Complaints Handling Procedure

October 2026

Hawthorn Housing Co-operative is committed to providing high-quality customer services.

We value complaints and use information from them to help us improve our services.

If something goes wrong or you are dissatisfied with our services, please tell us. This leaflet describes our complaints procedure and how to make a complaint. It also tells you about how we will handle your complaint and what you can what you can expect from us.

WHAT IS A COMPLAINT?

We regard a complaint as any expression of dissatisfaction about our action or lack of action, or about the standard of service provided by us or on our behalf.

WHAT CAN I COMPLAIN ABOUT?

You can complain about things like:

- delays in responding to your enquiries and requests
- failure or refusal to provide a service
- inadequate quality or standard of service, or an unreasonable delay in providing a service
- unfairness, bias or prejudice in service delivery
- a repair that has not been carried out properly or in an agreed time frame
- dissatisfaction with one of our policies or its impact on the individual
- treatment by or attitude of a member of staff
- our failure to follow proper procedure.
- lack of provision, or the provision of misleading, unsuitable or incorrect advice or information

Your complaint may involve more than one of our services or be about someone working on our behalf.

WHAT CAN'T I COMPLAIN ABOUT?

There are some things we can't deal with through our complaints procedure. These include:

- a routine first-time request for a service, for example reporting a problem that needs to be repaired or initial action on anti social behaviour
- a request for compensation only
- our policies and procedures that have a separate right of appeal, for example, if you are dissatisfied with the level of priority you have been given when applying for a house, you may have the right to appeal against the decision
- issues that are in court or have already been heard by a court or a tribunal
- a request for information under the Data Protection or Freedom of Information (Scotland) Acts
- an attempt to reopen a previously concluded complaint or to have a complaint reconsidered where we have already given our **final** decision following a stage 2 investigation. If you are still not satisfied, you can ask the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman for an independent review of the complaint.

WHO CAN COMPLAIN?

Anyone can make a complaint to us, including the representative of someone who is dissatisfied with our service. If you are making a complaint on someone's behalf, you will need their written consent. Please also read the section on 'Getting help to make your complaint'.

HOW DO I COMPLAIN?

You can complain in person at our office, by phone, in writing, email or by using our complaints form attached to this leaflet. It is easier for us to resolve complaints if you make them quickly and directly to the service concerned. So please talk to a member of our staff at the service you are complaining about. Then they can try to resolve any problems on the spot.

When complaining, please tell us:

- your full name and address
- as much as you can about the complaint
- what has gone wrong
- what outcome you are seeking

HOW LONG DO I HAVE TO MAKE A COMPLAINT?

Normally, you must make your complaint within six months of:

- the event you want to complain about, or
- finding out that you have a reason to complain, but no longer than 12 months after the event itself.

In exceptional circumstances, we may be able to accept a complaint after the time limit. If you feel that the time limit should not apply to your complaint, please tell us why.

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN I HAVE COMPLAINED?

We will always tell you who is dealing with your complaint. Our complaints procedure has **two stages:**

STAGE ONE – FRONTLINE RESOLUTION

We aim to resolve complaints quickly (where possible, when you first tell us about the issue). This could mean an on-the-spot apology and explanation if something has clearly gone wrong, or immediate action to resolve the problem.

We will give you our decision at stage 1 in five working days or less, unless there are exceptional circumstances.

If we can't resolve your complaint at this stage, we will explain why. If you are still dissatisfied you can ask for your complaint to be investigated further through stage 2. You may choose to do this immediately or some time after you get our initial response either within six months of the event you want to complain about or finding out that you have a reason to complain; or within two months of receiving your stage 1 response (if this is later). In exceptional circumstances, we may be able to accept a stage 2 complaint after the time limit. If you feel that the time limit should not apply to your complaint, please tell us why.

STAGE TWO – INVESTIGATION

Stage 2 deals with two types of complaint:

- Where the customer remains dissatisfied after stage 1 and
- those that clearly require investigation, and so are handled directly at this stage. If you do not wish your complaint to be handled at stage 1, you can ask for it to be handled at stage 2.

When using stage 2 we will:

- acknowledge receipt of your complaint within three working days
- where appropriate, discuss your complaint with you to understand why you remain dissatisfied and what outcome you are looking for
- give you a full response to the complaint as soon as possible and within 20 working days.

If our investigation will take longer than 20 working days, we will tell you. We will agree revised time limits with you and keep you updated on progress.

