



Complaints Handling Procedure

Chris Hamriding Lettings & Estate Agents Ltd

Registered Name: Chris Hamriding Lettings & Estate Agents Ltd

Telephone: 01260 543999

Email: sales@chrishamriding.co.uk

Website: www.chrishamriding.co.uk

Services:

1. Our commitment to complaints handling

Chris Hamriding Lettings & Estate Agents Ltd is committed to providing a professional, transparent and high-quality service to our clients, customers, landlords, tenants, buyers, sellers and other parties with whom we deal.

We recognise that, despite our best efforts, there may be occasions when a customer is dissatisfied with the service they have received.

We take complaints seriously and operate a formal complaints procedure designed to ensure that complaints are:

- acknowledged promptly;
- investigated fairly and objectively;
- dealt with by an appropriate member of staff;
- reviewed by a more senior member of staff where required; and
- concluded with a clear written response.

Our complaints procedure is intended to provide an opportunity for matters to be resolved directly with us before a complaint is referred to an independent redress provider.

2. What is a complaint?

A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction about the service provided by Chris Hamriding Lettings & Estate Agents Ltd, our staff, or the way in which we have handled a matter.

Complaints may concern, for example:

- delays or failures in communication;
- the handling of a sale or letting;
- property management matters;
- the handling of instructions;
- the administration of a tenancy;
- the handling of a checkout or deposit matter;
- alleged failures to follow agreed procedures
- other concerns regarding the service provided by our business.

Where a matter concerns a deposit dispute that is already being considered by an approved tenancy deposit scheme, the deposit scheme's adjudication process will remain separate from our internal complaints procedure. Our complaints procedure considers the service and handling of the matter. It does not replace the adjudication process of a tenancy deposit scheme.

3. How to make a complaint

Complaints should preferably be made in writing so that we can ensure that all issues raised are properly recorded and investigated.

Complaints can be submitted by:

Email: Congleton@chrishamriding.co.uk

Telephone: 01260 543999

Post: Chris Hamriding Lettings & Estate Agents Ltd, 9 High Street, Congleton, Cheshire, CW12 1BN

When making a complaint, please provide:

- your name and contact details;
- the property address, where applicable;
- details of the matter complained about;
- the date or approximate date of the events concerned;
- the name of the member of staff involved, if known;
- any relevant documents or evidence; and
- the outcome or resolution you are seeking, where appropriate.

If a complaint is made verbally, we ask that it is confirmed in writing so that there is a clear record of the matters being complained about.

4. Stage 1 – Departmental Manager Review

Upon receipt of a formal written complaint, we will acknowledge the complaint in writing within 5 working days.

The complaint will be recorded and referred to the appropriate Departmental Manager for investigation.

The Departmental Manager will review the relevant information, which may include:

- correspondence;
- tenancy or sales documentation;
- inventories and inspection reports;
- photographs;
- telephone records;
- internal records;
- agreements and policies; and
- any evidence supplied by the complainant.

The Departmental Manager will provide a written response setting out the outcome of the investigation.

The response will explain:

- the matters that have been considered;
- the findings of the investigation;
- any action that we propose to take; and
- whether any aspect of the complaint remains unresolved.

We aim to provide the Stage 1 response within 15 working days of receipt of the formal complaint. If additional time is required because of the complexity of the complaint, we will explain the reason for the delay and provide an indication of when a full response can be expected.

5. Stage 2 – Senior Management Review

If the complainant remains dissatisfied following the Stage 1 response, they may request that the complaint is reviewed by a senior member of management or Director. The Stage 2 review should be requested in writing and should explain the reasons why the complainant remains dissatisfied with the Stage 1 response. The Stage 2 review will be undertaken by a senior member of staff who was not directly involved in the original matter wherever reasonably practicable.

The purpose of Stage 2 is to provide an independent internal review of:

- the original complaint;
- the Stage 1 investigation;
- the evidence considered;
- the findings reached; and
- any additional information provided by the complainant.

