



S. H. O. U. T . TMO
WORKING FOR SHIREDALE

SHOUT TENANT MANAGEMENT ORGANISATION LIMITED

Complaints Policy

Last updated December 2023

1 Aims

1. The purpose of this policy is to ensure that all SHOUT TMO customers and their authorised representatives and any person or group of people who are affected by a service provided by SHOUT TMO or their contractors can raise a complaint, be confident that it will be thoroughly investigated and responded to in a timely manner. This policy sets out the process and clear guidelines on how we deal with and respond to your complaint including time frames.
2. We follow the housing ombudsman handling code in our approach to resolve complaints; the principles are to be fair, put it right, and learn from the outcomes.

2. What is a complaint?

Complaints are different to everyday enquiries such as reporting repairs, rent enquiries, or reporting anti-social behaviour issues.

Sometimes customers tell us they are unhappy with something and just want us to put things right these will usually be smaller issues that can be quickly sorted out. We will always agree with the customer how this will be handled and what the next steps are.

In relation to this policy, we have adopted the definition of a complaint as provided by the Housing Ombudsman:

'An expression of dissatisfaction, however made, about the standard of service, actions or lack of action by the organisation, its own staff, or those acting on its behalf, affecting an individual resident or group of residents'

As per the definition above, a Resident does not need to use the word 'complaint' for it to be treated as such.

3. What is a request for service?

A request for service is defined as a resident requesting for something to be put right. An example would include a resident asking for their heating to be fixed or reporting anti-social behaviour.

Reporting a fault or problem for the 1st time is not deemed a complaint. It is however important to note that if there is failure to address the request for service, it may become a complaint.

4. How to make a complaint?

A complaint can be made via the channels below:

- By telephone 0161 202 6482
- In person – coming to see us at the office on the days we are open
- In writing - posting a letter to SHOUT TMO LTD, 50 KILNSIDE DRIVE, HARPURHEY, M9 5QP
- By Email: emailing housingmanager@shouttmo.co.uk.
- Completing a web form on SHOUT TMO website - www.shouttmo.co.uk

5. Who can make a complaint?

A complaint can be raised to SHOUT TMO by any person or a group of people affected by an activity or service provided by the organisation.

Examples of whom the TMO may receive a complaint from include:

- members, tenants, other service users, former tenants
- applicants for housing
- partnership organisations and agencies
- contractors or consultants
- other members of the public.

Complaints may also be accepted from agencies and others representing the person wishing to make a complaint, such as the Citizen's Advice Bureau, MPs, councillors, support workers, family members and friends or neighbours (Management Committee members may not act as representatives for complainants). The TMO will ensure that there is written and signed authorisation, confirming that the complainant has given their permission that a representative will act on their behalf.

6. Exclusions

There are some circumstances where we would not normally accept a formal complaint or parts of a complaint and therefore would **not** usually be considered through the TMO's complaints procedure. However, in some of these circumstances we may internally investigate to ensure we continue to provide the best possible service. Such circumstances include:

- Where you are telling us about a problem for the very first time (e.g.a resident requesting a repair to be carried out or something else that has not yet been requested)
- Where you are asking for clarity on our policies and procedures.
- Where you wish to complain about a TMO's policy; we can investigate whether a policy has been followed, but we will not accept a complaint about the policy itself.
- Where you wish to complain about the terms of your tenancy agreement. We can investigate if the terms have been correctly interpreted, but we are unable to change the terms as this is legal contract. for example, right to buy eligibility.
- Where the issue took place more than 12 months ago
- Issues relating to anti-social behaviour and neighbour nuisance or disputes (which need to be dealt with through other policies. Although if there is a failure to address the request for service for repairs or ASB etc, it may become a complaint)
- Complaints which are being pursued in an unreasonable manner including frivolous or vexatious complaints.
- Demoted tenancy appeals.
- Temporary business or service closures/outages (including digital services) due to unforeseen circumstances or logistical reasons.
- New issues that arise during a complaint's investigation
- Anonymous complaints
- Matters that are subject to or are likely to escalate to legal action or insurance claims
- Complaints that have previously being fully investigated in line with this policy
- Complaints raised on behalf of a customer without their authority including petitions
- Issues relating to how the TMO is governed which need to be dealt with through the TMO's Code of Conduct.

There may be other circumstances where it is not appropriate to follow this complaints policy. If we do, for any reason, refuse to consider a matter as a formal complaint, we will always explain our decisions and signpost you to an appropriate service or team to progress the matter in the suitable way including your right to take a decision to the housing ombudsman.

