

# Complaints Leaflet

We aim to provide an excellent service to all our tenants, ensuring that everyone feels both valued and respected. We acknowledge that sometimes things go wrong and when they do, our aim is to put things right as soon as possible, learn from our mistakes and improve the way we work as a result. We believe that complaints are an excellent opportunity to listen and respond to our residents and other customers in a proactive way.

## What is a complaint?

A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction about an aspect of our service, policies, actions and decisions. This could be due to:

- Delays in responding to enquiries and requests
- Failure to provide a service
- The standard of a service received
- Failure to follow our policies
- Treatment by or attitude of a member of staff
- Failure to meet our stated standards or promises

## What is not a complaint?

A complaint is **not** a first attempt to request a service or an enquiry, nor is it a report of anti-social behaviour.

We will not be able to deal with the following via the complaints process:

- Where more than six months has passed since the event the complaint is about
- Where the complaint is being made about a service failure that should have been reported earlier (e.g. a repair was not reported until it was in a serious condition)
- Any matter which is already being (or has been) dealt with by a solicitor
- Matters that are being/have been dealt with by our insurer
- Complaints that have already been through the process or which in our opinion, are being pursued in an unreasonable manner
- Complaints that fall outside our jurisdiction (e.g. complaints about utilities)

## How can I make a complaint?

You can make a complaint on the telephone, in writing, by email or in person to any member of our staff. We see complaints as an opportunity rather than threat, our staff are encouraged to actively identify complaints.

If you would feel more comfortable, you can also ask a friend or a family member to complain on your behalf. However, you would need to confirm in writing or in person that you are happy for us to speak to them before we respond to the complaint.

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## Who can make a complaint?

- Anyone living in a property owned or managed by PCHA or receiving a service from us  
Residents on estates or next to properties managed by PCHA
- Applicants for housing
- Any person acting with the complainant's consent on their behalf, such as a family member, neighbour, friend, or an advocate, solicitor, advice agency, Councillor, MP or other designated person as defined by the Localism Act, and
- We reserve the right not to respond to anonymous complaints

## How will we respond to your complaint?

We will do everything we can to resolve a complaint/issue informally and quickly as soon as possible. PCHA is a small association and able to be quite flexible and responsive. We will talk to you to try to put things right and sort out the problem quickly. We aim (where possible) to resolve an initial complaint informally within a week. It may be possible to resolve the complaint immediately at the time it is reported or we may need to get further information - for example, visit a property, carry out a survey or get professional advice. If this is the case, we will let you know how long it will take.

If we cannot agree a course of action to resolve the complaint to your satisfaction within this time, we will then escalate this to the formal stage of the complaints procedure, as outlined below:

### Stage one

If the informal approach does not resolve matters and you wish to make a formal complaint, please speak to our housing manager or finance manager, depending on the nature of the complaint. They will investigate the complaint and provide a written response within 10 working days.

### Stage two

If you still feel that the complaint has not been resolved, please contact our Chief Executive who will investigate and respond within 10 working days.

### Stage three

Following this, if you still remain dissatisfied, you can write to request that PCHA's board consider the complaint. You must outline what resolution you are seeking. The board will then delegate at least two of its members to consider the complaint and their decision will be final.

## What if I am still not satisfied with the outcome of my complaint?

If a complaint is not resolved at the end of our internal complaint process, you can:

- Refer the matter to a Designated Person OR
- Wait 8 weeks and refer the matter directly to the Housing Ombudsman

For more information about Designated Persons or the Ombudsman, you can visit the Ombudsman's website [www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk](http://www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk) or telephone them on 0300 111 3000.