



Complaints Policy

Perran Housing LLP

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Head Office

E enquiries@perranhousing.co.uk
County Hall, Truro, Treyew Road TR1 3AY



PART OF THE
TREVETH GROUP
A CORNWALL COUNCIL
OWNED PARTNERSHIP

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Perran Housing LLP: Complaints Policy

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Author:	Altair/Perran
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1 | Introduction

- 1.1. Perran Housing LLP (**“Perran”**) is committed to providing a consistently high quality of service for its residents and customers and working in an open and accountable way that builds trust and respect. One of the ways in which we can continue to improve our service is by listening and responding to the views of our residents and customers and in particular, by responding positively to complaints, and by putting mistakes right when things have gone wrong.
- 1.2. High volumes of complaints must not be seen as a negative, as they can be indicative of a well-publicised and accessible complaints process. Low complaint volumes are potentially a sign that residents are unable to complain.
- 1.3. The objective of the policy is for Perran :
- to put mistakes right as quickly and effectively as possible
 - have a collaborative and co-operative approach towards resolving complaints, working with colleagues across teams and departments;
 - take collective responsibility for any shortfalls identified through complaints, rather than blaming others; and
 - act within the professional standards for engaging with complaints as set by any relevant professional body.
- 1.4. To achieve this objective, this policy:
- provides Perran residents with clear guidance on how to submit a complaint, and how their complaint will be processed; and
 - sets out Perran’s approach to responding to complaints in a manner which is compliant with all relevant legislation and regulations, and which ensures that a timely and satisfactory outcome is achieved.

2 | Legal and Regulatory Requirements

- 2.1. The Regulator of Social Housing Tenant Involvement and Empowerment Standard requires registered providers have an approach to complaints that is clear, simple and accessible that ensures that complaints are resolved promptly, politely and fairly.
- 2.2. This policy has been developed in line with the 2024 Housing Ombudsman Service's Complaint Handling Code (the Code).
- 2.3. Perran's Complaints Handling Code Self-Assessment will be published on our website when approved by the Project Committee. The Self-Assessment will be carried out annually or if there is a significant restructure, merger and/or change in procedures, or requested by the Housing Ombudsman.
- 2.4. If Perran is unable to comply with the Code due to exceptional circumstances such as a cyber incident, the Housing Ombudsman, and residents that may be affected will be informed along with a timescale for returning to compliance with the Code.
- 2.5. This policy also meets any legal obligation outlined in the following legislation:
 - Housing Act 1996
 - Localism Act 2011

3 | Definitions

- 3.1. Complainant: any resident or customer who makes a 'complaint' about Perran.
- 3.2. Complaint: we use the Housing Ombudsman definition and define a complaint as an expression of dissatisfaction, however made, about the standard of service, actions or lack of action by the landlord, its own staff, or those acting on its behalf, affecting a resident or group of residents. There are Stage one Complaints and Stage two Complaints.
- 3.3. Service Request: A service request is a request from a resident to the landlord requiring action to be taken to put something right. Service requests are not complaints, but must be recorded, monitored and reviewed regularly.
- 3.4. Complaints Officer: The person responsible for complaints at Perran.
- 3.5. Housing Ombudsman Service: a service provided to all residents of registered providers of social housing which can assist residents throughout the life of a complaint and also be used if complaints should be escalated. Perran is a member of the Housing Ombudsman Scheme.

4 | Complaints Officer

- 4.1. Perran will have a dedicated "Complaints Officer", whose role may or may not be dedicated to complaints handling. The Complaints Officer will:

- Deal with complaints on their merits, act independently, and have an open mind
- Give the resident a fair chance to set out their position
- Take measures to address any actual or perceived conflict of interest
- Consider all relevant information and evidence carefully.
- Act sensitively and fairly
- Be trained to receive complaints and deal with distressed and upset complainants
- Have access to staff at all levels to facilitate quick resolution of complaints; and
- Have the authority and autonomy to act to resolve disputes quickly and fairly.