The senior reviewer will consider whether the complaint was investigated appropriately and whether the conclusions reached at Stage 1 were reasonable based upon the information available. The Stage 2 reviewer may uphold, partially uphold or reject the complaint, or may propose further action where appropriate. A written Final Viewpoint response will be issued at the conclusion of Stage 2. We aim to provide the Stage 2 response within 15 working days of receiving the request for escalation.

6. Stage 3 – Independent Redress

If, having completed our internal complaints procedure, the complainant remains dissatisfied, they may refer the complaint to The Property Ombudsman (TPO), subject to TPO's Terms of Reference and eligibility requirements.

Chris Hamriding Lettings & Estate Agents Ltd is registered with The Property Ombudsman.

TPO provides an independent service for complaints concerning property businesses. TPO's process is separate from our internal complaints procedure. TPO's current guidance states that consumers should first complete the property business's internal complaints procedure before referring the matter to TPO. TPO may consider a complaint once the business has issued its final response, or where the internal procedure has not been completed within eight weeks.

A complainant should normally refer a complaint to TPO within 12 months of receiving our Final Viewpoint response, subject to TPO's current Scheme Rules and Terms of Reference.

The Property Ombudsman

Website: www.tpos.co.uk

Telephone: 01722 333306

Address:

The Property Ombudsman; 33 The Clarendon Centre; Salisbury Business Park; Dairy Meadow Lane; Salisbury; Wiltshire; SP1 2TJ

TPO's current contact details and referral requirements should be checked on its website before submitting a complaint.

7. Tenancy deposit disputes

Where a complaint concerns a tenancy deposit which is being dealt with through an approved tenancy deposit scheme, the deposit dispute itself will remain subject to the relevant scheme's dispute resolution process.

For example, where a dispute has been referred to the Tenancy Deposit Scheme (TDS), TDS may appoint an impartial adjudicator to consider the evidence submitted by the parties and determine the disputed deposit deductions under its applicable scheme rules.

Our internal complaints procedure does not replace or override the deposit scheme's adjudication process.

Accordingly, a complaint about the handling or administration of a checkout or deposit matter may be considered under this complaints procedure, while the separate question of whether particular deposit deductions should be awarded may remain a matter for the relevant tenancy deposit scheme.

The Property Ombudsman also confirms that it does not determine tenancy deposit disputes and directs consumers to their relevant deposit scheme for those matters.

8. Timescales

We aim to deal with complaints as quickly as reasonably possible. Our target timescales are:

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| • Stage | Target |
| • Complaint acknowledgement | Within 3 working days |
| • Stage 1 – Departmental Manager | Within 15 working days |
| • Stage 2 – Senior Management/Director | Within 15 working days of escalation |
| • Overall internal process | Normally within 8 weeks |

Where a complaint is particularly complex or requires information from third parties, it may not be possible to meet the above target timescales. If this occurs, we will explain the reason for the delay and provide an indication of when we expect to be able to provide a substantive response. Our internal complaints process will not normally exceed eight weeks from receipt of the formal complaint. TPO's current guidance also states that a complaint may be referred to it where eight weeks have passed without a final response.

9. Our approach to complaints

We will:

- treat complaints seriously and fairly;
- investigate complaints objectively;
- consider relevant evidence provided by all parties;
- avoid unnecessary delay;
- keep appropriate records of complaints;
- provide clear written responses;
- identify any errors where they are found;
- take reasonable corrective action where appropriate; and
- use complaints to improve our service.

Making a complaint will not affect a customer's right to receive our services or to use an independent redress scheme where applicable. We will not charge a customer for making or having a complaint investigated.

10. Final viewpoint

Our Stage 2 response will constitute our Final Viewpoint on the complaint and will explain our position on the matters raised. Where the complainant remains dissatisfied after receiving our Final Viewpoint, they may refer the matter to The Property Ombudsman, subject to TPO's Terms of Reference. The Final Viewpoint will provide the relevant information required to enable the complainant to understand how to make such a referral.