



Pinnocks Charity

ANNUAL COMPLAINTS PERFORMANCE AND SERVICE IMPROVEMENT REPORT - 2024

1. Introduction

This is our first annual complaints report, and covers the period **1st January to 31st December 2024**.

It provides our residents and tenants with information on the complaints we have received, what they were about and what we did to resolve them.

We strive hard to deliver high quality services, but we accept that we may not always get it right and when we do not, we will acknowledge this and attempt to correct it.

Our residents' views and perceptions are important to us, and we will continually take feedback to Board to improve our services to residents.

2. Management Committee's Response

The Chair of Trustees has reviewed and approved this years' Annual Complaints Report.

The Board regularly receives reports on any complaints received and ensure that we are proactively acting within the remit of the Code. We appoint Complaints Officers to investigate complaints to ensure that we are in touch with our resident's needs.

When complaints are received, we will follow our policy and procedure and when outcomes are agreed, we will consider the findings and make sure that we act on any actions required. We learn from them and use them in a positive way to deliver future service improvements.

3. Annual Self-Assessment

A copy of our latest self-assessment is attached for information.

4. Complaints Handling Performance

Period	Stage 1 complaints	Stage 2 complaints
2024	0	0

For this year, we are pleased to confirm that we received no formal complaints, meaning we have nothing to report on.

However, this does not mean that we are complacent. Instead, we will continue to ensure that all residents know how to access our Complaints Policy and Procedures and we have provided more information about this in Section 10.



5. Types of Complaints Received

We would have refused to accept complaints regarding Anti-social Behaviour (ASB) (although we did not receive any of these during the period of this report). This is because we have a separate ASB Policy and Procedure which deals with this. Copies of which are available from our office, or by contacting the clerk or complaints officer by phone or by email.

If we refuse to accept a complaint, we will always write to you and explain the reasons why in line with the Complaints Handling Code.

6. Complaints Escalated to the Housing Ombudsman Service

During this period 2024, we had no complaints cases escalated or referred to the Housing Ombudsman Service.

7. Compliance with the Code

We complied with the complaint handling code and had no Ombudsman intervention.

8. Learning & Service Improvements

Whilst we received no formal complaints, we do not take this for granted.

We recently completed our Resident perception surveys and have used the feedback from these surveys to ensure that our Complaints Policy and Procedure is easily accessible for all residents and tenants and that they know how to access it.

We have provided some more detailed information in Section 10 of this report.

9. The Housing Ombudsman Service

We include the Housing Ombudsman Service's contact information in all our correspondence relating to services, to actively encourage residents and tenants to use the service or access the Ombudsman service for assistance.

Residents should be aware that you do not have to have a formal complaint ongoing to seek advice and support from the Ombudsman service.

The Housing Ombudsman can be contacted in the following ways:

Web: www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk

Email: info@housingombudsman.org.uk

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

Tel: 0300 111 3000



10. Access to our Complaints Policy and Procedure

We try to ensure that complaints are resolved at the first point of contact, via our Clerk. If you remain dissatisfied, a formal complaint can be made.

Residents can access our Complaints Policy and Procedure and self-assessment against the Code in the following ways:

(a) The **Complaints Officer** :

Name: Tim Packham – Clerk
Telephone number: WhatsApp: 07745 524164
Address: The Lodge, St Thomas’s Almshouses, Old Road West,
Gravesend DA11 7LA
Email address: tim.packham@pinnocks.org

(b) The **Appeals Officer** is:

Name: Emma Pannell – General Manager
Telephone number: WhatsApp: 07745 524164
Address: The Lodge, St Thomas’s Almshouses, Old Road West,
Gravesend DA11 7LA
Email address: emma.pannell@pinnocks.org

Assistance can be obtained by visiting our office or calling us on **07745 524164**.

On receipt of a formal complaint, the Complaints Procedure will apply.

We also provide a copy of our Complaints Policy and Procedure to all new residents.

We provide information within our Annual Report regarding complaints.

We also include information within any services correspondence so that residents know how they can complain.

In addition, the publication of this report and our Board of Trustee’s response will demonstrate to residents that we value their perceptions of the services we deliver.

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Pinnocks Charity

BOARD’S RESPONSE TO THE ANNUAL COMPLAINTS PERFORMANCE AND SERVICE IMPROVEMENT REPORT

On 15th April 2025 the Board received:

- the 2024 annual complaints performance and service improvement report for residents living in homes owned and managed by Pinnocks Charity.
- An update to the complaints policy for residents living in homes owned and managed by Pinnocks Charity to meet the requirements of the new Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code 2024
- A self-assessment against the new Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code 2024

The Board has a Member Responsible for Complaints (MRC) who provides additional assurance to the Board on the effectiveness of Pinnock’s Charity’s complaints system.

