

Concerns, complaints and compliments policy – version 11.1

Date approved for use: 17th May 2021

Scope

- 1.1 This policy is a Dimensions Group policy. This means it applies to all its subsidiaries as listed [here](#).
- 1.2 The policy explains how we encourage, respond to, monitor and act on complaints, concerns and compliments received from the people we support, our tenants, residents, their representatives and others about the services we provide.
- 1.3 Its purpose is also to help employees view complaints and concerns as positively as compliments. This is as a means of increasing customer satisfaction and improving our services. It outlines the procedures we expect employees to follow to resolve complaints as quickly as possible and meet the regulatory requirements of which Dimensions must adhere to.
- 1.4 All our employees should follow this policy. Registered managers are responsible for ensuring that the people they support, their families and representatives have the confidence and information to raise concerns, make complaints and pay compliments. Whilst remaining ultimately accountable, registered managers of domiciliary care services may delegate this responsibility to locality managers. However, they must keep a record of which responsibilities they have delegated to whom.
- 1.5 Information is available for people we support, tenants, residents, their families and representatives so that they can see how we will respond to their concern, complaint or compliment. This information is also available in different formats (see paragraph [4.3](#))
- 1.6 To go straight to the policy content click on the hyperlinked section title below:

Section

[**Making it easy to complain**](#)

Page 4

[**Dealing with and investigating a concern or complaint**](#)

Page 6

<u>Stage 1 – complaint investigation</u>	Page 7
<u>Stage 2 – complaint appeal</u>	Page 10
<u>Process Flowchart</u>	Page 13
<u>Reasons why we might not investigate a complaint</u>	Page 14
<u>Recording and monitoring</u>	Page 15
<u>Compliments</u>	Page 16

Policy statement

- 2.1 We are committed to providing as high quality a service as possible to our tenants, residents, the people we support, their families and representatives. We recognise that feedback of all kinds helps us to learn and improve what we do. We will make every effort to let people know how important their feedback is to us, whether they are happy or unhappy with the services we provide.
- 2.2 This means we will provide everyone we support and their relatives and every tenant, with a copy of this policy or a version of it in the format of their choice and will make reasonable adjustments to ensure information is accessible to everyone. This includes versions in languages other than English. Where we don't have a requested version in stock, we will do our best to produce a version in as quick a time as possible.
- 2.3 We define a complaint to be “an expression of dissatisfaction, however made, about the standard of service, actions or lack of action by the organisation, those acting on its behalf, including our colleagues affecting an individual or group of our tenants, residents or people we support”.
- 2.4 We adhere to the [Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code \(England\)](#) which sets out good practice that will enable landlords, to respond to complaints, including those received from tenants, effectively and fairly. We have reflected these principles throughout this policy, easy read information and other associated documents.
- 2.3 We support the principles of the [NHS England ‘Ask Listen Do’ project](#) which is aimed at supporting organisations to learn from and improve the experiences of people with a learning disability, autism or both, their families and carers when giving feedback, raising a concern or making a complaint. We have reflected the principles throughout this policy, our easy read information, and other associated documents.

- 2.4 As a Dimensions employee, you should understand that whilst we expect you to help others make complaints, the complaints system is not for your personal use. Should you have a concern, you should raise it with your line manager. If this does not resolve the matter, you can follow our [Grievance policy](#) or you can whistleblow (see the [Whistleblowing policy](#)).
- 2.5 We treat all concerns, complaints and compliments in confidence and use the information to learn from and improve our services. We will not withdraw or reduce services because someone makes a complaint in good faith.
- 2.6 We will consider compensation for Dimensions-owned housing maintenance issues, as per the [Compensation policy](#).
- 2.5 Information held about complaints will be held and processed in line with the principles of the Data Protection legislation; details about this are reflected in our [Privacy Notice](#). Statistical reports will be produced to monitor trends but individuals will not be identified in these reports.

The impact of not implementing this policy

- 3.1 If you don't follow the guidance in this policy, our tenants, residents, the people we support, and their representatives might lose confidence in us. They might lose confidence in you personally. They might go to another provider for support. Not following this policy may make people less likely to give honest feedback, and this would make it harder for us to improve the quality of our services.
- 3.2 You might also get us in trouble with our regulators or other government officials:
 - the local authority (LA)
 - in England, the Care Quality Commission (CQC)
 - in Wales, the Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW)
 - the Charities Commission (CC)
 - the Regulator of Social Housing (RSH)
 - the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO).
 - the Housing Ombudsman Service (HOS)
 - the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO)
 - the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales (PSOW)

They might serve a requirement or warning notice. They would probably include the failing in their inspection report, and this would badly damage our reputation.

