



Procedure: **Complaint**
Approved by: Leadership Group
Date Approved: November 2022
Frequency of review: Every 3 years

1. PURPOSE

The Complaints Procedure aims to support the Complaints Policy and provides further guidance and process information to assist staff with handling complaints.

Broadland Housing Association (BHA) aims for a quick resolution of all issues reported to us from our tenants and offer a transparent route for our complaint handling process whilst welcoming opportunities to learn from feedback to inform service delivery. The Complaints procedure has been drafted to meet current legislation, regulatory expectations and good practice, including the Housing Ombudsman Code published in July 2020.

The procedure is supplemented by guidance for staff and process flow-charts. The procedure will be publicised to customers in a range of sources.

Training will be provided to all staff, supported by training videos available within Broadland Business Systems (BBS)

2. KEY STAFF RESPONSIBILITIES

Board

The Board is responsible for ensuring the continued development of certain policies. When a complaint reaches Stage 2, BHA Board members will sit on the complaint panel.

Senior management

The Management Team are responsible for ensuring that policies and procedures are followed by all concerned and promoting an anti-discriminatory environment for all to work. Senior Managers will deal with all Stage 1 complaints.

Staff

Employees are responsible for ensuring they are fully aware and adhere to the terms set out in the policy.

3. OVERVIEW

Making a complaint

We aim to provide good quality homes and service, but sometimes things go wrong, and mistakes are made – we are all human!

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We welcome complaints as a way to put things right, to learn and to improve. Complaints can be reported in any way convenient to the person complaining.

This includes:

- Tenants Online
- Website enquiry
- Telephone call
- Face to face
- Social media
- Letter

We aim to resolve complaints quickly and to learn from them. For each stage of the complaints procedure, we have a focus on people first, then on recording and process.

Who can make a complaint?

We can consider complaints from:

- a person who has a lease, tenancy, licence to occupy, service agreement or other arrangement to occupy premises owned or managed by a landlord who is a member of the Housing Ombudsman Scheme
- an ex-occupier if they had a legal relationship with the member at the time that the matter complained of arose
- an applicant for a property owned or managed by a member. This means that as well as considering complaints from tenants, we can also consider complaints from leaseholders and shared owners.

In summary, the procedure is:

Stage 1: Formal complaint – let's get another point of view.

This is the start of Broadland's formal process. To make sure all complaints are treated fairly and investigated correctly, a Stage 1 complaint is always allocated to a member of the Senior Management Team. If a complainant is not satisfied with Broadland's response to their informal complaint, or if they feel they want to make a formal complaint from the beginning, this is the stage that will be used. If a customer remains dissatisfied after stage 1, their complaint will be escalated to stage 2. (Appendix A)

Stage 2: Complaint Panel – what if you're not satisfied?

What happens at Stage 2:

If a complainant is not satisfied with Broadland's formal response at Stage 1, they can ask for their complaint to be escalated to Stage 2. At Stage 2, a panel made up of the Chief Executive (or other Executive Director) plus two Board members, meets to review complaint and make a decision about whether it has been dealt

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with correctly and in line with Broadland's policies. They are also able to review any compensation requests. (Appendix B)

Panel Hearings will be recorded to assist in the production of accurate minutes. These recordings will be permanently deleted after 28 days of the panel taking place.

Attendees:

The complainant will be given the opportunity to attend the appeal hearing and are permitted to bring a friend, family member or other person to support them. Details of who will be attending must be provided at least 7 days prior to the date of the appeal hearing. Broadland reserves the right to postpone an appeal hearing should they not be made aware of additional attendees.

The complainant is not required to attend the appeal hearing if they do not wish to, it can take place in their absence. In this instance they will be given the opportunity to provide a statement for the panel members to consider.

The appeal hearing will also be attended by the staff member who responded to the complaint at Stage 1, along with any other member of the Broadland team or external specialist it is felt would assist the panel in reaching a fair and considered outcome.

Information required:

Prior to a date being agreed for an appeal hearing, the complainant will be asked to provide information, this can vary with each complaint, but some examples are given in appendix B. Until all the necessary information is received by Broadland, the appeal hearing date will not be confirmed.

