



Goulden House Co-operative Ltd
Complaints Policy
24th September 2026

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1. Introduction

Welcome to Goulden House Co- Operative Ltd copy of the Formal Complaints Process as detailed in the following Policy Document.

What counts as a complaint:

Goulden House Co-Operative Ltd manage Goulden House on behalf of Wandsworth Borough Council. **“Wandsworth Borough Council defines a complaint as *“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 or group of individuals.”***

Richard Hickie

Chair of the Goulden House Management Committee

The Goulden House Estate Manager will be the key manager for complaints handling and investigation at Stage 1, unless Goulden House Co-operative Ltd Manager chooses, or is required to refer to another officer or committee member (*for example if the complaint is regarding the Goulden House Co-operative Manager*).

Stage 2 will be carried out by Wandsworth Council officers to ensure we are complying with the code.

In order to deliver a high standard of service to our residents, the council and Goulden House Co-operative will meet regularly, and learning from complaints is shared.

Annie Gleeson MSc

Estate Manager/Goulden House Co-Operative

The [Goulden House Co-Operative Ltd Estate](#) Manager will be the key manager for complaints handling and investigation at Stage 1, unless Goulden House Co-operative Ltd Manager chooses, or is required to refer to another officer or committee member (for example if the complaint is regarding the [Goulden House Co-operative Ltd Manager](#)).

Our managers and committee members will undergo training as necessary and be familiar with the Complaint Handling Code.

Stage 2 will be carried out by Wandsworth Council officers to ensure we are complying with the code.

In order to deliver a high standard of service to our residents, the council and [Goulden House Co-operative Ltd](#) will meet regularly, and learning from complaints is shared.

Regulatory framework

[Goulden House Co-operative Ltd](#) must record all complaints made in person at our office, via telephone, email, other online messaging services such as WhatsApp or letter. [Goulden House Co-operative Ltd](#) like the council, must adopt the [Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code's](#) definition of a complaint which is as follows:

“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.”

<https://www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk/landlords-info/complaint-handling-code/>

[Goulden House Co-operative Ltd](#) and Wandsworth are required to use a two stage complaints process, as set out by the Housing Ombudsman.

Stage 1: An investigation is carried out by a manager involved with the service and a response is given.

If a complainant is unhappy with the response, they may escalate their complaint to a Stage 2

Stage 2: A review of the complaint response is undertaken by a senior manager at Wandsworth and a response given.

If the complainant is still unhappy, they may approach an ombudsman as the last and final stage.

2. Defining Complaints

2.1 What is a complaint?

“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.”

A complaint may concern one or more of the following:

- [Goulden House Co-operative Ltd](#) has done something which the resident considers should not have been done
- [Goulden House Co-operative Ltd](#) has failed to do something that they consider should have been done
- The service provided by [Goulden House Co-operative Ltd](#) was not good enough; the resident received poor quality of service or there was poor communication
- There has been a failure or a delay in providing a service
- Mistakes were made in the way a decision has been reached, or a case has been handled
- [Goulden House Co-operative Ltd](#) has given incorrect or misleading information
- Staff have been rude or unhelpful or behaved inappropriately
- A contractor hired to undertake work by [Goulden House Co-operative Ltd](#) may have caused any of the above

A resident does not need to use the word complaint or state that they would like to make a complaint for it to be treated as such, for example “I am not happy with” is an expression of dissatisfaction, and so a potential complaint. You should be offered the opportunity to raise a complaint.

Residents have the right to express dissatisfaction and to request that their concerns be considered under the complaints process. Where the matter falls within the scope of this policy, it will be recorded and handled as a formal complaint and will not be dealt with informally instead.

To help explain our policy we'll use the example of a resident who has had a broken boiler in their flat. Look for these boxes to help see a real-world example.

If you want extra help, complaints from representatives of residents will be handled in line with the Complaints policy. If you want a relative, Citizens Advice staff or someone else to represent you, we will accept their complaint on your behalf.

