



## Complaints help us improve

Castlehill is committed to providing high-quality customer services. We value complaints and use information from them to help us improve our services.

If something goes wrong or you are dissatisfied with our services, please tell us. This leaflet describes our complaints procedure and how to make a complaint.

It also tells you about our service standards and what you can expect from us.

## Who can complain?

Anyone who receives, requests or is directly affected by our services can make a complaint to us. This includes the representative of someone who is dissatisfied with our service (for example, a relative, friend, advocate or adviser).

If you are making a complaint on someone else's behalf, please note that you will normally need their written consent.

## 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 our failure to follow proper procedure.

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

You can contact us via:

Castlehill Housing Association  
4 Carden Place  
Aberdeen AB10 1UT  
01224 625822  
[info@castlehillha.co.uk](mailto:info@castlehillha.co.uk)

## How do I complain?

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.

## How do I complain?

You can complain

- in person at any of our offices
- by phone on 01224 625822
- in writing
- or by email to [info@castlehillha.co.uk](mailto:info@castlehillha.co.uk)

It is easier for us to address complaints if you make them quickly and directly to the service concerned. So please talk to a member of our staff at the service you are complaining about. Then they can try to resolve the issue.

When complaining, please tell us:

- your full name and contact details
- as much as you can about the complaint
- what has gone wrong; and
- what outcome you are seeking.

## How long do I have to make a complaint?

Normally, 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.

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.

## What can't I complain about?



There are some things we can't deal with through our complaints procedure. These include:

- a routine first-time request for a service, for example, reporting a problem that needs to be repaired or initial action on anti-social behaviour
- requests for compensation
- 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. If you are still not satisfied, you can ask the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman 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.

## Who deals with your complaint?

We will always tell you who is dealing with your complaint. Our complaints procedure has two stages. Stage 2 complaints are dealt with by our Complaints Advisor.

### Stage one: frontline resolution

We aim to resolve complaints quickly and close to where we provided the service. 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 in stage 1 in five working days or less unless there are exceptional circumstances.

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 2.

You may choose to do this immediately or sometime after you get our initial response. We can help you with making this request.

### Stage two: investigation

Stage 2 deals with two types of complaint: those that have not been resolved at stage 1 and those that are complex and require detailed investigation.

When using stage 2 we will:

- acknowledge receipt of your complaint 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 response to the complaint as soon as possible and within 20 working days.

If our investigation will take longer than 20 working days, we will tell you. We will agree revised time limits with you and keep you updated on progress.

## Still dissatisfied?



After we have fully investigated, 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 cannot normally look at:

- a complaint that has not completed our 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 in court.

You can contact the SPSO:

Freephone: 0800 377 7330

Online contact: <http://www.spsso.org.uk/contact-us>

Website: <http://www.spsso.org.uk>

Mobile site: <http://m.spsso.org.uk>

## Other types of complaints

We also regard a complaint as any expression of dissatisfaction about the standard of service provided by us or on our behalf.

### Complaints about factoring?

The SPSO does not normally look at complaints about our factoring service. From October 2012 the Homeowners Housing Panel will try to resolve complaints and disputes between homeowners and property factors.

So if your complaint is about a factoring service and you are still dissatisfied after our investigation stage you will be able to go to the Homeowners Housing Panel.

### Care complaints

If your complaint relates to a housing support service we provide, you can choose whether to complain to us or the Care Inspectorate. You can find out more about their complaints procedure, or make a complaint, by contacting the Care Inspectorate.

Or you can contact them by:  
telephone 0845 600 9527  
fax: 01382 207 289  
Online mail to:  
[enquiries@careinspectorate.com](mailto:enquiries@careinspectorate.com)

## 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 an advocate if you have given them your consent to complain for you.

You can find out about advocates in your area by contacting the Scottish Independent Advocacy Alliance or Citizens Advice Bureau.

## Complaining to the SHR



The Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR) can consider issues raised with them about 'significant performance failures'. A significant performance failure 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 of a 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 a landlord is not a significant performance failure. Significant performance failures are not, therefore, dealt with through this complaint handling procedure. You can ask us for more information about significant performance failures. The SHR also has more information on their website:

<http://www.scottishhousingregulator.gov.uk>

Or you can phone them on: 0141 271 3810