

Resident Panel Charter

This Charter outlines how the Panel works. Including how members are chosen, the role and responsibilities of a panel member, and how meetings are held.

What does the Ombudsman do?

The Housing Ombudsman gives impartial, free, and fair dispute resolution to residents with a complaint about their social housing landlord. We investigate complaints that are brought to us if a resident is unhappy after finishing their landlord's complaint process.

All social housing landlords must be a member of the Housing Ombudsman Scheme. We also have voluntary members where other landlords choose to sign up.

Purpose of the Panel

The Resident Panel is an opportunity for residents of social housing landlords to be involved in the development of the service. It also gives us direct feedback on residents' experience of using our service and how we can increase awareness and understanding of the work we do.

Membership of the Resident Panel does not affect a resident's right to make a complaint to their landlord or the Ombudsman through the complaints process.

Membership

The Resident Panel is made up of residents of member landlords who subscribe to the Ombudsman Scheme. You can find out if your landlord is a member on our membership page.

Residents can apply to join the Resident Panel every 3 years. Applications are reviewed to make sure the panel fairly represents residents who can use the service. The provision of personal information about your location, age, disability, ethnicity, and tenure is optional. Choosing to provide this information will help us to make sure that the Panel is representative of the diversity of social housing residents across England. This information will never be shared with anyone else and will be stored securely.

Members are appointed for 3 years and can reapply at the end of each term. Once a panel member has been in place for 3 terms, they cannot reapply.

Remit and responsibilities

The Resident Panel typically meets online in the evenings. Meetings are held on a Chatham House principle, which means the discussions may be referred to by members of the Housing Ombudsman Service, but individual contributions will not be named. Members will be invited to respond to formal consultations by the Housing Ombudsman at full meetings, including (but not restricted to) the annual business plan and 3-year corporate plan. Members will also be invited to give feedback through surveys and questionnaires.

Frequency and notice of meetings

The Resident Panel will meet in full at least twice a year.

Invites will be sent via our email service 3 months before with a joining link that the member should register to join.

The agenda for the meetings will be circulated at least 3 weeks before. Following the meetings, a summary will be emailed to the panel and published on the Housing Ombudsman website for those that cannot come to or are not panel members to feed into.

Chair of the meeting

Meetings are chaired by the Ombudsman or their representative. Breakout sessions and discussions are facilitated by members of Housing Ombudsman Service staff of various levels.

Administration

- Communication with members will be through email: residentpanel@housing-ombudsman.org.uk
- Panel members must have access to a computer with Zoom and audio, camera on during meetings is preferable.
- Auto captions will be provided during meetings and a full transcript is available.
- Unacceptable language will not be allowed, and membership will be reviewed according to our own policy.
- Meeting notes and outcomes will be shared on social media.
- We will never share images of panel members' faces from meeting recordings.
- Panel members are not paid.
- To resign from the panel, a member must let us know in writing.