

Are You Satisfied?

How to make a Complaint



Creating quality choices for communities

## Are you satisfied? How to make a complaint

Herefordshire Housing Group, which incorporates Independence Trust, is committed to providing the best possible service but we recognise that sometimes customers will feel that they have cause to complain about the service they have received.

We encourage all feedback from customers, including complaints, and have developed a Complaints Policy along with a Complaints Procedure.

We aim to resolve complaints quickly, fairly and effectively. We will:

- Aim to put things right quickly for our customers when they go wrong

- Keep our customers informed of the progress of their complaint and the results of any investigation
- Seek to learn from each complaint to improve future performance
- Set performance targets for responding to complaints and monitor our performance against these targets
- Advise all complainants who they need to contact once they've exhausted the complaints procedure

This leaflet explains how to make a complaint and how we handle the complaint once we have received it.

## 1. What is a complaint?

A complaint is when a customer tells us that they are not happy with something that we have done or not done, and we have not put things right.

## 2. Who is a customer?

A customer is anyone who contacts us to request a service, or is receiving a service. This includes tenants, leaseholders and anyone who uses our care and wellbeing services.

## 3. How to make a complaint

Any person wishing to make a complaint can do so in person at any of the Group's offices, by telephone, e-mail, website, letter or by completing a Complaints Form.

You can make a complaint about Herefordshire Housing or Independence Trust in the following ways:

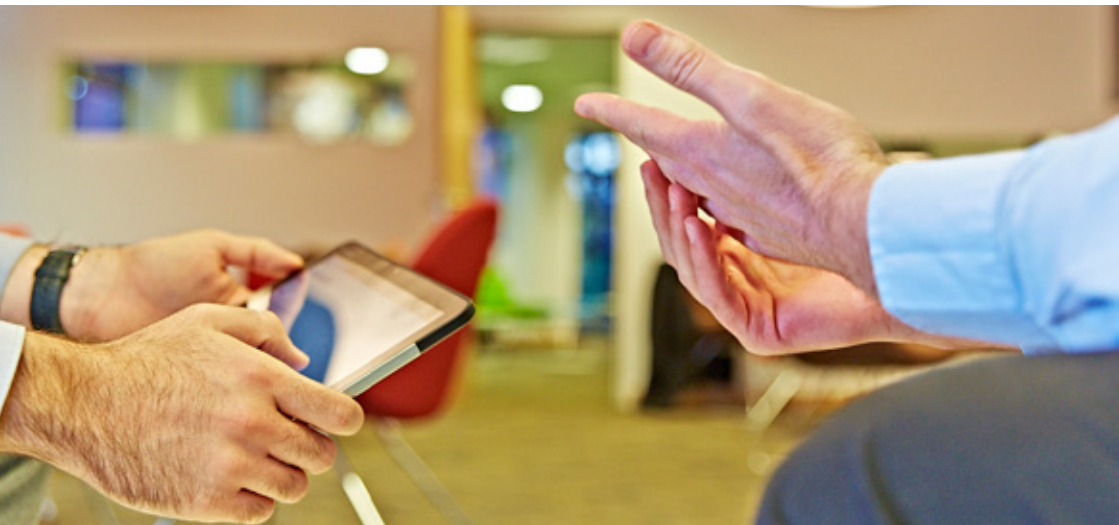
### Herefordshire Housing

- Telephone 0300 777 4321
- Via email: [complaints@hhl.org.uk](mailto:complaints@hhl.org.uk)
- Via our website at: [www.hhl.org.uk](http://www.hhl.org.uk)
- By visiting our main office at: Legion Way, Hereford, HR1 1LN

### Independence Trust

- Telephone 0345 8638323
- Via email: [complaints@independencetrust.co.uk](mailto:complaints@independencetrust.co.uk)
- Via our website at: [www.independencetrust.co.uk](http://www.independencetrust.co.uk)
- By visiting our main office at: 1 Mill Place, Bristol Road, Gloucester, GL1 5SQ

If someone is making a complaint on your behalf, we will ask you to confirm that this is your wish.



