



Procedure: **Complaint**

Approved by: Leadership Group

Date Approved: September 2025
Frequency of review: Annually

1. PURPOSE

The Complaints Procedure aims to support the Complaints Policy. It provides information to assist residents with making a complaint and staff with handling complaints, whilst meeting regulatory standards and aligning with the Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code.

The procedure is supplemented by flowcharts for residents and guidance notes for staff.

Regular training is provided to staff, tailored to their roles, and aims to share best practices, regulatory updates, and address any identified operational challenges.

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

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.

3. OVERVIEW

Definition of a complaint:

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

Definition of a service request:

A service request is a request from a resident to Broadland requiring action to be taken to put something right. Service requests are not complaints, but must be recorded, monitored, and reviewed regularly. A service request can be escalated to a complaint at the complainant's request. See Appendix 1.

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 two if it has not been taken through stage one of our process. Escalations to stage two must be made within 12 weeks of the date of the stage one response letter; exceptional 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 discretion.

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. See Appendix 6

Making a complaint:

We aim to provide good quality homes and services, but sometimes things go wrong. We welcome complaints as an opportunity to put things right, to learn and to improve. Complaints can be reported to any member of Broadland staff and in any way convenient to the complainant. This includes, but is not limited to:

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

We aim to resolve complaints in a timely manner and to learn from them throughout each stage of the complaint process.

Who can make a complaint:

Procedure Owner: Dale Wordley Directorate: Operations	Revised by: Douglas Heathfield Verified by: Leadership Group
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This policy and procedure 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.

The flow of our complaints procedure is shown in the tables in the appendices, with the key areas being in Appendix 2. In summary:

Stage 1: Formal complaint

A stage 1 complaint is always allocated to a member of the complaints team or a Senior Manager. If a complainant is not satisfied with Broadland's response to their stage 1, they can escalate their complaint to stage 2. (Appendix 2) **Stage 2 panel meeting:**.

At Stage 2, a meeting comprising the Chief Executive (or other Executive Director) and two Board Members will review the complaint and make a decision about whether it has been dealt with correctly and in line with Broadland's policies. They are also able to review any compensation requests. Appendix 3 provides more details about the process.

The stage 1 Complaint Handler will attend the meeting, along with any other appropriate (technical specialist or substantially involved) member of the Broadland team or external specialist, that it is felt would assist the panel in reaching a fair and considered outcome.

Stage 2 meetings 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.

The complainant will be given the opportunity to attend the stage 2 meeting and can bring a friend, family member or other person to support them. Details of who will be attending must be provided at least seven days prior to the date of the meeting. Broadland reserves the right to postpone the meeting should they not be made aware of additional attendees. Reasonable expenses will be considered if a complainant travels to attend a panel meeting in person at a mutually agreeable location which is usually a Broadland Housing Office.

The complainant is not required to attend the meeting 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 Chair will write to the complainant within 3 working days to confirm the outcome of the stage 2 meeting. 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 will 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 internal complaints process. The Housing Ombudsman Service information will be shared with the complainant should they wish to escalate further for independent review.

Community Complaint

Broadland recognises that there will be occasions when customers come together to raise complaints that affect them as a community. We know from experience that community complaints can be more complex and require more resources, and may require input from external partners. When dealing with community complaints, we will:

- Acknowledge that community complaints may be received in many different ways, including petitions, at engagement events, as a result of media coverage or by initial contact from one customer speaking on behalf of their communities to get their voices heard.
- A senior manager who deals with formal stage 1 complaints can use their discretion to decide that a complaint should be treated as a community complaint and will make the appropriate Executive Director aware of this decision.
- Upon being made aware of a community complaint, we will decide the best way to investigate the complaint. This may vary from individual visits to complainants to holding a community event, which is dependent on what the complaint is about.
- We will keep the complainants updated from the outset about anticipated timescales and ensure they are updated throughout the investigation; this may be individually or through an action plan, depending on the type of complaint.
- Where customers raise individual complaints through the community complaints process that only affect them, these will be dealt with separately and will follow our published timescales. Community Complaints are treated as a stage 1 complaint and can still progress to the stage 2 panel if they remain dissatisfied after the stage 1 response.

Complaints from non- tenants or anonymous complaints

- We accept complaints from non-tenants and will investigate these under this policy and within the same timescales.
- All complaints from non-tenants are logged manually on a spreadsheet and are kept outside of the BBS computer system.
- Anonymous complaints will be investigated based on the information given and are logged manually as above.

