Policy Number: SH009

Reviewed: 08/06/2026
Reviewed by: M KHAYYUM

COMPLAINTS POLICY

Supported Exempt Accommodation Services

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Quality Standards

Solace Housing is committed to providing a complaints process that is accessible, fair, transparent, and focused on continuous improvement. The organisation will ensure that:

- **Accessible Complaints Process** – Residents, representatives, and stakeholders can raise concerns easily and receive appropriate support throughout the process.
- **Fair and Impartial Investigations** – Every complaint is considered objectively, proportionately, and without bias.
- **Timely Resolution** – Complaints are acknowledged, investigated, and responded to within agreed timescales.
- **Resident-Centred Approach** – Complainants are treated with dignity, respect, and kept informed throughout the investigation.
- **Learning and Improvement** – Complaints are analysed to identify trends, improve services, and prevent recurrence.
- **Confidentiality** – Information relating to complaints is handled securely and shared only where there is a lawful basis.
- **Accountability and Governance** – Complaint outcomes are monitored by management to ensure consistency, fairness, and compliance with organisational standards.

Key Principles

Key Principles

The handling of complaints within Solace Housing is underpinned by the following principles:

Accessibility

Residents, advocates, family members, commissioners, local authorities and other stakeholders will have access to a clear, simple and transparent complaints procedure.

Fairness and Respect

Every complaint will be treated seriously and investigated fairly, objectively and without prejudice. No person will be disadvantaged for making a complaint in good faith.

Person-led Approach

The views, wishes and desired outcomes of the complainant will be considered throughout the complaints process. Reasonable adjustments will be made where required to ensure equal access.

Transparency

Complainants will be kept informed of progress, expected timescales and the outcome of investigations.

Learning and Continuous Improvement

Complaints are recognised as valuable feedback and will be used to improve services, strengthen governance, review policies and procedures, and inform staff learning and development.

Confidentiality

Complaint information will be managed securely in accordance with the organisation's Data Protection and Confidentiality Policy and will only be shared where there is a lawful basis or safeguarding obligation.

Accountability

All complaints will be appropriately recorded, investigated, monitored and reported. Managers are responsible for ensuring actions arising from complaints are completed and embedded into practice.

Resident information will be managed securely and confidentially in accordance with the organisation's Data Protection and Confidentiality Policy. Information will only be shared where there is a lawful basis, where consent has been obtained, or where safeguarding or legal responsibilities require disclosure.

Continuous Improvement

Solace Housing is committed to continually improving the quality of its support services. Resident feedback, outcome monitoring, supervision, audits, complaints, safeguarding reviews, inspections, and lessons learned will be used to strengthen practice, improve service quality, and achieve better outcomes for residents.

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Policy Statement

Solace Housing is committed to providing a high-quality supported accommodation service and recognises the right of residents, representatives and stakeholders to raise concerns or make complaints where they are dissatisfied with any aspect of service delivery.

The organisation will ensure that complaints are managed through a fair, transparent and consistent process that promotes early resolution wherever possible. Every complaint will be treated as an opportunity to improve services, strengthen resident confidence and enhance the quality of support provided.

No resident, representative or stakeholder will be treated unfairly or disadvantaged for making a complaint in good faith. Where complaints identify service failures, appropriate action will be taken to resolve the issue, learn from the findings and reduce the likelihood of recurrence.

Principles & Policies

Solace Housing promotes a positive culture where residents and stakeholders feel confident to raise concerns, knowing they will be listened to and treated fairly.
The organisation will:

- Encourage concerns to be raised at the earliest opportunity.
- Seek to resolve complaints promptly and informally wherever appropriate.
- Ensure formal complaints are investigated thoroughly, impartially and proportionately.
- Keep complainants informed throughout the investigation.
- Support residents who require assistance to access the complaints process.
- Make reasonable adjustments to ensure the complaints process is accessible to everyone.
- Maintain accurate complaint records and a central Complaints Register.
- Monitor complaint trends, themes and outcomes to identify opportunities for service improvement.
- Share learning with staff through supervision, team meetings, training and policy reviews.
- Escalate safeguarding concerns immediately in accordance with the Safeguarding Policy.

