will:

- Acknowledge receipt of the complaint within 5 working days.
- Confirm who is investigating the complaint.
- Provide an expected response date.
- Respond in writing within 10 working days.

Where additional time is required, we will explain the reason and provide a revised response date of no more than a further 10 working days.

The response will include:

- Our findings.
- Any service failures identified.
- Actions to put matters right.
- Any compensation or remedy offered.
- Details of how to escalate the complaint to Stage 2.

The Services Manager leads on complaint resolution and response. She is assisted by the Senior Management Team. One of these managers will investigate the complaint and respond or appoint an officer of appropriate seniority to do so. The process will be overseen and recorded by the Chief Executive.

If we need to seek further information from you in order to fully understand your complaint we will contact you.

Stage 2 - Complaint Review

If the resident remains dissatisfied, they may request a Stage 2 review. Residents are not required to explain why they wish to escalate their complaint. The complaint will be reviewed by a senior officer who was not involved in the Stage 1 investigation.

We will:

- Acknowledge the escalation request within 5 working days.
- Confirm who is conducting the review.
- Provide an expected response date.
- Issue a written response within 20 working days.

Where additional time is required, we will explain the reason and provide a revised response date of no more than a further 10 working days. The Stage 2 response is our final response.

The process will be overseen and recorded by the Chief Executive and we will keep you informed during the investigation.

Complaint Responses

All complaint responses will clearly state:

- The complaint stage.
- The complaint issues considered.
- Our decision.
- Reasons for our decision.
- Relevant policy, procedure, legislation, or good practice considered where appropriate.
- Any remedy offered.
- Any outstanding actions.
- Timescales for completing actions.
- Escalation rights.

At Stage 1 we will explain how to request a Stage 2 review. At Stage 2 we will explain how to refer the matter to the Housing Ombudsman Service.

Remedies

Where we identify service failure, we will seek to put matters right.

Remedies may include:

- An apology.
- Corrective action.
- Reconsideration of a decision.
- Service improvements.
- Financial compensation where appropriate.

Remedies will be proportionate, fair and reasonable in the circumstances.

Apology

Where appropriate, we will:

- Acknowledge the service failure.
- Accept responsibility where this is justified.
- Explain what happened.
- Express regret.
- Explain what action we will take to prevent recurrence.

Financial Compensation

Financial compensation may be considered where a resident has experienced:

- Direct financial loss.
- Avoidable inconvenience.
- Distress.
- Detriment.
- Unfair impact arising from a service failure.

Each case will be considered individually and awards will be proportionate to the circumstances.

Equality, Accessibility and Reasonable Adjustments

The 700 Club is committed to ensuring that all residents can access the complaints process. We will make reasonable adjustments for residents who may have:

- Disabilities.
- Physical or mental health conditions.
- Learning difficulties.
- Language or communication needs.
- Vulnerabilities that affect their ability to access our services.

Adjustments may include:

- Accepting complaints verbally.
- Allowing a representative to act on behalf of a resident.

- Providing information in alternative formats.
- Providing large-print documents.
- Offering additional support during the complaints process.

Housing Ombudsman Service

Residents may contact the Housing Ombudsman Service at any stage for advice and guidance. Following completion of our complaints process, residents have the right to refer their complaint to the Housing Ombudsman Service for independent investigation.

Housing Ombudsman Service

Website: www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk

Email: info@housing-ombudsman.org.uk

Telephone: 0300 111 3000

Address: PO Box 152, Liverpool, L33 7WQ

Some housing-related complaints may also fall within the jurisdiction of the **Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman**.

Website: www.lgo.org.uk

Telephone: 0300 061 0614

Learning from Complaints

We are committed to learning from complaints and using feedback to improve services. Complaint outcomes and trends will be monitored to identify:

- Recurring issues.
- Service failures.
- Opportunities for improvement.
- Training requirements.
- Policy or procedural changes.

Learning resulting from complaints will be shared across the organisation where appropriate.

Governance and Oversight

The HR Manager is the Member Responsible for Complaints and has responsibility for promoting a positive complaints culture, monitoring complaint handling performance, and reporting outcomes and learning to the Chief Executive and Board. The Chief Executive and Board will receive regular information on:

- Complaint volumes.
- Performance against timescales.
- Outcomes.
- Compensation payments.
- Service improvements arising from complaints.

An annual complaints performance and service improvement report will be produced and published.

Complaint Handling Code Compliance

The 700 Club is committed to complying with the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code.

We will:

- Complete an annual self-assessment against the Complaint Handling Code.
- Publish the self-assessment and any improvement actions on our website.
- Review this policy annually to ensure ongoing compliance with legislation and regulatory requirements.

700 Club Landlord Services Feedback Form

Name	
Address	
Contact Telephone Number	
E-mail Address	
Preferred method of contact: <i>(please circle)</i>	
Telephone / E-mail / Letter	
Please give us the brief details of your compliment, complaint, comment below:	
How would you like your complaint to be resolved?	