

ONWARD COMPLAINTS POLICY

Easy Read Guide

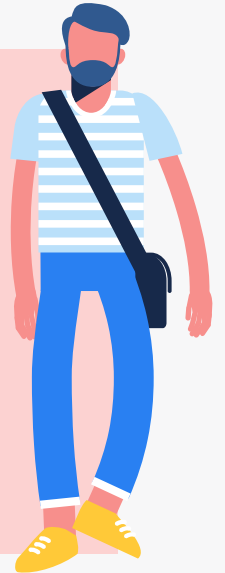
August 2023

We are committed to providing a high-quality service to the customers and communities we serve. However, we recognise that sometimes things can go wrong and this guide explains how you can make a complaint.

✔ What is a complaint?

A complaint is when you are unhappy with the standards of our services, actions, or a lack of action from us. You might complain to us because:

- ✔ We haven't met our service standards
- ✔ We have done something we shouldn't have done
- ✔ You are unhappy with how something has been dealt with
- ✔ We have taken too long to respond to you
- ✔ You are unhappy with how a staff member has treated you
- ✔ We have not met the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code



✘ What isn't a complaint?

Some things are not complaints, such as:

- ✘ Asking for information about one of our services
- ✘ Asking us to deal with the actions of others, for example letting us know about anti-social behaviour for the first time
- ✘ Something that is already in court or being heard by a court or tribunal
- ✘ Asking for information under the Data Protection Act
- ✘ If you are unhappy with a decision where there is already a process for challenging that decision or an appeals process already in place

✘ Examples of what isn't a complaint:

- ✘ You tell us that there is a leak in your home that needs fixing. This is not a complaint but could be one if we didn't fix this quickly.
- ✘ You tell us your neighbour is playing loud music. This isn't a complaint but could be if you were unhappy about how we dealt with it.
- ✘ You ask us for more information about one of our policies. This isn't a complaint but could be if we don't get back to you quickly or give you the wrong information.

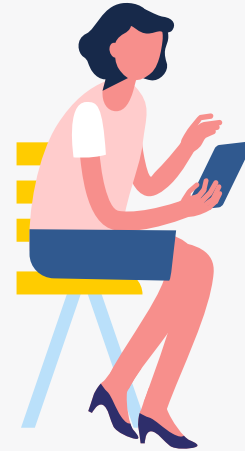


Who can complain?

Anyone that already gets a service from Onward, asks for one or is affected by what we do can make a complaint. You can do this for someone, for example if you're a family member, friend, advocate, or adviser.

How to make a complaint:

There are lots of ways to make a complaint. You can do this by:



Calling us on **0300 555 0600**



Using the online chat on our [website](#)



Via [My Onward](#)



Using our web form [here](#)



Texting or WhatsApp message on **07793 795882**



Speaking to us on **Facebook** (@OnwardHomes) or **Twitter** (@Onward_Homes)



Writing to us at **Renaissance Court, 2 Christie Way, Didsbury, Manchester, M21 7QY**

If you send a complaint to our Chief Executive or the Chair of the Board this will be sent to our Customer Resolutions Team and will follow this policy.

What happens when you make a complaint?

There are two steps to our Complaints Policy. Stage 1 is the first step as shown in the image below.



When you contact us, our Customer Resolutions Team will be in touch in two working days.

They will:

- Introduce themselves
- Explain the stage 1 complaints process
- Ask questions to help us understand your complaint and try to agree a solution
- Agree how we will update you on progress
- Reply within **ten working days** to explain the outcome and next steps
- If we need more time, we will let you know and agree when we will respond
- If we need to take action due to the complaint, for example a repair, we will keep in regular contact until all the work is complete and you're happy with the outcome.

We will write to you to explain our understanding of your complaint, what we have found and what we will do to make this right. We will only close the complaint when all actions are done.

What happens if I'm still unhappy?

If you're still unhappy after stage 1, you can ask for a review by a director. This is stage 2 of our complaints process. You will be asked why you are unhappy and what you would like to happen next to resolve your complaint. When you ask for a review, a director (or representative) will:

- Introduce themselves
- Explain the stage 2 complaints process
- Ask questions to help them understand the complaint
- Agree with you how we will update you on progress
- If we need more time, we will let you know and agree when we will respond

We will write to you to explain our understanding of your complaint, our findings and what we will do to make this right. We will only close the complaint when all actions are done.

If you're still unhappy

If you've gone through both stages of our complaints process and are still unhappy, you can speak to a Member of Parliament, your local councillor or an advocate of your choice.

