



# COMPLAINTS POLICY



**ACCENTGROUP.ORG**

Page | 1  
Accent Housing: Complaints Policy 070122 V2.0

# Complaints Policy

**Document Owner:** Paula Wilson – Director of Customer Contact

**Author:** Gavin Houghton – Customer Partnership Manager

**Version:** 2.0

**Audience:** Customers/colleagues/auditors/homeowners



Version History					
Doc ID (if applicable):					
Date Produced: 7 January 2022					
VERSION	APPROVED BY	REVISION DATE	NEXT REVIEW DATE	DESCRIPTION OF CHANGE	AUTHOR
V1.0	Claire Stone – EDCEX (& CEC)	26/11/2020	26/11/2021	New	Callie Lancaster
V2.0	Customer Experience Committee 01/02/2022	07/01/2022	07/01/2023	Change of template	Gavin Houghton

**Purpose:** Our aim is to; continuously improve the quality of the services we provide, improve our relationships with customers and operate within the regulatory and statutory framework.

## Contents

1. Introduction.....	4
2. Scope .....	4
3. References .....	5
4. How to make a complaint.....	5
5. Complaint stage – Early Resolution.....	5
6. Complaint stage – Manager Investigation.....	6
7. Complaint Stage – Director Investigation.....	6
8. Complaint Stage – External review .....	7
9. Appendices .....	9
Appendix 1 – Exclusions to this policy .....	9

## 1. Introduction

Everyone at Accent Housing is responsible for delivering an excellent customer experience. Customer Satisfaction is one of our key measures of success as an Organisation.

We recognise that from time to time, things can go wrong, and this policy outlines what we will do to put things right.

A customer does not have to say they want to make a complaint for their feedback to be dealt with in line with this policy.

Diversity and Inclusion is part of the fabric of our organisation, and therefore we will do our very best to ensure that we can meet our customers' diverse needs. If you have specific needs, please do let us know and we will do our best to accommodate.

WEBSITE: <https://www.accentgroup.org/about-us/diversity-and-inclusion/>

## 2. Scope

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.

Examples of complaints include:

- Failure to attend a scheduled appointment
- Failure to meet our repairs service standards (e.g. Timescales)
- Failure to keep to a commitment (call back, visit, send something out, provide information)
- Failure to deliver a paid for service charge
- Failure to provide correct charging information

We do not class 'service requests' as a complaint.

Example:

A customer is unhappy because their fence is broken. This would only follow the complaints policy if, for example, the customer raised the issue with us, and we failed to fix the broken fence within a timely manner.

We do not class 'Anti-Social Behaviour' as complaints. If the customer raises a complaint about their neighbour, this will be dealt with in accordance with our ASB Policy.

Example: A customer complains their neighbour is consistently playing loud music at 2am. This would only follow the complaints policy if, for example, the customer

raised the issue with us, and they were unhappy about the way we handled the case.

### 3. References

Accent Policies and Procedures can be found in the [Corporate Library](#).

- Equality Act 2010
- Accent Housing: Complaints Handling Procedure

### 4. How to make a complaint

We want to make it easy for our customers to tell us they're not happy with our services so there are lots of ways to make a complaint.

- Online: [www.accentgroup.org/contact-us/comments-complaints/](http://www.accentgroup.org/contact-us/comments-complaints/)
- Phone: 0345 678 0555
- Social Media: Facebook (Accent Housing) and Twitter (@AccentHousing)
- Through an Accent member of staff

We recognise and value the diversity of our communities. We aim to reduce barriers to ensure that everyone has equal access to our complaints service. We are committed to treating everyone fairly. so we comply with all relevant legislation under the Equality Act 2010.

We can only resolve a customer complaint if they provide us with all the relevant information and are clear about what they want us to do to resolve the matter. We cannot investigate anonymous complaints, but these may be kept on record.

### 5. Complaint stage – Early Resolution



#### **Acknowledgement**

We aim to acknowledge and/or discuss the matter with the customer within 24 hours.

#### **Response Times**

We always aim to resolve the issue straightaway, however there will be instances where we cannot resolve on first point of contact, and we will need some time to investigate. We aim to respond to the customer with what actions we will take to resolve, within 5 working days.

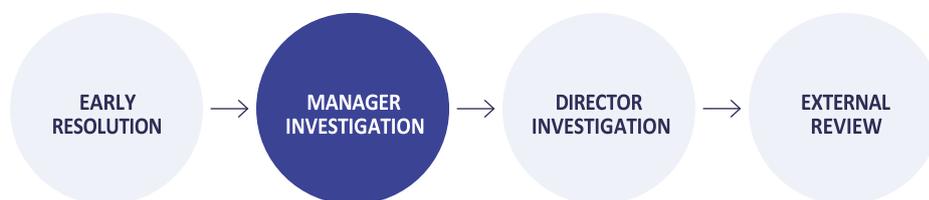
### Case Closure

We only close cases when all agreed actions have been completed and when the customer is happy for us to do so. Once the case is closed, the customer may receive a survey asking for feedback on how the case was handled.

### Customer not satisfied with the response.

The customer can ask for a manager to review the case. The customer will be asked to explain the reason why they're still not satisfied and what their expectations are.

