Support and housing for those in need

COMPLAINTS POLICY & PROCEDURE

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COMPLAINTS POLICY & PROCEDURE

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1. POLICY STATEMENT

The Exaireo Trust Ltd. is committed to ensuring that all those who have contact with us are treated with dignity and respect at all times by our staff, volunteers and contractors. We are also committed to providing the best possible service and to maintain positive relationships with all its service users / clients, stakeholders and customers. This includes – licensees, former service users / clients, applicants, referrers, neighbours, funders, visitors, suppliers and other organisations.

The Exaireo Trust Ltd. will respond positively to complaints and sees complaints as a means of enabling the organisation to improve its performance and to ensure it is maintaining the high standards of service required. High volumes of complaints should not be seen as a negative, as they can be indicative of a well-publicised and accessible complaints process. In fact low complaint numbers should be reviewed in case there are barriers or other reasons that residents may feel they are unable to complain.

Any applicant refused accommodation by any Exaireo project will be able to use Exaireo Complaints procedure to appeal against the decision.

Where complainants have difficulties with literacy or language, Exaireo will offer the assistance of a staff member of the complainant's choosing or invite them to bring an advocate to assist them throughout the process. Residents have the general right to use representatives or be accompanied at any point.

1.1. Objectives of Policy & Compliance with the Complaint Handling Code

To provide an effective and easy-to-use complaints procedure that is proportionate, responsive, cost effective, impartial, and speedy, promoting accountability whilst being compliant with statutory requirements. This Policy will therefore follow the Housing Ombudsman Service Complaint Handling Code. Please see paragraph 1.2.4 The Housing Ombudsman Service.

1.2. Application of Policy

This policy applies to all Exaireo Trust Ltd. projects and services.

1.3. Informing Clients/Service Users

Exaireo have produced a simplified statement for issue to project users, as required but especially at induction. This statement is attached at **Appendix 1**. There are also clauses

within the Licence Agreement document highlighting the Complaints Policy and core rights of complaint for all Licensees up to and including the Housing Ombudsman.

All staff have a responsibility to familiarise themselves with the complaints process to a sufficient level to be able to promote and explain that complaints are available and welcomed from any resident. Staff must ensure that any complaint made reaches the appropriate manager without delay. Residents must be able to raise their complaints in any way and with any member of staff.

Exaireo will publish this Complaints Policy on its website along with an annual complaints performance and service improvement report. Accompanying this, Exaireo will also publish our Trustees' comments on the annual report.

1.4. Definition of a complaint

A complaint is defined as:

> *'an expression of dissatisfaction, however made, about the standard of service, actions or lack of action by the landlord, its own staff, or those acting on its behalf, affecting a resident or group of residents.'*[1]

The word 'complaint' does not have to used for it to be treated as such. This procedure covers complaints about the service and its provision by Exaireo, to all its service users and customers. Complaints can be made by anyone who has had reason to be in contact with Exaireo staff or services.

Some (non-exhaustive) examples of types of complaint can include:

- The way Exaireo staff, including volunteers or agents, have conducted themselves whilst carrying out the business of Exaireo Trust Ltd.
- Appeals against refusal of accommodation.
- Licensor breaches of the Licence Agreement / not meeting obligations contained in it
- Unreasonable delays in providing services.
- Failure to carry out what has been agreed.
- Failure to meet the standards of service promised.
- Lack of response to a reported problem.
- Neighbour or external complaints

[1] The Complaint Handling Code 2024, Section 1, *The Housing Ombudsman Service*

Staff should recognise the difference between a **service request** and a **complaint**. A service request is a request from a resident to the landlord requiring action to be taken to put something right. Service requests are not complaints and must be recorded separately, as a 'Task' using the Arthur Housing Management System. This will allow monitoring and regular reviews of the Task. However, a complaint must be raised if a resident expresses dissatisfaction with the response to their service request. If this happens, the resolution of the Task must still continue and not be stopped or delayed in any way due to the investigation of the complaint or awaiting the outcome.

Where an expression of dissatisfaction with services is made through Exaireo's Resident Surveys, this is not defined as a complaint, although wherever possible, the person completing the survey should be made aware of how they can pursue a complaint if they wish to.

