

Wolverhampton Homes Complaints Policy 2026 - 2027

Monitoring and review

Document owner	Approved by	Authorised by	Effective date	Review date
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Document History

Version	Summary of changes	Document Status	Date
1.0	Refresh and inclusion of Customer Involvement Panel	Draft	2025
2.0	Annual review	Approved	2025
3.0	Amendments	Draft	February 2026

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1.0 Purpose and scope

1.1 Wolverhampton Homes are committed to providing a high-quality customer resolution service, dealing with complaints in a fair and impartial way.

1.2 By proactively listening to customers where things have not gone right by dealing with complaints about our services, we are able to make improvements based on the feedback we receive. We use this feedback to learn from our mistakes and to make improvements to service delivery.

1.3 The policy sets out clear processes and timeframes to help customers understand how we will investigate a complaint and how we will respond. This policy has been developed in line with dispute resolution principles recommended by the Housing Ombudsman, which are to:

- be fair – treat people fairly and follow fair process.
- put things right.
- learn from outcomes.

1.4 The complaints policy aims to set out a clear and fair process for the handling of complaints and dealing with all complainants in a transparent, consistent, fair, and reasonable way.

1.5 In a small number of cases where complainants, either individually or on behalf of someone they represent, pursue their complaint in an unreasonable and persistent way, will be dealt with through the Persistent or Unreasonable Complainant Policy.

2.0 What is a complaint

2.1 Under this policy, the definition of a complaint is:

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.

3.0 Who can make a complaint

3.1 A customer can make a complaint if they are affected by the action, or they can give consent for somebody else to act on their behalf.

3.2 Complaints can also be made by Designated Persons as defined by the Localism Act 2011. A Designated Person can be an MP, a local councillor, or a tenant panel member and they can intervene on a customer's behalf to help to resolve a complaint.

4.0 Complaints that cannot be dealt with under this policy

4.1 There are certain types of complaints that are not covered by this policy, and these will not be considered or escalated as a complaint. They are:

- anonymous complaints.
- where the issue is a service request unless the complaint is relating to a response to a service request.
- a complaint that has already been fully investigated in line with this policy.
- a complaint made by an employee about any matter relating to their employment.
- when the issue took place more than twelve months ago.
- where we have specific arrangements with a customer, in line with our Persistent or Unreasonable Complainants Policy.
- complaints that are being pursued in an unreasonable manner.
- complaints which are subject to legal action, where action has commenced following the pre-action protocol.
- complaints which are being dealt with as insurance claims; until the outcome of the claim is confirmed.

5.0 How to make a complaint

5.1 Information about making a complaint or giving feedback can be found on our website: <https://www.wolverhamptonhomes.org.uk/giving-feedback>

5.2 Complaints can be made in any one of the following methods:

- [Through our My Account app](#)
- Online at:
<https://www.wolverhamptonhomes.org.uk/feedback-form>
- by calling our Customer Contact and Access centre on 01902 556789
- In writing to:

Wolverhampton Homes Head Office
Alfred Squire Road
Wednesfield
Wolverhampton
WV11 1XU

- Via a friend, relative, a trusted person or an advocate such as a Member of Parliament or Councillor who can contact us on the customer's behalf. In these cases, we will need customer consent to discuss any issues.

5.3 We ask customers to let us know if they need any help in making a complaint and our Customer Resolution Team will be able to support them.

5.4 Where a complaint raises issues that fall within the responsibility of both the City of Wolverhampton Council and Wolverhampton Homes, we will agree with the council who will lead the investigation. We will let the customer know how their complaint will be handled, and the reply will be approved by both organisations before it is sent.

6.0 Putting things right

6.1 We aim to resolve expressions of dissatisfaction quickly, wherever possible at first point of contact. If the matter cannot be resolved quickly, we follow a two-stage complaints process detailed at Stage 1 and Stage 2. If we have made a mistake, there are several ways we can try to put it right. This includes:

- speaking to the customer over the telephone or in person to ensure we are clear about the concerns.
- making an apology.
- giving a full explanation.
- reviewing a decision that has already been made.
- reviewing our procedures.
- consider and advise on financial compensation.
- advise how we have learnt from this and what action we have taken to ensure this does not happen again.

We will consider each case on its own merits and offer the most suitable remedy to resolve the issue, to take steps to put things right, and to learn and make service improvements.

7.0 Complaints process

7.1 **Stage 1** - we aim to resolve all complaints at this stage.

We will acknowledge the Stage 1 complaint within five working days of this being received. We will contact the customer to discuss the complaint, how we can work to resolve it and to confirm the desired outcome. We will check on any customer support needs to help identify any reasonable adjustments that may be required in the handling of the complaint. Once a complaint is received, this will be reviewed and assigned to the relevant service lead for investigation. We will aim to resolve the matter at the earliest point.

We will aim to respond fully in writing within 10 working days from the day the complaint was acknowledged. Acknowledgement will be made within 5 days of receipt of the complaint. The service lead will provide all information to the Customer Resolution Team, including whether each element of the complaint is upheld or not.

