

## **Complaints Policy**

### **MAKING A COMPLAINT**

#### **Our Commitment**

Karin Housing Association is committed to providing all tenants with a high quality service in all areas of our work, and we encourage always act in a fair, helpful and efficient manner

Some of the time, we get things wrong and we want to hear about it so we have the opportunity to put it right.

When dealing with complaints, we will:

- Make it easy for you to make a complaint.
- Give you a prompt response.
- Sort out the problem efficiently and fairly.
- Be fair, polite and helpful.
- Help you fill in the complaints form if you have difficulty.
- Keep you up to date with the progress of your complaint.
- Treat your complaint confidentially;
- Give you the right to a second opinion.

#### **Who can make a complaint?**

Anyone living in a property owned or managed by us, or anyone acting on his or her behalf and with his/her consent.

Anyone who wants to receive a service from us can also complain, for example, someone applying for housing.

People who live next door to one of our properties can complain about the behaviour of our tenants, residents and their visitors, and about any damage caused to their property by lack of repair to our property.

We will not consider complaints about the fact that we own or lease a property in a particular area or street.

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### What can I complain about?

You can use the complaints process when you have told us that you feel something is wrong and we have not put it right. It gives you the opportunity to have put right something we should have done.

You may want to complain because:

- we have failed to carry out our legal duties as your landlord;
- you feel that our policies or practices are unfair;
- you believe that we have not carried out our own rules properly or have failed to act efficiently in delivering a service; or
- you feel that a member of staff has behaved improperly or has been impolite.

You **cannot** complain about:

- anything that happened over a year ago, unless you have only become aware of the situation.
- matters currently being dealt with by the Ombudsman, or where legal action has begun.
- everyday matters such as chasing repair requests.
- complaints by one tenant about another. This is dealt with by your Tenancy Services Officer as neighbour dispute or anti social behaviour.

### How to make a complaint:

If you want to complain it is important that you tell us what you want us to do to put things right.

Before we will consider the matter as formal complaint, we will try to put right, quickly, anything you feel has gone wrong. If we cannot sort out the matter to your satisfaction at this stage, you can then make a formal complaint that has three stages.

If you are dissatisfied with any aspect of our service, you should try to resolve any problems by firstly talking to the staff involved. In most cases, this will be the quickest way to resolve issues and it will help you to avoid delays in us dealing with your enquiry or complaint if you take this step first.

If your first contact is unsuccessful, you can ask for the matter to be considered as a Formal Complaint Stage 1.

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We will respond to your initial contact within a reasonable time, depending on the nature and complexity of the issues you raise. This will usually be within 10 working days; if it is likely to take longer than this, we will notify you.

### **Formal complaint: Stage 1**

At this stage, your complaint will be dealt with by the Tenancy Services Officer and we suggest that you put your complaint in writing. You can either write a letter or use our **COMPLAINTS FORM**. If you need help in completing this form, a member of staff will assist you.

We will respond to your complaint within 10 working days but should it take longer, we will write and inform you of the reasons for the delay.

### **Formal complaint: Stage 2**

If you are not satisfied with the response you receive, you must contact the person who dealt with your complaint giving your reasons for your dissatisfaction. You may wish to involve an external organisation to assist you with resolving your complaint.

The Director of Karin, will then consider your complaint and will send you a written response within 15 working days of his or her investigation. The Director may wish to meet with you in the office or in your home to discuss the matter. We hope the matter will be resolved at this stage.

Karin's internal complaints procedure ends with the decision of the Director. If you are not happy with their decision, you can take your complaint to the Housing Ombudsman Service.

The Ombudsman will only consider complaints that have been investigated through the above stages.

The Ombudsman's address is:

**Housing Ombudsman Service**  
**81 Aldwych**  
**London WC2B 4HN**

**Telephone: 020 7421 3800**

The Housing Ombudsman Service will try to sort out most complaints informally, but if this is not possible, he or she will either:

- Propose mediation or arbitration; or
- Start a formal investigation

## **KARIN HOUSING ASSOCIATION LIMITED**

Karin supports the Ombudsman's role, and is committed to fully co-operating with the Housing Ombudsman.

### **What happens if a complaint is upheld?**

We will give a full apology if all or part of a complaint is upheld. Depending on the nature of the complaint, we may also deliver the service we failed to provide, give financial compensation, if appropriate, and review our procedures so that the same mistake does not happen again.

### **What happens if a complaint is not upheld?**

If a complaint is not upheld, we will still try to reach an agreement, even if all procedures have been followed correctly. We always provide a full written explanation of why a decision is reached.