

The complaints process

Investigation stage

What is an investigation?

An investigation is the second (and final) stage of our complaints process. At this stage, your complaint looked into in more detail by our independent Case Resolution Team who will:

- Look fairly and honestly the concerns that you have raised;
- Carefully consider the impact that this has had on you and your family;
- Explain what action can be taken to resolve the complaint.

The purpose of our investigation is to assess whether staff have responded properly to a given situation and to decide whether their actions were fair under the circumstances.

Please note that it is not within the investigating officer's authority to overturn decisions that have been made in line with our policies, procedures or relevant legislation.

What happens during an investigation?

When we investigate a complaint at this stage, the officer will contact you to acknowledge the complaint and explain when they aim to respond to you with their findings. They may also ask you to give more details about your concerns, or share any other information that you want us to look at.

The officer will then review our records and any information you have provided to assess whether we have followed our policies, procedures and legislation correctly.

They will also consider any other factors which may affect your case need to ensure you have been treated in a reasonable way.

Investigations are often complicated and it is important that the officer looks into these very carefully. Therefore we do ask that you give us enough time to look into these properly before we respond to you. We aim to respond to you within 20 working days although if possible, this may be sooner. Very occasionally, we may need more time to investigate your concerns. If we need to extend an Investigation, we will explain the reason why and tell you when you can expect our response.

If you have any new requests or concerns that are not part of your complaint, please contact the Customer Service Centre who will be able to help.

What can I expect as an outcome?

Once the investigation has been completed, we will write to you with a formal response that explains our findings, and what we can do to resolve the issue for you. The response will also explain the reasons behind any decisions or proposals that are made as part of the complaint.

If you have any questions about the outcome, or believe that you have further information about your investigation that has not been considered, please contact us and we will look into this for you.

We won't always be able to tell you everything about the findings of our investigation and what action has been taken. This is because some things are protected by strict laws about sharing information. If this is the case, we will explain why we aren't able to answer all your questions in detail.

For example, you may want to know what action has been taken against a neighbour but we cannot tell you about this because this is confidential.

What if I am still unhappy?

We always aim to resolve complaints so that you are happy with the outcome, however we recognise that this is not always possible.

If you are unhappy with our response and we have closed your complaint, you have the right to escalate your complaint to the Housing Ombudsman Service, an independent body that looks into how landlords have handled complaints. They will not normally consider a complaint until 8 weeks after receiving our final response. Alternatively you can approach a designated person to look at the complaint for you. The designated person can be:

- MP
- Councillor

For more information, you can contact the Housing Ombudsman Service on:

Telephone – **0300 111 3000**

Email – **info@housing-ombudsman.org.uk**

Website – **www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk/**

This leaflet can be translated into other languages, large print and Braille or recorded on to an audio CD. Please contact us for details.

If you need to speak to a Sanctuary member of staff in your own language, please contact your local office they will arrange an interpreter for you.

0800 131 3348 (landline) 0300 123 3511 (mobile)

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