

## Complaints Policy

### 1. Introduction

- 1.1. ReSI Housing Limited (**ReSI Housing or the Company**) are committed to providing a high-quality service for its residents, and to working in an open and accountable way which builds trust and respect. The organisation will always endeavour to respond positively to complaints and put mistakes right where failings are identified.

### 2. Purpose

- 2.1. The objective of the Policy is for ReSI Housing to put mistakes right as quickly and effectively as possible
- 2.2. To achieve this objective, this Policy:
  - a) provides clear guidance on how to submit a complaint, and how a complaint will be processed; and
  - b) sets out our approach to responding to complaints in a manner which is compliant with all relevant legislation and regulations, and which ensures a timely and satisfactory outcome is achieved.
- 2.3. ReSI Housing will operate its Complaints Policy in compliance with the Housing Regulator's Standards as set out in "The Regulatory Framework for Social Housing in England from April 2012" as updated in 2015 and 2018 and associated guidance documents.
- 2.4. This Policy has been developed in line with the 2020 Housing Ombudsman Service's Complaint Handling Code.
- 2.5. Where a managing agent is engaged to manage properties on behalf of ReSI Housing or any of its companies;
  - 2.5.1. the managing agents will apply all aspects of the Complaints Policy on our behalf, and ensure their staff are trained on the Policy;
  - 2.5.2. the managing agents will consult ReSI Housing on all significant activities undertaken in fulfilment of the policy where required; and
  - 2.5.3. The word "staff" in this Policy refers to the staff of the managing agent with regard to all operational matters.

- 2.6. ReSI Housing is committed to working with residents to refine its Policies so they are fit for purpose. ReSI Housing will proactively monitor customer feedback on the Policy and its implementation and invite customer in future to contribute to the review and amendment of the Policy through Residents' Forums, online surveys and other mechanisms to maximise the input of residents into our services.

### 3. Scope

- 3.1. This Policy applies to all residents and customers of ReSI Housing companies or third parties complaining on their behalf ("advocates").  
This Policy covers complaints against ReSI Housing employees, contractors and managing agents.

### 4. Definitions

- 4.1. **Complainant:** any customer who makes a 'complaint' about ReSI Housing.
- 4.2. **Complaint:** we use the Housing Ombudsman definition and define a complaint as an "expression of dissatisfaction, however made, about the standard of service, actions or lack of action by the organisation, its own staff, or those acting on its behalf including third party property managers affecting an individual resident or group of residents". We will treat any communication from a relevant party that falls within this definition as a complaint, whether the complainant describes their communication as a "complaint".

Our complaints procedure includes two kinds of complaints:

- **Informal (Quick Resolution) complaint:** Negative feedback where ReSI Housing's response is much quicker than in the case of a formal complaint. These complaints do not normally require an investigation or sending of formal letters but will involve ensuring the problem is resolved as quickly as possible. Informal (Quick Resolution) complaints are dealt with through a response within 5 working days of the complaint being lodged.
  - **Formal complaints:** complaints which require some degree of investigation and / or follow-up, and cannot therefore be resolved on an informal / quick-resolution basis.
- 4.3. **Complaints Officer:** The person responsible for complaints at ReSI Housing.

4.4. **Housing Ombudsman Service:** a service provided to all residents of registered providers of social housing which can assist residents throughout the life of a complaint and also be used if complaints should be escalated. ReSI Housing is a member of the Housing Ombudsman Scheme.

## 5. Complaints Officer

- 5.1. ReSI Housing will have a dedicated “Complaints Officer”, whose role may or may not be dedicated to complaints handling. The Complaints Officer will:
- Act sensitively and fairly;
  - Be trained to receive complaints and deal with distressed and upset residents;
  - Have access to staff at all levels to facilitate quick resolution of complaints; and
  - Have the authority and autonomy to act to resolve disputes quickly and fairly.
- 5.2. Compliance & Performance Director will act as the dedicated Complaints Officer for ReSI Housing.