- 3.3 If you are a registered manager, you might get in trouble with our regulators personally.
- 3.4 Your actions in dealing with a complaint may be investigated by the [Housing Ombudsman](#), the [Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman](#) or the [Public Services Ombudsman for Wales](#). You will need to show that you have followed this policy.

Policy content

Making it easy to complain

- 4.1 If you are an employee, you should make sure that people who want to raise a concern or complaint find it easy to do and that you:
 - ask people about their experiences on a regular basis
 - provide information in a format that is helpful to them
 - put people at ease
 - resolve the issue as quickly as possible
 - keep people informed about the progress of investigations
 - provide people who make complaints with full explanations and apologies when appropriate, and
 - offer opportunities for people to tell us about their experience of making a complaint, so that we can learn from this.
- 4.2 Anyone affected by the way Dimensions provides services can make a complaint. You can make a complaint or raise a concern:
 - in person
 - through a team member or colleague
 - through an advocate or representative
 - by telephone – complaints telephone line: 0300 303 9024
 - by letter
 - by email to the manager, or to the organisation's complaints email address: complaints@dimensions-uk.org

- You can also make a complaint via our website:
<https://www.dimensions-uk.org/contact/making-complaint/>

4.3 We have easy read versions of this policy:

- [What Dimensions does about complaints – Ask Listen Do - easy read](#)
- [What Dimensions does about sharing a compliment – Ask Listen Do - easy read](#)

4.4 We also have an animation, an audio version, as well as fact sheets for families too. Our complaints satisfaction survey is available in an easy read version. These are available as [appendices](#) to the policy.

4.5 The [Housing Ombudsman Service \(England\)](#) can assist tenants with all aspects of their complaint at any stage in the complaints process.

4.6 Dimensions tenants, residents and the people we support are reminded of how to make a complaint as part of the biannual newsletters and the annual satisfaction survey.

4.7 We deal with anonymous complaints under the same procedure as complaints that aren't anonymous. However, it is better if contact details are provided, so we can tell the complainant the outcome of our investigation and ask them how well their complaint was handled.

4.8 A representative may complain on behalf of a tenant or person we support if:

- the person has given consent for the representative to act on their behalf, or
- the person cannot complain unaided and cannot give consent because they lack capacity, or
- the representative is acting in the person we support's best interests – for example, where the matter complained about, if true, would be detrimental to the person.

4.9 If you are not satisfied that the representative is acting with the tenant's or person we support's consent or in their best interests, you must notify the representative in writing, and state the reason.

- 4.10 If someone complains on behalf of a tenant or person we support, we will involve the person as much as possible. But we will always be mindful of not sharing data about a person without their consent.
- 4.11 If a person wishes to appoint an advocate, or you feel they may benefit from an advocate's help in making a complaint, you should do all you can to help them appoint one. Example national advocacy agencies include:
- **The Advocacy People** – contact details:
<https://www.theadvocacypeople.org.uk/>
Tel: 0330 440 9000
 - **PoHWER** – contact details:
www.pohwer.net
Tel: 0300 456 2370

But bear in mind, there will be smaller local agencies in your area too.

- 4.12 If a person would like to speak with someone outside of Dimensions about support with making a complaint, or needs further advice, you can also direct them to their local [Healthwatch](#) or [Citizens Advice](#).
- 4.13 Dimensions Quality Officer has oversight of all complaints received into the organisation and will ensure engagement from relevant departments within the organisation to support the resolution of these. The Quality Officer can be contacted by our tenants, residents, the people we support and colleagues within the organisation for advice, or where the outcome of a complaint is unclear, to support impartiality and in the conclusion of the complaint.

Dealing with and investigating a concern or complaint

5.1 We have 2 stages in our complaints process:

- Stage 1 – complaint investigation
- Stage 2 – complaint appeal

This stage includes informing the complainant of their right to contact the Housing or Local Government Social Care Ombudsman if they are unhappy with the outcome of their complaint appeal.

Steps to take when receiving a complaint are summarised in the [Dealing with a concern or complaint flowchart](#) on page 12.

