

Policy Name:	Comments, Complaints and Compliments Policy and Procedure
File No:	P27
Version:	2.0 (Final)

Policy Custodian:	Company Secretary
Policy Champion: (if applicable)	Governance & Regulation Officer

This document also relates to the following St Basils policies, procedures and guidelines:

- Dignity and Respect
- Data Protection
- Security of Information
- Confidentiality
- Disciplinary
- Grievance
- Safeguarding
- Code of Conduct
- Equality, Diversity & Inclusion
- Engagement
- Anti-Social Behaviour
- Recording Standards
- Staff Handbook
- St Basils Local Offer – Tenant Involvement and Empowerment Standard

Consultation Framework:

Consultation of this policy has taken place with the following parties during the following periods of time:

Custodian	26.02.2018 -
Champion	26.03.2018 -
Managers	26.02.2018 – 30.08.2018
Senior Leadership Team	21.11.2018
Staff	
Sub Committee (SDDSC)	
Board of Directors	09.01.2019

Approved by:	The Board	Approved date:	09.01.2019
Issue date:	30 th January 2019	Review due by:	May 2021

Policy Statement

St Basils aims to provide a high-quality, responsive, young person led service. We want to know when we get things wrong or when service users are unhappy with the service they have received from us. In order to ensure this we need to take account of the views and wishes of those we are here to support. We welcome every opportunity to monitor and improve our service and having a Comments, Complaints and Compliments policy and a clear procedure for dealing with them is one way of doing this.

The aim of this statement is to set out how we will listen, respond and learn, especially from problems and mistakes so that we can improve services and service delivery across the organisation so that everyone can benefit.

St Basils is committed to ensuring feedback of any nature is dealt with promptly in the most appropriate way. The policy and procedures are an essential part of putting this commitment into practice, and St Basil's staff will promote these feedback mechanisms to everyone. All feedback will be dealt with efficiently, fairly, sensitively and effectively.

The basis of this Policy is St Basil's commitment to equality, fair access and diversity.

Scope of Policy

This policy applies to all employees in all departments and services as well as young people whether they are St Basils residents and/or support service users or not.

For the purposes of this policy the term 'employee' will include all employees (whether full time or part time), volunteers, casual workers and contracted workers. The scope of this policy also includes the wider community.

Definitions

A comment is defined as a verbal or written remark expressing an opinion or reaction

A complaint is defined as a statement that something is unsatisfactory or unacceptable

A compliment is defined as a polite expression of praise or admiration

Legislation

The Equality Act 2010

The Data Protection Act 2018

Housing Act 1996 s.51 and Schedule 2

Housing and Regeneration Act 1996, 2008

Localism Act 2011

Children Act 2000

Offences Against the Person Act 1861

Regulatory Requirements;

The Regulator of Social Housing

Tenant Involvement & Empowerment Standard – Complainant Service, Choice & Complaints

“Registered providers shall:

“Have an approach to complaints that is clear, simple and accessible that ensures that complaints are resolved promptly, politely and fairly.”

“Providers shall accept complaints made by advocates authorised to act on a tenant's behalf.”

St Basils Local Offer:

“We will display and provide feedback leaflets and posters in all our schemes and publish this data in our Annual Review and Annual Report. Complaint handling training will be provided to all staff where appropriate as part of their induction and training. We have an effective policy in place to hear your complaints.”

For more information regarding legislation that relates directly to complaint management see appendix 1

General Principles

At St Basils we aim to make it as accessible as possible for anyone to give us feedback on the services we provide. Comments, Complaints and Compliments can be raised via our website by completing the online form at stbasils.org.uk/contact-us/; by email to feedback@stbasils.org.uk; verbally or in writing via any member of staff; completing the feedback form available at all our locations or in a downloadable version from the website and forward by post or email

Comments

We are always looking for ways to improve our services, and it is important that we respond to comments and let people know that we are listening. Where possible, if we change the way we deliver our services as a result of a comment, we should let people know.

A comment is a suggestion, idea or observation about our services. Anyone can make a comment about our services, how they access our services, about staff who deliver them, and so on.

When we receive a comment we will acknowledge it and thank the individual for their feedback. We will then consider how we can use it to improve our services. Comments should be shared and discussed with the relevant team members. This may for example, include sharing it anonymously at the next available team meeting for discussion, at a Managers meeting or making an organisation wide recommendation to SLT.

