



# COMPLAINTS, APPEALS AND FEEDBACK POLICY

Originator:	Policy and Strategy Team
Approval date:	17 <sup>th</sup> May 2024
Review date:	May 2025

1	Introduction
1.1	Pine Court Housing Association (PCHA) is committed to providing quality, responsive and timely services that consistently meet or exceed our customers' expectations.
1.2	The customer is at the heart of everything we do, and we use all forms of customer feedback to continuously improve the quality of the services that we provide. PCHA's approach to this is aligned to the requirements of the Housing White Paper, the Housing Ombudsman's Complaints Code and PCHA's adopted code of governance.
1.3	At PCHA we realise that despite our best efforts, we may not always get things right for our customers. When this happens we will act quickly to resolve a problem to the customer's satisfaction, keep the customer informed of our actions, advise of how we will learn from the experience and do things differently to prevent it happening again.
1.4	We also recognise that occasionally, customers may disagree with decisions that PCHA make. To ensure fairness, we operate an appeals process to allow customers to challenge decisions and request they are reconsidered.
1.5	In addition to complaints and appeals the scope of this Policy also takes account of the ways in which PCHA deals with compliments, suggestions and surveys as valuable forms of customer feedback.
1.6	<p>The application of this Policy ensures compliance with the outcomes of the Regulatory Framework for Social Housing in England adopted by the Regulator of Social Housing (RSH) and effective from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2024, as outlined below.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Transparency, Influence and Accountability Standard states that Registered Providers must: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Ensure their approach to handling complaints is simple and accessible</li> <li>○ Publicise their complaints process and what tenants can do if they are dissatisfied with the outcome of a complaint or how a complaint was handled</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

- Provide tenants with information about the type of complaints received and how they have learnt from complaints to continuously improve services
- The Tenancy Standard states that in relation to Allocations and Mutual Exchanges, Registered Providers must:
  - Registered providers must have a fair, reasonable, simple and accessible appeals process for allocation decisions.

## 1.7 Definitions

1.7.1 For the purposes of this Policy the following definitions will apply:

- **Complaint** – will be 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’
- **Appeal** – will be defined as ‘a disagreement with a decision we have made in line with our published policies or procedures’
  - General Appeal – this is an appeal about general service provision where a decision has been made that the customer does not agree with
  - Statutory Appeal – this is where the right to appeal is outlined in legislation or regulation – details given in Section 3.3
- **Request for Service** – will be defined as a request to PCHA to perform one or more of its landlord functions e.g. carrying out a repair or other function in connection with tenancy / estate management. When received, these will not be classed as complaints unless also accompanied by an expression of dissatisfaction (see definition of complaint above)
- **Feedback** – will be defined as ‘any method whereby customers can express their views on how PCHA delivers its services’

## 1.8 Access and Communication

1.8.1 PCHA is committed to ensuring that our services are accessible to everyone. We will seek alternative methods of access and service delivery where barriers, perceived or real may exist, that may make it difficult for people to work for us or use our services.

1.8.2 In line with the Mental Capacity Act, we will assume that tenants have capacity to understand information given to them. Where it is suspected that customers lack capacity to understand, PCHA will request an assessment by a professional practitioner and look to provide the appropriate support where capacity is deemed to be insufficient.

## 1.9 Equality, Diversity and Human Rights

1.9.1 PCHA is committed to ensuring that no person or group of persons will be treated less favourably than another person or group of persons and will carry out our duty with positive regard for the following core strands of equality; Age, Disability, Gender, Race, Gender Identity / Gender Expression, Sexual Orientation, Religion and/or Belief, Civil Partnership and Marriage, Pregnancy and Maternity.

1.9.2 PCHA also recognise that some people experience disadvantage due to their socio-economic circumstances, employment status, class, appearance, responsibility for dependants, unrelated criminal activities, being HIV positive or with AIDS, or any other matter which causes a person to be treated with injustice.

