



Cassiltoun

Housing Association

Complaints Policy

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Chair Person/Office Bearers Signature: <i>Aimee M. Stuart</i>	

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1.0 POLICY STATEMENT

- 1.1 Cassiltoun Housing Association (CHA) strives “to deliver excellent services across the organisation”. We recognise that from time to time we will not always get it right and face service failures and we value feedback from customers. We recognise the role that effective handling of complaints has in improving the quality of services we deliver to our customers and in fostering a culture of continuous improvement throughout the Association.
- 1.2 CHA will investigate complaints and resolve them as close to the point of frontline service delivery as possible. We will ensure that the person making the complaint is kept fully informed throughout the complaint handling process.
- 1.3 We will respond positively to all complaints, recognising them as an opportunity to learn and improve and will record complaints whether raised directly or informally through conversation.
- 1.4 CHA will monitor how complaints are handled, how well we meet our target timescales and what changes we have made in response to complaints. We will share this information with customers on an annual basis.
- 1.5 Where complaints are raised about more than one service area we will ensure a single co-ordinated response is made.
- 1.6 Anyone who receives, requests or is affected by our services can make a complaint.
- 1.7 If a customer expresses dissatisfaction but does not want to complain, they will be encouraged to submit their complaint in line with the Complaints Procedure. This will ensure feedback on the outcome of the complaint is communicated to the customer.
- 1.8 If a customer insists they do not wish to complain the issue will be recorded as an anonymous complaint to ensure completeness of our complaints data and allow us to fully consider the matter. This will also provide us with an accurate position regarding complaints for analysis and learning purposes.
- 1.9 If a customer is unable or reluctant to make a complaint, we will accept complaints brought by third parties as long as the customer has given their personal consent.
- 1.10 CHA will only consider complaints that are raised within six months of when the customer first became aware of the issue about which they are making a complaint. Complaints received out with this timescale will not be considered unless there are extenuating circumstances.
- 1.11 This Complaints Policy reflects the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO) Model Complaint Handling Procedure for Registered Social Landlords (RSL’s) which has been fully adopted by the Association. Further information is available in Cassiltoun Housing Association Complaint Handling Procedure.

2.0 DEFINITION OF A COMPLAINT

- 2.1 Cassiltoun Housing Association's definition of a complaint is:
'Any expression of dissatisfaction by one or more members of the public about Cassiltoun Housing Association's action or lack of action, or about the standard of service provided by or on behalf of Cassiltoun Housing Association.'

A complaint can be made regarding:-

- Delays in responding to 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

A complaint may involve more than one of our services or be about someone working on the Association's behalf.

3.0 LEGAL AND REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

- 3.1 The Public Services Reform (Scotland) Act 2010 places a statutory duty on Registered Social Landlords to comply with the SPSO Model Complaint Handling Procedure published for the housing sector.
- 3.2 The Scottish Housing Regulator will monitor compliance with this complaint handling procedure.
- 3.3 The Scottish Social Housing Charter came into effect on 1st April 2012 and places a duty upon RSL's to make it easy for tenants and other customers to make complaints and provide feedback on services, using that information to improve services and performance, and letting people know what they have done in response to complaints and feedback. Charter Outcome 2 relates specifically to complaints and states:-

Social Landlords manage their businesses so that:

"tenants' and other customers find it easy to communicate with their landlord and get the information they need about their landlord, how and why it makes decisions and the services it provides."

4.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY STATEMENT

- 4.1 This policy has been developed with consideration of the Equalities Act 2010 and seeks not to consciously or unconsciously discriminate or to have an adverse affect upon any of the nine protected characteristic groups outlined in the Act.
- 4.2 In particular we will ensure equal access to the complaints process by:
- Offering translation or interpretation services on request;
 - Taking complaints verbally to facilitate access for customers unable to communicate in written English or those with literacy problems;
 - Ensuring that investigation offers every complainant the opportunity to discuss the matter in person.

5.0 POLICY REVIEW

- 5.1 This Complaints Policy will be subject to review or following a review and amendments by SPSO to the model complaint handling procedure or any changes to SCSWIS or FCA complaint handling guidance. The purpose of the review is to assess the effectiveness of the policy in meeting targets and objectives, and to identify any changes which may be required.
- 5.2 As part of the review process, consultation will take place with staff, tenants and other stakeholders where appropriate to ensure the views of all are taken into account.
- 5.3 Any review of this policy will take into consideration any future review carried out by the SPSO of the Model Complaints Handling Procedure for RSL's.