



**Making a complaint  
about our services.**

## What to do if you are unhappy with our services and want to complain.

We deliver high-quality services to people we support, and to people who receive housing and maintenance services from us.

However, sometimes things can go wrong, and a person will not be happy about their service from us. If this happens, we want to know about it.

We value complaints and take them very seriously. We can learn from complaints and use information from them to improve our services.

In this leaflet we explain how you can make a complaint to us, how we will handle your complaint, and what you can expect from us.

## What is a complaint?

A complaint is when you let us know that you are unhappy with something we did or didn't do, or with the quality of the service we provided (or was provided on our behalf).

## What can I complain about?

The kinds of things you can complain about could include:

- refusing to provide a service
- not providing a service that we should have
- not providing a good enough quality, or standard, of service
- taking an unreasonably long time to provide a service
- taking too long to respond to enquiries or requests
- providing a service in a way which is unfair, biased or prejudiced
- not providing; or providing misleading, unsuitable or incorrect advice or information
- a repair that has not been carried out properly or in an agreed timeframe
- being unhappy about one of our policies or its impact on a person using our services
- failing to properly apply law, procedure or guidance when delivering services
- failing to follow proper administrative processes
- a staff members attitude, behaviour or treatment of a person using our services
- disagreement with a decision we made.

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

## What can't I complain about?

There are some things that we can't deal with as a complaint, often because there are other ways to deal with these matters. These include:

- being asked to provide a service for the first time
- being asked only for compensation (money)
- issues that have been taken to court; or have already been looked at by a court or tribunal
- you have disagreed with a decision that has a legal process for challenging it, (this could be for things like freedom of information), or where there is an appeal process which is usually followed
- requests for information under the Data Protection or Freedom of Information (Scotland) Acts
- a grievance by a staff member or a grievance relating to employment or staff recruitment
- a concern raised internally by a member of staff (which was not about a service they received, such as a whistleblowing concern)
- a concern about a child or an adult's safety
- an attempt to reopen a previously concluded complaint or to have a complaint reconsidered where we have already given our final decision
- abuse or unsubstantiated allegations about our organisation or staff where such actions would be covered by our Unacceptable Actions Policy
- a concern about the actions or service of a different organisation, where we have no involvement in the issue (except where the other organisation is delivering services on our behalf).

If we know of other ways that your issue could be resolved, we will give information and advice to try to help you.

## Who can complain?

Anyone can make a complaint to us if they receive, request, or are directly affected by our services. This includes the representative of someone who is unhappy with our service (for example, a relative, friend, advocate or adviser).

## How do I complain?

You can complain to us in the way that is easiest for you, for example by:

- Talking to a member of staff
- Writing a letter or email to us (our address is at the end of this leaflet)
- Talking to us on the telephone (our telephone number is at the end of the leaflet).

When complaining please tell us:

- Your full name and address
- As much as you can about your complaint (what has gone wrong)
- What you want us to do to resolve this

It is often easier for us to resolve complaints if you make them to us as soon as possible after something has gone wrong so please talk to a member of our staff so they can try to sort out any problems as soon as the issue occurs.

A copy of our complaint procedure is available on our website [www.key.org.uk](http://www.key.org.uk)

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

Usually, you should make your complaint within six months of the event happening or finding out that you have a reason to make a complaint.

In some exceptional circumstances we might still be able to look at your complaint even when more than six months have passed. If you think this might be the case for your complaint, please tell us why this is.

## What happens after I make a complaint?

Once you have told us something is wrong, we will work very hard to sort this out quickly.

We will tell you the name of the person who is dealing with your complaint.

There are two stages to how we handle complaints.

## Stage 1: Frontline response

We aim to respond to complaints quickly and wherever possible, when you first tell us about what has gone wrong.

Any member of staff can respond to a complaint at this stage, and this could mean giving you an on-the-spot apology and explanation if something has clearly gone wrong or taking immediate action to resolve the problem.

We will do this within 5 working days unless there are exceptional circumstances. If you are unhappy with how we have responded you can choose to take your complaint to the next stage (Stage 2 - Investigation).

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

## Stage 2: Investigation

If your complaint is more complicated and it's clear from the start that things can't be quickly fixed, we will investigate your complaint.

You can also ask us to investigate if you do not want us to use stage 1 to respond to you or if you received a Frontline Response and you are still unhappy.

