



# Tai Calon

## Community Housing

**Creating vibrant communities across Blaenau Gwent.**

**Policy Name:** Concerns and Complaints Policy

**Date:** 19<sup>th</sup> February 2024

### **Purpose and Scope:**

The purpose of this policy is to set out how we handle concerns and complaints.

**Responsibility (Manager/Team):** Ross Watts, Head of Customer Experience

### **Supporting Documents:**

### **Chief Executive/Director Approval:**

**Board Approval Date:** 19<sup>th</sup> February 2024

## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 Tai Calon Community Housing is committed to dealing effectively with any concerns or complaints you may have about our services.
- 1.2 Complaints are viewed as an opportunity to learn how to improve the services provided. If possible, we'll put right any mistakes we may have made. We will provide any service you're entitled to which we have failed to deliver. If we did something wrong, we'll apologise and, where possible, try to put things right for you. We aim to learn from our mistakes and use the information we gain from complaints to improve our services.

## 2. What is a complaint?

- 2.1 A complaint is:
  - An expression of dissatisfaction or concern.
  - About our action or lack of action or the standard of service provided.

A complaint is not:

- An initial request for service, such as reporting a repair.
- An appeal against a properly made decision.
- A means to seek change to legislation or a properly made decision (when laws or policies have been correctly applied)
- A report of anti-social behaviour.

## 3. How to express concern or complain formally

- 3.1 You can express your concerns or complain formally in the following ways:
  - Call us on **0300 303 1717**.
  - Email us at [talktous@taicalon.org](mailto:talktous@taicalon.org)
  - Write to us at **Tai Calon Community Housing, Solis One, Griffin Lane, Rising Sun Industrial Estate, Blaina NP13 3JW.**

- In person by making an appointment with one of our Senior Customer Service Advisors.
  - You can leave us your feedback and rate our services at any time using the link <https://survey.taicalon.org/s3/Listening-Post?V1=Concerns> or by responding to satisfaction surveys we send by either text or email following a service. All scores of 1 will be treated as informal concerns.
- 3.2 Normally, we will only be able to look at your concerns if you tell us about them within 6 months. This is because it is better to investigate your concerns while the issues are still fresh in everyone's mind.
- 3.3 In exceptional cases we may look at concerns which are brought to our attention later than this. However, you will need to explain why you have not been able to bring it to our attention earlier and we will need to have sufficient information about the issue to allow us to consider it properly. In any event we will not consider concerns about matters that took place more than three years ago.

## 4. Dealing with your concerns and complaints

### Informal

- 4.1 If possible, we believe it's best to deal with things straight away. If you have a concern, please raise it with the person you're dealing with. They will try to resolve it for you there and then. If the member of staff can't help, they will explain why, and you can then ask for a formal investigation.
- 4.2 The Public Services Ombudsman for Wales recommends that informal complaints are dealt with within 10 working days. We will aim to deal with your concern within 5 working days. If it is not possible to resolve your concern within this timescale, then the matter will be escalated to the formal investigation stage.

### Formal

- 4.3 We will formally acknowledge your complaint within 2 working days of receipt and let you know how we intend to deal with it.
- 4.4 We will deal with your complaint in an open and honest way.
- 4.5 We will tell you who we have asked to investigate your complaint. If your complaint is straightforward, we'll usually ask somebody from the

relevant service area to investigate it and respond. If it is more serious, we will ask the relevant Director to investigate the complaint. Where the complaint concerns a Director, it will initially be dealt with by the Chief Executive and if it concerns the Chief Executive, it will be dealt with by the Chair of the Board.

