



Policy: Complaints Policy

Approved by: Leadership Group

Date Approved: September 2025

Frequency of review: Annually

Commented [DH1]: @Stephani Davis - This one?

POLICY STATEMENT:

Broadland believes that excellent customer service is critical to ensure our success, and we are committed to providing the best possible service we can.

We treat complaints seriously, and we are committed to providing a supportive complaint handling service which meets the needs of our residents and acts upon learning and development of staff, processes, and services to prevent future service failures. We aim to get things right first time but recognise that sometimes our residents may have cause to complain about the service they have received.

We accept complaints from non-tenants and will investigate these under this policy and within the same timescales set out. We are committed to ensuring that all complaints, including those from non-tenants and anonymous sources, are handled with the same level of seriousness and thoroughness. We will implement measures to verify the authenticity of complaints to protect against impersonation and ensure that the identity of the complainant remains confidential if they choose to remain anonymous.

SCOPE

This policy sets out Broadland’s approach to managing complaints. The policy complies with the Housing Ombudsman Service Complaint Handling Code, The Building Safety Act 2022 and the requirements of The Regulator of Social Housing (RSH) Consumer Standards.

This policy applies to all residents, members of their household and non-Broadland tenants who are affected by either our services or interact with our staff and wish to make a formal complaint.

Our Complaints Procedure details our approach to handling complaints and provides clear information on how residents’ complaints will be managed through our two-stage process.

Exclusions: We will refuse to investigate a complaint when legal proceedings have started and a claim has been received through the courts, or where a complaint has already been investigated. We would also refuse to escalate a complaint to stage 2 if it has not been thoroughly reviewed at stage 1 of our process. Escalations to stage two must be made within 12 weeks of the date of the stage 1 response letter; exceptional

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circumstances apply. Complaints must be reported to Broadland Housing within 12 months of the cause of the complaint. Only exceptional circumstances will be investigated after this period of time.

Exceptional circumstances may include situations where the complainant was unable to report the issue due to serious illness or other significant barriers; in those instances, we would apply reasonableness and discretion.

Timescales: These timescales align with the Housing Ombudsman Service Complaint Handling Code.

Stage 1 acknowledgement: Stage 1 complaints are logged and acknowledged within five working days of the complainant informing Broadland Housing Association of their complaint.

Stage 1 response: Responses are provided within ten working days of the acknowledgement.

Stage 2 acknowledgement: Will be acknowledged within five working days of the complainant informing Broadland Housing Association of their wish to escalate.

Stage 2 Panel meeting and response: The panel meeting and written responses are provided within 20 working days of the acknowledgement.

Response extension: Some complex cases may require additional time to investigate and issue a response; this will be a maximum of a further ten working days for stage 1 and 20 working days for stage 2.

KEY STAFF RESPONSIBILITIES:

Board:

The Board are responsible for ensuring that we comply with the Complaint Handling Code and The RSH Consumer Standards. Board members will be involved in a stage 2 complaint meetings as a part of the panel chaired by a member of the Executive Team.

Member Responsible for Complaints (MRC):

The member responsible for Complaints is a board member who has additional responsibilities under the Complaint Handling Code.

Complaint Handlers:

There are specific staff who have been trained to respond to stage 1 complaints in line with the Complaint Handling Code.

Complaint Manager:

Act as the operational lead for Broadland in managing our complaints and working with Senior Managers to evidence how we have improved our services.

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PA To Executive Resources Director:

Is impartial from the stage one process and is responsible for the administration of the stage 2 complaint escalations and panel arrangements. They create an information pack and arrange the panel meeting with the Executive Team and the Complainant.

Head of Fire Safety:

This role is the specific point of contact as defined in the Building Safety Regulations and only applies to complaints from residents living in a high-rise building.

Staff:

All staff are trained to recognise when a resident is making a complaint and ensure it is reported in line with our procedures.

DEFINITIONS

Principal Accountable Person (PAP) and the Accountable Person: This definition only applies to complaints from residents living in a high-rise building as defined under the Building Safety Act 2022. Broadland Housing Association is both the Principle Accountable Person and the Accountable person as the owner and responsible organisation with the legal responsibility to repair the common parts of the building.