7. Complaints time scales

Where the formal complaint is going ahead, these are the summary of the time scales:

- Acknowledgement – written acknowledgement (including email) will be sent within 2 working days of receipt of the complaint.
- Stage 1 - Housing Manager investigation response will be sent within 10 working days of the complaint being logged. This may be extended where further information is being requested but the complainant will be advised accordingly. This will detail whether the complaint is upheld, partially upheld, or not upheld.
- Where the complainant is not satisfied with the findings of the Housing Manager – they have one month from the date of the Housing Manager's response to ask for a review (Stage 2) which will be dealt with by a Management member of the SHOUT TMO Board.
- The Board Management Member will aim to respond within 20 working days of receiving the request for a review (unless they require further time for evidence gathering and you will be informed accordingly).
- Should the complainant still not be satisfied with the outcome of the review, they can escalate to the Housing Ombudsman. 'Please see section 9, titled 'The Housing Ombudsman' for contact details.'

8. Complaints Process

At SHOUT TMO we are dedicated to assist customers with their complaints and have set out below the two stages for resolving formal complaints.

You also have the right to access the Housing Ombudsman Service throughout the complaint process for any advice. Contact details for the Housing Ombudsman is provided under section 9 below.

1. Stage 1 - Investigation

This step is a formal investigation which will be undertaken by SHOUT TMO Housing Manager who will investigate your complaint. The Housing Manager will investigate and provide you with a full written response, which will normally be sent within 10 working days from the complaint being logged. If they need more time to investigate your complaint, they will always keep you informed, along with the reason why and when you can expect a response.

If the complaint is against the Housing Manager, Volunteer or a Board Member the complaint will be investigated by a management member of the Board of Directors. The Board member will investigate and provide you with a full written response, which will normally be sent within 10 working days from the complaint being logged.

2. Stage 2 - Review

If after your complaint has been investigated, you are unhappy with how your complaint has been dealt with, you can request a review. You will need to make this request within one month of your stage 1 response being sent to you.

Your request to escalate to the review step will be handled by a Management Member of SHOUT TMO Board who will review the complaint handling and consider the reasons for your escalation. Your request for review will be responded to by the Board member handling the review who would not have previously been involved in the investigation of your complaint.

Where the complaint is against the Housing Manager, Volunteer or Board Member, and you are unhappy with how your complaint has been dealt with by the Board member who carried out the investigation, you can ask for a review which will be passed to the full Board who will handle the review. You will have to make the request within one month of your stage 1 response being sent to you.

We aim for the review to take place within 20 working days of the complaint being escalated. If more time is needed to review your complaint, we will always keep you informed, along with the reason why and when you can expect a response.

The response at stage 2 is the final response to your complaint and the end of our internal complaints process. If you are still not happy with the response you have received, information about further independent options is detailed below and also available on our website.

9. The Housing Ombudsman

If you remain unhappy with the response you have received at the final stage of the complaints process, you can ask for your complaint to be considered by the Housing Ombudsman. The Housing Ombudsman service is set up by law to look at complaints about the housing organisations that are registered with them. The service is free, independent and impartial.

Housing Ombudsman Service, P O Box 152, Liverpool L33 7WQ

Phone: 0300 111 3000

Email: Info@housing-ombudsman.org.uk

Website: <https://www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk/contact-us/>

10. Complaint Remedies

There are a number of ways in which we may consider resolving customer complaints. These remedies include but are not limited to:

- An apology and explanation
- A specific action or correction of an error within time scales
- A review of policy and procedures
- Additional training for colleagues
- Offering compensation, where appropriate.

11. Learning from Complaints

Customer satisfaction is a key measure of our performance, and we take a proactive approach to learning from any customer feedback, including complaints and compliments.

We use feedback to help shape up policies and procedures and to continually improve the services we deliver to our customers.

12. Monitoring and Delivery

The SHOUT TMO Executive Board members and Manchester City Council will monitor the delivery of this policy and it will be reviewed annually.

The policy may be reviewed sooner if appropriate, for example, if there are any changes to legislation or business requirements.

SHOUT TENANT MANAGEMENT ORGANISATION (SHOUT TMO) LIMITED

50 KILNSIDE DRIVE, HARPURHEY, M9 5QP

Phone: 01612026482

Email: housingmanager@shouttmo.co.uk.

Website: www.shouttmo.co.uk