



## IDS COMPLAINTS POLICY

### Introduction

IDS aims to undertake its work using a right first time approach and will respond and resolve complaints with a view to improving performance. Complaints about IDS' services should be seen in a positive light as an opportunity to assess and improve the services it provides.

Customers do not have to put their complaint in writing but all are documented on a standard complaints form and progress is monitored centrally.

IDS will investigate any complaint where it is alleged that it has:

- Failed to fulfill its responsibilities, carry out a policy or provide a service.
- Failed to achieve its stated standards of service.
- Failed to take into account matters that we ought to have done when coming to, or implementing a decision.
- Acted with bias or unfair discrimination.

Customers with complaints that cannot be resolved on the spot are given, or sent, a copy of a leaflet called '**How we handle your complaint**' and helped to make a formal complaint if it is their wish. Complaints are acknowledged within 48 hours.

There is a four stage complaints procedure:

Stage	Investigated By	Timescale
1	Relevant staff member or immediate line manager	10 working days
2	Director of Service	10 working days
3	Chief Executive	15 working days
4	Appeal Panel (Board Members)	1 calendar month

If a complainant is not satisfied with the response, having exhausted the procedure, they will be provided with the details of the Independent Housing Ombudsman to pursue their complaint.

Following a complaint being resolved, a feedback form is sent to complainants asking for their comments on how the complaint was handled.

The Senior Management Team consider reports on complaints received on a quarterly basis and a summary of complaints are considered by the appropriate Committees on a six monthly basis and the Board on an annual basis.

The average time taken to resolve a complaint is monitored, together with the age, gender and ethnic background of complainants.

## **Performance Standards**

- All complaints will be resolved without reference to the Independent Housing Ombudsman.
- All complaints will be processed within the specified time scales.

## **IDS COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE**

### **Introduction**

Complaints about IDS' services should be seen in a positive light as an opportunity to assess and improve the services it provides.

### **What is a Complaint?**

It is sometimes difficult to identify what constitutes a complaint. For the purpose of this policy a complaint is treated formally as a complaint when it concerns:-

- Failure to provide a service as agreed in the Tenancy Agreement or within the terms of existing policies.
- Failure to provide a service as defined in the Service Schedule.
- The conduct of staff, consultants or contractors employed by or on behalf of IDS.
- Failure to comply with any statutory or contractual obligations.

### **Potential Complaints**

If an issue cannot be resolved in the course of day to day management, provide the customer with a copy of the leaflet 'How We Handle Your Complaints'.

### **Stage 1**

If the customer wishes to make a complaint:

- Complete the complaint form containing details of the type of complaint and the resolution sought.
- Complaints may be recorded during an interview, by telephone, email or through a third party, such as an interpreter.
- The complaint form must be completed by a member of staff for all complaints.

When a formal complaint is received the relevant member of staff should discuss the matter with his/her line manager.

Complaints to Caretakers should be handled by Estate Managers, in consultation with their Area Housing Manager.

Complaints to Sheltered Scheme Managers should be dealt with in consultation with their Housing Welfare Manager.

Having discussed the matter, the member of staff or line manager must:

- Acknowledge receipt of the complaint in writing within forty-eight hours if a full response will take longer to prepare.
- Pass a copy of the complaint form to their line manager to be logged and filed in the central filing system. *[G/Complaints/ .....]The line manager to pass a copy [preferably e mailed] of completed form, and any other paperwork to the Director of Housing with a copy to the Housing Administrator*
- Investigate the complaint
- If appropriate, meet with the complainant to try to agree a way forward
- Send a full, written, response/confirmation of agreed actions within ten working days. *This to be copied to Director of Housing and the Housing Administrator*
- Ensure that any agreed actions are taken.

A standard acknowledgement letter can be found in G\; The Complaint Form can be found in G\:

## **Stage 2**

If a complainant is still dissatisfied, the matter may be referred to the relevant director who must:

- Acknowledge receipt of the complaint in writing within forty-eight hours if a full response will take longer to prepare
- Investigate the complaint
- If appropriate, meet with the complainant to try to agree a way forward
- Send a full, written, response/confirmation of agreed actions within ten working days
- Ensure that the Director of Housing, if the complaint is about another service, receives copies of all correspondence.
- Ensure that any agreed actions are taken.

## **Stage 3**

If the complainant is still dissatisfied, the complaint may be referred to the Chief Executive who will:

- Acknowledge receipt of the complaint in writing within forty-eight hours if a full response will take longer to prepare
- Investigate the complaint
- If appropriate, meet with the complainant to try to agree a way forward
- Send a full, written, response/confirmation of agreed actions within fifteen working days
- Ensure that the Director of Housing receives copies of all correspondence
- Ensure that any agreed actions are taken.

