



# COMMENTS AND COMPLAINTS GUIDANCE LEAFLET



## LET US KNOW ABOUT IT

We aim to provide a first class service to tenants, housing applicants, factored owners and others who use our services. There may be occasions, however, when our service falls short of our Service Quality Guarantee or when you may have suggestions for improvement. There may also be times when you would like to tell us that you are happy with the service you have received. **Your comments, suggestions and complaints are important to us, as they help us improve the services we provide.**

Our Management Committee has reviewed the Comments and Complaints Policy<sup>1</sup>, taking account of feedback from the ATC<sup>2</sup> and Consumer Panel<sup>3</sup>, and considering the model complaints procedure introduced by the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO). Our procedure also reflects specific recommendations from the Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR), following our participation in their thematic inspection<sup>4</sup>. This leaflet explains how to provide feedback and confirms what we will do with the comments, suggestions and complaints we receive.

## TAKING YOUR VIEWS SERIOUSLY

Feedback from you is the best way for us to check if we are doing things right. If you take the time to give us your views, we will make sure they are acknowledged, properly considered and responded to within a set timescale.

All feedback we receive is centrally recorded and reports are given to our Management Committee on the numbers and type of feedback items received, our speed and success in responding to feedback and any lessons we have learned. This information is also reported through our Newsletter and Annual Report on the Charter (ARC).

## THE FEEDBACK FORM

To formally record your feedback, the first step is to complete a Feedback Form. The Form can be used for making a comment, a suggestion or a complaint. A copy is attached. If you need further copies you can get one by:

- calling in person at our offices (addresses overleaf)
- telephoning or writing in for one to be sent to you
- sending an email to [admin@glasgowwestha.co.uk](mailto:admin@glasgowwestha.co.uk)

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<sup>1</sup> MC Meetings 26/04/11; 13/03/12; 26/04/17

<sup>2</sup> ATC 22/01/11

<sup>3</sup> Consumer Panel 11/04/11

<sup>4</sup> SHR discussions 24/06/15 and 01/03/17

Reviewed 07/12/16 (HOHP changed to Housing and Property Chamber First-tier Tribunal for Scotland & Regulatory References Updated) Reviewed 17/10/16 (SHR address)

Reviewed 01/10/16 (All Tel Nos/Addresses)

- downloading a copy from the COMPLAINTS icon on the front page of our website [www.gwha.org.uk](http://www.gwha.org.uk)

<b>If you require this document in a different format or font, please contact the office and we will do our best to accommodate your request.</b>			
<b>CENTRAL OFFICE</b>	<b>CONCIERGE/REMOTE OFFICES</b>		
5 Royal Crescent GLASGOW G3 7SL  Tel 0141 331 6650	56 Blythswood Court GLASGOW G2 7PE  Tel: 0141 428 3246	31 St Vincent Terrace, GLASGOW G3 8UU  Tel: 0141 428 3247	Hyndland 72 Crown Road North G12 9HW  Tel: 0141 428 3248
Opening Hours: Mon/Wed/Thurs/Fri: 9am – 4pm.  Tuesday 11.30am – 4pm.	Opening Hours:  24/7	Opening Hours:  24/7	Opening Hours: Mon-Fri 8am – 4pm. Concierge may be carrying out jobs around the area, but will leave note on door advising when they will return to office.

If you would prefer, you can send in a letter or you can pass your comments to us over the phone and, if necessary, a form will be completed on your behalf (and a copy sent to you). Alternatively, you may prefer to email your feedback to us. If you need interpreting services or if you need the information to be presented in a different format (e.g. Braille) we will be happy to make arrangements for this.

### **WHEN NOT TO USE THE FEEDBACK FORM**

If you want to make a complaint about one of your neighbours, do not complete the Feedback Form. Instead, you should contact the Tenancy Services staff directly 0141-331 6651.

If you are making a complaint about the conduct of a staff member, you should mark your envelope as “Private and Confidential” and for the attention of the Human Resources Officer (HRO). The HRO will ensure your complaint is directed to the Line Manager of the person you are complaining about.

If your complaint is about a matter that has already been the subject of Stage Two of our Complaints Process and we have given you our response, it is unlikely to be revisited by the Association.

### **WHAT YOU CAN PROVIDE FEEDBACK ABOUT**

You can provide feedback about any aspect of our service. If it is a complaint, it may be that you are unhappy

- if a repair has not been carried out properly
- if you have not received information you asked for

- if you feel a member of staff, a committee member or a contractor has not behaved acceptably towards you
- if you feel your housing application has not been handled properly

We will always try to deal with complaints sympathetically, but there are some things we will not be able to give you information about. For example, it would be wrong for us to discuss with you the details of someone else's housing application, as this would be a breach of confidentiality. We can, of course, talk to you about how our allocations procedure works.

We will endeavour to respond to all feedback we receive, however, in instances where the issue refers to a matter dating back more than 12 months, the extent of our investigations and the detail of our response will be determined by the availability and accessibility of information.