When investigating we will:

- acknowledge receipt of your complaint within 3 working days
- discuss your complaint with you to confirm our understanding of it, what we will investigate and the outcome you are looking for
- try to resolve your complaint where we can; and where we cannot, we will
- give you a full response as soon as possible, normally within 20 working days.

If our investigation will take longer than 20 working days, we will tell you this and let you know how long we think it will take to get back to you. We will then keep you updated on our progress.

## What if I am still unhappy?

If, after we have investigated your complaint and given you our final response, you are unhappy with our decision or the way we dealt with your complaint you can ask the Scottish Public Service Ombudsman (SPSO) to look at this.

The SPSO are an independent organisation that investigates complaints. They are not an advocacy or support service (but there are other organisations who can help you with advocacy or support).

You can ask the SPSO to look at your complaint if:

- you have gone all the way through our complaint handling procedure
- it is less than 12 months after you became aware of the matter you want to complain about; and
- the matter has not been (and is not being) considered in court.

The SPSO will ask you to complete a complaint form and provide a copy of our final response to your complaint. You can do this online at [www.spsso.org.uk/complain/form](http://www.spsso.org.uk/complain/form) or call them on Freephone 0800 377 7330.

You may wish to get independent support or advocacy to help you progress your complaint. See the **Getting help to make your complaint** section below.

The SPSO's contact details are:

SPSO

Bridgeside House

99 McDonald Road

Edinburgh

EH7 4NS

(if you would like to visit in person, you must make an appointment first)

Their freepost address is:

FREEPOST SPSO

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)

There are some complaints about housing that have a different route for independent review. We will tell you how to seek independent review when we give you our final response to your complaint.

## Care Inspectorate

If your complaint relates to the support we provide to you, you can choose whether to complain to us or directly to the Care Inspectorate.

Visit the Care Inspectorate's website for more information on how to make a complaint through them: <https://www.careinspectorate.com/>

## 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 systemic 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.

A complaint between an individual tenant and a landlord is not a significant performance failure. Significant performance failures are not, therefore, dealt with through our complaint handling procedure. You can ask us for more information about significant performance failures. The SHR also has more information on their website: [www.scottishhousingregulator.gov.uk/](http://www.scottishhousingregulator.gov.uk/)

## Getting help with your complaint

We understand you might feel worried about making a complaint or feel you cannot do this on your own.

You can ask someone you trust to help you do this or to complain on your behalf, and we will talk to them.

You may be able to get support from an advocate (someone who helps people to speak up about things that are important in their lives) or from the Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB).

You can find out about advocacy services in your area by contacting:

**Scottish Independent Advocacy Alliance (SIAA)**

Tel: 0131 510 9410

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

You can find out about your local Citizen Advice Bureau from:

**Citizens Advice Scotland**

Website: [www.cas.org.uk](http://www.cas.org.uk) or check your phone book for your local Citizens Advice Bureau.

We are committed to making our services easy to use for all members of the community. In line with our statutory equalities' duties, we will always ensure that we do what we can to help people access and use our services. If you want to complain in writing and have trouble doing this please tell us.

## Getting in touch with us

You can contact us at our office:

Key and Community Lifestyles  
The Square  
70 Renton Street  
Glasgow, G4 0HT

Telephone: 0141 342 1890

Email: [hello@key.org.uk](mailto:hello@key.org.uk)

Online: [www.key.org.uk](http://www.key.org.uk)

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## A quick guide to our complaints' procedure

### Complaints' procedure

You can make your complain in person, by phone, by email, 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 investigation, we will tell you this and keep you updated on progress.



### Stage 1: Frontline response

You can make your complain in person, by phone, by email, or in writing.

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 need investigation.

We will acknowledge your complaint within **three working days**.

We will confirm the points of the complaint to be investigated and what you want to achieve.

We will investigate the complaint and give you our decision as soon as possible. This will be no more that **twenty working days** unless there is clearly a good reason for needing more time.



### Scottish Public Service Ombudsman (SPSO)

If, after receiving our final decision, you remain dissatisfied with our decision, or the way we have handled your complaint, you can ask the SPSO to consider it.

There are some complaints about housing that have an alternative route for independent review. We will tell you how to seek an independent review when we give your our final decision on your complaint.