



Aenon Housing CIC

Homes with Purpose

Policy Name	Complaints Policy
Version	1.0
Approved By	Board of Directors -Aenon Housing CIC
Effective Date	01/02/2026
Date of next Review	01/02/2027

Aenon Housing CIC

Complaints Policy

1. Purpose and Scope

This policy sets out Aenon Housing CIC's approach to handling complaints in a fair, transparent and timely manner. The aims are to:

- Ensure all residents, applicants and authorised representatives can raise concerns easily.
- Provide resolutions that are fair, appropriate, and proportionate.
- Learn from complaints to improve service quality and resident experience.
- Comply with all relevant legal and regulatory requirements, including the statutory Complaint Handling Code (effective from April 2024), the Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023, and the Regulator of Social Housing's Consumer Standards (2024).

This policy applies to all Aenon staff, contractors, partner agencies and volunteers engaged in delivering supported accommodation and support services.

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2. Regulatory and Legal Framework

This policy is written in accordance with:

- The statutory Complaint Handling Code (2024)
- Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023
- Regulator of Social Housing (RSH) Consumer Standards (2024), including the Transparency, Influence and Accountability Standard
- Equality Act 2010
- UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) and Data Protection Act 2018
- Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman principles (where relevant to joint services)

The previous "designated person" requirement and mandatory 8-week waiting period were abolished nationally in 2022. Residents may therefore escalate unresolved complaints to the Housing Ombudsman immediately after Aenon's final response.

3. Definition of a Complaint

A complaint is any expression of dissatisfaction, however expressed and regardless of whether the term “complaint” is used, about:

- The quality or standard of a service
- Delay or failure to provide a service
- Staff or contractor conduct
- The accuracy or clarity of communication or decision-making
- Failure to follow policy or legal obligations

A first-time service request (such as reporting a repair or issue for the first time) is **not** a complaint. However, dissatisfaction with how a service request was handled **is** a complaint.

4. Who Can Complain

Complaints may be made by:

- Current residents
- Former residents (within permitted timeframes)
- Prospective tenants or applicants
- Family members or friends authorised to act
- Advocates or professional representatives
- Support workers or agencies acting with the resident’s consent

5. Accessibility and Reasonable Adjustments

Aenon Housing CIC will ensure that its complaints process is accessible to all, including residents with disabilities or additional communication needs. Reasonable adjustments may include:

- Accepting complaints verbally
- Allowing complaints to be dictated by telephone
- Providing accessible formats (Easy Read, large print, translated versions)
- Communicating through advocates or support agencies
- Extending timescales where a disability creates practical barriers

We will record any adjustments made and review them at appropriate stages.

6. How to Make a Complaint

Residents may make a complaint through any of the following routes:

- Telling any member of Aenon staff
- Telephone, email or in writing
- Using Aenon's complaints form (if preferred)
- Through a representative or advocate

Staff receiving a complaint must record it promptly and ensure it enters the formal process without unnecessary delay.

7. Complaint Handling Stages (Two Stages Only)

Aenon Housing CIC operates a statutory **two-stage** procedure. No third stage is permitted.

7.1 Stage 1 – Investigation and Response

- Acknowledgement within **5 working days**.
- Written response issued within **10 working days** of acknowledgement.
- One extension of up to **10 working days** permitted where the issue is complex; the resident must be informed of the reason and new deadline in advance.
- Response includes findings, outcomes, remedies offered, learning actions, and details of how to escalate to Stage 2.

7.2 Stage 2 – Senior Review

- Acknowledgement within **5 working days** of escalation request.
- Full written response within **20 working days** of the acknowledgement.
- One extension of up to **10 working days** permitted with reasons provided.
- This represents Aenon's **final response**.

8. What Residents Can Expect in Each Response

Each written response will include:

- Clear findings on each issue raised
 - Explanation of the investigation undertaken
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- Whether each issue is upheld, partially upheld, or not upheld
- Remedies or redress offered
- Actions to prevent recurrence
- Any service improvements identified
- Information about next steps, including Ombudsman access

9. Remedies and Redress

Aenon Housing CIC's remedies follow the Ombudsman's dispute-resolution principles:

1. **Be fair**
2. **Put things right**
3. **Learn from outcomes**

Remedies may include:

- Apology and explanation
- Practical actions (repairs, corrections, service changes)
- Policy or procedure amendments
- Staff training or service improvements
- Financial compensation (appropriate where there is distress, inconvenience, time and trouble, or quantifiable loss)

Compensation is paid **directly to the resident** and is not offset against arrears unless requested by the resident.

10. Safeguarding and Supported Housing Factors

In supported housing settings, complaints may highlight welfare risks, unmet support needs, or safeguarding concerns.

Where necessary, the complaints process will run alongside:

- Adult safeguarding referrals
- Risk management actions
- Welfare checks
- Multi-agency coordination

The safety of tenants remains a priority at all times.

11. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

Aenon Housing CIC will ensure that complaints are handled without discrimination. Staff must consider:

- Cultural or linguistic needs
- Disability-related barriers
- Mental capacity
- Support needs or vulnerabilities

Where necessary, advocacy or liaison with support agencies will be offered.

12. Data Protection and Confidentiality

Information gathered during complaints will be processed under:

- UK GDPR
- Data Protection Act 2018

We will:

- Identify a lawful basis for processing
- Limit sharing to what is necessary and proportionate
- Record information accurately and securely
- Provide privacy information upon request
- Ensure additional safeguards when handling sensitive information

13. Managing Unreasonable Conduct

Aenon aims to support all residents to engage constructively.

Where behaviour poses risk or significantly hinders investigations, proportionate measures may be introduced, such as:

- Agreeing a single point of contact
 - Setting communication boundaries
 - Time-limited restrictions
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Before any such measure is applied, Aenon will check whether additional support or reasonable adjustments are needed.

14. Learning, Monitoring and Governance

Aenon Housing CIC will:

- Conduct annual self-assessments against the statutory Complaint Handling Code
- Publish required summaries and learning outcomes
- Report trends to senior leadership and the Board
- Incorporate learning into service planning
- Use complaints data alongside Tenant Satisfaction Measures to inform improvements

A Board-level Member Responsible for Complaints oversees compliance.

15. Resident Feedback and Compliments

Compliments and positive feedback are also recorded. This helps celebrate good practice and recognise staff contribution. They are reviewed alongside complaints data to strengthen service culture.

16. Review Cycle

This policy is reviewed:

- Annually
 - Following relevant legislative or regulatory changes
 - After significant service incidents
 - At the direction of the Board
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