

# Lumen Customer Complaints Guide



Lumen Housing views complaints as an opportunity to learn from the issues raised by our residents and improve for the future. We know that things can go wrong and when they do, we want you to tell us so that we can try to put things right.

## **Our Commitment To You**

We are committed to making our complaints process accessible to all and can offer help and support to ensure any concerns from customers are listened to and understood.

This document provides a summary of Lumen's Complaints Policy.

## **Our Complaints Process**

A complaint is defined as:

*"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."*

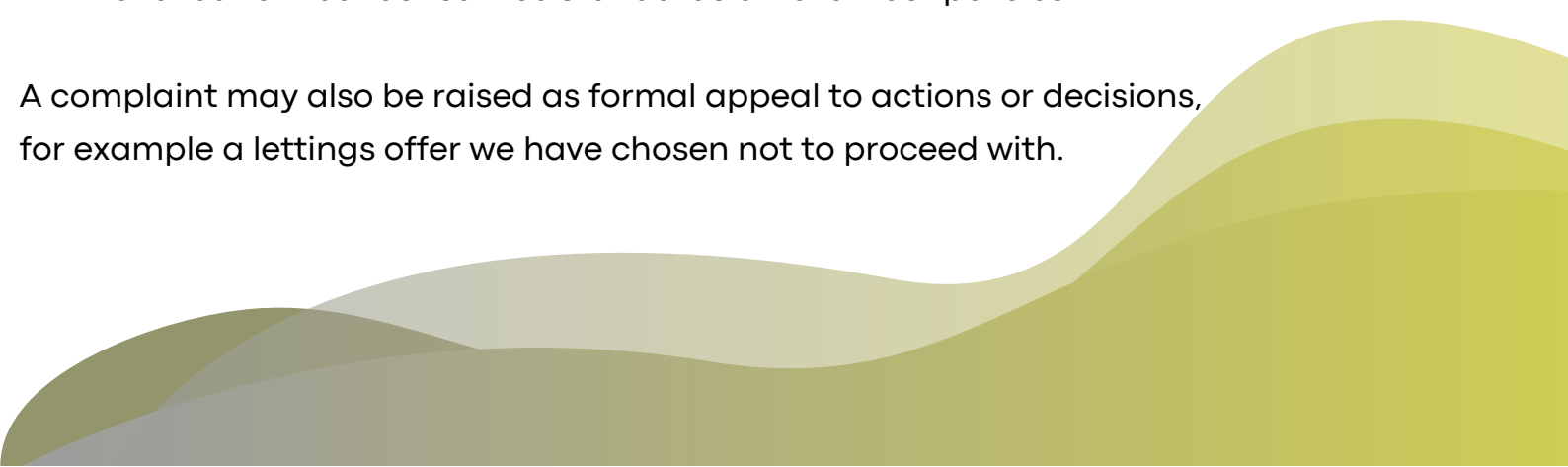
It is not necessary for you or your representative to use the word 'complaint' in order for us to treat it as such.

## **Types of Complaint**

The types of complaint we can consider may include, but is not limited to:

- We failed to provide a service when we should have done so
- We provided a poor standard of service
- We made a mistake in the way we provided a service
- We failed to meet our service standards or follow our policies

A complaint may also be raised as formal appeal to actions or decisions, for example a lettings offer we have chosen not to proceed with.



## **What is not a Complaint?**

Each complaint will be considered on its own merits, along with the individual circumstances of each complaint. Grounds for which a complaint would not be suitable for the complaints process are outlined below:

- Reports of anti-social behaviour or breaches of tenancy
- Complaints concerning the level of rent of service charge or the amount of the rent
- Complaints about the actions of an organisation that is not working for, or supported by, Lumen Housing
- Personnel matters including issues about staff employment or former employment and applications for employment
- Cases where legal proceedings have started. This is defined as details of the claim, such as the Claim Form and Particulars of Claim, having been filed at Court
- Insurance claims; these will be handed to relevant services within both Lumen Housing and the Council
- The issue giving rise to the complaint occurred over 12 months ago (Lumen Housing may exercise discretion to accept complaints made outside this time limit where there are good reasons to do so)
- Matters that have previously been considered under the Complaints Policy
- Anonymous complaints

Although we do not treat these issues as a complaint under this procedure, we will deal with them in an appropriate manner.