1.9.3	PCHA will also ensure that all services and actions are delivered within the context of current Human Rights legislation. PCHA will endeavour to ensure staff and others with whom we work, will adhere to the central principles of the Human Rights Act (1998).
1.10	<p>The Policy should be read in conjunction with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The PCHA Compensation Policy</li> <li>• The PCHA Vulnerable Persons and Reasonable Adjustment Policy</li> <li>• The PCHA Starter Tenancy Policy</li> <li>• The PCHA Tenancy Transfer, Succession and Mutual Exchange Policy</li> <li>• The Property Pool Plus (Sub Regional Choice Based Lettings Policy)</li> </ul>
<b>2</b>	<b>Statement of intent</b>
2.1	<p>With strategic direction from the Board and Executive Management Team, PCHA provides a positive approach to complaints, appeals and all forms of customer feedback. PCHA is committed to using this information to deliver consistently excellent customer services. In support of this, PCHA Board have a designated 'Complaints Champion' Board Member to oversee its strategic approach to Complaints Management, known as 'Member Responsible for Complaints'.</p>
2.2	<p>PCHA will ensure it provides complaints, appeals and feedback opportunities that are easy to understand and easy to access for all customers (and will be made available on the PCHA website). We will facilitate this by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensuring customers can provide complaints, appeals and feedback in a variety of ways including; contact over the phone, in person with any PCHA staff member, on-line, in writing or via social media</li> <li>• Involving our customers in designing and approving all our information on complaints, appeals and feedback to ensure it is jargon free and easy to understand</li> <li>• Making relevant information available in alternative languages and formats on request and meeting all requests for 'reasonable adjustments' – (In line with the PCHA Vulnerable Persons and Reasonable Adjustment Policy')</li> <li>• Ensuring customers receive support from PCHA staff, or via working in partnership with community support agencies and advocacy groups</li> <li>• Analysing complaints, appeals and feedback information against our known customer profile information and the diversity of the community where we operate, to break down any barriers that may prevent any group from accessing the services</li> <li>• Resolving complaints to customers' satisfaction, efficiently and learning from it to improve customer service</li> </ul>
2.3	<b>Resources</b>
2.3.1	<p>PCHA will ensure there are appropriate resources available to gather, analyse and act upon complaints, appeals and customer feedback intelligence. This aim will be achieved by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensuring staff are trained and regularly assessed in complaints, appeals and feedback handling, know how to access relevant procedures, provide prompt, consistent and direct responses to customers and take ownership of issues at the first point of contact</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensuring the organisation’s performance management framework uses complaints, appeals and customer feedback information to drive service improvement</li> <li>• Having in place a dedicated Customer Complaints Co-ordinator with responsibility for complaints handling, liaison as required with the Housing Ombudsman and access to staff at all levels to facilitate the prompt resolution of complaints</li> </ul> <p>2.4 <b>Monitoring</b></p> <p>2.4.1 PCHA will review and continuously monitor service standards with our customers for the ways in which we respond to complaints, appeals and feedback. To achieve this aim we will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide intelligence to our Investigating Officers, Managers, involved tenants and Board to show trends, responses provided, and actions taken to improve services</li> <li>• Use our Tenants Inspectors to audit the quality of case handling</li> <li>• Set challenging but realistic targets with our customers and benchmark our performance against our peers</li> <li>• Regularly review best practice in complaints, appeals and feedback handling and adopt improved ways of working identified as being beneficial to PCHA, including review and learning of case studies published by the Housing Ombudsman</li> <li>• Publish our performance, satisfaction and lessons learnt from complaints and feedback handling to our customers</li> <li>• Carry out a self-assessment against the ‘Housing Ombudsman’s Complaint Handling Code’ and report findings to Board every 12 months / publish this report and the Boards response to it on the PCHA Website</li> </ul> <p>2.5 Complaints and appeals about the operation of the Property Pool Plus (sub-regional choice-based lettings) scheme will be passed to the relevant Administering Authorities, see <a href="http://www.propertypoolplus.org.uk">www.propertypoolplus.org.uk</a>. However, PCHA will deal with complaints and appeals about the behaviour or conduct of its staff or those acting on its behalf.</p>
<b>3</b>	<b>Policy</b>
3.1	<p>PCHA has merged its Policy response for complaints, appeals and general customer feedback into One Policy document given the similarities that exist in the Stages of investigation, timescales for customer response and intention to use these forms of feedback to drive continuous improvement in service delivery.</p> <p>3.1.1 Listed below, at 3.1.4 are issues that are common to PCHA’s approach to both the investigation and response to complaints and general appeals. Where there are differences in response these are clearly indicated:</p> <p>3.1.2 If for any reason PCHA is not able to resolve an issue to a customer’s satisfaction at the first point of contact or they are not satisfied with a decision that PCHA has made in line with its published policies, customers may request that it is dealt with through the internal investigation process (see 3.1.4 below).</p> <p>3.1.3 PCHA will make a decision on the most appropriate channel to deal with the issue, based on the information supplied and will advise the customer in the acknowledgement contact or letter.</p>