As Chair of Trustees, and on behalf of the Trustee body, I have considered and approved the self-assessment that shows how the Charity complies with all aspects of the Housing Ombudsman’s Complaint Handling Code 2024.

Pinnocks Charity adopts the Housing Ombudsman’s definition of a complaint as any expression of dissatisfaction. This gives the Board assurance that Pinnocks Charity are recording an accurate volume of complaints, as the Board does not believe that a low volume of complaints would be a positive sign.

Given our size and the absence of any complaints during this reporting period, Pinnocks Charity does not have enough complaints to learn from trends. But we understand that communication which reiterates the existence of our complaints policy, and then dealing with any complaints received per the policy, is a key factor. The policy, training, expectations, and systems to deal with complaints have all been improved during 2024. The Board will monitor the feedback on communication through any individual complaints reported to the Board during 2025.

Signed: Charles Philip Painter – Chair of Trustees

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Signed

Date

Appendix A: Self-assessment form

This self-assessment form should be completed by the complaints officer and it must be reviewed and approved by the landlord's governing body at least annually.

Once approved, landlords must publish the self-assessment as part of the annual complaints performance and service improvement report on their website. The governing body's response to the report must be published alongside this.

Landlords are required to complete the self-assessment in full and support all statements with evidence, with additional commentary as necessary.

We recognise that there may be a small number of circumstances where landlords are unable to meet the requirements, for example, if they do not have a website. In these circumstances, we expect landlords to deliver the intentions of the Code in an alternative way, for example by publishing information in a public area so that it is easily accessible.

Section 1: Definition of a complaint

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
1.2	A complaint must be defined as: <i>'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.'</i>	Yes	Wording is included in Complaints Policy (attached)	
1.3	A resident does not have to use the word 'complaint' for it to be treated as such. Whenever a resident expresses dissatisfaction landlords must give them the choice to make complaint. A complaint that is submitted via a third party or representative must be handled in line with the landlord's complaints policy.	Yes	Wording is included in Complaints Policy	
1.4	Landlords must recognise the difference between a service request and a complaint. This must be set out in their complaints policy. 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, but must be	Yes	Wording is included in Complaints Policy	

	recorded, monitored and reviewed regularly.			
1.5	A complaint must be raised when the resident expresses dissatisfaction with the response to their service request, even if the handling of the service request remains ongoing. Landlords must not stop their efforts to address the service request if the resident complains.	Yes	Wording is included in Complaints Policy	
1.6	An expression of dissatisfaction with services made through a survey is not defined as a complaint, though wherever possible, the person completing the survey should be made aware of how they can pursue a complaint if they wish to. Where landlords ask for wider feedback about their services, they also must provide details of how residents can complain.	Yes	Wording is included in Complaints Policy which is referred to on website. (link provided)	

Section 2: Exclusions

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
2.1	Landlords must accept a complaint unless there is a valid reason not to do so. If landlords decide not to accept a complaint they must be able to evidence their reasoning. Each complaint must be considered on its own merits	Yes	Wording is included in Complaints Policy	We had no complaints during this reporting period.
2.2	<p>A complaints policy must set out the circumstances in which a matter will not be considered as a complaint or escalated, and these circumstances must be fair and reasonable to residents. Acceptable exclusions include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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. 	Yes	Wording is included in Complaints Policy	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Matters that have previously been considered under the complaints policy. 			
2.3	Landlords must accept complaints referred to them within 12 months of the issue occurring or the resident becoming aware of the issue, unless they are excluded on other grounds. Landlords must consider whether to apply discretion to accept complaints made outside this time limit where there are good reasons to do so.	Yes	Wording is included in Complaints Policy	
2.4	If a landlord decides 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 the landlord to take on the complaint.	Yes	Wording is included in Complaints Policy.	Although we have not had cause to proceed with this step, we are clear about the process should it get to that point during our dealings with a complaint.
2.5	Landlords must not take a blanket approach to excluding complaints; they must consider the individual circumstances of each complaint.	Yes	Wording is included in Complaints Policy.	We are clear that each complaint would be considered individually.

Section 3: Accessibility and Awareness

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
3.1	Landlords must make it easy for residents to complain by providing different channels through which they can make a complaint. Landlords must consider their duties under the Equality Act 2010 and anticipate the needs and reasonable adjustments of residents who may need to access the complaints process.	Yes	Wording is included in Complaints Policy. .	
3.2	Residents must be able to raise their complaints in any way and with any member of staff. All staff must be aware of the complaints process and be able to pass details of the complaint to the appropriate person within the landlord.	Yes	Wording is included in Complaints Policy and we reference this on our website and in handbook.	
3.3	High volumes of complaints must not be seen as a negative, as they can be indicative of a well-publicised and accessible complaints process. Low complaint volumes are potentially a sign that residents are unable to complain.	Yes	Wording is included in Complaints Policy.	As we have no benchmark to work with we can not know whether zero complaints is too low. We would and do always direct people to the complaints policy, however, if they indicate that they have