5 | **Scope**

5.1. Examples of complaints are:

- Where we have failed to provide a service, or there has been a delay in providing one.
- Where we have failed to follow our policies and procedures or have been unfair or inconsistent in applying them.
- Where we have failed to keep a complainant informed through lack of, or insufficient, information.
- Where there has been inappropriate behaviour or attitude from our staff.
- If a complainant is in any way unhappy about the way we've delivered a service.

5.2. A resident does not have to use the word 'complaint' for it to be treated as such. Whenever a resident expresses dissatisfaction landlords must give them the choice to make complaint. A complaint that is submitted via a third party or representative must be handled in line with the landlord's complaints policy.

5.3. Perran will accept a complaint unless there is a valid reason not to do so, we will not normally consider a matter a complaint if:

- The issue giving rise to the complaint occurred over twelve months before the complaint was raised or the issue giving rise to the complaint occurred over twelve months after the complainant found out they have a reason to complain. Where the problem is a recurring issue, Perran may consider any older reports as part of the background to the complaint if this will help to resolve the issue for the complainant;
- Where legal proceedings have been started, This is defined as details of the claim, such as the Claim Form and Particulars of Claim, having been filed at court. We will take steps to keep the complainant informed (e.g. by letter) but will not consider a new complaint until legal proceedings have been resolved; or
- Where matters have already been dealt with as part of the policy.
- When reviewing exclusions from our policy we will access each complaint on a case by case basis and may apply discretion in considering whether to exclude a complaint.

- 5.4. In exceptional circumstances, Perran may be able to accept a complaint after the time limit has passed where there are good reasons to do so. If a complainant feels that the time limit should not apply, they will need to tell us why so that a decision can be made.
- 5.5. If Perran decides not to accept a complaint, an explanation must be provided to the resident setting out the reasons why the matter is not suitable for the complaints process. The complainant has the right to take this decision to the Ombudsman and if the Ombudsman does not agree that the exclusion has been fairly applied, the Ombudsman may tell the landlord to take on the complaint.
- 5.6. A complaint can be made by anyone who is entitled to receive a service from Perran or is affected by that service provision. This can also include Perran customers as well as our residents where applicable. With written consent, a family member, friend or advocate may act on behalf of a complainant including being represented or accompanied at any meeting with Perran.
- 5.7. Residents will not be treated differently in they a make a complaint.
- 5.8. Complaints can be made by phone, by email or by letter. In accordance with the Equality Act 2010, Perran will make reasonable adjustments to ensure complainants may make a complaint.

6 | Dissatisfaction with a Service Request

- 6.1. An expression of dissatisfaction with services made through a survey is not defined as a complaint, though wherever possible, the person completing the survey should be made aware of how they can pursue a complaint if they wish to. Where landlords ask for wider feedback about their services, they also must provide details of how residents can complain.
- 6.2. A complaint must be raised when the resident expresses dissatisfaction with the response to their service request, even if the handling of the service request remains ongoing. Landlords must not stop their efforts to address the service request if the resident complains.

7 | Complaints Process

- 7.1. We operate a two-stage complaint process:
- 7.2. **Stage one complaint** – If a complainant is unhappy with a service we have provided or if we have been unable to resolve an issue to their satisfaction for a service request, a complaint can be logged under stage one of our complaints process.
- 7.3. If the complaint is determined to be a complaint, Perran will log the complaint as such and may contact the complainant to understand the nature of the complaint and / or to clarify outcomes being sought by the complainant. It will confirm receipt of the Stage one Complaint within 5 working days of receiving the complaint.

