

When things go wrong

The Sheppard Trust aims to provide you with a high level of service. We accept that sometimes we get things wrong and need to put them right. We welcome feedback and complaints as an opportunity to resolve problems, improve the service, and learn from these occasions.

Some people are reluctant to complain. The Trust can only resolve problems and improve the service if you speak up when things go wrong. If issues arise you are encouraged to raise them with us at an early stage so that we can put them right. The vast majority of issues can be resolved quickly and informally.

You can raise a complaint with any staff member, or someone else may raise it on your behalf. You may write, telephone, email, text/ Whatsapp message, speak to us in person or use the contact form on our website to report your complaint. Our staff will try to resolve the issue quickly and informally in the first instance, but if you request it your complaint will be escalated straight to Stage 1.

It helps if you tell us

- What service you are unhappy with
- What you have done so far to deal with the problem
- What you are seeking as a solution or outcome to the complaint.

Stage 1

If the initial informal response does not resolve the problem, or you wish to go directly to Stage 1, you can ask for your complaint to be treated as a formal complaint.

The Chief Executive will deal with your complaint. (unless your complaint is about the behaviour of the Chief Executive).

The Chief Executive will acknowledge your complaint within five working days of receipt, indicating the next steps and the anticipated timescale to investigate the matter and respond.

If your complaint is about the Chief Executive you should send it to the office marked “Trustees – Private” and it will be forwarded to one of the Trustees to investigate and respond.

The Chief Executive will always seek to resolve your complaint at the earliest possible opportunity. This will normally be within 10 working days of the complaint being acknowledged, and if this is not possible an explanation and a clear timeframe for a reply will be given to you. The Chief Executive will write to you with the outcome of your complaint.

Stage 2: Ask for a review of your complaint

If all or part of the matter is not resolved to your satisfaction, you should write to the Trustees, c/o the office, asking them to review the matter. You should normally do this within two months of receiving the outcome letter from Stage 1. You do not have to give reasons. Your request for Stage 2 will be acknowledged within five working days. The Chair of Trustees will review the investigation documents and a panel of Trustees will consider the matter.

The trustees will respond within 20 working days of acknowledgment. If this is not possible an explanation and a clear timeframe for a reply will be given to you. If a meeting is held to consider the matter then you or your representative will be invited to attend part of that meeting to explain your point of view and may bring a friend or relative with you. After the meeting the Chair will write to you to explain the decision made and any action to be taken to resolve your complaint.

Housing Ombudsman Service.

The Housing Ombudsman Service is a fair and impartial service which was set up to look at complaints about housing organisations. Their service is free of charge to residents.

If we have not resolved your complaint, or if we are not responding to a complaint you have made, you have the right to take your complaint to the Housing Ombudsman Service.

The best way to contact the Housing Ombudsman Service is through their online complaints form which you can access at www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk, or by emailing info@housing-ombudsman.org.uk

[You can also telephone 0300 111 3000](tel:03001113000) or write to Housing Ombudsman Service, PO Box 1484, Unit D, Preston, PR2 0ET (but please note that the service advises there will be delays in responding to post).

You can also access the Housing Ombudsman service for advice throughout your complaint. However, the Ombudsman will expect you to go through our complaints procedure before they consider your complaint.

Our full complaints policy is available on request.

The Sheppard Trust

Sheltered homes for older women in housing need

When things go wrong:

A summary of our complaints policy

We aim to ensure that:

- Making a complaint is as easy and transparent as possible, and there are different channels to make a complaint
- Residents and others who complain are listened to and treated with courtesy and empathy
- Residents will not be disadvantaged as a result of making a complaint
- Complaints are investigated promptly, thoroughly, openly and honestly
- Apologies are made or explanations are provided where appropriate along with any information on action taken to improve services as a result of the complaint
- Complaints are dealt with in a confidential manner which complies with our privacy and data protection policy.