				anything they are unhappy about.
3.4	Landlords must make their complaint policy available in a clear and accessible format for all residents. This will detail the two stage process, what will happen at each stage, and the timeframes for responding. The policy must also be published on the landlord's website.	Yes	Wording is included in Complaints Policy	
3.5	The policy must explain how the landlord will publicise details of the complaints policy, including information about the Ombudsman and this Code.	Yes	Wording is included in Complaints Policy	
3.6	Landlords must give residents the opportunity to have a representative deal with their complaint on their behalf, and to be represented or accompanied at any meeting with the landlord.	Yes	Wording is included in Complaints Policy	
3.7	Landlords must provide residents with information on their right to access the Ombudsman service and how the individual can engage with the Ombudsman about their complaint.	Yes	Wording is included in Complaints Policy	

Section 4: Complaint Handling Staff

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
4.1	Landlords must have a person or team assigned to take responsibility for complaint handling, including liaison with the Ombudsman and ensuring complaints are reported to the governing body (or equivalent). This Code will refer to that person or team as the 'complaints officer'. This role may be in addition to other duties.	Yes	Wording is included in Complaints Policy	We have identified named people for these roles.
4.2	The complaints officer must have access to staff at all levels to facilitate the prompt resolution of complaints. They must also have the authority and autonomy to act to resolve disputes promptly and fairly.	Yes	We are a small team and work closely with each other – and with trustees – around all such issues	
4.3	Landlords are expected to prioritise complaint handling and a culture of learning from complaints. All relevant staff must be suitably trained in the importance of complaint handling. It is important that complaints are seen as a core service and must be resourced to handle complaints effectively	Yes	Continual improvement in this, and other areas is key to the running of our almshouse charity.	

Section 5: The Complaint Handling Process

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
5.1	Landlords must have a single policy in place for dealing with complaints covered by this Code. Residents must not be treated differently if they complain.	Yes	Wording is included in Complaints Policy around impartiality. .	
5.2	The early and local resolution of issues between landlords and residents is key to effective complaint handling. It is not appropriate to have extra named stages (such as 'stage 0' or 'informal complaint') as this causes unnecessary confusion.	Yes	Wording is included in Complaints Policy which is what we follow.	
5.3	A process with more than two stages is not acceptable under any circumstances as this will make the complaint process unduly long and delay access to the Ombudsman.	Yes	Wording is included in Complaints Policy, which is what we follow.	
5.4	Where a landlord's complaint response is handled by a third party (e.g. a contractor or independent adjudicator) at any stage, it must form part of the two stage complaints process set out in this Code. Residents must not be expected to go through two complaints processes.	Yes	We are following the Complaints Policy.	

5.5	Landlords are responsible for ensuring that any third parties handle complaints in line with the Code.	Yes	We would do this.	
5.6	When a complaint is logged at Stage 1 or escalated to Stage 2, landlords must set out their understanding of the complaint and the outcomes the resident is seeking. The Code will refer to this as “the complaint definition”. If any aspect of the complaint is unclear, the resident must be asked for clarification.	Yes	We work through this as per the policy.	
5.7	When a complaint is acknowledged at either stage, landlords must be clear which aspects of the complaint they are, and are not, responsible for and clarify any areas where this is not clear.	Yes	We work through this as per the policy.	
5.8	At each stage of the complaints process, complaint handlers must: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. deal with complaints on their merits, act independently, and have an open mind; b. give the resident a fair chance to set out their position; c. take measures to address any actual or perceived conflict of interest; and 	Yes	We work through this as per the policy.	

	d. consider all relevant information and evidence carefully.			
5.9	Where a response to a complaint will fall outside the timescales set out in this Code, the landlord must agree with the resident suitable intervals for keeping them informed about their complaint.	Yes	We would work through this as per the policy.	
5.10	Landlords must make reasonable adjustments for residents where appropriate under the Equality Act 2010. Landlords must keep a record of any reasonable adjustments agreed, as well as a record of any disabilities a resident has disclosed. Any agreed reasonable adjustments must be kept under active review.	Yes	We would work through this as per the policy.	
5.11	Landlords must not refuse to escalate a complaint through all stages of the complaints procedure unless it has valid reasons to do so. Landlords must clearly set out these reasons, and they must comply with the provisions set out in section 2 of this Code.	Yes	We would work through this as per the policy.	
5.12	A full record must be kept of the complaint, and the outcomes at each stage. This must include the original complaint and the date received, all correspondence with the resident, correspondence with other parties, and	Yes	Records would be kept.	

