

Complaints Procedure

Your feedback matters

We're the people everybody turns to for maintenance and the upkeep of their property. So please, tell us what you think and say it as you see it. If you have a problem or complaint, your feedback matters to us.





We're listening

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A Guide to Managing Complaints

Your thoughts and feelings are important

We welcome customer feedback at any time. It helps us to understand how well we are doing and where we may need to make further improvements to our service.

We always strive for excellence, but sometimes things can go wrong or you may feel that we have not met your needs fully or in the way that you would have liked.

If this should ever happen, please get in touch with your Property / Development Manager.

You can also contact our Customer Service team (see below).



How to contact us



Post
FirstPort Property Services
Customer Service Centre
Marlborough House
Wigmore Place, Wigmore Lane
Luton LU2 9EX



Telephone
0333 321 4080
(Monday to Friday, 8am to 6pm)



Email
customerrelations@firstport.co.uk

Making a Complaint

Need help? Just tell us

Whenever you call or email us, please give us your customer account number and address, so that we can quickly identify your development. You'll find your customer account number on your latest service charge bill.

Our staff will listen to your concerns and ask what you would like them to do. They should be able to sort things out quickly for you and, if they feel they cannot deal with the matter themselves, they will be able to put you in touch with someone who can help.

This is the fastest and easiest way to resolve most problems. However, if that is not the case, you can ask us to review the matter through our formal complaints procedure. If you rent your property, please refer this matter in the first instance to your landlord.

For some issues, we will let you know what we can do or put you in touch with someone else who may be able to help, such as Citizens Advice Bureau, your local authority or trades people.

Examples of issues that are not normally covered by our complaints procedure include:

General enquiries and requests

Complaints made by one resident about another – unless your lease allows for this

Defects inside your own property, unless they are caused by a problem within the communal areas that we manage

Issues and Topics

Common concerns and talking points



Here are some examples of issues that you may wish us to look into through our formal complaints procedure:

You feel that we have failed to follow our own policies and procedures or the law

We have failed to act appropriately say, to carry out a repair promptly, or have been negligent

We have not responded to you fully or in a reasonable time

You believe we have discriminated or acted unfairly against you

You have a problem with the behaviour or actions of one of our employees or contractors

We know that making a complaint can be stressful, so we aim to make the experience as simple and straightforward as possible.

Our three step process will help us to review and resolve your concerns quickly, fairly and fully.

We may occasionally suggest alternatives, such as independent mediators or, perhaps, moving your complaint straight on to Stage 2, if we think that makes more sense.



How to Make a Complaint

Our three step process

Here is a quick guide to getting any complaint sorted:

STAGE 1

You can ask any of our staff to raise a Stage 1 complaint for you. You can do this in person, over the phone, by email or in writing.

Acknowledgement

If our review takes some time, we will acknowledge your complaint by email or in writing within three working days.

Completion of investigation

We should be able to complete our investigations and give you a full reply in writing, within ten working days.

STAGE 2

If you are unhappy with the response to your complaint, you can ask the FirstPort Property Services Management team to take a fresh look at it.

Final review

If you are unhappy with the response to your complaint, it will be reviewed by a member of the senior management team or a complaints panel.

Response

You will normally receive our response in writing within four weeks, and within ten working days of any advised panel meeting.

STAGE 3

If we cannot fully resolve matters for you – and have reached deadlock, you can seek a free and independent review of our actions within the next 12 months.

External review

We will advise you of your option(s) in our Stage 2 response, but most complaints can be reviewed by The Property Ombudsman Service (TPOS).

We always try to fully resolve concerns ourselves, and we successfully achieve this for the vast majority of complaints we receive.

STAGE 1

Formal review

You can ask any of our staff to raise a Stage 1 complaint for you. This can be done in person, over the phone, by email or in writing.

If you are writing to or emailing us, please clearly state that you are making a Stage 1 complaint so that we can quickly get this to the attention of the right person. Your customer number will help as well.

Please do not address or copy your complaint to any named individuals, as this can hold things up – they may be away from the office or on leave.