2. PROCEDURES

As part of Exaireo's ethos of welcoming complaints, we should make it easy for residents to complain by providing different channels through which they can make a complaint. Consideration of our duties under the Equality Act 2010 (see Equality and Diversity Policy) should be in mind to anticipate the needs and reasonable adjustments of residents who may need to access the complaints process. Support workers should help and assist with the bespoke needs of their residents in accessing the complaints process. Residents must not be treated differently if they complain.

Exaireo documentation will include a simplified statement (See Appendix 1), about how to make a complaint and access the Ombudsman. Exaireo staff will explain to Clients/Service Users about how to make a complaint. Staff will help Service Users/Clients, if requested, to prepare a complaint or access the Ombudsman.

The Complaints Procedure will be publicised by a simple statement of the procedure for complainants in Service Users'/Clients' handbooks and on induction. This information will include details of how to contact Exaireo Staff / Management. There will also be access to the Complaints Policy, forms and other complaint materials on the Exaireo website.

2.1. Exclusions from the complaint process

Exaireo must accept a complaint unless there is a valid reason not to do so. If a decision is made not to accept a complaint there must be evidence of the reasoning behind this. A record must be kept of this. Each complaint must be considered on its own merits. There can be no

blanket approach to excluding complaints; the individual circumstances of each complaint must be considered.

There may be circumstances in which a matter will not be considered as a complaint or escalated, but these circumstances must be fair and reasonable to residents. Non-exhaustive acceptable exclusions may include:

- The issue giving rise to the complaint occurred over twelve months ago.
- Legal proceedings have started. This is defined as details of the claim, such as the Claim Form and Particulars of Claim, having been filed at court.
- Matters that have previously been considered under the complaints policy.

Complaints received within 12 months of the issue occurring or the resident becoming aware of the issue, must be accepted unless they are excluded on other grounds. Exaireo should consider whether to apply discretion to accept complaints made outside this time limit where there are good reasons to do so.

If it is decided not to accept a complaint, an explanation must be provided to the resident setting out the reasons why the matter is not suitable for the complaints process and the right to take that decision to the Ombudsman. If the Ombudsman does not agree that the exclusion has been fairly applied, the Ombudsman may tell us to take on the complaint and we must do so.

2.2. Quick resolutions:

The early and local resolution of issues between landlords and residents is key to effective complaint handling. This will usually involve the complainant approaching any Exaireo staff member (for example their keyworker) verbally. Exaireo Trust's approach to complaints will be positive. The Exaireo Trust Ltd. would hope to resolve most complaints quickly and easily at this point, there and then.

When someone is making a verbal complaint, Exaireo staff must:

- Listen carefully.
- Clarify what the complaint is about.
- Remain polite, calm and objective.
- Explain the situation if appropriate.
- Tell the complainant what they will do as a result of the conversation.
- Ask the person if this will resolve their complaint, or if they wish to complain formally.
- Record the main details of the conversation on the **Exaireo Staff Record of Complaint** form **(Appendix 3).**

- Complete the Complaints Log (Appendix 4).
- Pass the completed form to the Complaints Officer.

If the complaint cannot be resolved informally, or if the complainant requests it, then the complaint must be escalated to Formal Stage 1.

2.3. Formal two-stage complaint process:

At each stage of the complaints process, complaint handlers must:

- deal with complaints on their merits, act independently, and have an open mind.
- give the resident a fair chance to set out their position.
- take measures to address any actual or perceived conflict of interest; and
- consider all relevant information and evidence carefully.

A complaint response must be provided to the resident when the answer to the complaint is known, not when the outstanding actions required to address the issue are completed. Outstanding actions must still be tracked and actioned promptly with appropriate updates provided to the resident.

2.3.1. Stage 1 (Formal complaint)

If a complaint has not been resolved quickly, then the complainant should be given the opportunity to complete either a **Resident Complaints Form (Appendix 2)** OR a **Complaints Originating from External Sources** form (**Appendix 7**) as appropriate.

If correspondence has been received e.g. by email, containing sufficient information, the complaint should proceed on this basis, and the complainant must not be asked to write out their concerns again purely to be on a 'form'. However, the complaint should be made in writing, but they can ask a member of staff or advocate to summarise their case for them. The completed complaint, whether on a Form or otherwise, should then be passed to the appropriate manager. Staff that help Service Users/Clients complete complaint correspondence should sign to say they have done so.

The Manager will:

- Acknowledge receipt of the complaint.
- 'Define' the complaint (set out our understanding of the complaint and the outcomes the resident is seeking or seek clarification on any aspect if it is unclear).
- Update the Complaints Log (Appendix 4).