Complaints

We will promote our procedures to make them accessible, and see this as a positive way of addressing poor experience and getting feedback to help change or review aspects of our services, or service delivery. Sometimes we may not be able to make changes, for example, St Basils must operate within the law. Where possible if we change the way we deliver our services as a result of a complaint, we will let the individual know.

A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction. It can be about our services, the standard of one of our services or about how we deliver our services, or a lack of action and how this is affecting someone. It can be made verbally to any staff member, or in writing and must be documented. Feedback leaflets are displayed and available at each of our sites, and are also be downloaded from the website or send an email to feedback@stbasils.org.uk and it will be emailed to you.

We take all complaints seriously, so all employees must be familiar with the Comments, Complaints and Compliments Policy and Procedures.

Complaints can be received from anyone, a resident young person, service user, or any member of the public.

Young people may decide to ask someone to help them make their complaint. This person is known as their 'advocate'. The advocate must have written permission to make the complaint on their behalf and we must receive a copy of this before we can discuss the complaint with the advocate. The advocate may be a friend, partner, relative, other support service or a member of St Basil's staff. St Basil's staff can signpost young people to other local advocacy services.

If there is a conflict of interest between the advocate's role and the staff members job role, they should discuss this with their line manager before agreeing to act as an advocate. The line manager should be confident that the staff advocate can manage any conflict of interest before agreeing. The decision rests with the line manager, who must - in all cases, ensure that the staff advocate is being supported throughout the process.

If we receive an anonymous complaint we will still record and investigate it as far as possible.

A complaint may be considered offensive if it includes inappropriate language or views which discriminate against anyone. If an offensive complaint is received, it will be logged and forwarded to an appropriate member of SLT who will decide (regardless of the offensive way in which the complaint has been raised), whether the complaint contains a substantial matter of concern, particularly where there is detriment to the rights and well-being of any person affected and should be investigated. In the absence of concern the

complainant will receive an appropriate response and the case will be closed.. In such cases, a complaint which may be 'closed' for purposes of offensiveness/ discrimination – should be done so by signing off by two SLT Members of St Basils.

Compliments

We appreciate compliments, they tell us that something we are doing is right. We will encourage people to tell us when things work well for them. This will help us to learn best practice and encourage others to introduce similar good practice measures wherever possible. When people take the time to compliment us we need to let them know that we value their positive feedback.

A compliment is positive feedback from a complainant regarding an area of our service or service delivery. A compliment may also be about the person who provided the service or, more generally, about the service we have provided.

When we receive a compliment, we will acknowledge it and consider how we can use it to improve the way we deliver our services by sharing it as an example of best practice.

Compliments should be shared (with the individual's permission) and discussed with the relevant team members. This may include sharing the compliment at the next available team meeting. If a compliment refers to an individual member of staff or team, a copy should be sent to the relevant individual(s).

Learning from a compliment can be applied across the organisation, the Manager receiving the compliment may share it (with the individual's permission) at the next available Team Meeting and/or Managers meeting, or may make an organisation-wide recommendation to SLT.

What we will do

We will signpost individuals to make a complaint if they are dissatisfied with an area of our service, how our services have been delivered to them or where there has been a lack of action.

We will treat all complainants respectfully during and after an investigation into their complaint.

We can arrange to help people who may find it difficult to make a complaint, for example, if English is not their first language. We will respect the complainant and apply the principles of the Equalities Act 2010 to protect against direct and indirect discrimination, harassment or victimisation in services and public functions, for people who are perceived to have, or are associated with someone who has a protected characteristic.

We will keep details of the complaint confidential, and only share them when necessary in line with the Data protection Act 2018 and St Basils Confidentiality Policy.

We will acknowledge complaints within the timescales as published in the policy and make leaflets and posters widely available at all of our premises.

Taking action through the complaints procedure may lead to St Basils taking disciplinary action against an employee, or starting action under other procedures, for example, legal procedures or child protection.

No member of St Basil's staff should investigate a complaint which has been made against them. This would constitute a 'conflict of interest'. If you receive a complaint and you find that you are referred to in the complaint, you must immediately forward it to feedback@stbasils.org.uk and must not participate in an investigatory role. Failure to do this may be considered gross misconduct. (Investigation is defined as holding meetings or discussions regarding the matter with anyone involved in the complaint, questioning the person who made the complaint, or making enquiries about someone who made the complaint).

Where a complaint covers a number of services, staff should forward the complaint to feedback@stbasils.org.uk it will then be referred to a member of SLT to decide who the most suitable person to investigate it is.