#### **Appeals Panel (Stage 4)**

Having exhausted the three options above, a complainant can request that the complaint be referred to the Board.

The Chief Executive will convene an appeals panel of three Board Members, at least one of whom should be a member of the relevant committee, within fifteen working days of the complainant confirming that they are still dissatisfied with the outcome of the complaint. The panel will:

- Consider the complaint and how it has been handled.
- Invite the complainant to attend to given them the opportunity to state their case.
- Send a full, written, response within one calendar month

#### **Further Action**

Complainants must be made aware that they have the right to refer the matter to the Independent Housing Ombudsman or the Housing Corporation if they are not satisfied with the response they have received.

#### **Recording and Monitoring Complaints**

- A separate central filing system will be created for all complaints, maintained by the Housing Administrator.
- A central excel spreadsheet, on the 'G' drive, will be maintained to log each stage of a complaint.
- Progress on complaints should be reviewed at regular intervals but at least at each one to one meeting.
- A Complaint Feedback form should be sent to the complainant within 5 working days of the complaint being resolved by the person who has dealt with the complaint.
- On receipt of the completed Complaint Feedback Form or after a period of 28days from the date the form was sent, the case will be closed.

## **Reporting**

- The Senior Staff Team will consider a report on complaints on a quarterly basis.
- Reports on complaints will be considered by the appropriate Committees, on a six monthly basis.
- The Board will consider a report on complaints on an annual basis.

Reports will include the average time taken to resolve complaints together with the age, gender, ethnic background and satisfaction of complainants.

## **Compensation**

In some cases it may be appropriate for compensation to be paid. Staff should refer to IDS' Compensation Policy to ensure that appropriate action is taken.

## COMPLAINT FORM

<b>COMPLAINANT DETAILS</b>	
<b>Name:</b>	
<b>Address:</b>	
<b>PH (HOME)</b>	<b>PH (WORK)</b>
<b>EMAIL:</b>	<b>PH (MOBILE)</b>
<b>Was an interpreter used?</b>	<b>Any special circumstances, eg vision impaired?</b>
Yes                      No	Yes                      No

<b>Complaint Received by</b>	
<b>NAME</b>	<b>TITLE</b>
<b>SIGNATURE</b>	<b>DATE</b>

<b>What is the complaint about?</b>			
Sheltered Housing		Lifeline	
Contractor		Maintenance	
Estate Management		ASB	
Former Tenant Arrears		Member of staff	
Lettings		Rent	
Finance		Repair	
Tenancy Management		Other	
Estate Service			

<b>What aspect of our service does the complaint relate to?</b>			
Attitude		Decision	
Standard of Service		Time	
Other			

<b>Who is making the complaint?</b>			
Tenant		Family member of Tenant	
Applicant		Leaseholder	
Adjacent Owner		Contractor	
Other			

<b>How was the complaint made?</b>			
Telephone		Letter	
Visit		Email	
Verbal		Other	

**Summary of complaint (What happened? Who was involved? When and where did it happen?)**


**Resolution requested by complainant:**


**Action taken: i.e. letter/telephone call/visit/email/other please specify**


**Outcome:**


Date acknowledgement sent (should be within 48 hours)

Date complainant advised of progress  
(should be within 10 working days)

Date complaint finalised:

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**Q7 Age**

	Under 25	26-35	36-45	46-55	56-65
Over 65	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>				

**Q8 Sex**

	Female	Male
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Q9 Ethnic Origin**

White: European Black African	<input type="checkbox"/>	Mixed: White & Black Caribbean	<input type="checkbox"/>	Mixed: White &	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mixed: White & Black British: Indian	<input type="checkbox"/>	Mixed: Other	<input type="checkbox"/>	Asian or Asian	<input type="checkbox"/>
Asian	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
Asian or Asian British: British: Other Bangladeshi	<input type="checkbox"/>	Asian or Asian British: Pakistani	<input type="checkbox"/>	Asian or Asian	<input type="checkbox"/>
Black or Black British: British: Other Caribbean	<input type="checkbox"/>	Black or Black British: African	<input type="checkbox"/>	Black or Black	<input type="checkbox"/>
Chinese or other ethnic group: Chinese	<input type="checkbox"/>	Chinese or other ethnic group: Other	<input type="checkbox"/>	Refused	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Reference Number/Code:** \_\_\_\_\_