

Making a Complaint

Key Information for People Using our Services

We want to ensure that we provide good quality homes and services to all our service users and we want to hear from you if you are not happy with the service that we have provided for you. Letting us know how you feel about our service will give us an opportunity to improve and make sure we get it right for you in the future.

Who can use the Complaints Procedure?

The following list is comprised of persons who have a right to complain to Rapport Housing & Care should they so wish, however the organisation will not discuss matters relating to a specific individual without their expressed consent, or that of any person acting on their behalf in an official capacity.

- ◆ Residents/ tenants/service users;
- ◆ Staff;
- ◆ Regulators;
- ◆ Relatives;
- ◆ Nominated persons;
- ◆ Other partner agencies including those persons/agencies purchasing our services;
- ◆ Those persons applying to use our services;
- ◆ Members of the public.

We will also accept complaints made by a person acting on behalf of people we support.

How do I Make a Complaint?

If you think we have not provided a good service, we can often resolve problems straight away, however, if we can't solve your problem quickly, we will ensure that your complaint is taken forward as a formal complaint.

You can make a complaint by phone, in writing (letter or email), in person or you can pick up and complete one of our leaflets that can be found in the foyer of our services. You will find our contact details at the back of this leaflet.

On receipt of your complaint we will log your concerns and

acknowledge this in writing within seven working days. If the complaint is regarding a repair or maintenance issue, we will record this as a maintenance request, rather than a complaint.

Complaint Investigations

When we receive a complaint, one of our staff will take responsibility for investigating and resolving your complaint, and will be the point of contact for you. They will contact you to:

- ◆ Listen and talk to you about the complaint or problem;
- ◆ Discuss what can be done and resolve it for you;
- ◆ Talk to you about appropriate timescales;
- ◆ Keep in touch with you throughout the investigation, particularly if some elements of the complaint are taking a while to resolve.

If you think that further actions should be taken, you can discuss this with them. When all actions are complete, we will contact you to close the complaint.

Please note, our policy states that where possible and practicable, a response will be provided within **twenty eight** working days.

Sometimes we have to follow legal rules in addition to our policies and if this is the case with your complaint, we will ensure that we talk to you about the reasons why, but in every case we will always aim to be fair.

The Duty of Candour

We will comply with the Duty of Candour in all of our Care

Quality Commission (CQC) registered services, this means that we will be open and honest with people when things go wrong and where any harm to a service user results from their care or treatment.

Review of Your Complaint

The aim of our complaints procedure is to ensure that we resolve your complaint as quickly as possible and to your satisfaction.

If you feel that we have not resolved your complaint, you can ask for an appeal. The appeal must be made within **seven** working days of receiving your final response letter.

It is important that you clearly state the reasons why you wish to make an appeal and this will ensure the process runs smoothly.

A senior manager will contact you within **ten** working days of your appeal, to discuss any outstanding issues. At this point it may be possible to resolve your complaint without an appeal meeting, for example by arranging other actions to put things right.

Taking Your Complaint Further

If you remain dissatisfied with the response given to your complaint, you can ask a 'designated person' to look at your complaint. A designated person can be:

- ◆ A member of Parliament;
- ◆ A local councillor;

A designated person can try and resolve your complaint or they can refer it to the following for you:

- ◆ Local Government Ombudsman (care homes and domiciliary care services only).

The Health Act has given the Local Government Ombudsman (LGO) responsibilities to investigate complaints about adult care providers from people who fund or arrange their own care services. The new power will run in parallel with the councils current complaint handling role for adults who use care services provided or arranged by councils.

If the complainant is not satisfied with the way in which Rapport Housing & Care has dealt with their complaint or the decision made, they have the right to take their complaint to; the local authority, if the complaint is being made by a service user who receives funding, or, to the Local Government Ombudsman if the service user is self funding.

They will only investigate your complaint after it has been through our internal complaints procedure.

- ◆ Independent Housing Ombudsman (supported and extra care housing services only)

Rapport Housing & Care is a registered provider (RP) of housing, registered with the Independent Housing Ombudsman Service as required by the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA). Complainants are only able to personally refer their complaint directly to the Housing Ombudsman Service **eight weeks** after the exhaustion of the landlord complaints procedure.

They will only investigate your complaint after it has been through our internal complaints procedure.

- ◆ Complaints to the Care Quality Commission (CQC) (care homes and domiciliary care services only)

CQC are responsible for checking that every care provider that is registered with them meets the Fundamental Standards. However, the duties given to the CQC by Parliament do not include dealing with individual complaints about providers' services.

The only exception to this is complaints from people whose rights are restricted under the Mental Health Act, or their representatives, about the way staff have used their powers under the Act.

CQC can be contacted if a person feels that they are not satisfied about the care they are receiving. This is because they can use the information when they are looking at individual services to make sure they are meeting the Fundamental Standards. If services are found not to meet the standards CQC can use their legal powers to ensure improvements are made.

Useful Contacts

Rapport Housing & Care Head Office
The Old Wharf
Station Road
Cuxton
Kent
ME2 1AB
Tel: 01634 723007

The Care Quality Commission (CQC)
Citygate
Gallowgate
Newcastle upon Tyne
NE1 4PA
Tel: 03000 616161

Local Government Ombudsman
PO Box 4771
Coventry
CV4 0EH
Tel: 0300 061 0614

Local Housing Ombudsman
Housing Ombudsman Service
81, Aldwych
London
WC2B 4HN
Tel: 0300 111 3000

Kent County Council Adult Services
County Hall
Maidstone
ME14 1XQ
Tel: 03000 41 61 61





If you use assistive technology and/or need a version of this document in a more accessible format, please email enquiry@rapporthc.co.uk and tell us what format you need and we will ensure you are provided with a copy that meets your needs.

The information contained in this leaflet is provided for general guidelines only. Customers are strongly advised to contact a Rapporth representative for further details and to satisfy themselves as to their accuracy.

Rapporth Housing & Care is a registered charity 254140, Housing Association H2362, Company 908333.