

How do I complain?

What is a complaint?

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What will happen next?

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A complaint under our procedure is defined as “when a customer expresses dissatisfaction about the work of South Lakes Housing and wants corrective action to be taken”

How do I complain?

You can make a complaint:

In Person

By Telephone: 0300 303 8540

By E-mail:

customerservices@southlakeshousing.co.uk

By Post:

South Lakes Housing, Bridge Mills
Business Centre, Stramongate, Kendal,
Cumbria LA9 4BD

Via our Website:

www.southlakeshousing.co.uk

Speak to a member of our staff in person or on the telephone.

It is often quicker and easier to speak to someone about a complaint. We have trained our staff in taking a customer complaint. You can complain either at our offices/by telephoning 0300 303 8540 or by emailing customerservices@southlakeshousing.co.uk

We will try to resolve these issues immediately, where the matter cannot be resolved by the person you speak to we will tell you that your complaint is being dealt with as a formal complaint and has been passed on to the relevant manager to investigate.

Formal Complaints Procedure

Stage 1 - Manager Review

- ▶ Your complaint will be logged and we will give you a reference number
- ▶ Your complaint will be given to someone who is qualified to respond to you
- ▶ We will acknowledge that we have received your complaint within **2 working days**
- ▶ The manager of the department dealing with your complaint will send you a written explanation within **5 working days**.
- ▶ If we need to make further investigations, we will let you know in writing and tell you when we will be able to give you a full reply (usually this will be within **10 working days**, however if we have to involve outside organisations, it may take up to **28 working days**).

If you are still not satisfied you can ask the Director/Assistant Director to independently review your complaint. You have 28 days to do this.

Stage 2 – Director Review

You can either write yourself or you can ask the Departmental Manager to pass your complaint to the Chief Executive.

- ▶ The Director/Assistant Director will acknowledge that he has received your request to independently review your complaint within **2 days**.
- ▶ The Director/Assistant Director will review the case, carrying out appropriate investigations, requesting information and interviewing those people involved.
- ▶ The Director/Assistant Director will write to you telling the findings of his review within 15 working days if possible or with further acknowledgement that your complaint is still being dealt with.

If the customer is not satisfied with the answer they receive, they have the right to appeal to the Board of South Lakes Housing. Appeals to the Board must be submitted to the Chief Executive within 28 days of his response being sent.

Stage 3 – Board Panel Review

You can either write yourself or you can ask the Departmental Manager to pass your request for an Appeals Panel to the Chief Executive.

- ▶ The Chief Executive will acknowledge that he has received your request for an Appeals Panel within **5 days**.

- ▶ The Chief Executive will refer the complaint to an Appeals Panel who has been appointed by the South Lakes Housing Board of Directors
- ▶ The Appeals Panel will carry out a thorough examination of your complaint. The Chief Executive will let you know their decision within **21 working days** of the review.

Appeals may be refused if the matters raised by the complainant have already been dealt with by the Stage 2 Investigating Manager. Complainants must set out why the matter(s) have not been addressed sufficiently and clearly identify how the complaint could be remedied at Stage 3 via the Board Panel Review.

If you are still dissatisfied you can complain to the Tenant Panel or the Housing Ombudsman Service.

Stage 4 – Tenant Complaint Panel Review

In accordance with the Localism Act, 2011 complainants may wish to refer their complaint for investigation to the Tenants' Committee Complaints Panel. The Panel will receive appropriate training and support to investigate a complaint and to adhere to data protection protocols. This can include an SLH member of staff or an Independent Tenant Advisor. The Tenants' Committee will agree the Complaints Panel membership at the AGM. The Complaint Panel has no remit to investigate disciplinary matters and these will be referred to the SLH HR Manager.

Stage 5 – Housing Ombudsman Referral

You have the right to refer your case to the Housing Ombudsman. You can do this by following the website link below.

<http://www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk/>