

COMPLAINTS

WHO CAN COMPLAIN?

This procedure is for anyone who requests or receives from us, or is affected by what we do.

You can ask someone else to act on your behalf such as a solicitor, ward councillor or a friend. However, we will always seek your permission before we discuss any details with them.



WHEN CAN YOU COMPLAIN?

You should generally report any concern straight away, but certainly within 3 months of the unsatisfactory service has been delivered, or after the incident has occurred.

WHAT CAN YOU COMPLAIN ABOUT?



If you are unhappy about any of the work we do or the services we provide, let us know. This includes the work or services carried out by our contractors.

If the complaint is unreasonable, persistent or vexatious we may handle it differently. If this is the case we will let you know what we will do.

We will only investigate an anonymous complaint if it includes documentary or photographic evidence and is of an exceptionally serious nature.

WHAT CAN'T YOU COMPLAIN ABOUT UNDER THIS PROCEDURE?

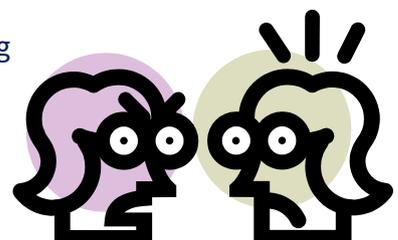
There are some things that you cannot complain about under this procedure. These include:

- Nuisance and anti-social behaviour. These will be dealt with under our nuisance and anti-social behaviour procedures.
- Housing benefit. Housing benefit is the responsibility of the local authority and any complaints should be made direct to them.
- Insurance claims. These will be referred to our insurers.

HOW CAN YOU MAKE A COMPLAINT?

It is advisable to talk to a member of staff who will try to sort out the issue on the spot.

If you are unable to do this you should write or e-mail us giving details of your complaint and when it occurred. If you speak with a



member of staff they will take notes of what you tell us. In every case we will try to get as much information as possible. This may involve an officer coming to your home or, if you prefer, an appointment may be made for you to come into the office and to speak with a member of staff in private.

We will ask you, your contact details and how you prefer to be contacted. We will also ask what happened, when it happened and who was involved. We will then ask you how we can resolve the complaint that is satisfactory to you.

WHAT HAPPENS AFTER YOU HAVE COMPLAINED?

STAGE	PROCESS	TIMESCALES
1.	The Operations Manager will investigate your complaint.	You will receive a written response within 7 working days.
2.	If you are not happy with the response or your complaint is about the Operations Manager, your complaint will be investigated by the Chief Executive.	You will receive a written response within 5 working days.
3.	If your complaint still has not been resolved to your satisfaction, you should write to the Chairman at the Trust's offices. S/he will look at all the information and may arrange to meet with you. S/he will advise you what is possible to resolve the complaint. If the Chairman does want to meet with you, you will be able to bring someone along to support you.	After the stage 3 complaint has been heard a decision will be made and you will receive a written decision within 5 working days of the interview. This decision will be the final decision of the Trust and no further referral of your complaint may be made.

WHAT IF YOU ARE STILL NOT HAPPY WITH THE WAY BRENTWOOD HOUSING TRUST HAS DEALT WITH YOUR COMPLAINT?

If you are still not satisfied with the response from Brentwood Housing Trust you have the right to appeal to the independent Housing Ombudsman. The Trust is a member of the Independent Housing Ombudsman Scheme. A leaflet describing the work of the Ombudsman and how to use the service is issued to every tenant, and will be provided to other users of the Trust's services on request. A copy will be on display in the Trust's offices at all times.

Complainants will normally be expected to have gone through the Trust's Complaints Procedure before making an approach to the Housing Association's Ombudsman, unless it is felt that the Trust's procedure is not being operated properly or is taking too long.

The address of the Housing Association Ombudsman is:

Housing Ombudsman Service
81 Aldwych
London
WC2B 4HN

Telephone: 0300 111 3000

Email: info@housing-ombudsman.org.uk

WHAT HAPPENS IF I DO NOT RECEIVE A REPLY WITHIN THE TIMESCALES SET OUT ABOVE?

In some instances we may exceed the time limits set out above. This may happen if we have to contact other organisations, seek information to help with our investigation or the designated officer is away from the office. If this is going to be the case we will let you know before the target time is reached. We will let you know when you will receive a reply.

CONFIDENTIALITY

All complaints will be dealt with confidentially. Even when someone is acting on your behalf, we will ensure that we have your permission to divulge information. There will be no adverse consequences for complaints, such as taking a service away.

COMPENSATION

We will only pay compensation in exceptional circumstances, where the complaint is upheld and relates to specific expenses or items.

OUR CONTACT DETAILS

Brentwood Housing Trust Limited
The Lodge
28, St Thomas Road
Brentwood
Essex
CM14 4DB

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