## Internal Complaint and General Appeal Investigation Stages

	Complaints	General Appeals
<b>Stage One</b>	<p>The complaint will be acknowledged, defined and logged within Five working days and the customer will be advised who will be investigating. At the point of reporting or on first contact with the customer when acknowledging or investigating a complaint, PCHA will, if possible, try to determine with the customer what outcome they would like to see to resolve the complaint satisfactorily.</p> <p>The investigating officer will endeavor to make contact with the customer(s) or their advocate (where we have clear consent from customer(s) to deal with a Third party) to obtain more details.</p> <p>A full response will be provided within ten working days of the complaint being acknowledged (unless the investigation requires more time, in which case the customer(s) will be advised of the revised timescale). The customer (s) will receive a letter outlining PCHA's response and any actions / timescales that will apply to remedy the complaint, if applicable</p> <p>Where a complaint has been resolved quickly (i.e. within Three working days) to the satisfaction of the customer, PCHA will close the case and may not provide a written communication if the customer agrees (this will still be recorded as a complaint in PCHA's system for reporting purposes and as part of complaint history i.e. if a customer expresses dissatisfaction about the same issue again)</p>	<p>Procedure and timescales for response to general appeals is the same as Stage One for complaints.</p> <p>Common factors which may form grounds for general appeals include (but are not exclusive of) the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Where PCHA has not taken into account an individual or groups circumstances or needs when making decisions</li> <li>• Where PCHA have not considered or had access to all relevant information</li> <li>• Where PCHA has acted outside its stated policies</li> <li>• Where an individual or group is unfairly disadvantaged in any way as a result of decisions made</li> </ul> <p>Non-exhaustive examples of grounds for general appeal include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Appeals against ineligibility for Independent Living services following needs and risk assessment</li> <li>• Refusal of aids and adaptations requests</li> <li>• Investment works decisions</li> <li>• Decisions on Right to Buy or Right to Acquire applications</li> <li>• Decisions on service charges</li> </ul>
<b>Stage Two</b>	<p>If the customer(s) is not satisfied with the outcome from Stage One, they may escalate their case to Stage Two.</p> <p>The complaint will be acknowledged, defined and logged within Five</p>	<p>If the customer(s) is not satisfied with the outcome from Stage One, they may escalate their case to Stage Two.</p>

	<p>working days and customer(s) will be advised who will be investigating.</p> <p>The case will be reinvestigated by an alternative member staff than dealt with the complaint at Stage One.</p> <p>If agreed between the investigating officer and the customer or specifically requested by the customer, a meeting may be arranged for the case to be discussed in person at an agreed location.</p> <p>Customers that chose to attend a meeting may be accompanied, as long as they advise PCHA who this will be and in what capacity, two days before the meeting is due to take place. They may also submit evidence (again giving Two days' notice).</p> <p>After the Stage Two investigations are completed, the customer will normally receive a full reply within 20 working days of the complaint being acknowledged (unless advised otherwise as above).</p>	<p>The response for Stage two appeals will mirror that for the Stage Two complaints (opposite).</p>
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- 3.1.5 Where PCHA believes complaints are being made in an unacceptable way such as persistent, vexatious or malicious complaints, it may manage the complaints outside of formal timescales and PCHA may invoke its Unacceptable Behaviour Policy. This may allow PCHA to liaise with external support agencies such as the Housing Ombudsman and consider the best course of action to resolve a complaint.
- 3.1.6 Where this happens PCHA will write to the complainant advising of their decision and what that means for their contact with the organisation. Where a customer has raised multiple complaints or appeals, a customer may be designated a single point of contact to ensure consistency.
- 3.1.7 PCHA will only escalate complaints when the substance of the case remains the same as Stage One. If new elements are raised, which would result in a substantially different resolution than would have been offered at Stage One, a new complaint will be opened.
- 3.1.8 Stages One and Two of the complaints and general appeals process are also available in the cases of collective disputes.
- 3.1.9 Stages One and Two of the complaint's investigation process will be available to non-PCHA customers (Third parties) but they will not be able to pursue matters further via the external complaint process outlined below (see 3.3).