BBS: Broadland Business Systems.

Complaint: A complaint is defined as an expression of dissatisfaction, however made, about the standard of service, actions or lack of action by BHA or those acting on our behalf, affecting an individual resident or group of residents.

Complainant: The person raising the formal complaint.

Community Complaint: When more than one resident is raising the same complaint, and would like to do so alongside other residents.

Reasonable Adjustment: A request for Broadland to adapt their service to meet the needs of a resident or a member of their household.

Resident: Refers to a current tenant, shared owner, leaseholder, licence holder and former tenant.

RSH: Regulator of Social Housing, Transparency, Influence and Accountability Standard.

Service Request: A service request is when a resident asks Broadland to put something right, and it is the first time that they have raised it.

Specific Point of Contact: This definition applies only to complaints from complainants residing in a high-rise building, as defined under the Building Safety Regulations. The definition of the accountable person is Broadland Housing Association.

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Reasonable expenses: Reasonable expenses will be considered if a complainant travels to attend a meeting in person at a mutually agreeable location which is usually a Broadland Housing Office.

RELEVANT KEY LEGISLATION AND RELATED DOCUMENTS: (not limited to)

Legislation	Documents
Housing Ombudsman Service Complaint Handling Code	BHA Complaints Procedure
Housing Ombudsman Service Complaint Spotlight Reports	BHA Managing Unreasonable Complaints Policy and Procedure
Equality Act 2010	BHA Compensation Policy
RSH - Transparency, Influence and Accountability Standard	Tenancy Agreement
RSH Tenant Satisfaction Measures	Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy and procedure
Building Safety Act 2022 – Operating a complaints system in a high-rise building.	Reasonable Adjustments Policy & Procedure

EIA – EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT:

A full EIA has been completed.

IMPORTANT PRINCIPLES:

- We aim to meet the timescales for responding to complaints in line with the Complaint Handling Code. Where we cannot meet these timescales, we will communicate this to the resident and provide them with the contact details for the Housing Ombudsman.
- Complaint performance is monitored monthly through the Business Performance meeting.
- We recognise that there will be times when staff know that a resident has not been provided with a good service, but they have chosen not to make a complaint. We will have a proactive conversation with the resident advising that the service has not met our standards and provide them with details of our complaints process or raising it on their behalf if they agree to this.

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- Due to limited resources and published timescales, residents may have their complaint dealt with by the same complaint handler on more than one occasion. Residents are not able to choose who deals with their complaint at any stage.
- A resident can escalate their service complaint to the next stage of the complaint process regardless of the outcome, and does not have to provide the reason they are escalating the complaint.
- If a resident continues to pursue communication about a complaint where they have chosen not to escalate it or where it has already been investigated, they will be advised that the complaint will not be re-investigated.
- Broadland will not investigate complaints relating to the impact on a complainant's health. If a complainant believes that Broadland's failure to provide a service has had an impact on their health, they will be advised to pursue a claim through our insurers and provided with the necessary information to do so.
- We strive to have a complaints process which is accessible for our residents and will make reasonable adjustments to ensure there are no barriers to making a complaint. There are further details on this in our procedure.
- We will promote the Housing Ombudsman Service to our residents at every opportunity.
- We will use the learning from complaints to improve our services and publish these using our communication channels.
- We will ensure that our policy and procedures meet the requirements for operating a complaints system for building safety in a high-rise residential building, recognising the additional requirements under the Building Safety Act 2022.
- When we receive a complaint which relates to the health and safety in your home, we will notify the Head of Health & Safety to ensure it is recorded as an accident, incident or near miss.
- Where a complainant owes the Association any monies in respect of outstanding rent, legal costs, repair charges or any other costs, a discussion will take place with the resident about any compensation awarded being credited to the relevant account. This does not apply to any out-of-pocket expenses being reimbursed within the award.
- We will publish our Complaints Policy and relevant information on our website, including the annual self-assessment against the complaint handling code and the annual performance report approved by our Board.

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Section 21 appeals will not be investigated at stage 1 of the complaints procedure and will go straight to stage 2 of the process.

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