

# Your Guide To: **MAKING A COMPLAINT**



## Our Vision & Values

# "Improving lives and places"

**Every Customer Happy**

**Every Home Loved**

**Every Opportunity Taken**

**Every Penny Counts**

**Every Person Positive**



# We value complaints and use information from them to help us improve our services.

If something goes wrong or you are dissatisfied with our services, please tell us. This leaflet describes our complaints procedure and how to make a complaint. It also tells you about our service standards and what you can expect.

## HOW TO CONTACT US

### FIRST:

Call us for free to report any issue or repair. If we can, we will deal with your issue there and then.

### SECOND:

If you need more detailed advice and support we will try to resolve your enquiry that day and will keep you up to date with the progress. If you need advice about a complex issue, we may need to seek the assistance of an officer from one of our specialist teams. We will give them your contact details and have them call you back.

### THIRD:

If you are dissatisfied with the response you receive, you can request that a complaint be raised on your behalf. This means you will receive a response within set timescales from the relevant department.

### IN WRITING:

River Clyde Homes:  
Roxburgh House,  
102 - 112 Roxburgh St,  
Greenock PA15 4JT

### BY PHONE:

At anytime of the day or night

 **0800 013 2196**

(free from a landline or mobile)

### ONLINE:

 [customerexperience@riverclydehomes.org.uk](mailto:customerexperience@riverclydehomes.org.uk)

 [www.riverclydehomes.org.uk](http://www.riverclydehomes.org.uk)

 @rivclydehomes

 @river.c.homes

## Who Can Make a Complaint to RCH?

**Anyone who receives or requests a service from River Clyde Homes**

Example: tenants; factored owners, people who have applied to us for housing

**Other members of the public who could be affected by the actions of River Clyde Homes**

Example: people who live beside our housing

**People or agencies who a customer has asked to make a complaint on their behalf**

A Representation Mandate authorising the arrangement is needed (except for matters raised by elected representatives, i.e. a Councillor, MSP, MP or MEP)

## What can a complaint relate to?

- Service failure, such as providing an inadequate service or no service at all
- Dissatisfaction with a River Clyde Homes policy
- Disagreement with a decision we have made (*unless a separate appeals procedure is available*)
- Unacceptable behaviour by a staff or board member or a contractor (*this includes treatment of customers and attitude shown towards them*)
- Failure to follow the appropriate administrative process, including River Clyde Homes' own policies and procedures
- Failure to respond to enquiries and requests in a timely way
- Failure to provide information, or providing information and advice that is incorrect
- Unfairness, bias or prejudice in service delivery
- Issues that are raised as matters that could affect some or all River Clyde Homes tenants (*a "Significant Performance Failure", as defined by the Scottish Housing Regulator*)

Some practical examples of what a complaint could cover:

|   |  |  |
|---|--|--|
| Failure to meet a commitment made to a customer   | Failure to meet a River Clyde Homes service standard or policy | Failure to show due care and attention to provide the right outcome for the customer |
| Not completing a repair properly                  | Not keeping a customer's personal information safe             | Damage to a tenant's property when we are in their home                              |
| Not carry out works when we said we would         | Not achieving an acceptable standard when a house is re-let    | Errors we have made in a customer's rent account                                     |
| Unexplained delays in completing adaptation works | Not following our policy when assessing a housing application  | Leaving a vulnerable tenant without heating  |

What issues fall outside the scope of the Complaints Procedure?

|  |  |  |
|--|--|--|
| Asking to reopen a previously concluded complaint, or to have a complaint reconsidered after our final decision. The customer may refer their concerns to the SPSO after our final decision. |  |  |
| Challenges to a housing decision where there is an established appeal route  | A routine first-time request for a service, or a concern raised but the customer chooses not to make a complaint | A request for compensation only  |
| Complaints against other tenants ( <i>Neighbour Relations and Harassment Policies apply</i> )  | An issue that is in court or that has already been heard by a court or a tribunal                                | A query or dispute regarding a bill or invoice ( <i>unless the customer wishes to complain following attempts to resolve matters by the responsible RCH team</i> ) |

