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**Glebe Housing Association**

**Annual Complaints Performance and Service improvement Report 2023−24**

**Introduction**

Glebe Housing Association (GHA) recognises a positive complaints handling culture is integral to the way it resolves disputes. Accountability and transparency are integral to a positive handling complaint culture and recognising this GHA reports back on wider learning to the Board, Residents Panel, and the staff team.

As a small Association GHA has appointed the Administration team as its Complaints Officers. This role is responsible for recording complaints and ensuring they are responded to, within the Complaints Handling Code timescales. The Chief Executive assures the Board that complaints are monitored and dealt with effectively and reports quarterly on the complaints received and learning acquired. In addition, the Complaints and Service Improvement report is issued annually to the board and published on Glebe’s website.

**Annual Self-Assessment of Compliance with the Housing Ombudsman Complaints Handling Code**

There are no areas of non-compliance recorded in the self-assessment and the self-assessment is published, alongside this report on our website.

**Complaints 2023 24**

During the period 20 complaints were received. This is an increase of 2 complaints from the previous period. GHA did not refuse any complaints received during this period. In Quarter 1 (Apr 23 – Jun 23) 7 complaints were received, in Quarter 2 (Jul 23 −Sep 23) 7 complaints were received, in Quarter 3 (Oct 23 – Dec 23) 1 complaint was received and in Quarter 4 (Jan 24 − Mar 24) 5 complaints were received.

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| 20  Formal Complaints received. | 15  Complaints were upheld. |
| 16  Complaints were responded to on target. | 4  Complaints responded to just outside of target. |
| 15  Complaints resolved at Stage 1 | 5  Complaints were escalated to Stage 2 |

**Trends**

Located on the one site, servicing older adults, most complaints related to repairs and clarity of communications. The whole staff team work directly next to the residents on the one site. The benefits of working close by to our residents is that issues can be identified and quickly addressed, and the resident voice is heard, and action taken can be seen.

**Complaint Handling**

GHA responded to all complaints received. We have processes in place to track and monitor complaints and have adopted suggestions by our Internal Audit to ensure they can be relied upon to provide accurate and complete information relating to the progress of each complaint received by the Association. Our recent Resident Satisfaction Survey evidenced 62% of our residents are content with how complaints are handling. We strive to improve this satisfaction measure and feel that the newly established administration team will contribute well to this.

**Learning and Service Improvement**

With the majority of the Administration Team being new to the Association GHA continues to ensure staff are aware of the Complaints Code and its policy and procedures. We have complaints as a regular agenda item in our team meetings so that we can discuss the complaints and look collectively at what we need to do to improve our complaint handling process and our services.

When things go wrong the staff team are reminded of the protocols in place and procedures that should have been followed. Guidance has been given to all staff on ensuring clear and concise information is always offered to residents and administration systems have been improved to support this.

The administration team have undertaken complaint handling training.

Over the past year, work has been undertaken to improve the waiting list to ensure it is fit for purpose and those looking to move to GHA are able to do so, whilst meeting the housing criteria. This has reduced the number of complaints received in previous years where applicants did not know where they were on the waiting list. We have reviewed and revised our Leaseholders welcome and sales pack and taken feedback from our leaseholders to ensure it is fit for purpose.

The resident newsletter is now used to notify residents of assistance that is available to them, as some have been unaware of the help available when they contact the staff team.

We know that communication is always going to be at the crux of a complaint and that we must work continuously to improve our communication with our residents. We are fortunate that there is a constant and ongoing dialogue of feedback which we receive from our residents as they literally live next to our offices. It is very beneficial as they genuinely offer their feedback and input to everything we do. Our Resident Scrutiny Panel represents every area of the estate, and the Panel affords residents the opportunity to review the complaints received in the previous quarter and we take their feedback and suggestions on how we can ensure such complaints don’t arise in the future.

We have amended our Policy to:

1. To note 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.
2. The timing of acceptable exclusions has been revised from 6 to 12 months.
3. Show that GHA will consider the individual circumstances of each complaint and not take a blanket approach to excluding complaints.
4. The section on dealing with complaints has been amended to show the Policy is available on our website alongside the Housing Ombudsman’s Complaints Code and our Self-Assessment against the Code and the Association will seek to resolve all complaints informally and our Complaints Policy follows the Ombudsman Complaints Code Handling.
5. Acknowledgement wording changed to show a complainant will be informed at the outset if their stated desired outcome is considered unreasonable or unrealistic and what aspects of the complaint Glebe are and are not responsible for.

At GHA’s Board meeting on 29th May 2024, a volunteer from the membership was sought to have lead responsibility for complaints to support a positive complaint handling culture. Perry Davies, Board Member was appointed to this role.

GHA remains complaint with the Code. No complaints have been made to the Housing Ombudsman Service during the year and GHA has not received any reports or comments from the Housing Ombudsman Service.

**Board Response**

In June 2024 the GHA Board reviewed Glebe’s Self-Assessment of Compliance with the Housing Ombudsman’s Complaints Code 2024 and the Annual Complaints Performance and Service Improvement Plan.

We are assured that these reports are a true reflection of Glebe’s complaint handling position.

In reviewing these documents, we are assured that the self-assessment determines that Glebe is compliant with the Housing Ombudsman’s Complaint Handling Code. We have reviewed the Complaints Policy to ensure that Glebe remains compliant with the Code and are satisfied that there are processes and procedures in place to ensure that all complaints are dealt with appropriately and fairly. During the year service improvements were made following complaints received and these are detailed in the Service Improvement Plan.

The Board notes that this has been a difficult year for the CEO without a full management team and consistent administration team in place which on occasion has resulted in not meeting the target time for responses, on all occasions.

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**Michael Rourke**

**Board Chair**