

# Information for residents about the Housing Ombudsman Service and how it can help you with a complaint about your landlord.

## How we can help

The Housing Ombudsman Service was set up by law to investigate complaints from residents about housing organisations that are registered with us - including all social providers (housing associations and local authorities).

## Who can use the Service

We can consider a complaint from an individual that is, or has been, in a landlord and tenant relationship with a landlord that is a member of the Housing Ombudsman Scheme.

## Complaining to your landlord

In the first instance you must let your landlord know about the issues you are having in your home. If you do not think it has taken the right action, or are unhappy with the service provided, you can make a complaint to it. The landlord must respond to your complaint via its dedicated process.

## Assistance through your landlord's complaints process

The Ombudsman's statutory Complaint Handling Code sets out requirements for how your landlord must handle a complaint, including the timescales it should take to respond to you at both stages of its complaints process.

If you have made a complaint to your landlord and it has not responded, or you need assistance navigating your landlord's complaint process we can help.

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## **Can the Housing Ombudsman complain to my landlord for me?**

Our role is to remain impartial. We cannot represent a resident to make a complaint or advocate on your behalf. We believe that the best way to resolve a dispute is for you to work with your landlord and be clear about why you are unhappy and what you would like it to do to put things right.

## **When can you investigate my complaint?**

We can only investigate a complaint which has been through both stages of a landlord's complaint procedure. We will need to see a copy of the stage 2 response before we can consider a complaint.

## **How will you investigate my complaint?**

We will need to check that we can consider the issues raised in the complaint. In some cases we may advise you to contact a different organisation that are better placed to resolve your complaint.

If we are able to investigate, we will ask both parties for any evidence we need to do so. We will assess whether the landlord acted fairly, taking all circumstances of the case into consideration.

## **How do I bring a complaint to the Housing Ombudsman Service?**

The best way to contact us is via our online webform as we will ask you a series of questions to help us understand what assistance you require. Alternatively, you can send us an email, call us, or write to us via the contact details below.