



## AH Homes Limited – Complaints Handling Procedure

### 1. Definitions and Interpretation

1.1 In this Complaints Handling Procedure the following expressions have the following meanings:

<b>“Appeal”</b>	means a request from a Customer to escalate a Complaint to Level Two following an unsatisfactory outcome at Level One;
<b>“Appeal Handler”</b>	means Robert Ailsby who will handle Level Two Complaints;
<b>“Business Day”</b>	means, any day (other than Saturday or Sunday) on which ordinary banks are open for their full range of normal business.
<b>“Complaint”</b>	means a complaint about the services provided by AH Homes Limited, about our customer service, or about our staff;
<b>“Complaint Handler”</b>	means Robert Ailsby who will handle Level One Complaints;
<b>“Complaints Policy”</b>	means our customer complaints policy;
<b>“Complaint Reference”</b>	means your file reference;
<b>“Customer”</b>	means a service user of AH Homes Limited;
<b>“Data Protection Policy”</b>	means our data protection policy
<b>“Decision Letter”</b>	means a letter sent by a Complaint Handler or Appeal Handler to a Customer informing that Customer of the outcome of their Complaint;
<b>“External Resolution”</b>	means the referral by a Customer of a Complaint to an external redress scheme for resolution if that Customer is not satisfied with the outcome at Level Two;
<b>“Investigation Report”</b>	means the outcomes detailed in our letters;
<b>“Level One”</b>	means the first stage in this Complaints Handling Procedure under which Complaints will be handled by a Complaint Handler;
<b>“Level Two”</b>	means the second stage in this Complaints Handling Procedure under which a Customer may appeal the outcome of a Level One Complaint and under which Complaints will be handled by an Appeal Handler;

- “Recommendation”** means the recommended resolution to a Complaint made by a Complaint Handler or Appeal Handler; and
- “Resolution Action”** means the available actions to be taken in response to a Complaint as detailed in Section 8.

## 2. **What this Complaints Handling Procedure Covers**

- 2.1 This Complaints Handling Procedure applies to Complaints pertaining to the provision of services by AH Homes Limited, to our customer service and to our staff.
- 2.2 For the purposes of this Complaints Handling Procedure, any reference to AH Homes Limited also includes our employees, agents and subcontractors.
- 2.3 Complaints may relate to any of our activities and may include (but are not limited to):
- 2.3.1 The quality of our customer service;
  - 2.3.2 The behaviour and/or professional competence of our staff;
- 2.4 The following do not constitute Complaints:
- 2.4.1 General questions about our services;
  - 2.4.2 Matters concerning contractual or other legal disputes;
  - 2.4.3 Formal requests for the disclosure of information including, but not limited to, those made under the Data Protection Act;

## 3. **Receipt and Recording of Complaints**

- 3.1 Customers may make Complaints to Homes Limited using any of the following methods:
- 3.1.1 In writing, addressed to 17-21 Cavendish Street, Ramsgate, CT11 9AL;
  - 3.1.2 By email, addressed to RA@ahhomes.co.uk;
- 3.2 All Complaints will be given a Complaint Reference and forwarded to an appropriate Complaint Handler, selected in accordance with Section 6.1.
- 3.3 All Complaints will be acknowledged in writing within 14 days of receipt. The acknowledgement will inform you of your Complaint Reference, and assigned Complaint Handler and will include a copy of our Customer Complaint Policy and this Complaints Handling Procedure.

## 4. **Complaint Information**

- 4.1 Customers are advised in our Complaints Policy that the following information should be provided in as much detail as is reasonably possible when making a Complaint:
- 4.1.1 The Customer's name, address, telephone number and email address, indicating any preferred method of communication;
  - 4.1.2 If the Complaint relates to a particular property, the property details;

- 4.1.3 If the Complaint relates to a particular member of staff, the name and, where appropriate, position of that person;
- 4.1.4 Further details of the Complaint including, as appropriate, all times, dates, events, and people involved;
- 4.1.5 Details of any documents or other evidence on which the Customer wishes to rely in support of the Complaint;
- 4.1.6 Details of how the Customer would like us to resolve the Complaint.

## **5. Complaint Levels**

- 5.1 We operate a two-stage complaints handling procedure. Upon receipt, all new Complaints should be handled in accordance with the Level One procedure set out in Section 6 below.
- 5.2 If a Customer is not satisfied with the resolution of their Complaint at Level One, you may request that the Complaint is escalated to Level Two in the form of an Appeal at which point the Complaint should be handled in accordance with the Level Two procedure set out in Section 7 below.
- 5.3 If a Customer is not satisfied with the resolution of their Complaint at Level Two, you have the option of referring the matter for External Resolution as detailed in Section 9 below.

## **6. Level One Complaints**

- 6.1 Upon receipt of a Complaint, the Complaint Handler shall consider the Complaint and make a decision within 14 Business Days whether to:
  - 6.1.1 Investigate the Complaint fully if it is considered to be valid, in which case the procedure should resume from Section 6.3; or
  - 6.1.2 Dismiss the Complaint if it is considered to be invalid, in which case the Complaint Handler should inform the Customer of their decision in writing within 21 Business Days.
- 6.2 Subject to delays arising from circumstances beyond reasonable control (including, but not limited to, delays in other persons responding to communications), the Complaint Handler shall have a period of 35 Business Days in which to fully investigate the Complaint and to decide upon appropriate Resolution Action(s).
- 6.3 The Complaint Handler shall examine and evaluate the Complaint, taking account of any relevant statements, information, evidence and circumstances and shall maintain objectivity and fairness at all times.
- 6.4 Following his/her examination of the Complaint, the Complaint Handler shall reach a decision within the time period set out in Section 6.2. Resolution Actions that may be chosen are set out in Section 8.
- 6.5 All Appeals must be forwarded to the Appeal Handler.

## **7. Level Two Complaints**

- 7.1 Upon receipt of an Appeal, the Appeal Handler shall consider the Appeal and make a decision whether to:

7.1.1 Investigate the Complaint again; or

7.1.2 Dismiss the Complaint.

**8. Resolution Actions**

When handling Complaints, Complaint Handlers and Appeal Handlers may consider a variety of solutions to address your complaint that would be appropriate to the circumstances.

**9. External Resolution**

9.1 As we are a member of The Property Redress Scheme **you** have the right to seek External Resolution of Complaints from that organisation if **you** are not satisfied with the outcome of your complaint.

9.2 The Property Redress Scheme handles any and all such referrals in accordance with its own policies and procedures.

**10. Implementation of Resolution Actions**

Upon the conclusion of a Complaint, whether at Level One or Level Two or by External Resolution, the Resolution Action(s) settled upon shall be implemented in a timely manner

**11. Confidentiality and Data Protection**

11.1 All Complaints, Appeals, evidence and other information gathered, held and processed under this Complaints Handling Procedure shall be treated with the utmost confidence at all times. Such information may be shared with staff of ours only to the extent required to resolve the Complaint in question in accordance with this Complaints Handling Procedure.

11.2 All personal information collected by us (including, but not limited to, Customers' names and contact details) shall only be collected, used and held in accordance with the provisions of the Data Protection Act 1998 and our Customers' rights under that Act, as detailed and embodied in our Data Protection Policy.