If we decide not to accept a complaint, a detailed explanation will be provided to the customer setting out the reasons why the matter is not suitable for the complaints process within 10 working days of a request being made.



## **Who Can Make a Complaint?**

A complaint can be raised by any person or group of people affected by an activity or service provided by, or on behalf of Lumen Housing including, but not limited to:

- Current tenants/licensees and members of their households
- Former tenants/licensees
- Housing applicants
- Leaseholders
- MPs and Councilors
- Advocates of the complainant such as friends, relatives or other representatives (a copy of the advocacy policy is available on the Lumen Website)
- A resident or group of residents who have been affected by our activities and/or services in the locality.


On making a complaint, our Complaints Officer will provide one-to-one assistance throughout the process.

Complainants can also seek assistance through external agencies, for example Citizens Advice and/or contact the Housing Ombudsman at any point throughout the course of their complaint for advice and support.

## **Expressions of Dissatisfaction**

Due to the nature of our services, a wide range of problems or queries may be presented to staff members on a daily basis. We will first try to resolve expressions of dissatisfaction outside of our Formal Complaints Policy on a 'there and then' basis where possible. This means putting something right quickly and offering an apology where necessary. Such issues should be dealt with immediately wherever possible or within 5 working days and records will be kept for audit and learning purposes.

However, if the matter cannot be resolved in this way, or if a customer requests, it will be logged as a formal complaint.



