



What you can do if you are still unhappy with the way we have handled your complaint

If you remain dissatisfied with our response following Stages 1 and 2 of our formal complaints procedure you have the right to take your complaint to the Housing Ombudsman.

You can do this by:

- waiting 8 weeks from the date of our final response letter and then approaching the Housing Ombudsman yourself, or
- contacting an MP, a local district councillor, or the Designated Tenant Complaints Panel (these are all 'designated' persons – see below).

About the 'designated' person

There are three categories of designated person:

1. **Members of Parliament** – all MPs are automatically designated persons and you can approach any or all of them. You do not have to approach a local MP but should you wish to do so the local MPs for East Devon are:

For the East Devon Constituency: Hugo Swire MP (Conservative)
(www.hugoswire.org.uk)

For Tiverton and Honiton Constituency: Neil Parish MP (Conservative)
(www.neilparish.co.uk)

Both can be contacted by:

Writing to: House of Commons, London, SW1 0AA
Telephoning: 0207 219 8173
Faxing: 0207 219 1895

2. **Any local district councillor** for the district in which you live. The Council has agreed that three will act as designated persons.

These are currently:

Councillor Ian Hall
Councillor Jack Rowland
Councillor Paul Millar

You can approach them directly or you can approach your own local district councillor who will contact them for you. Contact details for all councillors are available on our website (www.eastdevon.gov.uk) or by telephoning 01395 516551 and asking for Member Services.

3. **The Designated Tenant Complaints Panel** for East Devon District Council. This is a panel of tenants set up by the Tenant Representative Group and recognised by the Housing Review Board and Housing Ombudsman.

To contact the Panel please email DTCP@eastdevon.gov.uk or telephone 01395 517453

The role of the designated person

A designated person will help resolve the complaint in one of two ways; they can try and resolve the complaint themselves or they can refer the complaint straight to the Ombudsman. If they refuse to do either the complainant can contact the Ombudsman directly.

The designated person can try to put things right in whichever way they think may work best; but please note that a designated person has no legal authority over a landlord's policy or procedure. Having looked at the complaint the designated person may:

- consider that the complaint has been through all the proper stages, that it has been properly handled and the nature of the complaint suggests that there is little to be gained by pursuing it further, or
- consider that the landlord has not followed procedures correctly or that the procedures are inappropriate and it should acknowledge this and do something to rectify this as soon as possible, or
- consider that, even if the tenant or landlord is right or wrong about the facts of a complaint, they could have handled it better.

They will let you know what they decide. If the problem is still not resolved following the intervention of the designated person either they or the complainant can refer the complaint to the Ombudsman. The law says that when the designated person refers a complaint to the Ombudsman, it must be in writing.

About the Housing Ombudsman

The Housing Ombudsman is set up by law to look at complaints about the housing organisations that are registered with them. The service is free, independent and impartial. On 1 April 2013 the new Housing Ombudsman Service was launched with an extended jurisdiction covering all housing associations and local authorities. A new Housing Ombudsman Scheme (setting out the Ombudsman's terms of reference) also came into effect on 1 April.

The Housing Ombudsman considers complaints using dispute resolution principles and encourages their use by both landlords and tenants so they can resolve complaints at the earliest opportunity. There is a lot of helpful advice on their website at www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk

You can contact the Housing Ombudsman by:

Writing to: The Housing Ombudsman Service,
81 Aldwych, London, WC2B 4HN

Telephoning: 0300 111 3000

Emailing: info@housing-ombudsman.org.uk

For further information

Please contact the Complaints Officer of East Devon District Council by:

Writing to: The Complaints Officer, East Devon District Council, Knowle,
Sidmouth EX10 8HL

Telephoning: 01395 517417

Emailing: complaints@eastdevon.gov.uk