

Complaints: CIH charter for housing

This charter aims to support social housing providers to develop and deliver an excellent internal approach to managing and resolving complaints. It focuses on organisations' values, the accessibility of the service, the processes and the overall customer experience. The charter doesn't focus on issues of serious detriment that can be escalated directly to the Social Housing Regulator or the wider role of the designated person. By signing up to this charter, you are demonstrating to your customers that complaints are welcomed, taken seriously, resolved and learned from.

What are we signing up to?

Core commitment	(Building blocks) We can demonstrate that:
<p>We have a positive and flexible approach to complaints which is embedded throughout our organisation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our approach to complaints handling is reflected by our values, aims and objectives • We adopt the principle that all expressions of dissatisfaction that require a response should be treated as complaints • We have a positive approach to complaints and they are welcomed as part of our wider approach to collecting customer feedback • We are committed to treating complaints in a fair, impartial and reasonable way • We are committed to using complaints to review and improve the services we provide and to shape our business

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We recognise the importance of complaints and allocate the appropriate level of resources to ensure we can deal with and resolve them effectively • All our staff are trained and empowered to deal with complaints in an effective manner and see this as a core part of their role
<p>Our complaints service is open and accessible to all</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anyone wishing to make a complaint can do so freely in an easy and simple way, using a range of different methods • We ensure that information about our complaints service, and relevant support or advocacy services, is promoted, is easy to understand and can be accessed by all of our customers • We use the information our customers provide (including customer profiling data) to help us shape and develop a fair and accessible complaints service • All our staff will take ownership of a complaint and either seek to resolve it or pass it on to a relevant person • Our customers are confident that complaints are welcomed, treated seriously and will be dealt with in confidence
<p>We deliver a quality complaints service</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We have clear processes and service standards in place so that customers know what to expect from our service. We regularly review these with customers to ensure that they continue to meet their needs • Our service is focused on resolving complaints as early as possible and staff are empowered to do this • Customers are kept fully informed of who is handling their complaint, how to contact them and what will happen next and by when

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Customers receive a decision that is objective and evidence-based and which addresses all the issues that have been raised • We keep clear and accurate records as a matter of course and can account for the decisions that we have made • Customers are informed of how they might escalate their complaint once our internal procedure is exhausted, if they feel the problem is still not resolved
<p>We work with our customers to shape and improve our complaints service</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Customers are involved in the review and continuous improvement of the complaints process to ensure that it is fit-for-purpose, objective and outcome focused • We have structures in place to enable customers to be formally involved in the resolution of complaints • We provide appropriate training and support to customers who are involved in the monitoring, review and resolution of complaints
<p>We monitor our performance and learn from feedback to continually improve our services</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We set challenging but realistic targets to make sure we keep improving the way we handle complaints • We ask our customers if they are satisfied with our complaints handling and we use this feedback to learn and to improve the service • We regularly compare our complaints service with similar organisations to improve the quality and value for money of our service • We consistently analyse the trends arising from complaints and use this information to inform our approach to customer service and staff training, to drive improvement and to

target resources

- We seek to learn from all expressions of dissatisfaction, including those that are resolved at the first point of contact, and to use them to inform our improvement plans
- We regularly publish details of how we have improved our services as a result of learning from complaints