## 6. Approach to Complaints

- 6.1. Residents whose complaints refer to ReSI Housing can follow ReSI Housing two-staged complaints processed outlined below.
- 6.2. ReSI Housing will operate the Policy in line with the objective of seeking swift, effective complaints resolution. For this reason, ReSI Housing will work with residents to access the most appropriate channels for making complaints if these are not the ReSI Housing complaints process. For example, in some instances complaints should instead be made through planning consultations or other statutory processes.
- 6.3. We will **not** consider a matter a complaint if:
- 6.3.1. The issue giving rise to the complaint occurred over six months before the complaint was raised. Where the problem is a recurring issue, ReSI Housing will consider any older reports as part of the background to the complaint if this will help to resolve the issue for the resident;
  - 6.3.2. The complaint does not fall under the definition specified in this policy and falls under a category of a new or an existing service request
  - 6.3.3. Where legal proceedings have been started, we will take steps to keep the complainant informed (e.g. by letter) but will not consider a new complaint; or
  - 6.3.4. Where matters have already been dealt with as part of the Policy.

- 6.4. If we cannot deal with your complaint, we will write to you explaining why and including a list of your options.

## **7. Process to Making and Managing Complaints**

- 7.1. ReSI Housing follows a two-staged complaints management process. At all stages, the Complaints Officer will keep a record of all correspondence with the complainant. Where ReSI Housing is unable to adhere to timescales set out in the process, ReSI Housing will provide the complainants for good reason why this is the case.
- 7.2. Stage One (Complaint)
  - 7.2.1. A resident should make a complaint via e-mail, by phone or in person to a member of ReSI Housing staff.
  - 7.2.2. If complaint is determined to be an informal (Quick Resolution) complaint and no further clarification is required to understand the nature of the complaint, the Complaints Officer will log the complaint and provide a response confirming its understanding of the complaint and the resolution within 5 working days.
  - 7.2.3. If further clarification is required to understand the nature of the complaint and what outcomes are being sought by the resident and then afterwards the complaint is determined to be an informal (Quick Resolution) complaint, the Complaints Officer will issue a response within 5 working days of receiving such clarification.
  - 7.2.4. If the complaint is determined to be a formal complaint, the Complaints Officer will log the complaint as such and may contact the complainant to understand the nature of the complaint and / or to clarify outcomes being sought by the resident. The Complaints Officer will confirm receipt of the Formal complaint within 5 days of receiving the complaint.
  - 7.2.5. If the complaint requires further investigation to resolve, the Complaints Officer will provide a written response within 10 working days of receiving the complaint and in this time either:
    - provide a response confirming its understanding of the complaint and the resolution; or
    - provide a response confirming its understanding of the complaint and explaining why the complaint cannot be resolved and providing an estimated time frame by which the Stage One decision will be made. This may be

because the complaint needs to be addressed by a third party (e.g. developer, managing agent or contractor),

- 7.2.6. ReSI Housing aims to fully resolve all Stage One complaints within 20 working days.
  - 7.2.7. If an extension beyond 20 working days is required to enable ReSI Housing to respond to the complaint fully, this will need to be agreed between ReSI Housing and the complainer.
- 7.3. Stage Two (Complaint Review)
- 7.3.1. If the complainant is dissatisfied with the outcome of Stage One, the complainant will be given the chance to comment on any adverse findings. The Formal complaint and any follow-up will then be reviewed by a ReSI Housing board member. The Formal complaint details and relevant correspondence will be carefully reviewed, and the Complaints Officer will provide a written response within 10 working days of the escalation detailing how the organisation intends to resolve the Formal complaint. If longer is required, the complainant will be informed as soon as possible of an estimated time frame by which a decision will be made.
  - 7.3.2. We aim to resolve any Stage Two escalations within 20 working days of receiving the request to escalate. Exceptionally, we may provide an explanation to the complainant containing a clear timeframe for when the response will be provided. This should not exceed a further 10 days without good reason. If an extension beyond 10 working days is required to enable us to respond to the complaint fully, we will agree this with the complainant.
  - 7.3.3. If a complainant has escalated their complaint through the two-stage process and the issue has still not been resolved to their satisfaction, they can contact the following:
    - Designated Person – A Designated Person can be a Councillor or an MP. The Designated Person will help resolve the complaint themselves or refer the complaint directly to the Housing Ombudsman Service.
    - Housing Ombudsman Service – If a complaint has not been resolved to the complainant's satisfaction eight weeks after the completion of the ReSI Housing two-stage process, the complainant can contract the Housing Ombudsman Service directly, or can be referred to the service by a Designated Person. ReSI Housing will cooperate with The Housing

