

# Complaints, Compliments & Suggestions Helpsheet

## Complaints

We'd like to think that we get things right most of the time, but we know that occasionally things may go wrong. As an organisation that is committed to listening to our residents and improving our service, we really do want to hear from you if you've had a problem.

Anchor Hanover recognises a complaint as 'an expression of dissatisfaction, however made, about the standard of service, actions or lack of action by the organisation, its own staff, or those acting on its behalf, affecting an individual resident or group of residents.'

Our complaints process has two stages. We welcome complaints from anyone who is affected by the services we provide. This includes but is not limited to:

- residents
- customers seeking to rent or buy a property
- family members
- friends, representatives or advocates of residents
- neighbours
- service providers or professionals.

## Getting in touch

Often the quickest way to put things right is for you to speak with the local manager who works at your location. We do appreciate that sometimes this isn't possible, or you'll want to contact us directly, so we've made this easy for you to do.

You can get in touch with our Customer Relations Team in any of the following ways –

- In person via your local manager or another Anchor Hanover representative
- Telephone - 0800 731 2020
- Email – [Customer.Relations@Anchorhanover.org.uk](mailto:Customer.Relations@Anchorhanover.org.uk)
- Webform – [www.anchorhanover.org.uk](http://www.anchorhanover.org.uk)
- Post – Anchor Hanover Customer Relations Team, 2 Godwin Street, Bradford, BD1 2ST or by completing one of our 'We welcome your feedback' forms available at all locations.
- Social Media – using our Facebook page or twitter

Whatever your complaint, it will be dealt with fairly and professionally, and we will not treat you any differently because you've complained. We can also accept complaints from people acting your behalf if you'd prefer, we'll just need your permission to discuss it with them.



If you have a disability which may impact on how we may need to communicate with you then please let us know. We will take all reasonable steps to adapt our normal processes (where appropriate) to accommodate your needs. As part of this commitment our Customer Relations Team will ask you when logging a complaint about your preferred method of contact. We will then ensure wherever possible that we contact you using this method.

### **Our process and timescales: Stage 1**

- We will log and acknowledge your complaint **within 1 working day**
- You will (where possible) be contacted by telephone **within 2 working days** (unless you've asked not to be) by the person who will be working with you to get it resolved. This is to make sure they have understood the issues correctly and to see whether they can get it resolved straight away.
- If it can't be resolved straight away, it will be fully investigated, and you will receive confirmation of the outcome **within 14 calendar days** of receipt (unless a different timescale has been agreed with you). You may be contacted during the investigation by the person handling the complaint if they need additional information, or if they need to provide you with updates.

### **Our process and timescales: Stage 2**

- Once you've received our stage 1 response, we hope that this will resolve the complaint for you. If, however, you feel it hasn't been sorted, you can request the matter to be escalated and a reviewed by a more senior member of staff.
- You can do this by getting in touch using the contact method that best suits you. We'll let you know the outcome of any review **within 14 calendar days**. Again, you may be contacted by the person reviewing your complaint if they have any questions or need to provide you with updates.

When a complaint has been reviewed by a senior staff member and the outcome provided, this is the end of our internal process. While we'd hope that most complaints would be resolved by this point there may be times when they're not.

### **Exceptions to the normal process**

There may be rare and exceptional circumstances where, it is necessary to immediately escalate a new complaint to the final stage of the internal process. This will be at the Customer Relations Manager's discretion.

### **Taking your complaint to an Ombudsman**

This section explains where to go for an independent review of how we handled your complaint.

If you have completed the internal Anchor Hanover complaints process you may refer the complaint to the relevant Ombudsman Service if you remain dissatisfied with our final decision, or we fail to provide that decision by the relevant deadline.

The route taken will be dependent on the subject of your complaint. Please see details for the Housing Ombudsman or the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman..

If the route taken is via the Housing Ombudsman then you must either wait 8 weeks from when we gave you our stage 2 decision or you have first referred your complaint to a local councillor, MP or Anchor Hanover's Independent Customer Complaint Panel (ICCP)

We will co-operate fully with the relevant Ombudsman Service during any investigation and comply fully with the resulting decision which will be binding on us.

Details on all these bodies can be found on pages 4 and 5 of this helpsheet.

### **When we won't accept a complaint**

We will not discriminate against anyone who makes a complaint. If a complainant behaves inappropriately in making a complaint, we will seek to manage that behaviour as necessary, while treating the complaint like any other. However, there will be some rare occasions when we will not accept a complaint, examples of this are given below (this list is not exhaustive):

- Inappropriate or unacceptable behaviour, which is threatening, abusive or aggressive.
- Where the issue giving rise to the complaint happened over 6 months ago.
- The same matters have been fully addressed under a previous complaint.
- Where the complaint is a dispute over the term of a lease or legislation or is a matter that is already the subject of legal proceedings.
- The complaint is disputing the cost or reasonableness of a service charge or sinking fund/reserve fund contribution.

