



## Report to:

Northwards Housing Board  
14 June 2006

Item No:

**8b**

<b>Title:</b>	Compliments and Complaints Policy and Procedure		
<b>Date:</b>	30 May 2006		
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<b>Confidential:</b>	No		
<b>For:</b> (Please tick action required)	<b>NOTING</b>	<b>DISCUSSION</b>	<b>APPROVAL</b> √
<b>PURPOSE OF REPORT</b>			
To ask the Board to approve the attached policy and procedure.			
<b>This report was considered by the Performance and Quality Services Sub-Committee on 26 May 2006, who recommended that the Board approve this Policy and Procedure.</b>			
<b>RECOMMENDATION</b>			
The Board are asked to approve the Compliments and Complaints Policy and Procedure.			
<b>IMPLICATIONS</b>			
<b>Equality &amp; Diversity:</b>	Compliments and Complaints are valuable sources of feedback and help to ensure that we provide fair and equal services and treatment to all customers		
<b>Financial:</b>	None arising directly from this report		
<b>Staffing:</b>	None arising directly from this report		
<b>Decency Target:</b>	None arising directly from this report		
<b>Governance:</b>	None arising directly from this report		

**Equality & Diversity Implications (Please tick where relevant):**

BME	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Lesbian/Gay/Bisexual/Transgender	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Elderly	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Single Parents	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Young	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Domestic Violence	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Disability	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Alcohol / Drug Mis-users	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

**Consultation/Consideration:**

	<b>Yes, No or N/A:</b>	<b>Name:</b>	<b>Date:</b>
<b>Sub-Committee:</b>	Yes	Performance and Quality Services	26 May 2006
<b>Area Panel:</b>	N/A		
<b>Ward Councillors:</b>	N/A		

**Policy:**

**Compliments**

Positive comments (compliments) are valuable forms of feedback and should receive acknowledgement in the same way as a complaint.

**Complaints**

We will

- Investigate any complaint where it is alleged that Northwards Housing has:
  - Failed to fulfil its responsibilities, carry out a policy or provide a service
  - Failed to achieve its stated standards of service
  - Failed to take into account matters that ought to have been considered when coming to, or implementing a decision
  - Acted unfairly or with bias
- Consider all complaints in a fair and impartial manner and be approachable and helpful at all stages of the complaints procedure.
- Approach complaints in a positive and proactive manner; and learn from them in order to continually improve services.
- Treat complaints as a valuable source of feedback.
- Use the complaints procedure to learn from mistakes or omissions and to raise the level of customer satisfaction.
- Undertake the work of Northwards Housing using a 'right first time' approach and respond and resolve complaints with a view to improving performance.

**Performance Standards:**

- Aim to resolve all complaints without reference to the Local Government Ombudsman.
- All compliments and complaints will be processed within the specified time scales.
- All compliments and complaints will be recorded and monitored to see what lessons may be learnt to improve service delivery.
- The Performance and Quality Sub Committee and Housing Management Services Task Group will receive a quarterly report, summarising all compliments and complaints received. In addition the Board will also receive an annual report.

COMPLIMENTS AND COMPLAINTS POLICY	AUTHOR SJ BROWN	Page 1 of 1
ISSUE NUMBER 1	EFFECTIVE DATE	✓APPROVED BY PERFORMANCE AND QUALITY SUB COMMITTEE

## COMPLIMENTS AND COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

### Compliments

Let us know if you have had a speedy and efficient service, or if someone has been especially polite or helpful; either by filling in a form on-line at [www.northwardshousing.co.uk](http://www.northwardshousing.co.uk), or by email (to [info@northwardshousing.co.uk](mailto:info@northwardshousing.co.uk)), or by letter to Northwards Housing Customer Services, Hexagon Tower, Crumpsall Vale, Blackley, Manchester M9 8ZS. We will acknowledge your contact within seven working days at the latest.

### Complaints

Our procedure is a clear step-by-step system that lays down what we must do at each stage, and tells you when we will do it.

#### 1. **Talk to a member of staff**

Talk to the office that dealt with you originally. Tell us why you're unhappy and what you want us to do. Very often this will sort the problem out on the spot, without needing to fill in forms or put your complaint in writing. If we can't resolve the problem on the spot, we'll try to resolve it as soon as possible – normally within 2 working days. If you are not happy with the response . . .

#### 2. **Fill in a complaints form**

You can do this on-line at [www.northwardshousing.co.uk](http://www.northwardshousing.co.uk) or get a form from our offices or by telephoning Northwards on 0161 953 2662. We will acknowledge your complaint within 5 working days. The manager of the office will investigate the problem and give you a full response within 10 working days - or, if that's not possible, explain why there is a delay. The vast majority of complaints are sorted out by this stage, but if you are not happy with the solution we offer, you can take the complaint further.

#### 3. **Appeals**

If you have had a response, but are still not satisfied, you can take the complaint to a more **senior officer** who will review the case and respond to you in the same timescales (acknowledgment within five days, full response in 10).

#### 4. If you have taken the complaint to a senior officer and are still not happy, the case will go to a Northwards **director** who will respond to you in the same timescales (acknowledgment within five days, full response in 10).

#### 5. If you are still not happy you can take your case to the 'Local Government Ombudsman', Beverley House, 17 Shipton Road, York YO30 5FZ. **Tel:** 01904 380200, **Fax:** 01904 380269

The vast majority of cases are sorted out informally (at stage 1 above) or at the first formal stage (stage 2 above). In rare cases where you want to take the case to the higher stages we will explain exactly what you need to do.