



## **Compliments, Comments & Complaints Policy**

**Policy Ref: C01**

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## **1. Introduction**

- 1.1. Partick Housing Association (PHA) is committed to providing high-quality customer services. We value compliments, comments and complaints and use information from them to help us improve our services.
- 1.2. If something goes wrong or you are dissatisfied with our services, please tell us. If you feel we have done something that has delighted you, or, you simply want to leave us a comment on the services we deliver we welcome that feedback too.
- 1.3. This policy describes our comments, compliments and complaints procedure and how you can make one. It also tells you about our service standards and what you can expect from us.

## **2. What is a compliment?**

- 2.1. A compliment is an indication by one or more customers that they were happy with the actions taken or services provided by PHA.
- 2.2. A compliment may relate to:
  - service delivery standards;
  - approval of PHA policy;
  - actions taken by a member of staff; or
  - service improvements.
- 2.3. You can make a compliment by contacting this office in person or by telephone, emailing [corporateservices@partickha.org.uk](mailto:corporateservices@partickha.org.uk) or at our website [www.partickha.org.uk](http://www.partickha.org.uk)

## **3. What is a comment?**

- 3.1. A comment is feedback from one or more customers regarding a policy, procedure, service standard etc. This can be, but is not restricted to, feedback during a consultation exercise, a feedback session or written survey.
- 3.2 A comment may relate to
  - a proposed policy (including amendments of current policies);
  - consultation regarding service standards;
  - consultation relating to annual rent reviews; or
  - regular customer feedback surveys.
- 3.3 You can make a comment by contacting this office in person or by telephone, emailing [corporateservices@partickha.org.uk](mailto:corporateservices@partickha.org.uk) or at our website [www.partickha.org.uk](http://www.partickha.org.uk)

## 4. What is a complaint?

4.1. Partick Housing Association's definition of a complaint is:

*'Any expression of dissatisfaction by one or more customers or members of the public about Partick Housing Association's action or lack of action, or about the standard of service provided by us or on behalf of Partick Housing Association.'*

## 5. What can I complain about?

5.1. You can complain about things like;

- failure to provide a service, or inadequate standard of service;
- how we met your needs;
- how we communicated with you;
- how long we took to deal with your case;
- dissatisfaction with our policies or procedures;
- treatment by or attitude of a member of staff; and/or
- failure to follow the appropriate administrative process.

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

## 6. What can't I complain about?

6.1. There are some things we can't deal with through our complaints procedure. These include:

- a routine first-time request for a service, for example reporting an initial repair will not be logged as a complaint;
- requests for compensation;
- our policies and procedures that have a separate right of appeal, for example, if you are dissatisfied with the level of priority you have been given when applying for a house, you may have the right to appeal against the decision;
- issues that are in court or have already been heard by a court or a tribunal; and/or
- an attempt to reopen a previously concluded complaint or to have a complaint reconsidered where we have already given our **final** decision following a stage 2 investigation. If you are still not satisfied, you can ask the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO) for an independent review of the complaint.

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

## 7. The value of complaints

7.1. Complaints provide effective and valuable information for us to improve customer satisfaction. This complaints handling policy and supporting procedures will help us address customer dissatisfaction and also, where appropriate, provide learning opportunities to prevent the problems that gave rise to the complaint from happening again.

7.2. For our staff providing customer services, complaints provide us with a first-hand account of the experience and perspective of service users. This can highlight problems in our service delivery that could otherwise go undetected.

7.3. We recognise that if handled well, complaints can be valuable in providing our customers with a form of redress where things go wrong and can also inform our commitment to continuous improvement of services.

## **8. Who can complain?**

8.1. Anyone can make a complaint to us, including a representative of someone who is dissatisfied with our service. Please also read the section below on 'Getting help to make your complaint'.

## **9. How do I complain?**

9.1. You can complain in person at our office, by phone, in writing, by email or submitting comments through our website site at [www.partickha.org.uk/contactus](http://www.partickha.org.uk/contactus)

9.2. 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 any problems on the spot.

9.3. When complaining, tell us:

- your full name and address
- as much as you can about the complaint
- what has gone wrong
- how you would like us to resolve the matter.

## **10. How long do I have to make a complaint?**

10.1. 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, but no longer than 12 months after the event itself.

## **11. Contact details**

Partick Housing Association  
10 Mansfield Street  
Glasgow G11 5QP

Telephone: 0141 357 3773

Email: [complaints@partickha.org.uk](mailto:complaints@partickha.org.uk)

## 12. What happens when I have complained?

12.1. We will always tell you who and how we are dealing with your complaint. Our complaints procedure has two stages:

### Stage one- frontline resolution

We aim to resolve complaints quickly this could mean an on-the-spot apology and explanation if something has clearly gone wrong and immediate action to resolve the problem.

We will give you our decision at Stage 1 within five working days, unless there are exceptional circumstances.

If we can't resolve your complaint at this stage, we will explain why. If you are still dissatisfied you can ask for your complaint to be investigated further through Stage 2 of our complaints process. You may choose to do this immediately or sometime after you get our initial response. We can help you with making this request.