## **OUR RESPONSE**

When we receive your feedback, we will decide whether it is recorded under Stage 1 of our Comments and Complaints Procedure (this is known as frontline resolution) or whether it requires investigation under Stage 2. In some cases, your complaint may bypass Stage 1 altogether. In any event, we aim to respond promptly to all feedback to ensure that, wherever possible, problems are quickly resolved. Where you have made a suggestion for a change in how we do things we will let you know how we might do things differently in future or we will explain why this is not possible. If we feel you are being unreasonable, we will say so.

The response to your feedback will normally come from the staff member with day-to-day responsibility for the service and will be issued within 5 working days. This will be Stage 1 of our Comments and Complaints Procedure. In exceptional circumstances, the Service Manager may need to agree with you an extended timescale for response and this will generally be, at most, an additional 5 working days.

If you remain unhappy with the Stage 1 response, your concerns will be referred to Stage 2 of our Comments and Complaints Policy.

## **TAKING THINGS FURTHER**

Stage 2 is the final stage of our internal complaints process and will generally involve an investigation. Where the complaint relates to an operational matter, our response will be approved by the Service Manager or Divisional Director before it is issued to you.

If you request a Stage 2 review, you will generally receive an acknowledgement letter within 5 working days: this letter will confirm who is responsible for the investigation and will provide a timescale for response, which will generally be within 20 working days. Due to the complex nature of Stage 2 investigations, it may not always be possible to respond within 20 working days and in this case we will agree alternative timescales with you.

Following recommendation from the Scottish Housing Regulator, and to ensure our process is compliant with the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman's model Complaints Handling Procedures, the option for a Review Panel has been removed from our Complaints Procedure. This decision was taken by our Management Committee in the knowledge that the option was very rarely utilised and will not impact on the objective investigation of your complaint.

## EXTERNAL REVIEW

If you are unhappy with the outcome of our Stage 2 investigations, you may have the right to take your complaint to the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO) or, if you own your home, to the Housing and Property Chamber First-tier Tribunal for Scotland. We will co-operate with investigations carried out by the SPSO or Housing and Property Chamber First-tier Tribunal for Scotland.

SCOTTISH PUBLIC SERVICES OMBUDSMAN		HOUSING AND PROPERTY CHAMBER FIRST-TIER TRIBUNAL FOR SCOTLAND
<p>The SPSO is based at:</p> <p><b>Bridgeside House 99 McDonald Road Edinburgh, EH7 4NS</b></p> <p>Open Monday, Wednesday, Thursday &amp; Friday 9am – 5pm. Tuesday 10am – 5pm.</p>	<p>Post letters to:</p> <p><b>Freepost SPSO</b> (this is all you need to write on the envelope, and you don't need to use a stamp)</p>	<p>The Housing and Property Chamber First-tier Tribunal for Scotland is based at:</p> <p><b>Glasgow Tribunals Centre 20 York Street Glasgow G2 8GT</b></p>
<p><b>Tel number: 0800 377 7330 or 0131 225 5300</b></p> <p><b>Online contact:</b> <a href="http://www.spsso.org.uk/contact-us">www.spsso.org.uk/contact-us</a></p> <p><b>Website:</b> <a href="http://www.spsso.org.uk">www.spsso.org.uk</a></p> <p><b>Mobile site:</b> <a href="http://m.spsso.org.uk">http://m.spsso.org.uk</a></p> <p>The SPSO is the final stage for complaints about public services in Scotland. This includes complaints about Scottish housing associations. If you remain dissatisfied, you can ask the SPSO to look at your complaint. The SPSO cannot normally look at complaints:</p> <p>a) Where you have not gone all the way through the housing association's complaints handling procedure.</p> <p>b) More than 12 months after you became aware of the matter you want to complain about, or</p>		<p><b>Telephone : 0141 302 5900</b></p> <p><b>Fax: 0141 302 5901</b></p> <p><b>Website:</b> <a href="http://www.housingandpropertychamber.scot.nhs.uk">www.housingandpropertychamber.scot.nhs.uk</a></p> <p><b>Email:</b> <a href="mailto:HPAdmin@scotcourtribunals.gov.uk">HPAdmin@scotcourtribunals.gov.uk</a></p> <p>Homeowners may make an application to The Housing and Property Chamber First-tier Tribunal for Scotland for a determination as to whether their property factor has failed to carry out their factoring duties, or failed to comply with the Code of Conduct. The Code of Conduct sets out minimum standards of practice for registered property factors, covering.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I. Written Statement of Services</li> <li>II. Communication and consultation</li> <li>III. Financial obligations</li> <li>IV. Debt recovery</li> <li>V. Insurance</li> <li>VI. Carrying out repairs and maintenance</li> <li>VII. Complaints resolution.</li> </ol>

c) That have been or are being considered in court

## SCOTTISH HOUSING REGULATOR (SHR)

If you are a tenant (or an individual or group representing tenants), and you have **significant** concerns about the way we operate, you have the right to report this to the SHR. You should raise your concerns with us in the first instance to give us a reasonable time to respond and/or fix the failure. A **Significant Performance Failure (SPF)** is not an individual tenant complaint about services. SPFs relate to service matters that affect **many or all of our tenants** or to governance and financial matters, for example:

1. Failing to carry out health and safety requirements such as annual gas safety checks.
2. Not maintaining tenant homes or carrying out repairs in line with published responsibilities.
3. Failing to have appropriate governance and financial procedures in place or apply them; or
4. Not consulting tenants about issues such as proposed rent increases and other policies that affect them.

