

1. **Definitions and Interpretation**

1.1 In this Complaints Procedure the following expressions have the following meanings:

**“Appeal”**

an appeal by a Customer to escalate a Complaint to Level Two following an unsuccessful attempt to resolve the Complaint at Level One;

**“Appeal Handler”**

the person of <<insert business name>> or <<insert level>> who will handle the Complaints;

**“Business Day”**

any day other than Saturday or Sunday) when the premises are open for their full business day in <<insert location>>;

**“Complaint”**

any expression of dissatisfaction about the services provided by <<insert business name>>, about our premises or about our staff;

**[“Complaints Form”]**

the Complaints form for use by Customers submitted from <<insert location>>;]

**“Complaint Handler”**

the person of <<insert business name>> or <<insert level>> who will handle the Complaints;

**“Complaints Policy”**

the Complaints policy, available from <<insert location>>;

**“Complaint Reference”**

the number assigned to a Complaint when it is logged as that Complaint;

**“Customer”**

any person or company of <<insert business name>>;

**[“Data Protection Policy”]**

the Data Protection policy, available from <<insert location>>;

**“Decision Letter”**

a letter sent by a Complaint Handler or the Complaints Manager to a Customer informing that the Complaint has been resolved to the satisfaction of the Customer or the outcome of their Complaint;

**“External Resolution”**

any external scheme for resolution if the Customer is not satisfied with the outcome of the Complaint;

**“Investigation Report”**

a report prepared by a Complaint Handler detailing his/her findings and recommendations;

<p><b>“Level One”</b></p>		<p>in this Complaints Handling Procedure, which Complaints will be handled by the Complaint Handler;</p>
<p><b>“Level Two”</b></p>		<p>the next stage in this Complaints Handling Procedure, under which a Customer may appeal the outcome of a Level One Complaint, which Complaints will be handled by the Complaint Handler;</p>
<p><b>[“Professional Body”]</b></p>		<p>the name of regulator, e.g. RICS,</p>
<p><b>[“Recommendation”]</b></p>		<p>the recommended resolution to a Complaint, by a Complaint Handler or the Professional Body;</p>
<p><b>“Resolution Action”</b></p>		<p>the actions to be taken in response to a Complaint as detailed in Section 8.</p>
<p><b>2. What this Complaints Handling Procedure covers</b></p> <p>2.1 This Complaints Handling Procedure applies to Complaints pertaining to the provision of services to our customers and to our staff.</p> <p>2.2 For the purposes of this Complaints Handling Procedure, any reference to the Company includes our employees, agents and subcontractors.</p> <p>2.3 Complaints may relate to the following (but are not limited to):</p> <p>2.3.1 The quality of services provided;</p> <p>2.3.2 The behaviour of our staff;</p> <p>2.3.3 &lt;&lt;Insert additional matters to which this Complaints Handling Procedure applies as appropriate&gt;&gt;.</p> <p>2.4 The following do not constitute Complaints and therefore should be referred to the relevant department:</p> <p>2.4.1 General enquiries;</p> <p>2.4.2 Matters concerning legal disputes;</p> <p>2.4.3 Formal requests for information including, but not limited to, those made under the Freedom of Information Act;</p> <p>2.4.4 &lt;&lt;Insert additional matters to which this Complaints Handling Procedure does not apply as appropriate&gt;&gt;.</p>	S A M P L E	
<p><b>3. Receipt and Recording of Complaints</b></p> <p>3.1 Customers may make a Complaint using any of the following methods:</p> <p>3.1.1 [In writing, to the Complaints Handling Department, at &lt;&lt;insert business name and/or position&gt;&gt;, &lt;&lt;insert address&gt;&gt;];</p> <p>3.1.2 [By email, at &lt;&lt;insert email address&gt;&gt;];</p>		

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3.1.3 [Using our Complaint Form, please complete the form, including the instructions included with the form;]

3.1.4 [By contacting <<insert telephone number>> [and choosing option <<insert option number>>] when prompted.]]