	any relevant supporting documentation such as reports or surveys.			
5.13	Landlords must have processes in place to ensure a complaint can be remedied at any stage of its complaints process. Landlords must ensure appropriate remedies can be provided at any stage of the complaints process without the need for escalation.	Yes	As per the policy we would seek to ensure remedy at any stage.	
5.14	Landlords must have policies and procedures in place for managing unacceptable behaviour from residents and/or their representatives. Landlords must be able to evidence reasons for putting any restrictions in place and must keep restrictions under regular review.	Yes	Anti-social behaviour policy in place.	
5.15	Any restrictions placed on contact due to unacceptable behaviour must be proportionate and demonstrate regard for the provisions of the Equality Act 2010.	Yes	Yes	

Section 6: Complaints Stages

Stage 1

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
6.1	Landlords must have processes in place to consider which complaints can be responded to as early as possible, and which require further investigation. Landlords must consider factors such as the complexity of the complaint and whether the resident is vulnerable or at risk. Most stage 1 complaints can be resolved promptly, and an explanation, apology or resolution provided to the resident.	Yes	As per the complaints policy, this is an option at all times.	
6.2	Complaints must be acknowledged, defined and logged at stage 1 of the complaints procedure <u>within five working days of the complaint being received.</u>	Yes	As per complaints policy, this would be adhered to.	
6.3	Landlords must issue a full response to stage 1 complaints <u>within 10 working days</u> of the complaint being acknowledged.	Yes	This is part of the policy – and we would comply with this.	
6.4	Landlords must decide whether an extension to this timescale is needed when considering the complexity of the complaint and then inform the resident	Yes	Wording as per the complaints policy.	

	of the expected timescale for response. Any extension must be no more than 10 working days without good reason, and the reason(s) must be clearly explained to the resident.			
6.5	When an organisation informs a resident about an extension to these timescales, they must be provided with the contact details of the Ombudsman.	Yes	Wording as per the complaints policy.	
6.6	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.	Yes	Wording as per the complaints policy.	
6.7	Landlords 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.	Yes	Wording as per the complaints policy.	
6.8	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	Yes	Wording as per the complaints policy.	

	investigated or it would unreasonably delay the response, the new issues must be logged as a new complaint.			
6.9	Landlords must confirm the following in writing to the resident at the completion of stage 1 in clear, plain language: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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 with the response. 	Yes	Wording as per the complaints policy.	

Stage 2

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
6.10	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 landlord's procedure. Stage 2 is the landlord's final response.	Yes	Wording as per the complaints policy.	
6.11	Requests for stage 2 must be acknowledged, defined and logged at stage 2 of the complaints procedure	Yes	Wording as per the complaints policy.	

	within five working days of the escalation request being received.			
6.12	Residents must not be required to explain their reasons for requesting a stage 2 consideration. Landlords are expected to make reasonable efforts to understand why a resident remains unhappy as part of its stage 2 response.	Yes	Wording as per the complaints policy.	
6.13	The person considering the complaint at stage 2 must not be the same person that considered the complaint at stage 1.	Yes	This is provided for within the policy.	
6.14	Landlords must issue a final response to the stage 2 <u>within 20 working days</u> of the complaint being acknowledged.	Yes	Wording as per the complaints policy.	
6.15	Landlords must decide whether an extension to this timescale is needed when considering the complexity of the complaint and then inform the resident of the expected timescale for response. Any extension must be no more than 20 working days without good reason, and the reason(s) must be clearly explained to the resident.	Yes	Wording as per the complaints policy.	
6.16	When an organisation informs a resident about an extension to these timescales, they must be provided with the contact details of the Ombudsman.	Yes	As per the complaints policy.	
6.17	A complaint response must be provided to the resident when the answer to the complaint is known, not when the	Yes	As per the complaints policy.	

	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.			
6.18	Landlords 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.	Yes	As per the complaints policy.	
6.19	Landlords 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.	Yes	As per the complaints policy.	
6.20	Stage 2 is the landlord's final response and must involve all suitable staff members needed to issue such a response.	Yes	As per the complaints policy.	

Section 7: Putting things right

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
7.1	<p>Where something has gone wrong a landlord must acknowledge this and set out the actions it has already taken, or intends to take, to put things right. These can include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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; • Changing policies, procedures or practices. 	Yes	As per the complaints policy.	
7.2	Any remedy offered must reflect the impact on the resident as a result of any fault identified.	Yes	As per the complaints policy.	
7.3	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.	Yes	As per the complaints policy.	

7.4	Landlords must take account of the guidance issued by the Ombudsman when deciding on appropriate remedies.	Yes	As per the complaints policy.	
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Section 8: Putting things right

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
8.1	<p>Landlords must produce an annual complaints performance and service improvement report for scrutiny and challenge, which must include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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. 	Yes	Attached report, despite having zero complaints during this reporting period.	

