Wheatley Homes South
Compliments and complaints

If you're happy or unhappy with any of our services let us know.



Wheatley Homes South

Better homes, better lives

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We can produce information on request translated, in large print, Braille and audio formats. Visit www.wheatley-group.com/home/accessibility or contact your local housing officer.

Compliments and complaints

Wheatley Homes South is committed to providing high-quality customer services.

We value complaints and use information from them to help us improve our services.

If something goes wrong, or you are dissatisfied with our services, please tell us. This leaflet explains how to tell us when something has gone wrong. It outlines our complaints procedure, how we will investigate the matter, and what you can expect from us.

What is a complaint?

We regard a complaint as any expression of dissatisfaction about our action or lack of action, or about the standard of service provided by us or on our behalf.

You can read more about our approach to complaints and our complaints policy on our website.

What can and can't I complain about?

What can I complain about?

You can complain about things like:

- failure or refusal to provide a service
- inadequate quality or standard of service, or an unreasonable delay in providing a service
- delays in responding to enquiries or requests
- unfairness, bias or prejudice in service delivery
- lack of provision, or the provision of misleading, unsuitable or incorrect advice or information
- a repair that has not been carried out properly or in an agreed timeframe
- dissatisfaction with one of our policies or its impact on the individual
- failure to properly apply law, procedure or guidance when delivering services
- failure to follow the appropriate administrative process
- dissastisfaction about data use including data sharing, subject access requests, wrong information held, information accuracy, data retention, unauthorised disclosure or personal data use
- conduct, treatment by or attitude of a member of staff or contractor except where there are arrangements in place for the contractor to handle the complaint themselves
- disagreement with a decision, except where there is a statutory procedure for challenging that decision, or an established appeals process followed throughout the sector
- dissatisfaction with heating networks including heating outages, hot water interuptions, billing issues, metering disputes and heat supply service standards. Note these will be dealt with under our Heat Network Complaint policy.

Your complaint may involve more than one Wheatley Homes Glasgow service or be about someone working on our behalf.

What can't I complain about?

There are some things we can't deal with through our complaints handling procedure. These include:

- a routine first-time request for a service
- a request for compensation only
- issues that are in court or have already been heard by a court or a tribunal (if you decide to take legal action, you should let us know as the complaint cannot then be considered under this process)
- disagreement with a decision where there is a statutory procedure for challenging that decision (such as for freedom of information and subject access requests), or an established appeals process followed throughout the sector
- a request for information under the Data Protection or Freedom of Information (Scotland) Acts Our Data Protection and Freedom of Information policies have more information
- a grievance by a staff member or a grievance relating to employment or staff recruitment
- a concern raised internally by a member of staff (which was not about a service they received, such as a whistleblowing concern)
- a concern about a child or an adult's safety this would be covered by our Child Protection and Adult Protection policies.
- an attempt to reopen a previously concluded complaint or to have a complaint reconsidered where we have already given our final decision
- abuse or unsubstantiated allegations about our organisation or staff where such actions would be covered by our Unacceptable Actions Policy
- a concern about the actions or service of a different organisation, where we have no involvement in the issue, except where the other organisation is delivering services on our behalf.

If other procedures or rights of appeal can help you resolve your concerns, we will give information and advice to help you.

Who can complain?

Anyone who receives, requests or is directly affected by our services can complain. A representative, such as a relative, friend, advocate or adviser, can also complain on your behalf. We will normally need your written consent. See 'getting help to make your complaint' on page 9.

How do I complain?

You can complain:

- by calling our Customer First Centre
- in writing or by email
- through your online account
- by speaking to any member of staff.

Our Customer First Centre can also arrange for your housing officer to call or visit you. It's best to raise your complaint as soon as possible and directly with the service concerned, so we can try to resolve the issue quickly.

When complaining, please tell us:

- your full name and contact details
- what has gone wrong and as much detail as possible
- what outcome you are seeking.

Contact us

- **Telephone**: 0800 011 3447 (24 hours a day)
- **Website**: www.wheatleyhomes-south.com

How long do I have to complain?

Normally, you should complain within six months of:

- the event you want to complain about; or
- finding out you have a reason to complain.

In exceptional circumstances, we may accept a complaint after six months. If you think the time limit should not apply, please tell us why.

What happens next?

We will tell you who is dealing with your complaint. Our complaints procedure has two stages.

What happens when I complain?

Stage 1: Frontline response

We aim to respond to complaints quickly where possible, when you first tell us about the issue. This could mean an on-the-spot apology and explanation if something has clearly gone wrong, or immediate action to resolve the problem.