- Comply with contractual obligations, local authority expectations and recognised good practice in complaint handling.

The organisation recognises that complaints provide valuable insight into residents' experiences and are an essential part of maintaining high-quality, safe and person-led supported accommodation services.

Complaint Acknowledgement and Timescales

Solace Housing is committed to resolving complaints promptly, fairly, and transparently.

- All formal complaints will be acknowledged within five (5) working days of receipt.
- Complaints will be investigated thoroughly, and wherever possible, a full written response will be provided within twenty-eight (28) working days of the complaint being acknowledged.
- Where a complaint is particularly complex or additional time is required to complete a fair and thorough investigation, the complainant will be informed as soon as possible.
- Any extension to the investigation timescale will be clearly communicated, including the reason for the delay and the revised expected response date.
- Throughout the investigation, Solace Housing will keep the complainant informed of progress and provide updates where appropriate until the complaint has been concluded.

The organisation will aim to resolve complaints at the earliest appropriate stage while ensuring that investigations are fair, impartial, evidence-based, and proportionate.

Procedures

Solace Housing is committed to resolving complaints promptly, fairly, and transparently. Wherever possible, concerns will be resolved at the earliest opportunity through open communication and informal resolution. Where this is not possible, the formal complaints procedure will be followed.

Stage 1 – Raising a Complaint

Complaints may be made by:

- Residents.
- Family members or advocates (with consent where appropriate).
- Referring agencies, commissioners, or partner organisations.
- Members of the public or other stakeholders.

Complaints can be submitted verbally, in writing, by email, by telephone, or through a representative. Staff will provide reasonable assistance to anyone who requires support to make a complaint.

Stage 2 – Acknowledgement

- All formal complaints will be acknowledged within five (5) working days of receipt.
- The complaint will be recorded in the organisation's Complaints Register and assigned to an appropriate manager for investigation.

Stage 3 – Investigation

The investigating manager will:

- Review all relevant records and documentation.
- Speak with the complainant where further clarification is required.
- Interview staff or other relevant individuals where appropriate.
- Consider any policies, procedures, legislation, or contractual requirements relevant to the complaint.
- Identify whether any immediate action is required to safeguard residents or improve service delivery.

Investigations will be conducted fairly, impartially, confidentially, and proportionately.

Stage 4 – Outcome

Solace Housing will aim to provide a written response within twenty-eight (28) working days of receiving the complaint.

The response will include:

- A summary of the complaint.
- Details of the investigation undertaken.
- The findings and decision.
- Any actions taken or planned.
- Information about the next stage of the complaints process if the complainant remains dissatisfied.

Where it is not possible to conclude the investigation within 28 working days, the complainant will be informed of the reasons for the delay, provided with an updated timescale, and kept informed of progress until the complaint has been resolved.

Stage 5 – Review

If the complainant is dissatisfied with the outcome, they may request a review by a senior manager who has not been directly involved in the original investigation, where practicable.

The review will consider:

- Whether the complaint was handled fairly.
- Whether the investigation was thorough and proportionate.
- Whether the outcome was reasonable and supported by the available evidence.

The outcome of the review will be communicated in writing.

Stage 6 – External Escalation

Where the complainant remains dissatisfied after the internal review process has been completed, they will be provided with information about any relevant external complaints or dispute resolution processes, where applicable.

Learning and Service Improvement

Following the conclusion of every complaint, Solace Housing will consider whether any improvements are required. Lessons learned may result in:

- Changes to policies or procedures.
- Additional staff training or supervision.
- Service improvements.
- Quality assurance audits.
- Changes to working practices.

Actions arising from complaints will be monitored by management to ensure they are implemented and contribute to continuous service improvement.

Training

Solace Housing is committed to ensuring that all employees have the knowledge, skills, and confidence to manage complaints fairly, professionally, and in accordance with this policy.
All staff will receive training during induction and regular refresher training relevant to their role. This will include:

- Complaints Policy and Procedures.
- Customer Service and Effective Communication.
- Professional Boundaries.
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion.
- Safeguarding Adults.
- Conflict Resolution and De-escalation.
- Record Keeping and Report Writing.
- Data Protection and Confidentiality (UK GDPR).
- Investigating Complaints and Evidence Gathering (Managers).
- Root Cause Analysis and Lessons Learned (Managers).
- Duty of Candour and Openness.
- Trauma-Informed Practice.