3.1.10	The general appeals process will be available to all parties, with whom there is a connection and associated impact in the delivery PCHA services.
3.1.11	PCHA will not normally investigate complaints or hear appeals that relate to matters that are found to have occurred 12 months or more before being reported, unless the customer can demonstrate extenuating circumstances.
3.1.12	Similarly, PCHA will not accept escalation between Stages of the internal complaints and appeals process where 12 months or more elapses between Stages, unless extenuating circumstances can be demonstrated. If exceptions are accepted these will be at the discretion of the Director of Operations.
3.1.13	PCHA may also refuse to investigate complaints or hear appeals in the following circumstances a letter will be sent to the complainant outlining the reasons why this course of action has been taken.
3.1.14	<b>Complaints and appeals where legal proceedings have commenced</b>
3.1.14.1	Where customers pursue legal action against PCHA in connection with complaints and appeals, PCHA will continue to investigate and take action to find effective resolution of issues raised through its internal processes and where these have been exhausted, by referral to the Housing Ombudsman (where customers choose this route).
3.1.14.2	This will include continuing to work with customers to carry out any remedial works whilst they have initiated the Pre-Action Protocol for Housing Conditions Claims.
3.1.14.3	Only when court proceedings have commenced that PCHA may need to suspend or cease its internal investigation processes (this involves filing details of the claim, such as the Claim Form and Particulars of Claim, at court).
3.1.14.4	Even where this is the case, PCHA will be mindful to continue all reasonable efforts to resolve the root cause of the complaint e.g. attempting to complete outstanding repairs or remedial works.
3.2	<b>Complaints received via social media</b>
3.2.1	Where PCHA receives complaints via social media (and it is clear that a complaint is being made and not general commentary or a request for service) it will log the complaint and endeavor to respond direct to the complainant, within the timescales outlined in 3.1.4 above (not publicly), where their details are known.
3.2.2	As far as is possible, PCHA will look to maintain confidentiality for complaints received in this way in line with data protection principles and the provisions set out in its Data Protection Policy.
3.3	<b>External Complaints and Appeals Process</b>
3.3.1	In line with the provisions of the Building Safety Act 2022, when a customer has exhausted the internal complaints process (i.e. Stages One and Two) and they are still not satisfied with the response provided, they may refer their case to the Independent Housing Ombudsman for investigation.

3.3.2	Customers may contact the Housing Ombudsman at any Stage of an active complaint for advice, but the Housing Ombudsman will only investigate complaints that have exhausted the internal Stages (Stage One and Two) without satisfactory resolution.
3.3.3	<p>The contact details for the Housing Ombudsman are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Online Complaints form available at <a href="https://www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk/">https://www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk/</a></li> <li>• Via email: <a href="mailto:info@housing-ombudsman.org.uk">info@housing-ombudsman.org.uk</a></li> <li>• Via telephone: <b>0300 111 3000</b> (9.15am-5.15pm: Monday to Friday)</li> <li>• In writing to: <b>Housing Ombudsman Service, PO Box 1484, Unit D, Preston, PR2 0ET</b></li> </ul>
3.3.4	Customers that choose to refer their complaint to the Housing Ombudsman (when they are not satisfied with the response provided by PCHA at Stages One and Two) will need to liaise with the Housing Ombudsman direct for timescales of when they can expect a determination and response.
3.3.5	Customers should note, similar to the stance of PCHA, the Housing Ombudsman will not investigate or make determinations on complaints where legal proceedings have commenced.
3.3.6	PCHA will provide the contact details for the Housing Ombudsman on its website in all written correspondence connected with complaints handling.
3.4	<b>Statutory Appeals</b>
3.4.1	In addition to 'general appeals' there are a number of areas of service delivery where PCHA customers have a legal right to an internal appeal, known as 'statutory appeals' (See 3.4 – 3.6 below).
3.4.2	All statutory appeals are on a 1 Stage process and will be heard via an appeal meeting, at which the customer may choose to make personal representation, submit evidence and be accompanied by a person of their choice, giving PCHA 48 hours' notice in advance of the meeting. All statutory appeals will be heard by a more senior officer than sanctioned the original decision.
3.4.3	Any subsequent changes to this evidence or change of the person accompanying may result in the review being postponed, the evidence not being considered or a refusal to hear the customer(s) representative.
3.4.4	If having requested an internal appeal hearing the tenant(s) fail to attend or inform PCHA of the reasons why they cannot attend, the reviewing officer may proceed with the hearing in their absence.
3.4.5	On a discretionary basis PCHA may choose to postpone a hearing if requested by the customer(s) and there is a justifiable reason for doing so or if the person due to hear the appeal is unavailable for any reason.
3.4.6	This may, however, not always be possible if the delay would prevent PCHA from taking expedient legal action to remedy a tenancy breach or it would result in hearings being outside the permitted legal framework.



