



## **Our Complaints Procedure**

If you require the services of an interpreter or translator in making your complaint, please let us know.

### Standard Complaint stages:

#### **Informal**

This is an opportunity for us to deal with and resolve issues at the first point of contact. In accordance with our guidelines we aim to deal with informal complaints within 4 working days.

#### **Stage 1**

If you are not satisfied with the way we have dealt with your complaint during the informal process, you can ask to escalate your complaint. If this is considered valid this will then be reviewed by an alternative investigating officer. This is Stage 1 of our internal complaints procedure.

#### **Stage 2**

If you do not consider the matter has been dealt with in accordance with our Customer Feedback Policy, you can ask to have the outcome reviewed by another officer from an unrelated area.

#### **Designated person**

Following completion of a complaints investigation at Stage 1 and 2, livin's internal complaints handling process is complete. If you feel that your complaint has not been handled in accordance with livin's policy you have the option of asking a 'designated person' to review the way the complaint has been handled on your behalf. The designated person(s) may be a Member of Parliament (MP) or local County Councillor.

The designated person may choose to: review the way that the complaint was handled by livin; act as advocate and advise you of the next course of action (if any); refuse to review the matter and refer it to the Housing Ombudsman Service in writing. In these circumstances there is no requirement to observe the eight week delay for referrals.

#### **Housing Ombudsman Service**

If the complaint is about livin's management of your home or quality of service, you may contact the Housing Ombudsman Service directly without approaching a designated person. However, you must wait for a period of eight weeks after the complaint has been formally closed at Stage 2 of livin's procedure.

#### **What is not a complaint?**

A complaint, for the purpose of this procedure, is not any of the following:

- A request for service (for example, reporting a repair)
- A request for information, or explanation of livin' policies
- Any matter for which there is a right of appeal or redress
- Something which happened or which the customer knew of more than six months before contacting livin
- A complaint relating to antisocial behaviour (ASB), which would normally be dealt with under livin' ASB policy
- An issue that is currently subject to legal proceedings

## **What happens next?**

### **Stage 1**

We will acknowledge receipt of your complaint within two working days. This will be either verbally, in writing or by email, confirming the complaint you made, when we received it, and who will be responsible for handling and monitoring your complaint. We will aim to visit you to resolve Stage 1 complaints within 10 working days. If the investigation will take longer than this, we will update you in writing every 10 working days. Once the Stage 1 investigation is concluded we will write to you with our findings. If you do not consider the matter has been handled in accordance with our Customer Feedback Policy you can ask for your complaint to be investigated further, however you must do this within 14 calendar days of the date on your Stage 1 closing letter.

Please note: We will not escalate your complaint if you simply do not agree with the stage 1 decision.

### **Stage 2**

We will ask you why you think that your complaint has not been handled in accordance with procedure and for any other information to support your request. The Customer Service Manager will review your request within 10 working days and if your reasons are not considered valid we will write to you and let you know. If your reasons are considered valid your complaint will be passed to one of our managers working in a service area unrelated to the one you are complaining about. They will visit you to investigate your complaint and aim to contact you with their findings within 10 working days. If the investigation will take longer than this, we will update you in writing every 10 working days.

Once the Stage 2 investigation is concluded we will write to you with our findings. If you do not consider the matter has been handled in accordance with our Customer Feedback Policy you can ask a 'designated person' to review the way the complaint has been handled on your behalf. However you should do this within 14 calendar days of the date of your stage 2 decision.

## **Complaints about a partner or contractor**

If you have a complaint regarding one of our partner contractors, please let us know. As your landlord we need to know if the service you receive from our partners is not satisfactory. Complaints received about our partners will be logged and referred to the partner's Investigating officer for action.

Our partners are expected to follow livin's internal complaints policy and procedure and we will monitor their actions and response to your complaint and log the outcome.

**Anonymous complaints**

Occasionally we may receive a complaint from a complainant who wishes to remain anonymous. We reserve the right not to investigate anonymous complaints where it is clear that a full investigation is not practicable or the grounds of the complaint are not within our remit.