## How do I complain?

Please telephone us with any complaints or comments. Alternatively, you can write, email or use our online complaints form which can be found on our website

[www.riverclydehomes.org.uk](http://www.riverclydehomes.org.uk)

It is easier for us to resolve complaints if you make them quickly and directly to the service concerned. So please talk to a member of our staff at the service you are complaining about. Then they can try to resolve any problems on the spot. When making a complaint, be sure to tell us:

- your full name, address, phone number and email address
- as much as you can about the complaint
- what has gone wrong
- how you want us to resolve the matter.
- tell us how you would like us to communicate with you eg: by letter, by phone etc.

## Who can complain?

Anyone can make a complaint to us, including the representative of someone who is dissatisfied with our service, if that person has power of attorney. Please also read the section on 'Getting help to make your complaint'.

## How long do I have to make a complaint?

Normally, you must make your complaint within six months of:

- the event you want to complain about, or
- finding out that you have a reason to complain, but no longer than 12 months after the event itself.

In exceptional circumstances, we may be able to accept a complaint after the time limit. If you feel that the time limit should not apply to your complaint, please tell us why.

## Handling anonymous complaints

We value all complaints. This means we treat all complaints including anonymous complaints seriously and will take action to consider them further, wherever this is appropriate. Generally, we will consider anonymous complaints if there is enough information in the complaint to enable us to make further enquiries. If, however, an anonymous complaint does not provide enough information to enable us to take further action, we may decide not to pursue it. Any decision not to pursue an anonymous complaint must be authorised by a member of the Senior Management Team.

If an anonymous complaint makes serious allegations, we will refer it to a senior officer immediately.

If we pursue an anonymous complaint further, we will record the issues as an anonymous complaint on the complaints system. This will help to ensure the completeness of the complaints data we record and allow us to take corrective action where appropriate.

## How do I make an anonymous complaint?

You can make an anonymous complaint by post or by using our complaints form on our website. You do not need to add any personal details just tell us your complaint and how we can help resolve it.

## Mediation

Some complex complaints, or complaints where customers and other interested parties have become entrenched in their position, may require a different approach. Where appropriate, you may consider using services such as mediation or conciliation using suitably trained and qualified mentors to try to resolve the matter, and to reduce the risk of the complaint escalating further.

Mediation may help both parties to understand what has caused the complaint, and so is more likely to result in mutually satisfactory solutions.

If you and the customer agree to mediation, revised timescales will need to be agreed. An example of where mediation may be considered is in relation to complaints pertaining to Anti-Social Behaviour.

## Complaints about senior staff or committee members

Complaints about senior staff or committee members can be difficult to handle, as there may be a conflict of interest for the staff investigating the complaint.

When serious complaints are raised against senior staff or committee members, it is particularly important that the investigation is conducted by an

individual who is independent of the situation. The SHR specifies that a serious complaint against senior staff or the governing body of an RSL is a 'notifiable event', and as such the regulator must be informed immediately. It has also drawn up 'regulatory expectations' for the handling of serious complaints against the Chief Executive. This specifies that we must seek independent, professional advice to support us in handling, and in some cases investigating, the complaint.

The SHR's expectations also specify that strong governance arrangements must be in place that set out clear procedures for handling such complaints, including the governing body's role in such cases. Our processes specify the measures in place to ensure this is achieved, and the types of complaints we consider 'serious'.

We also have arrangements for handling minor complaints against the Chief Executive and for complaints against other senior staff and the governing body. These arrangements take account of the need to ensure that the final decision is fair, objective and impartial.

The SHR's Regulatory Expectations on serious complaints against a Chief Executive can be found on the SHR website.



# What happens when I have complained?

We will always tell you who is dealing with your complaint. Our complaints procedure has two stages:

## **Stage one – Frontline resolution**

We aim to resolve complaints quickly and close to where we provided the service. This could mean an on-the-spot apology and explanation if something has clearly gone wrong, and immediate action to resolve the problem. We will give you our decision at stage one in five working days or less, unless there are exceptional circumstances.