3.4.7	If during the course of a hearing an adjournment is requested by either PCHA, the customer(s) or their representatives and a further meeting is necessary, PCHA will give reasonable notice of the date, time and venue of the adjourned hearing.
3.4.8	<p>When hearing internal statutory appeals, the reviewing officer will assess the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If the legal procedures and notice periods have been adhered to in serving of notices or letters sent to tenant(s) advising of actions to be taken</li> <li>• It was appropriate in terms of evidence provided</li> <li>• The decision will stand up to scrutiny</li> </ul>
3.4.9	Statutory appeals and the timescales that will apply are as follows:
3.5	<b>Decision to extend or terminate starter tenancies</b>
3.5.1	Customers who want to appeal against this decision must inform PCHA in writing within 14 days of the notice or letter being served, advising them of its decision to extend or terminate the starter tenancy.
3.5.2	After carrying out a review, where the appeal is against the decision to terminate a starter tenancy, PCHA will notify the customer of the results in writing before the date the possession proceedings begin as specified in the notice or letter seeking possession.
3.5.3	If the appeal is against the decision to extend a starter tenancy, PCHA will inform the customer of the outcome of the review in writing before the 12 month anniversary of the starter tenancy.
3.6	<b>Decision to seek possession of a property on a demoted tenancy</b>
3.6.1	Customers who want to appeal against PCHA's decision to seek possession of a property on a demoted tenancy, must inform PCHA in writing within 14 days of receipt of the Notice Seeking Possession being served.
3.6.2	PCHA will give the tenant(s) no less than 5 days' notice of the hearing (giving time and venue for the meeting). PCHA will inform the tenant(s) of the review results in writing before the date of which possession proceedings may begin.
3.7	<b>Decision to decline applications for mutual exchange or succession</b>
3.7.1	If applicants wish to appeal against a decision made concerning their mutual exchange or succession application, they should inform PCHA in writing within 10 days of being informed of the decision to refuse their application. PCHA will inform the applicant of the outcome within 10 working days of the hearing date of its decision.
3.8	<b>Decisions to seek possession on assured tenancies under the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act, 2014</b>
3.8.1	Customers can request a review of PCHA's decision to seek possession under the absolute ground for possession as per the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act, 2014. The appeal should be made in writing within 7 days of the notice to seek possession being served on the tenant.