## 6. Complaint stage – Manager Investigation



### Acknowledgement

The manager investigating the case will aim to acknowledge and/or discuss the matter with the customer within 24 hours.

### Investigation

We aim to respond to the customer with what actions we will take to resolve, within 5 working days.

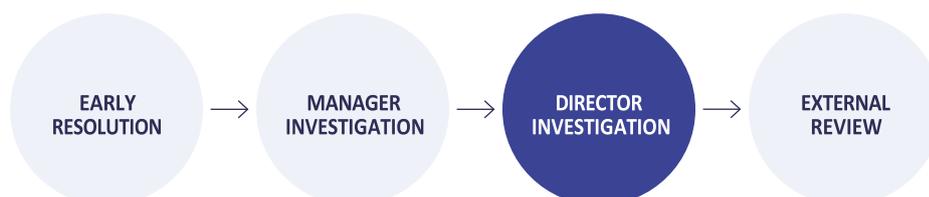
### Case Closure

We only close cases when all agreed actions have been completed and the customer is happy for us to do so. Once the case is closed, the customer may receive a survey asking for feedback on how the case was handled.

### Customer not satisfied with the response.

The customer can ask for a Director to review the case. The customer will be asked to explain the reason why they're still not satisfied and what their expectations are.

## 7. Complaint Stage – Director Investigation



## Acknowledgement

The Director investigating the case will aim to acknowledge and/or discuss the matter with the customer within 24 hours.

## Investigation

We aim to respond to the customer with what actions we will take to resolve, within 5 working days.

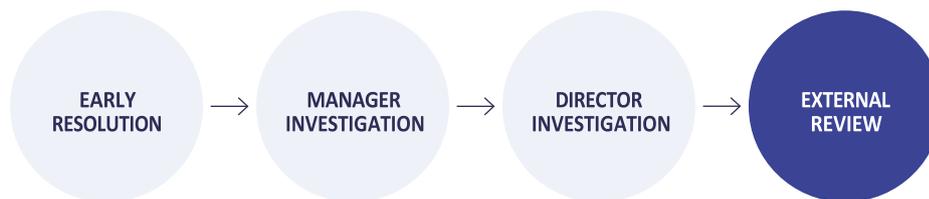
## Case Closure

We only close cases when all agreed actions have been completed and the customer is happy for us to do so. Once the case is closed, the customer may receive a survey asking for feedback on how the case was handled.

## Customer not satisfied with the response.

Director Investigation is the last stage within our internal process. Once a customer has been through the internal process, they have the right to refer their complaint to the Housing Ombudsman Service. DOMUS Services customers should go to the Property Ombudsman.

## 8. Complaint Stage – External review



Although we will make every effort to resolve complaints, if the customer is still unhappy after following our internal process, they can ask the Housing Ombudsman Service to review the complaint. Domus Services customers should go to the Property Ombudsman.

## The Housing Ombudsman

To contact the Housing Ombudsman Service, customers can ask a Member of Parliament (MP) or a local Councillor to refer the complaint.

Customers can also contact the Housing Ombudsman directly but please note that the Ombudsman will not be able to investigate the complaint until eight weeks from the final response letter.

## Contact Details

Housing Ombudsman Service  
81 Aldwych  
London, WC2B 4HN

Telephone: 0300 111 3000

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

Online complaint form: <https://www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk/residents/make-a-complaint/>

### **The Property Ombudsman (DOMUS Customers)**

The Housing Ombudsman will only consider complaints if they have been through our internal complaints process and a final response has been given, or if it's been more than eight weeks since the customer first made the complaint.

### **Contact details**

The Property Ombudsman Service

Milford House

43-55 Milford St

Salisbury SP1 2BP

Telephone: 01722 333306

E-mail: [admin@tpos.co.uk](mailto:admin@tpos.co.uk)

Online complaint form: <https://www.tpos.co.uk/consumers/how-to-make-a-complaint>

## 9. Appendices

### Appendix 1 – Exclusions to this policy

#### **Complaints relating to Services we do not provide**

We will not accept complaints about other landlords, local authorities, government policies or companies that do not provide services on our behalf.

#### **Complaints relating to personal property**

We cannot accept complaints about damage to personal property unless it has been caused by something we have done. We advise you take out Home Contents Insurance in the event of any unforeseen incidents.

#### **Legal and/or insurance proceedings**

Where a complainant has started court action or an insurance claim against us in respect of the specific issue(s) covered by their complaint, the complaint will be removed/excluded from our complaints process.

#### **Mediation**

If a referral for mediation is in progress or has been made, a complaint will be put on hold until the outcome of mediation is known. Subject to the outcome of mediation, the case owner of the complaint will assess whether it is appropriate to resume the complaints process.

#### **Repeat complainants**

If the issue has already been through our internal process, we reserve the right to stop the complaint investigation and close the complaint. The customer has the right for their complaint to be reviewed externally; please refer 'Complaint Stage – External Review'.

#### **Unacceptable behaviour**

We reserve the right to refuse to engage with individuals who exhibit behaviour which is abusive or threatening.