Complaints should be accepted if made within 12 months of the issue occurring, or of the resident becoming aware of the issue. Discretion should be applied to include complaints outside of this timeframe, where appropriate

3. Exclusions from our Complaints Process

Services for which there is an alternative appeal or tribunal process will not be dealt with using our complaints procedure. These include:

- Housing Benefit disputes
- Council Tax disputes
- First time requests for works (Service Requests)
- Requests for information (these are dealt with under separate procedures: the Freedom of Information Act and Subject Access Requests)
- Data protection complaints, as there is a separate complaints process and final recourse is the Information Commissioner's Office
- An expression of dissatisfaction with services made through a survey is not defined as a complaint
- A complaint that has already been considered by the Council and completed both stages of the Corporate Complaints' Procedure.
- A complaint where either the resident, [Goulden House Co-operative Ltd](#) or the Council has started legal proceedings, defined as when a claim is filed at court
- Some issues around leaseholds can be taken up by the First-tier Tribunal. <https://www.lease-advice.org/disputes/tribunal/>
- A complaint that is being, or has been investigated by the Housing Ombudsman Service

For a comprehensive list of what does and does not constitute a complaint please see the council's website.

If we exclude an issue from the complaints process, then we will always provide an explanation why. Where possible we will direct you to the right body for handling the issue you raise. We will also always remind residents of their right to take that decision to the Housing Ombudsman for review. You have a right to contact the Ombudsman at any time.

In our example, the complaint about a broken boiler might be rejected if the boiler was in a leaseholder's private flat, so it isn't the responsibility of [Goulden House Co-operative Ltd](#) or the council to fix, but the leaseholder.

4. Service Requests

Not all contact with the [Goulden House Co-operative Ltd](#) will be a complaint. There may be general feedback on staff or services. Most commonly will be requests for [Goulden House Co-operative Ltd](#) to take action on something. These are Service Requests.

The definition of a fault or service request is **“A service request is a request for services, including repairs, or information, being made for the first time.”**

Issues such as missed bin collections, faulty communal lighting, block cleaning issues or requesting repairs to a property may not, in the first instance, be treated as a formal complaint. If you contact us about these matters or minor repairs, they will at first be dealt with as faults or service requests. We aim to resolve as many issues as possible promptly in line with our repairs policy or the policies of Wandsworth Council where they are responsible.

If residents are dissatisfied with how their service request has been handled, the issue can be dealt with as a formal Stage 1 complaint. We do not require residents to make multiple service requests before accepting a complaint.

If a complaint is raised in relation to a failed service request or the handling of a service request will not stop or stall a resolution to the service request issue.

In our example, if we didn't fix a resident's boiler for 3 days when we said we would fix it in 2 days, and the resident complained, we won't stop trying to fix the boiler while dealing with the complaint.
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5. Making a Complaint

How can residents make a complaint?

People can raise a complaint via the following means:

- Send an email to office@gouldenhouse.org
- Write a letter to [Goulden House Co-operative Ltd, Estate Office, Entrance A, Bullen Street, Battersea London SW11 3HF](#)
- Telephone [020 792 45213](tel:02079245213) (MON-FRI 09:00-17:00)
- Raise a complaint in person at the Estate Office

Complaints can be accepted from a representative acting on your behalf. This could be a relative, friend, carer, solicitor, or an advocate from an advice agency (please note that we usually require your consent for them to act on your behalf). Complaints made via a representative (with consent) will be handled in line with this Complaints Policy. They may also attend meetings with you or on your behalf.

To help us, please try and include:

- who you are
- explain what the issue is
- what you would like us to do about it

If we need further information, we will contact you.

In our example, we would need to know, which property you are from, your contact details. What the problem is - a broken boiler. We would also like to know what you would like to happen, in our example it might be that the boiler was fixed within a day and some compensation.

Complaints regarding housing can often be emotional. We will check if a resident is vulnerable and make any reasonable adjustments might need to be made when handling the complaint. If you need help in making a complaint, or adjustments to help you understand our process and responses, please let us know.

We ask residents please be respectful of staff and abide by the Goulden House Co-Operative Ltd Bullying & Harassment Policy.

<https://www.gouldenhouse.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/06/Goulden-House-Co-Operative-Ltd-Bullying-Harrassment-Policy-Section-4-a.pdf>

Recording Complaints

Throughout the complaints process, we will keep detailed records. These will be shared with the council to ensure that we are complying with our responsibilities under The Complaint Handling Code.

