

ESTATE COMPLAINTS POLICY

1. Definitions

1.1 In this Complaints Policy, the following expressions have the following meanings:

“Appeal”

to escalate a Complaint from Level One to Level Two if you are not satisfied with the outcome at Level One;

“Appeal Handler”

staff of <<insert business name>> who will handle Level One Complaints;

“Business Day”

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

“Complaint”

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

[“Complaints Form”]

the Complaints Form, available at <<insert location(s)>>;]

“Complaint Handler”

staff of <<insert business name>> who will handle Level One Complaints;

“Complaints Policy”

“Complaints Procedure”

the Complaints Handling Procedure of <<insert business name>> which is used to manage a Complaint and is available at <<insert location(s)>> for your reference;

“Complaint Reference”

a unique code assigned to your Complaint which can be used to track your Complaint;

[“External Resolution”]

referring your Complaint to an external body for resolution if you are not satisfied with the outcome at Level Two;]

“Level One”

the first stage in our complaints handling process where your Complaint will be handled by a Complaint Handler;

“Level Two”

the second stage in our complaints handling process where you may appeal a Level One Complaint. Your Complaint will be handled by an Appeal Handler;

["Professional Body"]

of regulator, e.g. RICS,

2. Purpose of this Complaints Policy

- 2.1 <<Insert business name>> encourages feedback of all kinds from our customers. We welcome any complaint about our services, our customer service, or our products. We do not want to resolve it to your satisfaction but we want to resolve it in order to improve our business and customer experience.
- 2.2 It is our policy to resolve complaints quickly and fairly, where possible without recourse to formal investigation or external bodies. In particular, the aims of this Complaints Policy are:
 - 2.2.1 To provide a clear process for any customers who wish to make a Complaint about <<insert business name>>, our services, our products or our customer service.
 - 2.2.2 To ensure that <<insert business name>> knows how to deal with complaints made by our customers;
 - 2.2.3 To ensure that complaints are handled equally and in a fair and timely fashion;
 - 2.2.4 To ensure that feedback is gathered from Complaints and used in the future to improve <<insert business name>>.

3. What this Complaints Policy covers

- 3.1 This Complaints Policy covers the provision of services by <<insert business name>>, the provision of services by <<insert business name>> and to our staff.
- 3.2 For the purposes of this Policy, any reference to <<insert business name>> also includes our employees, subcontractors and subcontractors.
- 3.3 Complaints may relate to a number of areas and may include (but not be limited to):
 - 3.3.1 The quality of the services you have received from <<insert business name>>.
 - 3.3.2 The behaviour or competence of our staff;
 - 3.3.3 <<Insert additional areas of concern as appropriate>>.
- 3.4 The following are not complaints and should therefore be dealt with by the relevant department:
 - 3.4.1 Matters concerning legal disputes;
 - 3.4.2 Formal requests for information, for example, under the Data Protection Act 1998;
 - 3.4.3 <<Insert additional areas of concern as appropriate>>.

4. Making a Complaint

- 4.1 All Complaints, whether made by you or our staff, should be made in the following ways:
- 4.1.1 [In writing, to the person named in the Complaints Procedure, at the address <<insert name and/or position>>, <<insert address>>];
 - 4.1.2 [By email, at the email address <<insert name and/or position>> at <<insert email address>>];
 - 4.1.3 [Using our Complaints Form, following the instructions included with the form;]
 - 4.1.4 [By contacting our Customer Service team on <<insert telephone number>> [and following the prompts when prompted.]]
- 4.2 When making a Complaint, you are required to provide the following information in as much detail as possible:
- 4.2.1 Your name, address, telephone number and email address (We will contact you by the most appropriate contact method as your Complaint is handled);
 - 4.2.2 If you are making the Complaint on behalf of someone else, that person's name, address, telephone number and email address, as well as your own;
 - 4.2.3 If your Complaint relates to a particular property we are dealing with, the address of that property;
 - 4.2.4 If you are making the Complaint about a particular member of staff, the name and, where possible, the position of that person;
 - 4.2.5 Further details of the Complaint, including, as appropriate, all times, dates, events and circumstances;
 - 4.2.6 Details of any evidence you wish to rely on in support of your Complaint;
 - 4.2.7 Details of what you want us to do to resolve your Complaint. (Please note that whilst we will make every effort to accommodate such requests, we are not contractually obliged to take any action beyond that which we may be obliged to take.)
 - 4.2.8 <<Insert additional information as appropriate>>.

5. How We Handle Your Complaint

- 5.1 <<Insert business name>> has a two-stage complaints handling procedure. Following the procedure, our aim is to always resolve your Complaint without further recourse to Level Two. If you are not satisfied at the end of Level One, you may escalate your Complaint to Level Two. Complaints may [be referred to our Professional Body] [or] [be referred to our Professional Body] for resolution.
- 5.2 Level One:
- 5.2.1 Upon receipt of a Complaint as described above in Section 4, the <<insert position>> identified in the Complaint in our <<insert location, e.g. Complaints Procedure>> and will acknowledge receipt of the Complaint.

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giving you a

no longer than 3 working days>>.

5.2.2 When we address your Complaint we will also provide details of your Complaint to whom your Complaint was directed (as above) or your Complaint to another appropriate member of our team.