Complaints from tenants where another housing provider is contracted to provide housing management services:

- The stage 1 complaint will be dealt with by the organisation that provides that service under the management agreement.
- The stage 2 complaints process will follow the process of the landlord, with input from the other housing provider.

Complaints where we are contracted for housing management services:

- The stage 1 will follow our standard complaints procedure.
- The stage 2 will follow our standard complaints procedure, with the addition of notifying the Landlord's provided point of contact and offering a member of their Board to attend the panel meeting in addition to our standard panel composition. Where they are unable to attend, the panel meeting will go ahead to avoid delays, and the outcome will be shared with the Landlord.

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Dealing with complaints about staff, board members and contractors.

- Any complaints received about members of staff or board members will be investigated thoroughly.
- We will provide details on our findings; however, due to data protection legislation, we will not share information relating to performance or employee investigations with complainants.
- Staff are made aware when a complaint is made about them, and they are given the right to respond during the investigation.
- Any findings or recommendations relating to staff from the complaint investigation will be followed up with the staff member's 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 5).

No Contact:

Where a complaint is made, we will take all reasonable steps to make contact. Each attempt should be recorded within BBS as an update note in the service complaint item to evidence our attempts. This applies to stages 1 and 2.

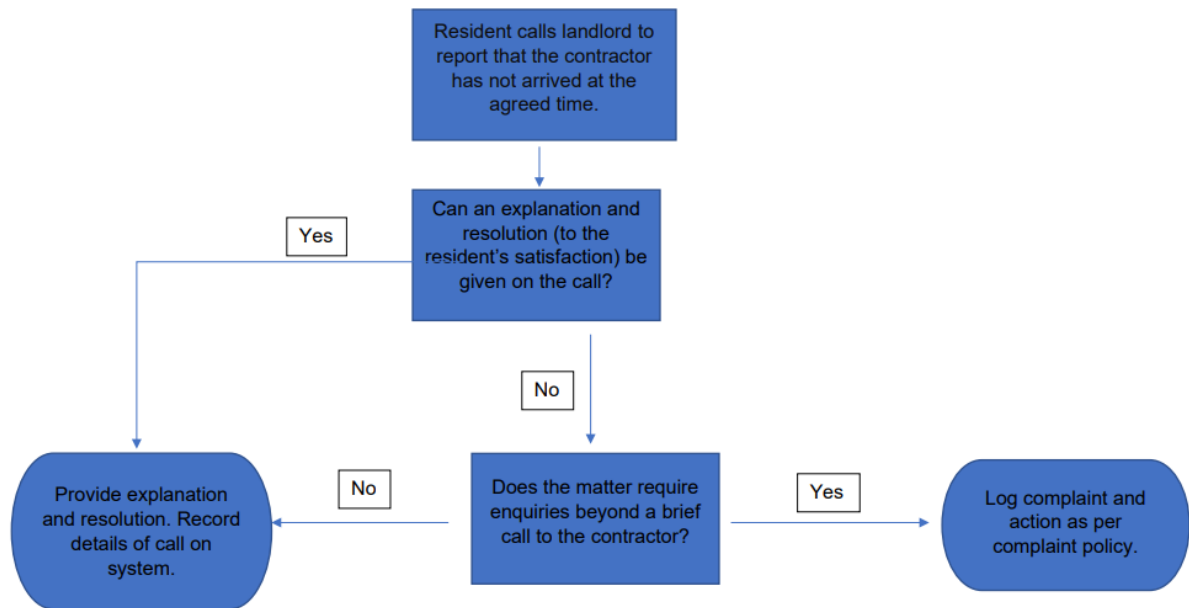
- Contact must be made first using the complainant's preferred method of communication.
- Contact must be made at three different times, on three separate days. The method of communication should be centred on the preferred method of communication. It would be reasonable to make contact using other forms of communication to maximise opportunities for success.
- After three contact attempts, the complaint will be placed on hold for 20 working days, and a letter will be sent detailing our effort to contact and asking the complainant to make contact.
- The complaint must be closed on BBS after 20 working days if no contact is received from the resident.
- Should the resident make contact after those 20 working days, a new complaint would be raised using the exact details, with reference made to the no contact process from the previous complaint.

