



Habinteg
Housing Association (Ulster) Ltd

Complaints Policy and Procedure

For those using the Association's Services

We are committed to providing you with a high standard of service at all times. However, we accept that there may be occasions when you are not satisfied with the service which you have received and, as a result, you may wish to make a complaint.



Policy

All complaints will be registered, logged and monitored weekly. Details of the volume of all complaints received will be reported annually in our Resident Newsletter and Annual Report.

The Association welcomes your comments and will use them to monitor performance standards, to promote accountability and to improve efficiency, introducing changes in the way we deliver our service where this is shown to be desirable.

All complaints will be dealt with promptly and in a professional manner by appropriate member/members of staff. Confidentiality will be preserved as far as is possible, however, some complaints will require the involvement of third parties if they are to be properly investigated and in such cases, confidentiality cannot be strictly guaranteed.

Complaints relating to nuisance or harassment by neighbours will be dealt with separately, under the Anti-Social Behaviour Policy. A copy of the policy can be obtained from our offices.

Procedure

A complaint should be made in the first instance, giving all the details which are relevant, including your name, address and the nature of the complaint. The Association will accept your complaint in writing (including email and other alternative formats) or verbally (by telephone, face to face or through an interpreter).

If you would prefer to put your complaint in writing and need help with this please ask our office staff for assistance. Alternatively, independent advice may be obtained from your local Citizens Advice Bureau, The Housing Rights Service, or other appropriate body. Those who do not wish to make a complaint may ask for their comments to be recorded so that all areas of concern may be addressed. You should note, however, that we cannot deal with anonymous complaints.

Stage 1

The Association will acknowledge your complaint within 5 working days and endeavour to provide a full reply within 15 working days. If information is required from others in order to properly address your concerns this may take longer and we shall keep you advised of when you can expect a full reply.

Stage 2

Once you have received a full reply, if you are still unhappy you should either address your written complaint to or ask that your verbal complaint be noted and passed to the relevant Director at the Association's Head Office. The Director will consider your complaint and provide a full reply within 15 working days.

Stage 3

If you remain dissatisfied after you have received the Director's response you may appeal against the outcome. At this stage you must put your appeal in writing to the Chief Executive, at the Association's Head Office. The Chief Executive will consider your appeal and provide a full reply within 15 working days.

If, after investigation, it is established that we did not meet our standards or we failed to perform our duty, we shall apologise, offer an explanation and take steps to ensure that the same problem does not occur again. .

*Reasonable expectations of tenants are contained in the 1992 DOE (NI) *Tenants Guarantee* and our own Standards - both are reproduced in full in our *Tenants Handbook*.

The Ombudsman

If you remain dissatisfied after you have exhausted the Associations' Complaints Procedure, you have a right to bring complaints about the Association's actions to the Northern Ireland Public Services Ombudsman. It is normally expected that you will have used Habinteg's internal complaints procedure before bringing a complaint to them.

You can contact:

Northern Ireland Public Services Ombudsman (and Northern Ireland Local Government Commissioner for Standards)

Progressive House

33 Wellington Place, Belfast, BT1 6HN

Telephone: **02890 233821**
Email: **nipso@nipso.org.uk**
Text phone: **02890 897789**
Web: **www.nipso.org.uk**
Freephone: **0800 34 34 24**

If you require any of the information contained in this leaflet in an alternative format or would like discuss the leaflet's content, please contact our head office at the address below.

Our offices (Holywood and North West) are open from 8:45am to 4:45pm from Monday to Thursday and 8:45am to 4.30pm on Friday). Any departures from these hours will be displayed at the offices and the answering machine message will be changed accordingly.

We welcome your views on all aspects of our customer service. Please contact us if you wish to comment.



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44 Newforge Lane
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Exchange House
2nd floor, Queens Quay
Londonderry BT48 7AS



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Habinteg's offices are open:
08:45 to 16:45 Monday to Thursday
08:45 to 16:30 on Fridays



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