



COMPLAINTS AND CONCERNS POLICY

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1. REVISION / REVIEW SHEET

Issue	Brief description of reason for change	Document Owner	Date Issued
1	Policy review	Fflur Griffith	December 2020
2	Policy review – minor changes	Fflur Griffith	July 2022
3	Policy review- minor changes and compliance with Renting Homes (Wales) Act 2016	Fflur Griffith	March 2023

2. INTRODUCTION

Adra (Tai) Cyf is committed to dealing effectively with any complaints and concerns you may have about our services. We aim to clarify any issue you may be unsure about. If possible, we will put right any mistakes we may have made. We will provide any service you are entitled to which we have failed to deliver. If we did something wrong, we will apologise and, where possible, try to put things right for you. We aim to learn from our mistakes and use the information we gain to improve our services.

3. OUR PRINCIPLES

Our aim, if possible, is to put right any mistake we have made. If we haven't provided a service that you should have received, we will provide it if that's still possible. If we've done something wrong, we will:

- Apologise.
- Accept responsibility.
- Be open and honest.
- Correct any mistakes as soon as possible.
- Listen to you to improve the service.
- Provide information and regular updates.
- Ensure that you will not suffer as a result of the complaint.
- Learn from our mistakes.

4. SCOPE

- 4.1 This Policy applies to all stakeholders who are unhappy with the service provided by Adra.
- 4.2 This Policy shall apply to **Adra (Tai) Cyf** (the Parent) and any of its subsidiaries (including **Medra Cyf**)
- 4.3 It is possible to authorize others to submit a complaint on your behalf e.g., friend, member of family, representative of an organization (e.g., Citizens Advice Bureau). This does not include a legal representative. If a person is expressing a complaint on behalf of someone else, we will need confirmation of their agreement for the other person to act on their behalf. To protect our customers from unauthorized access to their personal information, and to comply with the Data Protection Act 2018, we require authorization from any customer before information is disclosed to a third-party. You can request a copy of our 'Access to Personal Information' form by contacting us on 0300 123 8084 or by emailing enquiries@adra.co.uk
- 4.4 A complaint can be made in the following ways:
 - Filling out a complaint form – A customer can request a form from the member of staff they are dealing with or by contacting Adra on 0300 123 8084. Forms are also available at our offices and on our website www.adra.co.uk
 - A customer can make a complaint over the phone by contacting our customer services team on 0300 123 8084 stating that they wish to make a complaint

- Send an e-mail to – enquiries@adra.co.uk
- Write a letter to the Complaints Department at:

Adra (Tai) Cyfyngedig,
Tŷ Coch,
Llys y Dderwen,
Parc Menai,
Bangor,
Gwynedd.
LL57 4BL

Adra will make reasonable changes to our complaints process where necessary to ensure that customers with specific needs are not at a disadvantage when raising a complaint. We will ask customers to tell us how they would like us to communicate and establish whether a customer has particular requirements. Examples include, braille, large print documents, appointing a sign language expert. We may also make changes to how we manage contact with customers if we find there are unreasonable demands or behaviours towards staff who are trying to resolve complaints.

- 4.6 Normally we will only be able to look at complaints which have been brought to our attention within six months, this is in accordance with guidance provided by the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales. We may be able to look at concerns which are brought to our attention later than this, however, the customer will have to explain why the matter was not brought to our attention sooner to allow us to consider it properly. As per our 'QPpol11 Privacy Notice', we may refuse to comply with your request to access your information if your request is clearly unfounded. In any event, we will not consider any concerns about matters that took place more than three years ago.

5. ASKING US TO PROVIDE A SERVICE?

If you are approaching us to request a service, this policy does not apply. If you made a request for a service and then are not happy with our response, you will be able to make your concern known as we describe below.

6. WHAT IS A COMPLAINT?

- 6.1 A complaint is when a customer is unhappy with a service that they have received by Adra or one of our contractors. This includes occasions where you believe:
- We have done something we shouldn't have done.
 - We haven't done something that we should have done.
 - When the behaviour of an Adra employee (or a contractor) has been inappropriate.
 - A service we've provided has not been delivered to a reasonable quality, safety, frequency, or cost.
 - Our decision-making process has been flawed.
 - Adra has worked outside policy or protocol.

7. WHAT IS NOT A COMPLAINT? (For the purpose of this policy)

- An initial request for a service such as reporting a repair.
- Matters that have already been considered fully under Adra's Complaints Policy and a final / Stage 2 response has been provided.
- Matters that have already been considered by the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales.
- Matters which are the subject of civil or criminal court proceedings.
- Matters relating to Freedom of Information / Data Protection matters.
- Complaints from staff about Adra.
- Anonymous complaints – Adra will act on the information provided but will be unable to advise on the action taken to deal with the issue.
- Insurance claims – many contract holders believe that Adra automatically insure their belongings however, this is not the case. It is a contract holders' responsibility to arrange their own home content insurance when moving into a property.
- An appeal against a properly made decision. Adra recognises the customer's right to request a review of decision relating to relevant Adra policies. Any such review will be dealt with following our CCp04- Review of Decision process.

8. WHAT IF THERE IS MORE THAN ONE BODY INVOLVED?

If your complaint covers more than one body, we will usually work with them to decide who should take the lead in dealing with your concerns. You will then be given the name of the person responsible for communicating with you while we consider your complaint.