Our employees will have a number of possible roles under the complaints procedure. They may:

- Be the subject of a complaint
- receive a complaint
- act as an advocate to help a someone make a complaint
- be involved in an interview where another colleague is investigating a complaint
- Act as an investigating officer on behalf of the organisation, to investigate a complaint

Where possible, St Basils staff and Managers should avoid having more than one of the above roles at any one time when dealing with any one single complaint. This is for purposes of clarity of roles, responsibility and accountability.

Roles and Responsibilities

Members of both Operations and Governance Teams will ensure adherence to the agreed procedures and provide support and guidance to managers and affected staff throughout the process.

Individual Managers are responsible for ensuring that this policy is applied within their own area. If in doubt, advice and guidance on the application or interpretation of this policy must be sought prior to any action being taken via feedback@stbasils.org.uk. Managers are responsible for providing information in a timely, open, honest and understandable way.

Training Requirements

Managers will be given complaint handling and investigation training. Where appropriate, employees will complete complaint handling training as part of their induction training.

Communication

This policy will be communicated effectively to all employees via a range of different media avenues and can be produced in other formats where needed.

Responsibility

The Company Secretary is responsible for ensuring this policy is implemented and monitored.

Continuous Renewal Clause

This procedure will be reviewed every 3 years by the organisation to ensure it is in accordance with good practice guidance, prevailing legislation and statutory frameworks. However this policy may be assessed before that time as necessary – such as:

- if it becomes ineffective
- to reflect substantial changes in practice
- following inspection, as recommended by auditors
- or changes required by law

Disclaimer

This document can only be considered valid when viewed on the St Basils intranet/Shared: Drive. If this document has been printed or saved to another location, you must check that the version number on your copy matches that of the document online. Hard copies of this document are considered uncontrolled - please refer to the St Basils Intranet for latest version.

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

1. Informal Resolution

- 1.1 At St Basils, we recognise that someone may want to raise a matter with a member of staff without having to make a formal complaint. Anyone can request to speak to a member of staff to raise a matter and have this resolved - prior to making a formal complaint. At any time, if the individual is still not satisfied with the response or outcome, they reserve the right to make the matter formal – by letting us know they wish to make a formal complaint. At this point, the matter would be recognised as a Stage 1 formal complaint.
- 1.2 We will try to resolve any complaint informally at the point at which the problem arose. Many apparent concerns arise from misunderstandings that can quickly be resolved by talking through the matter. In most cases, complaints will be managed on an informal basis in the first instance. This is intended to provide the complainant with a quick, amicable and satisfactory resolution.
- 1.3 St Basils will aim to resolve informal complaints within 5 working days, other than in exceptional circumstances when the complainant will be kept informed of progress on a regular and consistent basis.
- 1.4 It is essential to give time to complainants and be patient, so that they feel they have been heard properly.
- 1.5 Consideration will also be given to any improvement opportunities identified as a result of informal complaints.
- 1.6 Staff at services will keep a log of all informal complaints and how they were resolved by using the Complaints Logging System provided, and must be made available on request in the event of a complaint being escalated to a formal Stage 1.

2. Formal Complaints

- 2.1 Introduction;
 - 2.1.1 Our formal complaints procedure is based on a three-stage process. Our aim is to resolve the complaint satisfactorily, at the earliest stage. However, we know that this will not always be possible, in which case the complaint may continue to stage 2 and possibly stage 3.
 - 2.1.2 If the complainant is not satisfied once St Basils' internal complaints procedure has been exhausted they can contact a 'Designated Person' to investigate their complaint further, and also the Housing Ombudsman.
 - 2.1.3 We will acknowledge all complaints within 2 working days of receipt, using the complainants preferred method of contact. They will be provided with a record of the date their complaint has been received and the allocated reference number for tracking purposes.
 - 2.1.4 Complaints will be managed by an officer independent of the service/s involved. If a complaint involves more than one service, it will be brought to the attention of a member of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) who will decide who would be the most appropriate person to co-ordinate any investigation, action and responses.
- 2.2 Important;
 - 2.2.1 No complaint can 'skip' a stage regardless of the nature of the complaint. i.e. 'all Formal complaints must be initially handled at stage 1. Therefore, complaint stages do not reflect the severity of the nature of the complaint.