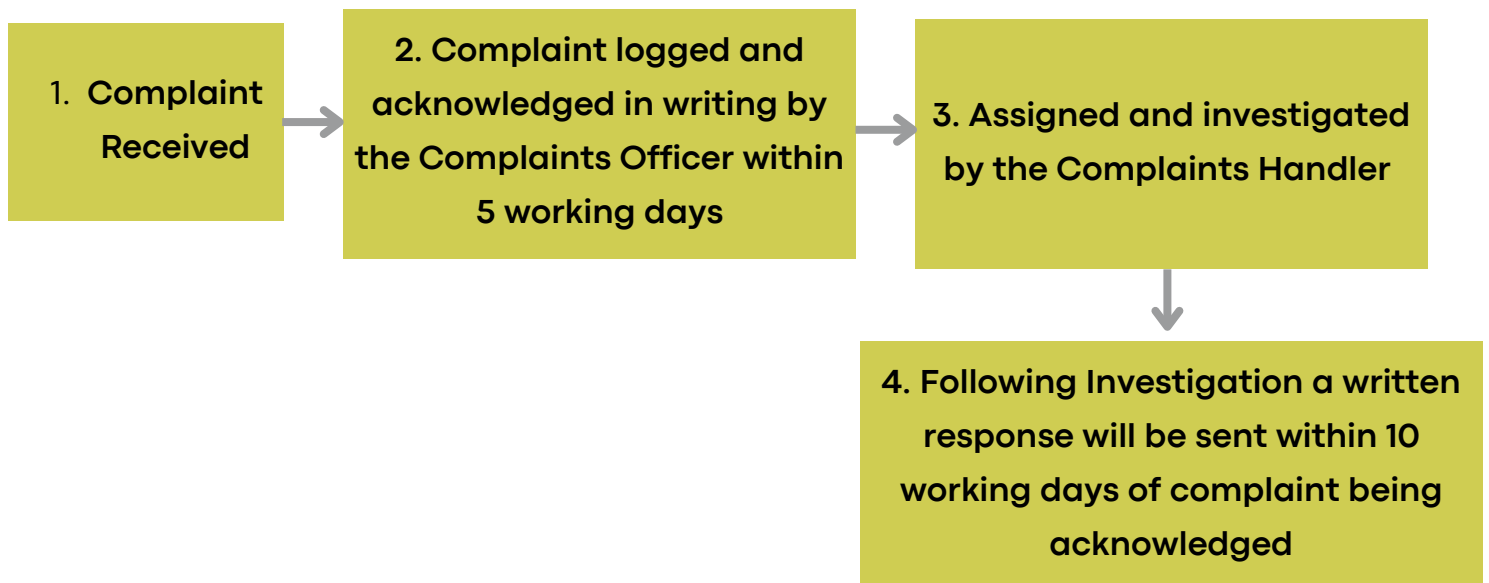
## **Stage 1 - Formal Complaints**

Any complaint about the behaviour or conduct of a staff member, contractor or other representative will always be dealt with formally in line with this Policy.

When a formal complaint is received, a member of the team will be assigned as the 'Complaint Officer' to provide support throughout the process.

Complaint Officers are trained to handle complaints, act sensitively and fairly and facilitate the quick resolution of complaints.

### **Stage 1 Complaint Process**



We will consider the complexity of the complaint and if an extension to the expected timescale is required we will inform the complainant of the expected timescale for response. An extension will be no more than 10 working days without good reason and will clearly explain any reasons to the complainant.

If the complainant is unhappy with the outcome of a Stage 1 complaint, they can escalate this to Stage 2 of the Complaints process.

Whenever we inform a complainant about an extension to response timescales, we will [provide the contact details of the Housing Ombudsman.

## Stage 2 - Appeal Panel



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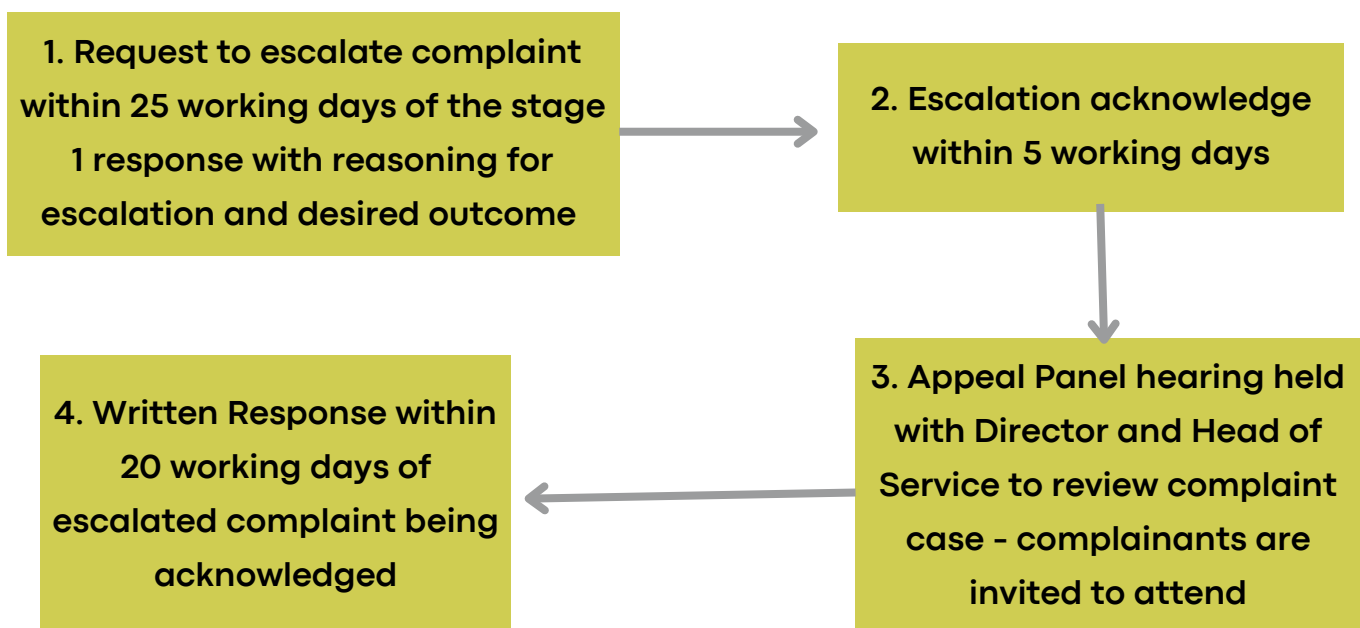
### Final Stage for Internal Resolution

Once a stage 1 response has been issued, if all or part of the complaint is not resolved to the complainants satisfaction it will be progressed to stage 2 of the procedure, unless an exclusion ground now applies that did not apply at stage 1.

