BROCKLEY TENANTS' CO-OPERATIVE LTD COMPLAINTS POLICY

Revised May 2025
For review May 2028

Approved by the Management Committee
Reviewed and Approved

Introduction

Brockley Tenants' Co-operative values what our Members tell us, even when they are telling us they are unhappy. We recognise there will be times when we get things wrong and when this happens, we will respond positively to any complaints or feedback received. We want Members to be heard and understood and will view complaints as an opportunity to learn how to do things better.

Our definition of a Complaint

A complaint is defined as *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 Member or group of Members*.

A Member does not have to use the word complaint in order for it to be treated as such. The Co-op aims to recognise the difference between a service request, feedback and a formal complaint.

Exclusions to the Complaints Policy

In the following circumstances, a matter will not be considered as a complaint:

- If the issue giving rise to the complaint occurred over twelve months ago. This exclusion may not apply where the complaint concerns safeguarding or health and safety issues, or there are other good reasons to do so.
- Where legal proceedings have been started. We will, however, keep Members informed of any delays to the legal process
- A liability issue that is subject to an insurance claim. Other elements of the complaint can still be considered through the complaints procedure
- Matters that have already been considered under the Complaints Policy
- If you tell us about anti-social behaviour caused by another Member or someone else. These matters will be dealt with under the Anti-Social Behaviour policy
- A service request is a request from a resident to the landlord requiring action to be taken to put something right. Service requests are not complaints.

If a matter is not accepted as a complaint, we will explain in detail why this is.

Our aims and principles in complaint handling

- All complaints will be dealt with promptly, politely and fairly
- Complaints will be dealt with in confidence
- Complaints will be acknowledged, accurately recorded and monitored
- Complainants will be kept fully informed of progress and the outcome of any investigation

Our Mission Statement:
Brockley Tenants' Co-op delivering safe, secure, decent and affordable homes for its Members.

- Complainants with special needs, language difficulties or other issue affecting their ability to make a complaint or have it addressed, will be offered additional assistance if needed
- Where any failure is identified and a complaint is upheld, the Co-op will offer an appropriate apology and award compensation if the terms of the Compensation Policy are met
- The complainant will be informed of any changes made or actions taken to prevent the issue from happening again

How to make a complaint

- Call the Housing Office on 020 8691 5898
- Email admin@brockley.coop
- Send a message via the website – www.brockley-tenants-co-op.co.uk/contact-us
- Visit the Housing Office and speak to a Member of the team
- Write to the Manager, Brockley Tenants' Co-operative, 249 Lewisham Way, SE4 1XF
- You can ask a friend or relative to complain on your behalf, but we will need to be clear they are acting with your permission

The complaints procedure and timelines

All Members of the staff team are responsible for resolving disputes at the earliest opportunity, but overall responsibility for handling complaints rests with the Co-op Manager.

Informal Resolution

Members who are dissatisfied with the service they receive should contact a Member of the staff team. Every effort will be made to resolve the complaint by finding an immediate solution agreed with the complainant.

Formal complaint

If a Member remains dissatisfied, the matter will be logged, investigated and responded to by the Manager (stage 1) unless the Member lives in an Hexagon Managed property and the complaint relates directly to Hexagon, its contractors, or a Member of Hexagon staff in which case the complaint should be made directly to Hexagon. Hexagon complaints team can be contacted directly complaints@hexagon.org.uk . If a Member remains unhappy with the stage 1 formal response, the complaint can be escalated to the Management Committee of the Co-op (stage 2). The Member will attend the Closed Management Committee Meeting to present their complaint and enable the Committee to clarify information. If the Member lives in a Hexagon Managed Property, the Stage 2 complaint will be referred to heard by Hexagon Housing Association. The Member will be informed of this and provided with a copy of Hexagon's complaint procedure. The Cooperative is responsible for providing all the relevant information to Hexagon.

Stage	Action	Target time
1	• The complaint will be acknowledged and logged • An investigation will take place and a written response sent to the complainant • The stage 1 complaint will be investigated by Hexagon if it relates to services they provide.	• Within 5 working days from receipt of the complaint • Within 10 working days from the complaint being acknowledged • Any extension to this will be no more than 10 working days, must have a good reason for this what is communicated to the complainant.
2	• The stage 2 complaint will be acknowledged and logged and if a Hexagon Member referred to Hexagon complaints team. • The complaint will either be heard by BTC Committee or Hexagon • For BTC Members a committee meeting will be held to discuss the complaint and reach a decision • A written response will be sent from the Committee to the complainant	• Within 5 working days • Within 20 working days any extension to this will be no more than 20 working days and must have a good reason for the delay and should be communicated to the complainant • This response may be delegated to the Coop Manager to communicate the decision

If there is any delay in responding to the complaint and it cannot be dealt with within the above timescales the complainant should be informed why and the contact details of the Housing Ombudsman should be given at this point.

Designated person

If you are unable to resolve your complaint through the Co-op's or Hexagon's procedure you can contact a designated person to help find a solution. The designated person can be an MP, local councillor or a Tenant panel. They can try to resolve the complaint themselves or refer the complaint straight to the Housing Ombudsman. If you decide not to contact a designated person, you can contact the Housing Ombudsman directly eight weeks after the Co-op has given you the final response to your complaint.

The Housing Ombudsman Service

The Co-op is registered with the Housing Ombudsman Service. The Housing Ombudsman Service is set up by law to look at complaints from all housing organisations that are registered with them. The service is free, independent and impartial.

If you remain dissatisfied at the end of the Co-op's complaints procedure, your complaint can be brought to the Ombudsman service. The Ombudsman will consider all the evidence provided and issue a decision, which may include actions the landlord needs to take and orders for compensation.

Members may contact the Housing Ombudsman Service at any time to assist throughout the life of a complaint and engage with the Ombudsman's dispute support advisors.

Website	www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk
Email	info@housing-ombudsman.org.uk
Phone	0300 111 3000
By post	Housing Ombudsman's Service, PO Box 1484, Unit D, Preston, PR2 0ET

Learning and Improvement

- The Co-op will use complaints to learn from mistakes and seek to improve its service to Members
- The Co-op will publish information in relation to its complaint handling performance
- Appropriate training will be given to those involved in complaint handling
- The Cooperative elects a Member with Responsibility for Complaints each year who is part of the Management Committee. This role takes an overview of the complaints process to check that responses are made within the guidelines listed above.
- The Management Committee includes a report about Complaints received during the year as part of its Annual report on Tenant Satisfaction Measures. This includes a Service Improvement Report to outline the Committees response to complaints and lessons learnt from them.

Policy/Procedure/Report:	BTC Complaints Policy April 2024
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