



# Complaints & compliments policy

## 1.0 Purpose & Scope

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

We aim to give excellent customer service. We welcome both positive and negative feedback to help improve our services.

This policy applies to all areas of the business and covers all complaints and compliments received from all residents, customers, and third parties making a complaint on their behalf. This policy also applies to MP and local councillor queries.

## 2.0 Definitions

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- **Complaint** - an expression of dissatisfaction with a service received or a service failure made by us.
- **Compliment** - an expression of gratitude for a positive experience.

## 3.0 Making a compliment or complaint

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Any person is able to express gratitude or dissatisfaction at services we provide.

Compliments and complaints can be made in person, over the telephone, by letter, by email, or via the website.

All complaints and compliments will be recorded and used to help improve our services.

When a complaint is made we will aim to resolve it as quickly as possible.

If you report or we suspect that abuse or neglect is taking place, we will refer to our Safeguarding policies and procedures. You can also report allegations of abuse and neglect directly to the local authority.

## 4.0 Our Principles

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We will listen to your complaint and carefully consider your expectations and desired outcomes.

We will aim to resolve your complaint as quickly as possible.

Where appropriate, compensation may be awarded in line with our Compensation policy.

There are some instances where the issue that you raise will not be dealt with via the complaints process, these are:

- If the complaint relates to an ongoing legal matter.
- A first request for service, information or an explanation of our policies and procedures
- Reported cases of neighbour disputes, anti-social behaviour, hate crime or domestic abuse will not be dealt with through the complaints process, unless you are complaining about how a case has been dealt with.
- A claim being dealt with by our insurers.
- If your complaint is directed at the contents of our policies we may be limited in the resolution that we can come to, however we will use this information when carrying out policy reviews.

Complaints should be made within a reasonable period which would normally be within six months of the matter occurring. In exceptional circumstances we may decide to respond to a complaint outside of this timescale.

We are committed to ensuring that our staff are treated with respect. To protect our staff, we will not engage with any threatening or abusive behaviour. We will deal with any unacceptable behaviour under the relevant policies.

Making a complaint will not result in any adverse changes to the services that you receive from us.

## **5.0 Dealing with complaints**

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We will contact you by your preferred method within 2 working days to acknowledge receiving your complaint, making sure that we are clear on what you would like to happen to resolve the issue and be clear on timescales.

If the timescales need to be changed for any reason, we will agree a new timescale with you.

We will keep you informed throughout the investigation of your complaint.

Complaint responses will be made via your preferred method, followed by a written response within 10 working days. The written response will detail any follow up actions that are required to resolve the complaint and a timescale given for when these are expected to be complete.

Written responses can be translated into a preferred forms or languages on request.

Anyone can make a complaint on your behalf. If a third party making a complaint on your behalf is not an MP, local Councillor, a person with power of attorney, we will require written permission from you before corresponding with them. If someone has made a complaint on your behalf we will respond directly to you and send a copy to the third party who made the complaint on your behalf.

If we receive an anonymous complaint that raises a safeguarding or whistleblowing issue, this will be dealt with under the relevant policy. Our ability to fully explore and feedback on the issue may be limited due to the nature of anonymous complaints. We will record, investigate and monitor anonymous complaints in the same way that we treat other feedback.

## 5.1 Reviews:

If you are not satisfied with our response, you can ask for your complaint to be reviewed. You can request a complaint review within 20 working days from either the date of our response letter or from the date we were due to complete the agreed actions.

You can make a request for a review, stating why you are still unhappy, by the same methods as making a complaint set out in section 3 of this document.

The review will be carried out by an independent reviewer, who was not involved in making the initial decision. They will contact you directly to discuss the complaint and you will receive a final written response within 20 working days of the date you submitted your review request

Upon receiving the review response, you will have exhausted our internal complaints process.

## 5.2 External Appeals against complaint review:

If you are not satisfied with the outcome of the review stage response you have the option of asking an external body to review how we have handled your complaint.

This will usually be the **Housing Ombudsman**.

**Local authorities** - Where we are providing services on behalf of a local authority customers can also complain to their local authority, this will apply to: customers in temporary housing, customers in receipt of services such as floating support or domiciliary care.

**The Financial Ombudsman** - If your complaint relates to one of our financial products.

**The Charity Commission** - If you are receiving services from a charitable foundation, you can refer your complaint to the Charity Commission.

**First tier tribunal** - If your complaint relates to service charges or rent adjustments you can refer the issue to the First Tier Tribunal at any stage.

We will co-operate fully with the Ombudsman Service during any investigation and comply fully with the resulting decision, which will be binding on us.

## 6.0 Our approach

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In writing this policy we have carried out a diversity and inclusion impact assessment. The assessment has identified a number of opportunities to improve access to the complaints policy which have been built into this review.

The policy does not involve the use of personal, sensitive information so it has not been necessary to carry out a privacy impact assessment.

This policy was informed by consultation with staff and residents.

## 7.0 Reference

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Notting Hill Genesis Compensation and goodwill gesture policy.

### Document control

Author	Tara Devine
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Approved by	Day 1 Policy Approval group
Policy owner	TBC
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### Version control

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April 2018	New Notting Hill Genesis policy created.	1.0