

HOMESDALE HOUSING COMPLAINT PROCEDURE

POLICY STATEMENT

Homesdale believes that if a resident needs to make a complaint or register a concern, they have that right, and should be encouraged to do so. Homesdale welcomes all comments, including complaints and looks on them as an opportunity to learn, adapt, and provide a better service.

Homesdale adopts the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code, and its definition of a complaint as follows

A complaint shall be defined as an expression of dissatisfaction, however made, about the standard of service, actions or lack of action by the organisation, its own staff, or those acting on its behalf, affecting an individual residents or group of residents.

You do not have to use the word "complaint" for it to be treated as such.

This policy is intended to ensure all complaints are dealt with properly. When Homesdale receives a complaint we will ensure

- You are aware of the procedure, and how to access it
- It is taken seriously and resolved at the earliest opportunity
- Investigated thoroughly, dealt with on its merits and with an open mind
- Give an apology if a mistake has been made and put the mistake right if possible
- Give a full explanation if we have acted fairly and according to our policies & procedures.
- It is documented in the Complaints Log
- It is treated in the strictest confidence (if in the course of investigations we need to disclose your name we will contact you before we do this)

However, a complaint cannot be considered if

- it is more than 12 months old unless there exceptional circumstances (for example safeguarding)
- legal proceedings have commenced (details of the claim filed at Court, or being dealt with by a solicitor)
- subject to an insurance claim
- the complaint has been considered already

A COMPLAINT OR SERVICE REQUEST?

You may need to ask Homesdale to put something right for you. A service request and a complaint are different. A service request might be a request for action or information, for example: a contractor has missed an appointment, or you would like some information about your rent, or you would like to use the laundry at a different time.

If you feel the request was not handled in the right way then you may wish to make a complaint.

RESPONSIBILITY

Overall responsibility for monitoring complaints lies with the Board of Trustees. The Manager has responsibility for complaints. All staff are responsible for ensuring complaints are dealt with in the proper manner, according to the procedure.

HOW TO MAKE A COMPLAINT

Complaints do not have to be put in writing, they can be made in person, by telephone, email, or letter. You can be supported to make a complaint by another person such as a friend, family member or advocate and this person can accompany you to any meetings. You can make a complaint to any member of the Homesdale staff

Email homesdale@pilgrimsfriend.org.uk

Telephone 0300 303 8485

Write Homesdale, Housing Office, Mountier Court, Homesdale Close, Wanstead, London, E11 2TL

We will endeavour to resolve your complaint promptly and provide you with an apology, explanation or resolution.

If we experience any behaviour that is deemed unacceptable or unreasonable we will refer to relevant policies to manage this. We will assess and take into consideration equality and diversity, individual needs and circumstances before applying any restrictions

Step One

Homesdale will send you acknowledgement of receiving your complaint within 5 working days.

Depending on the problem we may arrange to discuss the matter with you, or appoint an investigating officer to gather information. You may be asked what you want Homesdale to do to resolve your complaint. Homesdale will outline our understanding of your complaint, and any outcomes you require for you to comment before a final decision is made.

Homesdale will aim to give you a full answer to your complaint in 10 working days. If we need longer to investigate, we will inform you of this and give you a target date for a response, this will not be longer than a further 10 working days. The reasons for this will be explained and the details of the Ombudsman will be given. Homesdale provide updates throughout the process, however if you require more frequent contact let us know and we will endeavour to provide this.

The decision will be communicated to you in writing, outlining the complaint stage, the outcome, reasons for the decision, details of any remedy and actions, and details of the next stage if still dissatisfied.

Where further complaints are raised during the investigation, these will be included into the first stage outcome if an outcome and final decision hasn't been given and if the new complaints are relevant. If the stage one outcome has already been delivered or investigating the new reports will unreasonably delay the process, then the new issues should be treated and logged as a new complaint case.

Step Two

If you are not satisfied with the response at Step One you can approach the Assistant Director of Operations.

You can contact the Assistant Director of Operations at complaints@pilgrimsfriend.org.uk or Pilgrims' Friend Society, 175 Tower Bridge Road, London, SE1 2AL. Tel 0300 303 1400. The Assistant Director of Operations will acknowledge your complaint within 5 working days. We will outline our understanding of your complaint and any outcomes sought. The Assistant Director of Operations may also need to discuss the matter with you.

A written response will be sent in 20 working days, and the Director of Operations and the Chief Executive will be advised of the complaint. If we need longer to investigate, we will inform you of this and give you a target date for a response, this will be no longer than a further 20 working days. The reasons for this will be explained and the details of the Ombudsman will be given. You will be provided with updates throughout the process, however if you require more frequent contact let us know and we will endeavour to provide this.

The decision will be communicated to you in writing, outlining the complaint stage, the outcome, reasons for the decision, details of any remedy and actions and details of the next stage if still dissatisfied.

Still not Satisfied

If you have been through all the above steps in Homesdale's procedure and you are still not satisfied, then the Housing Ombudsman can pursue your complaint for you.

The Ombudsman will expect you to have followed all stages of Homesdale's complaints procedure as detailed above.

The Housing Ombudsman
PO Box 1484
Unit D
Preston
PR2 0ET

Telephone 0300 111 3000
info@housing-ombudsman.org.uk
www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk

This procedure can be made available on request in other languages and in other formats such as audio and large print.