

Customer Complaints Policy

Purpose of the policy:	To establish DPHA's policy and set out our position on Customer Complaints.
Guidance used for developing the policy:	SPSO Statement of Complaints Handling Principles SPSO Guidance on a Model Complaints Handling Procedure SPSO Registered-Social-Landlord-Customer-Facing template
Policy complies with the following Regulatory Standards:	<p>Standard 2: The RSL is open about and accountable for what it does. It understands and takes account of the needs and priorities of its tenants, service users and stakeholders. And its primary focus is the sustainable achievement of these priorities.</p> <p>Standard 4: The governing body bases its decisions on good quality information and advice and identifies and mitigates risks to DPHA's purpose.</p> <p>Standard 5: The RSL conducts its affairs with honesty and integrity.</p> <p>Health and Social Care Standards My life, my support</p> <p>Standard 4.21 I know how, and can be helped, to make a complaint or raise a concern about my care and support.</p> <p>Standard 4.21 If I have a concern or complaint, this will be discussed with me and acted on without negative consequences for me.</p>
Policy is linked to the following DPHA policies:	Unacceptable Actions Customer Service Standards
Date Policy last reviewed:	December 2023
Date revised policy approved by PRWG:	12 December 2023
Date Policy is next due to be reviewed:	December 2026
Equality Impact Assessment carried out for policy?	Yes
Publish on the Website:	Yes

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1.0 Introduction

1.1 DPHA is committed to providing high-quality customer services.

1.2 **We value complaints and use information from them to help us improve our services.**

1.3 If something goes wrong or you are dissatisfied with our services, please tell us. This leaflet describes our complaints procedure and how to make a complaint. It also tells you about our service standards and what you can expect from us.

2.0 What is a complaint?

2.1 We regard a complaint as any expression of dissatisfaction about our action or lack of action, or about the standard of service provided by us or on our behalf.

3.0 What can I complain about?

You can complain about things like:

- failure or refusal to provide a service
- inadequate quality or standard of service, or an unreasonable delay in providing a service
- delays in responding to enquiries or requests
- unfairness, bias or prejudice in service delivery
- lack of provision, or the provision of misleading, unsuitable or incorrect advice or information
- a repair that has not been carried out properly or in an agreed timeframe
- dissatisfaction with one of our policies or its impact on the individual
- failure to properly apply law, procedure or guidance when delivering services
- failure to follow the appropriate administrative process
- conduct, treatment by or attitude of a member of staff or contractor (except where there are arrangements in place for the contractor to handle the complaint themselves); or
- disagreement with a decision, (except where there is a statutory procedure for challenging that decision, or an established appeals process followed throughout the sector).

3.1 Your complaint may involve more than one of our services or be about someone working on our behalf.

4.0 What can't I complain about?

4.1 There are some things we can't deal with through our complaint's procedure. These include:

- a routine first-time request for a service
- a request for compensation only

- issues that are in court or have already been heard by a court or a tribunal (if you decide to take legal action, you should let us know as the complaint cannot then be considered under this process)
- disagreement with a decision where there is a statutory procedure for challenging that decision (such as for freedom of information and subject access requests), or an established appeals process followed throughout the sector
- a request for information under the Data Protection or Freedom of Information (Scotland) Acts
- a grievance by a staff member or a grievance relating to employment or staff recruitment
- a concern raised internally by a member of staff (which was not about a service they received, such as a whistleblowing concern)
- a concern about a child or an adult's safety
- an attempt to reopen a previously concluded complaint or to have a complaint reconsidered where we have already given our final decision
- abuse or unsubstantiated allegations about our organisation or staff where such actions would be covered by our [Unacceptable Actions Policy or equivalent]; or
- a concern about the actions or service of a different organisation, where we have no involvement in the issue (except where the other organisation is delivering services on our behalf).

4.2 If other procedures or rights of appeal can help you resolve your concerns, we will give information and advice to help you.

5.0 Who can complain?

5.1 Anyone who receives, requests or is directly affected by our services can make a complaint to us. This includes the representative of someone who is dissatisfied with our service (for example, a relative, friend, advocate or adviser). If you are making a complaint on someone else's behalf, you will normally need their written consent. Please also read the section on Getting help to make your complaint below.

6.0 How do I complain?

6.1 Complaints can be reported to any member of staff either in person at our office, by phone, in writing, email or by using our Complaints Record form Appendix B, a quick guide on complaint reporting is attached at Appendix A. All of our staff are trained to handle complaints.

6.2 It is easier for us to resolve complaints if you make them quickly and directly to the service concerned. So please talk to a member of our staff at the service you are complaining about. Then they can try to resolve the issue.

When complaining, tell us:

- your full name and address
- as much as you can about the complaint

- what has gone wrong; and
- the outcome that you would like to see

6.3 Any member of the Board of Management that is approached by customer of the Association with a complaint will not deal with the complaint directly. The complaint will be referred to a member of staff within the relevant team to deal with.

7.0 How long do I have to make a complaint?

7.1 Normally, you must make your complaint within six months of:

- the event you want to complain about, or
- finding out that you have a reason to complain

7.2 In exceptional circumstances, we may be able to accept a complaint after the time limit. If you feel that the time limit should not apply to your complaint, please tell us why.

