

IMANI HOUSING COOP COMPLAINTS POLICY

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Imani Housing Co-operative aims to provide an excellent service to its customers. If a customer finds reason to complain we will aim to deal with the complaint promptly, efficiently and a professional manner.

1.2 Imani Housing Co-operative is an open and learning organisation. Anyone who is affected by the things we do, the services we provide, or the policies we operate can make a complaint.

1.3 For the purpose of this policy we define “customers” as “anyone affected” and a “complaint” as “any expression of dissatisfaction with the service that Imani provides, whether it is justified or not”.

2.0 Legal Framework

2.1 In implementing this policy, Imani Housing Cooperative will have due regard to the Homes Community Agency Regulatory Framework.

3.0 Policy Statement

3.1 Imani is committed to providing excellent services to all our customers and we recognise that from time to time people may have cause for dissatisfaction with our services.

3.2 Imani will investigate, learn from and where possible resolve all legitimate complaints made against I Imani Housing Co-operative, its staff or its contractors within published procedures.

3.3 Imani Housing Co-operative will work with and abide by the final decision of the Housing Ombudsman and will aim to implement any recommendations as soon as possible.

3.4 The purpose of this policy is to;

- Give customers the opportunity to make complaints or suggestions for service improvement and to have these reviewed promptly by staff.
- Highlight any areas of common complaints to Imani from which the co-operative can learn from, and if necessary, adapt its behaviour.
- Raise the overall levels of customer satisfaction.
- Create a climate where service improvement is seen as an ongoing partnership between the Co-operative and its customers.

4.0 Implementation

4.1 Imani Housing Co-operative is committed to responding promptly and courteously to customers at all times and will maintain the highest standards when dealing with customer complaints by ensuring that all staff are aware of and trained in this area.

4.2 Imani Housing Co-operative will develop detailed service standards and procedures in this area and ensure that staff receive ongoing training in how to deal effectively with complaints.

4.3 Imani Housing Co-operative will ensure that procedures are in place that make it easy for customers to complain about the service being received, in confidence, and will welcome feedback to enable service improvements to be made.

4.4 Imani Housing Co-operative recognises that its customers will have a wide variety of different needs and will not all want or be able to access the service in the same way.

In view of this, there will be a number of ways to contact Imani Housing Co-operative:

- In person, to the relevant person or section
- By telephone
- By filling out and completing a complaints form
- By completing an online complaints form on Imani's
- website
- By email

4.5 Imani Housing Co-operative will aim to;

- Acknowledge written complaints within two working days of receipt
- Send a written response within ten working days
- Send a holding reply giving a revised target for

response not exceeding 10 working days in agreement with the customer, if the complaint is complex, or requires a visit or inspection, within five working days of the complaint.

- Advise customers how issues can be taken further, if
- they are dissatisfied with the response.

4.6 Imani Housing Co-operative promises to:

- Reply using plain English.
- Address all the points raised and explain what Imani will do to resolve the issue.
- Provide a response in different formats where necessary (e.g. large print, audio, translations) to address diverse needs.

Dealing with complaints

4.7 When a complaint is received, Imani Housing Cooperative will record it and will follow the complaints procedure detailed in the Tenants Handbook and Complaints Guide.

4.8 For every complaint received Imani Housing Cooperative will;

- Acknowledge receipt of the complaint, within two working days and advise the customer of the date by which they will be sent a written response.
- Respond to the complaint in writing, within the agreed timescales, as per Imani's complaints procedure.
- Keep the customer informed of progress, if a response to the complaint cannot be made within the set timescales.
- Offer a full apology if Imani Housing Co-operative is at fault.
- Where possible offer a solution to resolve the complaint.
- Advise the customer of their right to appeal against a decision made, and of whom they should contact to escalate the complaint to the next stage in the procedure.
- Where a customer requires help to make a complaint, e.g. to write the complaint, make arrangements for the customer to receive this support.

5.0 Equality and diversity implications

5.1 In carrying out its services, Imani Housing Cooperative is committed to: -

- Treating all customers positively regardless of sexual orientation, gender, race, disability, religion or age.
- Taking seriously all complaints of harassment, bullying, discrimination or victimisation, investigating and responding accordingly.
- Ensuring all correspondence is written using plain language and providing service access in other languages, large print, audio and Braille formats on
- on request.
- Ensuring its complaints procedures is accessible for all.

6.0 Responsibility

6.1 It is the responsibility of the Chairperson of Imani Housing Coop's management committee to ensure that this policy is in place.

6.2 The Chairperson of Imani Housing Coop's management committee is responsible for the effective implementation of this policy

6.3 The Chairperson of Imani Housing Coop's management committee is also responsible for ensuring that the staff involved in handling complaints are trained.

6.4 The Co-op Development worker is responsible for monitoring and providing performance information.

7.0 Consultation

7.1 This policy will be reviewed in consultation with residents at least once every two years.

8.0 Review and Board Approval

8.1 This policy will be reviewed once every two years taking account of any changes to legislation that may occur.

Person Responsible for the review of this policy:

The Chairperson

Date of this review: November 2013

Date of Board approval: January 2014

Date the next review is due: Summer 2016