



# NEW FOREST HOMES FOR UKRAINE

## Complaints procedure

### Introduction

We are committed to providing a high-quality, transparent and accessible service to everyone we deal with. To do this, we need you to tell us when we get things wrong. We want to help resolve your complaint as quickly as possible.

We handle unhappiness with our service, which calls for a response, as a complaint. We listen to your complaints, treat them seriously, and learn from them so that we can continuously improve our service.

### What this policy covers

This policy covers complaints about the standard of service you should expect from us and the behaviour of our staff and volunteers in delivering that service. We refer to these complaints as 'service complaints'.

### Our responsibilities

Our Leadership Team has overall responsibility for this policy, and are responsible for making sure we implement and comply with it. We reserve the right to change the policy at any time.

All of our staff, and volunteers are responsible for identifying complaints and forwarding them and any other information needed to the responsible director; Alex Pittertou

We will record your complaints confidentially.

### Reasonable adjustments and alternative formats

Our aim is to make our policy easy to use and accessible for everyone. We will take steps to make any reasonable adjustments needed to access this policy, or any requests to provide responses in other formats.

## Stage 1 : Informal complaint

Where issues are simple and we accept we have done something wrong, we may not need a formal investigation. We can say sorry, try to put things right and / or learn from our mistake. Where this is an option, we will do this promptly and within 10 working days.

Any member of staff or volunteer can deal with a complaint informally (including the person being complained about) and offer an on-the-spot apology. If the complaint is simple but the person who received the complaint cannot handle it because they are unfamiliar with the issue, they will pass it on to someone who can as soon as possible.

If we apologise on the phone or face-to-face, we won't usually follow up with an email (although individual members of staff may decide to).

If you are still not happy or we don't feel that the complaint is easily dealt with informally, you can make a formal complaint using stage 2 (see [Stage 2: Formal complaint](#)).

## Stage 2 : Formal complaint

A complaint will be escalated to this stage when:

- stage 1 was attempted but you remain dissatisfied
- the issues are complex or require detailed investigation, or
- the complaint relates to issues that have been identified as serious.

## Making a stage 2 formal complaint

You can make a formal complaint:

- **by email Alex Pittortou [pittortou@btinternet.com](mailto:pittortou@btinternet.com)**
- **by post: Alex Pittortou Dane End, Heath Lane, East Boldre SO42 7WF**

When making your complaint please include:

- your name and address (an email address will do)
- what your complaint is about,
- Please try to be as clear as possible. This will help us understand your complaint and respond to you promptly. If a complaint is unclear, we may ask you for more information to help us to understand. If you do not provide the information we need when asked, we may not be able to help you.

## **Timescales**

If you want to make a formal complaint, then you should do so within three months of the matter you wish to complain about. Waiting longer could make it difficult to look at your complaint and mean that we aren't able to unless we think there are exceptional circumstances. Examples of exceptional circumstances include:

- you've only just found out about the problem
- you need an extension as a reasonable adjustment, and
- ill health, bereavement or other serious personal circumstance.

We aim to send a full response within 20 working days of receiving your complaint. If we need to contact you for further clarification, the 20 working days will start from the date we get the information we need. If we are not able to meet this deadline, we will tell you and let you know when we are likely to be able to respond to your complaint.

## **Initial assessment**

We will decide whether the issue is a service complaint or whether your complaint needs to be handled in another way.

## **Covered by another policy or process**

If your complaint is covered by another policy or process, we will send it to the correct team to handle and write to explain that to you.

## **Feedback**

If your complaint isn't a service complaint and doesn't fall within any of our other policies, we will treat it as feedback. When you provide feedback it can help shape our future work, even if we are unable to take immediate action on the issue you raise.

## **Reasons we may refuse your complaint**

If your concern is about the actions or service of a different organisation and we have no involvement in the issue, we will refuse your request and signpost you to the other organisation to complain.

There are also situations where we may decide that we won't look into your complaint further, even though it is a 'service complaint'. These include:

- attempts to reopen a previously concluded complaint or to have a complaint reconsidered where we have already given you our final decision
- where we have already looked into the matter for you under another process
- anonymous complaints
- where the time-limit for complaining has passed, and
- if we think the complaint is unreasonable

## **Acknowledging the complaint**

If we think the service complaint should be investigated under stage 2 of this policy, we will acknowledge the complaint within 5 working days of receiving it.

## **Investigation**

We will decide which member of staff will look into your complaint in more detail. They will handle your complaint fairly and you can expect to be treated with courtesy, respect and fairness. Where possible, they will be someone who has not been involved before.

## **Outcome**

We will give a fair and balanced description of what happened and what conclusions we have reached on your complaint.

It is possible that there will be parts of the complaint that fall within this policy (service complaints) and others that don't. Where this is the case, we will be clear with you in our response about what we could and couldn't investigate.

If we are able to put things right, we will try to. If we can't put things right, we will be open and honest, say sorry, explain what went wrong (and why) and try to improve in the future.

**New Forest Homes for Ukraine**

**August 2022**