

For use by Rent Smart Wales Licensees as appropriate

All Rent Smart Wales licensed landlords and agents have licence conditions that they must abide by, and it should be noted that a failure to abide by licence conditions can put a licence at risk. Any person completing letting and management activities at rental properties within Wales without a licence would be committing an offence.

One of these licence conditions requires a Licensee to have a written procedure in place to ensure that a tenant can raise a complaint where they feel there is a need to do so. The intention of this licence condition is to ensure that any dissatisfaction can be dealt with quickly and efficiently before it escalates.

Any licence issued from the **1st December 2022** has the following licence condition relating to a complaints procedure, although it should be noted that prior to the 1st December 2022, licensees were already required to have a complaints procedure in place:

“The licensee must manage any complaints from those involved in their business practices in a professional and coherent manner and have a written procedure in place appropriate to the licensee's business model. This should include how to make a complaint and explain how and when the complaint will be responded to.

The licensee must ensure that the written procedure is accessible to service users which includes prospective tenants, tenants and landlords. This includes but is not limited to the procedure being available in any office, on any website and ensuring that it is provided on a request from any service user which includes prospective tenants, tenants and landlords. The licensee will provide a copy of their written complaint handling procedure to Rent Smart Wales on request.”

In order to assist Licensees to adhere to this licence condition, Rent Smart Wales have produced, in consultation with The Property Ombudsman, the following template complaints procedure. Where a Licensee does not already have a complaints procedure in place, this template can be used by any Licensee. This template should be adapted to suit the Licensee's own circumstance, there will be circumstances where the reporting procedures will be much simpler e.g. individual landlord Licensee.

Please note that it is imperative that the complaints procedure/policy is easily accessible to all service users and also that the procedure/policy is adhered too. If Rent Smart Wales have any concerns regarding a Licensee's conduct in relation to any complaints raised, the Licensee may be required to provide evidence to demonstrate that the procedure/policy in place has been followed.

CUSTOMER COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE/POLICY

Introduction

We <INSERT NAME OF ORGANISATION> are committed to dealing effectively with any complaints you have about our service. If we have made a mistake we will apologise and try to put things right.

We review complaints regularly. Wherever possible, we will use this information to improve the way we do things. We also welcome comments and compliments about the service we have provided.

How to contact <INSERT ORGANISATION NAME>:

We want it to be simple and convenient for you to raise a complaint, make a comment or pay us a compliment.

To contact us:

- **Call:** <INSERT PHONE NUMBER>
- **Email:** <INSERT EMAIL ADDRESS>
- **Write to:** <INSERT CORRESPONDENCE ADDRESS>

What can you expect from us when you make a complaint?

If we receive a complaint from you, we will do all that we can to help you and we will try to find a solution to any problems you have brought to our attention. We will ensure that:

- Your complaint is acknowledged within 3 working days of the date that it is received
- We will aim to resolve the complaint within 15 working days - if your complaint is more complex we may need more time.
- We will let you know within the 15 working day period if we think it may take longer to investigate your complaint and tell you how long we expect it to take, providing regular updates.

We will respect your right to confidentiality and privacy and we will treat you fairly and in accordance with our commitment to equality.

If you are asking us for a service for the first time e.g. repairs, you should give us a chance to put things right. If you are not happy with our response and you let us know, we will then treat it as a complaint.

The person who is investigating your concerns will firstly aim to establish the facts. In some instances we may ask to meet you to discuss your concerns.

Outcome

Following our investigation, we will let you know what we have found and we will use your preferred form of communication, such as letter or e-mail, when we contact you. We will explain how and why we came to our conclusions.

If we find that we have done something wrong, we will tell you this, explain what happened and apologise. If we find there is a fault in our systems or the way we do things, we will tell you what it is and how we plan to change things to stop it happening again.

Putting things right

If there is a simple solution to your problem, we may ask you to accept this solution. For example, where you asked for a service and we see straight away that you should have had it; we will offer to provide the service rather than continue to investigate

Staff training

We will make sure that our staff are trained to handle complaints effectively and receive appropriate training in the use of the Complaints Policy.

The Redress Scheme

We are a member of the <INSERT NAME OF THE REDRESS SCHEME>. You can contact the Redress Scheme at any time. However, they are unable to deal with a complaint until our complaints process has been completed and we have had a chance to put things right.

<INSERT INDEPENDENT LETTING AND MANAGEMENT REDRESS SCHEME (AS ACCEPTED BY RENT SMART WALES DETAILS)>

Complaint Management Process

The process for resolving matters which have not been addressed to your satisfaction within agreed timescales or expectations is set out below:

Stage 1 - Making your complaint

Please set out the details of your complaint in writing (either by letter or email) by contacting **<INSERT NAME AND ROLE OF RELEVANT STAFF MEMBER>** at:

Email: **<INSERT APPROPRIATE EMAIL ADDRESS>**

Address: **<INSERT DESIGNATION OF POST AND CORRESPONDENCE ADDRESS>**.

Telephone number: **<INSERT TELEPHONE NUMBER>**

Include as much detail as possible, including dates, names of any members of staff you have dealt with, and where you are able to enclosing/attaching any supporting evidence.