You can also speak to our Customer Resolution Forum. This is a group of Onward residents, supported by but independent of us, who help us to deal with complaints.

They can help to:

- Bring both sides together to find a solution
- Say if the solution we offered is fair
- Recommend you refer to the Housing Ombudsman if we can't find a solution



If you're still not happy, you can contact the Housing Ombudsman.

The Housing Ombudsman

The Housing Ombudsman Service is an independent organisation that investigates complaints. You can get in touch with the Housing Ombudsman at any stage for help.

They can look at your complaint if:

- You have been through every stage of our complaints process
- It's less than 12 months after you first knew about what you wanted to complain about
- The issue hasn't or isn't being looked at by a court. You will be asked to fill out a complaint form and give a copy of our response. You can get in touch with the Ombudsman by:
 - Going online at [Make a complaint - Housing Ombudsman](#)
 - Calling them on freephone 0300 111 3000

Complaints about gas and electricity

Some of our customers get services that include providing gas and electricity. If you have complained about gas or electricity services we provide to you and are not happy with the outcome you can contact the Energy Ombudsman.

The Energy Ombudsman is approved by Ofgem as an independent dispute resolution service which aims to impartially and independently resolve disputes between energy suppliers and their customers.

You can ask the Energy Ombudsman to investigate your complaint if:

- You have fully exhausted our complaint handling procedure.
- We notify you that we have been unable to resolve your complaint to your satisfaction within 8 weeks and/or have issued you with a deadlock letter.
- You feel that you have encountered sustained difficulty in raising your complaint with us.

Complaints can be referred to the Energy Ombudsman via their website, post, email or telephone:

Energy Ombudsman, PO Box 966, Warrington WA4 9DF

Tel: 0330 440 1624

Email: enquiry@energyombudsman.org

Website: www.energyombudsman.org



Compensation

Sometimes we might give payments or compensation. If this is for loss or damage to goods, we may ask for proof of purchase and what the items were like before they were damaged.

Things not covered by this policy

- ✗ Complaints about services by other landlords, councils, or the government or businesses
- ✗ Complaints about damage to property unless caused by something we have done
- ✗ A complaint where there is already court action or an insurance claim against us
- ✗ If there is a mediation in progress we will put on hold until there is a decision
- ✗ If the complaint has already been reviewed unless there is new information
- ✗ If you show unacceptable behaviour

If you want to speak to us about anything else you can:



Call **0300 555 0600**. We are available from 8am - 8pm (Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday) and on Wednesday from 10am - 8pm.



Send an email to **customerservices@onward.co.uk**



Use the My Onward Portal or our Live Chat or WhatsApp (**07793 795882**) services



If need you help communicating with us,
please get in touch – 0300 555 0600

Jeśli potrzebujesz pomocy w komunikowaniu się z nami, daj znać - 0300 555 0600

Si vous avez besoin d'aide pour communiquer avec nous, contactez-nous au 0300 555 0600

Ha beszélni szeretne velünk, kérjük hívja a 0300 555 0600-as telefonszámot

与我们沟通方面如需帮助 · 请致电 : 0300 555 0600

اگر برای ارتباط با ما به کمک نیاز دارید، لطفاً با شماره 0300 555 0600 تماس بگیرید

لو حاجي تتواصل معانا اتصل على - 03005550600

إذا احتجت إلى المساعدة والتواصل معنا، يرجى الاتصال على - 0300 555 0600

Ikiwa unahitaji msaada wa kuwasiliana nasi, tafadhali wasiliana nasi kupitia nambari ya simu - 0300 555 0600

ଆମେ ସାଥେ ବାର୍ତ୍ତା ବିନିମୟ କରାଋ ଜନ୍ୟ ସାହାଯ୍ୟ ଲାଗଲେ, ଅନୁଗ୍ରହ କରେ ଏହି ନମ୍ବରେ ଯୋଗାଯୋଗ କରନ୍ତୁ - 0300 555 0600

আমাদের সাথে বার্তা বিনিময় করার জন্য সাহায্য লাগলে, অনুগ্রহ করে এই নম্বরে যোগাযোগ করুন - 0300 555 0600

ਜੇਕਰ ਸਾਡੇ ਨਾਲ ਗੱਲਬਾਤ ਕਰਨ ਵਿੱਚ ਮਦਦ ਦੀ ਲੋੜ ਹੈ, ਤਾਂ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਸੰਪਰਕ ਕਰੋ - 0300 555 0600

اگر آپ کو ہم سے مواصلت کرنے میں مدد درکار ہے تو، براہ کرم رابطہ کریں - 0300 555 0600