In the event that a complaint (at any stage) is regarding any form of abuse (as defined by St Basils Safeguarding Policy and Procedures), or regarding a risk to a person's health and safety, the person receiving the complaint must immediately notify St Basils Safeguarding Officer or if unavailable, any member of St Basils SLT.

2.3 Stage 1 – We aim to resolve the complaint immediately if possible

2.3.1 Stage 1 complaints can be sent to feedback@stbasils.org.uk at St Basils Head Office. The purpose of this is to provide complainants with a centralised location for receiving and logging all complaints within St Basils, where they will be picked up by the Duty Officer. Duty Officers have sufficient seniority to provide assurance that the complaint will be dealt with in an independent manner and away from the service that they are complaining about.

2.3.2 As far as possible on the day it is received, the Duty Officer will:

- Log the complaint and provide a unique reference number for tracking purposes
- Send an acknowledgement within 2 working days of receipt, (see Appendix 3) advising the complainant of the complaints policy and what they can expect from St Basils.
- Immediately bring any safeguarding complaint to the attention of the Safeguarding Officer or in their absence, any other member of St Basils SLT.
- Immediately bring any offensive/ discriminatory complaint, or a complaint regarding multiple services, to the attention of a member of SLT.
- Allocate an appropriate Stage 1 Investigating Officer to look into the complaint

2.3.3 If any member of St Basil's staff receives a formal complaint, this must be forwarded immediately to feedback@stbasils.org.uk, access to this mailbox is strictly limited and all complaints are managed as discreetly as possible. If the complainant wishes for the complaint to be kept confidential they can ask for this to be delivered in a sealed envelope marked 'confidential', but this may limit the scope of the investigation.

2.4 The Stage 1 Investigating Officer will:

2.4.1 Make initial contact with the complainant to let them know you are handling their complaint, at Stage 1 of St Basils Complaints Policy and Procedures, provide your contact information and (if necessary and it is deemed safe to do so) make arrangements to meet with the complainant and discuss their concerns.

2.4.2 To ensure a full audit trail, use the 'Complaint Investigation Report' (Appendix 4) template to record their meetings, discussions, materials and documentation reviewed and to record their findings and recommendations. A copy of the report should be forwarded to feedback@stbasils.org.uk, quoting the unique reference number in the subject line.

2.4.3 Share their findings and recommendations (where relevant) with the manager of the service/ department being complained about.

2.4.4 Make a sound, fair and honest judgement and decision and draft a response (see Appendix 5) to the complainant and state:

- Who has been interviewed (job titles only) and what documentation has been reviewed as part of the investigation
- State clearly what the outcome/ decision is
- State who has made the decision (job title only) and what changes have been made/action has been taken (if any) as a result of the complaint
- An apology if relevant and what to do if further dissatisfied

Forward the draft response to feedback@stbasils.org.uk. To protect staff from any possible repercussions, the response will be sent direct to the complainant from Head Office, investigating officer names will not be quoted.

2.4.5 St Basils aim to conclude the investigation outcome as soon as possible with the aim to resolve within 10 working days of receiving the complaint. Complex cases may take more time to investigate and conclude and it is important to ensure each case is given the necessary attention.

2.4.6 In complex cases the Duty Officer will keep the complainant informed of progress on a regular and consistent basis.

