

North East Derbyshire District Council (NEDDC) is the landlord. Rykneld Homes is the housing management company providing housing services, including complaints handling on NEDDC's behalf. This Complaints Policy applies to anyone who uses our housing services, including residents of North East Derbyshire and people who live outside the District but use those services, for example, applicants to the Housing Register.

We aim to provide a good service for all customers but realise there will be times when things go wrong. When this happens, our first response will always be to try and put it right as quickly as we can.

If you remain unhappy, or if your issue requires a full investigation, it will be registered formally.

What is the difference between a Service Request and a Complaint?

We adopt the Housing Ombudsman's definition as follows:

"A service request is a request from the resident to the landlord requiring action to be taken to put something right. Service requests are not complaints but must be recorded, monitored and reviewed regularly."

A Complaint is defined as:

"An expression of dissatisfaction, however made, about the standard of service, actions or lack of action by the organisation, its own staff, or those acting on its behalf, affecting an individual resident or group of residents."

You do not need to use the word 'complaint' for it to be treated as such. You will be given the choice to raise a complaint when you express dissatisfaction with the response to your request for service, even if the handling of your service request remains ongoing. We will also not stop our efforts to address your service request if a complaint is made.

Making Your Complaint

You can make your complaint to any Rykneld Homes staff member. You may telephone, email, write to us, speak to us in person, use the form on our website, by X or Facebook to report your complaint or simply fill in the form in this leaflet (if necessary, please include additional sheets). We are here to help – if you need any help making a complaint just ask any member of Rykneld Homes staff.

Our contact details are below:

Rykneld Homes Ltd
2013 Mill Lane
Wingerworth
Chesterfield
S42 6NG

Phone Number: 01246 217670

Website: www.rykneldhomes.org.uk

Email: Complaints@rykneldhomes.org.uk

Complaints received on social media will be responded to in writing to maintain confidentiality where a name and address is provided. We will accept complaints made by advocates who are authorised to act on the complainants' behalf.

In acknowledgement of your complaint at Stage 1 and Stage 2, we will then set out:

- Our understanding of your complaint
- The outcome you are seeking
- Which aspects of your complaint we are not responsible for (where relevant).

Stage One: Customer Experience Team

We will acknowledge your complaint and tell you who is dealing with it within five working days of receiving it.

Complaints at Stage 1 will be responded to within 10 working days of the complaint being acknowledged. If your complaint is complex and additional time is required to investigate, we will let you know and keep you informed of our progress. We aim to keep any extension to no more than 10 additional working days.

The Customer Experience Team will investigate your complaint. They will try to contact you by phone, arrange to meet you, to investigate and to discuss the outcome so you can voice any concerns. We can use other methods of communication if you prefer. Any discussions will not delay the response to the Stage 1 complaint.

Should additional complaints be raised during a Stage 1 investigation, these will be incorporated into the Stage 1 response, if these are related, and the response has not already been issued.

Any new issues will be logged as a new complaint if the Stage 1 response has already been issued, the new issues are unrelated, or it would unreasonably delay the Stage 1 response.

A response will be provided to your complaint when the answer is known and not when the outstanding actions to address the issue are completed. Any outstanding actions will, therefore, be tracked and actioned promptly, ensuring that you are provided with appropriate updates.

If you do not think the outcome is justified, you can ask for your complaint to be escalated to Stage 2 of our complaints process.

The standard escalation period to Stage 2 is within 20 working days of receiving a Stage 1 response. However, we will use our discretion to accept an escalation outside this period, where appropriate.

Stage Two: Head of Service/Director

At Stage 2, escalation requests will be acknowledged, clarified and logged within five working days of receipt.

At Stage 2, your complaint will be reviewed by someone who was not involved in the Stage 1 decision. Wherever possible, this will be a Head of Service who is not responsible for the service area your complaint relates to, with oversight from a Director.

The investigating officer will try to contact you by phone, arrange to meet with you to discuss your complaint and the proposed outcome, so you have the opportunity to raise any concerns. You will not be required to give reasons for your request to escalate and any discussions you have with us will not delay our response to the Stage 2 complaint.

Complaints at Stage 2 will be responded to within 20 working days. If your complaint is complex and additional time is required to investigate, we will let you know and keep you informed of our progress. We aim to keep any extension to no more than 10 additional working days.

A response will be provided to your complaint when the answer is known and not when the outstanding actions to address the issue are completed. Any outstanding actions will, therefore, be tracked and actioned promptly, ensuring that you are provided with appropriate updates.