Stage I – complaint investigation

- 5.2 We aim to handle concerns and complaints quickly, effectively and in a fair and honest way.
- 5.3 Often people feel more comfortable about suggesting improvements rather than complaining formally. These concerns or feedback should still be recorded on the complaints management system (CMS), to help us learn from these. However, formal letters (as per the appendices to this policy) do not need to be sent in these instances. Refer to [Dealing with a concern or complaint flowchart](#) on page 12 for further guidance.
- 5.4 If a complainant alerts us to possible abuse, neglect or a different criminal offence, we will tell the local authority’s adult safeguarding team and the police, as appropriate. The safeguarding team/police will decide how to investigate and monitor outcomes. If somebody brings such an allegation to your attention, you must inform a more senior colleague immediately – that is, whether day or night, so they may take appropriate action. Please see the [Safeguarding policy](#) and [Accident and incident reporting policy](#) for more details.
- 5.5 Complaints relating to discrimination of people with protected characteristics might be unlawful under the [Equality Act 2010](#). Please see the [Equality and diversity policy](#) for more details about this.
- 5.6 If a complainant involves more than our organisation in their complaint (Dimensions and a local authority for example), we must work with that organisation to provide a single response to complainants. Arrangements need to be in place to agree:
- who should take the lead in co-ordinating the handling of the complaint
 - communicating with the complainant
 - providing information that is reasonably requested, and
 - attending any meeting reasonably required.
- 5.7 If someone complains to us, and we aren’t responsible for the care or service complained about, you should:
- signpost them to the right organisation and provide the person with their contact details, and
 - offer to share their concerns with the correct organisation – you will need the person’s permission to do this.
- 5.8 When you receive a concern or complaint you must:

- show empathy to the person raising the concern
- write down the complainant's contact details, if you don't already have them
- assure the complainant that any information they give you will be shared on a need-to-know basis only, as per our [Confidentiality policy](#)
- reassure them that we will not treat them or others unfairly if they choose to complain
- ask them what they would like to happen as a result of their complaint (the outcome) and record this in your report
- take all reasonable steps to resolve the complaint informally – that is, to their satisfaction but without the need for a full-blown investigation
- if you cannot resolve their concern immediately, tell them what steps you are going to take to resolve it as soon as possible
- If you are not a manager, whether or not you immediately resolve a concern or complaint, you must inform your line manager as soon as possible and within 24 hours at most. If unable to inform your line manager within 24 hours, you must inform their line manager or the on call manager.

5.9 Operations directors, heads of service and their line managers are responsible for appointing investigators, including assigning them on the CMS, and where appropriate, may request the Quality & Compliance Team investigate.

5.10 You must appreciate that if you receive a concern or complaint that results in a safeguarding alert or even a police investigation, the Safeguarding procedure must be followed, but you still have the same duty to keep the complainant informed of the progress of the complaint and to update the CMS.

5.11 As a locality manager, operations director or head of service, if a team member has not resolved the complaint already, inform the team member that you will contact the complainant. Make contact as soon as possible and within two working days at most to assure them that you will deal with their complaint. Send the complaint acknowledgement letter for the relevant entity, within five days. See [appendices](#) for details and edit it as appropriate. Tell the complainant who will be investigating their complaint. Outline the expected timescales for completing your investigation. This should be within 15 working days of the date the person first raised their complaint. Upload this letter and any other associated documents to the CMS.

- 5.12 You/the investigator should keep the person making the complaint informed about the investigation's progress, particularly if you are not able to resolve their complaint within 15 working days of the complaint being made. It is also important to record all developments on the CMS.
- 5.13 If you cannot resolve the issue within 15 working days of the complaint being made, tell your line manager for a decision on how to proceed. The longest we should take to resolve a concern or complaint is 20 working days.

If a 20-working day resolution looks unlikely or impossible for whatever reason, your line manager will advise you on what exactly to communicate, in writing, to the person making the complaint. It may be the case, that they refer the complaint to our Quality & Compliance Team. In this case, the Quality & Compliance Team will keep the person informed of any revised timescales.

- 5.14 When you have finished your investigation, set out your conclusion and recommendations for action in the complaint resolution letter for the relevant business entity, See [appendices](#) for the relevant complaint resolution letter for each entity. The complaint resolution letter includes an invitation to the complainant to complete a Customer complaint satisfaction survey, which is also available in easy read.

Before sending the letter to the person making the complaint, authorisation from your operations director, head of service, or more senior manager is required. Contact the complainant to talk through the findings and outcome of the investigation. If they are not satisfied with the findings and complaint outcome, inform them of their right to appeal. Details of how to appeal the complaint outcome are explained in the complaint resolution letter.