- 2.4.7 At any stage of the process, if all attempts fail within a reasonable timescale to elicit a response from the complainant this will result in the complaint being closed. In the event of the complainant re-establishing communication the option to reopen and restart the timescale from day 1 will be observed.
- 2.4.8 If during the course of the investigation, the investigating officer identifies that a member of staff's conduct is an ongoing issue, they must report it to the relevant line manager immediately for action to be taken and not wait for the complaint process to be completed
- 2.5 If the complainant feels their complaint has not been resolved satisfactorily at stage one, they should write to St Basils or email feedback@stbasils.org.uk within 10 working days of receiving our response. The complainant should give their reasons for remaining unhappy and what they would like to happen.
- 2.6 Stage 2 – Senior Investigating Officer (Head of Service) Investigation
- 2.6.1 A further acknowledgement will be sent to the complainant within 2 working days of their notice to escalate to the next stage and the timescales advised. The complaint should be forwarded to the Company Secretary who will appoint a Senior Complaints Officer to investigate the complaint. Stage 2 Complaints will also be reported to the Board of Trustees. The Senior Complaints Officer will aim to resolve the complaint to the complainants' satisfaction within a further 10 days. The investigation may involve interviews, reviewing written documentation and discussions with all persons involved in the complaint matter. This process and the outcome should be recorded and the Senior Complaints Officer will write to the complainant informing them as appropriate;
- How we have made our decision
 - What the decision is
 - Who has made the decision (job title only)
 - What changes have been made/action has been taken
 - An apology if relevant
 - What to do if further dissatisfied
- 2.6.2 The Senior Investigating Officer will use the 'Complaint Investigation Officer Report' template to record their investigatory activities. After the complaint has been dealt with, the original report, a copy of the draft outcome letter and any other documentation must be sent to feedback@stbasils.org.uk. To protect staff from any possible repercussions, the response will be sent direct to the complainant from Head Office, investigating officer names will not be quoted.
- 2.7 If the complainant feels their complaint has not been resolved satisfactorily at stage two, the complainant should write to St Basil's or email feedback@stbasils.org.uk within 10 working days of receiving a response. The complainant should give their reasons for remaining unhappy and what they would like to happen.
- 2.8 The Company Secretary or their appointed officer, will retain a log of all stage 2 complaints, investigations and outcomes. These will be held securely and confidentially in line with data protection requirements.
- 2.9 Stage 3 – Director: Review the Decision
- 2.9.1 The Company Secretary will refer the complaint to a Director who will review that the process and outcome has been correctly followed, and aim to resolve the complaint within a further 10 working days or as soon as is practicable. Stage 3 complaints will be reported to the Board of Trustees. The Director will write to the complainant stating the outcome(s) / decision(s), a copy of the response will be forwarded to feedback@stbasils.org.uk for the file.
- 2.10 External Bodies/ Signposting to a Designated Person

- 2.10.1 If the complainant is a resident and is not satisfied with the outcome of the process, they may wish to take their complaint further. St Basil's staff should be open, transparent and supportive in advising young people of their right to escalate the matter further should they wish.
- 2.10.2 If the young person is unhappy with the outcome, they have the right to ask for their complaint to be considered by a recognised 'Designated Person'. St Basils staff will provide support to identify an appropriate designated person as stated in these procedures.
- 2.10.3 Staff should assist young people to identify their chosen course of complaint by providing helpful information such as identifying a suitable 'Designated Person', advocate or providing young people with access to the internet to identify their local MP or counsellor.
- 2.10.4 For the purpose of this Policy, a 'Designated Person' is specifically defined in the Localism Act 2011 as; '... an MP, Local Councillor, or a Tenant Panel'.
- 2.10.5 A 'Tenant Panel' is specifically defined as a 'Tenant Panel who is registered and recognised by the Housing Ombudsman'.
- 2.10.6 When signposting a post 'Stage 3' complaint to a Designated Person, St Basil's staff should inform the resident young person of the following websites and if requested provide a list of recognised 'Tenant Panels'.
- Local Member of Parliament – <http://findyourmp.parliament.uk/>
 - <https://www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk/designated-person-information/>
 - Local Councillor – <http://www.writetothem.com/>
 - Tenant Panels – <https://www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk/useful-tools/fact-sheets/designated-tenant-panels/>
- 2.10.7 Complainants also reserve the right to complain via their solicitor, Citizens Advice Bureau, via the Supporting People Local Authority funded programme, or via Homes England.

For an overview of St Basils Complaints Policy stages, please refer to Appendix 2 in this document.

3. Closed Complaints

- 3.1 All complaints will be investigated and will be deemed closed and satisfied when a complainant:
- Has not requested an escalation to the next stage anywhere within the process within 10 days of receiving an outcome letter, or
 - has exhausted the internal 3 stage complaints procedure and the Investigating Officer at Stage 3 has notified the complainant in writing of the outcome (if the complainant is a resident young person they may wish to pursue their complaint externally to a 'Designated Person' although the complaint is closed from St Basils perspective), or
 - has received a legal judgment from a legal hearing, or
 - has not responded within the time frames at any stage of the process (rights are reserved to re-open if communication resumes at a later date).