4 REVIEW

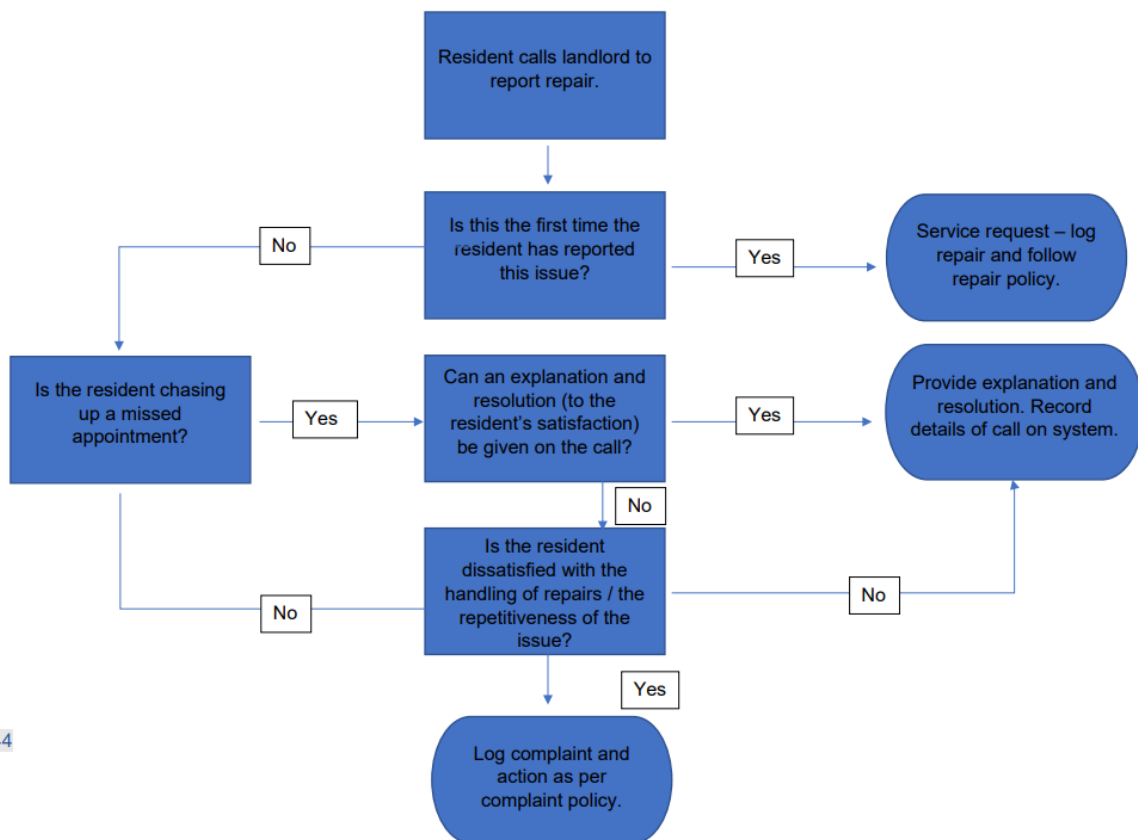
Monitoring:

Complaints are initially raised in the customer record. To meet timescales, a tracking spreadsheet is used to review the dates of raised, acknowledged, and responded to complaints for reporting purposes. Complaint volume and trends are reported to the Board Member Responsible for Complaints on a monthly basis, as well as in bi-annual reports to the Board. This procedure will be reviewed annually when we complete the Complaint Handling Code Self-Assessment.