After the appeal hearing and next steps:

Following completion of the appeal hearing, the Chair will write to the complainant within 3 working days with the panel's response. Should additional time be needed for further investigation or the gathering of additional information, this will be agreed with the complainant. The complainant has 15 days from the date of the Chair's letter to inform Broadland if they wish accept the outcome of the appeal hearing. They have 12 months from the response letter to seek independent review by the Housing Ombudsman Service.

Stage 2 is the final stage of Broadland's complaints process.

Dealing with complaints about staff, board members and contractors.

- We will not share any information with regard to individual employees.
- Human Resources and the relevant line manager will be made aware when any complaint is made about staff.
- We will inform and support if a complaint is about a member of staff.' 'Employees will be made aware of the findings/outcome of the complaint with the appropriate support in place'.

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- The person investigating the complaint will seek input from relevant staff member/s and document their responses which will form part of the complaint response.
- Any findings or recommendations relating to staff from complaint investigation will be followed up with the staff members line manager or HR or both as appropriate.
- Complaints about Board members will be assigned to the most appropriate person on the board to investigate.
- Complaints about contractors will be investigated in the same way as staff, however any findings or recommendations from complaints will be raised at the formal contract meetings. (Appendix C).

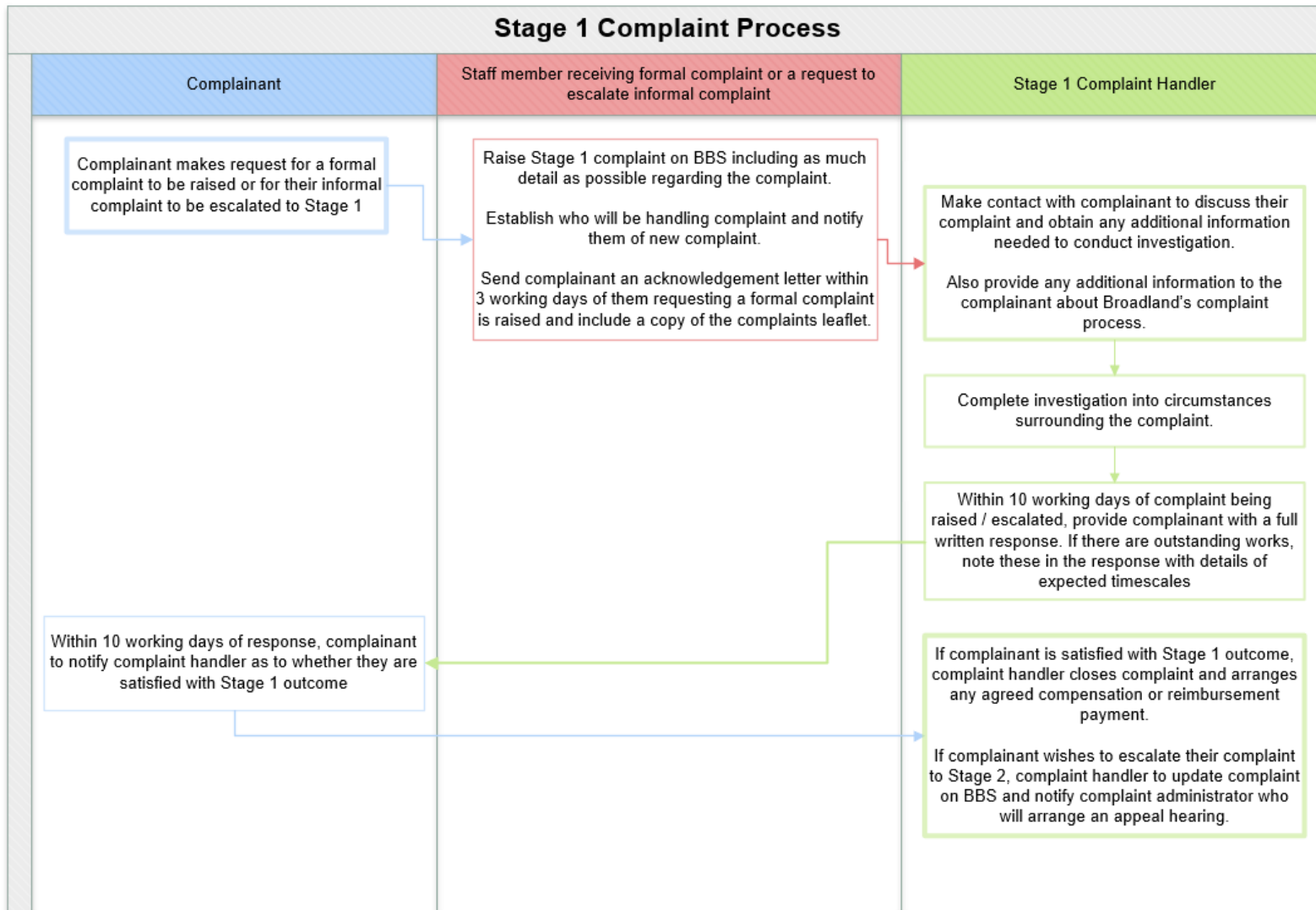
4. REVIEW

This procedure will be subject to ongoing review in the light of experience, changes in legislation and Group policy and meeting the needs of our stakeholders.

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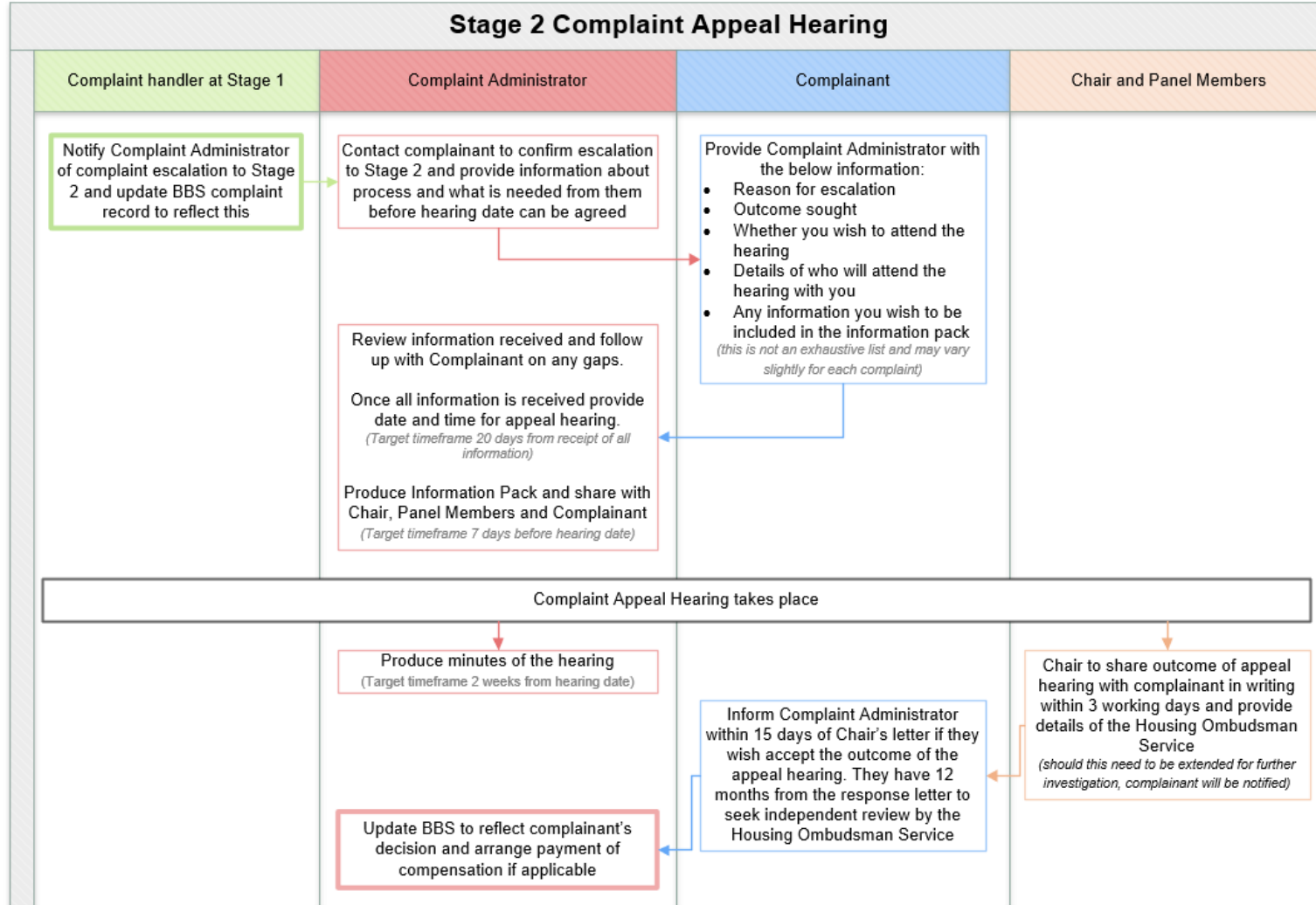
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Appendix A – Stage 1 Process