8.2	The annual complaints performance and service improvement report must be reported to the landlord's governing body (or equivalent) and published on the on the section of its website relating to complaints. The governing body's response to the report must be published alongside this.	Yes	Chair of Trustees has signed off this report and it appears on our website.	
8.3	Landlords must also carry out a self-assessment following a significant restructure, merger and/or change in procedures.	Yes	All policies would be reviewed in such a case.	
8.4	Landlords may be asked to review and update the self-assessment following an Ombudsman investigation.	Yes	This would be done.	
8.5	If a landlord is unable to comply with the Code due to exceptional circumstances, such as a cyber incident, they must inform the Ombudsman, provide information to residents who may be affected, and publish this on their website Landlords must provide a timescale for returning to compliance with the Code.	Yes	We would inform relevant people in the event of a cyber incident.	

Section 9: Scrutiny & oversight: continuous learning and improvement

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
9.1	Landlords 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.	Yes	As a matter of course.	
9.2	A positive complaint handling culture is integral to the effectiveness with which landlords resolve disputes. Landlords must use complaints as a source of intelligence to identify issues and introduce positive changes in service delivery.	Yes	Any patterns of complaints would be noted and acted upon.	
9.3	Accountability and transparency are also integral to a positive complaint handling culture. Landlords must report back on wider learning and improvements from complaints to stakeholders, such as residents' panels, staff and relevant committees.	Yes	Relevant committees and panels would be informed.	
9.4	Landlords must appoint a suitably senior lead person as accountable for their complaint handling. This person must assess any themes or trends to identify potential systemic issues, serious risks, or policies and procedures that require revision.	Yes	The CEO has ultimate responsibility for this policy and would assess issues and risks.	

9.5	In addition to this a member of the governing body (or equivalent) must be appointed to have lead responsibility for complaints to support a positive complaint handling culture. This person is referred to as the Member Responsible for Complaints ('the MRC').	Yes	A member of a sub-committee of trustees is the MRC	
9.6	The MRC will be responsible for ensuring the governing body receives regular information on complaints that provides insight on the landlord's complaint handling performance. This person must have access to suitable information and staff to perform this role and report on their findings.	Yes	Although this would be delegated to the Management team (as opposed to being carried out by the voluntary trustee)	
9.7	As a minimum, the MRC and the governing body (or equivalent) must receive: a. regular updates on the volume, categories and outcomes of complaints, alongside complaint handling performance; b. regular reviews of issues and trends arising from complaint handling; c. regular updates on the outcomes of the Ombudsman's investigations and progress made in complying with orders related to severe maladministration findings; and	Yes	If we have any complaints these would be reported to the trustee body.	

	d. annual complaints performance and service improvement report.			
9.8	<p>Landlords must have a standard objective in relation to complaint handling for all relevant employees or third parties that reflects the need to:</p> <p>a. have a collaborative and co-operative approach towards resolving complaints, working with colleagues across teams and departments;</p> <p>b. take collective responsibility for any shortfalls identified through complaints, rather than blaming others; and</p> <p>c. act within the professional standards for engaging with complaints as set by any relevant professional body.</p>	Yes	We are a very small team, and a small housing provider, and so themes and issues would easily be identified and communicated.	

Pinnocks Charity

Complaints Policy

Effective Date: March 2025

Policy Approved by: Main Board

Review Date: March 2026



The Henry Pinnock and Victoria and Albert Memorial Charity (Reg. Charity No. 210365), also known as Pinnocks Charity (Reg. Charity No. 1211347) | Registered Provider of Housing (Reg. No. A3969) | Member of the Housing Ombudsman Scheme | Member of the Almshouse Association

The Lodge, St Thomas's Almshouses, Old Road West, Gravesend, Kent, DA11 7LA

Website: www.pinnocks.org

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Complaints Policy

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This policy applies to the trustees of Pinnocks Charity (the **Charity**) and seeks to ensure that the Charity's complaints process is flexible and responsive to the needs of individual complainants to enable residents to be heard and understood.

The Charity complies with the Complaint Handling Code (the Code) issued by the Housing Ombudsman Service. All complaints dealt with under this policy will be dealt with in a manner consistent with the Code and the Charity will maintain all records as required by the Code.