The fastest way to get a complaint resolved is between you and your Property Manager. If they have already had discussions with you, we will normally then ask the Feedback team or a suitable senior manager to investigate your complaint in detail.

Any complaints made about our staff will be reviewed with our Human Resources team.

If we think the Stage 1 review could take some time, we will acknowledge your complaint by email or in writing within three working days, setting out the steps we intend to take and when we expect to be able to come back to you. In most cases, we should be able to complete our investigations and fully reply to you within ten working days. If we think it will take longer, we will let you know and tell you when we expect to complete our review.

Whether we discuss our response with you in person, by phone or email, we will always confirm it in writing.

Stage 1 - Complaints



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Email

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STAGE
2

Final review by Senior Management Team

If you are unhappy with the response to your complaint you can ask that the FirstPort Property Services Business Management team take a fresh look at it. Please use the contact details on page 5, clearly advising that you are now seeking a Stage 2 complaint review.

We will let you know how this will be carried out, depending on the exact nature of your concerns. Most Stage 2 complaints will be reviewed by a member of the senior management team or perhaps a complaints panel.

However, depending on the topic and its urgency, it may sometimes be better for someone else to carry out the review for you, in which case we will let you know.

Either way, your complaint will be carefully reviewed and we'll take full account of all the issues and any actions taken or proposed. We will always seek the best possible outcome for you, and use this to guide our final decision.



If we cannot reach agreement with you, this will usually be referred to the Ombudsman as a deadlock situation requiring an independent review.

You will normally receive our final response in writing within four weeks, and within ten working days of any advised panel meeting. If we feel we need more time or information to reach a suitable conclusion, we will let you know when you can expect us to get back to you.

STAGE
3

External review

We always try to fully resolve concerns ourselves, and we successfully achieve this for the vast majority of complaints we receive.

However, if we cannot do so and have reached deadlock (or more than 8 weeks has elapsed since your complaint was first made), you can seek a free and independent review of our actions within the next 12 months. We will advise you of your options in our Stage 2 response but most complaints will be referred to The Property Ombudsman Service (TPOS).

The Property Ombudsman Service

This is an independent body who deals with property-related complaints for many different organisations in the UK. See below for details of how to contact them.

Please note that the Ombudsman cannot deal with complaints about perceived

value for money, which (for leasehold properties only) would instead need to be considered by the First Tier Tribunal of the Property Chamber in England or a Leasehold Valuation Tribunal in Wales.

The Ombudsman service does not deal with any complaints that are subject to court proceedings or which they consider to be malicious or unjustified. They will be happy to clarify if they are able to review your complaint for you following our Stage 2 response.

We fully respect the independence of these bodies and will always honour their rulings. We pay the cost of all cases heard by TPOS, so there are no charges for you, either personally or through your development's service charge.

However, other tribunals/forums may require you to pay an up-front case fee.

How to contact The Property Ombudsman Service



Post
The Property Ombudsman,
Milford House, 43-55 Milford Street,
Salisbury SP1 2BP



Email
admin@tpos.co.uk



Website
tpos.co.uk



Telephone
01722 333 306

Our Drive for Improvement

Onwards and upwards



Once your complaint is resolved, we may contact you among a regular sample of customers to invite you to give your feedback. You can then tell us how we dealt with your concerns and let us know if there is anything else you would like us to do.

One of our senior managers may ask you for this directly, or we may invite you to take part in a short survey.

You can also share with us any other ideas you have as to how we could improve our service. You can do this at any time using the contact information on the inside back cover.

We regularly review this information, together with other feedback from our customer forums, development meetings and formal research surveys.

Independent advice

LEASE (The Leasehold Advisory Service) offers FREE advice on the law affecting residential leasehold in England and Wales. It is totally independent and is funded by Government.

Post

Fleetbank House, 2-6 Salisbury Square, London, EC4Y 8JX

Website

www.lease-advice.org

Get in Touch

Whenever you need advice or information, we're here to help.

Your feedback matters

We develop and evolve our services in line with what we believe our residents need and expect. So the more you can share with us about the kind of services you'd like to have, the better we can meet your needs.

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More than just bricks and mortar

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