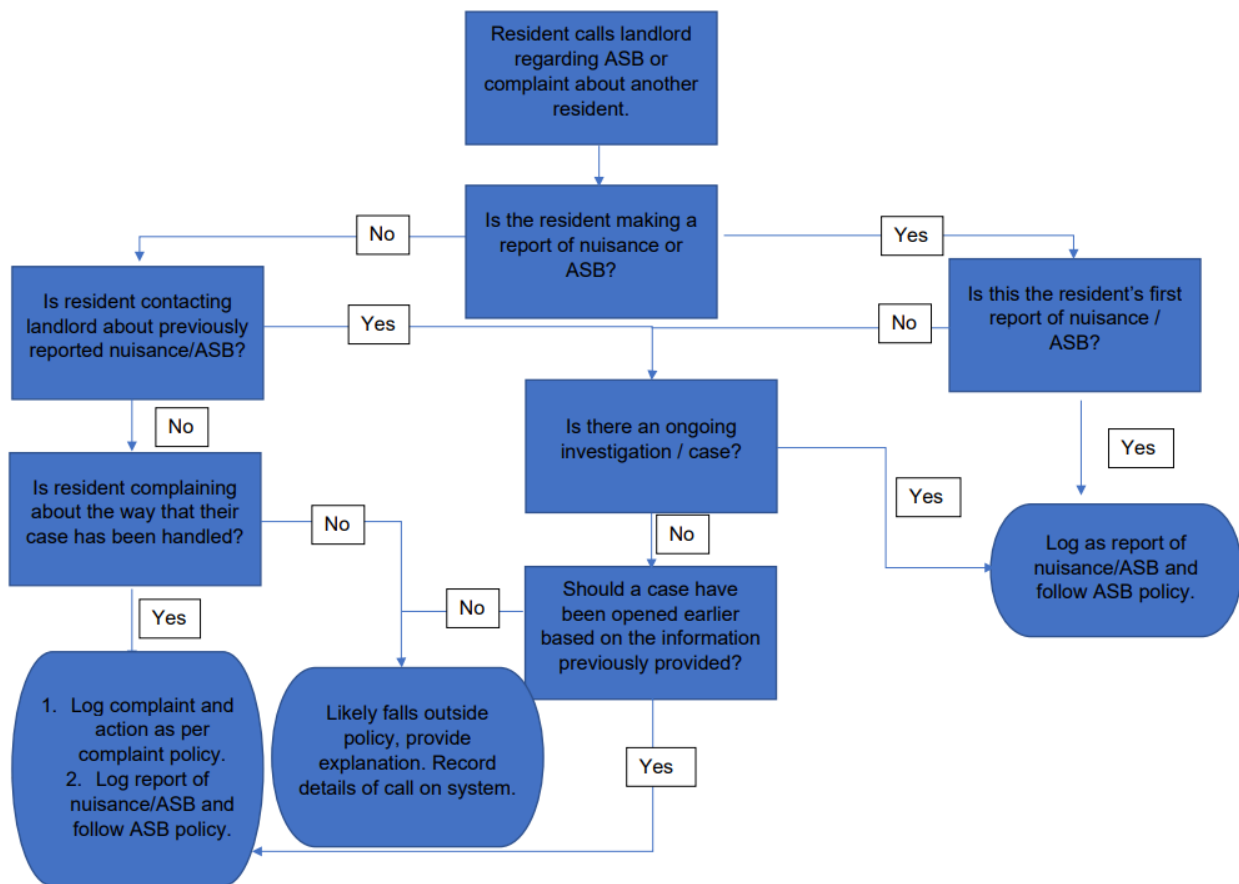
Appendix 1 – Service Request or Complaint flow chart (HOS)



