



## **COMPLAINTS POLICY GUIDANCE NOTES FOR TENANTS AND APPLICANTS**

### **1. Introduction**

We hope that you will be satisfied with the housing service that the Association provides, both to tenants and applicants. However, we realise there may be occasions when you want to complain about our staff or contractors. Causes of complaint might be about the action or lack of action on the part of the Association or about the standard of the service, or the response of a member of the Association's staff or one of our contractors.

### **2. Distinguishing Complaints and Normal Contacts with the Association**

It is important to distinguish between a normal contact with the Association, such as reporting a repair on a property or making an enquiry about rent accounts, and making a complaint about the service provided by the Association.

### **3. Resolving a Complaint**

Normally, a complaint will be resolved by contact with the Housing Officer, Scheme Manager or another member of staff that you normally deal with. Hopefully most problems can be resolved without making a Serious Complaint, and this will only arise if the member of staff cannot resolve the issue satisfactorily. If this situation arises, you may register a Serious Complaint with the Association within 6 months of an unsatisfactory response by the member of staff that you have been dealing with.

### **4. Procedure for Serious Complaints**

If you wish to make a Serious Complaint you should normally write or contact the Office Services Manager at the Association. It is easier for the Association to deal with complaints that are expressed in writing, and the Association can supply a Complaints Form for this purpose. However, we recognise that this may not be practical in some circumstances, and an interview can be requested with a senior member of staff if it is difficult to put the complaint in writing.

On receipt of a written complaint, or a request for an interview with a senior member of staff, the Association's Office Services Manager will



arrange for the matter to be investigated by an appropriate senior manager.

When replying to a complaint submitted in writing, the senior manager will seek to provide a full written response within 10 working days of the complaint being received. If it is not possible to fully investigate the complaint within this timescale, a reply will be sent within 10 working days outlining what further action is to be taken by the Association.

If you have not submitted your complaint in writing and need to meet with a senior manager in order to outline your complaint, then a full response will normally be sent within 10 working days of this meeting taking place. Again if it is not possible to fully investigate the complaint within this timescale a reply will be sent to you within 10 working days outlining what further action is to be taken by the Association.

If you are not happy with the senior manager's investigation, you may write within 6 months of receipt of their reply to the Chair of the Association's Board of Management asking for a Board review of your complaint. Depending on the nature of the complaint, the Chair of the Board of Management will reply to you, or may appoint two Board Members to investigate the matter more fully. A personal interview may be undertaken with you if this is felt to be necessary. The result of the Board of Management investigation will normally be reported to the Association's Housing & Community Services Committee.

### **Independent Housing Ombudsman**

If you have exhausted the Complaints Procedure within the Association and you are still not happy with the way that the Association has responded to your complaint, you may then approach the Independent Housing Ombudsman Service.

The Ombudsman can be contacted at:

Independent Housing Ombudsman  
Norman House, 105-109 Strand  
London WC2R 0AA  
Tel: 020 7836 3630

### **Trivial & Malicious Complaints**

The Association reserves the right not to investigate repeated trivial complaints if there is evidence that a tenant is being vexatious against the Association and/or malicious against a particular member of staff. In such circumstances



the Association's Housing & Community Services Committee will consider the matter and inform a tenant accordingly.

### **Compensation**

The Association has a Compensation Policy which applies in certain circumstances where we fail to deliver a satisfactory service.

A copy of the Compensation Policy is available from the Association's Head Office on request and further details of compensation in relation to failures to provide repairs can be found in section 4 of the Tenants Handbook.



## COMPLAINTS FORM

This form is designed to help you follow the correct procedure if you wish to make a complaint against the Association.

1. Before completing this form, you should contact your Housing Officer, Scheme Manager or a member of staff that you usually deal with, in order to try and resolve the issue about which you are concerned.

Please refer to the Association's guidance notes.

### YOUR COMPLAINT

Please provide details of your complaint. Please explain why you believe the issue has not been resolved satisfactorily.



2. Would you like to meet a Senior Manager to discuss your complaint and to explain your concerns? YES/NO

3. **NAME** .....

**ADDRESS** .....

.....

.....

**SIGNATURE** ..... **DATE** .....

**Please return this form to Maggie Morrison, Office Services Manager, Christian Action Housing, Benedict House, 61 Island Centre Way, Enfield EN3 6GS**

<b>For Office Use:</b>	
Date received	.....
Valid complaint	YES/NO
For action by	.....
Acknowledged on	.....
Reply sent	.....