Managers responsible for investigating complaints will receive additional training in complaint handling, conducting fair and impartial investigations, decision-making, report writing, and implementing service improvements.
All training will be recorded and monitored through the organisation's Training Matrix. Compliance will be reviewed through supervision, competency assessments, annual appraisals, and quality assurance audits to ensure staff remain competent and confident in managing complaints effectively.

Monitoring and Review

Solace Housing will regularly monitor the implementation of this policy to ensure that complaints are managed fairly, consistently, and in accordance with legislative requirements, organisational policies, and recognised quality standards.
Monitoring will include:

- Maintaining and reviewing the Complaints Register.
- Monitoring the number, nature, trends, and outcomes of complaints.
- Reviewing complaint response times to ensure compliance with the organisation's service standards.

- Auditing complaint investigations to ensure they are fair, impartial, evidence-based, and appropriately documented.
- Monitoring the implementation of actions and service improvements arising from complaints.
- Reviewing complaints relating to safeguarding, equality, health and safety, and service quality to identify emerging risks or patterns.
- Obtaining feedback from residents and complainants on the effectiveness of the complaints process.
- Reporting complaint trends and lessons learned to senior management to support continuous improvement.

Learning from complaints will be used to improve policies, procedures, staff training, and service delivery, helping to reduce the likelihood of similar issues occurring in the future.

This policy will be formally reviewed annually, or sooner where there are changes to legislation, regulatory or contractual requirements, organisational practice, or where audits, complaints, inspections, or significant incidents identify the need for review.

Authorisation and Signature

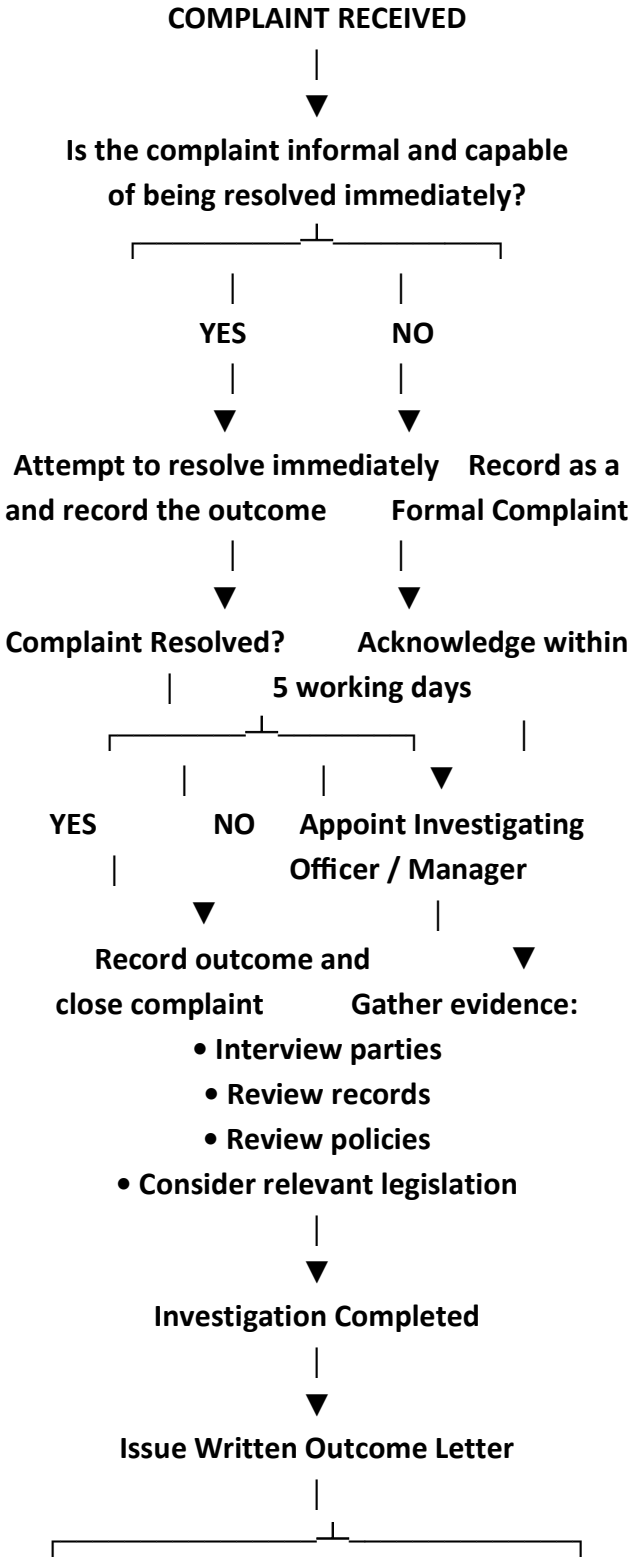
This Policy is the authorised version agreed by the Directors of Solace Housing.

