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| **Customer Feedback Policy** |  |

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|  | **BACKGROUND AND OBJECTIVES** |
|  | Alliance Homes Group believes that customers have a right to comment about services. As such, we aim to provide an accessible, fair and effective customer feedback procedure that encourages customers to give feedback. |
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|  | We welcome feedback as an important part of our commitment to customer care and service development. |
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|  | We apply this policy and its associated procedure to ensure that any customer who is not happy with the level of service received has an accessible, confidential and easy to use method for making a complaint, which offers effective action and response. |
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|  | We aim to provide high quality services to our customers at all times. However, we recognise that, in any organisation, service provision may not always be satisfactory. This policy and its accompanying procedure will address this matter. |
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|  | We provide an approach to complaints that is clear, simple and accessible, which ensures that complaints are resolved promptly, politely and fairly. This policy assists us in meeting our obligations under the Homes & Community Agency’s Tenant Involvement & Empowerment Standard, and the CQC fundamental standards. |
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|  | We will learn from feedback about our services so that we may continually improve those services. |
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|  | **POLICY DETAIL** |
|  | **Definitions** |
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|  | Feedback is a comment about a service where a customer is expressing a view about the service.  A compliment is feedback where a customer independently contacts us to express satisfaction with a service or individual |
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|  | A complaint is feedback where a customer is expressing dissatisfaction with a service or individual. |
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|  | Areas where individuals may express dissatisfaction which may not be regarded as complaints could relate to:   * the general law (unless wrongly applied) * persons or bodies over which we have no control * our overall policies (unless wrongly applied) * the level of rent that is being charged (unless wrongly applied) * matters which are, or could reasonably be expected to be, the subject of court or tribunal proceedings, or which are in the hands of our insurers |
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|  | We will not normally investigate any complaints that arise more than 12 months after the complainant first being aware of the circumstances that gave rise to the complaint. |
|  | Complaints and feedback may be received on official forms, by letter, fax, e-mail, telephone/text phone, website, personal visit or through any representative of the complainant. |
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|  | **Complaints Handling** |
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|  | We aim to investigate complaints quickly, effectively, and, where possible, to the customer’s satisfaction. A procedure has been devised separately to achieve this. |
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|  | This procedure allows for the recording and monitoring of all complaints. |
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|  | At the conclusion of the Internal Review Stage, the complainant is informed of their right to appeal to the review panel if they remain dissatisfied with the outcome. |
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|  | At any point in the process where we feel it appropriate, we may offer to refer the complaint to an independent mediator for resolution. |
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|  | We will make available a feedback leaflet setting out how customers can ensure that their concerns are dealt with. |
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|  | We will not treat any service user who has made a complaint less favourably than any other service user. |
| 2.2.7 | If a customer remains dissatisfied, after exhausting our process, the following options are available:  **Housing** – Customers will be advised of their right to take their complaint to the designated person/panel. Or, they can wait 8 weeks and go directly to the Housing Ombudsman.  **Contact Details**  Tel : 0300 111 3000  Address : Housing Ombudsman Service 81 Aldwych London WC2B 4HN Fax : 020 7831 1942  Email : [info@housing-ombudsman.org.uk](mailto:info@housing-ombudsman.org.uk?Subject=Enquiry)  **Home Care** - Customers will be advised of their right to take their complaint to the Local Government Ombudsman.  **Contact Details**  **Tel : 0300 061 0614 Address : The Local Government Ombudsman** PO Box 4771 Coventry CV4 0EH Fax : 024 7682 0001  **Debt Advice** - Customers will be advised of their rights to take their complaint to the Financial Ombudsman Service (FOC) and will be supplied with the leaflets regarding this.  **Contact details**  **Tel : 0800 023 4 567 or 0300 123 9 123,**  Address : The Financial Ombudsman Service Exchange Tower London E14 9SR |
|  | Email : [**complaint.info@financial-ombudsman.org.uk**](mailto:complaint.info@financial-ombudsman.org.uk) |
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|  | **Ombudsman Services** |
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|  | We will comply with our statutory and regulatory obligations to maintain membership of the Ombudsman Services. |
| 2.3.2 | Where a request is made by the Ombudsman for information, the relevant investigating manager should work with the Review Administrator to collate the pack and all information. |
|  | **Unreasonably Persistent or Vexatious Complaints** |
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|  | Where the Group Chief Executive considers a complaint to be deliberately repetitious or vexatious, we may, at any point of the complaints procedure, review the complaint and give a decision. Should this decision be that the complainant is vexatious, the complaint will be closed. The complainant then has the option to go to the Ombudsman service. |
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|  | If a complaint is substantially the same as one made within the previous six months, we may choose not to investigate the matter. |
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|  | **Staffing Issues** |
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|  | All staff will receive training to help them develop their skills in dealing effectively with customers and applying this policy. |
