

Leathermarket JMB Complaints Policy

1.0 POLICY STATEMENT

Leathermarket JMB aims to provide excellent housing services for our residents. Nevertheless, there will be times when our service falls below expected standards. When it does, we want to make it easy for residents to let us know, and we want to act swiftly to put it right, resolving complaints at the earliest possible opportunity and putting things right if we've done something wrong. This policy explains how we aim to do that.

The JMB recognises the value of complaints as an important feedback mechanism that provide opportunities for us to improve the quality of our services. All complaints will be logged, with emerging themes or trends used to identify potential systemic issues, serious risks, or policies or procedures that require revision.

Wider learning and improvements resulting from complaints will be shared with residents.

We will:

- Publish an annual self-assessment detailing how we comply with the Housing Ombudsman's Complaints Code.
- Collect and collate data to enable us to analyse our complaint handling performance and publish the analysis on our website at the end of each financial year. This will include any findings of non-compliance by the Housing Ombudsman.

We accept complaints in all formats and they can be made in a number of ways, including:

Via our website: [Complaints Form | Leathermarket JMB](#)

By email to: complaints@leathermarketjmb.org.uk

By telephone: 0207 450 8000

By writing to us at: Complaints, Leathermarket JMB, 26 Leathermarket St, London, SE1 3HN

In person, at our office on Leathermarket St or by speaking to a staff member on your estate

A complaint does not have to be labelled as such to be managed in accordance with our complaints procedure but it will help us to respond promptly if it is.

2.0 AIMS

We aim to:

- Make it easy to raise a complaint with us
- Keep you informed at all stages and let you choose how we contact you
- Work with you to find a solution that works as quickly and effectively as possible
- Keep to the timetable
- Treat you with respect and keep any information you give us confidential
- Acknowledge when we get it wrong and then take action to put it right

3.0 WHAT IS A COMPLAINT?

We have adopted the definition recommended by the Housing Ombudsman:

A complaint is:

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- an expression of dissatisfaction, however made, about the standard of service, actions, or lack of action by us, our staff, or those acting on our behalf, affecting an individual resident or group of residents.

In contrast, we sometimes receive service requests labelled as a complaint, and we will handle those differently. A service request is:

- A request to undertake action to put something right, for example when a resident calls to report a leak and this has not been reported previously.

You do not have to use the word ‘complaint’ for it to be treated as such. If you express dissatisfaction with our response to a service request, we will ask you whether you want to raise a complaint.

Handling of a service request will not stop because you have raised a complaint and you will not be treated differently because you have complained.

4.0 COMPLAINTS NOT COVERED BY THIS POLICY

We will accept a complaint unless there is a valid reason not to do so and each complaint will be considered on its merits. However, there will be circumstances in which a matter may not be considered under this policy. They are:

- Where the issue giving rise to the complaint occurred over twelve months ago unless the issue is ongoing (although in some circumstances, for example where somebody’s health or safety is at risk, this may not apply)
- Where legal proceedings have started and been filed at court
- Where the matter has already been considered under all stages of the JMB’s complaints policy and is considered closed by the JMB
- Where the matter relates to staff misconduct and is more appropriately dealt with under our HR procedures. We will still deal with it but we won’t use this policy and the outcome may be confidential
- Complaints from JMB staff regarding employment issues will be dealt with under internal HR procedures

Where a complainant makes persistent and unwarranted contact that prevents us from dealing effectively with their complaint, places unreasonable demands on our staff, or harasses, threatens, or is abusive to our staff we will manage communication with them through our Unreasonable Behaviour Policy. This does not mean that the issues raised in their complaint will not be investigated.

If we are unable to accept your complaint, or escalate a complaint, for the reasons outlined above we will provide a detailed explanation setting out the reasons why the matter is not suitable for the complaints process and your right to take that decision to the Ombudsman.

5.0 MAKING A COMPLAINT

We operate a two-stage complaints process:

Stage one: The complaint will be dealt with by JMB staff members from the relevant area of the organisation. If the complaint is about a staff member or manager, the complaint will be dealt with by another manager.

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Stage two: We aim to put things right first time but if you are dissatisfied with the outcome of your complaint, you can ask for it to be reviewed. This is stage two of our complaints process and it is managed by Southwark Council.

Ombudsman: If you are unhappy after completing all stages of our complaints procedure, you can refer your complaint to the Housing Ombudsman for further investigation.

