

Complaints at Hastoe

At Hastoe we aim to deliver excellent services to residents, but we recognise that sometimes things go wrong and when this happens, we want to put things right and stop it happening again. We value feedback from residents and will use this to improve our services. We want to make sure that it's easy for you to make a complaint, and our aim is to resolve the issue as quickly as possible. We will thoroughly investigate and review all complaints.

Ways to make a complaint:

You can make a complaint in a number of ways:

- By completing the online form at www.hastoe.com/contact-us/make-a-complaint/
- Contacting us by phone, text message, email or letter
- Through the MyHastoe portal
- Face to face
- Through a third party such as an MP, councillor, advocate, friend or family member. The complainant will need to give permission in most circumstances.

What is a complaint?

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.

Housing Ombudsman

At any stage of your complaint, you can access the Housing Ombudsman Service by visiting their website at www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk, by emailing info@housing-ombudsman.org.uk, by phoning 0300 1113000, or by writing to:

Housing Ombudsman Service,
PO Box 152,
Liverpool,
L33 7WQ

What is not a complaint?

Some areas of dissatisfaction fall outside the scope of our complaints policy and we will not investigate them as a complaint. These include:

- A first request for service, such as a repair; Challenges to service charges or rent setting, although we will investigate complaints about the services these charges pay for such as cleaning or grass cutting.
- Neighbour disputes or antisocial behaviour, unless the complaint is in relation to how Hastoe has managed the issue.
- Complaints relating to services where the policy for the area of service has been applied correctly.
- In situations where legal action has been commenced either by Hastoe or against Hastoe.
- Situations where a claim is being dealt with by Hastoe's insurers.
- Complaints about data breaches.
- Matters that have already been investigated as part of a formal complaint.

We manage issues regarding the above areas in a different way. Please contact us if you wish to discuss any of these issues.

Where a complaint is made about an issue that occurred more than 6 months before the complaint being made, we will not ordinarily investigate these as a complaint, but we will consider the information as part of the background of a complaint.

Learning from complaints:

We publish our complaints performance, and any improvements made as a result of the complaints we receive, in our Annual Report to Tenants. We invite residents who have had recent experience of our complaints process to scrutinise our complaints performance. This enables us to learn from their experiences and to improve our services. Hastoe also carries out regular self assessments against the Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code and takes appropriate action to ensure complaint handling is in line with the framework.

Reasonable adjustments

Throughout the complaints process, we will make reasonable adjustments to accommodate your needs in accordance with the Equality Act 2010. This may include changes to the complaints policy, procedure or process.

How we deal with complaints:

Stage 1

All complaints will be investigated at Stage 1 where dealing with the issue normally has not resolved the problem or where you have requested to make a complaint. The complaint will be investigated by a manager from the department responsible for the service being complained about, who hasn't been involved in dealing with the issue previously. Your complaint will be acknowledged in two working days, advising who the investigating manager will be, details of Hastoe's complaints policy and timescales for response.

You will be contacted by the investigating manager, normally by telephone, to discuss your complaint in more detail. You will be asked to provide specific details of your complaint and how you would like us to resolve the issue. We need this information so that we are clear on all areas of your complaint, especially if it's in relation to more than one issue or the complaint is complex. We also need to understand what you would like as an outcome of your complaint so that we can advise you about what we are able to do to resolve the issue.

You will receive a full written response within 10 working days of the complaint being made, or you will be contacted to advise a longer timescale is needed if the complaint is particularly complex. Where a longer timescale is necessary, this should not exceed a further 10 working days unless there is a good reason. The investigating manager will keep in regular contact with you to provide updates in how they are progressing the issue.

Stage 2

If you remain unhappy with the response you received at Stage 1 you must let us know within 21 days of our response and we will review your complaint. You will need to advise us what it is you remain unhappy with and what you would like as an outcome to your complaint. We will acknowledge the review of your complaint within 2 working days.

We will arrange for a manager more senior to the investigating manager at Hastoe to review the way in which your complaint was handled at Stage 1. You will be contacted by this manager usually by telephone or virtual meeting method such as Skype or Zoom to discuss the complaint and to understand why you're still unhappy and what you would like as an outcome. The manager will conduct the review and provide you with a written response of the outcome within 20 working days. If the review is likely to take longer you will be advised on a reasonable timescale for review. This should not exceed a further 10 days without good reason.