- 5.15 If an apology to the complainant is appropriate, you should consider if this falls under the HSCA Duty of Candour. See [Duty of candour \(being open and honest\) policy](#).
- 5.16 You may become aware of a complaint on social media. If this happens, do not attempt to address the matter yourself but inform the Marketing Team either by emailing them, marketingteam@dimensions-uk.org, or if out-of-hours, by messaging them on one of our social media accounts.
- 5.17 In the event of a complaint being received via social media, it will be referred to the complaints team and the relevant operational team as appropriate, in line with our [website privacy policy](#) and in order that it follows our standard complaints procedure. We will always advise the complainant of the steps we are taking.

Stage 2 – complaint appeal

- 5.18 If a person making a complaint is not happy with the outcome of their complaint, they have the right to appeal. Ideally, they should do this within two weeks of being informed of the outcome. Explain this complaint resolution letter. See [appendices](#) for the relevant complaint resolution letter for each entity. Forward any requests for appeal to your operations director or head of service (or more senior manager, if appropriate) as soon as possible, so they may appoint an appeal investigator.
- 5.19 The investigator of an appeal should be senior to the original investigator.
- 5.20 As the investigator of an appeal, you should follow the same procedure for a first-time complaint. This means you have fifteen days to consider it. If it is going to take longer than this, you need to write to the complainant to tell them and explain why.
- 5.21 It also means recording the appeal on the CMS, making reference to complaint ID number of the original complaint.
- 5.22 Contact the complainant to talk through the findings and outcome of the complaint appeal investigation. If your decision is to uphold the original decision not to uphold a complaint, then you must inform the complainant verbally and in your complaint appeal resolution letter of their right to contact the relevant ombudsman to ask them to review their complaint.
- 5.23 In England, this is the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LG&SCO) (NB: The LG&SCO will not normally investigate a complaint until the provider has had an opportunity to respond and resolve matters):
- **Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman**
Website: www.lgo.org.uk
Tel: 0300 061 0614
Complaint appeal page: <https://complaints.lgo.org.uk/>
- 5.24 In Wales, inform the complainant that they may complain to the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales (PSOW). The PSOW can look into their complaint if the complainant, or person on whose behalf they are complaining, believes they:
- have been treated unfairly or received a bad service through some failure on the part of the organisation providing it, or,

- have been disadvantaged personally by a service failure.

- **Public Services Ombudsman for Wales**

Phone: 0300 790 0203

Email: ask@ombudsman-wales.org.uk

Website: www.ombudsman-wales.org.uk

Twitter: @OmbudsmanWales

Address: I Ffordd yr Hen Gae
Pencoed
CF35 5LJ.

Complainants may also contact:

- **Care Quality Commission**

Website: www.cqc.org.uk

Tel: 0300 061 6161

Address: CQC
Citygate
Gallowgate
Newcastle upon Tyne
NE1 4PA

- **Care Inspectorate Wales**

Website: <https://careinspectorate.wales/>

Tel: 0300 790 0126

Address: Welsh Government Office
Sarn Mynach
Llandudno Junction
LL31 9RZ

- the person's local authority (you **must** add its contact details to the person's accessible [Making a complaint or speaking out Ask Listen Do easy read](#) booklet)
- the person's landlord.

5.25 The Housing Ombudsman Service (England) can assist tenants with all aspects of their complaint at any stage in the complaints process. Dimensions tenants

or their representatives can refer to the Housing Ombudsman Service if they are not happy with our response to a complaint:

- **Housing Ombudsman Service**

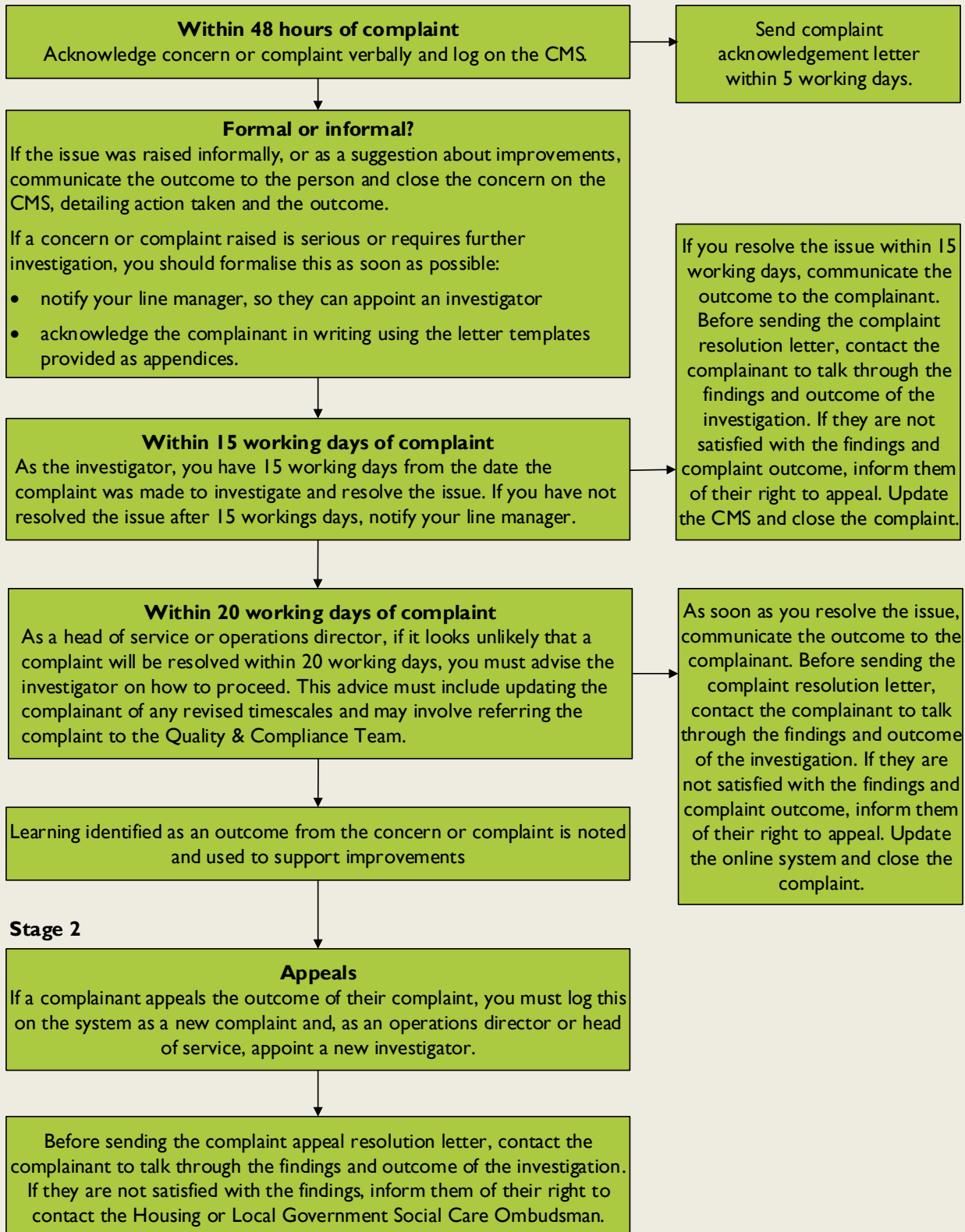
Website: www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk

Tel: 0300 111 3000

Address: PO Box 152
Liverpool
L33 7WQ

Dealing with a concern or complaint flowchart

Stage 1



Reasons why we might not investigate a complaint

A complaint has already been investigated and resolved

- 6.1 If we have followed our complaints policy, including the appeals process, we will not reinvestigate a previous complaint made and will write to the complainant informing them of this, signposting them to the Housing or Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman.

Time limits

- 6.2 Complainants should complain as soon after the date on which the event occurred or came to their notice. If a complaint is received more than twelve months later, we may not be able to investigate properly. But we shall also consider whether there was good reason for not making the complaint sooner and whether, despite the delay, it is still possible to investigate the complaint effectively and fairly. The decision whether or not to investigate will be made by the Group Executive Team, one of whom will also inform the complainant of the reasons why. If the Executive Team can't come to a decision, they will refer to the chair of the Group Audit and Risk Committee to make the decision on behalf of the Board.
- 6.3 If a complainant wishes to appeal the outcome of their complaint and the appeal is received more than twelve months later, we may not be able to investigate properly. But we shall also consider whether there was good reason for not making the appeal sooner and whether, despite the delay, it is still possible to investigate the complaint appeal effectively and fairly. We may not be able to review our decision unless the complainant can show their appeal:
- is based on important evidence that contains facts that were not accurate, and the complainant can show this using readily available information, or
 - there is new and relevant information that was not previously available, and which affects the decision made.