- Inform the Complaints Officer.

When a complaint is acknowledged the Manager must be clear which aspects of the complaint Exaireo are, and are not, responsible for and clarify any areas where this is not clear. The Manager will ensure that the complaint is fully investigated and that the details of the investigation are recorded on file. The Complaints Officer will ensure compliance with Policy and the Complaints Handling Code including recording and reporting requirements to the Board and annual submissions to the Housing Ombudsman Service.

The **Incident Report Form (Appendix) 6** is to be utilised for recording any witness statements.

The timescale for acknowledging, defining and logging the complaint at this stage is **five working days of the complaint being received.** Exaireo must then investigate and issue a full response **within 10 working days** of the complaint being acknowledged.

A complaint might occasionally require a lengthier investigation. Any extension must be no more than 10 working days without good reason, and the reason(s) must be clearly explained to the resident. When informing a resident of an extension, they must be provided with the contact details of the Ombudsman.

Investigators must address all points raised in the complaint definition and provide clear reasons for any decisions, referencing the relevant policy, law and good practice where appropriate.

Where residents raise additional complaints during the investigation, these must be incorporated into the stage 1 response if they are related and the stage 1 response has not been issued. Where the stage 1 response has been issued, the new issues are unrelated to the issues already being investigated or it would unreasonably delay the response, the new issues must be logged as a new complaint.

At the end of the investigation the appropriate Manager, Office Administrator or Key-Worker should reply in writing in clear, plain language to the resident with the outcome of the investigation and offer to meet them to explain:

a. the complaint stage.
b. the complaint definition.
c. the decision on the complaint.
d. the reasons for any decisions made.
e. the details of any remedy offered to put things right.

f. details of any outstanding actions; and
g. details of how to escalate the matter to stage 2 if the individual is not satisfied

Copies of all correspondence or meeting notes should be kept on file and the Complaints Log updated. See Complaints Log and Case Notes.

2.3.2. Stage 2 (Formal Appeal)

If all or part of the complaint is not resolved to the resident's satisfaction at stage 1, it must be progressed to stage 2 of the procedure. Stage 2 is Exaireo's final response. Residents must not be required to explain their reasons for requesting a stage 2 consideration. Exaireo is expected to make reasonable efforts to understand why a resident remains unhappy as part of its stage 2 response.

The Manager will:

- Acknowledge receipt of the appeal.
- 'Define' the complaint (set out our understanding of the complaint and the outcomes the resident is seeking or seek clarification on any aspect if it is unclear).
- Update the Complaints Log (Appendix 4).
- Inform the Complaints Officer.

Requests for stage 2 must be acknowledged, defined and logged at stage 2 of the complaints procedure within **five working days of the escalation request being received**.

When the appeal is acknowledged the Manager must be clear which aspects of the complaint Exaireo are, and are not, responsible for and clarify any areas where this is not clear. Exaireo must issue a final response to the stage 2 within **20 working days** of the complaint being acknowledged. Any extension must be no more than 20 working days without good reason, and the reason(s) must be clearly explained to the resident together with contact details of the Ombudsman.

Notice should be given to the Board of Trustees, in particular to the Member Responsible for Complaints (MRC), to ensure the appeal is passed to the appropriate member of staff, and thoroughly reviewed. The review would normally be by a senior manager or trustee and not the same person making the original decision.

The **Complaints Log and Case Notes** will be updated accordingly. The Complaints Officer should also be informed to ensure proceedings are compliant with Policy and the Complaint Handling Code.

The process of investigating the appeal and the procedure for informing the complainant will be as in Stage 1; except that the procedure is normally escalated to senior manager / trustee level.

In particular, the senior manager / trustee must address all points raised in the complaint definition and provide clear reasons for any decisions, referencing the relevant policy, law and good practice where appropriate. At the end of the investigation, they must confirm the following in writing to the resident at the completion of stage 2 in clear, plain language:

a. the complaint stage.
b. the complaint definition.
c. the decision on the complaint.
d. the reasons for any decisions made.
e. the details of any remedy offered to put things right.
f. details of any outstanding actions; and
g. details of how to escalate the matter to the Ombudsman Service if the individual remains dissatisfied.

The option to escalate further to the Housing Ombudsman Service must be explained with full cooperation and support provided to do so if needed. See paragraph 2.4 The Housing Ombudsman Service.

