

Ash- Shahada Housing Association

Complaints Policy

Making a Complaint

It is important to us that we listen to our tenants and provide services that meet and exceed expectations. Customers often tell us this and provide us with compliments about the service they receive. However, sometimes, things may not go right, and you may wish to complain about the service you receive. We take all complaints seriously and see them as an opportunity to learn and improve our services and our relationship with tenants. We aim to resolve all complaints at the earliest stage possible to avoid resources being unnecessarily spent.

Our Commitment

If we get something wrong, we want to hear about this so that we can have the opportunity to put things right.

When dealing with complaints, we will:

- Make it easy for you to make a complaint.
- Give you a prompt response.
- Efficiently and fairly carry out any actions required.
- Be fair, polite and helpful.
- Help you fill in the complaints form if you have difficulty.
- Keep you up to date with the progress of your complaint.
- Treat your complaint confidentially;
- Give you the right to a second opinion.
- Inform you about what to do if you are not happy with the outcome.

Who can make a complaint?

A tenant or co-tenant living in a property owned or managed by us.

People who live next door to one of our properties can complain about the behaviour of our tenants, residents and their visitors, and about any damage caused to their property including lack of repair to our property.

What can I complain about?

You can use the complaints process when you have told us that you feel something is wrong and we have not put it right. It gives you the opportunity to put right something we should have done.

You may want to complain because:

- we have failed to carry out our legal duties as your landlord;
- you feel that our policies or practices are unfair;

- you believe that we have not followed our own rules properly or have failed to act efficiently in delivering a service to you; or
- you feel that a member of staff has behaved improperly or has been impolite or that the member of staff has treated you poorly; or that
- We have failed to provide a service.

You cannot complain about:

- anything that happened over a year ago, unless you have only become aware of the situation.
- matters currently being dealt with by the Ombudsman, or where legal action has begun.
- everyday matters such as chasing repair requests.
- complaints by one tenant about another. This is considered as neighbour dispute or anti-social behaviour. *We may get involved if there is a criminal activity taking place, such as harassment or hate crime.*
- Requests for compensation.
- A routine first-time request to have a service provided.
- We will not consider complaints about our ownership of a lease or property in a particular area or street.
- Issues that you have caused directly or indirectly.
- A complaint which is currently being dealt with or is in process.
- Something you have agreed to but have changed your mind.

How to make a complaint:

If you want to complain it is important that you tell us what you want us to do to put things right. Your complaint can be made in person at our office, by phone, by post, by email, or through our website – www.ash-shahada.org. By talking to us, your complaint can be resolved directly and quickly. If you want to make a complaint, we encourage you first to tell us what the problem is. We encourage you to talk to a member of staff. This can help us resolve the problem quickly. A nominated representative can also make a complaint on your behalf provided you have given them consent to make the complaint and you have informed us of this in writing.

Before we consider the matter as formal complaint, we will try to put right, quickly, anything you feel has gone wrong. If we cannot sort out the matter to your satisfaction at this stage, you can then make a formal complaint that has three stages. When making a complaint, you should direct this to your Housing Officer.

When making a complaint, please tell us the following:

- Your full name and address
- Explain in detail what your complaint is about by following the 5W1H method (who, what, why, where, when and how); and
- How you think the matter can be resolved.

Informal stage

If you are dissatisfied with any aspect of our service, you should speak to our staff in the first instance. In most cases, this is the quickest way to resolve issues and it will help us reach a speedy resolution.

We will respond to your initial contact within reasonable time, depending on the nature and complexity of the issues you raise. This will usually be within 1 month; if it is likely to take longer than this, we will notify you.

If your initial engagement does not result in a resolution, is unsuccessful, you can ask for the matter to be reviewed as a Formal Complaint.

Formal Complaint: Stage 1

At this stage, your complaint will be dealt with by the Housing Officer (or equivalent) and we suggest that you put your complaint in writing. You can either post the complaints form or use our **COMPLAINTS FORM** which is on our website. If you need help in completing this form, please contact us.

