

# Lochfield Park Housing Association

## Customer Complaints Policy & Procedures

FUNCTION	DOCUMENT	DATE
Management Committee Control & Accountability	Customer Complaints Policy & Procedures	Review: June 2016 Approved: June 2016 Implemented: June 2016 Next review: June 2019

## **1.0 Why Have A Complaints Procedure?**

- 1.1 Lochfield Park Housing Association aims to provide a first class service but there may be occasions when you're not happy about something, and if this is the case it is important for you to tell us.
- 1.2 The aim of this complaints procedure is to give you clear details of what steps you can take to try and get things put right where there's a problem.
- 1.3 The complaints procedure also gives us a chance to keep an eye on the quality of service we provide so that we can continually work to improve it.

## **2.0 Who Can Use The Complaints Procedure?**

- 2.1 Anyone who receives or requests a service from Lochfield Park can use the complaints procedure. This includes tenants, people applying for housing, sharing owners, and members of the general public.
- 2.2 The procedure is also open to people who may be acting on your behalf such as a councillor, Member of Parliament, advice agency or solicitor.

## **3.0 What Can You Complain About?**

- 3.1 You can complain about any aspect of our service which you are unhappy with.
- 3.2 Complaints against neighbours will be dealt with under our neighbour disputes procedure. But if you have a complaint about the way we have dealt with a neighbour dispute, then you can use the complaints procedure.
- 3.3 We will always try to deal with complaints sympathetically, but there are some things we will not be able to give you information about. For example, it would be wrong for us to discuss with you the details of someone else's housing application, as this would be a breach of confidentiality, but we can of course talk to you about how our allocation procedure works.

## **4.0 Try To Sort Things Out Informally**

- 4.1 You have every right to make a formal complaint whenever you wish to, but in the first instance it can often be quicker and easier for everyone if the problem can be sorted out informally - the choice is yours.
- 4.2 To try and resolve a problem informally, the best thing for you to do is talk to a staff member and let them know what you would like to be put right. They will investigate and let you know how long it should take for the problem to be sorted out, and hopefully a solution will be reached.

## **5.0 The Formal Complaints Procedure**

- 5.1 If the problem has not been sorted out informally, you should in the first instance complain in writing to the Line Manager of the section concerned. I.e. Housing Manager or Maintenance Manager.
- 5.2 When you make a complaint it is really important for you to let us know exactly what the problem is and how you would like to see it resolved. You can complain in writing, by telephone or in person. If the Line Manager is not available your complaint will be noted by the member of staff who speaks to you and passed onto them. The Line Manager will acknowledge your complaint within three working days. He / She will then investigate your complaint and respond to you in writing within a further 10 working days.
- 5.3 If you are not satisfied with the Line Managers' response you may take your complaint to the Director of the Association and he will respond within a further 10 working days.
- 5.4 If you are not satisfied with the Director's response you may take your complaint to the Management Committee of the Association for deliberation. The Management Committee will consider your complaint at the next available meeting and respond in writing within one week of the meeting through the Chairperson, stating the reasons for their decision.

## **6 Taking Your Complaint Further The Appeals Procedure**

- 6.1 If you are unhappy with the decision of the Management Committee you may take your complaint to the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman Service at 4 Melville Street, Edinburgh, EH3 7NS.
- 6.2 Please note that the Ombudsman will only consider your complaint when you have exhausted Lochfield Park's Complaint Procedure.

## **7 Who Will Know About My Complaint?**

- 7.1 We will as far as possible respect the confidentiality of your complaint. Whilst we are looking into your complaint your name will not be divulged any more than is absolutely necessary within the Association, and if your complaint goes to the Management Committee, then Committee members will not be told who has complained.
- 7.2 You will appreciate, however, that if your complaint involves another tenant or a member of staff or Committee it may be very difficult for us to look into it without talking to that tenant or Staff / Committee member. If you ask us not to talk to the

tenant or Staff / Committee member we will try to respect your wishes, but it will probably not be possible for us to take any action to tackle the problem.

- 7.3 It will not be possible for us to deal with anonymous complaints as it is obviously difficult for us to check things with the person making the complaint.

## **8 How Do We Record and Monitor Complaints?**

- 8.1 Complaints can help us as well as you! All formal complaints made to Lochfield Park are recorded and reported to the Director who will regularly advise the Management Committee of changes or improvements necessary as a result of complaints received. This is an important element of Lochfield Park's own monitoring of its Policies and Procedures.
- 8.2 Lochfield Park maintains a central register in which formal complaints and their outcomes are recorded. This register is kept in the Directors office.

**Information leaflets on our complaints procedure are available on request from our office. Telephone 0141 771 2228.**

## **CUSTOMER COMPLAINTS SUMMARY OF PROCESS**

### Step 1

Try to sort things out informally

### Step 2

If you are still unhappy put your complaint in writing to the Line Manager of the section concerned i.e. Housing Manager or Maintenance Manager. Your complaint will be acknowledged within three working days, and a response issued within 10 working days.

### Step 3

If you are not satisfied with the Line Manager's response you should complain in writing to the Director of the Association who will respond within a further 10 working days.

### Step 4

If you are not satisfied with the Director's response you may take your complaint to the Management Committee of the Association for consideration. The complaint will be heard at the next available meeting of the committee and the Chairperson will respond in writing within one week stating the reasons for their decision.

### Further Action

If you are unhappy with the decision of the management committee you may take your complaint to the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman at 4 Melville Street, Edinburgh., EH3 7NS.

**Please note that the Ombudsman will only consider your complaint after you have exhausted Lochfield Park's Complaint Procedure.**

**If at any time during the Complaints Procedure your complaint is upheld we will apologise immediately and take steps to remedy the situation. We will also learn from our complaint's procedure and strive to improve our performance and the services we provide to customers.**