Contact details

Dalmuir Park Housing Association

Beardmore House, 631 Dumbarton Road, Dalmuir, Clydebank, G81 4EU.

Tel: 0141 952 2447

Email: admin@dpha.org.uk

Web: www.dpha.org

8.0 What happens when I have complained?

8.1 We will always tell you who is dealing with your complaint. Our complaints procedure has two stages:

8.2 Stage one – frontline resolution

We aim to resolve complaints quickly where possible, when you first tell us about the issue. This could mean an on-the-spot apology and explanation if something has clearly gone wrong, and immediate action to resolve the problem.

Where a frontline resolution is not possible, we will provide you with timescales of when you can expect a response to your complaint. We aim to give you our complaint resolution decision in writing in five working days or less, unless there are exceptional circumstances.

If you are not satisfied with the response we give at this stage we will tell you what you can do next. If you choose to, you can progress your complaint to a stage 2. You must normally ask us to consider your complaint at stage 2 either:

- within six months of the event you want to complain about or finding out that you have a reason to complain; or
- within two months of receiving your stage 1 response (if this is later).

In exceptional circumstances, we may be able to accept a stage 2 complaint after the time limit. If you feel that the time limit should not apply to your complaint, please tell us why.

8.3 Stage two – investigation

Stage 2 deals with two types of complaint: where the customer remains dissatisfied after stage 1 and those that clearly require investigation, and so are handled directly at this stage. If you do not wish your complaint to be handled at stage 1, you can ask us to handle it at stage 2 instead.

When dealing with a stage 2, we will:

- acknowledge receipt of your complaint within three working days
- discuss your complaint with you to understand why you remain dissatisfied and what outcome you are looking for
- give you a full response to the complaint as soon as possible and within 20 working days.
- we will confirm our understanding of the complaint we will investigate and what outcome you are looking for
- we will try to resolve your complaint where we can (in some cases we may suggest using an alternative complaint resolution approach, such as mediation); and
- where we cannot resolve your complaint, we will give you a full response as soon as possible, normally within 20 working days.

- 8.4 If our investigation will take longer than 20 working days, we will tell you. We will agree revised time limits with you and keep you updated on progress.

9.0 Recording and Reporting

- 9.1 To collect suitable data, it is essential to record all complaints in line with SPSO minimum requirements, as set out in the Complaints Handling Procedure (CHP). All complaints will be recorded on our Homemaster software system.
- 9.2 Complaint statistic details will be reported and analysed by staff for trends in information to ensure that any service failures are identified, and appropriate action is taken.

- 9.3 A summary of complaints is reported to the Board of Management on a quarterly basis. Complaint statistics are submitted annually to the Scottish Housing Regulator as part of the Annual Return to the Charter.

10.0 What if I'm still dissatisfied?

- 10.1 After we have given you our final decision, if you are still dissatisfied with our decision or the way we dealt with your complaint, you can ask the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO) to look at it.

The SPSO are an independent organisation that investigates complaints. They are not an advocacy or support service (but there are other organisations who can help you with advocacy or support).

You can ask the SPSO to look at your complaint if:

- you have gone all the way through Dalmeir Park Housing Associations complaints handling procedure
- it is less than 12 months after you became aware of the matter you want to complain about; and
- the matter has not been (and is not being) considered in court.

The SPSO will ask you to complete a complaint form and provide a copy of our final response to your complaint. You can do this online at www.spsso.org.uk/complain/form or call them on Freephone 0800 377 7330.

You may wish to get independent support or advocacy to help you progress your complaint. See the section on **Getting help to make your complaint** below.

The SPSO's contact details are:

SPSO

Bridgeside House

99 McDonald Road

Edinburgh

EH7 4NS

(if you would like to visit in person, you must make an appointment first)

Their freepost address is:

FREEPOST SPSO

Freephone: 0800 377 7330

Online contact www.spsso.org.uk/contact-us

Website: www.spsso.org.uk

- 10.2 There are some complaints about housing that have an alternative route for independent review. We will tell you how to seek independent review when we give you our final response on your complaint.

10.3 Complaints about factoring

10.3.1 The SPSO does not normally look at complaints about our factoring service. First-tier Tribunal for Scotland (Housing and Property Chamber) will try to resolve complaints and disputes between home owners and property factors. So, if your complaint is about our factoring service, and you are still dissatisfied after our investigation stage you will be able to go to the First-tier Tribunal for Scotland.

10.3.2 You can access their website for more information on

<https://www.housingandpropertychamber.scot/>

10.4 Care complaints

10.4.1 If your complaint relates to a care service we provide, you can choose whether to complain to us or the Care Inspectorate. You can find out more about their complaint's procedure, or make a complaint, by contacting the Care Inspectorate.