Public reporting on complaints will not share identifying details. Please request a copy of the GDPR/Data Protection Policy from the Goulden House Estate Office. The GDPR/Data Protection Policy is reviewed regularly by the Goulden House Management Committee, to reflect any changes to the law.

The council may also share details with the Housing Ombudsman or the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman, if required to do so.

6. The Process

Stage 1 – Receiving a complaint (up to 5 Working Days)

When a complaint is raised, our staff will log the complaint as soon as possible.

- We will acknowledge receipt of the complaint by email, post, or phone within 5 working days.
- The acknowledgement must set out our understanding of the complaint, the outcomes the resident is seeking, which aspects they are and are not responsible for.
- The 5 working days is counted when any officer or contractor received the complaint.

It may be that the complaint is for another department or team, if this is the case the complaint will be passed on immediately to the relative team, and the resident informed that this has happened.

If a complaint is regarding the Manager a more senior officer will lead, this may be the Chair of the committee, or if there is no more senior officer then it may be passed to the relevant Area Housing Manager in the Resident Services Department of Wandsworth Council. Where this is the case, we will notify the resident.

Stage 1 – Investigation (up to 10 working days)

Details of the complaint and what outcome is required need to be clear to assist us in resolving the complaint. In some cases, further information may be needed about the complaint to fully consider the matter. If further details are required, we will contact the complainant and ask for more information.

If the investigation and response cannot be completed within 10 working days, we may need to extend the timescale for an **additional 10 working days**, only in exceptional circumstances. If we need to do this, we will contact the complainant in writing to explain why more time is needed, the expected timescale for a response. This should include agreeing with the resident, suitable intervals for keeping them informed and the details of the Hosing Ombudsman Scheme.

Only in complex cases, or where third-party reports, or evidence is required should Stage 1 cases go beyond a 20-working day response time.

The complainant and should be advised why more time is required, the expected timescale for a response and include the details of the Housing Ombudsman Service. A copy of this should be kept as part of the record and the data recorded as part of the statistics.

A manager from [Goulden House Co-operative Ltd](#) will oversee an investigation, gather evidence, and come to a decision about the complaint. The decision will be: **upheld, partially upheld, not upheld**.

A written response will be provided to a complaint within **10 working days** from of the complaint being acknowledged.

Each complaint response will contain the following:

- the name of the manager investigating
- contact details
- the unique case number
- what stage the complaint is being investigated under
- the details of the complaint
- any evidence or information used to make a decision
- the decision either: **upheld, partially upheld, not upheld**
- If upheld or partially upheld, an apology and any recommended outcomes such as work to take place or compensation
- Any learning to stop the problem occurring again
- What to do if the resident is unhappy with the complaint response, how to escalate to Stage 2.
- details for the Housing Ombudsman.

Residents will get a response, once the answer or an action plan is known, rather than waiting until all outstanding actions have been completed.

In our example once we raise an order for the boiler to be repaired within 24 hours, you should receive a response. We wouldn't necessarily wait for the fix to happen before responding.

Where the stage 1 response has not yet been issued and a further complaint is made that is related to the initial complaint, it should be incorporated into the stage 1 response. Where there are new issues that are unrelated to the original complaint, or where it would cause unreasonable delay to add to the response, the new issues must be logged as a new complaint.

Stage 2 – Receiving a complaint (up to 5 Working Days)

If the complainant is still unhappy following the Stage 1 response, they will be advised to raise their complaint to Wandsworth Council's Resident Services Department. [Goulden House Co-operative Ltd](#) may forward their request for escalation on the person's behalf and should inform the complainant they have done so and provide the contact details for the Resident Services Department. The council have up to 5 working days to send an acknowledgement. Residents do not need to provide a reason for their escalation.

- The Resident Services Department must acknowledge receipt of the complaint by email, post, or phone within 5 working days.
- The acknowledgement must set out the council's understanding of the complaint, the outcomes the resident is seeking, which aspects they are and are not responsible for.
- The 5 working days is counted when any council officer, RMO officer or contractor received the complaint

Stage 2 – Review (up to 20 working days)

The council then has up to 20 working days from the date of the acknowledgement to review and respond.

The review will be undertaken by a Senior Manager or Head of Service at Wandsworth Council. Stage 2 complaints will not be considered by the same person that was involved in the stage 1 response.