Stage 2 - Our acknowledgement

Your complaint will be acknowledged and you will receive a response within 3 working days of us receiving your complaint.

Stage 3 - Our investigation

Your complaint will be investigated and **<INSERT NAME AND ROLE OF RELEVANT STAFF MEMBER>** will provide a formal written response addressing your specific complaints and proposing resolutions where appropriate

Timescale: Within 15 working days of receiving your complaint

Stage 4 - Final Viewpoint

If you remain dissatisfied, you should contact us again and we will conduct a separate review to be undertaken by **<INSERT NAME AND ROLE OF RELEVANT STAFF MEMBER>**. This will outline our final viewpoint on the matter.

Timescale: Within 15 working days of receiving your request for a further review

Stage 5 - Redress

If our final viewpoint letter does not resolve matters (or more than 8 weeks has elapsed since the complaint was first made), you can request an independent review from the **<INSERT INDEPENDENT LETTING AND MANAGEMENT REDRESS SCHEME (AS ACCEPTED BY RENT SMART WALES)>** of which we are a member, without charge.

Timescale: You must refer your complaint to the **<INSERT INDEPENDENT LETTING AND MANAGEMENT REDRESS SCHEME (AS ACCEPTED BY RENT SMART WALES)>** within 12 months of receiving our final viewpoint letter.

<INSERT COMPANY STAMP AND DATE AND VERSION OF POLICY>

EXAMPLE TEMPLATE LETTERS

Template 1 - Acknowledgement Letter

Dear [INSERT COMPLAINANTS NAME]

Re: [INSERT PROPERTY ADDRESS]

Thank you for your email/letter dated [INSERT DATE]. I acknowledge receipt of your complaint and [name of relevant member of staff] will provide a formal written response to your complaints by [INSERT DATE]. Should I need more time to investigate the issues raised I will contact you to explain why.

Yours sincerely,
[INSERT NAME AND JOB TITLE]

Template 2 - Initial Complaint Response

Dear [INSERT COMPLAINANTS NAME]

Re: [INSERT PROPERTY ADDRESS]

Thank you for your email/letter of [INSERT DATE], raising your complaint to us.

Having considered your complaint letter, I understand your specific complaints to be;

- A
- B
- C

Based on the evidence available to me, I have concluded that:

[INSERT EXPLANATION OF THE COMPANY'S POSITION WITH REGARD TO THE COMPLAINTS LISTED ABOVE. INCLUDE ANY RESOLUTION WHERE POSSIBLE. YOU MAY LIKE TO ENCLOSE SUPPORTING EVIDENCE OF YOUR ARGUMENT IF APPROPRIATE.]

I hope this resolves the issues above. Should it be the case that you are dissatisfied with this response you may escalate your response to [INSERT RELEVANT MEMBER OF STAFF NAME] who will conduct a separate review of your complaint within 15 working days of your escalating this to us.

Yours sincerely,
[INSERT NAME AND JOB TITLE]

Template 3 - Investigation Acknowledgement Letter

Dear [INSERT COMPLAINANTS NAME]

Re: [INSERT PROPERTY ADDRESS]

Thank you for your email/letter of [INSERT DATE], in response to our initial investigation into your complaint. We are sorry that you are not satisfied with the outcome of our initial investigation.

Your complaint will now be independently investigated by [INSERT NAME OF RELEVANT MEMBER OF STAFF]. This review will result in a final viewpoint letter. You should receive this response by [INSERT DATE].

Yours sincerely,
[INSERT NAME AND JOB TITLE]

Template 4 - Final Viewpoint Letter

Dear [INSERT COMPLAINANTS NAME]

Re: [INSERT PROPERTY ADDRESS]

Thank you for your email/letter of [INSERT DATE], in response to our initial investigation into your complaint.

I understand that you remain dissatisfied with our position. Having thoroughly considered the correspondence to date, I understand your specific complaints to be;

- A
- B
- C

Based on the evidence available to me, I have concluded that:

[INSERT EXPLANATION OF THE COMPANY'S FINAL POSITION WITH REGARD TO THE COMPLAINTS LISTED ABOVE. YOU MAY LIKE TO ENCLOSE SUPPORTING EVIDENCE OF YOUR ARGUMENT IF APPROPRIATE]

This represents the final viewpoint of [COMPANY]. I hope that I have been able to resolve the matter to your satisfaction. If, however, you remain dissatisfied, you have the right to refer your complaint to [INSERT NAME OF RELEVANT REDRESS SCHEME], details of which can be found below.

[INSERT DETAILS OF RELEVANT REDRESS SCHEME]

Please be aware that you have up to 12 months from the date of this email/letter to refer your complaint to the [INSERT NAME OF RELEVANT REDRESS SCHEME] in writing, although it is preferable that you do so as soon as possible if you wish to pursue this matter further. [INSERT - YOU MAY WISH TO INCLUDE ANY CONSUMER GUIDES THE REDRESS SCHEME MAY PROVIDE]

Yours sincerely,
[INSERT NAME AND JOB TITLE]