EHSL views complaints as an opportunity to learn and improve for the future, as well as a chance to put things right for the person [or organisation] that has made the complaint.

Our policy is:
• To provide a fair complaints procedure which is clear and easy to use for anyone wishing to make a complaint
• To publicise the existence of our complaints procedure so that people know how to contact us to make a complaint
• To make sure everyone at EHSL knows what to do if a complaint is received
• To make sure all complaints are investigated fairly and in a timely way
• To make sure that complaints are, wherever possible, resolved and that relationships are repaired
• To gather information which helps us to improve what we do

**Definition of a Complaint**

A complaint is defined as an expression of dissatisfaction, however made, about the standard of service, actions or lack of action by the Company, its own staff, or those acting on its behalf, affecting an individual resident or group of residents.

**Where Complaints Come From**

Complaints may come from tenants and persons involved in the arrangements for our tenants' housing and care. This may include family members, social workers, support providers and other professionals. They may also come from members of the public.

A complaint can be received verbally, by phone, by email or in writing.

**Exclusions**

We will not usually accept complaints when:

- We have not previously been made aware of an issue and been given the opportunity to put things right.
- There is a more suitable alternative process available to resolve concerns raised more effectively and efficiently or the concern raised is a service request (e.g. service charge queries, anti-social behaviour reports or insurance claims), complaints will be accepted where we have failed to follow these processes.
- The same issues have already been raised by the customer and have already been considered through our complaints process
- The issue giving rise to the complaint occurred over six months ago, except where a claim of disrepair has been made. However, we will consider older reports of relevant issues as background to complaints if necessary and will consider older concerns when responding to safeguarding or health and safety concerns.
- The complaint relates specifically to an approved EHSL policy; however, we will accept complaints about how a policy has been applied.
- Legal proceedings have been started relating to the same concern and a claim has been filed with a court.
- A court, tribunal, arbitrator or Ombudsman has already considered the matter
- Access to our complaints process has been restricted in line with our Excessive Use and Unreasonable Behaviour Policy
- This policy does not cover complaints from staff, who should use EHSL's Discipline and Grievance policies.

**Confidentiality**

All complaint information will be handled sensitively, telling only those who need to know and following any relevant data protection requirements.

**Responsibility**

Overall responsibility for this policy and its implementation lies with EHSL's executive management team

**Review**

This policy is reviewed regularly and updated as required. Complaints Procedure of EHSL Publicised Contact Details for Complaints:

Written complaints may be sent to EHSL at 614 Reading Road, Winnersh, RG41 5HE or by e-mail at feedback@ehsl-uk.com

Verbal complaints may be made by phone to 0300 200 4100 or in person to any of EHSL's employees.

Complaints may also be made via the website (www.ehsl-uk.com/complaints) or via the Arthur App

**Receiving Complaints**

Complaints may arrive through channels publicised for that purpose or through any other contact details or opportunities the complainant may have. Complaints received by telephone or in person need to be recorded. The person who receives a phone or in person complaint should:

• Write down the facts of the complaint

• Take the complainant's name, address and telephone number

• Note down the relationship of the complainant to EHSL (for example: tenant, family member, professional stakeholder)

• Tell the complainant that we have a complaints procedure

• Tell the complainant what will happen next and how long it will take

• Where appropriate, ask the complainant to send a written account by post or by email so that the complaint is recorded in the complainant's own words.

For further guidelines about handling verbal complaints, see Appendix 1

**Resolving Complaints**

The Process:

**Making a complaint**

If you are already dealing with an officer, you should tell them that you wish to make a complaint or otherwise, you can make a complaint via email, phone, letter, online, via an app, or in person.

The Complaint information will then be passed on to the Head of Landlord Services. They will review and record the complaint and delegate to an appropriate manager to investigate and take the appropriate action.

**Acknowledgement of complaint**

The first thing the investigating manager will do when we receive a complaint is ensure we understand what has caused the dissatisfaction, what impact it has had and what our customer wants us to do to put things right.

We will ensure that we include our understanding of the complaint, and the outcomes the customer is seeking, where we feel that any part of the complaint is unclear, we will ask for further clarification to ensure a full understanding of the definition of the complaint.

Where necessary we will ensure that we manage customer expectations from the outset and will be clear where a desired outcome is unreasonable or unrealistic.

Once we have received sufficient details, we will provide confirmation to the customer that a complaint has been opened, including reference details for the complaint, how to contact us and information about the complaint policy. We will acknowledge all complaint requests within five working days.

**Stage 1** –The investigating manager will investigate your concerns and respond to you. A response will be sent to you no later than 28 working days from the date your complaint was received. If this is not possible, you will receive an explanation and a date by when the stage one response should be received.

**Stage 2** – if you are dissatisfied with the response at Stage 1, let us know within 14 working days. A Senior Manager will review your case and the previous response you received and will send you a full reply setting out their findings within 21 working days unless an alternative date is agreed.

**Stage 3** – if you remain unhappy with the proposed resolution, let us know within 14 working days. A member of the Executive Management Team will review your complaint and the previous responses at the earlier stages and will write to you setting out their findings within 21 working days.

This response represents our final response to a complaint. If a customer remains dissatisfied with our response after this stage, they will be referred to the relevant external complaint redress scheme.

**Closing a Complaint**

We will close a complaint when:

- A resolution plan has been provided with clear, reasonable timescales for actions. Outstanding actions will be tracked and actioned expeditiously, and regular updates provided.
- A complaint is not upheld and no appeal raised at that stage or within the set timescale.
- The complainant specifically states that they do not wish to take the matter further
- We require additional information from the customer to proceed with the complaint but have been unable to contact them. This will only be done once three reasonable attempts have been made using all contact information available
- A legal hearing has taken place and a judge has made a relevant ruling
- The complainant acts in an unreasonable or offensive manner and/or refuses to cooperate with our staff

We will notify the customer in writing that their complaint has been closed and the reason for this.

**External Stage**

The complainant can complain to the Property Redress Scheme at any point. EHSL's registration number is PRS002793. Information about the kind of complaints the Property Redress Scheme can involve itself in can be found on their website at: https://www.theprs.co.uk/

**Variation of the Complaints Procedure**

The Executive management team may vary the procedure for good reason. This may be necessary to avoid a conflict of interest, for example, a complaint about the CEO should not also have the CEO as the person leading a Stage 3 review. Monitoring and Learning from Complaints. We review our complaints annually to identify any trends which may indicate a need to take further action.