3.2 Upon receipt of Complaint, the following steps should be taken [immediately] OR [within <<insert period>>]:

3.2.1 [If a written Complaint is received by post, <<insert name and/or position>> must log the Complaint, logging or recording>>];

3.2.2 [If a written Complaint is received by email, <<insert name and/or position>> must log the Complaint, logging or recording>>];

3.2.3 [If a Complaint is received by telephone, <<insert name and/or position>> must log the Complaint, logging or recording>>];

3.2.4 [If a Complaint is received by any other means, <<insert name and/or position>> must log the Complaint, logging or recording>>].

3.3 All Complaints must be logged and forwarded to an appropriate Complaint Handler in accordance with Section 6.1, within <<insert period>> of receipt.

3.4 All Complaints must be acknowledged in writing within <<insert period>> of receipt. The acknowledgement should include a reference, their assigned Complaint Handler, <<insert business name>>'s Customer Complaint Handling Procedure].

#### 4. Complaint Information

4.1 Customers are advised that the following information should be provided, where reasonably possible when making a Complaint:

4.1.1 The Customer's name, telephone number and email address, where appropriate for communication;

4.1.2 If the Complaint is made by a third party, the information provided in reference to both parties;

4.1.3 If the Complaint relates to property, the property details;

4.1.4 If the Complaint relates to a member of staff, the name and, where appropriate, the person;

4.1.5 Further details, including, as appropriate, all times, dates, events and circumstances;

4.1.6 Details of any evidence on which the Customer wishes to rely in support of the Complaint;

4.1.7 Details of how the Customer wishes to resolve the Complaint, and the efforts to achieve this, however, we are not bound to undertake any action which we may be contractually or otherwise prevented from doing;

4.1.8 <<insert additional information>> where appropriate>>.

4.2 If the information does not meet the above requirements, missing, insufficiently detailed, or

incomplete, [<<insert period>>] should contact the Customer within <<insert period>> receipt of the Complaint to request further information]. If the Complaint Handler should contact the Customer within <<insert period>> of being assigned to the Complaint to request further information.

## 5. Complaint Levels

- 5.1 <<Insert business days>> two-stage complaints handling procedure. Upon receipt of a Complaint, Complaints should be handled in accordance with the procedure set out in Section 6 below. It is our policy to use all reasonable endeavours to resolve all Complaints to the satisfaction of the Customer.
- 5.2 If a Customer is not satisfied with the resolution of their Complaint at Level One, he/she may request that the Complaint is escalated to Level Two in the form of an Appeal. The Appeal should be handled in accordance with the procedure set out in Section 7 below.
- 5.3 If a Customer is not satisfied with the resolution of their Complaint at Level Two, he/she has the right to refer the matter for External Resolution as detailed in Section 9.

## 6. Level One Complaints

- 6.1 [The following staff are designated as Complaint Handlers and eligible Complaint Handlers for Level One Complaints:]
- 6.1.1 Complaints relating to the following service may be referred to:
- <<Insert name of staff member>>, <<insert contact details>>;
  - <<Insert name of staff member>>, <<insert contact details>>;
  - <<Insert further details>>
- 6.1.2 Complaints relating to the following behaviour and/or professional competence may be referred to:
- <<Insert name of staff member>>, <<insert contact details>>;
  - <<Insert name of staff member>>, <<insert contact details>>;
  - <<Insert further details>>
- 6.1.3 [<<Insert a list of Complaints that may be referred to or remove as appropriate>>]

OR

- 6.1 [The following staff are designated as Complaint Handlers and eligible Complaint Handlers for Level One Complaints:]
- <<Insert name of staff member>>, <<insert contact details>>;
  - <<Insert name of staff member>>, <<insert contact details>>;
  - <<Insert further details>>
- 6.2 Upon receipt of a Complaint, the Complaint Handler shall consider the