- 1.2 A **complaint** is defined as: "an expression of dissatisfaction, however made, about the standard of service, actions, or lack of action by the Charity, its trustees, its own staff, or those acting on its behalf, affecting an individual resident or group of residents.
- 1.3 The word "complaint" does not need to be used expressly for the matter to be considered a complaint. Whenever a resident expresses dissatisfaction the Charity must give them the option to make a complaint. Complaints made by residents may be made by the resident's carer, family members or a representative of a resident and these must be handled in line with the Charity's complaints policy.
- 1.4 Complaints can be made to any staff member of the Charity. This can be done in a number of ways which include:
- Telephone
 - Face to face
 - Email
 - Letter
 - WhatsApp
- 1.5 A service request is a request from a customer requiring action to be taken to put something right. (e.g., to carry out routine maintenance etc.) **service requests** are not a **complaint**. Service requests should be dealt with in accordance with the Residents' Handbook. Failure to deal appropriately with a service request may lead to the matter being dealt with as a complaint.
- 1.6 Service requests will be recorded, tracked and monitored to completion.
- 1.7 A complaint must be raised when the resident expresses dissatisfaction with the response to their service request, even if the handling of the service request remains ongoing. The Charity must not stop their efforts to address the service request if the resident raises a complaint.
- 1.8 An expression of dissatisfaction with services made through a resident's survey is not defined as a complaint, though wherever possible, the person completing the survey should be made aware of how they can pursue a complaint if they wish to. Where the Charity has asked for wider feedback about their services, they will provide details of how residents can raise a complaint.

- 1.9 In dealing with complaints the Charity will ensure that:
- (a) individuals who raise a complaint are listened to and treated with courtesy and empathy.
 - (b) residents will never be disadvantaged as a result of raising a complaint.
 - (c) complaints will be investigated promptly, thoroughly, honestly, and openly; and
 - (d) in dealing with complaints the Charity will comply with confidentiality and data protection policies.

2. Exclusions

- 2.1 The Charity must accept a complaint unless there is a valid reason not to do and will ensure we consider the individual circumstances of each complaint.
- 2.2 The following matters will not be considered as complaints:
- (a) The issue giving rise to the complaint occurred over twelve months ago.
 - (b) Legal proceedings have begun as defined as details of the claim, such as the Claim Form and Particulars of Claim, having been filed at Court.
 - (c) Matters that have previously been considered under the complaints policy.
 - (d) the complainant is anonymous unless there is sufficient documentary evidence to substantiate the complaint.
- 2.3 Unless excluded on other grounds, the Charity must accept complaints referred to them within 12 months of issue occurring or the resident becoming aware of the issue. Where there are good reasons to do so, the Charity must also consider whether to apply discretion to accept complaints made outside the time limit.
- 2.4 If a complaint is not accepted a detailed explanation will be provided to the resident setting out the reasons why the matter is not suitable for the complaints process .

3. Unreasonable behaviour

We understand that complainants can get upset and frustrated when things have gone wrong.

- 3.1 If the Charity feels a complaint is pursued unreasonably, including any actions or behaviours of the resident/representative, these complaints will be reviewed in line with the charity's unreasonable behaviour policy.
- 3.2 All complaints will be reviewed on an individual basis

- 3.3 If any restrictions are put in place, these will proportionate and demonstrate regard for the provisions of the Equality Act 2010.
- 3.4 The charity will ensure any restrictions will be recorded, monitored and reviewed regularly and the complainant updated following the review.
- 3.5 Any restrictions in place will not prevent the Charity from ensuring the complaint can be taken be through the full complaints process.

4. Accessibility and awareness

- 4.1 Complaints will be dealt with in a manner that is consistent with the Charity's Equality & Diversity Policy and the Charity's duties under the Equalities Act 2010.
- 4.2 If any individual making a complaint wishes the Charity to make reasonable adjustments to accommodate an individual's particular needs, they, or their representative, should contact the *nominated lead for Equality & Diversity matters (the General Manager)* whose details are in the Residents' Handbook, by phone or by email, in person or via WhatsApp to discuss what adjustments may be possible.
- 4.3 The Charity acknowledges that a high volume of complaints must not be seen as negative, as this can be indicative of a well-publicised and accessible complaints procedure. Low complaint volumes are potentially a sign that residents are unable to complain.
- 4.4 The complaints handling policy will be listed in the Residents Handbook, published on the Charity's website, (if they have one) It will also be hand posted whenever updated, for a limited period of time in communal areas.
- 4.5 Residents will have the opportunity to have a representative deal with their complaint on their behalf, and to be represented or accompanied at any meeting. We will always follow data protection measures when disclosing any information to a third party.

5. Complaint handling staff

- 5.1 Complaints will be investigated by the Complaints Officer at Stage One.
- 5.2 Appeals will be investigated by the Appeals Officer at Stage Two.
- 5.3 If the Complaints Officer and/or the Appeals Officer are conflicted, or the complaint relates to the Complaints Officer and/or the Appeals Officer, the complaint should be directed to the CEO whose details are in the Residents' Handbook.
- 5.4 Staff will be suitably trained in the importance of complaint handling.

