

## Complaints

We always want to hear your views on our services, both positive and negative.

When you tell us that you aren't happy with the service we have given, we use this feedback to put things right and make sure the same mistakes don't happen again.

For example, you can make a complaint if:

- We have not delivered a service on time
- We have not delivered a service at all
- We have given you the wrong information
- You received a poor-quality service
- You have a complaint about a member of staff
- You did not receive any information about an enquiry you have made to us
- You are dissatisfied with the service you have received.

### The complaints process

South Tyneside Homes will be the respondent of all complaints, in their role as Management Agent for South Tyneside Housing Ventures.

### What happens if I have a complaint?

Many problems can be resolved immediately. If not, we have a three stage complaints process and a Policy Review Log. At the end of the process, if you are still not happy, you will then have the right to take your complaint to the Local Government Ombudsman.

Some complaints come about because of challenges to our policies or procedures.

We may have followed the policy as it stands so these complaints are difficult to investigate, but the customer may actually disagree with the policy. In these cases we add your concerns on to the Policy Review Log and senior management consider this every month to identify where we may be able to consider changes to policy.

### How is your complaint dealt with?

We will enter your complaint onto our electronic complaints system and give you a unique reference number. We will acknowledge receipt of your complaint, in writing or by telephone, within 3 working days.

If we have an informal complaint that we can resolve there and then we will enter it onto our electronic complaints system for monitoring purposes. You will not receive an acknowledgement letter.



# Complaints Process

Please note that all of our timescales for responding to complaints do not start until the first working day after the complaint is registered.

## Stage 1

If you make a complaint we will acknowledge receipt of your complaint in writing, by e-mail or by telephone, within 3 working days providing you with a unique reference number.

We will try to resolve your complaint within 10 working days and send our response by letter.

If it is not possible to resolve your complaint within 10 working days, we will send you a holding letter explaining why.

## Stage 2

If you are not satisfied with our response at Stage 1, you can ask for your complaint to be investigated under Stage 2 of our complaints procedure. You must do this within 28 days. A manager of South Tyneside Homes will investigate your complaint. We will acknowledge all stage 2 complaints within 3 working days and reply to your complaint within 15 working days.

Again, if this is not possible we will send a holding letter explaining why.

## Stage 3

If you are still not satisfied with the outcome of Stages 1 and 2, you can ask for your complaint to be investigated under Stage 3 of our complaints procedure. You must do this within 28 days by writing, telephone or e-mail.

Customer Services Team  
South Tyneside Homes  
Strathmore  
11 Rolling Mill Road  
Viking Business Park  
Jarrow  
NE32 3DP

Telephone: 0300 123 6633

Email: [connect2@southtynesidehomes.org.uk](mailto:connect2@southtynesidehomes.org.uk)

An independent team who has had no involvement at any other stage will acknowledge your complaint within 3 working days. They will then investigate your complaint and respond within 20 working days.

# Complaints Process

Where we are not able to respond within the set timescales, we will keep you informed of progress and agree a new target date with you when we hope to have your complaint resolved.

If you are still not satisfied you may refer your complaint to one of the following:

## **The Designated Person**

If you have completed all three stages of our complaints process you can contact a designated person to request a review of your complaint. A designated person is any local Councillor or Member of Parliament (MP). South Tyneside Council's website will tell you who your local Councillor is at [www.southtyneside.info](http://www.southtyneside.info). The designated person will review your complaint and either make recommendations to South Tyneside Homes or refer your complaint to the Housing Ombudsman Service.

A designated person has no powers to enforce their recommendations, the only legally defined power they have is to refer a complaint to the Housing Ombudsman Service on a tenant's behalf. Details of how to refer your complaint to a designated person will be provided in your stage 3 complaint response letter.

## **The Housing Ombudsman Service**

The Housing Ombudsman Service is an independent body which deals with disputes between social landlords and their tenants. You can contact the service directly without approaching a designated person if you wait eight weeks after receiving the Stage 3 response of your complaint from South Tyneside Homes. Or you can ask a designated person to refer you to the Ombudsman as explained above.

You can contact the Housing Ombudsman Service at Exchange Tower, Harbour Exchange Square, London, E14 9GE, or email [info@housing-ombudsman.org.uk](mailto:info@housing-ombudsman.org.uk) or telephone: 0300 111 3000. Details of how to refer your complaint to the Housing Ombudsman Service will be provided in your stage 3 complaint response letter.

## **The Local Government Ombudsman**

Any complaints relating to the management of the Allocations and Lettings Policy that South Tyneside Homes manages on behalf of South Tyneside Housing Ventures can be referred to the Local Government Ombudsman. You can contact the Local Government Ombudsman at PO Box 4771, Coventry, CV4 0EH, online at [www.lgo.org.uk](http://www.lgo.org.uk) (please note: this link will direct you away from South Tyneside Homes' website) or telephone: 0300 061 0614. Details of how to refer your complaint to the Local Government Ombudsman will be provided in your stage 3 complaint response letter.



# Complaints Process

## How to make a complaint

- **In writing to:**

Customer Services Team  
South Tyneside Homes  
Strathmore  
11 Rolling Mill Road  
Viking Business Park  
Jarrow  
Tyne and Wear  
NE32 3DP

- By telephone on 0300 123 6633
- By fax on 0191 426 8432
- By e-mailing us at [connect2@southtynesidehomes.org.uk](mailto:connect2@southtynesidehomes.org.uk)
- In person at your [local housing office](#)
- By telling your Delivery Officer
- By asking someone to complain on your behalf
- By approaching a councillor to make the complaint on your behalf