



## Complaints Policy

## **Introduction**

Crosby Housing Association (CHA) is committed to providing high-quality, value for money services. Sometimes things go wrong, and we encourage feedback, including complaints, as a means to correcting failures in performance and improving services.

We try to resolve expressions of dissatisfaction at the first point of contact, avoiding the need to enter into the formal complaints process. At all stages of the complaints process efforts will be made to deal with the matter as quickly as possible

Complaints will be handled in accordance with the complaints process set out in Appendix 1. Copies of this policy will be published on our website and paper copies will be available on request.

## **Aims of the Policy**

The aim of this policy is to:

- ensure that complaints are dealt with in a timely, consistent, fair and impartial manner
- achieve successful outcomes to complaints that are agreed by all parties
- learn from mistakes using the information gained from complaints to help shape services and improve performance.

## **What is a complaint?**

A complaint is defined as an expression of dissatisfaction however made about the standard of service, actions, or lack of action by the association, its staff, or those acting on its behalf, affecting an individual resident, group of residents or stakeholder.

Complaints can include the following: (this list is not exhaustive)

- Failure to provide a service at the standard expected
- Delay in answering a query or responding to a request
- Poor customer service from a staff member or contractor of the association
- Failure to fulfil statutory or contractual responsibilities.
- Failure to follow agreed policies or procedures
- Malice, bias, inequity, or discrimination

The following list shows some examples **that are not** covered by this policy.

- Issues that involve ongoing legal action or a service failure that happened more than 12 months ago
- Requests for a service e.g. the first report of a repair

- Complaints about services not provided by the Association e.g. refuse collection, street cleansing etc
- Complaints about policies adopted by the Association where they are driven by law, the government or regulatory direction
- Complaints that have already been dealt with through the Association's formal complaints process
- Complaints about neighbour nuisance and anti-social behaviour (ASB). This is dealt with under a separate policy. However, it can become a complaint when it is a failure on the part of CHA's service or the way in which the case has been handled

### **Who can complain?**

A complaint can be made by anyone who is receiving, seeking or impacted by a service from the Association.

A representative may make a complaint or deal with a complaint on someone's behalf if they have their consent. See consent form at Appendix 2.

Complainants will also have the opportunity to be accompanied at any meeting with the Association, where this is reasonable.

***Please note: We will act on anonymous complaints, but by their nature we are unable to respond. Anonymous complaints will be included in reports to board.***

### **Making a Complaint**

A complaint can be made using any of the contact methods provided by the Association. However, to enable the Association to track and monitor complaints effectively the preferred method to report a complaint is via the complaints form at Appendix 3.

It would be extremely helpful if complaints could be to-the-point and focused on the key cause(s) of dissatisfaction. If you feel it would be helpful, photos can also be included.

Complaints received through social media will be acknowledged and dealt with in line with this policy. However, to ensure confidentiality and privacy is maintained, communications in relation to the complaint will not be conducted in the public domain.

### **Recording of complaints**

On the working day a complaint is received, the relevant information relating to the complaint will be recorded. We will ensure all relevant details and correspondence are stored centrally as a formal complaint case.

### **Complaint resolution**

We will ask complainants what they would like us to do to put things right and to resolve their complaint from the earliest stage of contact.

Measures to resolve a complaint may include an apology, completion of a service, amendment to a policy, colleague training, a goodwill gesture or re-imbursement of financial losses, will be considered.

### **What happens when the complaint has been reviewed?**

CHA will provide a written explanation of the decision it has reached. This will include any action it has taken to improve services going forward.

If the complainant is unhappy with the response received, they can appeal the decision. Appeals will be handled in line with the process at Appendix 1.

If the complainant is still dissatisfied following a final appeal or the way in which it is being handled, the complainant can formally complain to the Housing Ombudsman. However, if the complainant is dissatisfied with the way the complaint is handled or the time taken to respond they can contact the Housing Ombudsman for support before the final stage has been completed.

The complainant should be given the following contact details for the Ombudsman:

Housing Ombudsman Service  
PO Box 1484  
Unit D  
Preston  
PR2 0ET  
Telephone: 0300 111 3000 Fax: 020 7831 1942  
Email: [info@housing-ombudsman.org.uk](mailto:info@housing-ombudsman.org.uk)

As a heat network operator, we follow Ofgem's consumer protection rules to ensure clear information, fair billing and reliable service for residents. We aim to resolve complaints quickly and fairly. If a resident is not satisfied with our final response, they can take their complaint to the **Energy Ombudsman**, who provides independent support for heat network customers.