5.1 STAGE ONE COMPLAINTS

When we receive a complaint, we will review it and allocate it to the person in the organisation best able to deal with it. They will then contact you **within 5 working days** to acknowledge receipt and to ask for more information if they need to clarify anything. They may also need to carry out a visit to your property or meet with you to discuss your complaint further. If there is any aspect of your complaint that the JMB are not responsible for we will inform you at this point.

If we can offer immediate remedy we will do so.

All complaints will be responded to in writing within **10 working days** from the date that we send the acknowledgement.

We aim to:

- deal with complaints on their merits
- act independently and have an open mind
- take measures to address any actual or perceived conflict of interest
- consider all information and evidence carefully
- keep the complaint confidential as far as possible, with information only disclosed if necessary to properly investigate the matter
- Adhere to any reasonable arrangements agreed with you with regards to methods and frequency of contact

On occasion, we will need more than ten days to fully investigate the issue. In this case, we will write to you and explain how much time we need and why. This will not ordinarily exceed a further ten days and if it does we will provide a clear explanation of next steps and agree suitable intervals with you for keeping you informed. If you do not think that the new timeframe is reasonable you can contact the Ombudsman and ask them to intervene.

If the issue your complaint relates to requires us to undertake work that may take weeks or months to complete, we will provide regular updates on our progress.

5.2 STAGE TWO COMPLAINTS – REVIEW

If you are not satisfied with the response to your complaint you can request for it to be escalated to stage two of our complaints process for review. You should do this within **28 days** of receiving our response.

Stage two of our complaints process is handled by our colleagues at Southwark Council and they will respond within **20 working days of receipt**. In exceptional circumstances, they may contact you to agree an extension.

You can read more about how the council manages their stage 2 complaints [here](#).

5.3 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

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We will take account of and, wherever possible, accommodate each individual's needs when operating our complaints procedure, making any reasonable adjustments requested in line with the Equality Act 2010. This may include:

- Visiting you at home
- Providing fully accessible meeting locations
- Translation or interpreting
- Independent mediation
- Signposting to independent advice or advocacy

Our staff team will be trained to understand their obligations under the Equality Act and how that applies to their practice.

6.0 PUTTING THINGS RIGHT

We aim to deliver excellent services and to get it right the first time but if something has gone wrong, we will acknowledge this and set out the corrective actions we have taken or intend to take. These may include:

- An apology
- An explanation
- Taking action if there has been a delay
- Reconsidering or changing a decision
- Amending a record or adding a correction or addendum
- Financial remedy
- Changes to policies or practices.

We will clearly set out what will happen and when, seeking your agreement as appropriate.

7.0 PUBLICISING OUR POLICY

The JMB recognises that receiving a high volume of complaints can be an indicator that its policy is well-publicised and understood. We will therefore provide a link to this policy in a prominent page on our website, and will provide information about our complaints policy, and about the Housing Ombudsman, in other communications with residents.

8.0 THE HOUSING OMBUDSMAN

You can contact the Ombudsman at any stage during the complaints process and they may be able to offer you assistance and support during the complaints process.

You can also contact them if you have exhausted our complaints procedure and are still unhappy and ask for them to look at your complaint again or investigate. You can contact them by:

Writing to them at: Housing Ombudsman Service, PO Box 152, Liverpool L33 7WQ

Telephone: 0300 111 3000

Email: info@housing-ombudsman.org.uk

For more information, visit: www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk

9.0 GETTING INDEPENDENT HELP

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You can ask somebody else to act on your behalf. If we have your permission we can discuss and resolve your complaint with them. A complaint that is submitted via a third party or representative will be handled in line with this policy.

10.0 ANONYMOUS COMPLAINTS

In the case of anonymous complaints, we will decide whether an investigation is required. This will depend on the nature of the complaint and the information provided by the complainant.

11.0 MONITORING AND REPORTING

We will keep a record of complaints, including dates received, acknowledged, and responded, category of the complaint, actions taken, and lessons learned.

12.0 LEARNING FROM OUR COMPLAINTS

It is important to the JMB that it uses complaints received to learn where things are going wrong and what can be done differently to improve services for our residents. This includes using case studies from complaints and speaking to complainants in-depth to better understand what went wrong. All complaints data will be managed in line with UK GDPR.

We will appoint a board member with responsibility for complaints (MRC), who will:

- Champion a positive complaints culture;
- Seek assurance from officers;
- Provide assurance to the board; and
- Ensure complaints handling promotes service development.

13.0 MAINTAINING CONFIDENTIALITY

The Data Protection Act 2018 and UK General Data Protection Regulations (UK GDPR) regulates the way in which organisations can use personal data. We are committed to protecting the rights of all complainants and follow the Data Protection Policy at all times.

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