

Complaints, compliments and comments



Our commitment

We know that things can occasionally go wrong. We welcome feedback as a valuable opportunity to learn from our mistakes and make improvements for the future.

On receiving a complaint, we expect our staff to listen and put things right quickly and informally.

We will deal with complaints impartially, objectively, and fairly. We

will ensure that if you complain, you do not receive any adverse treatment because of your complaint.

We will take ownership, apologise where we have made a mistake, and aim to resolve the complaint to your satisfaction.

We will be clear about our timescales and keep you informed throughout any investigation.

What is a complaint?

A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction or concern with the standard and/or delivery of services we have provided, whether justified or not, which requires a response. The dissatisfaction can be with service failures including, but not limited to:

- the quality of the service offered or work carried out;
- the action or lack of action taken by staff;
- the attitude or behaviour of staff;
- missed appointments;
- a failure to comply with policy, procedure, or standards of service delivery; or
- cost.

Our complaints process does not cover matters that are dealt with through an alternative procedure (e.g. raising repairs, reporting anti-social behaviour, insurance claims, disrepair, appeals against statutory Notices, or policy decisions), or matters that are outside our control (e.g. complaints submitted 12 months or more after the issue occurred, services for which The Barnet Group is not responsible, or matters of law or central government policy). For more information, please refer to our Complaints Policy.

Who can make a complaint?

Anyone who receives a service from us can make a complaint. This includes:

- current and potential residents of properties owned or managed by The Barnet Group;
- customers and clients in receipt of services such as floating support, adult social care, or community development work from The Barnet Group;
- the families of those customers we support through our adult social care services;
- residents neighbouring properties owned or managed by The Barnet Group or its development sites;
- former customers who have been living in homes owned or managed by The Barnet Group, or who have been in receipt of any services offered by The Barnet Group;
- MPs and Councillors making a complaint on behalf of a tenant; and
- other advocates acting on behalf of a tenant (excluding legal representatives who write to us with a view to take legal action)

How can I make a complaint?

Complaints or expressions of dissatisfaction can be received in a number of ways:

- by telephone;
- in person (e.g. at reception, during a home visit, or at the place people are supported);
- by email;
- by letter;
- through our website;
- via a third party (with permission, including advocates); or
- at the request of a Councillor or MP.

Handling complaints

We aim to resolve expressions of dissatisfaction as soon as possible, informally, at the “first point of contact”. This may take the form of an apology,

explanation of what has happened, or agreeing actions to be taken to resolve the situation.

Stage 1 (internal)

If we cannot resolve your complaint when you first report it to us and you wish to make a formal complaint, we will log this. Within 2 working days we will send you an acknowledgement that will tell you who is dealing with your complaint and give you their contact details.

We always try to reply in full to complaints within 10 working days, but if we need more time to investigate we will let you know why and how long it will take, up to a maximum of 20 working days from first receipt of your complaint.

Stage 2 (internal)

If you are not satisfied by our response to your complaint at Stage 1, please contact us and make it clear that you wish to escalate to Stage 2 of our complaints process.

A complaints officer will ask you the reason why you remain unhappy and what outcome you are hoping for. If there is evidence that the issues have not been addressed and/or resolved,

we will ensure your complaint is investigated by a senior manager.

We always try to reply in full to complaints within 10 working days, but if we need more time to investigate we will let you know why and how long it will take, up to a maximum of 20 working days from first receipt of your complaint.

Complaints related to homelessness and housing allocations - Stage 3 (internal)

If you are not a tenant or leaseholder and your complaint relates to homelessness or allocations, if you are not satisfied by our response at Stage 2, please contact us to discuss it with a complaints officer.

If there is evidence that the issues have not been addressed and/or resolved, we will refer your complaint to our internal, impartial Stage 3 Complaints Panel which includes a Board Member, a member of the Executive Management Team, and a Head of

Service who has not previously been involved in your complaint. You have the right to attend.

We will arrange for the formal panel to take place within 20 working days of confirming your request for review, and always aim to fully respond to your complaint within 10 working days of the meeting, but if we need more time to investigate we will let you know why and how long it will take, up to a maximum of 20 working days from the meeting.

After our internal process

Complaints related to social housing

If you are not satisfied with our response at Stage 2, you have the right to refer your complaint to a designated person:

- any ward councillor
- any Member of Parliament

Finally, if you choose not to refer your

complaint to a designated person, or if your designated person refuses to refer your complaint to the Housing Ombudsman Service (HOS), you can approach the HOS directly once eight weeks have passed since the date of our final response to you.

Complaints related to homelessness and housing allocations

If you remain unsatisfied following the response from the Complaints Panel, you have the right to approach the

Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGO) to request an independent review.

Complaints related to adult social care

If you remain unsatisfied following our Stage 2 response, you have the right to approach the Local Government

and Social Care Ombudsman (LGO) to request an independent review.

Contacting The Barnet Group

(Barnet Homes, Opendoor Homes, and Your Choice Barnet)

By email: Talk2Us@barnethomes.org

On our websites: barnethomes.org
opendoorhomes.org
yourchoicebarnet.org

In writing: Complaints and Information team
The Barnet Group
Floor 5, Barnet House
1255 High Road
London
N20 0EJ

By telephone: 020 8359 5225 (Barnet Homes)
020 8359 4799 (Your Choice Barnet)

Contacting external agencies

You can find your local MP or ward councillors at:
writetothem.com or barnet.gov.uk

Housing Ombudsman Service

81 Aldwych, London, WC2B 4HN
Telephone: **0300 111 3000**
Website: housing-ombudsman.org.uk

Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman Service

PO Box 4771, Coventry, CV4 0EH
Telephone: **0300 061 0614**
Website: lgo.org.uk/contactus



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