We will respond to your complaint within 10 working days, but, if this is not possible, we will write to inform you about the delay and provide a date when you will receive the stage one response. This will not exceed a further 10 days without good reason.

We will not consider complaints at Stage 1, if you have not tried to resolve the matter as outlined in the paragraph 'Informal stage'.

If you are not satisfied with the outcome, you can request the decision be reviewed by the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) or equivalent.

Formal Complaint: Stage 2

If you are not satisfied with the outcome at stage one, you can request for the CEO (or equivalent) to review your complaint and the stage one decision. You may wish to involve an external organisation to assist you with resolving your complaint.

The CEO (or equivalent) will send you a written response within 20 working days from the date they received your request for a review. The CEO (or equivalent) may wish to meet with you in the office or in your home to discuss the matter. It is our hope that the matter will be resolved at this stage.

If you are not satisfied with the outcome, you can request that the complaint should be escalated to the Board of Ash-Shahada. You may wish to involve an external organisation to assist you with resolving your complaint. You can get help to make a complaint by contacting the Citizens Advice Bureau on the website - www.cab.org.uk.

Formal Complaint: Stage 3

If you still believe that your complaint has not been resolved, you have the right to put your case to the Board of Ash-Shahada Housing Association. The Board may ask a Board Member

of a panel of members to review the complaint and decision on its behalf. You can take a friend or family member to a meeting with the Board member but not a legal representative or advocate. This stage is necessary because of the independence of the Board and because it is the final decision-making body of the Association.

We will inform you of the Board's decision within 20 working days from when the complaint was escalated to the Board of Ash-Shahada.

Ash-Shahada's internal complaints procedure ends with the decision of the Board. If you are not happy with their decision, you can request the Housing Ombudsman's Service to review the Board's decision.

Please note that the Housing Ombudsman will only consider complaints that have been investigated through stages 1-3 above.

The Ombudsman's address is:

Housing Ombudsman Service
PO Box 152
Liverpool, L33 7WQ

Telephone: 0300 111 3000

You can complain to the Housing Ombudsman's Service at <https://www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk/about-us/corporate-information/policies/dispute-resolution/policy-on-remedies/>

Please use the form below to provide us with details about your complaint. If you need an accessible format of the form below, or if you require assistance to complete it, please let us know.

**COMPLAINTS FORM
AND CONFIDENTIAL QUESTIONNAIRE**

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

If you have a complaint or enquiry about any aspect of the service provided by Ash-Shahada, which has not been resolved, it would help us if you use this form to make your complaint, but please write a letter, or telephone, if you prefer. Send your complaint, with any supporting documents to:

**The Housing Officer
Ash-Shahada Housing Association
Daily Times House
43/45 Coldharbour Lane
London SE5 9NR**

1. Surname

2. Forename(s)

3. Address

4. Day Time Telephone Number

5. Complaint:

| | |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| 6 | The people I have spoken to are: |
| 7 | I would like Ash-Shahada to take the following action(s) to resolve my complaint: |
| Signed _____ Date _____ | |

Confidential Questionnaire on Equal Opportunities

Ash-Shahada is opposed to any form of discrimination. We want to know if anyone is suffering any prejudice because of their race, colour, sex, disability, household or age.

You do not have to fill in this questionnaire but it will help us to see if we are achieving these aims and to help improve our services to you.

Your answers will be kept separate from your application and will be completely confidential. We will use them for statistical purposes only.

I would describe myself as the following (tick one box only)

White British Irish

Other (please give details) _____

Mixed White and Black Caribbean White and Black African White and Asian

Other (please give details) _____

Asian or Asian British Indian Pakistani Bangladeshi

Other (please give details) _____

Black or Black British Caribbean African

Other (please give details) _____

Chinese Other (please give details) _____

I do not want to answer

My colour is: Black White

Other (please give details)

I am: Female Male

I consider myself to be disabled or have disabilities. Yes No

My household is:

A couple A couple with a child or children

A single person A single person with a child or children

My age is:

16 to 25 26 to 40 41 to 60 61 to 75 over 75

Review Date:

Thank you