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Ombudsman's requests for information (including providing evidence within 15 working days of it being requested if possible). The Housing Ombudsman Service can be accessed here: <http://www.housingombudsman.org.uk/home/>

## 7.4. Outcome of the complaints

- 7.4.1. Depending on the outcome of the complaint, we may:
- 7.4.2. Acknowledge when things go wrong and do our best to fix them
- 7.4.3. apologise
- 7.4.4. improve procedures to prevent similar problems from happening again
- 7.4.5. pay a financial remedy, if applicable

## 8. Making a complaint

- 8.1. ReSI Housing allows complaints to be made via e-mail, by phone and in person to ReSI Housing staff.
- 8.2. ReSI Housing will proactively monitor social media to identify complaints and accept Informal (Quick Resolution) complaints from social media where relevant. Where a complainant wishes to make a Formal complaint via social media, ReSI Housing's social media handler will signpost the complainant the appropriate channels. This may be reviewed in the future.
- 8.3. The website of our managing agents will include information on how to raise a complaint. ReSI Housing aims to have this Complaints Policy and process easily found and downloadable.
- 8.4. How to contact us:

You can complain to us by telephone on 020 7382 0909 using e-form or emailing us on [complaints@resi-housing.com](mailto:complaints@resi-housing.com) or by letter to us at ReSI Housing Limited, 80 Cheapside, London, EC2V 6EE

## 9. Guidance for Contractors (including managing agents)

- 9.1. This Policy requires any contractor providing services on ReSI Housing's behalf to:
  - Record and respond to customer complaints within the timescales detailed in ReSI Housing's internal complaints process;

- Provide ReSI Housing with any information relating to a complaint upon request; and
- Assist RESI with investigating complaints where appropriate.

## **10. Learning from Complaints**

- 10.1. ReSI Housing views complaints as opportunities to learn about how it can improve its services. ReSI Housing will record and monitor every complaint, including details such as the subject of the complaint, resolution time and any learning points.
- 10.2. ReSI Housing will regularly review this register of complaints received in order to identify recurring subjects and continuously improve how the organisation handles complaints. Where possible, ReSI Housing will share with residents how learnings are being applied.
- 10.3. In addition, ReSI Housing will proactively monitor the effects of its complaint's procedure. Areas to be monitored will include:
- Total number of Informal (Quick Resolution) and Formal complaints;
  - Nature of complaints (e.g. ASB, repairs issues, contactor issues);
  - Percentage of complaints resolved at the first stage of the internal process;
  - Percentage of complaints resolved at the second stage of the internal process; and
  - Percentage of complaints escalated beyond the internal process.

## **11. Equality and Diversity**

- 11.1. We adhere to the provisions of the Equality Act 2010. ReSI Housing does not discriminate against customers or residents on account of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation.
- 11.2. This means ReSI Housing has processes in place to accommodate an individual's needs regarding access to an appropriate channel for raising a complaint.
- 11.3. We work in accordance with our Equality and Diversity Policy, ensuring that appropriate advice and assistance is given to those disadvantaged in the community, and that adequate translation and interpretation facilities, large print material, Minicom, induction loops etc. are available.

## **12. Training and Promotion**

12.1. We will publicise this policy, process, the Complaint Handling Code and The Housing Ombudsman Scheme to our staff, managing agents and customers through:

- Our website;
- Leaflets
- Posters
- Newsletter
- Policy briefings and training; and
- As part of regular correspondence with residents

12.2. Any ReSI Housing officer obliged by this Policy shall be offered such training as may be required to give effect to this Policy.

## **13. Changes to the Complaints Policy**

13.1. No change to this Policy will be made without the authority of the Board.

## **14. Monitoring and review**

14.1. This Policy will be reviewed as required or at least every year to incorporate any changes in legislation or good practice.

14.2. ReSI Housing is committed to working with residents to refine its policies so they are fit for purpose. ReSI Housing will proactively monitor customer feedback on the Policy and its implementation and invite customers in future to contribute to the review and amendment of the Policy through Residents' Forums, online surveys and other mechanisms to maximise the input of residents into our services.

**25 September 2023**