If we cannot resolve your complaint immediately, we will give your decision at stage 1 within five working days, unless there are exceptional circumstances.

If you are not satisfied with the response we give at this stage, we will tell you what you can do next. If you choose to, you can take your complaint to stage 2. You must normally ask us to consider your complaint at stage 2 either:

- within six months of the event you want to complain about or finding out that you have a reason to complain; or
- within two months of receiving your stage 1 response (if this is later).

In exceptional circumstances, we may be able to accept a stage 2 complaint after the time limit. If you feel that the time limit should not apply to your complaint, please tell us why.

Stage 2: Investigation

Stage 2 deals with two types of complaint:

- where you remain dissatisfied after stage 1; or
- if you or we believe this is a complex case which will require detailed investigation.

When using stage 2:

- we will acknowledge receipt of your complaint within three working days;
- we will confirm our understanding of the complaint we will investigate and what outcome you are looking for;
- we will try to resolve your complaint where we can, in some cases we may suggest using an alternative complaint resolution approach, such as mediation; and
- where we cannot resolve your complaint, we will give you a full response as soon as possible, normally within 20 working days.

If our investigation will take longer than 20 working days, we will let you know. We will advise you our revised time limits and keep you updated on progress.

What if I'm still dissatisfied?

After we have given you our final decision, if you are still dissatisfied with our decision or the way we dealt with your complaint, you can ask the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO) to look at it.

The SPSO is an independent organisation that investigates complaints. They are not an advocacy or support service, but there are other organisations who can help you with advocacy or support.

You can ask the SPSO to look at your complaint if:

- you have gone all the way through the Wheatley Homes Glasgow's complaints handling procedure;
- it is less than 12 months after you became aware of the matter you want to complain about; and
- the matter has not been, and is not being considered in court.

The SPSO will ask you to complete a complaint form and provide a copy of our final response to your complaint.

You can do this online at **www.spso.org.uk/complain/form** or call them on Freephone **0800 377 7330**.

You may wish to get independent support or advocacy to help you progress your complaint. See the section on getting help to make your complaint on page 9. The SPSO's contact details are:

- SPSO,
  Bridgeside House,
  99 McDonald Road,
  Edinburgh, EH7 4NS

Their freepost address is:
FREEPOST SPSO

Freephone: **0800 377 7330**
Online contact:
www.spso.org.uk/contact-us
Website: **www.spso.org.uk**

Factoring, private residential, heat network and data protection complaints

There are some complaints about housing that have an alternative route for independent review. We will tell you how to seek independent review when we give you our final response on your complaint.

Factoring complaints

If your complaint relates to a factoring service we provide, we will investigate your complaint. At Stage 2, we will ask homeowners to confirm their complaint in writing or by email. After we have given you our final decision, if you are still dissatisfied with our decision or the way we dealt with your complaint, you can ask the First Tier Tribunal to look at it.

First-tier Tribunal for Scotland
Housing and Property Chamber
Glasgow Tribunals Centre,
20 York Street,
Glasgow, G2 8GT
Telephone: **0141 302 5900**
Email: **HPCadmin@scotcourtstribunals.gov.uk**
Website: **www.housingandpropertychamber.scot**

Lowther tenancies

If your complaint relates to a private residential tenancy service that we provide, we will investigate your complaint. After we have given you our final decision, if you are still dissatisfied with our decision or the way we dealt with your complaint, you can ask the First Tier Tribunal to look at it.

First-tier Tribunal for Scotland
Housing and Property Chamber
Glasgow Tribunals Centre,
20 York Street, Glasgow, G2 8GT
Telephone: **0141 302 5900**
Email: **HPCadmin@scotcourtstribunals.gov.uk**
Website: **www.housingandpropertychamber.scot**

Heat network complaints

If your complaint relates to the supply of heat from a regulated heat network and are dissatisfied with the outcome of your complaint, or if the complaint remains unresolved after eight weeks, you are able to refer the case to the Energy Ombudsman.

- Energy Ombudsman, P.O Box 966, Warrington WA4 9DF
- Telephone: **0330 440 1624**
- Email: **enquiry@energyombudsman.org**
- Website: **www.energyombudsman.org**

Each heat network complaint is reviewed independently and we look to resolve complaints with appropriate outcomes. Potential remedies to complaints include but are not limited to; an explanation, an apology, taking appropriate remedial action, compensation in appropriate circumstances. Please refer to our Heat Network Complaint policy for more information.