4. Annual Performance Review

- 4.1. As part of our continuous improvement plan, St Basils will complete a statistical analysis of all complaints on an annual basis. This will include a desk top review of the following;
- Number of complaints made/complaint stages and the nature of complaints
 - Staff training needs in relation to complaint handling
 - Feedback to managers
 - An impact assessment of how complaints have influenced service changes

5. Exceptions

5.1 This complaint procedure may *not* be used in the following circumstances;

- Organisations that we are working with through a partnership or written agreement cannot use these procedures to complain. They must use the procedures as laid out in the Management Agreement or Service Level Agreement or Contract.
- Employees, students, trainees and volunteers of St Basils, cannot use these procedures to complain. They should use St Basils Grievance Procedures.
- Where the complaint relates directly or indirectly to legal proceedings being taken by the complainant against St Basils, in which case the complaint will be referred to St Basils Company Secretary and solicitors and addressed as part of the legal proceedings.
- In all instances where actual or inferred personal injury is an issue, St Basil's staff will not comment or discuss the case with the claimant, except where the incident is occurring, or has just occurred, and the situation needs to be managed effectively to protect both people and assets.

Legislation which relates directly to complaint management

Housing Act 1996 s.51 and Schedule 2

All Registered Providers must be members of the Housing Ombudsman Scheme (which is the only scheme currently approved by the Secretary of State) in respect of all their housing activities. If a Registered Provider fails to join the scheme, it will be considered to be in breach of the law. St Basils is a Member of the Housing Ombudsman Service, which with effect from 1st April 2013, has jurisdiction covering all Registered Providers and Local Authorities.

Localism Act 2011

From the 1st April 2013 tenants of Registered Providers will be able to request that their complaints be considered by a 'Designated Person' once they complete the internal procedures of their landlord. Such a person can be an MP, a local Councillor, or a recognised Tenant Panel. The Designated Person may help resolve the complaint directly, may refer the complaint to the Housing Ombudsman, or may decline doing either. In the latter case the complainant may approach the Housing Ombudsman for their consideration of the complaint. The complainant may also approach the Housing Ombudsman directly if more than eight weeks have elapsed since the completion of the internal procedures of the landlord, without the need to involve a Designated Person first.

Ombudsman:

If the complainant is not satisfied with the outcome of their complaint after it has been considered at a Review, they can refer their complaint to the Independent Housing Ombudsman Service. Please note they will only usually look at a complainant complaint once it has been through all stages of our internal complaints procedure.

As of 1 April 2013 in line with the Localism Act 2011 the Housing Ombudsman Service will only accept direct referrals from complainants once 8 weeks have elapsed since they completed the landlord's internal complaints procedure.

In addition to this change complainants now have the right to ask a 'designated person' to assist them in facilitating local resolution of their complaint instead of referring to the Ombudsman. A designated person does not have any legal powers or capabilities but they can refer a complaint to the Ombudsman at the complainant's request at any time, should they feel that it is appropriate to do so.

For more information about designated persons please visit the Ombudsman's website <http://www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk> or telephone them on 0300 111 3000.

Overview of St Basils Formal Complaints Procedure Stages and Timescales

NOTE: Timescales are defined as date complaint is received:

Stage 1 – Investigating Officer

Outcome to be achieved within the target of **10 working days** of receiving the complaint where possible, if not complainant to be kept informed.

At this stage, all complaints must be initially handled and logged via feedback@stbasils.org.uk by the Duty Officer at Head Office, who will send a receipt to the complainant and appoint a

Complaints Investigating Officer

If the complaint is not satisfied at this stage the complainant will request their complaint be escalated to



Stage 2 – Senior Investigating Officer

Outcome to be achieved within the target of **10 working days**

At this stage, the Company Secretary will be advised who will appoint a

Senior Complaints Investigating Officer

If the complaint is not satisfied at this stage the complainant will request their complaint be escalated to



Stage 3 – Directorate Review the Decision

Outcome to be achieved within the target of **10 working days**

Following this response the complaint will be deemed to have exhausted the internal procedure and be closed.

Final correspondence will signpost the complainant to



Designated Person ('MP', 'Counsellor' or recognised 'Tenants Panel')



Housing Ombudsman

Acknowledgement Template

Our Ref: [Insert file reference number]

[Insert date]

[Insert name and address]

Private and Confidential

Dear [Insert name]

Re: Complaint Acknowledgement

I write to acknowledge receipt of your complaint on [insert date received]. We are sorry you feel you have cause to complain about the service provided by St Basils, please be assured we will do everything we can to address this.

Your complaint will now be dealt with under Stage 1 of the St Basils Complaints Policy and Procedure. We take complaints very seriously and must give each case adequate time and consideration. Where possible our aim is to respond within 10 days of the receipt of your complaint. Where this is not possible for more complex cases, you will be kept informed.

