

COMPLIMENTS AND COMPLAINTS POLICY

Lead Manager	Gavin Hamer - Area Manager
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Officer Responsible for Review	Gavin Hamer - Area Manager

Version	Action & Changes	Author	Date
1	New Policy - Replacing Complaints/Compliments Policy	Gavin Hamer	March 2018
2		Gavin Hamer	March 2020
3		Gavin Hamer	March 2022

AIM

The purpose of this policy is to outline the duty and responsibility of staff and volunteers working on behalf of New Walk CIC in relation to complaints and compliments.

OBJECTIVES

- To explain the responsibilities of the organisation and its staff/volunteers have in respect of complaints/compliments.
- To provide a clear procedure that will be implemented where issues arise.

HOW CAN I COMPLAIN OR MAKE A COMPLIMENT?

We know we occasionally will make mistakes. We know you might feel unhappy about the service we provide from time to time.

When this happens, making a complaint can help us solve the problem and learn how to do things better. By solving the problem, we learn from our mistakes to make sure the same problem doesn't arise again. This will help us to improve the services we give to all our residents.

At the same time, when we do something well, we like to know about it. This helps us to understand what you think is a good standard of service – and it means that our staff knows when they've done a good job.

DEFINITION

What is a complaint?

A complaint is defined as ***'an expression of dissatisfaction with the quality of services, with an action or lack of action by New Walk CIC or their staff'***.

What is a compliment?

A compliment is ***'a statement of praise: something said to express praise or approval'***. A compliment should be recorded when a customer has made a specific effort to give praise such as telephoning or writing to show their satisfaction or appreciation for a service

WHAT CAN I COMPLAIN ABOUT?

Examples of a complaint might include:

- Failing to provide a service;
- Providing a poor standard of service;
- Treating you unfairly;
- Failing to follow our own policies or procedures.

WHAT CAN I NOT COMPLAIN ABOUT?

Examples of other complaints raised by customers that will not be dealt with through our complaints policy and procedure include:

- An initial request for a service or information – for these, please contact a member of staff directly.
- Complaints about neighbours or anti-social behaviour, which are dealt with through separate policies and procedures.

- Suggestions for improvement – for these we suggest you contact Operations directly via email, the telephone or in writing.
- Service charge disputes. These should be referred to the Leasehold Valuation Tribunal (LVT).

HOW TO COMPLAIN ABOUT OR COMPLIMENT US

You can make a complaint or pay us a compliment in a number of ways:

In Person – You can contact us by phone or talk to us in person at one of our offices or you can contact a member of staff on: 01642 244448 (opt 1)

In writing – Send us your comments by letter to our correspondence address at:

New Walk CIC
52-54 Hartington Road
Stockton-on-Tees
TS18 1HE

Online - you can complain on our website www.newwalkcic.co.uk

By email - you can send an email to operations@newwalkcic.co.uk

A copy of this complaints policy can be found in each of our offices.

We will acknowledge your complaint within five working days and we will aim to resolve your complaint within ten working days. However, if the problem is particularly complex, this may take a little longer. We will let you know if this is the case and then keep you informed of progress.

HOW WILL A COMPLAINT OR COMPLIMENT BE DEALT WITH?

Compliments: All compliments will be recorded and the particular service areas notified. All compliments will be acknowledged within three days of receipt.

Complaints: New Walk CIC will take all complaints seriously and will monitor those complaints to ensure the service is improved as a result. If the complaint is related to a serious matter then you will always be advised to issue a complaint in writing.

We have a three-stage complaints procedure, which is outlined below

We will:

- Send you a response within our agreed targets;
- Apologise to you, explain what happened and aim to put it right as soon as possible;
- Keep you informed at all times;
- Learn from our mistakes, so they don't happen again;
- Tell you about any improvements we make as a result of your complaint and suggestions;
- Ask you how you felt we had handled your complaint at the end of the process.

OUR THREE STAGE COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

It is our intention to resolve all complaints at the earliest possible stage - all complaints are submitted to a manager. Wherever possible, we will aim to resolve the problem immediately.

At each stage of the procedure you will receive a response to your complaint. The response will give the decision, the reason for that decision and explain who you should contact if you wish to move to the next stage.

STAGE ONE

After making a complaint, your feedback will be passed to the relevant manager to investigate and resolve. The manager will discuss the problem with you, and ask you how you would like your problem to be dealt with. Wherever possible, we will try to resolve your problem immediately. If the complaint is relating to a serious matter and cannot be resolved immediately then you will always be advised to issue a complaint in writing.

At the very least, we will aim to send you a full response within ten working days.

STAGE TWO

If you are unhappy with the manager's response, you can contact to request that your complaint is reviewed by one of our senior management teams. They will then look at how your problem has been managed, and decide whether there is more we could do. We will send you a full response within twenty working days of you asking for your complaint to be reviewed.

STAGE THREE

If you are still dissatisfied, you can ask us to arrange for a special appeals panel to review your case. The Panel will be heard by staff and board representatives. You will be offered the opportunity to meet with the panel personally, so that you can explain why you are still unhappy. The Panel will be arranged within 15 days of you notifying us that you wish to proceed to stage 3. A full response will be sent to you within five working days of the meeting.

The appeals panel will provide our final response to the concerns that you have raised.

THE HOUSING OMBUDSMAN

If, after going through all three stages of our complaints procedure, you are still dissatisfied, you can contact the Housing Ombudsman. The Ombudsman should be written to the address below:

Housing Ombudsman Service
PO Box 15
Liverpool
L33 7WQ

Email: info@housing-ombudsman.org.uk
Telephone: 0300 111 3000

Normally, the Ombudsman will only deal with your case if you have followed all the stages of our procedure.

New Walk CIC ensures all complaints are treated equally in accordance with our policy regardless of gender, race or ethnic origin.

REVIEW OF THIS POLICY

The Area Manager shall be responsible for reviewing this policy once every two years (subject to any legislation or sector developments requiring earlier review) to ensure that it continues to meet its objectives, reflects good practice and meets statutory and regulatory requirements.