- 7.4. A full response to stage one complaints will be provided within 10 working days of the complaint being acknowledged. We endeavour to provide an answer to the complainant as soon as the outcome is known.
- 7.5. If the complaint requires further investigation to resolve, Perran will provide a written response within 10 working days of receiving the complaint and in this time either:
- provide a response confirming its understanding of the complaint and the resolution; or
 - provide a response confirming its understanding of the complaint and explaining why the complaint cannot be resolved and providing an estimated time frame by which the Stage One decision will be made. This should not exceed a further 10 working days without good reason. Perran will agree suitable intervals for keeping them informed about their complaint. This may be because the complaint needs to be addressed by a third party (e.g. developer, managing agent or contractor).
- 7.6. **Stage two complaint**
- 7.7. If all or part of the complaint is not resolved to the complainants satisfied at stage one, the complainant may request for the complaint to be escalated to a Stage two complaint.
- 7.8. The Stage two Complaint will be considered by a different person than the person considering the stage one complaint.
- 7.9. The facts and responses at stage one will be carefully reviewed and Perran may contact the complainant to understand the nature of the dissatisfaction to the stage one complaint and / or to clarify outcomes being sought by the complainant. It will confirm receipt of the Stage two Complaint within 5 working days of receiving the escalation request.
- 7.10. A full response to stage two complaints will be provided within 20 working days of the complaint being acknowledged. We endeavour to provide an answer to the escalation as soon as the outcome is known.
- 7.11. If the escalation requires further investigation to resolve, Perran will provide a written response within 20 working days of receiving the escalation and in this time either:
- provide a response confirming its understanding of the escalation and the resolution; or
 - provide a response confirming its understanding of the escalation and explaining why the escalation cannot be resolved and providing an estimated time frame by which the Stage two decision will be made. This should not exceed a further 20 working days without good reason. Perran will agree suitable intervals for keeping them informed about their escalation. This may be because the escalation needs to be addressed by a third party (e.g. developer, managing agent or contractor).
- 7.12. . This is the final stage of the Perran's complaints process.

8 | Beyond the Two Stage Process

- 8.1. If a complainant is still not happy and would like to escalate their complaint after completing the Perran's internal process, they can contact the following:
- 8.2. **Housing Ombudsman Service** – If a complaint has not been resolved to the complainant's satisfaction after the completion of the Perran two-stage process, the complainant can contract the Housing Ombudsman Service directly, or can be referred to the service by a Designated Person. Perran will cooperate with The Housing Ombudsman's requests for information (including providing evidence within 15 working days of it being requested if possible). The Housing Ombudsman Service and further details about the Complaint Handling Code can be accessed here: <http://www.housingombudsman.org.uk/home/>

9 | Complaints relating to Perran's contractors including managing agent

- 9.1. Perran require any contractor that provides services on our behalf to comply with this policy by:
- Recording and responding to complainants feedback within the stated timescales.
 - Providing us with any information relating to a complaint when requested.
 - Assisting Perran with complaints investigations as appropriate.
- 9.2. A complaint is seen as an opportunity to learn about what or how we need to improve our service at Perran. We will record and monitor every complaint, including details such as the subject of the complaint, resolution time and any learning points.
- 9.3. Perran will regularly review this register of complaints received in order to identify recurring subjects and continuously improve how the organisation handles complaints. Where possible, Perran will share with residents and customers how learnings are being applied.
- 9.4. In addition, Perran will proactively monitor the effects of its complaint's procedure. Areas to be monitored will include:
- Total number of Formal complaints, both stage one and stage two;
 - Nature of complaints (e.g. ASB, repairs issues, contractor issues);
 - Percentage of complaints resolved at the first stage of the internal process;
 - Percentage of complaints resolved at the second stage of the internal process; and
 - Percentage of complaints escalated beyond the internal process.
- 9.5. Where a landlord's complaint response is handled by a third party (e.g. a contractor or managing agent) at any stage, it must form part of the two stage complaints process set out in this Code. Residents must not be expected to go through two complaints processes.
- 9.6. In order to do this we will:

- Record and monitor every complaint including details such as what the complaint was about, how it was resolved, how quickly it was resolved and what we learnt.
- Carry out regular complaint reviews in order to continuously look at how we can improve our handling of complaints and the services we provide.
- Survey complainants on their satisfaction with the way the complaint was handled.

9.7. We will publicise this policy to our staff, managing agents and tenants through our website.

10 | **Policy Management**

10.1. The Project Committee has overall responsibility for this putting this policy into practice.

10.2. This policy will be reviewed at least every two years, unless legislation, business or sector developments require otherwise – to ensure that it continues to meet the stated objectives and to take account of good practice developments.