The decision whether or not to investigate a complaint appeal will be made by the Group Executive Team, one of whom will also inform the complainant of the reasons why. If the Executive Team can't come to a decision, they will refer to the chair of the Group Audit Committee to make the decision on behalf of the Board.

Unreasonable complainant behaviour

- 6.4 Unreasonable and unreasonably persistent complainants are those who, because of the nature or frequency of their contact with the organisation, hinder our consideration of their, or other people's, complaints.

- 6.5 We will not tolerate deceitful, abusive, offensive, threatening or other forms of unacceptable behaviour from complainants. When it occurs, we will take proportionate action to protect the wellbeing of our employees and the integrity of our processes.
- 6.6 In most instances when we consider someone's behaviour is unreasonable, we will explain why and ask them to change it. We will also warn them that, if the behaviour continues, we may take action to restrict their contact with our offices/teams. Where the behaviour is so extreme that it threatens the immediate safety and welfare of our employees, we may report the matter to the police or consider taking legal action. In such cases, we may not give the complainant prior warning.

Legal proceedings

- 6.7 Where legal proceedings have commenced between a tenant and Dimensions as the Landlord, we may not be able to investigate a complaint. Dimensions will take steps to ensure that tenants are not left without a response for lengthy periods of time, for example, where a letter before action has been received or issued but no court proceedings are started or settlement agreement reached. A tenant has the right to challenge this decision by bringing their complaint to the Housing Ombudsman. Where appropriate the Housing Ombudsman will instruct Dimensions as the Landlord take on the complaint.
- 6.8 The decision whether not to investigate will be made by the Group Executive Team or chair of the Group Audit and Risk Committee as per paragraph 6.2. They will also inform the complainant of the reasons why.

Recording and monitoring

- 7.1 We have to show how we have handled complaints to various statutory bodies. You should log concerns, complaints and compliments on the CMS, as quickly as possible, or ensure this has been completed. This includes uploading all relevant documents – for example written correspondence to and from complainants and investigation reports.
- 7.2 For details on how to use the CMS, see [appendix 8: Guidance – complaints and compliments management system](#).
- 7.3 As far as we are able – that is, based on information that people making complaints provide – we will analyse Dimensions' response to complaints in relation to diversity and address any issues of inequality we identify.

- 7.4 Where required, we will share information on complaints with our regulators but we will depersonalise data to preserve confidentiality as per Data Protection Act (2018). (See [Data handling and protection policy](#).)

Compliments

- 8.1 The recording of compliments is not a regulatory requirement. However, our regulators do take compliments into consideration when making judgments about our services, so it is important that we are able to evidence them.
- 8.2 As a manager, you should consider:
- the learning the feedback provides
 - the positive impact on team members' morale that acknowledgement of good work has, and
 - how well it reflects on your management performance.
- 8.2 All compliments should also be recorded on the CMS. You may do this for compliments paid verbally, but you may also offer people the opportunity to record their compliment themselves using the [What Dimensions does about sharing a compliment – Ask Listen Do - easy read](#) booklet.

Relevant legislation, guidance & related policies & templates

Legislation

- 9.1 The Health & Social Care Act 2008 (Regulated Activities) (Amendment) Regulations 2015
- 9.2 The Social Services Complaints Procedure (Wales) Regulations 2014
- 9.3 The Local Authority Social Services and National Health Service Complaints (England) Regulations 2009
- 9.4 Data Protection Act 2018
- 9.5 General Data Protection Regulations (UK-GDPR)
- 9.6 Equality Act 2010

Guidance

- 10.1 *Guidance for providers on meeting the regulations* (Care Quality Commission, 2015)
- 10.2 *National Minimum Standards for Domiciliary Care Agencies in Wales* (The Welsh Assembly Government, 2004)

- 10.3 *The Regulatory Standards for Social Housing in England: Tenant Involvement and Empowerment Standard* Regulator of Social Housing
- 10.4 *My expectations for raising concerns and complaints* (Local Government Ombudsman; Healthwatch; Parliamentary Health Ombudsman, England 2014)
- 10.5 [Complaints about charities guidance \(CC47\)](#) (The Charity Commission – GOV.UK)
- 10.6 Quality Matters - Acting on compliments, feedback and complaints about adult social care – a good practice guide for adult social care practitioners
- 10.7 [NHS England – Ask Listen Do](#) - The Ask Listen Do project is aimed at supporting organisations to learn from and improve the experiences of people with a learning disability, autism or both, their families and carers when giving feedback, raising a concern or making a complaint.
- 10.8 [Reasonable adjustments for people with a learning disability](#) (GOV.UK)
- 10.9 [The Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code](#) provides good practice for landlords on fair and effective complaint handling