Where we require additional time to investigate the complaint, we will contact the customer within 10 days of the complaint being received to provide the reasons for the delay and to agree any extension and to provide a new response date. Any extension will be no longer than an additional 10 working days.

7.2 **Stage 2** - If a customer is not satisfied with the response given at Stage 1, they can ask us to review our original investigation. The customer will need to explain how the complaint meets one of the following criteria:

- The issue was not properly addressed at Stage 1 of the process.
- There was something inaccurate in the response given.
- The customer has new information or evidence to give to us that was not available originally.

Should the above criteria not be met, we may decide not to escalate a complaint to Stage 2, however we will clearly explain the reason for this decision in writing to the customer.

We ask customers to contact us within 20 working days of the Stage 1 response, should they wish to progress to Stage 2 of the complaints process.

The Stage 2 complaint will be acknowledged within 5 working days. We will contact the customer to discuss the complaint and how we can work to resolve it. Once a complaint is received, this will be reviewed and assigned to the relevant Head of Service for investigation. We will aim to resolve the matter at the earliest point.

The Head of Service will review the original complaint response to ensure the initial investigation was thorough and that the complaints policy and procedure has been applied correctly. If they are satisfied that it did, the original decision will be upheld.

We will respond fully within 20 working days from the day the Stage 2 complaint was acknowledged, to confirm our decision. Acknowledgement will be made within 5 days of receipt of the complaint.

Where we require additional time to investigate the complaint, we will contact the customer within 10 days of the complaint being received to provide the reasons for the delay and to agree any extension and to provide a new response date. Any extension will be no longer than an additional 20 working days.

This is the end of our Stage 1 and 2 complaints process.

8.0 What to do if dissatisfied with the outcome of the complaint response

8.1 If a customer is still dissatisfied with the response they have received, they can choose to refer their complaint to a designated person, such as a Member of Parliament or Councillor.

8.2 The customer is also able to refer the case to the relevant Ombudsman and where this is the appropriate body for the complaint, details of how to contact them will be provided in our Stage 2 response letter.

8.3 The Housing Ombudsman is responsible for complaints about council or housing association landlords. They can review how a complaint has been dealt with. The Ombudsman decides if a landlord acted properly and followed the correct procedures.

8.4 The Housing Ombudsman can be contact by telephone on 0300 111 3000 or email at [Contact us - Housing Ombudsman \(housing-ombudsman.org.uk\)](mailto:contact@housing-ombudsman.org.uk)

9.0 Learning from complaints

9.1 Customer satisfaction is very important to us, and we use feedback, including learning from complaints to shape improvements to our services and processes.

9.2 Wolverhampton Homes produce an annual report which details our complaints performance and reflects how we have improved services in line with customer feedback. We also publish our learning from complaints on our website.

10.0 Persistent or unreasonable complaints

10.1 Where an individual or group make persistent complaints about different matters, or repeated complaints about the same issue – either while their complaint is being investigated, or once the investigation has been completed we may consider this as Persistent or Unreasonable.

10.2 These types of complaints will be handled in line with our Persistent or Unreasonable Complainants Policy. Where a complaint is considered unreasonable, it is still important to ensure that the customer can access our services, including the complaints service.

10.3 There are options available to staff to enable them to manage unreasonable complaints effectively and fairly, with minimal disruption to other customers.

11.0 Policy review

11.1 We aim to review this policy on an annual basis or in line with changes in legislation, regulation or business requirements.

11.2 The Housing Ombudsman requires landlords to self-assess against the Complaint Handling Code on an annual basis and publish this on their website. WH comply with this.

11.3 Our Customer Involvement Panel provide feedback to ensure our policy meets the needs and expectations of our customers and they regularly review our complaint handling process and performance.

12.0 Privacy and personal data

12.1 Customer privacy is important to us, and we are therefore committed to handling personal data in accordance with the provisions of the Data Protection Act 2018, UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) and any subsequent changes to data protection legislation.

12.2 Our privacy policy can be found on our website:
<https://www.wolverhamptonhomes.org.uk/privacy>

13.0 Discretionary payments

13.1 Wolverhampton Homes aims to be fair and proportionate in its response to resolving issues arising from complaints and in doing so may consider a gesture of a good will 'without prejudice' to be considered by way of a compensation payment.

13.2 The factors taken into account when deciding the overall amount include the:

- duration of any avoidable distress or inconvenience.
- seriousness of any other unfair impact.

13.3 Should a discretionary goodwill payment be awarded, the value will be offset against any outstanding balances owed in the first instance, including but not exclusive to rent arrears or repair recharges.

14.0 Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

14.1 This policy details the multiple ways that a complaint can be made, including via an advocate. This will support the removal of barriers ensuring fair and equal access to the process for all.

14.2 All reasonable adjustments will be made if disability is considered a factor in the ability of our customer to make a complaint.

14.3 Our aim is to make the Complaints policy easy to use and accessible to all of our customers in line with the Equality Act 2010.