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5.2.3 If your Complaint is not resolved, you will be informed of the outcome of the investigation and given a fair and reasonable opportunity to respond. Communication between you and the staff member in question will be via the Complaint Handler only via the Complaint Handler and we respectfully ask that you do not contact the staff member in question directly while we are working to resolve it.

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5.2.4 If we require further information or evidence from you, the Complaint Handler will ask for it as quickly as is reasonably possible. We will make reasonable efforts to supply any such information in order to avoid delaying the resolution of your Complaint. If you are for any reason unable to provide such information, we will use all reasonable efforts to proceed with the investigation. We will be aware that we will not ask for further information unless we consider it important to the successful resolution of your Complaint.

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5.2.5 We aim to resolve your Complaint no longer than <<insert period no longer than 3 working days>>. However in some cases, particularly if the Complaint is not possible to resolve, this may not be possible. If this is the case, you will be informed of the delay, the reasons for it.

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5.2.6 At the conclusion of the Complaints procedure, regardless of the outcome of the investigation, you will be provided with full details of our investigation, the outcome of the investigation, and any action taken as a result. You will be informed of your right to appeal our decision and escalate the Complaint to Level Two in the form of an Appeal.

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5.3 Level Two:

5.3.1 If you are not satisfied with the resolution of your complaint at Level One, you may appeal the decision to Level Two. Appeals are handled by <<insert staff member>> level members of our team.

If you are not satisfied with the resolution of your complaint at Level One, you may appeal the decision to Level Two. Appeals are handled by <<insert staff member>> level members of our team.

5.3.2 Appeals, regarding the outcome of the investigation, should be directed to the Complaint Reference Handler who will forward the request to a Complaint Reference Handler. Receipt of Appeals will be acknowledged within <<insert period no longer than 3 working days>>. Upon acknowledgement receipt of your Appeal we will provide you with a Complaint Reference Handler.

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5.3.3 If your Complaint is not resolved, you will be informed of the outcome of the investigation and given a further opportunity to respond. Communication between you and the staff member in question will be via the Complaint Handler and we respectfully ask that you do not contact the staff member in question directly while we are working to resolve it.

If your Complaint is not resolved, you will be informed of the outcome of the investigation and given a further opportunity to respond. Communication between you and the staff member in question will be via the Complaint Handler and we respectfully ask that you do not contact the staff member in question directly while we are working to resolve it.

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5.3.4 If we require evidence from you, the Appeal Handler will make every effort to ensure that it is reasonably possible to ask for it. We ask you to make every effort to supply any such information as soon as possible in order to avoid delaying the process. If you are for any reason unable to provide such information, we will use all reasonable efforts to proceed with the process. We be aware that we will not ask for further information unless we consider it important to the successful resolution of your Complaint.

5.3.5 We aim to resolve your Complaints within <<insert period no longer than >> however in some cases, particularly if the Complaint is complex, this may not be possible. If this is the case, you will be informed of the delay, the reasons for it.

5.3.6 At the conclusion of the Complaints procedure, regardless of the outcome, we will provide you with full details of our investigation, our conclusions and any action taken as a result. Our decision will be subject to your right to seek External Resolution of your Complaint.

5.3.7 [As we are a member of the Property Ombudsman] [Ombudsman Services: Property Redress Scheme] you, as a service user, may have the right to seek External Resolution of your Complaint if you are not satisfied with the outcome of our decision.

5.4 [External Resolution of your Complaint]
5.4.1 If you are not satisfied with the outcome of your Complaint at Level Two you may refer your Complaint to [The Property Ombudsman] [The Property Redress Scheme]. Any such referral must be made within 6 months of receipt of our final decision.

5.4.2 For details of our external conflict resolution mechanisms, please contact us at <<insert address>>, by telephone on <<insert telephone number>> or by email at <<insert email address>>, or via their website.

5.4.3 Please note that [The Property Ombudsman] [Ombudsman Services: Property Redress Scheme] may decline to deal with your Complaint if you are a commercial customer.

5.5 [Referral to Professional Body]
5.5.1 <<insert business name>> is a member of the Professional Body. If you are not satisfied with the outcome of your Complaint at Level Two you may refer your Complaint to <<insert name or job title>> at <<insert address>> for consideration by the Professional Body.

5.5.2 Please note that the Professional Body will only be able to consider your Complaint if it falls within the rules of conduct.

6. Confidentiality and Data Protection
6.1 All Complaints and the information contained therein are treated with the utmost confidentiality.

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confidence. Such information shall be shared with those staff members of <<insert business name>> who know in order to handle your Complaint.

6.2 We may ask for your personal details for training and quality improvement purposes. If you have any concerns, you may revoke it at any time by contacting <<insert name and position / department>>, whose details are provided above in Section 4.1.

6.3 All personal information (including, but not limited to, your name and address) shall be held in accordance with the provisions of the Data Protection Act 1998 and your rights under that Act.

7. Questions and Further Information

If you have any questions about this Complaints Policy or about <<insert name and position / department>>, please contact <<insert name and position / department>>, by telephone on <<insert telephone number>> or by email on <<insert email address>>.

8. Policy Responsibility and Review

8.1 Overall responsibility for this Policy shall lie with <<insert business name>> and the immediate <<insert name and position / department etc.>>.

8.2 This Complaints Policy shall be reviewed and updated as required.

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