Group policies

- 11.1 Accessible information standard
- 11.2 Data handling and protection
- 11.3 Accident and incident reporting
- 11.4 Confidentiality
- 11.5 Disciplinary
- 11.6 Grievance
- 11.7 Whistleblowing
- 11.8 Anti-social behaviour and harassment
- 11.9 Building maintenance
- 11.10 Compensation
- 11.11 Eviction
- 11.12 Rent and charge setting
- 11.13 Tenant involvement and empowerment
- 11.14 On call
- 11.15 Safeguarding
- 11.16 Duty of candour (being open and honest)
- 11.17 Equality and diversity

- 11.18 [What Dimensions does about complaints – Ask Listen Do – easy read](#)
- 11.19 [What Dimensions does about sharing a compliment – Ask Listen Do - easy read](#)

Related procedures, decision flowcharts, forms and so on

- 12.1 [appendix 1a - Making a complaint or speaking out Ask Listen Do easy read](#)
- 12.2 [appendix 1b - Making a complaint or speaking out Ask Listen Do easy read \(interactive\)](#)
- 12.3 [appendix 2: Making a complaint or speaking out audio version \(audioboom.com\)](#)
- 12.4 [appendix 3: Complaints and compliments animation \(youtube.com\)](#)
- 12.5 [appendix 4: Facts for Families – When things go wrong – how to make a complaint](#)
- 12.6 [appendix 5: Facts for Families – Sharing a compliment](#)
- 12.7 [appendix 6: What to do if you are unhappy with your home Ask Listen Do easy read](#)
- 12.8 [appendix 7a: Complaints form \(interactive email version\)](#)
- 12.9 [appendix 7b: Complaints form \(printers version\)](#)
- 12.10 [appendix 8: Guidance – complaints and compliments management system](#)
- 12.11 [appendix 9a: Complaint acknowledgement letter – Dimensions](#)
- 12.12 [appendix 9b: Complaint acknowledgement letter – Outreach 3 Way](#)
- 12.13 [appendix 9c: Complaint acknowledgement letter - Discovery](#)
- 12.14 [appendix 9d: Complaint acknowledgement letter – Dimensions Cymru](#)
- 12.15 [appendix 10a: Complaint resolution letter – Dimensions](#)
- 12.16 [appendix 10b: Complaint resolution letter – Outreach 3 Way](#)
- 12.17 [appendix 10c: Complaint resolution letter – Discovery](#)
- 12.18 [appendix 10d: Complaint resolution letter – Dimensions Cymru](#)
- 12.19 [appendix 11: Complaints satisfaction survey](#)
- 12.20 [appendix 12a: Complaints satisfaction survey – easy read](#)
- 12.21 [appendix 12b: Complaints satisfaction survey – easy read \(interactive\)](#)

12.22 [appendix 13: Easy read privacy notice for complaints and compliments \(Looking after your personal information when you make a complaint or compliment\)](#)

Equality statement

- 13.1 This policy promotes equality, diversity and human rights by directing Dimensions employees to treat complaints and concerns from our tenants, residents, the people we support and their representatives in exactly the same courteous and helpful way whatever the person's race, age, gender, ethnicity, religion, disability or sexual orientation.
- 13.2 Also, by analysing the diversity of complainants where we can we will identify any pattern revealing issues of inequality and seek to address these proactively.
- 13.3 We promote equality, diversity and human rights by treating all people equally and fairly whatever their:
- age
 - disability
 - gender reassignment
 - marriage and civil partnership
 - pregnancy and maternity
 - race
 - religion or belief
 - sex
 - sexual orientation
- 13.4 The equality impact analysis (EIA) is in the intranet's Document library. You can link to it from here: [Concerns, complaints and compliments policy – version 11 – initial equality impact analysis.](#)

Data protection statement

- 14.1 This policy involves handling personal data. So when you carry out any procedures this policy describes, you should also think about what our Data handling and protection policy says.
- 14.2 Our Data handling and protection policy is our promise to handle personal data correctly under the Data Protection Act 2018 and the General Data

Protection Regulation (UK-GDPR). It tells you how to keep that promise. It balances everyone's rights to data privacy with the work we do.