- 4.6 If there is a simple solution to your problem, we may ask you if you're happy to accept this. For example, where you have asked for a service and we see straight away you should have had it, we will offer to provide the service rather than investigate.
- 4.7 We will aim to resolve your complaint as quickly as possible and expect to deal with most complaints within 20 working days. If your complaint is more complex, we will:
  - Let you know within this time why we think it may take longer to investigate.
  - Tell you how long we expect it to take.
  - Give you regular updates including telling you whether any developments might change our original estimate.
- 4.8 The person who is investigating your complaint will firstly aim to establish the facts. The extent of the investigation will depend upon how complex and how serious the issues you have raised are. In complex cases, we will draw up an investigation plan.
- 4.9 We'll look at relevant evidence. This could include information you have provided, our case files, notes of conversations, letters, emails or whatever may be relevant to your particular concern. If necessary, we'll talk to the staff or others involved and look at our policies, any legal entitlement and guidance.
- 4.10 In some cases, we may ask to meet with you to discuss your complaint.

## **5. Outcome**

- 5.1 If we formally investigate your complaint, we will let you know what we find. We will explain how and why we come to our conclusions.
- 5.2 If we find that we made a mistake, we'll tell you what happened and why.

- 5.3 If we find there is a fault in our systems or the way we do things, we'll tell you what it is and how we plan to change things to stop it happening again.
- 5.4 If we make a mistake, we will always apologise for it.

## 6. Putting Things Right

- 6.1 If we didn't provide you with a service you should have had, we'll aim to provide it now, if that's possible. If we didn't do something well, we'll aim to put it right. If you have lost out because of a mistake on our part, we'll try to put you back in the position you would have been in if we'd done things properly.
- 6.2 If you had to pay for a service yourself, when we should have provided it for you, we will try to refund the cost.

## 7. The Ombudsman

- 7.1 If we do not succeed in resolving your complaint, you may complain to the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales. The Ombudsman is independent of all government bodies and can investigate your complaint if you believe that you personally, or the person on whose behalf you are complaining:

- Have been treated unfairly or received bad service through some failure on our part.
- Have been disadvantaged personally by a service failure or have been treated unfairly.

The Ombudsman normally expects you to bring your concerns to our attention first and to give us a chance to put things right. You can contact the Ombudsman by:

- Phone: 0300 790 0203
- Email: [ask@ombudsman.wales](mailto:ask@ombudsman.wales)
- The website: [www.ombudsman.wales](http://www.ombudsman.wales)
- Writing to: Public Services Ombudsman for Wales 1  
Ffordd yr Hen Gae, Pencoed CF35 5LJ

There are also other organisations that consider complaints. For example, the Welsh Language Commissioner's Office deals with complaints about services in Welsh. We can advise you about such organisations.

## **8. Learning Lessons**

- 8.1 We take your concerns and complaints seriously and try to learn from any mistakes we've made. Our Leadership Team considers a summary of all complaints quarterly and is made aware of all serious complaints.
- 8.2 We share summary information on complaints received and complaint outcomes with the Ombudsman as part of our commitment to accountability and learning from complaints.
- 8.3 Where there is a need for significant change, we will develop an action plan setting out what we will do, who will do it and when we plan to do it. We will let you know when changes we've promised have been made.

## **9. What if you need help?**

- 9.1 Our staff will aim to help you make your concerns known to us. If you need extra assistance, we will try to put you in touch with someone who can help.

## **10. What we expect from you**

- 10.1 In times of trouble or distress, some people may act out of character. There may have been upsetting or distressing circumstances leading up to a concern or a complaint. We do not view behaviour as unacceptable just because someone is forceful or determined.
- 10.2 We believe that all complainants have the right to be heard, understood and respected. However, we also consider that our staff have the same rights. We therefore expect you to be polite and courteous in your dealings with us.
- 10.3 We will not tolerate aggressive or abusive behaviour, unreasonable demands or unreasonable persistence. We have a separate policy to manage situations when we find that someone's actions are

unacceptable. *Please see our Unreasonable Behaviour Policy.*



**Visit our offices or write to us at:**

Tai Calon Community Housing, Solis One,  
Rising Sun Industrial Estate, Blaina, Blaenau  
Gwent NP13 3JW

**Email us:** [talktous@taicalon.org](mailto:talktous@taicalon.org)

**Phone:** 0300 303 1717

**Find us on the web at:** [www.taicalon.org](http://www.taicalon.org)

**Do you need a different format?**

If you would like this document in a different format or language, don't hesitate to contact us.