If your complaint is about a body working on our behalf, you may wish to raise the matter informally with them first. However, if you want to express your concern or complaint formally, we will look into this ourselves and respond to you.

9. THE COMPLAINTS PROCESS

9.1 The Customer Services Team is responsible for dealing with complaints. Once a complaint has been received by the Customer Services Team, the complaint will be referred to the Customer Services Co-ordinator. The Customer Services Co-ordinator will be responsible for dealing with your complaint from the beginning to the end of the process.

9.2 Stage 1

9.2.1 The Customer Services Co-ordinator will acknowledge the complaint within **5 working days** and will work alongside the relevant officers / departments in investigating the complaint.

We will aim to resolve concerns and complaints as quickly as possible and expect to deal with the majority within **10 working days**

The Customer Services Co-ordinator will firstly aim to establish the facts. The extent of the investigation will depend upon how complex and how serious the issues raised are. In some instances, we may ask to meet with you to discuss your concerns or inspect the problem.

We will 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 the particular complaint.

If we find that we made a mistake, we will tell you what happened and why. If we find that there is a fault in our systems or the way we do things, we will tell you what it is and how we plan to change things to stop it happening again

If we made a mistake, we will always apologise and aim to make sure it does not happen again.

9.2.2 If you are satisfied with the response but the complaint has not been resolved (e.g., repairs not completed) you will be contacted with regular updates until resolution. The complaint will only be closed once you have confirmed that you are satisfied the complaint has been resolved or if we do not hear from you following **10 working days** of sending our Stage 1 formal response.

9.2.3 If you are not satisfied with the response given, you can request that another resolution be offered, or that the complaint is escalated to a member of Adra's Senior Leadership Team.

9.3 Stage 2

9.3.1 If you are not happy with Stage 1 formal response, you can request that your complaint be escalated. A Senior Leadership Team member will assess and revise the complaint and, if appropriate and beneficial to the investigation, a telephone call, face-to-face visit / video call will be arranged

The Senior Leadership Team member will acknowledge your complaint within **5 working days** of the complaint being escalated.

We will aim to resolve complaints as quickly as possible and expect to deal with the majority within **20 working days**.

Depending on the nature of the complaint, they will:

- Support and adhere to the original decision / resolution.
- Reverse the decision.
- Offer a new resolution.
- Take other appropriate action which may include not investigating the matter any further.

9.3.2 Should the Senior Leadership Team member support the original decision / resolution proposed, we will notify you of Adra's final / Stage 2 response and the complaint will be closed.

9.3.3 Should a new resolution be offered; you will receive regular updates until the complaint is resolved.

10. APPEALING TO THE PUBLIC SERVICES OMBUDSMAN FOR WALES

If you feel that we did not succeed in resolving a complaint, you may complain to the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales.

The Public Services Ombudsman for Wales is independent of all government bodies and can look into a 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 the part of Adra.
- Disadvantaged personally by a service failure or have been treated unfairly.

The Public Services Ombudsman for Wales normally expects you to bring your concerns to Adra's attention first and to give us a chance to put things right.

Contacting the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales:

- **Phone:** 0300 790 0203
- **E-mail:** ask@ombudsman-wales.org.uk
- **Website:** www.ombudsman-wales.org.uk
- **Writing to:** The Public Services Ombudsman for Wales
1 Ffordd yr Hen Gae,
Pencoed,
Bridgend,
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. Adra can advise you about such organisation.

11. WHAT WE EXPECT FROM YOU

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 believe that all complainants have the right to be heard, understood and respected. However, we also consider that our staff have the same right. We therefore expect you to be polite and courteous in your dealings with us. We will not tolerate aggressive, abusive or coercive behaviour, unreasonable demands, or unreasonable persistence. We will manage situations when we find that someone's actions are unacceptable in accordance with Adra's 'CCpol02 – Managing Customer Contact Policy.

12. MONITORING AND LESSONS LEARNT

We take complaints very seriously and we try to learn from any mistakes we have made. We record lessons learnt from each complaint and the action taken to improve the service. We seek to identify any trends in complaints with each service and look at how effectively our actions have addressed the matter to ensure that similar instances do not arise again in future.

We monitor and record lessons learnt by:

- Periodically reviewing complaints outcomes to identify whether there are any patterns / wider lessons to be learned that may not be apparent from individual complaints.
- Holding regular meetings with Service Managers to discuss complaints received against their service.
- Report on complaints to Adra's Senior Leadership Team and our Board on a six-monthly basis. This includes an analysis of the data gathered and information on recommendation that have been made for improving service delivery.
- Ensuring that all the information gathered is used to target any problem areas and consider if there is potential to improve policies, procedures and services.

13. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

Adra acknowledges and accepts its corporate responsibility to promote a culture of equality and recognises the value of diversity and the strengths that it brings to our services and communities.

Adra will take positive steps to ensure that it does not discriminate unlawfully and is committed to providing a workplace that is free from harassment, victimisation, and discrimination. We will always act within the scope of our own 'EDpol01 - Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Policy'.

14. REVIEW

This policy will be reviewed at least every 3 years or in response to changes in legislation, regulatory guidance, good practice or changes in other relevant Adra policies. Adra also retains the right to review this policy from time to time in addition to the circumstances set out above.

15. ASSOCIATED POLICIES

- CCpol02 – Managing Customer Contact Policy
- EDpol01 - Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Policy
- QPpol11 - Privacy Notice