

Leasehold Advisory Service (LEASE)

Complaints procedure

We want to help you resolve your complaint as quickly as possible.

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1. Introduction

- 1.1.** LEASE is committed to providing a high-quality service to everyone we deal with. In order to do this we need you to give us any comments about our service, and to tell us when we get things wrong. We want to help you resolve your complaint as quickly as possible.
- 1.2.** We treat as a complaint any expression of dissatisfaction with our service which calls for a response. We listen to your complaints, treat them seriously, and learn from them so that we can continuously improve our service.
- 1.3.** A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction, whether justified or not. Our policy covers complaints about:
 - the standard of service we provide
 - the behaviour of our staff
 - any action or lack of action by staff affecting an individual or group
- 1.4.** Our complaints policy does not cover:
 - matters that have already been fully investigated through this complaints procedure
 - anonymous complaints
 - complaints about access to information where procedures and remedies are set out in legislation, e.g., Freedom of Information Act 2000, Data Protection Act 1998.
- 1.5.** Persistent and or vexatious complaints are becoming an increasing problem for all departments and public sector bodies, and difficulties in handling such

complaints can place strain on time and resources and can be stressful for staff who have to deal with these complex and challenging issues. In order to counter this, we will introduce directives that deal with persistent or vexatious complaints.

2. Our standards for handling complaints

2.1. Standards

- We treat all complaints seriously.
- You will be treated with courtesy and fairness at all times - we would hope, too, that you will be courteous and fair in your dealings with our staff at all times.
- We will deal with your complaint promptly - we will acknowledge receipt of a written complaint within 5 working days and we will send you a full reply within 15 working days of receipt.
- If we cannot send a full reply within 15 working days of receipt we will tell you the reason why and let you know when we will be able to reply in full.
- We will publish information in our annual report on the numbers and categories of complaints we receive, and the percentage of complaints upheld.

2.2. All complaints received will be dealt with confidentially and in accordance with the requirements of the Data Protection Act 1998.

3. How to complain

3.1. You can make a complaint during your advice call or by email or post. You can send an email to complaints@lease-advice.org or in writing to: Complaints Team, Leasehold Advisory Service, Fleetbank House, 2-6 Salisbury Square, London, EC4Y 8AE.

3.2. We have a 2-stage complaints procedure. At each stage it will help us to resolve your complaint quickly if you can give us as much clear detail as possible, including any documents and correspondence and stating that you are making a complaint in line with our procedure.

3.3. The stages of the complaints procedure

3.3.1. Stage 1

This is the first opportunity to resolve a complainant's dissatisfaction, and the majority of complaints will be resolved at this stage. In the first instance, we will try to get your complaint resolved by a Senior Advisor of the area or team against whom the complaint has been made. Upon receipt of your complaint we will contact the relevant Senior Advisor and ask them to deal with your complaint.

3.3.2. Stage 2

If you are dissatisfied with this response you may request a review by the Chief Operating Officer. You can send an email to complaints@lease-advice.org or

in writing to: Chief Operating Officer, Complaints Team, Leasehold Advisory Service, Fleetbank House, 2-6 Salisbury Square, London, EC4Y 8AE.

3.3.3. Timescales for handling a complaint

For each stage a complaint will be handled within a maximum of 20 working days. Complaints will be acknowledged within 5 working days and a full response within 15 working days.

3.3.4. Extending time limits

We aim to complete all complaints within the timescales above; however, if a complaint is very complex it may occasionally be necessary to extend the time limit. If this is the case, we will keep the complainant informed of progress with the investigation, the reasons for the delay, and the new deadline.

4. If you remain dissatisfied

- 4.1.** If having followed the 2-stage complaints procedure you still remain dissatisfied, you can ask to have your complaint reviewed by the Chief Executive. You can send an email to complaints@lease-advice.org or in writing to: Chief Executive, Complaints Team, Leasehold Advisory Service, Fleetbank House, 2-6 Salisbury Square, London, EC4Y 8AE.

Escalated complaints will be acknowledged within 5 working days and a full response within 15 working days.

For any other complaints, please email complaints@lease-advice.org or write to: Complaints Team, Leasehold Advisory Service, Fleetbank House, 2-6 Salisbury Square, London, EC4Y 8AE.

5. Exemptions

- 5.1.** We are unable to deal with complaints regarding other organisations. For example, we cannot deal with complaints about particular solicitors, managing agents, valuers and estate agents. We are also unable to deal with complaints regarding Government policy.

If you have a complaint about another organisation's product or services and are unsure where to take it, please contact one of our Advisers on 0207 832 2500 who will be able to provide you with information and guidance. Otherwise, please contact the organisation directly.