3.8.2	PCHA will communicate the outcome of the review to the tenant in writing before the date on which proceedings for possession may be commenced.
3.9	<b>Feedback</b>
3.9.1	PCHA will maximise all types of formal and informal customer feedback in order to drive service improvement.
3.9.2	The intelligence gained from of all forms of feedback including performance and satisfaction information is regularly shared with our involved tenants. The information is used to identify improvement opportunities and may trigger a service review and remedial actions when there are any dips in performance.
3.9.3	PCHA endeavors to capture all informal interactions which are not complaints, appeals, suggestions or compliments, whether positive or negative comments about the services PCHA delivers.
3.9.4	PCHA will use this information to identify issues that are common to a number of customers and detail the action they have taken as a result in our customer newsletters and website.
3.10	<b>Compliments</b>
3.10.1	PCHA encourage customers to let us know when we have done something they are satisfied with, as well as areas we need to improve. PCHA keeps a central register of all compliments received, they are shared with the Executive Management Team and where individual staff members are identified as having delivered excellent services, they are sent an internal message of thanks.
3.11	<b>Suggestions</b>
3.11.1	PCHA encourages all customers to submit suggestions on how we can change and improve the ways in which we work to deliver better services. Any suggestions adopted are publicised and individually acknowledged.
3.12	<b>Surveys</b>
3.12.1	PCHA make extensive use of surveys to gain customer intelligence and assess satisfaction with the ways in which it is delivering services. PCHA has a programme of surveys that is reviewed annually with the tenant-led Service Review Groups and includes STAR (Survey of Tenants and Residents) surveys and Tenant Satisfaction Measurement monitoring, on-going in-house surveys and one off service-specific surveys.
3.13	<b>Reasonable Adjustments</b>
3.13.1	For all complaints, appeals or when eliciting customer feedback PCHA will endeavor to make 'reasonable adjustments' to its practice and processes where a customer is at a 'substantial disadvantage i.e. more than minor or trivial', as a result of their protected characteristics or any other reason why they might receive a differential service, in line with the requirements of the Equalities Act 2010.

<p>3.13.2</p> <p>3.13.3</p> <p>3.13.4</p> <p>3.13.5</p> <p>3.13.6</p> <p>3.13.7</p> <p>3.13.8</p>	<p>This may include acting outside the parameters outlined in this Policy and offering a flexible approach. Non exhaustive examples of the type of actions PCHA may put in place include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Using advocates and working with support agencies when investigating complaints and seeking effective resolutions</li> <li>• Making referrals to support agencies when additional support needs are identified that are not currently being met</li> <li>• Ensuring preferred communication requirements are catered for e.g. via email, in large print, verbal communications only or in alternative languages</li> <li>• Ensuring any meeting venues that are used and facilitated by PCHA in the course of a complaint’s investigation e.g. at Stage 2 meetings or appeal hearings are accessible and meet identified needs</li> <li>• Allowing additional time for implementation of any reasonable adjustments in the complaint’s investigation process and response targets or for customers to respond and escalate between Stages (where specific needs are identified)</li> </ul> <p>PCHA will only implement reasonable adjustments when the customer specifically requests them, makes PCHA aware that they may have additional needs or when PCHA has prior information provided by the customer (and kept up to date by the customer) of any such needs.</p> <p>PCHA will endeavor to identify the need for any reasonable adjustments for customers making complaints at the first point of contact and when complaints are acknowledged. This will include sensitive, non-intrusive and non-judgmental questions to establish any changes to process that may be required or provision of reasonable adjustments.</p> <p>PCHA will record and monitor the use of all reasonable adjustments when investigating and responding to complaints, appeals and for customer feedback mechanisms and will make this information available to involved customers and in annual reporting.</p> <p>In making reasonable adjustments, PCHA will seek to find effective and practical solutions to meet individual needs and may alter its approach on a case-by-case basis.</p> <p>Through ongoing monitoring and trend analysis, PCHA will aim to identify any changes to process or best practice that would benefit all customers and lead to continuous service improvement.</p> <p>Further details of PCHA’s approach to dealing with vulnerable customers or reasonable adjustments can be found in PCHA’s ‘Vulnerable Persons and Reasonable Adjustments Policy’.</p>
<p><b>4</b></p>	<p><b>Implementation</b></p>
<p>4.1</p> <p>4.2</p>	<p>All PCHA staff have a responsibility for ensuring the effective implementation of this Policy and should take ownership of complaints, appeals and feedback handling. All PCHA staff will be expected to cooperate with any internal investigations and panel meetings as required.</p> <p>Where PCHA receive complaints, appeals or feedback that are a result of the contents of its published policies, this will trigger a review of the policy which will take place with customer representatives (Customer Empowerment Panel) unless the policy has been reviewed within</p>