6. Complaints process

- 6.1 At each stage of the complaints process, complaint /appeals officers must:
- a) deal with complaints on their merits.
 - b) act independently and have an open mind but may consider reports of previous complaints that relate to the same issue being complained about.
 - c) give the resident a fair chance to set out their position.
 - d) take measures to address any actual or perceived conflict of interest; (which may include asking another staff member or trustee to investigate the complaint).
 - e) consider all relevant information and evidence carefully.
 - f) keep the details of the complaint confidential as far as possible, with information only being disclosed if necessary to properly investigate the matter.

7. Stage One of the Complaints Process

- 7.1 The Complaints Officer will acknowledge the complaint and make a record, within 5 working days. The acknowledgement will:
- a) summarise the Charity's understanding of the complaint (The complaint definition).
 - b) make clear which aspects of the complaint the Charity is, and is not, responsible for and clarify any areas where this is not clear.
 - c) summarise the Charity's understanding of what the Complainant is seeking as an outcome.
 - d) raise any questions that require clarification from the Complainant; and
 - e) set out the next course of action and anticipated timescale.
- 7.2 The Charity will issue a full response within 10 working days from the complaint being acknowledged. In exceptional cases, if the Complaints Officer anticipates that the complaint will take longer to resolve, this will be explained to the resident with a clear timeframe set out for the resolution of the complaint which will not exceed a further 10 working days, without good reason. If any further extensions are required, this will be in agreement with resident who will be updated at regular intervals.
- 7.3 A complaint response will 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 will be tracked and actioned promptly with appropriate updates provided to the resident.

- 7.4 The Complaints Officer will investigate the complaint in an impartial manner permitting all relevant parties to provide information. The resident and any third parties involved in the complaint should be given the opportunity to set out their position before any final decision is made. The Complaints Officer may delegate the management and investigation of the complaint to another individual.
- 7.5 If the Complaints Officer is conflicted, or the complaint relates to the Complaints Officer, the complaint should be directed to the CEO whose details are in the Residents' Handbook.
- 7.6 If the complaint involves questions relating to the Charity or the Complainant's legal obligations, the Complaints Officer will set out clearly their understanding of the respective legal obligations and may seek legal advice before doing so.
- 7.7 If a new issue is raised by the resident during the stage one process, these should be dealt with as part of the process if they are relevant. However, if the issues relate to a different issue and/or are raised after the response has already been issued, the issues will be dealt with as a separate complaint.
- 7.8 In responding to the complaint, the Complaints Officer will confirm in writing:
 - 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 two if the individual is not satisfied with the result.

8. Stage Two of the Complaints Process

- 8.1 If the resident is not satisfied with the response from the Complaints Officer, they have 20 working days to submit an appeal (stage 2) in writing by email, via telephone call or in person to the Appeals Officer. The appeals officer will not be the same person that responded at stage 1 and whose details can be found in the Residents' Handbook and this policy. The charity will ensure that any request received after the 20 working days to escalate a complaint, will be assessed and dealt with on an individual basis.

- 8.2 The resident does not need to provide reasons for requesting the complaint to be escalated
- 8.3 The Appeals Officer will acknowledge the appeal within 5 working days of receipt and will
- (a) summarise the Charity's understanding of the appeal (the complaint definition).
 - (b) summarise the Charity's understanding of what the resident is seeking as an outcome.
 - (c) raise any questions that require clarification from the resident; but acknowledge that reasons do not need to be given for the complaint to be escalated to appeal.
 - (d) set out the next course of action and anticipated timescale.
- 8.4 The Appeals Officer will respond in writing to the resident within 20 working days of the appeal being acknowledged, informing them of the outcome of the appeal process and the decision of the Appeals Panel.
- 8.5 If the Appeals Officer believes that the appeal will take longer than 20 working days, this will be explained to the resident with a clear timeframe set out for the resolution of the complaint which will not exceed a further 20 working days. If any further extensions are required, this will be in agreement with resident who will be updated at regular intervals. Such explanation should also include the contact details of the Housing Ombudsman.
- 8.6 A complaint response will 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 will be tracked and actioned promptly with appropriate updates provided to the resident.
- 8.7 In responding to the appeal, the Appeals Officer will confirm in writing:
- (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 Housing Ombudsman will be provided if the complainant is not satisfied with the response to the appeal.

9. Putting things right where something has gone wrong

- 9.1 Where something has gone wrong the Charity must acknowledge this and set 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.
 - Changing policies, procedures, or practices.
- 9.2 Any remedy offered must reflect the impact on the resident as a result of any fault identified.
- 9.3 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.

10. Scrutiny & oversight

- 10.1 The Charity has a senior lead person, the CEO, who is accountable for their complaint handling. This person will assess any themes or trends to identify potential systemic issues, serious risks, or policies and procedures that require revision.
- 10.2 A member of the board of trustees – one of the Applications and Beneficiaries sub-committee members - has been appointed to have lead responsibility for complaints to support a positive complaint handling culture. This person is known as the Member Responsible for Complaints (MRC)

11. Annual Review

- 11.1 This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis
- 11.2 The Charity will carry out an annual self-assessment

- 11.3 The Trustees of the Charity as a whole will consider any findings or recommendations of the annual self-assessment and the annual complaints performance and service improvement report.