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|  | Staff should not be afraid to admit mistakes, and offer an apology at the earliest opportunity. Where a complaint is received about a member of staff, they will be informed immediately by their manager, and given the opportunity to give their view of the situation. They will also be kept informed of progress and the findings of any investigation. |
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|  | The Housing Services Manager (Customer Services), is responsible for providing advice on handling complaints, monitoring the effectiveness of the customer feedback procedure. |
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|  | **Other Feedback and Compliments** |
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|  | All forms of feedback, including compliments and suggestions, are acknowledged and recorded in The Hub, which is a centralised database. |
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|  | From time to time, we will canvass the opinion of customers through a variety of techniques to gauge the levels of satisfaction with our services. |
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|  | **Compensation** |
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|  | Where a complaint is upheld following investigation, any claim for compensation will be assessed by the relevant Director (or, following a review, the Review Panel) who will determine if the complainant should receive an ex gratia payment and the amount, based on the inconvenience or loss suffered. |
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|  | The relevant Director may also authorise local managers to exercise their discretion (within certain financial and other guidelines to be laid down by the Group Chief Executive) to make a suitable ex gratia gesture of goodwill, where appropriate.  All decisions around compensation amounts should be made with reference to the guidance found on Connect. |
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|  | **Learning from Feedback** |
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|  | In cases where customer feedback identifies a policy or procedural problem (i.e. not service delivery), we will consider the situation and, where appropriate, amend practice accordingly. We will inform the customer of the change and thank them for their input. |
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|  | We will ensure that trends/patterns in customer feedback are identified and any lessons learnt from customer feedback are acted upon and reported to the Performance Management Group and the Board in order to identify appropriate changes in practice and service improvements. |
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|  | Publicity of the customer feedback service and summaries of feedback received will be given through various communications. |
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|  | **MONITORING, CONSULTATION AND REVIEW** |
|  | The Board will receive regular reports on the performance against agreed targets and indicators. |
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|  | Key targets and Performance Indicators include:   * Monitoring information drawn together on a quarterly basis so that the Board is provided with a strategic view of feedback that highlights any trends and suggests possible improvements in areas of service provision or practices. * The number, subject of and response time to action complaints and feedback; the number of appeals with results and analysis of general feedback on Alliance Homes Group Group services. * Percentage of customers satisfied with the overall service provided by their landlord, as identified by the Customer Satisfaction survey * Number of complaints dealt with by the Ombudsman |
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|  | The Group Chief Executive and Executive Team will ensure that the complaints procedure is implemented, maintained and reviewed on a regular basis. Steps will be taken to ensure that the views and experiences of customers and staff concerning the way in which complaints are handled are taken into account as part of the review process. |
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|  | The Housing Services Manager (Customer Services) is responsible for ensuring that this policy is reviewed within the published timescale. |
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|  | In line with our involvement policy, Customers and Staff will be included in:   * monitoring our performance * reviewing this policy, in order to reflect their needs and priorities   Further details about how this will be achieved are set out in separate tenant and leaseholder involvement agreements. |
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|  | Failure by staff to observe the standards set out in this policy will be taken seriously and investigated in line with the performance and conduct policy. |
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|  | This policy will be reviewed every two years. |
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|  | **EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY** |
|  | This policy is subject to a periodic Equality Impact Assessment. |
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|  | The purpose of such an assessment is to consider the effect of the policy with regard to the recognised protected characteristics of equality and ensure that it does not unfairly impact any individual or group.  The protected characteristics are; age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity or other grounds set out in our Equality and Diversity Strategy and Single Equality Scheme.  Remedial action will be undertaken if a detrimental effect is identified. |
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|  | This policy and any other related publications of Alliance Homes Group can be provided in other formats for those with visual, literacy or language difficulties. |
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|  | **ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTS** |
|  | This policy has links to the Customer Care Policy, Access to Information Policy, Tenant Leaseholder Involvement Policy, Data Protection & Confidentiality Policy and all associated procedures. |
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|  | **APPROVAL** |

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| **Approval** | **Date** |
| Updated to update review process | 1st April 2017 |
| Equality Impact Assessment completed | 24th September 2015 |
| EIA reviewed by Equality & Diversity Manager | 24th September 2015 |
| ET review / approval | 5 February 2013 |
| Board or Cttee approval | 27 February 2013 |
| Review due before | March 2019 |