

## Key information sheet

# Making a complaint



### Who can use the complaints procedure?

You can use this complaints procedure if:

- You live in one of our homes or you receive a service from us
- You are affected by the management of our homes or the services that we provide. This includes potential residents and service users
- You are acting on behalf of a resident or service user, if that person has given you permission to do so

### Why do you have a complaints procedure?

We aim to deliver great services that are tailored to your needs, so your opinions are really important to us. If you tell us you are not happy with a service we provide, it gives us the opportunity to put things right and to improve our services.

### When can I make a complaint?

If you think that we have failed to deliver a service or that we have provided a poor service, please contact us to let us know so we can take action. If we cannot put it right for you straight away, you can report the matter as a formal complaint.

If you are reporting something for the first time, like a new repair or a problem with a neighbour, we will record this as a service request, rather than a complaint.

### How do I make a complaint?

You can contact us by telephone, letter, email or

on our website. We will log your complaint and send you an acknowledgement letter within 3 working days.

### Stage one

A person from the relevant team will investigate your complaint. They will speak to you and try to come up with the right solution. They will write to you within 10 working days of the complaint being logged to tell you what we are doing about it. If you are not happy with the outcome, you must let us know within 28 days of receiving your response letter and we will move your complaint on to stage two of our procedure.

### Stage two

A manager – who has not previously been involved with your case – will look at all of the information that is relevant to your complaint. They will write to you with a full response within 10 working days. If they think it will take longer than this to investigate your complaint, they will let you know when you will receive a full response.

If you are not satisfied with the response, contact us within 28 days to escalate the matter to stage three.

### Stage three

We will send you an acknowledgement letter to confirm that your complaint is being moved to stage three. We will invite you to a meeting where you can present your complaint to an independent panel. You may bring someone along to the meeting to support you.

The panel will decide whether the complaint has been handled correctly and decide if any further action is required. going to meet.

This meeting will be held within 28 days of the acknowledgement letter being sent. We will give you at least 10 days' notice of when the panel is We will write to tell you the panel's decision within 10 working days of the panel hearing.

### **What if I am not satisfied with the response I receive?**

If you have gone through all three stages of our complaints procedure and are not satisfied with the outcome of your complaint, you can contact an external organisation.

If you are a tenant, leaseholder or housing applicant you can contact the Housing Ombudsman Service. They will only investigate your complaint after it has been through all the stages of our internal complaints procedure.

### **Housing Ombudsman Service**

Telephone: 0300 111 3000

Email: [info@housing-ombudsman.org.uk](mailto:info@housing-ombudsman.org.uk)

Website: [www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk](http://www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk)

Complaints or disputes about service charges may be referred to the Leasehold Valuation Tribunal (LVT), which is an independent decision-making body.

Telephone: 0845 600 3178

Website: [www.rpts.gov.uk](http://www.rpts.gov.uk)

You can view our Complaints Policy in full on our website: [www.circle.org.uk/policies](http://www.circle.org.uk/policies)