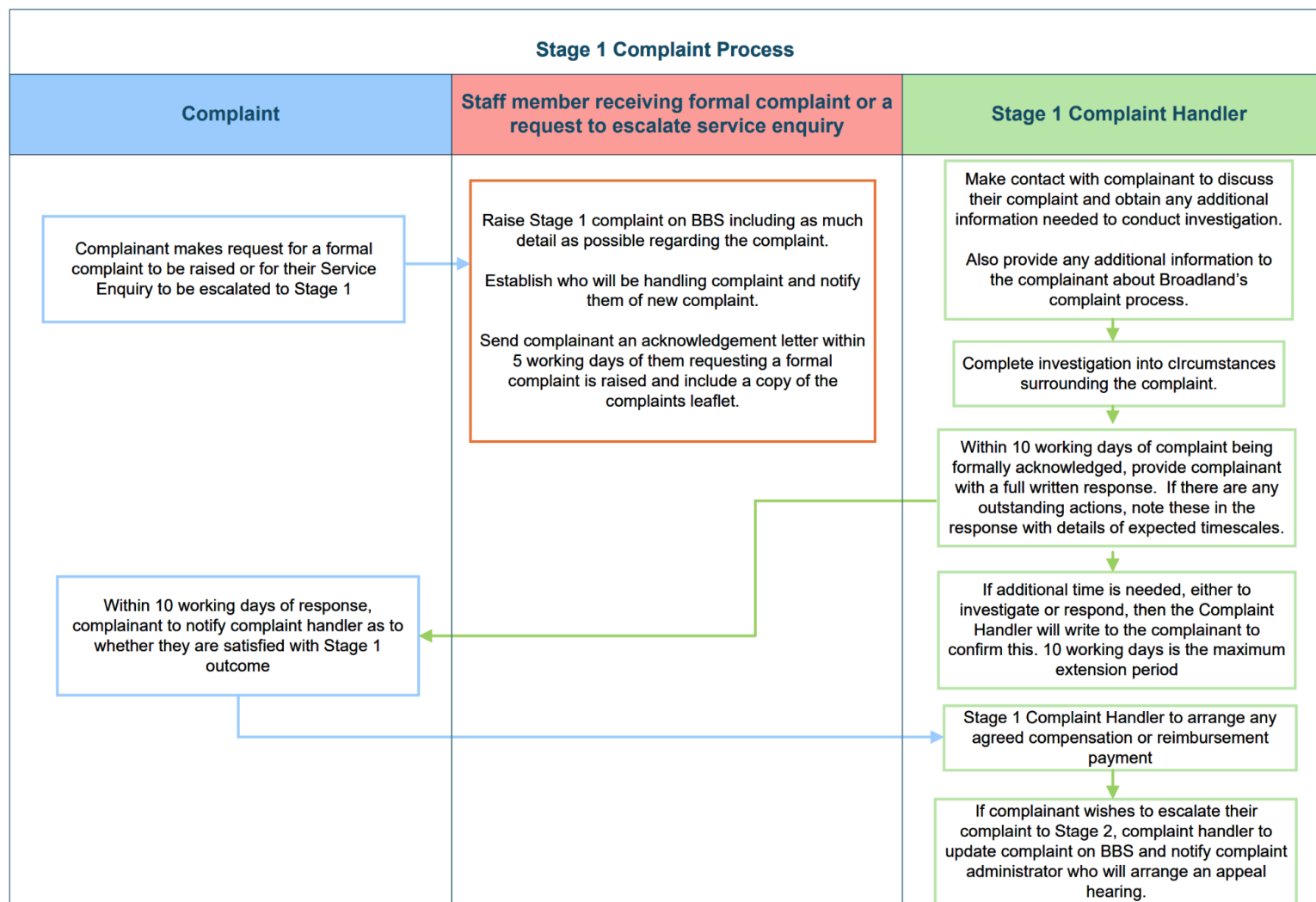
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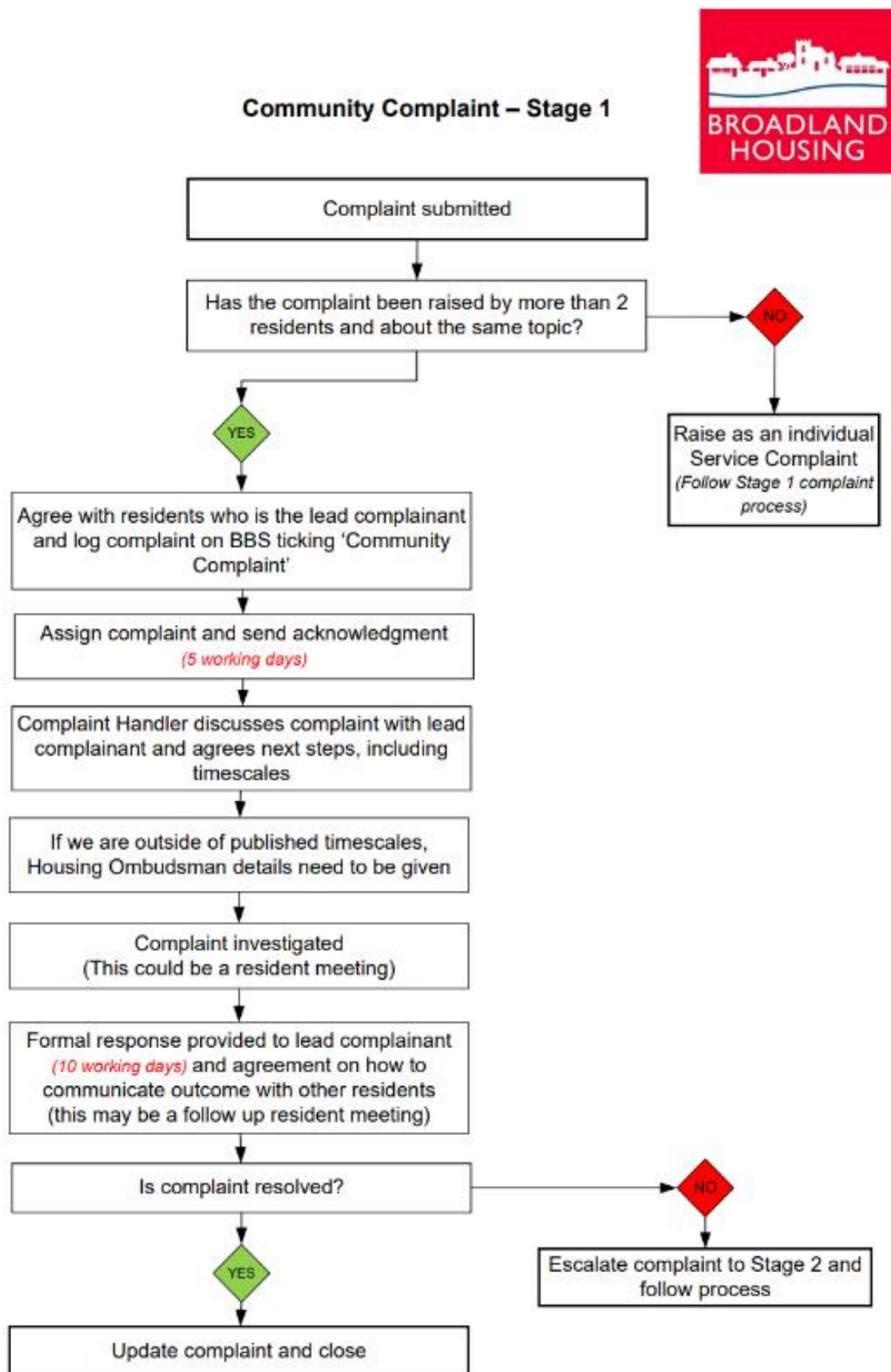
Appendix 2 – Stage 1 Process flow chart



