

How we'll handle your complaint

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Your feedback matters

At Karbon we work hard to give you a brilliant service.

But, we're only human and sometimes things do go wrong. If you feel like our service hasn't been up to scratch, please let us know. We want to put it right.

We're also keen to constantly improve so not only will we listen and act to resolve a problem, we'll also strive to learn from it to improve how we do things and continually enhance the services we provide.

In this leaflet you'll find everything you need to know about our complaints process and what to expect from us along the way.

In line with the Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code, our definition of a complaint is:

'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.'

Ways you can get in touch

- By telephone, on 0800 533 5442.
- By email, enquiries@bykerct.co.uk
- 17 Raby Cross, Byker, Newcastle upon Tyne NE6 2FF
- Via our website bykercommunitytrust.org
- Face to face with any member of the Karbon team or contractors working on Karbon's behalf.
- Via direct message on Twitter and Facebook.
- Via a Councillor, MP or relevant third party.

We'd encourage you to get in touch with us as soon as possible after the issue first arises, as they must be raised within 2 months of the occurrence. This is so we can deal with the problem as quickly as possible.

Our promise to you

If something goes wrong, we'll apologise, explain what happened, and work with you to make it right.

We'll deal with your complaint as quickly as we can, keeping you updated along the way with what's happening.

If you wanted someone else to contact us for you, we're more than happy to speak to them. However, we do need your permission to keep your information safe.

What to expect when making a complaint

When first getting in touch please explain as clearly as you can:

1. What you're unhappy with.
2. The reasons why you're unhappy.
3. What you would like us to do about it.

We can then make sure that your complaint is recorded in our system and assigned to the Karbon colleague who is best placed to get things sorted.

We always aim to get things fixed as quickly as we can for you but sometimes it isn't that easy.

If your complaint moves to a different stage of the process, we will always make sure that the right person is there to keep you informed and supported.

If your complaint moves through the stages of our process, we will contact you by

the end of the next working day to acknowledge its status and let you know the next steps.

At each stage we will contact you by the end of the next working day to acknowledge its status and let you know the next steps.

Stage 0

Fast, informal resolutions where possible

Lots of problems can often be resolved quite informally the first time you contact us, and our aim is to sort any problems as quickly as we can for you. Stage 0 is our chance to put things right quickly.

If after any next steps have been carried out, you're still unhappy then we will talk about whether you would like to escalate your complaint, taking it to formal stage 1 review.

Stage 1

Formal review of the complaint

After your complaint has been moved to stage 1, a Team Leader, Manager or Head of Service will take over. They'll get in touch to find out why you were unhappy with the last outcome so they can carry out a full review.

Within the next 5 working days, they'll get back to you with a response. This will show the steps they've taken to investigate your complaint and get things solved.

In some cases we might need a bit more time. If there's a delay we'll always let you know why and when we expect to get the final response to you.

If you're unhappy with our response at stage 1 you can move your complaint to stage 2. To do this we'll need a bit more information.

- A. What specific parts of your original complaint have we not investigated?
- B. What part of our response do you disagree with and why?
- C. What would you like the outcome of your complaint to be (what would you like us to do)?

At stage 0 or stage 1, if you're unhappy with the outcome please let us know within the 10 working days of hearing from us. If there is a valid reason for taking longer than 10 days then the case will still be considered.

Stage 2

Final stage review

Your complaint will now be looked after by a Head of Service, Assistant Director, Director or Executive Director.

This is the final stage of our complaint process where we hope to work with you to get everything sorted.

Just the same as at stage 1, they'll work hard to get back to you with a full written response within 5 working days of hearing from us. If it is going to take us longer than this, we'll let you know why.

Question.

After stage two concludes, if I'm still not happy what can I do?

Answer.

Stage 2 is the end of our complaints process, however there are agencies outside of Karbon who are there to help.

Getting help from a designated person

A designated person can help you get a complaint resolved after our process has ended.

The designated person could be a local councillor or your local MP for example. Once we have your written permission we will be happy to speak to them directly. They can find out a bit more about your complaint, what steps we have taken so far to help get it resolved, and to talk through what more could be done.

Your designated person can help in a couple of different ways:

1. By trying to resolve the complaint themselves.
2. By taking the complaint to the Housing Ombudsman Service.

You can find out who your councillor is by visiting your local council's website. You can find the contact information for your local MP by completing a postcode search online at www.parliament.uk.

The Housing Ombudsman Service

This service looks at complaints made to housing organisations that are registered with them. The service is free, independent and completely impartial.

Karbon Homes is a registered member of the Housing Ombudsman Service so you can contact them about your complaint.

To find out how and when to refer your complaint to the Housing Ombudsman Service, visit www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk.

Independent advice

Charitable organisations such as Citizen's Advice are also there to help you understand your options when it comes to taking a complaint further.

You can find out more about the advice and guidance that Citizen's Advice provide at www.citizensadvice.org.uk/housing/social-housing.

The Financial Ombudsman Service

Our Money Matters service is regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority and has separate guidance.

To find out how and when to refer your complaint to the Financial Ombudsman Service, visit www.financial-ombudsman.org.uk/.

Contact us

You can call us on: 0800 533 5442. We are available 8am to 6pm, Monday to Friday.

Please note all calls are recorded for training and monitoring purposes.

You can email us on enquiries@bykerct.co.uk. Or visit our website at bykercommunitytrust.org.

Finally, you can search for us on Facebook or Twitter.

If you would like this leaflet in another language or format (such as audio) please let us know.

We'll work to improve accessibility for everybody that we deal with, offering reasonable adjustments and adaptations to meet needs and discussing ways that we can work to remove barriers that customers may experience.

Karbon Homes is a charitable registered society under the Co-operative and Community Benefit Societies Act 2014. Registration No.7529.