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Appendix B – Stage 2 Process



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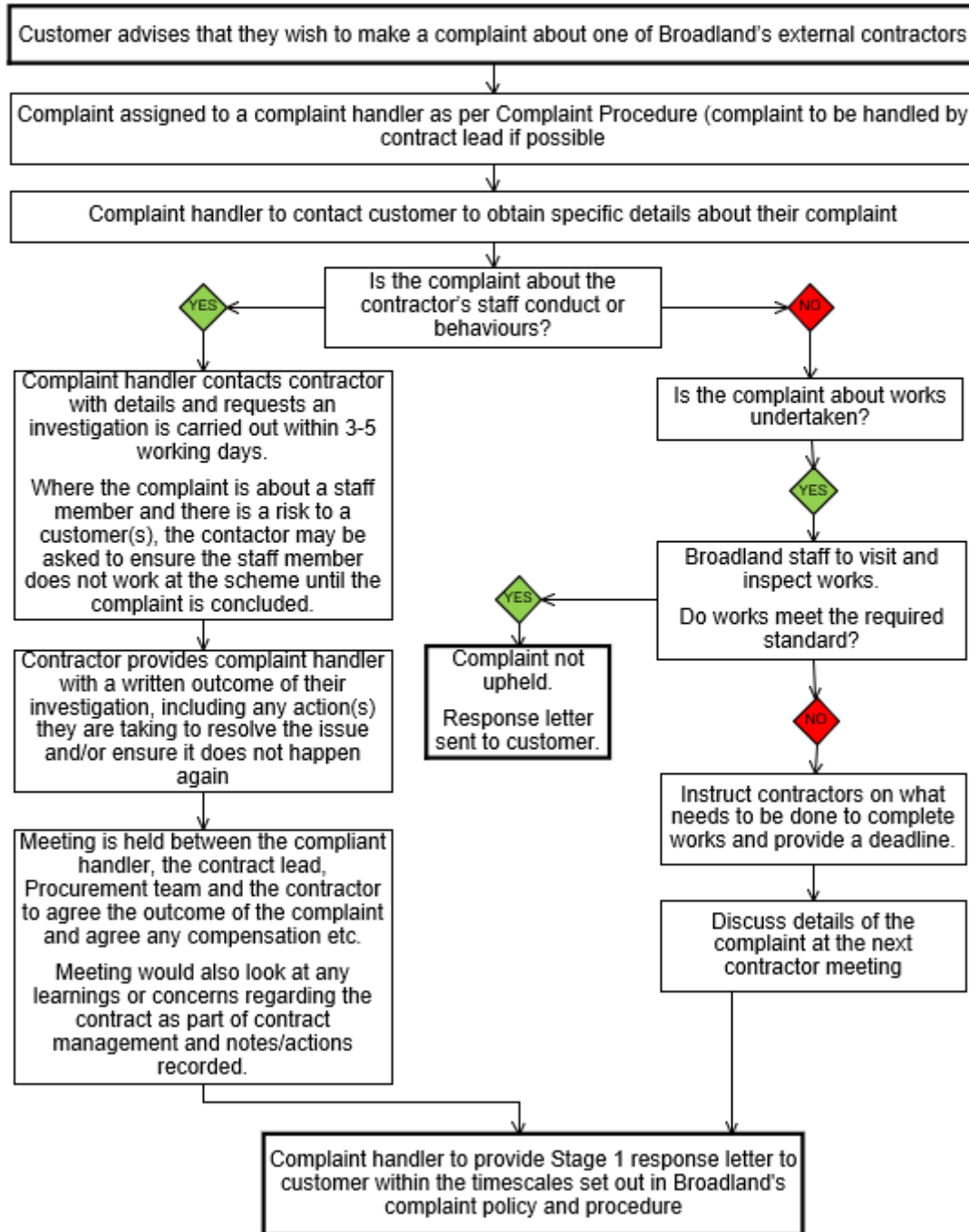
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Appendix C – Contractor Complaints



Customer Complaint about a Broadland Contractor



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