	the past 6 months (in which case a reply will be sent to the customer outlining the details of the review and no further review of the Policy will take place unless it is scheduled or there are other factors that would normally prompt a review e.g. change in legislation).	
4.3	Where required, the review of PCHA published policies will take place at the earliest possible opportunity, subject to the availability of customer representatives and internal resources. Where this type of review is agreed, PCHA will close the case and write to the customer to inform them of the outcome and how the situation will be remedied.	
4.4	After a case has been closed, PCHA will keep the customer informed of actions being taken including any changes made to the policy.	
4.5	If staff become aware that there are problems with the effective operation of the Policy or the procedures that support it, they should complete a 'change request' within the PCHA document management system and these will be incorporated into the Policy / procedural review process.	
<b>5</b>	<b>Performance</b>	
5.1	PCHA will monitor and report performance on the delivery of the service yearly with the Departmental Management Team and Board. PCHA will also share performance information with customers that are engaged through the formal involvement structures.	
5.2	The key performance indicators include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Satisfaction with the complaints and appeals handling process</li> <li>• Performance on meeting response targets</li> <li>• Number of escalations between Stages</li> </ul>	
<b>6</b>	<b>Consultation</b>	
6.1	All staff and customer representatives have been consulted in the development of this Policy.	
<b>7</b>	<b>Review</b>	
7.1	The PCHA Complaints, Appeals and Feedback Policy will be reviewed annually, as near as is possible from the date of Operations Director's (PCHA) approval or as required by the introduction of new legislation, regulation or as a result of PCHA system audits. The review process will ensure its continuing suitability, adequacy and effectiveness.	
<b>8</b>	<b>Equality Impact Assessment</b>	
8.1	Was a full Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) required?	Yes
8.2	When was EIA conducted and by who?	An EIA was conducted by the Policy and Strategy Manager and the Quality and Inclusion Officer in January 2024.

8.3	Results of EIA	Key recommendations include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monitor the outcomes of any determinations of the Independent Complaints Panel to ensure all groups are treated fairly</li> </ul>		
<b>9 Scheme of delegation</b>				
9.1	Responsible committee for approving and monitoring implementation of the Policy and any amendments to it	Operations Director -PCHA		
9.2	Responsible officer for formulating Policy and reporting to committee on its effective implementation	Operations Director-PCHA		
9.3	Responsible officer for formulating, reviewing and monitoring implementation of procedures	Operations Director-PCHA		
<b>10 Amendment log</b>				
<b>Date of revision:</b>		<b>Reason for revision:</b>	<b>Consultation record:</b>	<b>Record of amendments:</b>
5 <sup>th</sup> July 2022		In line with changes in operational practices	See Section 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1.1- Reference of the Housing White Paper and Housing Ombudsman’s Complaints Code and other adopted codes of governance</li> <li>• 2.1- Added that the PCHA Board has designated a Complaints Champion’ Board Member to oversee our strategic approach to Complaints</li> <li>• 3.3.13 &amp;3.3.14 – inclusion of changes to Policy on commencement of Buildings Safety Act Regulations in Oct 2022</li> <li>• 3.11 – Inclusion of new clauses outlining ‘reasonable adjustments’ provisions</li> </ul>

12 <sup>th</sup> January 2023	In line with changes in operational practices	See Section 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number Scheme altered throughout</li> <li>• The external complaints process has been amended in line with the requirements of the Building Safety Act which came into effect on 1<sup>st</sup> October 2022 (this includes removal of the 'designated person' provisions)</li> <li>• Change at 3.1.14- Inclusion of how PCHA will proceed where customers pursue legal action against OVH in connection with complaints and appeals</li> </ul>
17 <sup>th</sup> May 2024	In line with changes in operational practice	See section 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Change at 1.6 to reflect revised Regulatory Standards (effective from the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2024)</li> <li>• Change at 1.7.1 to include definition of 'Request for Service'</li> <li>• Inclusion at 2.2 and 3.13.8 to reference PCHA Vulnerable Persons and Reasonable Adjustments Policy</li> <li>• Minor wording changes throughout to reflect revised Housing Ombudsman's Complaints Handling Code (effective from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2024) and change of response timescales at 3.1.4 to reflect the same</li> </ul>