



Complaints, procedures and policy 2025

Abbeyfield Wey Valley Society

Assisted Living in Guildford and Oxted

Registered Charity No. 1168173. Company No. 10259078 Housing Association No. H3294



Introduction

The Society's Complaints Policy has been designed to ensure that all complaints and service requests are handled fairly, inclusively, and effectively. We aim to correct mistakes and address tenant concerns promptly.

Our Policy aims to:

Ensure that all complaints are handled promptly, fairly, consistently and confidentially (in line with data protection regulations)

- Be clear about who is responsible for complaints at each stage.
- Record all complaints and to review how we handled them, in order to drive improvement.
- Publish information about complaints handled in our annual report.
- Take action to 'put things right' where a complaint identifies that we have failed to deliver a service to the expected standard.



1. Defining a Complaint

The term complaint is defined here 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 resident or group of residents’.

We recognise that the word complaint does not have to be used in order for it to be treated as such. This policy is intended for residents but also covers an expression of dissatisfaction by any stakeholder affected by the standard of service, actions, or lack of action by our Society. Conversely, a request for a service is not in itself a complaint – it is only where the request for service is not dealt with adequately or within a reasonable time-scale that it would be become a complaint.

2. Who Can make a complaint?

Tenants and customers of the Society.

Individuals on the waiting list or those who have terminated their tenancy within the last 12 months.

Complaints can be submitted directly or via a third party with permission.



3. Circumstances in which a matter will not be considered as a complaint.

- The issue giving rise to the complaint occurred over twelve months ago.
- Legal proceedings have started. This is defined as details of the claim, such as the claim form and Particulars of Claim, having been filed in court.
- Matters that have previously been considered under the complaints policy.

If the Society decide not to accept a complaint, an explanation will be provided to the complainant setting out the reasons why the matter is not suitable for the complaints process and the right to take that decision to the Ombudsman.

If after consideration, the ombudsman does not agree that the exclusion has been fairly applied, the Ombudsman may tell the landlord to take on the complaint.



4. Our Complaints Process

Our Society aims to make it easy for residents and stakeholders to make a complaint by offering a choice of channels that can be used and ensuring that the Society's policy is publicised by:

- Displaying information on the complaints process on the noticeboard
- Giving information on the complaints process to residents when they take up residence

Where a resident or their representative is dissatisfied with any aspect of the service provided by our Society, the first course of action should be to raise the problem directly with the relevant manager or individual concerned. We will try to resolve the issue informally on the day it is raised, and, in most cases, will be able to do so quickly and satisfactorily.

Where an individual is having difficulty in making a complaint, we will make all reasonable adjustments to assist the complainant in registering the complaint.

At all stages, please provide contact details of the complaint and any suggestions you may have for resolving the complaint. Anonymous complaints will be investigated under the same procedure; however, it is better where contact details are provided so that we can inform the complainant of the outcome of our investigation.

Complaints received via social media will receive a generic response and be passed to The Chief Executive Officer to be addressed through the standard procedure. Where the complaint is made publicly on social media, confidentiality cannot be protected. Where the issue raised cannot be resolved informally, a formal complaint can be made using the procedure below.



5. Our Complaints Procedure

Stage 1: Investigation

Complaints can be made:

In person or via a representative to the House Manager or the Society's Operations Manager.

By email, to the House Manager:

Roundhay Independent Living

Roundhay@awvs.org.uk

David Gresham House

davidgreshamhouse@awvs.org.uk

By telephone to The House Manager:

Roundhay - 01483 910815

David Gresham House - 01883 715948

By post, address to the AWVS Operations Manager

Abbeyfield Wey Valley Society

Mike Hawthorn Drive

Farnham

Surrey

GU9 7UQ

We will log details of the complaint and acknowledge it in writing to the complainant within 5 working days of receipt.



Stage 1 (continued)

An investigation will be carried out and a full written response, including any actions planned, will be provided within 10 working **days**, which may be extended by a further 10 working days, where necessary, subject to agreement with the complainant. The complainant will be asked if their complaint is resolved and if they are happy with the way in which it has been dealt.

If the complainant remains dissatisfied, they may escalate the complaint to stage 2 by notifying The Chief Executive Officer (same postal address as above).

Stage 2: Review

When a complaint is escalated, the complaint and its Stage 1 investigation will be subject to a full review by the Chief Executive Officer.

We will provide a full written response within 20 working days from the request to escalate. Where this is not possible, an explanation will be given, and an agreement reached to extend the response period by no more than a further 10 working days. The complainant will be informed that the response following Stage 2 concludes the Society's internal complaints procedure.



6. After conclusion of our complaints process

The Society is registered with the Ombudsman service - Housing.

The complainant can be referred to the Housing Ombudsman Service.

**Housing Ombudsman Service,
PO Box 1484, Unit D, Preston, PR2 0ET**

Tel: 0300 1113000

website: www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk/residents/make-a-complaint/).

A complainant is required to wait eight weeks following conclusion of the Society's complaints process before taking the complaint to the Ombudsman directly.

They may choose to refer the complaint to a 'Designated Person' (such as their MP or local councillor) during this time to help them resolve the complaint or refer the complaint to the Housing Ombudsman on their behalf.

Our Society will co-operate with the Ombudsman during any investigation and comply fully with the resulting final decision, which will be binding.



7. Putting things right

Where we have failed to deliver a service to the expected standard, we will seek to resolve the complaint and to 'put things right' – this may include an apology, corrective action, including, where appropriate, making a compensation payment. Any significant findings will result in a review and any lessons learned will be recorded.

8. Reporting on Complaints

The Board will have access to full records of any complaints received at the Society. A self-assessment to review the volume, outcomes, complainant satisfaction and compliance with time frames will be undertaken on an annual basis. The results of which will be shared with residents and details published in the Annual Report.