2.4. The Housing Ombudsman Service

The Housing Ombudsman Service website is: http://www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk/

2.4.1. Complaint Handling Code

Exaireo has a statutory obligation to comply with the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code (the 'Code'). The Code sets out how Exaireo must approach complaints including enabling a positive complaints culture as well as resolving any complaints themselves.

Each year Exaireo will self assess against the provisions of the Code and publish the results on its website along with this Policy and other complaint related material. We will also make an annual submission of our performance against the Code to The Housing Ombudsman so that they can monitor our compliance with the Code, regardless of whether any complaints progress to the Ombudsman. This means the Ombudsman can monitor all organisations even where no complaints are referred to them.

2.4.2. Complaints Officer

As part of the Code, Exaireo must have a person or team assigned to take responsibility for complaint handling, including liaison with the Ombudsman and ensuring complaints are reported to Trustees. The Code refers to that person or team as the Complaints Officer. They will hence ensure compliance with this Policy and the Complaints Handling Code and undertake the reporting requirements to the Trustees and annual submissions to the Housing Ombudsman Service. The Complaints Officer for Exaireo is **Chris Plummer**.

The complaints officer will have access to staff at all levels to facilitate the prompt resolution of complaints. They will also have the authority and autonomy to ensure disputes are resolved promptly and fairly.

2.4.3. Member Responsible for Complaints (MRC)

As part of the Code, Exaireo must have a Member Responsible for Complaints (MRC). This is a member of Exaireo's Board of Trustees who will be responsible for the overall oversight and scrutiny of our compliance and performance against the Code. The MRC for Exaireo is **Catherine Brady**.

2.4.4. Escalating complaints to the Ombudsman

All residents have the right to refer unresolved social housing matters to the Housing Ombudsman Service. The Housing Ombudsman Service is independent of Exaireo Policy and Procedures but all the steps in this document must have been fully exhausted first. The resident may choose another recognised external outlet for their complaint prior to, or as well as, the Ombudsman (e.g. their MP or a local councillor). All these outlets must be fully supported by staff and be offered full co-operation at all times. The resident is to be freely offered any assistance they need to access the Ombudsman service.

Residents are encouraged to inform staff if they are seeking redress via the Ombudsman Service but this may not be forthcoming. If any suggestion is made by a resident of seeking redress through the Ombudsman; staff will:

- check the resident has exhausted all steps in the Exaireo Complaints Procedure
- offer help, advice and assistance; especially if any Exaireo procedure steps remain
- immediately inform senior management and the Complaints Officer.

On receipt of possible escalation to the Ombudsman, the Complaints Officer will:

- contact the Member Responsible for Complaints (MRC)
- make the complaint file available to the MRC, as required

- pass on any correspondence or new information within 3 working days of receipt
- update the Complaints Log (Appendix 4).

On being informed of Ombudsman action, the MRC will oversee the decision on the best course of action to take, in consultation with senior management and the Board. Depending on the circumstances, nature and seriousness of the complaint this could include, but is not limited to:

- waiting for confirmation of Ombudsman involvement
- reviewing again all aspects of the complaint,
- calling an extraordinary Trustee Meeting,
- designating another lead trustee and/or senior manager,
- considering if any external or legal advice may be needed.

If a lead trustee or senior manager has been designated to deal with the Ombudsman; the MRC, on behalf of the Board, will retain overall oversight as required.

Whilst an Ombudsman case is ongoing the MRC (or other designated lead) will:

- draft or approve all responses made to the Ombudsman, in conjunction with the Complaints Officer
- ensure full co-operation with the Ombudsman
- ensure any requests or requirements received are complied with timeously
- keep a record on file of all Ombudsman contacts, correspondence, requirements and actions taken in Case Notes
- update senior management and the Board as required

Upon resolution of the Ombudsman case, the MRC (or designated lead) will:

- update the Board, Complaints Officer and senior management
- consider whether an extraordinary Trustee Meeting is needed
- ensure implementation of the decision within the set timescales
- consider whether any policy, procedures or practices need to be changed
- consider whether any staff training needs to be undertaken
- update the Complaints Log and Case Notes

2.5. Putting things right

It is Exaireo Trust's overall objective to provide a high quality service to all its Service Users/Clients/Applicants. To achieve this objective The Exaireo Trust Ltd. has set standards of service that Service Users/Clients/Applicants can expect.