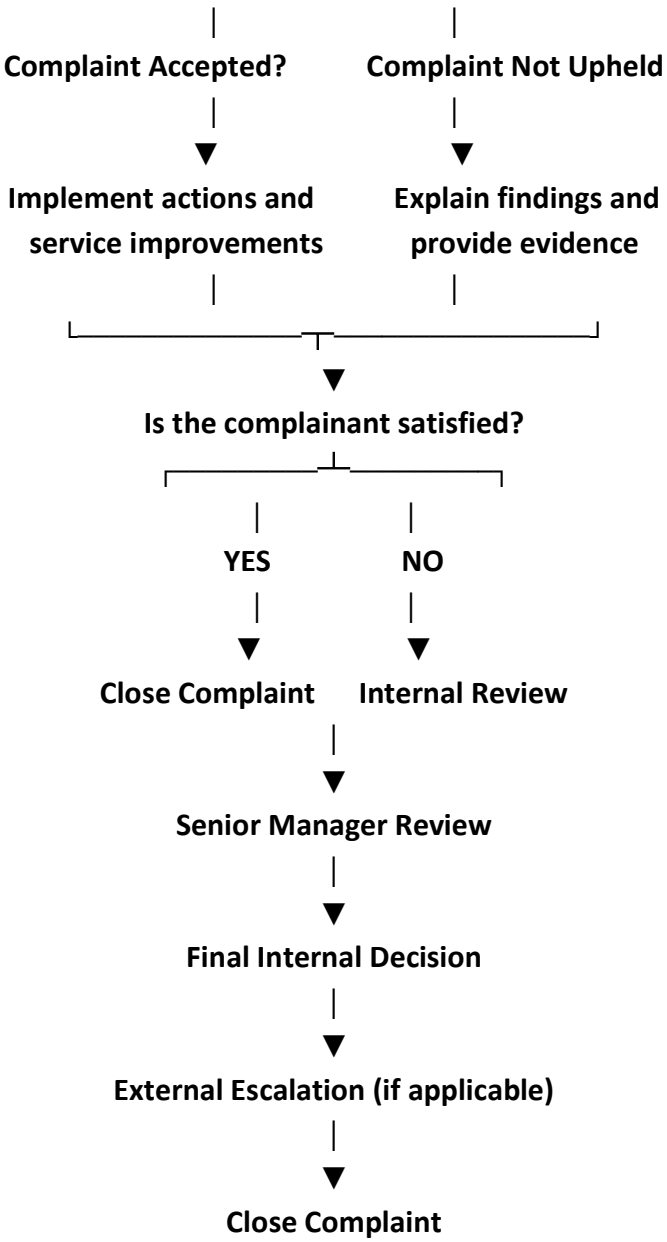
All employees are expected to follow this policy and failure to do so could result in disciplinary action.



Signed on behalf of Solace Housing.

