

Policy	Complaints and Compliments Policy
Policy Owner	Executive Team
Authorised by	RGC/BOARD
Date Authorised	31.10.22
Review Date	October 2024
Policy Review Period	Every 2 years
Version	3.0

Definition

Trinity Housing Association define a complaint as; “An expression of dissatisfaction, however made, about the standard of service, actions or lack of action by the organisation, its own staff, or those acting on its behalf, affecting an individual resident or group of residents”

Purpose

Trinity Housing Association actively encourages feedback from a range of sources into the quality of the services delivered to our tenants. Complaints are viewed as an opportunity to improve our standards and are seen as just one of a number of means of determining how continuous improvement can be affected. Compliments are welcomed as a means of recognising good practice and sharing in successes. The Trinity Housing Association Complaints and Compliments Policy is designed to promote feedback from customers, staff and external sources.

Responsibility for Implementation

- Executive Team
- All Staff

Principles

In all services, staff will observe, abide by and actively promote the Trinity Housing Association Complaints and Compliments system, inviting feedback from tenants and their advocates and family members as well as commissioners and other professionals.

All tenants (and if appropriate their families/carers) will be provided with a written copy of the Complaints and Compliments Policy, in a format appropriate to their individual needs, which may include a range of user friendly mediums, formats and languages.

The system is designed to:

- Provide a means through which to register a formal complaint or obtain administrative review of decisions affecting tenants.
- Provide a means through which to acknowledge good practice.
- By encouraging active feedback, inform quality building practices and provide a conduit for recommendations for continuous service improvement.

Procedure – Complaints

1. All complaints received by employees of Trinity Housing Association must be forwarded to the Executive Assistant who is the designated 'Complaints Handler'. The Complaints Handler will not necessarily manage the investigation of the complaint but will need to be informed and updated regularly as to the status of the complaint in order to record and document.
2. Complaints may be made in person, by telephone or in writing. It is frequently possible to resolve a complaint informally, and wherever possible this should be the objective. Swift, appropriate action will often be sufficient to deal with issues to the satisfaction of all parties. Employees should always remain open and friendly when hearing about issues that are causing people to complain. Employees must always remember that a complaint is an opportunity to improve the service and not a personal criticism.
3. Where it is not possible to resolve the complaint informally, the person should be asked to set out the complaint in writing and be advised as to whom the letter should be addressed. Complaints should be made, in the first instance, to the Housing Officer responsible for the region, or if a wider issue to the Executive Assistant at Trinity Housing Association.

4. Tenants wishing to complain about any aspect of their service will be assisted to do so upon request. This assistance may include helping the complainant to clearly formulate the details and basis of the complaint and putting it in writing.
5. Within 3 working days of receipt of a complaint, a letter will be sent to the complainant from the Complaint Handler acknowledging the concern, confirming who will be dealing with the matter and providing contact details for that person. The letter will further outline an anticipated timescale when the complainant might next expect to be contacted about the matter. This should then be logged in the complaints file and Operational Workbook – ‘Complaints’.
6. Should the complaint be considered serious enough to warrant it, the matter will be notified to the Chief Operating Officer who will in turn inform the Chief Executive.
7. In consultation with the Housing Officer/Executive Assistant will determine the most appropriate process for review or investigation of the complaint and a principle investigator will be appointed.
8. Investigations into the complaint should begin as soon as is practical. Progress in dealing with the matter should be reported to the complainant throughout the process, especially if there are delays in resolving the issues.
9. Within 15 working days of receiving the written account, the delegated investigator will provide a written response to the complainant. A copy of the response will also be sent to any other parties notified of the complaint. A copy will also be held on the Trinity Housing Association Complaints File held by the Executive Assistant who will also update the Operational Workbook.
10. Complaints and compliments will be monitored by the Chief Operating Officer and Chief Executive. Any unresolved complaints will be shared with the Chief Executive.
11. A register of all complaints received will be maintained at the Trinity Housing Association office Complaints File and Operational Workbook in accordance with RSH guidelines and requirements and will include the following information:
 - a. Date the complaint was made
 - b. An allocated complaint log number
 - c. Person making complaint and their designation
 - d. Actions taken

- e. The resolution
- f. Date resolved

14. In addition, the register will also include the following:

- a. If the complaint was not resolved in the service, to whom it was passed for further investigation
- b. The date it was passed to that person
- c. A date to review the outcome/resolution with that person
- d. Final resolution
- e. Date of final resolution and notification of outcome to complainant

Appeals

- Within 28 days of receiving a written response, the complainant has the right to notify the company that they are dissatisfied and to appeal against the outcome. In this instance, the appellant will be provided with contact details for the Chief Operating Officer/Chief Executive, to whom they should write setting out the basis of their appeal.
- Within 28 days of receipt of an appeal, the Chief Operating Officer/Chief Executive will review all relevant information and discuss and explore the issues with the complainant. A final decision on the matter will then be issued and a copy provided to any other parties notified of the complaint.

Complaints Handling Code

The Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code promotes the progressive use of complaints, providing a high-level framework to support effective handling and prevention alongside learning and development. The Code ensures complaint handling data is being used consistently, promotes engagement at different levels and sets out expectations for boards, senior executives and frontline staff.

The purpose of the Code is to enable Trinity to resolve complaints raised by our tenants quickly and to use the learning from complaints to drive service improvements. It will also help to create a positive complaint handling culture amongst staff and tenants.

The following key areas have already been completed by Trinity Housing Association:

- Inclusion of the definition of a complaint into the Trinity Complaints and Compliments Policy;

“An expression of dissatisfaction, however made, about the standard of service, actions or lack of action by the organisation, its own staff, or those acting on its behalf, affecting an individual resident or group of residents”

- The Trinity Housing Association Complaints Handling Code has been added to the THA website.

Compliments

The company is always pleased to receive compliments and also to hear about how success may have assisted someone to make a positive change in their life. Celebrating achievements both big and small with the people using our services is one of the most rewarding and important aspects of our work. Compliments may also be a means of learning what works for people in certain situations and so they can be used to help to find solutions to people’s difficulties. For staff, learning that they have done something well can contribute to a sense of achievement and satisfaction. Positive feedback is therefore welcomed and encouraged.

The Trinity Housing Association office holds a compliments folder, in which any letters sent expressing satisfaction are kept. These can then be shared with other service users, existing and new staff, people interested in receiving a Trinity Housing Association service and also other professionals and people interested in finding out more about us on behalf of potential future service users.

Information about compliments will be collated by the Chief Operating Officer during checks and passed on to the Chief Executive.