Exaireo recognise that in some instances it might fail to achieve these standards and, in these cases, it is committed to the principle of acknowledging this openly and setting out the actions it has already taken, or intends to take, to put things right.
These can include:

- Apologising.
- Acknowledging where things have gone wrong.
- Providing an explanation, assistance or reasons.
- Taking action if there has been delay.
- Reconsidering or changing a decision.
- Amending a record or adding a correction or addendum.
- Providing a financial remedy (compensation).
- Changing policies, procedures or practices.

Any remedy offered must reflect the impact on the resident as a result of any fault identified. The remedy offer must clearly set out what will happen and by when, in agreement with the resident where appropriate. Any remedy proposed must be followed through to completion. Exaireo must take account of the guidance issued by the Ombudsman when deciding on appropriate remedies.

Exaireo will consider compensation where failures occur, other than where any failure is outside Exaireo's control.

In most cases where the need for compensation is agreed, Exaireo will offer rent rebates or deductions against any rent or other debts owed to The Exaireo Trust Ltd. Where this is not appropriate Exaireo make compensation in cash.

The Exaireo Trust will consider discretionary compensation in the following areas only:

a) Where Exaireo has failed to meet its minimum standards of service delivery e.g. where an emergency repair for which Exaireo is responsible has not been carried out within 24 hours or where a project fails to deliver an acceptable service to an individual Service User/Client without reasonable justification.

b) In the event of a justified and proven complaint processed through The Exaireo Trust Ltd. Complaints Policy.

c) Cases of serious disruption or disturbance due to circumstances within Exaireo's control e.g. where major repairs or improvements to Exaireo properties need to be carried out.

Senior managers or Trustees will decide on the validity of all instances of compensation and will set the amounts to be compensated. The minimum amount will be £10 and maximum amounts will be linked to resident's weekly rent, for example in cases of disruption due to building works. Decisions made at the discretion of the Board of Trustees will be final.

In addition to any discretionary compensation, Exaireo will cooperate fully with any compensation order made by the Housing Ombudsman or other legal duties.

2.6. Monitoring

2.6.1. Complaints Log and Case Notes

All complaints will be recorded in the Complaints Log (Appendix 4). An electronic 'live log' version has been set up on SharePoint to log basic details and dates. A Case Notes section has also been created on SharePoint for the recording of the investigation, actions, timeline, decisions and rationale. Also, for the retention of documents & correspondence.

A paper version of the Complaints Log will also be kept at The Exaireo Trust Coneries office for logging complaints by staff who do not have access to SharePoint. Managers have access to update the Case Notes; all staff have access to log complaints. The Complaints Officer will ensure that complaints are logged, and appropriate Case Notes are kept. The electronic logs help with the recording of complaints while off the main office site.

- The Complaints Log is located on SharePoint at:
  Shared > Documents > EXAIREO > POLICIES & PROCEDURES > Complaints > Complaints - LIVE LOG.docx

- The Complaints Case Notes are located on SharePoint at:
  Shared > Documents > Complaints
  N.B. this folder is only accessible / visible to the Management Team.

The Complaints Log and Case Notes will be maintained by the Complaints Officer and will track the progress of a complaint from the date it is received until the date it is finally resolved.

Complaints received will be discussed with the appropriate Manager as part of the supervision of all Exaireo staff.

2.6.2. Quarterly Monitoring

A Quarterly Complaints Monitoring Report will be prepared by the Complaints Officer each quarter for the Member Responsible for Complaints (MRC) and the wider Board of Trustees. **(Appendix 5).**

The MRC will exercise overall responsibility for overseeing and scrutinizing the Complaints Policy & Procedures and operational effectiveness together with compliance with the Complaints Handling Code.

2.7. Reporting

The Complaints Officer will make an annual submission to the Ombudsman of Exaireo's performance against the Code. This must be made by the **30th September** each year (6 months after financial year end).

The submission will be in conjunction with the self-assessment and the **annual complaint performance and service improvement report** which are prepared by the Complaints Officer. The self assessment and performance report must be reported to the Trustees via the Member Responsible for Complaints (MRC) and published on the section of Exaireo's website relating to complaints. The Trustees must produce a response to the report which must also be published alongside this. The MRC will usually produce this response on behalf of the Board for joint agreement and sign-off.