12. For the purposes of this policy:

12.1.1 The **Complaints Officer** is:

Name: Tim Packham – Clerk
Telephone number: WhatsApp: 07745 524164
Address: The Lodge, St Thomas’s Almshouses, Old Road West, Gravesend DA11 7LA
Email address: tim.packham@pinnocks.org

12.1.2 The **Appeals Officer** is:

Name: Emma Pannell – General Manager
Telephone number: WhatsApp: 07745 524164
Address: The Lodge, St Thomas’s Almshouses, Old Road West, Gravesend DA11 7LA
Email address: emma.pannell@pinnocks.org

This policy has been approved for issue by the board of trustees

Signature:

Name:

[CHAIR OF TRUSTEES / CLERK TO THE TRUSTEES]

Position:

Date:



RESIDENT SATISFACTION SURVEY 2024

		Avg Score	Rank	%	Satisfaction
1	Overall Satisfaction	4.21	7	84%	Fairly Satisfied
2	Has Pinnocks carried out a repair to your home in the last 12 months?				
2a	Satisfaction with repairs service	4.45	1	89%	Fairly Satisfied
3	Satisfaction with time taken to complete the most recent repair	4.33	2	87%	Fairly Satisfied
4	Satisfaction that the home is well maintained	4.31	4	86%	Fairly Satisfied
5	Satisfaction that the home is safe	4.31	4	86%	Fairly Satisfied
6	Satisfaction that Pinnocks listens to tenant views and acts upon them	3.97	9	79%	Fairly Satisfied
7	Satisfaction that Pinnocks keeps tenants informed	4.24	6	85%	Fairly Satisfied
8	Agreement that Pinnocks treats tenants fairly and with respect	3.95	11	79%	Agree
9	Have you made a complaint to Pinnocks in the last 12 months?				
9a	Satisfaction with the approach to complaints handling	4.33	2	87%	Fairly Satisfied
10	Do you live in a building with communal areas?				
10a	Satisfaction with cleanliness and maintenance of communal areas	3.91	12	78%	Fairly Satisfied
11	Satisfaction that Pinnocks makes a positive contribution to neighbourhoods	3.72	13	74%	Fairly Satisfied
12	Satisfaction with approach to handling anti-social behaviour	3.96	10	79%	Fairly Satisfied
13	Have you contacted a member of staff about an issue in the last 12 months?				
13a	Satisfaction with the responsiveness and professionalism of staff	4.19	8	84%	Fairly Satisfied

	No. of responses	39
5	Very Satisfied	
4	Fairly Satisfied	
3	Neither Satisfied nor Dissatisfied	
2	Fairly Dissatisfied	
1	Very Dissatisfied	
5	Strongly Agree	
4	Agree	
3	Neither Agree nor Disagree	
2	Disagree	
1	Strongly Disagree	



Pinnocks Charity

BOARD’S RESPONSE TO THE ANNUAL COMPLAINTS PERFORMANCE AND SERVICE IMPROVEMENT REPORT

On 15th April 2025 the Board received:

- the 2024 annual complaints performance and service improvement report for residents living in homes owned and managed by Pinnocks Charity.
- An update to the complaints policy for residents living in homes owned and managed by Pinnocks Charity to meet the requirements of the new Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code 2024
- A self-assessment against the new Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code 2024

The Board has a Member Responsible for Complaints (MRC) who provides additional assurance to the Board on the effectiveness of Pinnock’s Charity’s complaints system.

As Chair of Trustees, and on behalf of the Trustee body, I have considered and approved the self-assessment that shows how the Charity complies with all aspects of the Housing Ombudsman’s Complaint Handling Code 2024.

Pinnocks Charity adopts the Housing Ombudsman’s definition of a complaint as any expression of dissatisfaction. This gives the Board assurance that Pinnocks Charity are recording an accurate volume of complaints, as the Board does not believe that a low volume of complaints would be a positive sign.

Given our size and the absence of any complaints during this reporting period, Pinnocks Charity does not have enough complaints to learn from trends. But we understand that communication which reiterates the existence of our complaints policy, and then dealing with any complaints received per the policy, is a key factor. The policy, training, expectations, and systems to deal with complaints have all been improved during 2024. The Board will monitor the feedback on communication through any individual complaints reported to the Board during 2025.

Signed: Charles Philip Painter – Chair of Trustees

Charles Painter 14-Apr-2025

Charles Painter (Apr 14, 2025 20:47 GMT+1)

Signed Date