## 4. What is the procedure?

Herefordshire Housing Group has a Complaints Procedure and you can request a hard copy of this or you can download it from our websites at [www.hhl.org.uk](http://www.hhl.org.uk) or [www.independencetrust.co.uk](http://www.independencetrust.co.uk)

Once a complaint has been made it will be investigated and dealt with in the following manner.

### Initial Contact

We will make it easy and straightforward for you to make a complaint

If we have failed to carry out a service to your satisfaction or have not responded to you in some way and you contact us, we will aim to resolve your complaint within 10 working days. Our aim is to resolve your complaint at this first contact stage.

Most complaints can be resolved quickly and easily. We will tell you who is responsible for handling your complaint and will log it on our complaints database. If your complaint will take longer to resolve, we will let you know.

We will keep you informed

Most complaints require some explanation and you may wish to have a record of your complaint.

We will ensure you have a full explanation and will provide this in your preferred format

If you are not happy with the outcome of your complaint at this stage, your complaint will be progressed to the next stage.

### Stage 1 - Review by Head of Service or Manager

The Complaints Champion will record all details of your complaint including those from the Initial Contact stage.

- We will aim to acknowledge the complaint at Stage 1 within 3 working days. We will pass the complaint to the relevant Head of Service or Manager for investigation.
- We will write to the complainant within 10 working days with the result of the investigation and a conclusion to the complaint.

If you are not happy with the result of stage 1, you will have 10 working days to advise the Group Governance Manager,

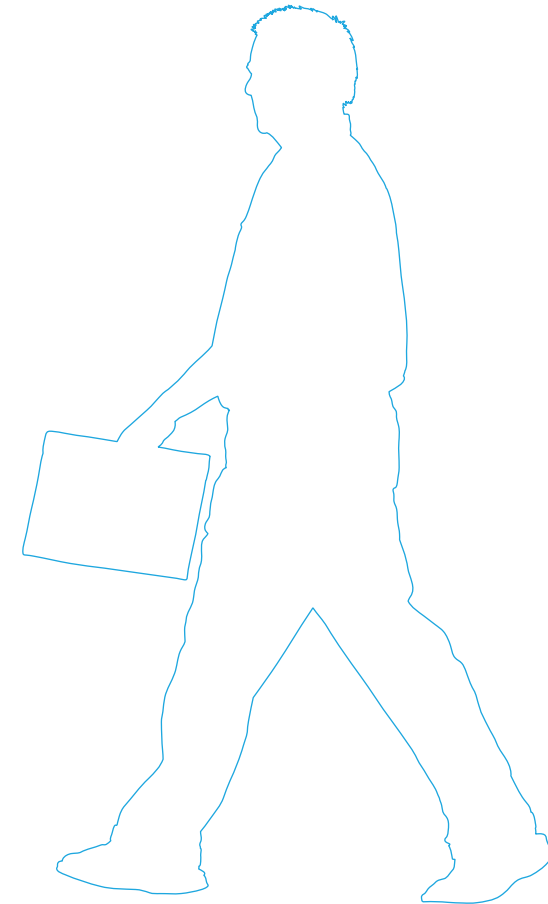
giving the reasons why you remain dissatisfied, and you may request that the complaint be reviewed by a Director or Assistant Director.

### Stage 2 - Review by Director or Assistant Director

We will acknowledge your complaint at Stage 2 and pass the complaint to the appropriate Director or Assistant Director for investigation.

They will carry out a review and will examine all of the correspondence and notes relating to the complaint to ensure that it has been dealt with fairly. They may even ask to visit you.

- They will aim to provide a formal written response within 10 working days of the review.
- The letter will advise the customer that if they are still not satisfied they have 10 working days to request an Appeal.
- The Group Governance Manager will provide information on the Appeals process to the customer and arrange to convene an Appeals Panel.



## Stage 3 - Appeal

Complaints that go to an Appeal will be heard by a Panel, which will be made up of members of the Group's Board of Management.