The annual complaints performance and service improvement report for scrutiny and challenge, must include:

a. the annual self-assessment against this Code to ensure their complaint handling policy remains in line with its requirements.
b. a qualitative and quantitative analysis of the landlord's complaint handling performance. This must also include a summary of the types of complaints the landlord has refused to accept.
c. any findings of non-compliance with this Code by the Ombudsman.
d. the service improvements made as a result of the learning from complaints.
e. any annual report about the landlord's performance from the Ombudsman; and
f. any other relevant reports or publications produced by the Ombudsman in relation to the work of the landlord.

2.8. Continuous learning and improvement

Exaireo must look beyond the circumstances of the individual complaint and consider whether service improvements can be made as a result of any learning from the complaint. We must use complaints as a source of intelligence to identify issues and introduce positive changes in service delivery.

Accountability and transparency are also integral to a positive complaint handling culture. Exaireo must report back on wider learning and improvements from complaints to stakeholders, such as residents' panels, staff and relevant committees.

Overarching this Policy Exaireo must have a standard objective in relation to complaint handling for all relevant employees or third parties that reflects the need to:

a. have a collaborative and co-operative approach towards resolving complaints, working with colleagues across teams and departments;
b. take collective responsibility for any shortfalls identified through complaints, rather than blaming others; and
c. act within the professional standards for engaging with complaints as set by any relevant professional body.

3. ORGANISATIONAL IMPACT OF POLICY

3.1. Financial

Minimal financial impact anticipated, although complaints procedures and reporting must be adequately resourced. The implementation of this policy will help address any issues at an early stage and so should minimise any action escalating to the Housing Ombudsman Service, which could otherwise lead to a greater financial impact. Similarly, the feedback received via these procedures should enhance the development of best practice efficiencies.

3.2. Legislative

This Policy must follow and comply with the Complaint Handling Code and therefore must be updated as required by Code changes or directives from the Housing Ombudsman Service.

3.3. Risk Management

Risks to the Organisation will be mitigated by ensuring;

- All employees and managers are aware of this Policy, appended procedures, and the Complaint Handling Code.
- good record keeping and timely responses at each Complaint Stage.

3.4. Procedural

Include this Policy in the Induction Process for both staff and residents. Raise and refresh at team meetings and staff supervisions. Include monitoring and scrutiny at Board meetings, lead by the Member Responsible for Complaints (MRC).

3.5. Consideration of links/contradictions with other policy/policies

This Policy links to the Induction Process for Staff and Service Users, the Allocations Policy and the Equalities Policy.

4. LIST OF APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1 - COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE FOR CLIENTS / SERVICE USERS

APPENDIX 2 - RESIDENT COMPLAINT FORM

APPENDIX 3 – EXAIREO STAFF RECORD OF COMPLAINT

APPENDIX 4 - COMPLAINTS LOG

APPENDIX 5 - QUARTERLY MONITORING OF COMPLAINTS

APPENDIX 6 - INCIDENT REPORT FORM

APPENDIX 7 - COMPLAINTS ORIGINATING FROM EXTERNAL SOURCES

APPENDIX 1 - COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE FOR CLIENTS / SERVICE USERS

POLICY STATEMENT

You have the right to complain if you feel that the service you have received, the way you have been treated by an Exaireo worker or volunteer, when we have not done something which was agreed, or if you are unhappy about anything else concerning The Exaireo Trust Ltd.

If you want to write down your complaint but have problems with writing or language; please ask an Exaireo worker to help you. There is a form, which you can fill in with the details of your complaint.

Action will then be taken, and you will be told the outcome of this action. Exaireo are a signatory to the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code.

WHAT TO DO

If you have a complaint, please do the following:

1 **Tell an Exaireo Worker**
They will listen and try to explain the situation or otherwise try to sort out the problem quickly, there and then. They will keep a record of what you say and that you have complained. If you are not happy with their reply, you can make a formal complaint.

2 **Formal Complaint (Stage 1)**
To do this your complaint needs recording on a form. If you need help with doing this, a worker will help you. We will confirm that we have received and understood your complaint within 5 working days. We will look into the problem and let you know the outcome within another 10 working days of acknowledging the form. If you are not happy with the outcome you can Appeal. The appeal is called Stage 2 of the Formal Stage.

3 **Formal Appeal (Stage 2)**
You can appeal the outcome to your formal complaint. To do this, please write to us and give details of why you are not happy and what you want done to put things right. If you need help doing this, a worker will assist you. We will confirm that we have received and understood your appeal within 5 working days.