If we can't resolve your complaint at this stage, we will explain why. If you are still dissatisfied you can ask for your complaint to be investigated further through stage two. You may choose to do this immediately or some time after you get our initial response. We can help you with making this request.

## **Stage two – Investigation**

Stage two deals with two types of complaint: those that have not been resolved at stage one and those that are complex and require detailed investigation.

When using stage two we will:

- acknowledge receipt of your complaint within three working days
- discuss your complaint with you to understand why you remain dissatisfied and what outcome you are looking for
- give you a full response to the complaint as soon as possible and within twenty working days.

If our investigation will take longer than twenty working days, we will tell you. We will agree revised time limits with you and keep you updated on progress.

# What if I'm still dissatisfied?

When you receive a Stage Two response from a senior member of staff at River Clyde Homes, you have exhausted the internal complaints process.

After we have fully investigated, if you are still dissatisfied with our decision or the way we have dealt with your complaint you can escalate your complaint to either of the following for a further independent assessment.

## Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO).

The SPSO cannot normally look at:

- a complaint that has not completed our complaints procedure (so please make sure it has done so before contacting the SPSO)
- events that happened, or that you became aware of , more than a year ago
- a matter that has been or is being considered in court.

### You can contact SPSO:

#### In person:

Bridgeside House  
99 McDonald Road  
Edinburgh  
EH7 4NS

✉ Freepost SPSO

☎ 0800 377 7330

🌐 [www.spsso.org.uk/contact-us](http://www.spsso.org.uk/contact-us)

The logo for the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO) consists of the letters 'SPSO' in a bold, purple, sans-serif font, set against a white rectangular background.

🌐 [www.spsso.org.uk](http://www.spsso.org.uk)

📱 [www.m.spsso.org.uk](http://www.m.spsso.org.uk)

## Housing and Property Chamber First-tier Tribunal for Scotland (HPC)

The SPSO does not normally look at complaints about our factoring service. The Housing and Property Chamber – First Tier Tribunal for Scotland (HPC) provides the possibility for issues between homeowners and property factors to be impartially resolved. HPC offers dispute resolution for problems occurring between homeowners and their factors. Applications can be made to HPC where a homeowner believes that the property factor has failed to comply with its factoring duties or the Property Factors' Code of Conduct.

### You can contact HPC:

#### Housing and Property Chamber First-tier Tribunal for Scotland (HPC)

4th Floor, 1 Atlantic Quay, 45 Robertson Street, Glasgow G2 8JB  
☎ 0141 302 5900

✉ [HPCadmin@scotcourtsribunals.gov.uk](mailto:HPCadmin@scotcourtsribunals.gov.uk)



## The Care Inspectorate

If your complaint relates to a care service we provide, you can choose whether to complain to us or the Care Inspectorate, or both. You can find out more about their complaints procedure, or make a complaint, by contacting the Care Inspectorate. Information about the Care Inspectorate's complaints procedure, contact details and offices around Scotland, and information about how to complain are all on their website: **[www.careinspectorate.com](http://www.careinspectorate.com)**

### You can contact The Care Inspectorate: The Care Inspectorate, Europa Building Ground Floor, 450 Argyle Street, Glasgow G2 8LH

☎ 0345 600 9527

Online complaints form ✉ [enquiries@careinspectorate.com](mailto:enquiries@careinspectorate.com)



# Reporting a Significant Performance Failure to the Scottish Housing Regulator.

The Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR) can consider issues raised with them about 'significant performance failures'. A significant performance failure is defined by the SHR as something that a landlord does or fails to do that puts the interests of its tenants at risk, and which the landlord has not resolved.

This is something that is a systematic problem that does, or could, affect all of a landlord's tenants. If you are affected by a problem like this, you should first report it to us. If you have told us about it but we have not resolved it, you can report it directly to the SHR. A complaint between an individual tenant and a landlord is not a significant performance failure. Significant performance failures are now, therefore, dealt with through this complaints handling procedure. You can ask us for more information about significant performance failures.