If we do not accept a complaint for any reason including those described above, we will write to the complainant within 14 calendar days explaining our reasons. The complainant will also be told that they are able to appeal this decision by contacting the Housing Ombudsman Service.

### **Compliments**

As with complaints, compliments are a good way of helping us improve our services. They are also great for team and individual morale as we make sure any compliments reach the team or person they're about. We also make sure that managers get to hear about the brilliant things our staff are doing and, where appropriate, use this information to share best practice across the organisation.

You can submit a compliment using any of the methods detailed earlier for complaints. Your compliment will be acknowledged, and we'll make sure it gets to the right person or team.

### **Suggestions**

Sometimes you may want to let us know about something that's neither a complaint nor a



compliment. For example, it might be an idea you've had for improving our services. We'd love to hear from you. You can submit your suggestions by using any of the methods listed earlier.

You'll always receive acknowledgement of your suggestions and may, where necessary, receive some follow up contact from a member of the Anchor Hanover team.

## **Tenants, Homeowners, Care Residents (and their representatives)**

- **Independent Customer Complaint Panel (ICCP)**

The Independent Customer Complaints Panel is made up of Anchor Hanover residents from rented and leasehold locations. These residents all have an interest in providing an impartial view on how a complaint has been handled throughout the process. If you decide to ask the Panel to look at your complaint, they will review all the correspondence relating to the matter and provide a response based on how they feel the case has been handled.

As part of the response sent to you, the ICCP may make recommendations to Anchor Hanover to ask them to act over and above the replies already sent to you, or they may sign post you to the relevant bodies for further review if they don't feel any recommendations are necessary. To ask the panel to review your complaint you can contact them using the following details:

E-mail: [ICCP@anchorhanover.org.uk](mailto:ICCP@anchorhanover.org.uk)

Telephone: 0345 602 5516

Post: ICCP, 2 Godwin Street, Bradford, BD1 2ST

- **Local Councillor or a Member of Parliament (MP)**

You can also refer your complaint directly to your local councillor or an MP for your area immediately after receiving your stage 2 response from Anchor Hanover.

- Names of local councillors can be found in local libraries or by contacting your local Council
- You can find out the name and contact details for your MP by phoning the House of Commons Information Office on 020 7219 4272 or online at [www.parliament.uk](http://www.parliament.uk).

- **Housing Ombudsman Service**

The Ombudsman service has a set eight week 'cooling off' period between the time you receive Anchor Hanover's final response and when you can refer your complaint to them for investigation.

We will co-operate fully with the Ombudsman Service during any investigation and comply fully with the resulting decision which will be binding on us.

E-mail: [info@housing-ombudsman.org.uk](mailto:info@housing-ombudsman.org.uk)

Telephone: 0300 111 3000

Post: Housing Ombudsman Service, PO Box 152, Liverpool, L33 7WQ

## Residents receiving care services (and their representatives)

- **Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman**

For care related complaints you can refer your complaint to the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman immediately after receiving your response from Anchor.

Web: [www.lgo.org.uk/adult-social-care/](http://www.lgo.org.uk/adult-social-care/)

Telephone: 0300 061 0614

Post: The Local Government Ombudsman, PO Box 4771, Coventry, CV4 0EH

- **Care Quality Commission (CQC)**

We are registered with the CQC for all our care services however, the CQC do not investigate individual complaints. While the CQC will not investigate individual complaints, they are happy to receive information and feedback from you regarding our services.

### Care Quality Commission Customer Service Centre

Citygate, Gallowgate, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE1 4PA

Tel: 0300 616161

[www.cqc.org.uk](http://www.cqc.org.uk)

## Other external bodies that can look at your complaint

- **First Tier Tribunal (Property Chamber) - (leaseholders and tenants)**

An application can be made to the Tribunal to address certain types of disputes (such as service charge disputes or rent increases). For a full list of their areas of **jurisdiction** please see the website detailed below.

Contact details for your regional office can be found by visiting

<https://www.gov.uk/courts-tribunals/first-tier-tribunal-property-chamber>

## Useful contacts

Whether a complaint, compliment or suggestion the organisations listed below may be able to provide you with information and/or advice –

- Age UK - [www.ageuk.org.uk](http://www.ageuk.org.uk) or telephone 0800 678 1602

- LEASE - [www.lease-advice.org](http://www.lease-advice.org)

- Citizens Advice - [www.citizensadvice.org.uk](http://www.citizensadvice.org.uk) or telephone: 0800 144 8848