An investigating officer will be appointed to look into your complaint and may need to contact you to clarify any of the details to ensure your concerns are dealt with appropriately. Please ensure you quote the reference number provided in any further correspondence in relation to this complaint.

Yours sincerely

[Insert Duty Officers name]

Duty Officer

[

CC. **Investigating Officer**

COMPLAINTS MANAGEMENT

Dear **[INSERT INVESTIGATING OFFICERS NAME]**

Thank you for agreeing to be the investigating officer for complaint Ref: **[INSERT REF NO HERE]**

What you should consider during your investigation:

- Establish the full facts of any service delivery failure, including time, actions, communication. This should help establish the root cause of the complaint.
- If it is necessary to meet or visit the complainant make sure it is safe to do so – consider anything that may be regarded as a risk either to yourself or to the complainant.
- Adverse impact may include financial loss – did we fail to do something that has had a financial impact on the complainant?
- Time and Trouble – eg in chasing a repair. Good triage could have prevented this was it completed effectively?
- Distress and inconvenience – caused because we failed to do something we should have done. Must be on a case by case basis.
- Understand what the complainant is seeking as an outcome – and manage their expectations, alternative offer of service rather than monetary compensation.
- Did the complainant contribute to the service failure? eg through delays, no access or conduct?
- Medical evidence – eg has the complainant suffered injury as a result of the service failure; would a disability be affected etc?
- Cumulative impact – has a failure in service delivery made matters worse?

Examine what should have happened against what did happen – the difference is a service failure.



For office use only

Complaint Reference No:

Complaint - Investigating Officers Report

THIS REPORT IS CONFIDENTIAL

To be completed by the appointed Investigating Officer and retained with all complaint investigation notes and materials. Upon completion of the investigation, all documentation (originals) including a draft response using the Stage 1 Outcome Template should be forwarded to the Duty Officer at feedback@stbasils.org.uk.

IF THE COMPLAINT IS REGARDING A SAFEGUARDING OR ABUSE MATTER, YOU MUST IMMEDIATELY BRING THIS TO THE ATTENTION OF THE DUTY SAFEGUARDING OFFICER

Investigating Officer Full Name:

Job Title:

Project/Department:

Date Complaint Received:

Complaint Stage? (please circle to indicate)

Stage 1 Stage 2 Stage 3

Details of the Complaint

What is the complainants' desired outcome?

Key people contacted/ their response(s):

Name: _____

Date: ____/____/____

Method: In person/ telephone/ email (circle)

Key Questions/ Responses:

Name: _____

Date: ____/____/____

Method: In person/ telephone/ email (circle)

Key Questions/ Responses:

Other materials/documents considered as part of this investigation:

Other Policies/ Legislation relevant:

Your key findings:

Your recommendations:

Your overall recommendations from your investigation findings, i.e. what action do you recommend should now be taken, why and by whom?

Also state your specific recommendations in relation to the complainant's desired outcome. If your recommendations are regarding a member of St Basil's staff, and/ or a St Basils service, you must firstly discuss these with the relevant Service Manager prior to forwarding your draft response to feedback@stbasils.org.uk.

The outcome: Are you upholding the complaint? (please circle to indicate)

Yes No Partly

Reason/s for your decision:

Signed: _____

Date: ____/____/____

Stage 1 Outcome Template

Our Ref: [Insert file reference number]

[Insert date]

[Insert name and address]

Private and Confidential

Dear [Insert name]

Re: Your complaint dated [insert date]

Following the investigation into your complaint I write to conclude the findings of our investigating officer.

My understanding is [summarise the complaint in your own words]

The following activities were undertaken in the course of the investigation.

-
-
-
-

(Where there are multiple parts to a complaint)

I have noted [?] parts to the complaint, extracted from the original written communication and will address each one individually.

[extract content from original complaint, do not change the wording]

Response:

[Describe the evidence located]

[Conclude your findings and why you have come to your decision]

I am able/unable to uphold this element of your complaint.

[Delete which does not apply]

I have dealt with your complaint at Stage 1 of St Basils Complaints policy and procedures. If you do not agree with my decision you may request in writing within 10 days of receipt of this notice your complaint be escalated to Stage 2 at which stage it will be reviewed by a Head of Service.

Thank you for bringing these matters to our attention. At St Basils, we see complaints as a way of receiving feedback which can help us to assess and review our services, and the way in which they are delivered. This can provide us with a valuable opportunity to make improvements.

Yours sincerely