For issues relating to the supply of heat independent help is available through Citizens Advice Scotland.

- Citizens Advice Scotland, 1st Floor, Broadside, 2 Powderhall Road, Edinburgh EH7 4GB
- Email: **info@cas.org.uk**
- Website: **www.cas.org.uk**

Data protection complaints
If you are unhappy with how your personal information has been collected, used, shared, stored or processed, then these concerns will be managed through our Complaints Policy. Data protection complaints will be acknowledged no later than 30 calendar days in accordance with applicable data protection legislation, although we will aim to acknowledge these sooner wherever possible. Once acknowledged, we will take appropriate and proportionate steps to investigate and respond to the complaint without undue delay, keep complainants informed where appropriate, communicate the outcome of the complaint, and advise individuals of their right to raise concerns with Wheatley's Data Protection Officer and the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) – Website: **www.ico.org.uk**

Reporting a significant performance failure to the Scottish Housing Regulator

The Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR) can consider issues raised with them about 'significant performance failures'. A significant performance failure is defined by the SHR as something that a landlord does or fails to do that puts the interests of its tenants at risk, and which the landlord has not resolved. This is something that is a systemic problem that does, or could, affect all of a landlord's tenants. If you are affected by a problem like this, you should first report it to us. If you have told us about it but we have not resolved it, you can report it directly to the SHR.

A complaint between an individual tenant and a landlord is not a significant performance failure. Significant performance failures are not, therefore, dealt with through this complaints handling procedure. You can ask us for more information about significant performance failures.

The SHR also has more information on their website: **www.housingregulator.gov.scot**

Getting help to make your complaint
We understand that you may be unable or reluctant to make a complaint yourself. We accept complaints from the representative of a person who is dissatisfied with our service. We can take complaints from a friend, relative, or an advocate, if you have given them your consent to complain for you.

Children can make complaints, defined as those under the age of 18 in accordance with the SPSO's child-friendly complaint handling principles. Representatives can complain on behalf of children. We will deal with these complaints under our child friendly complaints process.

You can find out about advocates in your area by contacting the **Scottish Independent Advocacy Alliance:**
Tel: **0131 510 9410**
Website: **www.siaa.org.uk**

You can find out about advisers in your area through the Citizens Advice Scotland.
Visit their website **www.cas.org.uk** for your local service.

We're committed to making our services easy to use for all members of the community. In line with our statutory equalities duties, we will always ensure that reasonable adjustments are made to help you access and use our services. If you have trouble putting your complaint in writing, or want this information in another language or format, such as large font, or Braille, please tell us in person, contact us on **0800 011 3447** or email us at **talk@wheatleyhomes-south.com**



Compliments
Are you happy with our service? Please let us know by visiting **www.wheatleyhomes-south.com** We can use your experience to help improve things for other people.

Quick guide to our complaints procedure

Complaints procedure
You can make your complaint in person, by phone, by email or in writing. We have a two-stage complaints procedure. We will always try to deal with your complaint quickly. But if it is clear that the matter will need investigation, we will tell you and keep you updated on our progress.

Stage 1: Frontline response
We will always try to resolve your complaint, within five working days, if we can. If you are dissatisfied with our response, you can ask us to consider your complaint at stage 2.

Stage 2: Investigation
We will look at your complaint at this stage if you are dissatisfied with our response at stage 1. We also look at some complaints immediately at this stage, if it is clear that they need investigation.

We will acknowledge your complaint within three working days. We will confirm the points of complaint to be investigated and what you want to achieve. We will investigate the complaint and give you our decision as soon as possible. This will be after no more than 20 working days unless there is clearly a good reason for needing more time.

Scottish Public Services Ombudsman
If, after receiving our final decision on your complaint, you remain dissatisfied with our decision or the way we have handled your complaint, you can ask the SPSO to consider it. There are some complaints about housing that have an alternative route for independent review. We will tell you how to seek independent review when we give you our final response on your complaint.

Need to get in touch?
We're always here to help.



Call us **0800 011 3447**
Call our **Customer First Centre**
24 hours a day, seven days a week for any issues you have.



Speak to your **housing officer.**
Our housing officers can visit you in your home or contact you by telephone if that is easier. Call the Customer First Centre to arrange this.



Visit us (web)
www.wheatleyhomes-south.com
Visit MyHousing (web)
www.myhousing.org.uk



Find us on Facebook
www.facebook.com//WHomesSouth



Write to us
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Dumfries and Galloway
DG1 3UE

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Wheatley Group

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