



Complaints Policy

Approved by the Board on 9 December 2020

In this policy you are our tenant if you pay your rent to us on a weekly or shared ownership basis. If you pay your rent to another housing association you are not our tenant.

We do not want anyone who lives in a property we own to have any problems. We are willing to help put anything right where we are in a position to do so. If you have a problem with a property that we own and let us know we will respond, so far as we can, in accordance with this policy and let you know what we are doing and why.

This document is available in alternative format, for example easy-read, on request.

1. Introduction

- 1.1. Funding Affordable Homes Housing Association Limited (**FAHHA**) is committed to providing good quality homes and an excellent service. Sometimes things go wrong and, when that happens, we want to put things right as quickly as possible.
- 1.2. We want our customers to have confidence that we listen, learn and take prompt action to put matters right. We strive to provide a fair and effective resolution to any complaint and use what we learn from this process to drive service improvements across our business.
- 1.3. We promote a positive complaints handling culture among colleagues and customers, viewing them as an opportunity to put things right quickly, promote positive customer relationships and provide a learning opportunity.

2. Who can make a complaint?

- 2.1. This policy applies to our tenants. By tenants we mean people who have a lease, tenancy, licence or other arrangement to occupy premises directly owned and managed by us, who pay their rent to us on a weekly or shared ownership basis, including ex-occupiers if they were in occupation at the time the matter complained of arose. We also accept complaints from applicants for properties owned and managed by us.
- 2.2. This policy does not apply to tenants of properties managed by a managing housing association on behalf of FAHHA, or where the matter relates to services provided by a care provider. If you pay your rent to another housing association you are not our tenant. At many of the properties FAHHA owns we partner with established managing housing associations and care providers, who are able to provide a local, responsive and customer-focused service to residents, and have their own experienced, professional staff, complaints policies and procedures. FAHHA works closely with those managing housing associations and care providers to ensure that the service residents of those properties receive meets the high standards we strive for.

3. Policy

- 3.1. A complaint is defined as an expression of dissatisfaction, however made, about the standard of service, actions or lack of action by us, our staff, or those acting on our behalf, affecting an individual customer or group of customers.
- 3.2. We wish to ensure that it is easy for a customer to make a complaint about a property owned and managed by us and so complaints will be accepted via any of our usual contact methods, these can be found here:
 - 3.2.1. verbally in person, by phoning 020 3995 5616; or
 - 3.2.2. in writing, by emailing info@fundingaffordablehomes.com; or
 - 3.2.3. in writing, by letter to:

Funding Affordable Homes Housing Association Limited
18 Savile Row
London
W1S 3PW

- 3.3. Should we receive a complaint via a representative or advocate, permission will need to be provided by the customer, where possible.
- 3.4. If you need any support or assistance in making a complaint, including if you would find it easier to contact and correspond with us by an alternative method to those outlined above, then please let us know so that we can support you, or if you prefer, provide you with the details of other organisations that can help.
- 3.5. All at FAHHA are empowered to accept and handle complaints. Our designated complaints officer is responsible for ensuring complaints are dealt with in line with this policy and our Complaints Procedure. Timescales for responses and the specific process followed when dealing with a complaint are outlined in our Complaints Procedure. These align with the Housing Ombudsman Service Complaint Handling Code.
- 3.6. There are circumstances where we may not accept a complaint or where we may decide to deal with it in a different way to the normal process. A complaint may not be accepted should it fall within one of these circumstances:
 - 3.6.1. where the issue giving rise to the complaint occurred over six months ago. However, where the problem is a recurring issue, we may consider any older reports as part of the background to the complaint if this will help to resolve the issue;
 - 3.6.2. where legal proceedings have been started or are threatened. By threatened we mean where a formal letter of claim or equivalent have been sent to us. However, if there is a delay after a letter of claim and no proceedings are issued we can contact the customer and activate their complaint if they no longer intend issuing proceedings;
 - 3.6.3. where the matters complained of have already been considered this policy. In this case if the complaint has already been escalated through our process, we can refer the customer directly to the Housing Ombudsman; and/or
 - 3.6.4. if a complaint is being made unreasonably or the customer is demonstrating unacceptable behaviour when pursuing their complaint. We have a separate policy setting out how we deal with unacceptable behaviour.
- 3.7. If we decide not to accept a complaint, or to deal with it differently, a detailed explanation will be provided to the customer explaining the reasons why the matter is not suitable for the complaints process, or to outline how we are dealing with it and why.
- 3.8. We will maintain the confidentiality of the person making a complaint. However, where there is an adult safeguarding or child protection issue, we have a duty of care to fully investigate and follow the appropriate procedure which may involve disclosure to the relevant authorities.
- 3.9. If a customer remains dissatisfied with the outcome of their complaint having been through our internal Complaints Procedure, they have the right to take their complaint to a designated person and/or the Housing Ombudsman. We are bound by the terms of the Housing Ombudsman Scheme and will fully co-operate

will all requests for information made by the Ombudsman, work with them in resolving complaints effectively, and adhere to recommendations made to put things right. We recognise that the Ombudsman can assist customers throughout the life of a complaint.

3.10. At the end of the complaints process we will encourage all customers to feed back on the process and will report outcomes, learning points and statistical performance to relevant customer groups, Boards and Committees. Any themes or trends will be assessed to identify any systemic issues, serious risks or areas for improvement for appropriate action. Learning and improvements from complaints will also be included in our Annual Report.

3.11. This policy applies to all tenants, as defined at paragraph 2 above or their representatives. We will comply with the Equality Act 2010 and are aware that not all individuals are able to exercise their rights to raise concerns or complain about the service they receive due to a specific protected characteristic and that we may need to adapt our policies, procedures or processes to accommodate an individual's needs. We will ensure that reasonable adjustments are made as required and in accordance with our Reasonable Adjustments Policy.

3.12. Where possible, and with the agreement of the customer, we will seek to resolve complaints informally and if this is not appropriate or possible we operate a two stage complaints process. Details of the process, what will happen at each stage, and timeframes for responding are set out in our Complaints Procedure.

4. Legal & Regulatory Framework

- Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code July 2020
- Regulator of Social Housing's regulatory framework

5. Related Policies

- Unacceptable Behaviour Policy
- Reasonable Adjustments Policy

6. Related Procedures

- Complaints Procedure