- The Appeals Panel will aim to meet within 20 working days of the complainant's request
- The Group Governance Manager will send copies of all correspondence relating to the complaint to the members of the Appeals Panel and to you in advance of the Panel meeting
- The Panel will consider all the facts relating to the complaint and decide whether the decision should be upheld or not

A written response will normally be sent within 10 working days of the Panel meeting. This will set out the Panel's decision and the reasons why the decision has been reached. The correspondence will also provide details of the right to refer the complaint to the Housing Ombudsman Service, your Local Authority or the Financial Ombudsman Service, should you still remain dissatisfied.

## Housing Ombudsman Service

If you remain dissatisfied you have a right to complain to the Housing Ombudsman. The Ombudsman will only consider a complaint after it has been through all stages of the internal complaints procedure.

The Housing Ombudsman can be contacted at:

The Housing Ombudsman Service  
81 Aldwych, London WC2 4HN

Tel: 020 7421 3800  
Lo-Call: 0845 7125 973  
MiniCom: 020 7404 7092  
Fax: 020 7831 1942

Email:  
info@housing-ombudsman.org.uk

## Financial Ombudsman Service

The Financial Ombudsman Service can be contacted at:

The Financial Ombudsman Service Exchange  
Tower London E14 9SR

Telephone: 020 7964 1000

Email:  
complaint.info@financial-ombudsman.org.uk

Website: www.financial-ombudsman.org.uk

## Local Authority

Someone in receipt of CQC regulated care e.g. home care or reablement, has the right to complain to their Local Authority if they remain dissatisfied, after all prior stages have been exhausted.

If a customer remains dissatisfied with the care they have received they have the right to complain to the Local Authority.

The Local Authority in your area can be contacted in the following ways:

[Gloucestershire County Council](#)  
01452 425000 [www.gloucestershire.gov.uk](http://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk)

[Herefordshire Council](#)  
01432 260000 [www.herefordshire.gov.uk](http://www.herefordshire.gov.uk)

[Shropshire County Council](#)  
0345 678 9000 [www.shropshire.gov.uk](http://www.shropshire.gov.uk)

[Worcestershire County Council](#)  
01905 763763 [www.worcestershire.gov.uk](http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk)

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**If you require this information leaflet in Braille,  
large print or audio format please call 0300 777 4321**  
**Minicom users please call: (01432) 378 487**

Versions in other languages 

### Polish

Niniejsza ulotka wyjaśnia w jaki sposób złożyć zażalenie. Jeżeli życzy sobie Państwo otrzymać niniejsze informacje w tłumaczeniu, prosimy o wskazanie tego telefonicznie pod. 0300 777 4321.

### Russian

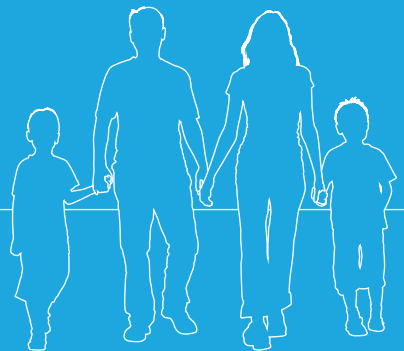
Эта брошюра объясняет порядок подачи жалобы. Если вы хотите перевести эту информацию, то звоните по телефону 0300 777 4321.

### Portuguese

Este folheto explica-lhe como apresentar uma reclamação. Se quiser que esta informação seja traduzida, por favor telefone para 0300 777 4321.

### Lithuanian

Tai informacinis lapelis apie skundų pateikimą. Jei norėtumėte gauti šios informacijos vertimą, prašom skambinti telefonu 0300 777 4321.



**Head Office**

- > Independence Trust, 1 Mill Place, Bristol Road, Gloucester, GL1 5SQ
- > Telephone 0345 8638323 > Email [info@independencetrust.co.uk](mailto:info@independencetrust.co.uk)
- > Website [www.independencetrust.co.uk](http://www.independencetrust.co.uk) > **Part of the Herefordshire Housing Group**