- Complaint and make a decision on whether to:
- 6.2.1 Investigate the Complaint if the Customer considers the Complaint to be valid, in which case the Complaint Handler shall follow the process set out in Section 6.3; or
  - 6.2.2 Dismiss the Complaint if the Customer considers the Complaint to be invalid, in which case the Complaint Handler shall inform the Customer of his/her decision in writing within <insert period>> Business Days.
- 6.3 Subject to delays beyond his/her reasonable control (including, but not limited to, delays in communications), the Complaint Handler shall have a period of <<insert period>> Business Days to decide upon appropriate action.
- 6.4 If the Complaint relates to a staff member (a "Complainee"), the Complaint Handler shall inform the Complainee in question of the Complaint and arrange [meetings or telephone calls] as required to discuss the Complaint. The Complainee should not, under any circumstances, contact the Customer regarding the Complaint. If the Customer contacts the Complaint Handler regarding the Complaint (which may be in breach of the Complaints Policy), the Complainee should respectfully refuse to discuss the Complaint, referring the Customer to Section 6.3. The Complaint Handler's contact should be reported to the Complaint Handler.
- 6.5 If the Complaint Handler has information or evidence in support of the Complaint, the Complaint Handler shall contact the Customer using the Customer's preferred method of communication, stating clearly what information or evidence is available. Customers should be respectfully reminded that any delay in response to such a request may delay the resolution of their Complaint in accordance with Section 5.2.4 of our Complaints Policy.
- 6.6 If a Customer is requested under Section 6.3 to provide information or evidence in support of the Complaint, the Complaint Handler must nevertheless use all reasonable endeavours to investigate the Complaint. If, however, the Complaint Handler considers that it is not possible to uphold the Complaint in the absence of the requested information or evidence, he or she may close the Complaint and inform the Customer of the outcome in accordance with Sections 6.9 to 6.12.
- 6.7 The Complaint Handler shall evaluate the Complaint, taking full account of all relevant information, evidence and circumstances, and shall maintain full and accurate records of the Complaint at all times.
- 6.8 [Subject to the extent of access to all records, information and staff that may be available to him/her to carry out an impartial and thorough investigation of the Complaint, the Complaint Handler shall,] During the investigation of the Complaint, the Complaint Handler shall have access to all records, information and staff that may be available to him/her to carry out an impartial and thorough investigation of the Complaint.
- 6.8.1 [Access to records, information and staff shall require:]
    - a) <<delete>>
    - b) <<delete>>
    - c) <<insert name and/or position>>: <<delete>> or information>>; <<delete>> or information>>; <<insert name and/or position>> or information as required>>.]
- 6.9 Following his/her evaluation of the Complaint, the Complaint Handler shall reach a decision within the period set out in Section 6.3 (subject to the

- exceptions noted throughout this document. The options that may be chosen are set out in Section 8.
- 6.10 [Upon reaching a decision, the Complaint Handler shall send an Investigation Report and Recommendation and/or position>> within <<insert period>> Business Days.
- 6.11 In the event that <<insert name and/or position>> does not agree with the Complaint Handler's Recommendation under Section 6.10, the Complaint Handler shall give reasons for the decision and the Complaint Handler shall have a further <<insert period>> Business Days to revise his/her decision and/or Recommendation, submit it to <<insert name and/or position>> for review. Following resubmission, <<insert name and/or position>> shall agree with the decision and/or Recommendation, be reassigned to a new Complaint Handler and the Letter of Recommendation shall begin again] **OR** [<<insert name and/or position>>'s Recommendation shall be final].]
- 6.12 [Upon reaching a decision, the Complaint Handler shall send an Investigation Report and Decision Letter to the Customer by first class post, as applicable, the Complaint Handler shall send an Investigation Report and Decision Letter to the Customer by first class post, as applicable, the Complaint Handler shall set out the decision and/or Recommendation, and shall remind the Customer of their right to escalate the Complaint to Level Two. <<Insert number>> copies of the Investigation Report and Decision Letter should be provided to the Complaint Handler, file storage, logging, recording etc.>>].
- 6.13 If a delay either occurs or is likely to occur at any stage of the Level One procedure, the Complaint Handler shall inform the Customer using the method. The Customer should be informed of the length of the delay and the reasons therefor.
- 6.14 The Customer shall be given <<insert period>> Business Days within which to make an Appeal. If the Customer wishes to escalate the Complaint to Level Two.
- 6.15 Upon receipt of an Appeal, the Complaint Handler shall take the following steps should be taken [immediately] by the Complaint Handler:
- 6.15.1 [If a written Appeal is received by post, the Complaint Handler must respond within <<insert period>> Business Days;]
- 6.15.2 [If a written Appeal is received by email, the Complaint Handler must respond within <<insert period>> Business Days;]
- 6.15.3 [If an Appeal is received by telephone, the Complaint Handler must respond within <<insert period>> Business Days;]
- 6.16 All Appeals must be handled in accordance with Section 8.
- 6.17 All Appeals must be acknowledged within <<insert period>> of receipt by <<insert name and/or position>>. The acknowledgement should be sent to the Complaint Handler.