Appendix A – Complaints Flowchart




Complaint Accepted?
Complaint Not Upheld
Implement actions and service improvements
Explain findings and provide evidence
Is the complainant satisfied?
YES
NO
Close Complaint
Internal Review
Senior Manager Review
Final Internal Decision
External Escalation (if applicable)
Close Complaint

Appendix B – Acknowledgement Letter

[Date]

Private & Confidential

Dear [Complainant's Name],

Re: Acknowledgement of Complaint – Reference: [Complaint Reference Number]

Thank you for contacting Solace Housing and for bringing your concerns to our attention.

This letter acknowledges receipt of your complaint, which we received on [Date Received]. Your complaint has been logged under the above reference number and will now be investigated in accordance with our Complaints Policy.

We are committed to ensuring that all complaints are handled fairly, impartially, and respectfully. An investigating manager has been appointed to review the information provided, gather any relevant evidence, and consider the matters you have raised.
We aim to provide you with a full written response within 28 working days of receiving your complaint. If, due to the complexity of the investigation or the need to obtain further information, we are unable to meet this timescale, we will contact you as soon as possible to explain the reason for the delay and provide you with a revised response date.

If we require any further information from you during our investigation, a member of our team will contact you directly.

Thank you for taking the time to share your concerns. We value your feedback, as it helps us to improve the quality of our services and the support we provide to our residents.

If you have any questions regarding your complaint or wish to provide any additional information, please contact us using the details below, quoting your complaint reference number.

Yours sincerely,
[Name]
[Job Title]
Solace Housing

Policy Number: SH009

Reviewed: 08/06/2026
Reviewed by: M KHAYYUM

Telephone: 0800 999 1870
Email: info@solacehousing.co.uk

Complaint Reference: [Reference Number]
Date Complaint Received: [Date]
Target Response Date: [28 Working Days from Receipt]

Appendix C – Complaint Form

SOLACE HOUSING – COMPLAINT FORM

Thank you for bringing your concerns to our attention. Solace Housing is committed to resolving complaints fairly, promptly, and professionally.

Please complete this form with as much detail as possible. If you require assistance completing this form, a member of staff can help you or arrange for an advocate or interpreter where appropriate.

Section 1 – Complainant Details

Full Name: _____
Address: _____
Telephone: _____
Email: _____
Are you the:
☐ Resident
☐ Family Member
☐ Advocate
☐ Referring Agency
☐ Commissioner
☐ Other (please specify): _____

Section 2 – Resident Details (if different from complainant)

Resident Name: _____
Relationship to Resident: _____

Section 3 – Complaint Details
Date incident occurred: _____
Location: _____
Staff member(s) involved (if known):

Please describe your complaint (continue on a separate sheet if required):

Section 4 – What outcome are you seeking?

Section 5 – Supporting Information

Please list any documents or evidence you have attached.

☐ Letters

☐ Emails

☐ Photographs

☐ Witness Details

☐ Other

Details:

Section 6 – Accessibility Requirements

Do you require any support during the complaints process?

☐ Interpreter

☐ Advocate

☐ Easy Read Format

☐ Large Print

☐ Alternative Communication Method

☐ Other

Please specify:

Section 7 – Declaration

I confirm that the information I have provided is true and accurate to the best of my knowledge.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

For Office Use Only

Complaint Reference Number: _____

Date Received: _____

Received By: _____

Method Received:

☐ In Person

☐ Telephone

☐ Email

☐ Letter

☐ Website

☐ Other

Acknowledgement Sent: ☐ Yes ☐ No

Date Acknowledged: _____

Investigating Manager: _____

Risk / Safeguarding Concern Identified: ☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, action taken:

Complaint Category (tick all that apply):

☐ Support Delivery

☐ Staff Conduct

☐ Property / Repairs

☐ Health & Safety

☐ Safeguarding

☐ Equality & Diversity

☐ Communication

☐ Anti-Social Behaviour

☐ Licence Agreement

☐ Finance / Charges

☐ Other: _____

Target Response Date (28 Working Days):

Outcome:

☐ Upheld

☐ Partially Upheld

☐ Not Upheld

☐ Resolved Informally

☐ Withdrawn

Actions Agreed:

Date Complaint Closed: _____

Manager Signature: _____

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Process Flow