WHAT IF I'M STILL DISSATISFIED?

After we have fully investigated, if you are still dissatisfied with our decision or the way we dealt with your complaint, you can ask the **Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO)** to look at it.

The SPSO are an independent organisation that investigates complaints. They are not an advocacy or support service. You can ask the SPSO to look at your complaint if:

- you have gone all the way through the Co-operative's complaints handling procedure
- it is less than 12 months after you became aware of the matter you want to complain about; and
- the matter has not been (and is not being) considered in court

You can contact the **Scottish Public Service Ombudsman (SPSO):**

In Person: Bridgeside House, 99 McDonald Road, Edinburgh, EH7 4NS

By Post: FREEPOST SPSO

Freephone: 0800 377 7330,

Online contact : www.spso.org.uk/contact-us

Website: www.spso.org.uk,

REPORTING A SIGNIFICANT PERFORMANCE FAILURE TO THE SCOTTISH HOUSING REGULATOR

The Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR) can consider issues raised with them about 'significant performance failures'. A significant performance failure is defined by the SHR as something that a landlord does or fails to do that puts the interests of its tenants at risk, and which the landlord has not resolved. This is something that is a systematic problem that does, or could, affect all of a landlord's tenants. If you are affected by a problem like this, you should first report it to us. If you have told us about it but we have not resolved it, you can report it directly to the SHR.

A complaint between an individual tenant and a landlord is not a significant performance failure. Significant performance failures are not, therefore, dealt with through this complaints handling procedure. You can ask us for more information about significant performance failures. The SHR also has more information on their website: http://www.scottishhousingregulator.gov.uk/

GETTING HELP TO MAKE YOUR COMPLAINT

We understand that you may be unable, or reluctant, to make a complaint yourself. We accept complaints from the representative of a person who is dissatisfied with our service. We can take complaints from a friend, relative, or an advocate, if you have given them your consent to complain for you.

You can find out about advocates in your area by contacting the **Scottish Independent Advocacy Alliance** (www.siaa.org.uk, Tel: 0131 510 9410) or **Citizens Advice Scotland** (www.cas.org.uk or check your phone book for your local bureau).

We are committed to making our service easy to use for all members of the community. In line with our statutory equalities duties, we will always ensure that reasonable adjustments are made to help customers access and use our services. If you have trouble putting your complaint in writing, or want this information in another language or format, such as large font, or braille, please tell us in person or contact us via one of the methods below.

OUR CONTACT DETAILS

Hawthorn Housing Co-operative, 23A Finlas Street, Glasgow, G22 5DB

Tel: 0141 336 2138 **Email: enquiries@hawhousing.co.uk**

Website: www.hawthornhousing.org.uk

QUICK GUIDE to our Complaints Procedure

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

You can make your complaint in person, by phone, by e-mail or in writing.

We have **a two-stage complaints procedure**. We will always try to deal with your complaint quickly. But if it is clear that the matter will need a detailed investigation, we will tell you and keep you updated on our progress.

STAGE 1: FRONTLINE RESOLUTION

We will always try to resolve your complaint quickly, within **five working days** if we can.

If you are dissatisfied with our response, you can ask us to consider your complaint at **stage 2.**

STAGE 2: INVESTIGATION

We will look at your complaint at this stage if you are dissatisfied with our response at stage 1. We also look at some complaints immediately at this stage, if it is clear that they are complex or need detailed investigation.

We will acknowledge your complaint within **three working days.**

We will confirm the points of complaint to be investigated and what you want to achieve.

We will investigate the complaint and give you our decision as soon as possible. This will be after no more than **20 working days** *unless* there is clearly a good reason for needing more time.

THE SCOTTISH PUBLIC SERVICES OMBUDSMAN

If, after receiving our final decision on your complaint, you remain dissatisfied with our decision or the way we have handled your complaint, you can ask the **SPSO** to consider it.

There are some complaints about housing that have an alternative route for independent review. We will tell you how to seek independent review when we give you our final response on your complaint.

HAWTHORN HOUSING CO-OPERATIVE – COMPLAINTS FORM	
NAME:	
ADDRESS:	
EMAIL:	
TELEPHONE NUMBER:	
Please give a brief outline of your complaint and explain why you are dissatisfied.	
Please tell us what you would like to do to put this right.	
If you need more space, please continue on another sheet of paper and attach it to this form.	
SIGNATURE:	**DATE:**

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