The simplest way to report a **SPF** is to complete the form on the SHR's website [www.scottishhousingregulator.gov.uk](http://www.scottishhousingregulator.gov.uk) and then email it to [shr@scottishhousingregulator.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:shr@scottishhousingregulator.gsi.gov.uk). You may also report your concerns, or seek further information by telephone, fax, letter, or email.

**Address: Scottish Housing Regulator  
Buchanan House  
58 Port Dundas Road  
GLASGOW G4 0HF**

**Tel: 0141 242 5642**

## **CONCLUDING YOUR FEEDBACK**

Once we have responded to you, we will keep your case open for one month to give you the opportunity to consider whether you wish to take the matter further. If we do not hear from you within the month, we will close the file. We will write to you at this stage to ask for your comments on your experience of the process. Your comments will enable us to continually improve and update our service provision.

## **YOUR RIGHT TO PRIVACY**

We will, as far as possible, respect the confidentiality of your correspondence. Whilst we are looking into the issues you have raised, your name will not be divulged any more than is absolutely necessary within the Association.

If you progress to the Review Panel Stage, then the Review Panel members will know who you are, but this will not be divulged to other members of the Association's Management Committee.

## **GETTING INDEPENDENT ADVICE AND SUPPORT**

We aim to make the Comments and Complaints process as user-friendly as possible. There may be situations, however, when you feel the need for independent support and advice in raising an issue with us or in representing your case at an Appeal hearing. You can be represented by anyone you choose but you may find it helpful to contact one or more of the organisations listed below, all of who provide services to people in the local community:

<p><b>Shelter</b> <b>First Floor, Suite 2, Breckenridge House</b> <b>274 Sauchiehall Street</b> <b>GLASGOW, G2 3EH</b> <b>Opening Hours: 9am – 5pm</b> <b>(emergency cases only)</b></p> <p><a href="http://www.shelter.org.uk">www.shelter.org.uk</a></p> <p><b>Tel No: 0808 800 4444</b> <b>(free housing advice helpline)</b> <b>Opening Hours: 9am – 5pm</b></p>	<p><b>Citizens Advice Direct</b> <b>2nd Floor, Brunswick House, 51 Wilson Street, Glasgow, G1 1UZ</b></p> <p><b>Tel No: 0808 800 9060</b> <b>For advice:</b> <a href="mailto:advice@citizensadvice.org.uk">advice@citizensadvice.org.uk</a> <b>Website: <a href="http://www.advice.scot">www.advice.scot</a></b></p> <p><b>Opening Hours:</b> <b>9am - 6pm (Mon-Thurs)</b> <b>9am – 5pm (Fri)</b> <b>10am – 2pm (Sat)</b></p>
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<p><b>West of Scotland Racial Equality Council</b>  <b>Napiershall Centre, 39 Napiershall Street,</b>  <b>GLASGOW, G20 6EZ</b></p> <p><b>Tel No: 0141 337 6626</b>  <b>Email: <a href="mailto:info@wsrec.co.uk">info@wsrec.co.uk</a></b></p> <p><b>Opening Hours:</b>  <b>9:30am - 5pm (Mon-Thurs)</b>  <b>9:30am – 4:30pm (Fri)</b></p>	<p><b>Legal Services Agency</b>  <b>3<sup>rd</sup> Floor, Fleming House, 134 Renfrew Street, GLASGOW G3 6ST</b></p> <p><b>Tel No: 0141 353 3354</b>  <b>Website: <a href="http://www.lsa.org.uk">www.lsa.org.uk</a></b>  <b>Email: <a href="mailto:lsa@btconnect.com">lsa@btconnect.com</a></b></p> <p><b>Opening Hours:</b>  <b>9am - 5pm (Mon-Fri)</b></p>
<p><b>Glasgow Centre for Inclusive Living</b>  <b>117-127 Brook Street</b>  <b>Glasgow</b>  <b>G40 3AP</b></p> <p><b>Tel: 0141 550 4455</b>  <b>Fax: 0141 550 4858</b>  <b>Text phone: 0141 554 6482</b>  <b>Website: <a href="http://www.gcil.org.uk">www.gcil.org.uk</a></b></p>	<p><b>Glasgow Disability Alliance</b>  <b>Suite 301, The White Studios, Block 4</b>  <b>Templeton Business Centre</b>  <b>62 Templeton Street</b>  <b>Glasgow, G40 1DA</b></p> <p><b>Tel: 0141 556 7103</b>  <b>Email: <a href="mailto:info@gdaonline.co.uk">info@gdaonline.co.uk</a></b></p> <p><b>Website: <a href="http://www.gdaonline.co.uk">www.gdaonline.co.uk</a></b></p>

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Registered with Scottish Housing Regulator HEP126

Registered under the Co-operative and Community Benefit Societies Act 1955 RS

Registered as a Scottish Charity SC001667