- A resident does not have to provide a reason for escalation. The landlord should make efforts to understand why the resident remains dissatisfied, making use of extensions, if necessary, but should perform the investigation based on the information it has if the resident is not forthcoming with further information.
- The Council will provide a written response, with a decision on the complaint, following a review at Stage 2 within **20 working days from receipt**. A complaint response should be provided when the answer or an action plan is known, rather than waiting until all outstanding actions have been completed.
- If the Council are not able to meet this timescale as the case is more complex, they may extend up to an additional 20 working days. The complainant will be kept informed by the Corporate Complaints Team. This should include agreeing with the resident, suitable intervals for keeping them informed. The complainant should be advised why more time is required, the expected

timescale for a response, and they should be given the details of the Housing Ombudsman Service. A record must be kept on file and recorded.

- Only in complex cases, or where third-party reports, or evidence is required should Stage 2 cases go beyond a 40 working day response time. The complainant should be advised why more time is required, the expected timescale for a response and include the details of the Housing Ombudsman Service. A copy of this should be kept as part of the record and the data recorded as part of the statistics.
- [Goulden House Co-operative Ltd](#) will be informed of the outcome

At the end of the Stage 2 response the complainant will be provided with the contact details of the Housing Ombudsman Service, as that would be the complainant's next and final recourse if still dissatisfied.

If there remain any outstanding actions, the complainant should be kept updated until those are completed.

Beyond Stage 2 – Ombudsman Services

If the complainant is still dissatisfied, they may contact the Housing Ombudsman Service directly. The Housing Ombudsman Service is an independent, impartial, and free service for social housing residents.

The Housing Ombudsman Service make the final decision on disputes between residents and landlords that are registered members of the Scheme. This includes residents and leaseholders of social landlords (Wandsworth as a local authority is required to be part of the scheme. RMOs such as [Goulden House Co-operative Ltd](#) not need to register themselves, their services are covered by Wandsworth's membership).

The Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO) may also act as an ombudsman in some cases; however, the Housing Ombudsman will deal with all complaints about the Councils' landlord function from its tenants and leaseholders. The Council will advise if there are matters that should be referred to the (LGSCO)

7. Accessibility

We want to make it easy for anyone who wants to complain to do so and in line with the Equalities Act 2010 will consider reasonable adjustments for residents who may need access to the complaints process.

For example, if you need an interpreter or sign language interpreter, need information translated into another language, in Braille, on audio tape or in electronic format, or are neurodivergent and require information to be more accessible to suit your needs, please tell us when you first make your complaint, so we can make appropriate arrangements for you. [Goulden House Co-operative Ltd](#) and The Council will always do its best to meet residents' needs.

You can complain to any member of our staff, and they will accept your complaint.

8. Publicising Our Complaints Policy

The Complaints policy will be available in a clear and accessible format for all residents. This may require it to be provided in large print, braille or in the appropriate language for residents to understand.

The policy will be available in [the Estate Office, Goulden House](#), on our website www.gouldenhouse.org and via newsletters annually.

9. The Housing Ombudsman Service

The [Housing Ombudsman Service](#) will consider complaints about:

- leasehold services such as sales processes for leasehold properties, and general leasehold services provided by the landlord such as repair responsibilities under the lease
- moving to a property such as type of tenancy offered, mutual exchange or decision to renew a fixed term tenancy
- rent and services charges
- occupancy rights including succession, assignment, and possession proceedings
- property condition e.g. repairs, major works, or disabled adaptations
- tenant behaviour e.g. anti-social behaviour harassment or noise nuisance
- estate management e.g. cleaning or communal repairs, parking
- complaint handling e.g. delays in the process
- compensation e.g. home loss or disturbance payments or for tenant improvements

As of 1 April 2024, a new [Complaint Handling Code](#) became statutory, meaning that landlords are obliged by law to follow its requirements. The Code aims to achieve best practice in complaints handling and ultimately to provide a better service to residents. For the latest information please check the website of the Housing Ombudsman.

Residents may contact the Housing Ombudsman Service at any time for advice.

For a full and detailed examples of the above please visit [Housing Ombudsman Service](#) website. The above is correct at time of publication.