

## **COMPLAINTS POLICY**

### **1. Policy Statement**

Black Country Housing Group (the Group) is committed to providing a high quality, accessible and responsive service to its customers. Listening to and responding to feedback, good or bad, is one of the ways in which we continue to improve our services to our customers.

This policy is intended to ensure that complaints are dealt with fairly, and that all feedback, regardless of its nature, is taken seriously.

The Group will listen to, acknowledge and investigate all complaints. It supports the idea that most complaints, if dealt with early, openly and honestly, can be sorted out quickly and efficiently between the customer and the organisation.

### **2. Scope**

This policy applies to all of the Group's customers, service users and clients that use or are affected by its services, whether those services are delivered by staff, volunteers or third party suppliers.

### **3. Related or Relevant Policy / Procedures or Other Documents**

Complaints Procedure  
Diversity Strategy  
Service Standards  
Communications Strategy  
Data Protection Policy  
Whistleblowing Policy  
Hate Incidents Policy  
CQC Fundamental Standards

### **4. Definitions**

A formal complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction about the Group's action or lack of action, or about the standard of a service, whether the action was taken or the service was provided by the Group itself or someone acting on our behalf, after the Group has had the opportunity to put things right.

A complaint is not a request for service to be delivered, such as first repair or report of neighbour nuisance.

A compliment is positive feedback or praise about a service provided by the Group or someone acting on our behalf.

A comment is written or spoken discussion, analysis, or criticism on any part of a service delivered by the Group or someone acting on its behalf or a suggestion on how a service can be improved.

## **5. Responsibilities**

Heads of Service are responsible for overseeing the implementation of this Policy and all colleagues are responsible for the operation of this Policy.

## **6. Designated Person**

This is a mediator and the Group has appointed its Deputy Chair of the Board of Management as the Designated Person. At the request of the complainant the Designated Person can review the investigation and can refer a complaint to the Housing Ombudsman on behalf of the complainant in the event that the problem is unresolved by the Group's officers.

## **7. Aim of the Complaints Procedure**

The Group aims to ensure its complaints procedure is properly and effectively operated and that its customers feel confident that their complaints are listened to and acted upon quickly and fairly.

Specifically it aims to ensure that:

1. customers, clients, service users and their representatives, are aware of how to make a complaint and that we provide easy to use opportunities for them to register their complaints
2. all feedback is acknowledged within 3 working days
3. all complaints are fully investigated, with focus on facts and evidence, and responded to in writing by a date agreed with the complainant
4. complaints are dealt with quickly, fairly and sensitively, with due regard to both staff and customers
5. any wrongdoing is remedied
6. the process itself is fair and transparent

## **8. Consumer Credit Related Complaints**

BCHG is authorised by the Financial Conduct Authority to carry out consumer credit-related services for our tenants. These services are Not for Profit Debt Counselling or Not for Profit Debt Adjusting. **Appendix 1** sets out the details of how we handle consumer credit related complaints.

## **8. Confidentiality**

All feedback will be treated confidentially. Anonymous requests will be investigated, however we will encourage that contact details be provided so that the complainant can be informed of the outcome.

## **10. Recording and reporting**

All complaints, compliments and comments received about any service delivered by the Group will be recorded electronically in a central location. The Executive Directors monitor complaints monthly and our performance is also reported to the Group's Audit & Risk Committee quarterly as part of the Governance framework.

## 11. Equality Statement

The Group aims to handle all complaints fairly and honestly regardless of who makes them. The Group treats all members of the community equally and will not show bias to any particular individual or group.

Date Reviewed	<a href="#">April 2016</a>	Next Review Date	<a href="#">April 2018</a>
Reviewed By	<a href="#">S Woods</a>	Approval By	<a href="#">Exec Team</a>
Consultation	<a href="#">Leaders / Managers</a>	Responsible Officer	<a href="#">Head of Corporate Services</a>
Distribution	<a href="#">Extranet / Web</a>	Version No.	<a href="#">04</a>

## Appendix 1

### Consumer Credit Related Complaints Policy

The Financial Conduct Authority requires us to have a Complaints Policy and to be a member of the Financial Ombudsman Service. On receipt of a complaint we will do all we can to resolve the complaint by the end of the next business day. If this isn't possible, we'll write to the customer within five working days to tell them what we have done to resolve the problem, or to acknowledge the complaint and let the customer know when they can expect a full response. The acknowledgement letter must include a copy of the complaints process, including details of the Financial Ombudsman Service and a copy of their leaflet "Your Complaint and the Ombudsman".

We will let the customer know the name and contact details of the person or team dealing with their case. If we can't offer a full response after 5 days we will aim to respond within 4 weeks of the date of the complaint. If, due to the complexity of the complaint this isn't possible, no later than 4 weeks from the date of the original complaint, we will write to confirm when the customer can expect our final response.

Our final response should be sent in writing no later than 8 weeks from the date we originally received the complaint. If we haven't issued our final response within eight weeks from the date of the complaint, or if the customer is dissatisfied with our response, they can ask the Financial Ombudsman Service for an independent review. The Financial Ombudsman Service will only consider a complaint once the customer has tried to resolve it with us.

You can contact the Financial Ombudsman Service in a number of ways:

**Telephone:** You can telephone the Financial Ombudsman Service on:

- Tel: 0800 023 4 567 -Calls to this number are free on mobile phones and landlines.
- Tel: 0300 123 9 123 -Calls to this number are charged at local rate and cost no more than calls to 01 and 02 numbers. Phone lines are open Monday to Friday – 8am to 8pm and Saturday – 9am to 1pm. These numbers may not be available outside the UK. To call from abroad please dial: +44 20 7964 0500. The Financial Ombudsman Service will be happy to phone you back, if you're worried about the cost of calling them.

**Text Message:** Customers can send a text message on 07860 027 586 and the Financial Ombudsman Service will call them back. Customers should make sure that no personal information (such as account numbers) is included in the text message.

**Online enquiry:** Please use this form for general enquires about the Financial Ombudsman Service and how they can help. [www.financial-ombudsman.org.uk](http://www.financial-ombudsman.org.uk)

**Email:** Emails should be sent to: [complaint.info@financial-ombudsman.org.uk](mailto:complaint.info@financial-ombudsman.org.uk)

**In writing:** If you would like to write to the Financial Ombudsman Service, please address any letters to:

The Financial Ombudsman Service.  
Exchange Tower,  
London,  
E14 9SR

## COMPLAINTS POLICY

Everyone hopes that you are happy 😊

If you are sad 😞 tell your key workers

Do you feel happy? 😊

If you are still sad 😞 tell the manager if you want to

We hope that you feel happy 😊, but if you are still sad 😞 then you can tell the boss

If you make a complaint we will respond within 28 days.