If we decide not to escalate a complaint as there is a valid reason not to do so, we will evidence the reasoning and provide a detailed written explanation within 10 working days of of a request being made.

The Appeal Panel consists of the Director responsible for the service area and a Head of Service. The Stage 2 consideration will not be conducted by the same person that completed the Stage 1 investigation and response.

All customers will be invited to attend the Appeal Panel meeting or offered the opportunity to provide evidence to the panel in a way that suits their needs, i.e. at an accessible venue or over the phone, for instance.



The stage 2 Appeal Panel Decision Marks the end of Lumen's Internal Complaints process.

## **Next Steps**

If a complainant remains dissatisfied with the outcome, they can contact The Housing Ombudsman if the issue relates to a landlord function and they are tenants and The Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman if their complaint relates to care services.

## **Closing a Complaint**

A complaint will be considered closed under the following circumstances:

- After requesting further information to investigate the complaint and not receiving a response or the customer refusing to engage in the process.
- After sending a response and there is no further contact from the customer after 25 working days from the issue of the response.
- When an investigation is complete, and the final response has been sent and any agreed resolution action has been delivered.


Once a complaint is closed, we will not reopen it unless sufficient new evidence is presented.

## **Learning from Complaints**

Lumen is committed to learning from complaints to help us improve services for the future. At the completion of each complaint, an evaluation form will be completed to assess the root cause, lessons learned and actions to be taken to prevent reoccurrence where necessary.

A satisfaction survey will be sent to all complainants upon the closure of their case to help us identify whether there are any wider steps that we can take to improve our complaint services.

All complaint information is recorded with performance information which is reviewed by Senior Managers to help continuous development.



## How to Make a Complaint



In writing : Lumen Housing  
348-350 Lytham Rd, Blackpool, FY4 1DW.



By Email : [enquiries@lumenhousing.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@lumenhousing.co.uk)



On Our Website <https://lumenhousing.co.uk/contact-us/>



Verbally by visiting the office:  
348-350 Lytham Rd, Blackpool FY4 1DW.



Appointments can be booked with a member of staff in a convenient venue  
(customer's home or office).



By Telephone : 01253 477 222

We are committed to making our complaints process accessible to all and can offer help and support to ensure any concerns from customers are listened to and understood.

A customer may contact the Housing Ombudsman at any time throughout the course of their complaint for advice and support.



A full copy of our Complaints Policy can be found on the Lumen website or upon request using the contact details below.

A copy of this document can be provided in an accessible format upon request.

**Lumen Housing Ltd**  
**348-350 Lytham Road, Blackpool**  
**FY4 1Dw**

**T: 01253 477222**

**E: [hello@myblackpoolhome.co.uk](mailto:hello@myblackpoolhome.co.uk)**

**W: <https://lumenhousing.co.uk>**

## **The Housing Ombudsman**

A customer can complain to the Housing Ombudsman at any time but the complaint will usually be referred back to Lumen Housing if it has not been through the full internal complaints process.

The Ombudsman will also only consider the matter if you have contacted them within 12 months of your original complaint.

The Housing Ombudsman contact details:

Visiting <http://www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk>

Calling 0300 111 3000 (Mon-Fri 9.15am - 5.15pm)

Texting 'call back' to 0762 481 1595

Emailing: [info@housing-ombudsman.org.uk](mailto:info@housing-ombudsman.org.uk)

Writing to:

The Housing Ombudsman Service,  
PO Box 1484,  
Unit D  
PR2 0ET