Information about the Care Inspectorate complaints procedure can be found [Here](#)

You can contact the Care Inspectorate:

Write via post to:

Care Inspectorate Compass
House 11 Riverside Drive
Dundee
DD1 4NY

Phone: 0345 600 9527

Online contact: [Care Inspectorate online-complaint-form](#)

Website: <https://www.careinspectorate.com/index.php/complaints>

Email: enquiries@careinspectorate.com

10.5 Reporting a Significant Performance Failure to the Scottish Housing Regulator

The Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR) can consider issues raised with them about 'significant performance failures'. A significant performance failure is defined by the SHR as something that a landlord does or fails to do that puts the interests of its tenants at risk, and which the landlord has not resolved. This is something that is a systematic problem that does, or could, affect all of a landlord's tenants. If you are affected by a problem like this, you should first report it to us. If you have told us about it but we have not resolved it, you can report it directly to the SHR.

A complaint between an individual tenant and a landlord is not a significant performance failure. Significant performance failures are not, therefore, dealt with through this complaints handling

procedure. You can ask us for more information about significant performance failures. The SHR also has more information on their website:

You can contact the SHR:

Write via post to:

Scottish Housing Regulator
Buchanan House
58 Port Dundas Road
Glasgow
G4 0HF

Phone: 0141 242 5642

Online contact: [SHR complain-about-a-landlord](#)

Website: <https://www.scottishhousingregulator.gov.uk/>

Email: shr@shr.gov.scot

11.0 Getting help to make your complaint

- 11.1** We understand that you may be unable, or reluctant, to make a complaint yourself. We accept complaints from the representative of a person who is dissatisfied with our service. We can take complaints from a friend, relative, or an advocate, if you have given them your consent to complain for you.
- 11.2** You can find out about advocates in your area by contacting the Scottish Independent Advocacy Alliance or Citizens Advice Bureau.

Scottish Independent Advocacy Alliance

Tel: 0131 260 5380

Website: www.siaa.org.uk

Citizens Advice Scotland

Social Economy Centre
63 Kilbowie Road
Clydebank
G81 1BL

Phone: 0141 435 7590

Website: west-dunbartonshire-cab-clydebank-extension

On line: <http://www.wdcab.co.uk/appointments/clydebank/>

12.0 Equality and Human Rights

- 12.1 We are committed to promoting an environment of respect, understanding, encouraging diversity and eliminating discrimination by providing equality of opportunity for all. This is reflected in our Equality and Human Rights Policy.
- 12.2 We are committed to making our service easy to use for all members of the community. In line with our statutory equality duties, we will always ensure that reasonable adjustments are made to help customers access and use our services. If you have trouble putting your complaint in writing, or want this information in another language or format, such as large font, or Braille, please tell us in person, contact us on 0141 952 2774 or email us admin@dpah.org.uk

13.0 Data Protection

- 3.1 We will treat personal data in line with our obligations under the current data protection regulations and our Data Protection Policy. Information regarding how data will be used and the basis for processing data is provided in our Customer Fair Processing Notice.

Our contact details

Please contact us by the following means:

Dalmuir Park Housing Association

Beardmore House, 631 Dumbarton Road, Dalmuir, Clydebank, G81 4EU.

Tel: 0141 952 2447

Email: admin@dpha.org.uk

Web: www.dpha.org

14.0 Policy Review

- 14.1 This Policy will be reviewed by the Board every 3-years or earlier if required.

Quick guide to our complaint's procedure

Complaints procedure

You can make your complaint in person, by phone, by e-mail or in writing.

We have a **two-stage complaints procedure**. We will always try to deal with your complaint quickly. But if it is clear that the matter will need a detailed investigation, we will tell you and keep you updated on our progress.

If your complaint relates to care service you can choose to complain to us or to the Care Inspectorate.



Stage 1: frontline resolution

We will always try to resolve your complaint quickly, within **five working days** if we can.

If you are dissatisfied with our response, you can ask us to consider your complaint at stage 2.



Stage 2: investigation

We will look at your complaint at this stage if you are dissatisfied with our response at stage 1. We also look at some complaints immediately at this stage, if it is clear that they are complex or need detailed investigation.

We will acknowledge your complaint within **three working days**.

We will confirm the points of complaint to be investigated and what you want to achieve.

We will investigate the complaint and give you our decision as soon as possible. This will be after no more than **20 working days** *unless* there is clearly a good reason for needing more time.



The Scottish Public Services Ombudsman,

If, after receiving our final decision on your complaint, you remain dissatisfied with our decision or the way we have handled your complaint, you can ask the SPSO to consider it.

There are some complaints about housing that have an alternative route for independent review. We will tell you how to seek independent review when we give you our final response on your complaint.

Appendix 2 - COMPLAINTS RECORD

This form should be completed for anyone showing dissatisfaction from the Association's services. Complaints can be reported either in person, in writing, by e-mail or by telephone. Staff assistance can be provided to help complete the form, if required. The Association will accept written correspondence where the complainant does not complete this form. In these cases the monitoring sections will be completed by Staff and all will be kept together.

SECTION 1 : COMPLAINANT DETAILS

Name of Complainant:		
Address:		
Other Contact Details:	Telephone No:	E-mail address:
Date of Incident	Location of incident:	
Please provide brief details of incident being reported		
Please outline what you would like the outcome of your complaint to be		
Confirmation of details and Signature of Complainant		