

## **WESLO HOUSING MANAGEMENT Complaints Policy**

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The purpose of this Policy Procedure Note is to provide staff and the complainant with information and guidance when dealing with a complaint.

## 1 Introduction

This guide provides information on the way we deal with complaints. Weslo Housing Management is committed to providing high quality customer services. We value complaints and use information from them to help us monitor the quality of our service so we can improve it. All complaints made to Weslo are recorded and reported to the Operations Director who will regularly report to Weslo's Board and Management Team any changes or improvements that Weslo may be making as a result of complaints received.

We recognise that there may be times when you are dissatisfied with our services. It is important for you to tell us so we can put it right. This document 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.

In accordance with the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001, information about our complaints is also included in our Tenant Handbook.

## 2 What is a complaint?

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 Who will know about my complaint?

As far as possible, we respect the confidentiality of your complaint. Whilst we are looking into your complaint your name will not be divulged any more than is absolutely necessary.

You will appreciate, however, that if your complaint involves another tenant or a member of staff it may be difficult for us to look into the matter without talking to that tenant or member of staff. If you ask us not to talk to the tenant or member of staff, we will try to respect your wishes but it may not be possible for us to take any action to resolve the complaint.

We will consider anonymous complaints if there is enough information in the complaint to enable us to make further enquiries. Any decision not to pursue an anonymous complaint must be authorised by a Director.

## 4 What can you complain about?

You can complain about any aspect of our service with which you are unhappy, for example:

- delays in responding to your enquiries and requests
- failure to provide a service
- our standard of service
- dissatisfaction with a policy
- treatment by or attitude of a member of staff or a contractor
- our failure to follow proper procedures
- refusal to give advice or answer questions.

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

Complaints against neighbours will be dealt with under our neighbour disputes procedure. If, however, you have a complaint about the way we have dealt with a neighbour dispute, then you can use the complaints procedure.

## 5 What can't you complain about?

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 a problem that needs to be repeated or initial action on anti social behaviour.
- 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.
- 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 for an independent review of the complaint.

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

## 6 Who can complain?

Anyone who receives or requests a service from Weslo can make a complaint to us, including the representative of someone who is dissatisfied with our service. This includes tenants, people applying for a house, owners or any other customer of Weslo. Please also read the section on 'Getting help to make your complaint'.

## 7 How do I complain?

If you are unhappy about any of our services and the matter cannot be resolved informally, please telephone us on 01506 634060 or call into our offices. You should make it clear at this point that you are making a complaint.

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.

You can complain in person at any of our offices or by telephone, in writing, email or by using our complaints form. It is important to let us know exactly what the problem is and how you would like us to resolve it. Using the form should help you to do this. A member of staff can help you to complete it if necessary. You can obtain a form from our website – [www.weslo-housing.org](http://www.weslo-housing.org), or by calling in to our offices, or telephoning us and asking us to post you a form.

When complaining, tell us:

- Your full name and address
- As much as you can about the complaint
- What has gone wrong
- How you want us to resolve the matter

## 8 How long do I have to make a complaint?

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.

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.

## 9 Repeated Complaints

If you continue to make the same complaint without giving us any new information and we have already investigated it, we will treat this as a repeated complaint. We will acknowledge the complaint as being a repeated complaint, but take no further action.

## 10 Contact details

Housing Manager  
Weslo Housing Management  
66 North Bridge Street  
Bathgate  
EH48 4PP

Telephone 01506 634060  
Email: [complaints@weslohm.co.uk](mailto:complaints@weslohm.co.uk)

## 11 What happens when I have complained?

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

**Stage One – frontline resolution – for complaints which are straightforward and can be resolved on the spot.**

We aim to resolve complaints quickly and close to where we provided the service. This could mean an on-the-spot apology and explanation if something has clearly gone wrong and immediate action to resolve the problem.

To try to resolve the problem informally, the best thing would be to talk to or write to your Housing Officer or any other Officer if this is appropriate and let them know what you would like put right. It is important to let us know exactly what the problem is and how you would like us to resolve it.

We will give you our decision in five working days or less, unless there are exceptional circumstances. Most Stage One complaints will be resolved orally, face to face or on the telephone so we may not need to write to you. However, we will write to you if we think it will help to confirm or clarify the facts or outcome of the complaint for you, or if you request a response in writing.

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 Two. You may choose to do this immediately or some time after you get our initial response. We can help you with making this request.

### **Stage Two – investigation**

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

At Stage 2, we will:

- Record the complaint as a Stage Two complaint
- 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.

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. We will record details of the action taken and the outcome as this helps us improve service standards.

## **12 What if I am still dissatisfied?**

Following a full investigation, 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 make sure it has done so 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 or by post:

In Person  
SPSO  
4 Melville Street  
Edinburgh  
EH3 7NS

By Post  
SPSO  
Freepost EH641  
Edinburgh  
EH3 0BR

Freephone: 0800 377 7330

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: <http://m.spsso.org.uk>

### **13 Complaints about factoring**

The SPSO does not normally look at complaints about our factoring service. The Homeowners Housing Panel will try to resolve complaints and disputes between home owners and property factors. So if your complaint is about a factoring service and you are still dissatisfied after our investigation stage you will be able to go to the Homeowners Housing Panel.

You can contact the Homeowners Housing Panel using the details below:

Homeowners Housing Panel  
Europa Building  
450 Argyle Street  
Glasgow  
G2 8LH

Telephone: 0141 242 0175  
Fax: 0141 242 0141  
Email: [hohpadmin@scotland.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:hohpadmin@scotland.gsi.gov.uk)

They are open from 9:00am to 5:00pm, Monday to Friday

### **14 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.

Significant performance failures are not, therefore, dealt with through the complaints handling procedure. You can ask us for more information about significant performance failures. The SHR also has more information on their website:

<http://www.scottishhousingregulator.gov.uk> Telephone 0141 271 3810

A complaint between an individual tenant and a landlord is not a significant performance failure.

### **15 Getting help to make your complaint**

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.

You can find out about advocates in your area by contacting the Scottish Independent Advocacy Alliance or Citizens Advice Bureau.

**Scottish Independent Advocacy Alliance**  
Telephone 0131 260 5380 Fax 0131 260 5381 website [www.siaa.org.uk](http://www.siaa.org.uk)

**Citizens Advice Scotland**

Website [www.cas.org.uk](http://www.cas.org.uk)

Or check your telephone book for your local bureau

You might also wish to contact a solicitor, the Welfare Rights Service or a Law Centre.

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 have trouble putting your complaint in writing, please tell us.

We can also provide this document to you in other languages and formats, such as large print, audio and Braille. Our contact details are:

Weslo Housing Management  
66 North Bridge Street  
Bathgate  
EH48 4PP  
Telephone 01506 634060  
Email: [enquiries@weslohm.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@weslohm.co.uk)

## A quick guide to our complaints 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.

### Stage One: 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 Two.

### Stage Two: investigation

We will look at your complaint at this stage if you are dissatisfied with our response at Stage One. 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.