- 14.3 Information held about complaints will be held and processed in line with the principles of the Data Protection Act 2018 and UK-GDPR. Statistical reports will be produced to monitor trends but individuals will not be identified in these reports.
- 14.4 For information on how we handle personal and sensitive data, please refer to the [legal section of our website](#) which includes a copy of our privacy notice for complaints and compliments. This is available also in an easy read format. A copy can be sent, on request.

Review

- 15.1 We will review this policy three years from its original publication. But if changes in legislation, regulation or best practice mean we need to, we will review sooner.
- 15.2 If the changes are big, we will equality impact analyse (EIA) the policy again and send out to consultation in line with our Policy development and consultation policy.
- 15.3 For smaller changes, we will update this same version. We will record this in the Version control section below.

Glossary

- 16.1 Not all these words appear in this policy. But you may find other people use them when talking about complaints.

Term	Definition
Mental capacity (sometimes shortened to capacity)	This is a person's ability to make a particular decision at a particular time.
Best interests decision	This is a decision made on behalf of a person who is unable to make the decision for themselves because they lack the mental capacity to do so.
Complaint investigator	A person who carries out a formal review of information.

Term	Definition
Complaint management system (CMS)	Our online process for recording and monitoring complaints and compliments.
Complaint outcome	This is the result of the investigation, whether the complaint is upheld, partially upheld, or not upheld.
Complaint appeal	A request for the complaint outcome to be re-considered.
Satisfaction survey	A set of questions asking about the person's experience of something.
Vexatious complaints	A complaint made without merit and with the intention of causing inconvenience, harassment or expense to others. (It's our policy not to use this word. We will not label a complainant as vexatious.)
Whistleblow	Raising a concern that is in the public interest, usually about some wrongdoing in the workplace.

People & groups involved in writing & approving this policy

Policy owner:	Jackie Fletcher, Group Director of Quality, Public Affairs & Marketing
Policy author/reviewer:	Tanya Emmons, Quality & Compliance Manager
People & groups consulted:	Diversity Matters; National Colleague Forum Policy Subgroup; Housing Dept.

Version control

Version number	Approved date:	Communication date:	Summary of minor changes
11	17 th March 2021	17 th March 2021	Review to include Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code and 'tenants' and 'residents' throughout the policy.

			<p>Several paragraphs and sections renumbered due to additions and edits.</p> <p>Former section 7 moved up to end of Section 5 (stage 2 – appeals)</p> <p>1.3 adherence to regulatory requirements</p> <p>1.5 removed</p> <p>1.6 index updated</p> <p>2.3 definition of a complaint added</p> <p>2.4 Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code added</p> <p>3.2 added ‘other government officials’, ‘Housing Ombudsman Service’ and ‘LGSCO’ and ‘the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales (PSOW)’</p> <p>3.4 Housing Ombudsman and the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales (PSOW) added</p> <p>4.4 statement re-worded</p> <p>4.5 Housing Ombudsman Service can assist tenants with all aspects of their complaint. Link added</p> <p>4.6 added ‘Dimensions tenants and the people we support are reminded of how to make a complaint as part of the biannual newsletters and the annual satisfaction survey’</p> <p>4.13 Quality Officer role added</p> <p>Section 5 – Stage 1 and Stage 2 explanation and headings</p> <p>5.14 addition to contact complainant</p>
--	--	--	---

			<p>5.17 additional point for complaints received via social media</p> <p>Former section 7 (Appeals) moved up to 5.18 (now Stage 2 – appeals)</p> <p>5.22 inclusion of talking with the complainant before sending the letter</p> <p>5.25 Housing Ombudsman Service contact details added</p> <p>Flowchart updated and moved to end of section 5</p> <p>6.1 Housing Ombudsman added</p> <p>6.2 addition ‘of the reasons why’ and ‘and Risk’</p> <p>6.3 (was old 7.9) on Time limits</p> <p>6.7 added heading Legal proceedings</p> <p>6.8 added ‘of the reasons why’ ‘and Risk’</p> <p>All following sections re-numbered</p> <p>10.5 Complaints about charities information and link to Charities Commission</p> <p>10.9 Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code added</p> <p>Section 12 – appendices updated, re-numbered and links renewed</p> <p>Section 13 – Equalities statement – inclusion of tenants and residents</p> <p>14.4 added to include the name and links to privacy notices on website</p>
--	--	--	--

11.1	17 th May 2021	17 th May 2021	4.4 CD replaced by online audio version. 12.3 Audio version linked to (audioboom.com).
------	---------------------------	---------------------------	---

Next review due: March 2024