

# THE MOSSCARE HOUSING GROUP

## Complaints policy and procedure

<b>Summary</b>	This policy and procedure outlines our approach to dealing with complaints. We will use complaint recommendations to regularly review our service delivery.
<b>Author</b>	Tola Adesemowo, Assistant Director Housing Services
<b>Lead manager</b>	Patricia Carmody, Continuous Improvement Manager
<b>Lead director</b>	Rob Ferguson, Housing Services Director / Deputy Chief Executive
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<b>Policy users</b>	All staff

# Policy Statement

- We aim to provide a high quality service to our residents and applicants, and abide by the requirements of both legislation and the Residents Charter.
- As a group we care about getting things right. However, we are aware that sometimes things can go wrong. If this happens we need to know in order to rectify any problems.
- We envisage that individual staff members can deal quickly with most problems experienced. People will be directed to the complaints procedure if it is not possible to sort out a complaint locally.
- Information concerning complaints will be distributed to our tenants through:
  - the tenants' handbook
  - newsletters
  - a complaints leaflet – 'If you are not satisfied with our services'
  - our website [www.mosscare.org.uk](http://www.mosscare.org.uk) or [www.mossbank.org.uk](http://www.mossbank.org.uk)
- Complaints can be received in a variety of forms, for example:
  - on our complaints form
  - in writing
  - by phone
  - in person
  - by a third party
  - via our website
  - via e-mail
- We will use complaints as a tool for continuous improvement.
- We will give feedback to residents through newsletters, residents' meetings and focus groups.

# COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

The complaints procedure has 3 stages.

## Stage 1

- This is when the complainant contacts us at the Head Office.
- They can do this by filling in the form which is part of the complaints leaflet, writing a letter or e-mail, or making a telephone call.
- The complainant will receive a written acknowledgement within 3 days, and will be given the name of the Manager dealing with their complaint.
- The manager will make every effort to investigate and resolve the complaint within 10 working days.

## Stage 2

- If the complainant is not satisfied with the response they receive from the Manager at Stage 1, they can ask for a Director to resolve matters. This is stage 2.
- They can make their request for the complaint to go to Stage 2 by letter, by e-mail or by telephone.
- The complainant will receive a written acknowledgement within 3 days stating that they are being considered at Stage 2, and giving them the name of the relevant Director dealing with the complaint.
- The Director will then review the complaint and try to resolve matters.
- The Director will contact the complainant in writing within 10 working days to let them know the outcome.

### Stage 3

- If the complainant is not satisfied with the result of Stage 2, they can ask for the complaint to be considered by an Appeals Panel.
- They must do this as soon as possible after hearing from the Director at Stage 2, and no more than 28 days later.
- An Appeals Panel is made up of 3 voluntary Committee members of Mosscafe.
- At this stage all the paperwork on the complaint will be passed to Mosscafe's senior Director with responsibility for complaints.
- They will make initial attempts to resolve matters and/or to agree a convenient date and venue for the Appeals Panel to meet and consider the complaint.
- They will make sure that the complainant is provided with copies of relevant paperwork, together with information on the role of the Appeals Panel.
- The complainant can attend with a relative, friend or representative, or choose to send a written statement.
- The complainant will receive a report of the Appeals Panel's decision within 1 week.
- They will also be informed of the appropriate external agencies to contact should they be dissatisfied with the Appeals Panel's decision. This will include the Independent Housing Ombudsman.

**There are certain principles that are common to all of our complaints procedures. These are described below.**

- The Corporate Support Officer, on behalf of the Housing Services Director, will act as a central point to log and monitor all complaints to every directorate.
- He/she will keep a register that logs the date the complaint was received, and which directorate is responsible for action.
- The Housing Services Director or deputy is responsible for ensuring that written complaints received in the post are correctly marked up for action by the appropriate Manager/Director. The following complaints stamp must be used:

<b>COMPLAINT – MOSSCARE HOUSING GROUP</b>	
<i>Date Rec'd</i>	_____
<i>Date Ack'd</i>	_____
<i>Ack'd by</i>	<input type="text"/>
<i>Action by</i>	<input type="text"/>
<i>Copies to</i>	<input type="text"/>
	<input type="text"/>

- Any staff member receiving a complaint that does not come in the post should refer it to the Corporate Support Officer so that it can be appropriately marked for action.
- All written complaints received by the Association will receive a written acknowledgement within 3 working days. This must specify the name of the manager responsible, and tell the complainant when they will receive a response.
- All responses to complaints must refer to the complainant's right to refer the matter to a higher authority if they are not satisfied with the Association's response.
- The Stage 3 Appeals Panel will normally be 3 members of the appropriate Sub-Committee.

- Each Director will have responsibility for ensuring that an appropriate staff member keeps a register of complaints received and action taken for their department.
- Each directorate will prepare a quarterly report for the appropriate sub-committee, noting complaints received and complaints resolved by type of complaint.
- Should a complaint be received that does not fit easily into the above procedure, the Housing Services Director should seek guidance from the Chief Executive as to how best to deal with the complaint.
- Complaints about our repairs service should be dealt with by the Technical Services section, as they have responsibility for this area of work.
- If any member of staff is involved in a discussion with a complainant about the complaint, a written record must be passed to
  - the relevant housing officer who must keep the record on the resident's or applicant's file,
  - and to the manager or director who is dealing with the complaint, who will keep the record on the complaint file.
- In some cases, the complaint will involve both Technical Services and Housing Services issues. For example, repairs and housing management. This requires a joint response. In these cases, Housing Services must take responsibility for co-ordinating this response.

- Sometimes we receives enquiries from third parties such as MPs or councillors.
  - If this is in the form of a complaint it will be incorporated into the above procedure.
  - If it is simply an enquiry it must be logged on a central file by the Housing Services Director and then dealt with by the appropriate staff member and filed on the tenancy file or applicant file.