### Stage two – investigation

Stage 2 deals with two types of complaint: those that have not been resolved at Stage 1 and those that are complex and require detailed investigation.

When using 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; and
- give you a full response to the complaint as soon as possible and within 20 working days.

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.

## 13. What if I am still dissatisfied?

13.1. After we have fully investigated, 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 **cannot** normally look at:

- a complaint that has not completed our complaints procedure (so please ensure you have exhausted this process before contacting the SPSO)
- events that happened, or that you became aware of, more than a year ago
- a matter that has been or is being considered in court.

You can contact the SPSO:

In Person:

SPSO  
Bridgeside House  
99 McDonald Road  
Edinburgh EH7 4NS  
Freephone: 0800 377 7330

By Post:

SPSO  
Freepost EH641  
Edinburgh EH3 0BR

Online contact: [www.spsso.org.uk/contact-us](http://www.spsso.org.uk/contact-us)  
Website: [www.spsso.org.uk](http://www.spsso.org.uk)  
Mobile site: [www.m.spsso.org.uk](http://www.m.spsso.org.uk)

## 14. Complaints about property factoring

- 14.1. PHA's subsidiary company, Partick Works Limited (PWL), delivers property factoring services and private residential letting services.
- 14.2. The SPSO does not normally look at complaints about property factoring or private residential landlord services. First-Tier Tribunal for Scotland (Housing and Property Chamber) (HPC) will try to resolve complaints and disputes between factored homeowners and property factors or private residential tenants and private residential landlords. So if your complaint is about a property factoring or private residential landlord service, and you are still dissatisfied after our investigation stage, you should contact:

First-Tier Tribunal for Scotland (Housing and Property Chamber)  
Scottish Courts and Tribunal Service  
4<sup>th</sup> Floor  
1 Atlantic Quay  
45 Robertson Street  
Glasgow G2 8JB

Telephone: 0141 302 5900  
or visit their website at [www.housingandpropertychamber.scot](http://www.housingandpropertychamber.scot)

## 15. Concluding a complaint

- 15.1. Once you have exhausted the complaints process and a decision has been reached by the SPSO or First-Tier Tribunal to not uphold the original complaint, we consider the matter closed. We will only re-engage with you if either body makes a recommendation to do so and/or they uphold or partially uphold your original complaint.

## **16. Persistent or Vexatious Complaints**

- 16.1. We recognise that some complainants will not or cannot accept that we are unable to assist them further or provide a level of service other than that provided already. They may seek to persist in disagreeing with the action or decision taken in relation to their complaint or contact the office persistently about the same issue.
- 16.2. Examples of actions grouped under this heading include persistent refusal to accept a decision made in relation to a complaint; persistent refusal to accept explanations relating to what this office can or cannot do; and continuing to pursue a complaint without presenting any new information. The way in which these complainants approach our office may be reasonable, but their persistent or vexatious behaviour in continuing to do so is not.
- 16.3. We consider the actions of persistent or vexatious complainants to be unacceptable when they take up what we regards as being a disproportionate amount of time and resources.

## **17. Managing unacceptable actions**

- 17.1. There are relatively few complainants whose actions are considered unacceptable. How we aim to manage these actions depends upon their nature and extent. If it adversely affects our ability to do our work and provide a service to others, we may need to restrict the complainant's contact with our office in order to manage the unacceptable action. We aim to do this in a way, wherever possible, that allows a complaint to progress to completion through our complaints process.
- 17.2. We may restrict contact in person, by telephone, letter or electronically or by any combination of these. We try to maintain at least one form of contact. In extreme situations, we will tell the complainant in writing that their name is on a 'no personal contact' list. This means that they must restrict contact with our office to either written communication or through a third party.

## **18. Reporting a significant performance failure to the Scottish Housing Regulator**

- 18.1. 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 many or 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.
- 18.2. 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 at [www.scottishhousingregulator.gov.uk](http://www.scottishhousingregulator.gov.uk) or you can phone them on 0141 242 5642. Leaflets are also available within our reception area.

## **19. Getting help to make your complaint**

- 19.1. 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.
- 19.2. You can find out about advocates in your area by contacting the Scottish Independent Advocacy Alliance on 0131 556 6443 or Citizens Advice Bureau at [www.cas.org.uk](http://www.cas.org.uk).
- 19.3. We are committed to making our service easy to use for all members of the community. In line with our statutory equalities duties, we will always ensure that reasonable adjustments are made to help customers access and use our services. If you find it difficult to put your complaint in writing, please tell us.
- 19.4. We can also give you this leaflet in other languages and formats (such as large print, audio and Braille).

## **20. Equality and Diversity**

- 20.1. This policy has been developed with consideration to the Equalities Act 2010 and seeks not to consciously or unconsciously discriminate or to have an adverse impact upon any of the protected characteristic groups outlined in the Act.



## Quick guide to our 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.

### 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 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.

We will tell you how to do this when we send you our final decision.