



COMPLAINTS POLICY

Definition of a Complaint:

A complaint is '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, affecting an individual resident or group of residents.'

You do not have to use the word 'complaint' for it to be treated as such. Whenever a complainant expresses dissatisfaction, we will give them the choice to make complaint.

Policy Aims and Objectives:

The Society's aim is to provide an efficient, effective, and completely impartial service for all its tenants and applicants for accommodation.

Despite these efforts there may be occasions when tenants, applicants, their relatives, or advocates feel dissatisfied with the service or the policies of the Society.

We aim to provide clarity and consistency in the way we process and consider complaints and in the way we resolve them.

We try to resolve matters as quickly as possible by being open, accountable and outcome focused. We view complaints positively; prompt action will be taken to carry out an investigation; put things right where we need to and learn from any mistakes.

We don't consider service requests such as repair requests or lettings requests as complaints.

Complaints Process:

Complaints can be made verbally to a member of staff, by phone on 01603 625078, by e-mail information@norwichhousingsociety.co.uk , or in writing to Norwich Housing Society, 13 Bracondale, Norwich, NR1 2AL.

Stage 1: Complaints will be considered and investigated by the Chief Executive Officer, who will acknowledge receipt within five working days and respond to the complaint within ten working days. In exceptional circumstances where this is not possible, a response will be sent within ten days providing an estimated resolution date.

Stage 2: If the complainant remains dissatisfied, they should appeal to the Society's Chair of the Board at the Society's Office at 13 Bracondale, Norwich NR1 2AL explaining why the response at Stage 1 was unsatisfactory.

Stage 2 appeals will be acknowledged within five working days and resolved within twenty working days. In exceptional circumstances where this is not possible, a response will be sent within twenty days providing an estimated resolution date.

At the conclusion of the Stage 2 appeal, if the complainant remains dissatisfied then they may contact the Housing Ombudsman Service to investigate.

The Housing Ombudsman can be contacted on 03001113000 or at info@housing-ombudsman.org.uk or by post at Housing Ombudsman Service. P.O. Box 152 Liverpool L33 7WQ.

If any conflicts of interest are identified in dealing with complaints, then the Office Manager will deal with complaints at Stage 1 and the Vice Chair of the Board will deal with complaints escalated to Stage 2 of the process.

Complaints Management:

The Society, at its discretion may provide compensation where there has been a significant breakdown in service, or the complainant has suffered financial loss.

The Society has the discretion in exceptional circumstances to consider complaints in a different manner. For example, where there are group complaints, a need for mediation or to accommodate the needs of the complainant.

In some cases, the Society will work collaboratively with advocates or support providers to resolve complaints.

The Society will reject what it considers vexatious complaints, explaining its reasoning. It will not consider repeat complaints on the same facts, or complaints about matters over twelve months old, abusive, or aggressive language.

You may also find it helpful to contact Citizens Advice or Shelter to help you resolve any disputes.

Confidentiality:

We will treat any information you share with us confidentially and ask you if you agree to share information if we need to investigate your complaint.

We will comply with the General Data Protection Act regarding the storage, access, retention, and disclosure of your data.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion:

The Society is committed to promoting fair and equal access to services. The Society's policies have been established to promote an environment which is free from discrimination whilst valuing the diversity of all people.

Legislation and Regulation:

This policy is in line with relevant legislation such as the Localism Act 2011, Housing Act 1996 (schedule 2), General Data Protection Act 2018, Equality Act 2010, Building Safety Act 2022, the Housing Ombudsman Code, Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023 and Tenant and Involvement Empowerment Standards of the Regulator of Social Housing.