Extensions of Time

Rykneld Homes will respond to complaints within the timescales set out in the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code as set out above for Stage 1 and Stage 2. Where this is not possible, we may need to extend the timescale, if this is the case you will be notified of this.

We will only exceed the extension period at either stage of your complaint where there is a good reason to do so. Should we need to extend the period required to respond to your complaint, we will:

- Contact you to discuss this further
- Provide you a reason for the extension
- Agree suitable intervals to update you
- Provide you with a timescale of when we expect the complaint to be concluded
- Provide you with the contact details of the Housing Ombudsman, to achieve full compliance with Code provisions 6.5 and 6.16.

Independent Review

We are a member of the Housing Ombudsman Scheme and comply with its best practice principles in complaint resolution. You can contact the Housing Ombudsman for support at any stage and if you remain dissatisfied following a Stage 2 response, you can refer the complaint to the Housing Ombudsman at www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk or write to: PO Box 1484, Unit D, Preston PR2 0ET.

Exclusion

Matters that are not considered under this Complaints Policy are as follows, however, each case will be considered on its own merits:

- An initial request for service
- Anti-social Behaviour, unless the complaint refers to our failure to deal with the matter appropriately. You may wish to request an ASB Case Review in these circumstances which sits outside of this Complaints Policy, information on how to do this is on the Rykneld Homes website.
- Legal proceedings have been started. This is defined as details of the claim, such as the Claim Form and Particulars of Claim, having been filed at Court
- Matters that have previously been considered under the Complaints Policy.

Discretion will always be applied, with all complaints being considered on their own merits.

We will accept complaints referred to us within 12 months of you becoming aware of the issue at the source of your complaint. Discretion will also be applied to accept a complaint outside of these timescales where it is appropriate to do so.

If there is a valid reason not to accept a complaint, an explanation will be provided setting out the reasons why and how to refer the decision to the Housing Ombudsman.

Personal Injury Claims will be handled by our Insurers, however, a complaint will still be accepted should a request be made, so that we can ensure all matters surrounding this are fully investigated.

Managing Unreasonable Behaviour

Where a customer's behaviour is unreasonable, includes unreasonable demands, is aggressive or threatening, or is unreasonably persistent, we may consider reasonable adjustments to the way we communicate with them, for example, by limiting the method of contact. Any such action will be considered carefully and in line with our Customer Care Policy. This will not prevent a customer from accessing the complaints process.

Publicising Complaints Policy

This Complaints Policy will be published on Rykneld Homes website.

Regular media and website campaigns are utilised to ensure our customers are aware of the variety of contact methods they can use to raise an issue with us.

Our quarterly performance reporting, including the Tenant Satisfaction data for complaints, is reported to Rykneld Homes Senior Management Team (SMT), NEDDC, the Board and Customer Board.

Our performance is also publicised in the Annual Customer Report and reviewed at Rykneld Homes Board and NEDDC's Cabinet and Standards Committee.

Our annual self-assessment against the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code is publicised annually on Rykneld Homes and NEDDC's website.

How we Learn from Your Complaints to Help Us Improve Our Services

Rykneld Homes continuously analyses the reasons for complaints. We identify lessons we can learn from positive feedback and from individual complaints, and as a result make changes to the way we deliver our services. When we conclude a complaint, the letter will always ask if you have any comments that will help us to improve the Complaints service for future customers.

Complaints Policy

Version	Author	Date	Changes
V1 & 2	Development Manager	July 2009	New Policy
V3	Development Manager	November 2009	Reviewed and updated
V4	Community Involvement Manager	November 2011	Reviewed and updated
V5	Business Development Manager	July 2012	Reviewed and updated
V6	Business Development Manager	April 2013	Reviewed and updated
V1	Performance Quality Manager	February 2014	New Complaints Policy/Leaflet format
V2	Performance Quality Manager	February 2016	Reviewed and updated
V3	Business Development Manager	March 2019	Reviewed and updated
V4	Business Development Manager	December 2020	Reviewed and updated
V5	Business Development Manager	June 2021	Reviewed and updated
V6	Complaints Manager	March 2022	Reviewed and updated
V7	Complaints Manager	October 2023	Reviewed and updated
V8	Complaints Manager	March 2024	Reviewed and updated
V9	Complaints Manager	July 2026	Review of the Complaints Policy undertaken and approved by the Housing Ombudsman Service

Your details:

Email: _____

Please give details of your complaint here:

[illegible]

Tell us what you think we could do to put things right:

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Confidentiality

We treat all complaints confidentially and will handle all information in accordance with Data Protection Regulations.