How to make a Comment, Complaint or Compliment

South Essex Homes: Keeping you informed

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www.southessexhomes.co.uk

Telephone: 0800 833 160

Ref: 011
We, at South Essex Homes, are committed to providing high quality services and improving them to meet our customers needs. To do this we would like to know your views.

Your views are important to us because they help us to improve our services and ensure we treat everyone fairly.

We need to know when you are not happy, we also need to know when we have done something well or if you have a suggestion for something we could do better.

This booklet explains how you can provide us with comments about the service. It also contains a Customer Feedback Form if you want to make any comments once you have read this booklet.
What are...

Complaints

South Essex Homes defines a complaint as:

‘An expression of dissatisfaction, where South Essex Homes has failed to do what we have agreed to do.’

For example, if you feel a service standard, policy or procedure has not been met, or a contractor fails to keep an appointment time, please inform the Customer Contact Centre on 0800 833 160.

For complaints regarding:

• Neighbour Disputes
• Neighbour Nuisance
• Anti-Social Behaviour

Please contact our Anti-Social Behaviour Line 0800 833 163.

Comments and Compliments

A comment is a suggestion about how South Essex Homes can improve its services.

However, if you feel you want to make a positive comment about an individual, team or service, South Essex Homes will treat this as a compliment.

We welcome all compliments, as these help us to identify where we are performing well and share this good practice with other departments of South Essex Homes.

We will acknowledge receipt of your comments and compliments, and let you know what action we will be taking. We will also pass your comment or compliment to the Head of Service, and publish the best suggestions in our Insight magazine.

Our Guarantee is to respect confidentiality at all times.
How you can make a Comment, Complaint or Compliment

You can provide your feedback on the service we provide by returning the enclosed feedback form or in any of the following ways:

Freephone 0800 833 160

Email complaints@seh.southend.gov.uk

Text Message 07799 071 872

Online www.southessexhomes.co.uk

Letter Write to the Service Improvement Officer at: FREEPOST SOUTH ESSEX HOMES

What you can expect from us and our procedure to handle your feedback.

South Essex Homes has three stages for dealing with complaints. At every stage of your complaint, we will ask you how you feel that we have failed to meet your expectations and what you think we should do to resolve your complaint.
Stage 1
If you are making a complaint about a person or a service area for the first time, the Service Improvement Officer will be responsible for making sure it is investigated and will send you an acknowledgement letter within 3 working days. Whenever possible we will do our best to provide a full response to your complaint at this point.

Your complaint will be passed to the Manager or Team Leader responsible for the area of service you are unhappy about, who will send you a full response within 10 working days. This letter will also include details of who to contact if you are still unhappy.

Stage 2
Despite efforts to resolve the issue at Stage 1, if you are still unhappy with the way it was dealt with, or the service is still poor, please contact the Service Improvement Officer (the telephone number will be provided on response letter from stage 1). Your complaint will then be passed on to a Group Manager or the Director.

The Director or Group Manager will respond to you within 10 working days. The response will include an explanation of what you can do if you are still not satisfied.

If you feel a response at Stage 2 has not fully satisfied your complaint, you can appeal. In this request, you must set out clearly why you think the ongoing complaint has not been resolved and the remedy required. We need this information in order for the Complaints Review Panel to be convened and to enable them to consider your request effectively. Failure to provide this may result in us being unable to proceed with your complaint.

Your appeal must be received by the Service Improvement Manager (telephone number provided on response letter) within 15 working days of the response to your Stage 2 complaint

Stage 3
Your stage 3 complaint will be investigated within 21 working days by a review panel made up of members from our South Essex Homes Management Board. The Service Improvement Officer will send you a response within 2 working days of the panel meeting. This will set out the panel’s decision and will also give you details of the Ombudsman if you are not satisfied.

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Stage 4
If you have been through the South Essex Homes complaints process and are still not satisfied with our response or feel the issue has not been resolved, there are several options you can take;

From April 2013, instead of going directly to the Local Government Ombudsman, residents can;

1. Go to a ‘designated person’ and ask their assistance in resolving their complaint and/or referring their complaint to the Housing Ombudsman

A ‘designated person’ can be

- A Member of Parliament
- A local Councillor from the district you live in - for us, Southend-on-Sea Borough Council
- A designated Tenant Panel - however there is currently no designated Tenant Panel in Southend

The ‘designated person’ will try to resolve the complaint locally but if they are unable to, and the complainant wishes them to, they can refer it to the Housing Ombudsman.

2. Contact the Housing Ombudsman directly. However, you must wait for eight weeks from the date of the decision on your Stage 3 complaint - this will be the date on the letter confirming the Review Panel’s decision.

You can contact the Housing Ombudsman at:

Housing Ombudsman Service
81 Aldwych,
London,
WC2B 4HN

Telephone: 0300 111 3000

Email: info@housing-ombudsman.org.uk

Website: www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk

Fax: 020 7831 1942
Useful Contact Numbers

South Essex Homes
Customer Contact Centre  0800 833 160 (freephone)
Income Management Team  0800 0234 057 (freephone)
Anti-Social Behaviour Team  0800 833 163 (freephone)

Civic Centre Contact Centre  01702 215000
Southend Police Station  101
Southend Hospital  01702 435555
Cory Environmental  01702 617766
SAVS (Southend Association of Voluntary Services)  01702 356000
Consumer Direct  08454 04 05 06
NHS Direct  0845 4647
Dial A Ride  01702 215665
01702 215666
Transco (Gas)  0800 111 999 (freephone)
EDF (Electricity)  0800 783 8838 (freephone)