



# **MILLAT ASIAN HOUSING ASSOCIATION**

## **COMPLAINTS POLICY**

### **PURPOSE:**

This document outlines the Association's Complaints Policy

**Updated in February 2024**

**To be reviewed in February 2027**

## Introduction

This complaints Policy has been developed in line with Millat Housing's values which are

- . Think Customer
- . Build relationships
- . Work together
- . Aim High
- . Own it

Millat is committed to providing an excellent resident service and welcome feedback from all our residents. If you are pleased with our services, please let us know by emailing your housing officer. We will use this information to thank our staff members. We recognise, however, that sometimes things go wrong. If you are dissatisfied with something we have done or not done, or with the level of service you received, we want to know so we can investigate what has happened and try and put things right. This will also give us the chance to learn and improve our services.

To ensure that this policy meets the needs of our diverse resident base it has been written in accordance with the Complaint Handling Code published by the Housing Ombudsman<sup>[1]</sup>.

Millat Housing accepts complaints from tenants, leaseholders, and shared owners or third parties who have a connection to a Millat Housing resident or property. If a complaint is being made on the complainant's behalf by an advocate, for example family, friend, advocate, or MP, written or expressed permission may be required from the complainant to allow us to communicate with this person directly.

[1] The Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code ([housing-ombudsman.org.uk](https://housing-ombudsman.org.uk))

## What is a Complaint

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.

This could include:

1. Failure to follow up or notify the resident about appropriate follow up action following initial contact.
2. Failure or lengthy delay in providing a service or taking an action which Millat Housing said they could provide or take.
3. Failure to comply with a policy.
4. The inappropriate behaviour of Millat employees or contractors which would bring Millat Housing into disrepute.

## What is not a Complaint

There are some circumstances in which we will not consider a formal complaint.

These include:

- A policy decision that has been properly arrived at.
- Where a complaint is made more than six months after the matter has come to the resident's attention. We do understand that there may be circumstances that mean this time scale is not possible, and we will consider individual situations and adjust as appropriate.
- A matter already fully considered through relevant stages of the complaints process described below, the courts, or another legal process.
- A matter directly linked to legal or enforcement proceedings already started by the resident or Millat Housing.
- An initial request for service, e.g., a repair which Millat Housing has not yet had an opportunity to put right.
- A claim for damages that should be handled as an insurance claim.
- Anti-social behaviour. Reports about anti-social behaviour are handled in a different way. Millat Housing has a separate anti-social behaviour policy. Please report complaints about anti-social behaviour to your Housing Officer on 020 8640 6413. We will investigate complaints about anti-social behaviour handling.

## Reasonable Adjustments

Millat Housing commits to making reasonable adjustments to this policy in line with the Equality Act 2010. These could include but are not limited to changes to timescales and methods of communication, such as large print.

If you would like to request a reasonable adjustment, please let your Housing Officer know.

## Making a Complaint

Immediate resolution: Where a resident is unhappy with the service they have received, we ask that they inform Millat Housing about the problem so that we can try and resolve it as quickly and effectively as possible.

Please consider two important things before submitting a formal complaint:

1. Have you already told your Housing Officer or another member of the Millat Housing team about this issue?
2. Have you allowed adequate time for the team to put right the situation?

## **Formal Complaints and the two-stage process**

In the event we cannot resolve the issue immediately and you would like to make a formal complaint, we will advise you of the complaints procedure and give any help you need. Once a formal complaint has been made, Millat Housing follows a two-stage complaints process.

Formal complaints should be made via your Housing Officer by telephone, email, in person, or by post to the office address.

- What service you are unhappy with
- What you have done so far to deal with the problem
- What you are seeking as a solution or outcome to the complaint.
- All complaints will be logged on the complaints records system and acknowledged prior to referral to the correct internal department to investigate.

### **The First Stage (Stage 1)**

1. The complaint will be acknowledged within five working days of receipt by your Housing Officer. You will receive a complaint reference number, details of the lead handler, and confirmation of the timescales we will be working to.
2. The full response will be in writing and will include any resolutions agreed between you and the manager. It will state that this is a Stage 1 complaint, outline the complaint, set out the response and the reasons for the response, and where a resolution is offered, a timeframe for that resolution.
3. Millat aims to respond to your complaint within ten working days. If this is not possible, we will give reasons for the delay and provide a new timescale with regular updates. This extension will not exceed a further ten days.
4. With the response there may be actions outstanding, for example a repair to be completed. Any outstanding actions will be followed up within an agreed timeframe.
5. If you are not satisfied with the Stage 1 response, you can request to go to the second stage of the complaints process. This needs to be done within 30 calendar days of receipt of the Stage 1 response.
6. We will consider escalation requests outside of this deadline in extenuating circumstances. Please advise the complaint handler or your Housing Officer of any required reasonable adjustments.
7. We will ask for details on why you are dissatisfied and for additional information and evidence.

## **The Second Stage (Stage 2)**

1. The request to proceed to Stage 2 should be addressed directly to the person who handled your complaint at Stage 1. The Stage 2 complaint will be handled by a different staff member, more senior than the handler of the Stage 1. The staff member will contact you to acknowledge the escalation and confirm the timescales.
2. In some circumstances, there may be a reason why we decide not to escalate your complaint to Stage 2. Where this decision is made, we will clearly outline the reasons why and explain your right to approach the Housing Ombudsman Service.
3. The Second Stage is a review of the Stage 1 decision, and any further evidence supplied.
4. The Second Stage response will be provided in writing within 20 working days of the receipt of the request for review. If this is not possible, we will give reasons for the delay and provide updates at agreed intervals. Any extensions to this response should not exceed a further 10 working days.
5. In exceptional circumstances where this deadline must be exceeded, we will agree the new timescale with the resident.
6. The Second Stage reviews will only review points and decisions made in the Stage 1 complaint.
7. Stage 2 is the final stage of the internal complaints process and if you feel that a satisfactory resolution has not been reached, you may apply to the Housing Ombudsman and will be given details on how to do so.

Millat Housing provides no appeal process for these decisions.

## **The Housing Ombudsman**

You can contact the Housing Ombudsman directly.

The contact details for the Housing Ombudsman Service are:

Online complaint form: [www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk/residents/make-a-complaint/](http://www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk/residents/make-a-complaint/)

Phone: 0300 111 3000

Email: [info@housing-ombudsman.org.uk](mailto:info@housing-ombudsman.org.uk)

Postal address: Housing Ombudsman Service, PO Box 1484, Unit D, Preston, PR2 0ET

## **Persistent, Abusive, or Unreasonable Behaviour**

Millat Housing may manage the complaints process and communication regarding complaints differently according to our Unacceptable Behaviour Policy.

We will still investigate your complaint.

## **Equality & Diversity**

Millat is committed to diversity. To ensure equal access to our services is available, Millat will comply with the Equality Act 2010 and all other legislative requirements relating to equality. We will work to avoid exclusions or restrictions that are not appropriate to the housing and support needs of our tenants and that may lead to discrimination. We will endeavor to ensure that all tenants receive a consistent level of quality service.

## **Notes**

- (1) Housing Ombudsman's Complaints Handling Code –**  
**<https://www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk/landlords-info/complaint-handling-code/>**