



Complaints Procedure for Niche CBS Residents

Introduction

We always aim to provide a high standard of Housing Support in all our services.

Our Clients' views are important to us and help to ensure our services are consistently meeting people's needs. If you are unhappy with any of our services, it is important that you let us know.

Making a Suggestion

Often people feel more comfortable suggesting improvements than complaining formally. Suggestions can be made by anyone living in a Niche CBS property, or their friends/family. To make a suggestion you can:

- Speak to one of the Housing Support Officers or a Manager
- Utilise available comments or suggestion boxes if you would rather make your suggestion that way,
- If the suggestion is something that Niche CBS as a company needs to consider you can send it to:

Niche CBS Ltd, 117-119 Seaside Road, Eastbourne, BN21 3PH

Or call us on 01323 640 292

Making a Complaint

We aim to handle complaints quickly, effectively and in a fair and honest way. We take all complaints seriously and use valuable information from investigating to help us improve the service we provide. We treat all complaints in confidence.

Niche CBS assures Clients and their families that it will not withdraw or reduce Housing Support because someone makes a complaint in good faith.

Who Can Complain

Anyone affected by the way Niche CBS provides services can make a complaint. A representative can make a complaint for the affected person if they:

- Cannot make a complaint themselves, or
- Have given consent for the advocate to act on their behalf.

If you are not happy about making a complaint yourself and you do not know someone who can talk or write to us on your behalf, we will be happy to find someone from an independent Organisation to act as an advocate for you.

How You Can Make a Complaint

You can complain:

- In person
- By telephone
- By letter
- Via an advocate/representative
- Through a member of our staff
- By email - contact@niche-cbs.com

Where someone wishes to make a formal complaint about Niche CBS and makes that complaint verbally, we will make a written record with you, signed by you at the time, and then provide a copy of it within 3 working days

¹ Niche CBS Limited is a Community Benefit Society with charitable rules registered with the Financial Conduct Authority under the Co-operative and Community Benefit Societies Act 2014 – Reg No. 8429. Registered Office: Paddock Woods, Wormley, Surrey, GU8 5TR.

Anonymous Complaints

We deal with anonymous complaints under the same procedure. However, it should be noted, if you provide contact details, we can update you on the outcome of our investigation.

Responsibility

The Directors of Niche CBS have overall responsibility for dealing with all complaints made about the service. We will provide as far as is reasonably practical:

- Any help you need to understand the complaints procedure
- Advice on where you may get that help
- Advice about making a complaint in a way you can understand.

How We Handle Complaints

Niche CBS may ask one of the management team to investigate the complaint. That person will have enough seniority and experience to deal with the issues raised by the complaint.

We will formally acknowledge a complaint within 3 working days and give you the details of the person investigating.

We will also keep you informed about the progress of the investigation. We aim to have all complaints finished within 28 working days unless we agree a different time scale with you.

When we have finished investigating, we will arrange to meet with you to discuss the outcome, and write to you with:

- Details of the findings
- Any action we have taken
- Our proposals to resolve your complaint

Time Limits

You should complain as soon as you can after the date on which the event occurred or came to your notice. If you complain more than twelve months later, we may not be able to investigate properly. However, we will consider whether you had a good reason for not making the complaint sooner and whether, despite the delay, it is still possible to investigate the complaint effectively and fairly.

Further Steps

At any stage during the process, if you are not happy with the way Niche CBS is dealing with your complaint you can contact the Directors at the previous address on p40.

You can also contact your Local Authority Complaints Team to complain. You can contact the Local Authority Complaints Team at: **Local Authority Complaints Team** <https://www.lewes-eastbourne.gov.uk/about-the-councils/make-a-complaint/>

Once we have dealt with your complaint, if you are not happy with the outcome you can refer your complaint to the Housing Ombudsman and ask for it to be reviewed. The Housing Ombudsman provides a free independent service.

You can contact them at:

Housing Ombudsman Service, PO Box 152, Liverpool L33 7WQ

Tel: 0300 111 3000 www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk/

NB: The Ombudsman will not normally investigate a complaint until the provider has had an opportunity to respond and resolve matters