A different Senior Manager or Trustee will look again at your complaint and let you know the outcome within another 20 working days of acknowledging the appeal. This will be Exaireo's final response but if you are still not happy with the outcome you have the option to take your complaint to the independent Housing Ombudsman.

4 Independent Housing Ombudsman

We sincerely hope that all problems will have been resolved after working through the above steps but, if we still have not been able to agree the outcome, you have the right to refer the matter to the Independent Housing Ombudsman.

You must have completed Exaireo's complaints process, having been through all the steps above. You must have cooperated with staff, at each stage, to help investigate and resolve your complaint. If you choose this option, please inform a senior manager that you are doing so.

You can get up to date information and make your complaint to the Housing Ombudsman online via the Housing Ombudsman Service website at: http://www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk/.

Alternatively, further contact details are:

Email: info@housing-ombudsman.org.uk

Phone: 0300 111 3000

Write to:
Housing Ombudsman Service
PO Box 1484
Unit D
Preston
PR2 0ET

Exaireo staff will be happy to help you access and work with this service to finally resolve any remaining dispute.

APPENDIX 2 - RESIDENT COMPLAINT FORM

RESIDENT NAME: ……..…….DATE: ……..

ADDRESS: ……..……..

Your complaint is:

Completion assisted by Exaireo Staff? Yes / No Member of Staff:……..

Signed:…….Dated:……

APPENDIX 3 – EXAIREO STAFF RECORD OF COMPLAINT

Complainant's Name		Date of incident:	
Receiving Staff Name		Date of report:	
Details of Incident or Complaint			
Action being taken to resolve the situation with target dates			
Outcome of action with dates resolved			
Resolved to Complainant's satisfaction?			

APPENDIX 4 - COMPLAINTS LOG

		Quick resolutions		FORMAL COMPLAINT – Stage 1			FORMAL APPEAL – Stage 2				OMBUDSMAN			
Date Complaint Received	Source	Quickly resolved? Y / N	Date Resolved	Stage 1 Complaint Date Received	Date Complaint Defined & Acknowledged	Date Full Response Issued	Stage 2 Complaint Date Received	Date Complaint Defined & Acknowledged	Date MRC / Trustees Notified	Date Final Response Issued	Date escalated to Ombudsman	Date MRC / Trustees Notified	Date of Outcome from Ombudsman	Date Ombudsman directive(s) implemented

APPENDIX 5 - QUARTERLY MONITORING OF COMPLAINTS

Project: **The Exaireo Trust Ltd** **Quarter**: .....

Number of complaints received in this quarter:..... Number of complaints still to be resolved:.....

Number of complaints taken to Formal Stage 2:..... Number of complaints taken to Ombudsman: .....

Subject of complaint	No. of complaints	Level of complaint Informal / Formal	Level of resolution (e.g. Key-Worker, Manager, CEO, Trustee)	Source of complaint (e.g. Resident, neighbour, external agency)
Behaviour of (other) Resident(s)				
Harassment				
Conduct of staff				
Standard of support				
Standard of accommodation				
Repairs & Maintenance				
Neighbour complaints				
Other				

APPENDIX 6 - INCIDENT REPORT FORM (witness statement)

Project Name:	Exaireo Trust Ltd.
Project Address:	5 The Coneries Loughborough LE11 1DZ
Telephone No:	01509 266422
Date of incident	
Time of incident	
Location of incident	
Person(s) involved	

Statement by (print name).....

Made on (date): ..... Time: .....

Please State:

- What were you doing when the incident happened?
- How the incident appeared to happen?
- Was/what injuries/damage were caused?
- What action was taken following the incident?

Please circle whether statement continued on a separate sheet: Yes / No

Signature of person making this statement.....

APPENDIX 7 - COMPLAINTS ORIGINATING FROM EXTERNAL SOURCES

Complaints Received from Neighbours or External Sources

Source of complaint: .....
Property(ies) affected:.....
Dates(s) of incidents(s) period of dispute:.....
Nature of dispute: .....

Risk* posed to Exaireo by this situation (delete as appropriate): High Risk / Low Risk
*The level of risk reflects the potential for the incident or on-going dispute to threaten the project's continuing operation in this location.

Action taken to resolve situation:

Outcome of action:

Form Completed By:..... Date:.....