

# Your Guide to Complaints, Comments and Compliments



Sorting out problems and using feedback to improve services



More than a landlord

Building Communities - Valuing People - Delivering Excellence

• Collaboration • Flexibility • Integrity • Professionalism • Ambition



**Customers generally accept that on occasions things go wrong, but expect that something will be done to put them right.**

Teesdale Housing Association is an organisation that highly values complaints and comments, learns from them and uses them to improve services.

It is also good to know when customers are happy with our services so we can identify good practices and pass praise onto staff.

## **How can I make a Comment or Complaint?**

Any individual or group who receives services from Teesdale Housing Association, or who is affected by our services can make a comment or complaint.

We want to make it as easy as possible for customers to comment or make a complaint about our services and we will accept them in any of the following ways:

- In person
- In writing
- By telephone
- By email to [complaints@teesdaleha.co.uk](mailto:complaints@teesdaleha.co.uk)
- Via our website at [www.teesdaleha.co.uk](http://www.teesdaleha.co.uk) in the “Contact us” section
- Through another person, perhaps an advocate, social worker, solicitor, etc.
- Through comments made on surveys i.e. VMS

We will also support individual’s needs and meet them re: type talk, Braille, interpreters, translation, or visit people at home to assist making a complaint if required.

## What happens if I need to complain?

Our Complaints procedure consists of an informal complaints stage followed by a 3 stage formal complaints process.

### **Informal complaint**

Our main priority is to sort the problem out. When you first contact us to make a complaint we will try to sort the problem there and then to your satisfaction. However, if this is not possible or you are still not satisfied with the outcome you can make a formal complaint.

### **Complaints process - Stage 1**

When we receive your complaint by your preferred method it will be dealt with by a Service Manager. We will acknowledge receipt of the complaint within 1 working day and this will tell you who is dealing with the complaint and their contact details.



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We will aim to give you a full written response to the complaint within 10 working days. We may need to contact you for more information during this time.

If you do not consider the complaint to be resolved following our written response you may request that the complaint be progressed to the next stage.

## **Stage 2**

There may be times when you are still dissatisfied with how we have handled your complaint and you can request it to be reviewed by a Head of Service. Your request will be acknowledged within 1 working day and state the contact details of who is reviewing the complaint.

The Head of Service will complete an independent review and notify you in writing within 10 days of you requesting the review with a full detailed response.

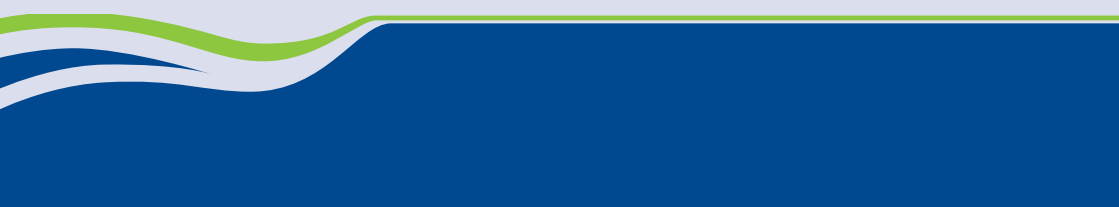
If you do not consider the matter resolved at the end of stage 2, you can request for the complaint to be heard by a Complaints Panel.

## **Stage 3**

The final stage of the Complaints process is the opportunity of a meeting with a panel preferably of three people, at least one of whom will be a member of the Board. It is not necessary for the meeting to be with the Chair or the full Board. You will be given the right to meet with at least one member. The meeting will take place within one month of the request being made. You can bring someone with you for support or to represent you. You will receive a copy of any papers that have been prepared for the Complaints Panel in advance of the meeting. The individual needs of the complainant will be considered when setting up a venue for the Complaints Panel meeting.

The Panel will inform you in writing within 10 days of the hearing giving you the final response.

The Complaints Panel is the final stage of the complaints process. If you are still dissatisfied with the final response you can refer the matter to the Housing Ombudsman within 12 months.



## The Housing Ombudsman

The Housing Ombudsman is an independent body that investigates complaints against social housing landlords. Before contacting the Ombudsman, your complaint must have been considered through our full complaints procedure. The Housing Ombudsman can be contacted at:

### The Housing Ombudsman Service

81 Aldwych

London

WC2B 4HN

Or through their website on [www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk](http://www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk)

## What will we do?

If we find that your complaint is valid we will apologise to you and learn from the experience to ensure that it doesn't happen again. Compensation may be considered depending on the circumstances.

We welcome feedback from customers on how we handle complaints. At the end of your complaint we will contact you by telephone and ask if you would be willing to answer a short survey. Any general feedback will also be welcomed.

## Comments and Compliments

We welcome feedback from customers and use this to make improvements and efficiencies in our services. Comments and compliments can be made using the same method as complaints. We will pass on compliments to the individual officers or service teams and use this information to highlight good practice in the organisation. We will report service improvements made following comments and compliments through our "You said, we did" feature in the Newsletters.



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If you would like any further information on Complaints, Comments and Compliments please contact us on:



**Telephone:** 01833 694400



**Fax:** 01642 678241



**Email:** [enquiries@teesdaleha.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@teesdaleha.co.uk)



**Website:** [www.teesdaleha.co.uk](http://www.teesdaleha.co.uk)



**In Writing / By Visiting:**

Teesdale Housing Association

14A Redwell Court

Harmire Enterprise Park

Harmire Road

Barnard Castle

County Durham DL12 8BN



**Language Line:** Language Line is a service for people who do not speak English. To access Language Line call: 0845 310 9900.





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