



COMPLAINTS - HAVE YOUR SAY



Creating the right environment for people to flourish



www.linc-cymru.co.uk



Linc is keen to resolve any issues you may have as quickly and easily as possible. If possible, we will put right any mistakes we may have made. We will provide any service you are entitled to which we have failed to deliver. If we did something wrong, we will apologise and, where possible, try to put things right for you. We aim to learn from our mistakes and use the information we gain from complaints to improve our services.

When to use this procedure

When you express your concerns or complain to us, we will usually respond in the way we explain below. Sometimes, you might be concerned about matters that are not covered by this procedure (such as a complaint about anti-social behaviour) and we will then advise you about how to make your concerns known.

Asking us to provide a service

If you are approaching us to request a service (eg. Reporting a repair or requesting an appointment) this procedure does not apply. If you make a request for a service and then are not happy with our response, you will be able to make your concern known as we describe below.

Stage 1 – Informal resolution

If possible, we believe it is best to deal with things straight away. If you have a concern, please raise it with the person you are dealing with. They will try to resolve it for you there and then. If there are any lessons to learn from addressing your concern, the member of staff will draw them to our attention. If the member of staff cannot help, they will explain why and you can then ask for a formal investigation. If you do not feel your concern has been addressed at the first stage of our complaints process then you can ask for your complaint to be escalated and investigated formally.

How to express concern or complain formally

If your complaint was not completely resolved at the first stage, or it involves a serious service failure which requires formal investigation, you can request a second stage complaint. This will be logged by our Governance and Corporate Projects Manager who will ensure you are kept informed throughout the investigation.

You can express your concern in any of the following ways:

- Telephoning us on 0800 072 0966
- Speaking to us in person
- Emailing us on contact.centre@linc-cymru.co.uk
- Visiting our website www.linc-cymru.co.uk
- Writing to us at 387 Newport Road, Cardiff, CF24 1GG

Dealing with your concern

- We will formally acknowledge your concern within 1 working day and let you know how we intend to deal with it.
- We will ask you to tell us how you would like us to communicate with you and establish whether you have any particular requirements – for example, if you need documents in large type.
- We will deal with your concern in an open and honest way.
- We will make sure that your dealings with us in the future do not suffer just because you have expressed a concern or made a complaint.

Normally, we will only be able to look at your concerns if you tell us about them within 6 months. This is because it is better to look into your concerns while the issues are still fresh in everyone's mind. Please ensure that your concern covers all the points that you wish to raise with us as we cannot look at additional items as part of your complaint if they were not detailed when raising your initial concern with us.

We may exceptionally be able to look at concerns which are brought to our attention later than this. However, you will have to explain why you have not been able to bring it to our attention earlier and we will need to have sufficient information about the issue to allow us to consider it properly.



What if there is more than one body involved?

If your complaint covers more than one body (for example, a local authority or care provider) we will usually work with them to decide who should take the lead in dealing with your concerns. You will then be given the name of the person responsible for communicating with you while we consider your complaint.

🔍 Stage 2 – Formal Complaint – Investigation

We will tell you who we have asked to look into your concern or complaint. If your concern is straightforward, we will usually ask somebody from the relevant service area to look into it and respond to you. If it is more serious we may use someone from elsewhere in the organisation.

We will set out our understanding of your concerns and ask you to confirm that we are right. We will also ask you to tell us what outcome you are hoping for.

The person looking at your complaint will usually need to see the files we hold relevant to your complaint. If you don't want this to happen, it is important that you tell us.

If there is a simple solution to your problem, we may ask you if you are happy to accept this. For example, where you have asked for a service and we see straight away that you should have had it, we will offer to provide the service rather than undertake a full investigation.

We will aim to resolve concerns as quickly as possible and expect to deal with the vast majority within 20 working days. If your complaint is more complex we will:

- Let you know within this time why we think it may take longer to investigate
- Tell you how long we expect it to take
- Let you know where we have reached with the investigation, and
- Give you regular updates, including telling you whether any developments might change our original estimate

The person who is investigating your concerns will firstly aim to establish the facts. The extent of the investigation will depend upon how complex and how serious the issues you have raised are. In complex cases, we will draw up an investigation plan.

In some instance, we may ask to meet with you to discuss your concerns. Occasionally, we might suggest mediation or another method to try and resolve disputes.

We will look at relevant evidence. This could include information you have provided, our case files, notes of conversations, letters, emails or whatever may be relevant to your particular concern. If necessary, we will talk to the staff or others involved and look at our policies, any legal entitlement and guidance.

Outcome

If we formally investigate your complaint, we will let you know what we find. If necessary, we will produce a report. We will explain how and why we came to our conclusions.

If we find that we made a mistake, we will tell you what happened and why.

If we find there is a fault in our systems or the way we do things, we will tell you what it is and how we plan to change things to stop it happening again.

If we make a mistake, we will always apologise for it.



Compensation / Customer Care payments

We know that sometimes things can go wrong. The level of inconvenience or disruption can sometimes reach a level where Linc considers it appropriate to pay compensation.

Compensation paid might relate to specific expenses or items but could also take the form of a good will gesture.



The Ombudsman

If we do not succeed in resolving your complaint, you may complain to the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales. The Ombudsman is independent of all government bodies and can look into your complaint if you believe that you personally, or the person on whose behalf you are complaining:

- **Have been treated unfairly or received a bad service through some failure on the part of Linc**
- **Have been disadvantaged personally by a service failure or have been treated unfairly**

You can make a complaint to the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales at any stage of the process. However, the Ombudsman will normally expect you to have complained directly to Linc and given us reasonable opportunity to investigate and respond to the complaint first.

We hope that we can solve your problem, but if you have followed our complaints procedure and you are still not happy, please contact the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales

Further information on the Ombudsman service can be found at www.ombudsman-wales.org.uk.

Public Services Ombudsman for Wales,
1 Ffordd yr Hen Gae,
Pencoed,
CF35 5LJ

Tel: 0300 790 0203
Fax: 01656 641 199
Email: ask@ombudsman-wales.org.uk

Learning Lessons

We take your concerns and complaints seriously and try to learn from any mistakes we have made. Our senior management team considers a summary of all complaints on a regular basis and is made aware of all serious complaints.

Where there is a need for significant change, we will develop an action plan setting out what we will do, who will do it and when we plan to do it. We will let you know when changes we have promised have been made.



What We Expect From You

In times of trouble or distress, some people may act out of character. There may have been upsetting or distressing circumstances leading up to a concern or a complaint. We do not view behaviour as unacceptable just because someone is forceful or determined.

We believe that all complainants have the right to be heard, understood and respected. However, we also consider that our staff have the same rights. We therefore expect you to be polite and courteous in your dealings with us. We will not tolerate aggressive or abusive behaviour, unreasonable demands or unreasonable persistence. We have a separate policy to manage situations when we find that someone's actions are unacceptable.

Unreasonably Persistent Complainants

Linc is committed to dealing with all complaints fairly and impartially and to providing a high-quality service to those who make them. As part of this service we do not normally limit the contact complainants have with us.

However, there are a small number of complainants who, because of the frequency and/or nature of their contact with the Linc's office, hinder our consideration of their or other people's complaints. We refer to such complainants as 'unreasonably persistent complainants' and, exceptionally, we will take action to limit their contact with our office. Any restrictions imposed will be appropriate and proportionate and made by an Executive Director.

General information

Linc-Cymru Housing Association Ltd
387 Newport Road
Cardiff
CF24 1GG

Free phone: 0800 072 0966
Email: contact.centre@linc-cymru.co.uk

If you require this leaflet in any other format or language, please contact us.



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