## 7. Level Two Complaints

- 7.1 [The following staff shall be designated as Complaint Handlers and eligible Appeal Handlers for

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## Level Two Complaints

- 7.1.1 Appeals per [redacted] may be referred to:  
    <<Insert name>>, <<insert contact details>>;  
    <<Insert name>>, <<insert contact details>>;  
    <<Insert further details>>
- 7.1.2 Appeals per [redacted] and/or professional competence of our staff may  
    <<Insert name>>, <<insert contact details>>;  
    <<Insert name>>, <<insert contact details>>;  
    <<Insert further details>>
- 7.1.3 [<<Insert additional details>> appeal or remove as appropriate>>.]

## OR

- 7.1 [The following staff [redacted] and eligible Appeal Handlers for Level Two Complaints:  
    <<Insert name>>, <<insert contact details>>;  
    <<Insert name>>, <<insert contact details>>;  
    <<Insert further details>>
- 7.2 Upon receipt of an appeal, the Appeal Handler shall consider the Appeal and make a decision within [redacted] Business Days whether to:  
    7.2.1 Investigate the appeal, in which case the problem will be resolved in accordance with Section 7.3; or  
    7.2.2 Dismiss the appeal, in which case the Appeal Handler shall inform the Customer of his/her decision in writing within [redacted] Business Days. If the Complaint is so dismissed, the Complaint will be dismissed in its entirety, or the Appeal will stand.
- 7.3 Subject to delays beyond his/her reasonable control (including, but not limited to, delays in other persons responding to communications), the Appeal Handler shall have a period of <<insert period>> Business Days in which to consider the Complaint and to decide upon appropriate Resolution.
- 7.4 If the Complaint relates to the performance of the Complainee, the Appeal Handler shall inform the Complainee of the Appeal and arrange [meetings] to discuss the Complaint. In such cases, the Complainee may, in any circumstances, contact the Complainee directly. If the Customer contacts the Complainee directly (which they are requested not to do in our Complaints Policy), the Complainee should respectfully refuse to discuss the matter, and refer the Customer to Section 5.3.3 of our Complaints Policy. Any such contact should be referred to the Appeal Handler.
- 7.5 If the Appeal Handler receives information or evidence in support of the Complaint, the Appeal Handler should contact the Customer using the Customer's preferred method of communication, stating clearly what





7.13 If a delay either occurs or is anticipated, the Level Two procedure will be initiated. The Customer's preference will be determined and the Customer will be informed of the length of the delay.

likely to occur at any stage of the shall inform the Customer using the mod. The Customer should be delay and the reasons therefor.

## 8. Resolution Actions

When handling Complaints from the following Resolution of a Complaint:

and Appeal Handlers may select  
te to the facts and circumstances

- 8.1 <<Insert description
- 8.2 <<Insert description
- 8.3 <<Insert description
- 8.4 <<Insert description
- 8.5 <<Insert further Res

ed>>.

## 9. External Resolution

- 9.1 As <<insert business name>> [Ombudsman Service] have the right to refer the complaint to the relevant organisation if they are not a member of the Complaints Handling Accreditation Scheme.

er of [The Property Ombudsman]  
erty Redress Scheme] Customers  
ution of Complaints from that  
the outcome resulting from this

- 9.2 [The Property Omb  
Redress Scheme]  
own policies and  
Complaint for Ext  
Property Ombuds  
Redress Scheme]  
business name>>  
pertaining to a Co  
Property Ombuds  
Redress Scheme]  
authorised by <<ins