### **Monitoring, Delivery and Performance**

Details of all complaints will be reported to the Board quarterly.

Satisfaction surveys will be carried out once complaints are closed and outcomes / lessons learned will be monitored and reported to the Board. Performance on complaints will be published in the Associations annual report.

The Association will use lessons learnt from complaints to contribute to service improvements. To achieve this, it will ensure that learning is recorded, shared and published where appropriate. CHA will also work with Tenants to feed into service improvement proposals.

## **Unacceptable behaviour when pursuing complaints**

Unacceptable behaviour from complainants and/or their representatives when pursuing complaints will be dealt with the tenancy agreement.

## **Legislation / Regulation**

CHA is regulated by the Regulator of Social Housing and is a member of the Housing Ombudsman Scheme.

We will carry out an annual assessment against the Housing Ombudsman's complaint handling code. This will be available to view on our website.

## **Data Protection**

The General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) requires compliance with principles for processing personal data, including protecting against unauthorised access of personal data. Personal data that is inappropriately accessed or disclosed may constitute a data breach. The GDPR requires organisations to keep a record of all data breaches and, where the breach is likely to result in a risk to the rights and freedoms of individuals, the organisation must notify the ICO within 72 hours of becoming aware of the breach. If the data breach results in a high risk to the rights and freedoms of individuals, those individuals must be notified without undue delay.

## **Equality, Diversity & Inclusion**

In implementing this policy, we aim to treat all people fairly. Where customers have specific needs or require additional support, we will make every effort to accommodate them and to provide a service that is open and inclusive.

## **Monitoring & Review**

The HR & Governance Manager is responsible for implementing this policy. The policy will be reviewed every 3 years or sooner if required.

<b>Review Date:</b>	June 2023
<b>Actual review date</b>	27 November 2023
<b>Policy Owner</b>	HR & Governance Manager
<b>Name of Reviewer:</b>	Hannah Wilson – HR & Governance Manager
<b>Change Log:</b>	New Policy  22 Jan 2026 – updated information around escalation procedures for heat network residents.

<b>Approver</b>	Board
<b>Date Approved</b>	<b>27 November 2023</b>
<b>Date due for next review:</b>	November 2026

## Appendix 1

### Complaints Process

#### Stage 1

All complaints are acknowledged within 5 working days of receipt and assigned to the appropriate person.

It is our intention to respond to complaints within 10 working days. However, where the complaint is due to contractor performance, we will need to engage the contractor in the resolution of the complaint and the timescale will be extended to 15 working days.

In some cases, we may need more time to fully investigate, we will let you know if this is the case and keep you updated throughout.

A decision will be made as to whether the complaint has been upheld following stage 1 investigation



#### Stage 2

If a complainant is not satisfied with the stage 1 outcome, they may submit an appeal in writing or via email to [complaints@crosby-ha.org.uk](mailto:complaints@crosby-ha.org.uk). This appeal should be made within 20 working days of the date of the decision.

All stage 2 complaints are acknowledged within 5 working days of receipt and assigned to the appropriate person.

The association will determine the outcome of the appeal within 15 working days of receipt.

Where more time may be needed to further investigate, we will let you know this is the case and keep you updated throughout.



#### End of CHA's process

If the complainant is dissatisfied with the appeal/stage 2 decision, they will be advised to seek advice from:

- a designated person
- the Citizens Advice Bureau
- the Housing Ombudsman

## Appendix 2

### Data Protection Compliance Form of Authority to Disclose Personal Information

I (insert name).....

of (insert full address).....

**Hereby authorise..... (the named person) to represent me and act on my behalf in relation to my complaint with Crosby Housing Association.** \**The named person agrees to provide identification details required in accordance with the Tenants Privacy Policy (where necessary).*

**I authorise Crosby Housing Association to communicate with the named person and provide whatever information he/she may require**

Signed.....

Dated.....