The SHR also has more information on their website:

 [www.scottishhousingregulator.gov.uk](http://www.scottishhousingregulator.gov.uk)

 0141 242 5642



## Getting help to make your complaint.

We understand that you may be unable, or reluctant, to make a complaint yourself.

We can accept complaints from the representative of a person who is dissatisfied with our service. Complaints from a friend, relative or an advocate can be accepted as long as a signed mandate is enclosed at the time the complaint is raised to give them your consent to complain for you.

You can find out about advocates in your area by contacting the Scottish Independent Advocacy Alliance or Citizens Advice Bureau.

Scottish Independent Advocacy Alliance

 **0141 524 1975**

 **[www.siaa.org.uk](http://www.siaa.org.uk)**

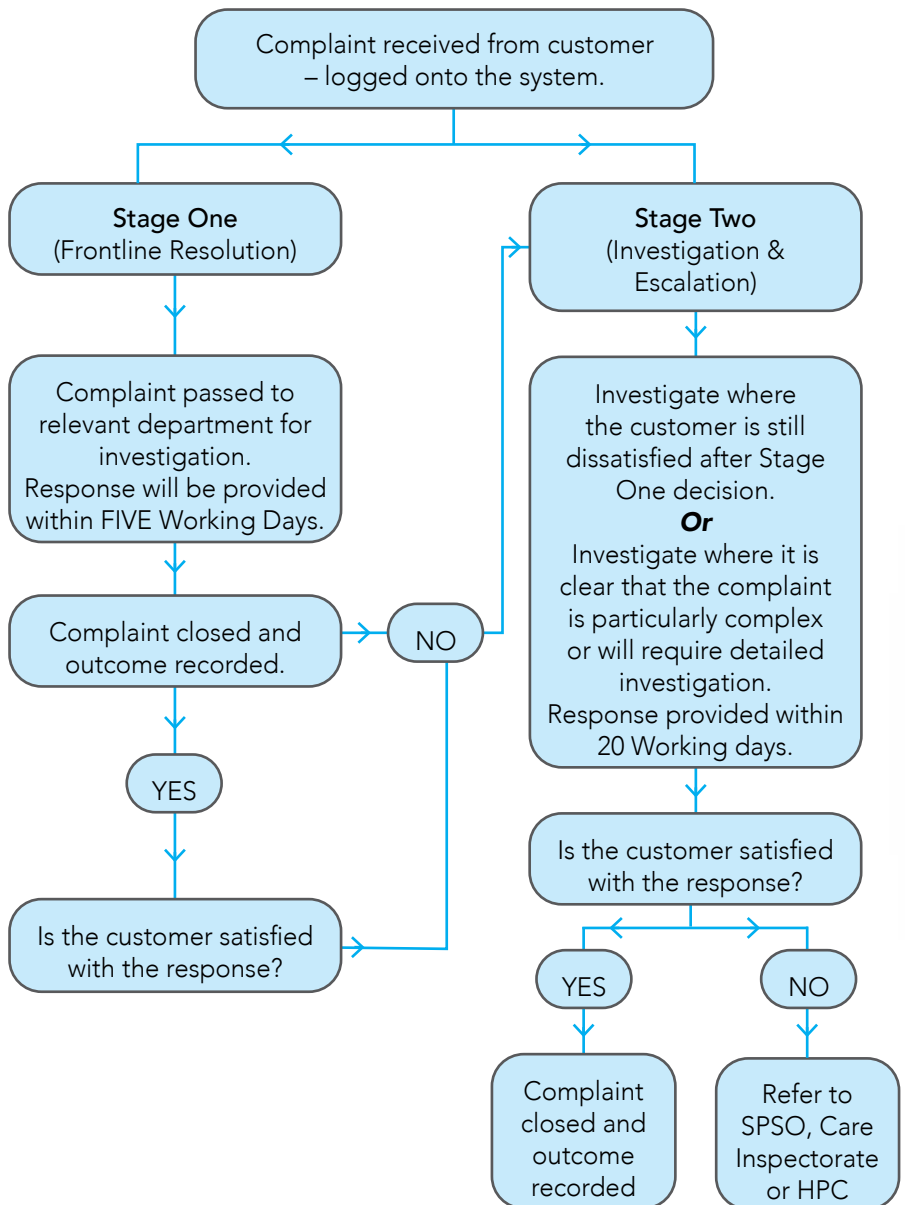
Citizens Advice Scotland

 **[www.cas.org.uk](http://www.cas.org.uk)**

Or check your phone book for your local bureau.