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Verified by: Leadership Group

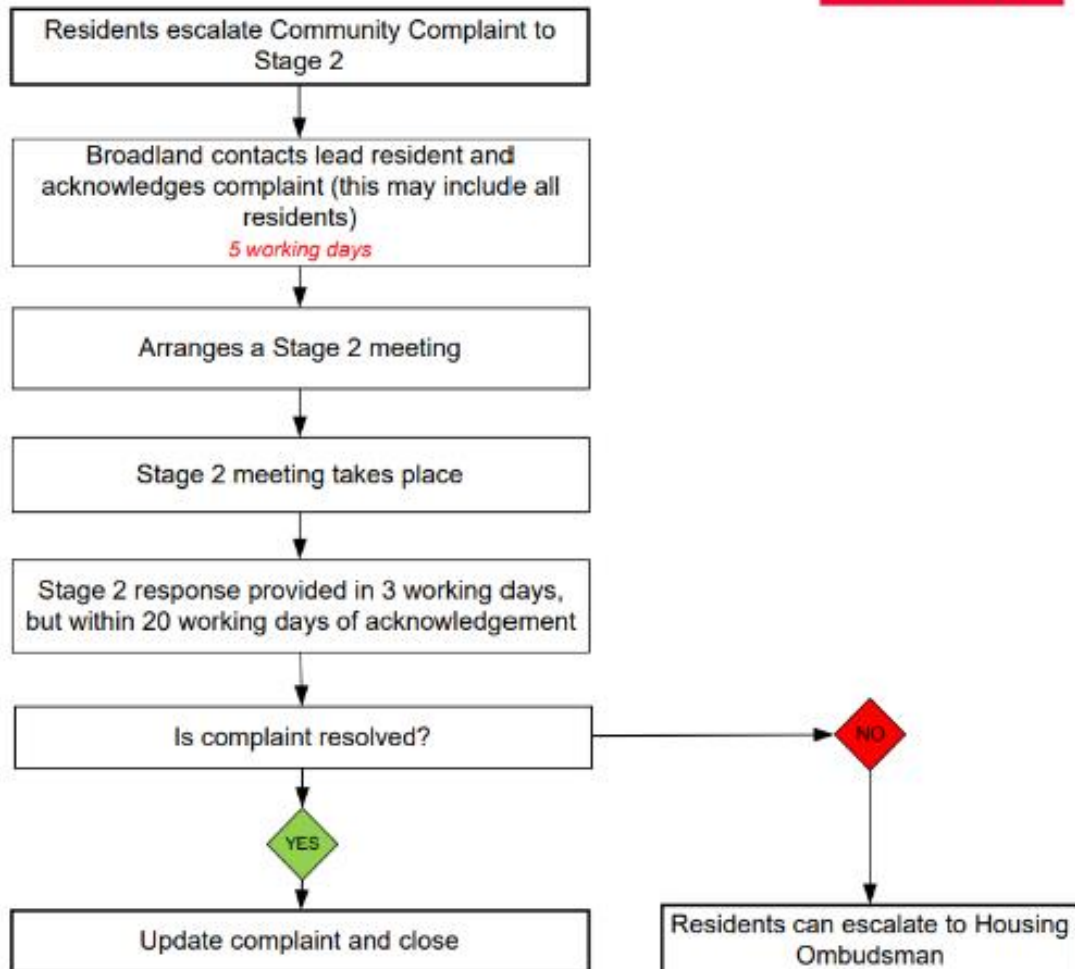
Appendix 3 – Community Complaint Stage Flow chart (stage 1 and 2)