## Appendix 3

## Complaints Form

## PERSONAL DETAILS

Title \_\_\_\_\_ Forename/s \_\_\_\_\_ Surname \_\_\_\_\_

**Address** \_\_\_\_\_ **Postcode** \_\_\_\_\_

**Contact number** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Email address** \_\_\_\_\_

**Please select preferred method of contact:**  **Telephone**  **Email**  **Post**

**Telephone**  **Email**  **Post**

**Are you (please tick as appropriate):**

A Crosby Housing Association tenant  An applicant for re-housing

Other

## Complaint Details

**State the nature of your complaint & include dates / times if appropriate:**

(Please be to-the-point and focus on the key cause(s) of dissatisfaction)

**Have you previously reported this matter to a member of staff?**

**Please select:** Yes  No

**If yes, please provide whom this matter was reported to and the outcome:**

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**What would you like us to do to put things right and resolve your complaint?**

**Please provide details below:**

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**If we need further information, when would be best to contact you?**

**Please select:**

Monday - AM  PM  | Tuesday - AM  PM   
Wednesday - AM  PM  | Thursday - AM  PM   
Friday - AM  PM

**Declaration**

**The details provided in this document are a true reflection.**

**Signed** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date** \_\_\_\_\_

**Please return this form to:  
HR & Governance Manager  
Crosby Housing Association, 10 Church Road, Waterloo, L22 5NB**

**Tel: 0151 920 7300  
Email: [complaints@crosby-ha.org.uk](mailto:complaints@crosby-ha.org.uk)**

**For office use only**

**Date received: \_\_\_\_\_ Date acknowledged: \_\_\_\_\_ Staff member: \_\_\_\_\_**

## EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES MONITORING

Crosby Housing Association is committed to providing equality of opportunity and we ask you to give the following information for statistical purposes only. It will be detached from your complaints form and recorded separately from your personal details. Failure to return this form, will not affect any issues raised.

### GENDER

Man  Woman  Intersex  Non-binary  Prefer not to say

If you prefer to use your own term, please specify here \_\_\_\_\_

### AGE

16-24  25-29  30-34  35-39  40-44  45-49   
50-54  55-59  60-64  65+  Prefer not to say

### ETHINICITY

Ethnic origin is not about nationality, place of birth or citizenship. It is about the group to which you perceive you belong. Please tick the appropriate box

#### White

English  Welsh  Scottish  Northern Irish  Irish

British  Gypsy or Irish Traveller  Prefer not to say

Any other white background, please write in: \_\_\_\_\_

#### Mixed/multiple ethnic groups

White and Black Caribbean  White and Black African  White and Asian

Prefer not to say

Any other mixed background, please write in: \_\_\_\_\_

#### Asian/Asian British

Indian  Pakistani  Bangladeshi  Chinese  Prefer not to say

Any other Asian background, please write in: \_\_\_\_\_

#### Black/ African/ Caribbean/ Black British

African  Caribbean  Prefer not to say

Any other Black/African/Caribbean background please write in: \_\_\_\_\_

#### **Other ethnic group**

Arab  Prefer not to say

Any other ethnic group, please write in: \_\_\_\_\_

### **SEXUAL ORIENTATION**

#### **What is your sexual orientation?**

Heterosexual  Gay  Lesbian  Bisexual

Prefer not to say

If you prefer to use your own term, please write in: \_\_\_\_\_

### **RELIGION**

#### **What is your religion or belief?**

No religion or belief  Buddhist  Christian  Hindu  Jewish

Muslim  Sikh  Prefer not to say

If other religion or belief, please write in: \_\_\_\_\_

### **DISABILITY**

The Equality act 2010 defines a person as disabled if: they have a physical or mental impairment, the impairment has a substantial and long term adverse effect on their ability to perform normal day-to-day activities.

A long term effect is one which has:

- 1) Lasted at least 12 months
- 2) Is likely to last a period of at least 12 months, or
- 3) Is likely to last for the rest of the life of a person affected.

Given this definition, would you describe yourself as having a disability?

Yes  No

### **CARING RESPONSIBILITIES**

#### **Do you have caring responsibilities? If yes, please tick all that apply**

None  Primary carer of a child/children (under 18)

Primary carer of disabled child/children

Primary carer of disabled adult (18 and over)  Primary carer of older person

Secondary carer (another person carries out the main caring role)

Prefer not to say