

## **Complaints policy and procedure**

**King Street Housing Society aims to provide an excellent service to its customers. If a customer finds reason to complain we will aim to deal with the complaint promptly and efficiently. We welcome complaints. They help us to know where we are going wrong and what we need to do to put things right.**

### **1. Policy Statement**

We aim to be customer focused. Although we work hard to provide a good service to our customers, we may not always meet the high standards that we set ourselves. If any of our customers have reason to complain, their complaint will be welcomed and dealt with promptly and efficiently.

We will do all that we can to ensure that complaints are acted upon and resolved. All complaints should be dealt with in accordance with the Society's Equalities Policy.

### **2. Who can complain?**

Anyone who feels aggrieved at the way we have dealt with them or feels that they have been affected by our actions. For example:

- Tenants and Leaseholders
- Applicants for housing
- Neighbours of our properties
- Relatives and representatives of the above

### **3. What is a complaint?**

Complaints can relate to: dissatisfaction with our policies, decisions we have taken, services we have failed to deliver, or the quality of the service.

Complaints can be about our staff, our contractors or any other aspect of the way we do business and over which we have control. Complaints should be distinguished from informal grumbles, comments and suggestions. These are recorded separately.

### **4. Monitoring complaints**

The Chief Executive will monitor all complaints, including informal comments and grumbles, and provide regular monitoring reports to the Committee of Management. If trends emerge from this monitoring, managers will discuss the action that needs to be taken to improve performance in key areas.

Information about complaints will be included in annual performance reports. We will be open about our performance in handling complaints.

## **5. Compensation**

The Society has a policy for the payment of compensation. Managers will be encouraged to pay compensation where it is fair to do so and where it will result in a resolution of the complaint.

The four-stage process for dealing with complaints is set out below:

### **4. Procedure**

#### **Stage 1- The customer expresses unhappiness with our service**

If the customer is unhappy with any aspect of our service we will try to put it right there and then. Staff will listen to the customer's point of view and then explain what we intend to do to put things right and the timescale involved. Staff are expected to show initiative in resolving complaints wherever possible at this first stage.

If the customer remains unhappy, we will offer them the opportunity to move to Stage 2 - the formal complaint stage.

#### **Stage 2 - Registering a formal complaint**

The customer will be asked to fill in a complaint form and a Manager will reply within 5 working days. If the customer is unable to fill in the form we will do it for him/her. The Manager may contact the customer in person to seek clarification on aspects of the complaint. If we are unable to reply within 5 working days (for example if the case is complicated) we will acknowledge the complaint within 5 working days and tell the customer when a reply can be expected.

Our reply will seek to answer the complaint. If we agree that we have done something wrong we will say so and apologise. We will also say what we intend to do to put it right. If the manager feels that the complaint is unjustified, he or she will give the reasons for this decision in writing.

If the customer is not happy with this response, they will be given the opportunity to move on to Stage 3

#### **Stage 3 - Appeal to the Chairman**

The complaint form and the relevant correspondence will be passed to the Chairman who will discuss the case with the Chief Executive.

The Chairman will consider the complaint and respond to the customer within 10 working days. In the Chairman's absence, the Deputy Chairman will deal with the complaint and the same timescales will apply. The Chairman may consult informally with other members of the Committee in reaching a decision.

The Chairman will seek to answer the complaint. If he/she agrees that we have done something wrong he/she will tell the customer this and apologise. He/she will also tell the customer what we intend to do to put it right.

If the customer is still not happy with this response, they can move to Stage 4

#### **Stage 4 - Independent Housing Ombudsman**

The Society belongs to an independent Housing Ombudsman scheme.

We will help the customer to contact the Ombudsman. He or she will investigate the complaint and come to decision. This decision could require the Society to put something right or to pay compensation.

If the customer is not happy with the Ombudsman's response, they will have exhausted the Society's complaint procedure and the Ombudsman service. The customer's only recourse will be to seek legal advice.

The Independent Housing Ombudsman is at:

Norman House  
105-119 Strand  
London  
WC2R OAR  
Tel: 0207 836 3630

**King Street Housing Society**

**COMPLAINT FORM**

**What do you want to complain about? Please tell us as much as you can about the problem, giving dates where possible**

*(continue overleaf if necessary – you can attach documents if this supports your case)*

**Who have you spoken to about this problem?**

**(give dates if known)**

**What do you want us to do to put things right?**

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<b>Your name</b>	
<b>Your address</b>	
<b>Your phone number</b>	
<b>E mail address</b>	

**Use this space for additional comments**

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**Signed.....Date.....**  
...

**Please return this form to King Street Housing Society at 89 King Street, Cambridge CB1 1LD Tel: 01223 312294. Fax: 01223 355394.**

**You will receive a reply within 5 days of our receipt of the form. If we cannot give you a full reply we will acknowledge the form within 5 days and tell you when you can expect to receive a full reply.**