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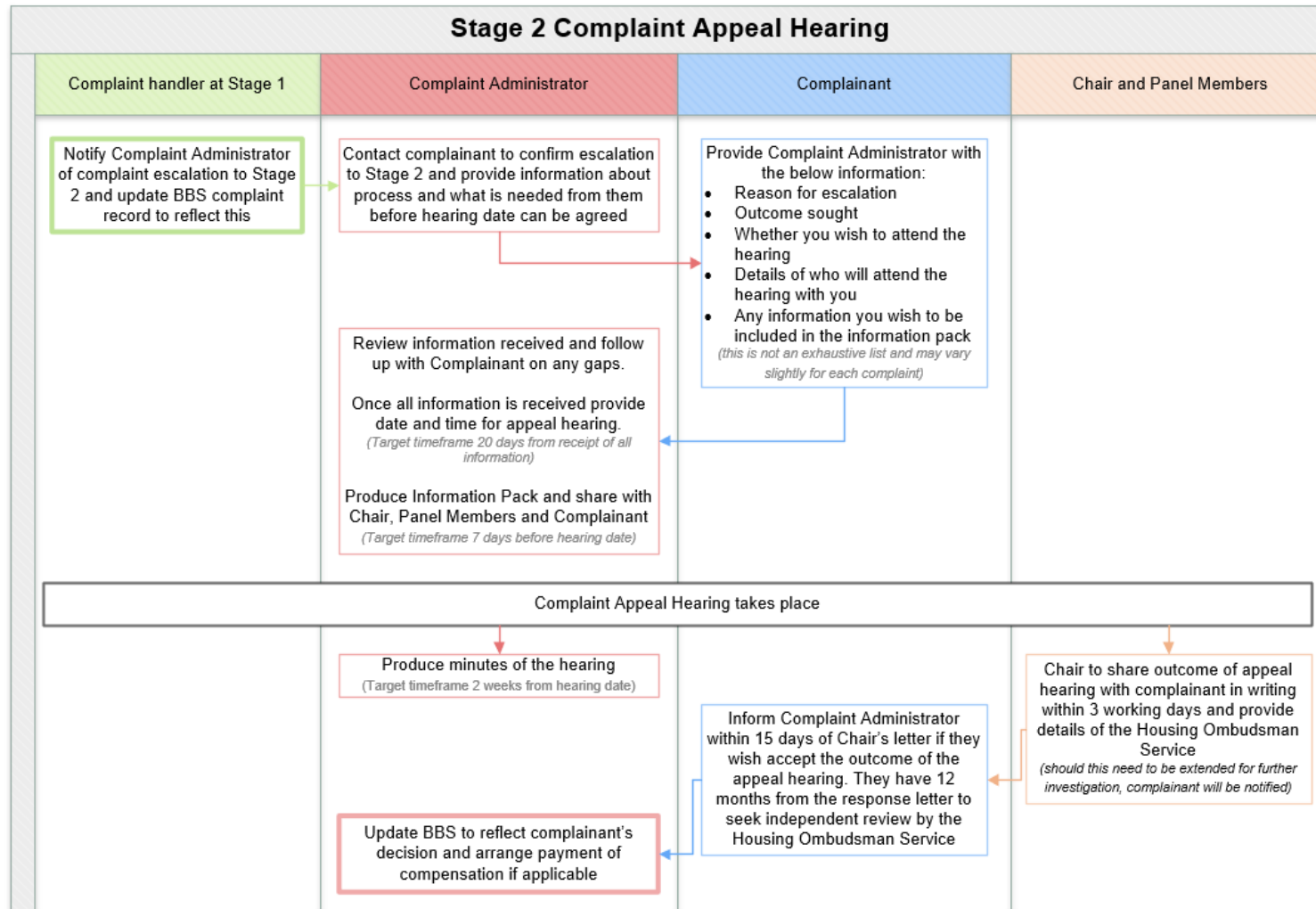
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Community Complaint – Stage 2