# Quick guide to our complaints procedure.





# **PAY YOUR RENT ON YOUR LUNCH BREAK. *EVEN IF THAT'S 2AM.***

**WITH OUR 24-HOUR LOCAL CALL CENTRE,  
WE'RE AWAKE WHEN YOU ARE.**

Pay rent or owners fees, manage your direct debits, report antisocial behaviour, apply for a new home, request a repair or inspection, make a complaint, pay us a compliment.

Call us free on **0800 013 2196** 24 hours a day, 7 days a week,  
or email [\*\*customerexperience@riverclydehomes.org.uk\*\*](mailto:customerexperience@riverclydehomes.org.uk)

We can produce information on request in large print, Braille, tape and on disk.

It is also available in other languages. If you need information in any of these formats please contact us on 0800 013 2196

Informacje w wersji dużym drukiem, alfabetem Braille'a, na kasecie magnetofonowej, dysku lub w innych językach dostępne są na życzenie. W celu uzyskania informacji w jednym z powyższych formatów prosimy o kontakt pod numerem 0800 013 2196.

ہم درخواست کرنے پر معلومات کو بڑے حروف والی عبارت ، نابینا لوگوں کے لیے بریل، ٹیپ اور ڈسک کی صورت میں مہیا کر سکتے ہیں۔

یہ معلومات دیگر زبانوں میں بھی دستیاب ہے۔ اگر آپ کو ان میں سے کسی بھی صورت میں یہ معلومات درکار ہوں تو ہم سے اس نمبر پر رابطہ کیجئے:

0800 013 2196.

我们可以根据要求而制作采用大字印刷、盲文、磁带和光盘等格式的信息。

同时还提供有使用其它语言的版本。如果你需要任何此类格式的信息，请联络我们：0800 013 2196.

अनुरोध किए जाने पर हम जानकारी को हम बड़े प्रिंट, ब्रेल, टेप में और डिस्क पर उपलब्ध करा सकते हैं।

यह अन्य भाषाओं में भी उपलब्ध है। यदि आपको इनमें से किसी फॉर्मेट में जानकारी की आवश्यकता है तो कृपया हमें 0800 013 2196 पर सम्पर्क करें।

ਮੰਗ ਕਰਨ ਤੇ ਅਸੀਂ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਵੱਡੀ ਛਪਾਈ, ਬ੍ਰੇਲ, ਟੇਪ ਅਤੇ ਡਿਸਕ ਤੇ ਉਤਪਾਦਿਤ ਕਰ ਸਕਦੇ ਹਾਂ।

ਇਹ ਹੋਰ ਭਾਸ਼ਾਵਾਂ ਵਿੱਚ ਵੀ ਉਪਲਬੱਧ ਹੈ। ਜੇ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਇਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਰੂਪਾਂ ਵਿੱਚੋਂ ਕਿਸੇ ਵਿੱਚ ਚਾਹੀਦੀ ਹੋਵੇ ਤਾਂ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਸਾਡੇ ਨਾਲ 0800 013 2196 ਤੇ ਸੰਪਰਕ ਕਰੋ।

River Clyde Homes:

Roxburgh House,

102 - 112 Roxburgh Street,

Greenock, PA15 4JT

River Clyde Homes is a company

limited by guarantee, registered

in Scotland (SC329031)

and a Scottish Charity

(SC038584). Property Factor

Registration Number: PF000152.



Improving Lives and Places