Services: Property] [The Property  
h referrals in accordance with its  
nt that a Customer refers their  
ropriate representative(s) of [The  
ervices: Property] [The Property  
th members of staff of <<insert  
s to documents and information  
such interactions between [The  
ervices: Property] [The Property  
name>> shall (unless otherwise  
>>) take place via:

<<insert name>>, <<insert contact details>>;

<<insert name>>, <<insert contact details>>;

&lt;&lt;insert furt

- 9.3 Any and all requests for Services: Property information, whether subject to the approval of who shall ensure the nature of the Company

erty Ombudsman] [Ombudsman  
ess Scheme] for evidence or  
e answered without undue delay,  
 <<insert name and/or position>>,  
sonable and pertinent given the

- 9.4 <<Insert further provisions

10. **[Professional Regulator]**

- 10.1 As <<insert business name>> of the Professional Body it is open to Customers to contact the Professional Body about alleged breaches of the Professional Body's Code of Ethics.
- 10.2 The Professional Body shall investigate such referrals in accordance with its own policies and procedures. In the event that a Customer makes a Complaint to the Professional Body, the Professional Body shall, with members of staff of <<insert business name>>, provide access to documents and information relating to such interactions between the Professional Body and <<insert name>> shall (unless otherwise specified) take place via:
- <<insert name>>, <<insert contact details>>;
- <<insert name>>, <<insert contact details>>;
- <<insert further details>>
- 10.3 Any and all requests for information, whether made by the Professional Body for evidence or information, shall be answered without undue delay, by <<insert name and/or position>>, to the extent reasonable and pertinent given the nature of the Complaint.
- 10.4 <<Insert further provisions>>

11. **Implementation of Resolution**

- Upon the conclusion of a Resolution Action, whether Level One or Level Two or by External Resolution, the Professional Body shall require <<insert name>> settled upon shall require the implementation of Resolution Actions ultimately by <<insert name>> [and may be delegated thereby, as appropriate]:
- 11.1 [Resolution Actions shall be the responsibility of:
- <<Insert name>>, <<insert contact details>>;
- <<Insert further details>>
- 11.2 Resolution Actions shall be the responsibility of the behaviour and/or professional competence of our <<insert name>> shall require the implementation of Resolution Actions ultimately by <<insert name>> [and may be delegated thereby, as appropriate]:
- <<Insert name>>, <<insert contact details>>;
- <<Insert further details>>
- 11.3 [<<Insert additional Resolution Actions or remove as appropriate>>.]

**OR**

- 11.1 [<<Insert name>>, <<insert contact details>>.]

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12. **Recording of Resolution**

- 12.1 Upon the conclusion of the implementation of the applicable Resolution Action(s) <<insert name and position>> shall <<describe steps for logging or recording>>.
- 12.2 <<insert further provisions>>.

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13. **Confidentiality and Data Protection**

- 13.1 All Complaints, Applications and Enquiries received, processed under this Procedure shall be treated with the utmost confidence and <<insert business name>> may be shared with staff of <<insert business name>> required to resolve the Complaint in accordance with its Handling Procedure.
- 13.2 In the event that the <<insert business name>> are to be used for training or quality improvement purposes, <<insert business name>> will be shared with other staff of <<insert business name>> of this Complaints Handling Procedure, the relevant <<insert business name>> permission must first be sought using that Customer's details by <<insert business name>> method. Personal details (that is, <<insert business name>> customer) shall be removed from all <<insert business name>> may be revoked at any time in <<insert business name>> do so under Section 6.2 of our <<insert business name>>.
- 13.3 All personal information <<insert business name>> (including, but not limited to, Customer details) shall only be collected, used and held in accordance with the provisions of the Data Protection Act 1998 and our Customer Data Protection Policy Act [, as detailed and embodied in <<insert business name>>.

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14. **Procedure Review and Revision**

- 14.1 Overall responsibility for the Complaints Handling Procedure and the implementation thereof shall be <<insert business name and position / department>> etc.>>.
- 14.2 This Complaints Handling Procedure shall be reviewed regularly at intervals of <<insert period>> and updated as required.
- 14.3 This Complaints Handling Procedure was adopted on <<insert date>>.
- 14.4 This Complaints Handling Procedure was last reviewed on <<insert date>>.

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