NB: All timescales or extensions are in line with the Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code

Appendix 4 – Stage 2 Process flow chart



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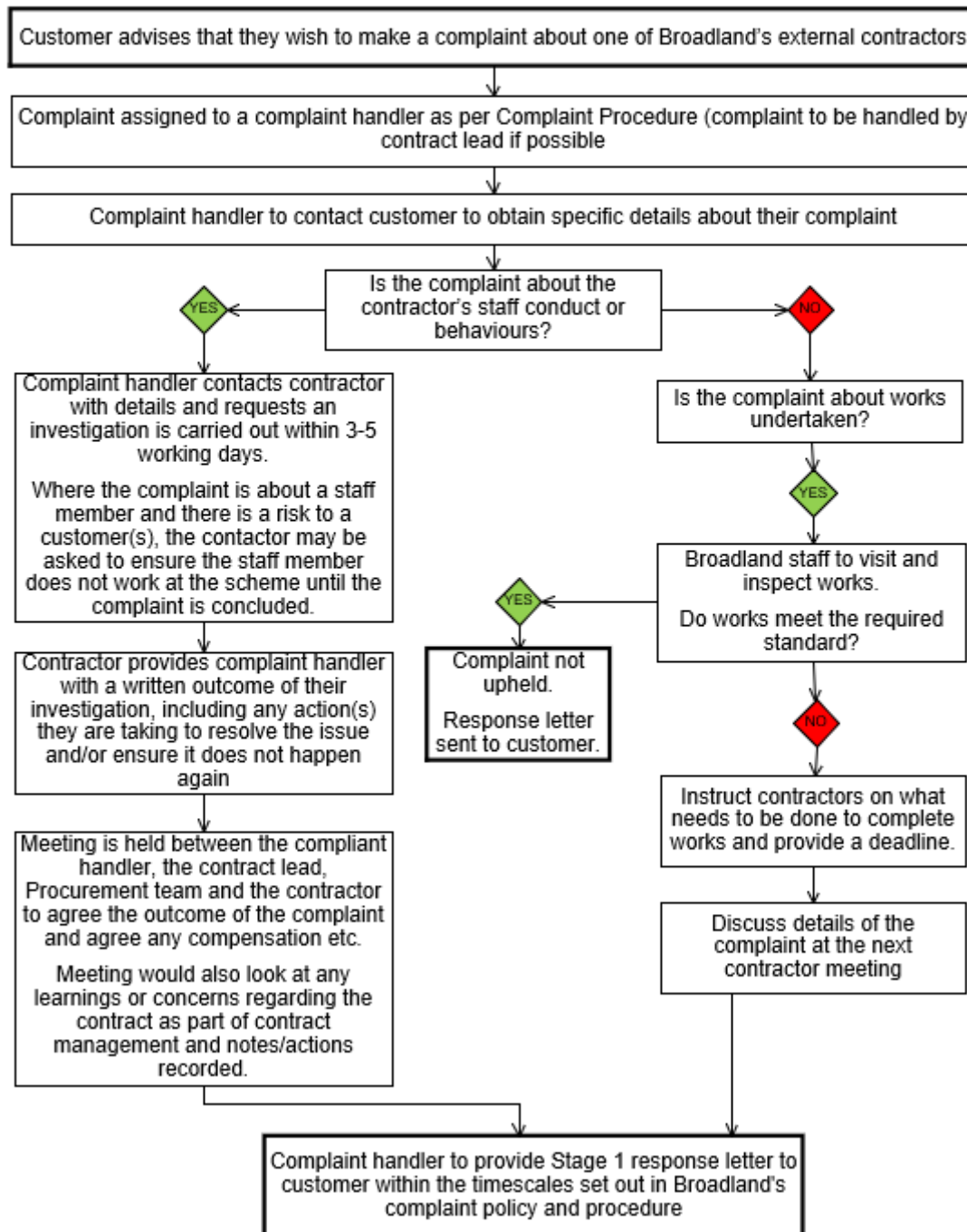
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Appendix 5 – Contractor Complaints



Customer Complaint about a Broadland Contractor



Appendix 6 – Health Claims Flowchart



Process for making a claim against Broadland Housing Association

