

How to make a complaint

We make every effort to keep standards high.

However, there may be times when our services do not meet your expectations.

Your opinions are very important to us and we want to hear from you if you feel that we have got something wrong or failed to deliver a service to a high enough standard.

By using our complaints process, you can give us the opportunity to put things right quickly and effectively.

What is a complaint?

At Gateway, we define a complaint as:

‘any dissatisfaction about something we have or have not done, or the standard of service we have provided or someone else has provided on our behalf’.

What is not a complaint?

We will not treat any of the following as a complaint.

- Repairs that you have not already reported.
- Repairs that are not completed or only partly completed, but are still within our completion timescales.
- Residents chasing non-urgent repairs for the first time.
- New reports of harassment or antisocial behaviour.
- New applications for transfers or requests for mutual exchanges.
- Requests for advice or information.
- Anything that you have not previously reported on is within timescale (for example, if our timescales say we have to do a repair within seven days, you cannot complain that it hasn't been done until that time limit has passed).

Any complaints must be made within three months of the event being complained about, or within three months of the complainant last contacting Gateway about the issue.

We will not use this procedure to respond to legal action against us. If legal action is taken against us, we will stop any investigation we are making into a related complaint.

Our service promise

How to complain

We accept complaints in any of the following ways.

- Phone – call our complaints number on 020 8709 4313.
We will record your call.
- Letter – write to Gateway, 409-13 Mile End Road, London, E3 4PB.
- In person – at our head office (as above). We will also accept complaints from another person on your behalf.
- Email – send your email to complaints@gatewayhousing.org.uk
- Website – visit www.gatewayhousing.org.uk and click on ‘make a complaint’.

Help with making a complaint

We want to make it as easy as possible for you to make a complaint. If you ask, we will provide:

- translations of this leaflet into other languages;
- an interpreting service by phone;
- this leaflet in large print, in Braille or on audio tape; and
- home visits, if you find it difficult to leave your home.

It helps us if you fill in a complaints form as it is more likely we will get all the information we need.

How we will treat your complaint

We take all complaints seriously. We will treat all sensitive information you give us in confidence, in line with the Data Protection Act 1998.

The complaints process

Our complaints process has three internal stages and an independent appeal stage.

We will try to sort out your complaint at each stage so you do not have to continue through the complaints process. We will record all complaints we receive and report on how we have performed in the residents' annual report. We will contact you once we have sorted out your complaint to find out if you were satisfied with the outcome.

Stage one

We will confirm in writing within two working days that we have received your complaint. We will investigate your complaint and a Manager will send you a full response within 10 working days of receiving your complaint (or a letter telling you when you will receive a full

response if we are not able to investigate thoroughly within this time).

Stage two

If you are not satisfied with our response to stage one, you can move to stage two by contacting us within 31 calendar days.

We will refer your complaint to a Director who will oversee a more in-depth investigation. We will send you a written response within 15 working days.

Stage three

If you are not satisfied with our response to stage two, you can move to stage three by contacting us within 31 calendar days.

We will invite you to meet a panel to discuss your complaint within 50 working days of your request to go to stage 3. The panel will include a board member, one of our directors or the Chief Executive and one representative from the Residents' Scrutiny Panel. The panel will be held at a time and place to suit you and us.

The panel will decide if we have:

- followed our policies and procedures;
- acted fairly; and
- been sensitive to your needs.

We will write to you with their decision within ten working days of your meeting with the panel.

Stage four

Independent appeal

In most cases, you should contact the Independent Housing Ombudsman.

You can contact the ombudsman at any stage of our internal complaints process but we recommend that you go through all three stages first. We do not have any control over the length of time this appeal stage takes.

If you would like a copy of the full complaint process or this leaflet in large print, on audio tape or in another language please contact us on 020 8709 4300

