

Complaints Procedure

1. Our commitment

Chambers Estate Agents is committed to providing a professional, transparent and high-quality estate agency, lettings and property management service.

We recognise that, from time to time, a service user may feel dissatisfied with the service they have received. Where this happens, we are committed to dealing with the matter promptly, fairly, consistently and professionally.

We welcome complaints as an opportunity to review our service, resolve concerns where possible, improve our procedures and maintain the standards expected of a professional letting and managing agent licensed in Wales. This complaints policy applies to all service users, including prospective contract-holders, contract-holders, tenants, landlords, applicants, guarantors, clients, customers and any other person who has received, requested or been affected by our lettings or property management services.

2. Purpose of this policy

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that complaints are handled in a clear, accessible and consistent way. This policy explains how a complaint can be made, how Chambers Estate Agents will investigate and respond, the timescales that apply, how a complaint may be escalated internally, and how a service user may refer an unresolved complaint to the company's approved property redress scheme where appropriate.

The policy is also intended to support compliance with the Housing (Wales) Act 2014, Rent Smart Wales licensing requirements, the Rent Smart Wales Code of Practice for Licensed Landlords and Agents, consumer protection requirements, redress scheme requirements and the company's wider professional obligations.

3. Scope of this policy

This policy applies to complaints about the service provided by Chambers Estate Agents in connection with estate agency, lettings and property management activities.

Complaints may relate to, but are not limited to, property marketing, applicant handling, viewings, landlord advice, tenant or contract-holder communications, property management, repairs, maintenance, rent collection, deposits, fees, inspections, contractor handling, complaints handling, staff conduct, equality and diversity, reasonable adjustments, vulnerability, communication standards or compliance processes.

This policy applies to complaints made in person, by telephone, by email, by letter, through the company's website, or through any other reasonable communication method.

Where a matter relates to an urgent repair, health and safety concern, safeguarding issue, active leak, loss of essential services, fire safety concern, gas safety concern, electrical safety concern or other urgent property management matter, Chambers Estate Agents may treat the operational issue as urgent while also recording and progressing any associated complaint under this policy.

4. Who may complain

A complaint may be made by any service user who is dissatisfied with the service provided by Chambers Estate Agents. This includes prospective contract-holders, contract-holders, tenants, landlords, applicants, guarantors, clients, customers, contractors, suppliers, neighbours or other persons who have been affected by the company's lettings or property management activities.

A complaint may also be made by an authorised representative acting on behalf of a service user, provided Chambers Estate Agents is satisfied that the representative has authority to act.

5. What is a complaint

For the purpose of this policy, a complaint is any expression of dissatisfaction about the service, action, omission, conduct, decision, communication, or standard of work provided by Chambers Estate Agents or by a person acting on the company's behalf.

A complaint does not need to use the word "complaint" to be treated as one. Where a service user expresses dissatisfaction and expects a response, explanation, remedy or review, the matter should be considered under this policy. Examples of complaints may include dissatisfaction with communication, delay, repair handling, property management, landlord advice, tenant handling, marketing, referencing, application handling, staff conduct, fees, documentation, contractor performance, deposit administration, complaint handling, or perceived unfair treatment.

6. Matters outside this policy

Some matters may fall outside 'Chambers Estate Agents' direct control or may need to be dealt with through a different process. This may include disputes that are purely between landlord and contract-holder where Chambers Estate Agents has no management responsibility, matters already subject to court proceedings, tribunal proceedings, insurance claims, deposit scheme adjudication, police investigation or formal enforcement action, and complaints about third parties where the company has not instructed, controlled or contributed to the issue.

Where a matter falls outside this complaints procedure, Chambers Estate Agents will explain this to the complainant where appropriate and, where possible, signpost them to the relevant organisation or process. This does not prevent the company from considering whether any part of the matter relates to the service provided by Chambers Estate Agents.

7. How to make a complaint

A complaint may be made in writing, by email, by telephone, in person or through any other reasonable communication method. Complaints should preferably be sent to:

**Chambers Estate Agents
(Cardiff) Limited trading as:**

Chambers Estate Agents

Address:

35 Merthyr Road, Whitchurch, Cardiff,
South Glamorgan, CF14 1DB

Email:

info@chambersestateagents.co.uk

Telephone:

029 2052 2106

For the attention of:

The Directors / Senior Management

Where a complaint is made verbally, the member of staff receiving the complaint should record the key details. Chambers Estate Agents may confirm its understanding of the complaint in writing and invite the complainant to confirm that the summary is accurate. This helps ensure that the complaint can be investigated properly and provides a clear record should the matter later be referred to independent redress. However, Chambers Estate Agents will not refuse to consider a complaint solely because it was made verbally.

To assist with investigation, complainants are encouraged to provide their name, contact details, property address if relevant, the nature of the complaint, relevant dates, names of staff or contractors involved, copies of relevant correspondence, and the outcome they are seeking.

8. Accessibility and reasonable adjustments

Chambers Estate Agents is committed to ensuring that the complaints process is accessible. Where a complainant has a disability, vulnerability, language barrier, communication difficulty, support need or other personal circumstance that affects their ability to make or progress a complaint, the company will consider reasonable adjustments.

This may include allowing a complaint to be made verbally, allowing additional time to provide information, communicating through an authorised representative, providing information in an accessible format, using a preferred communication method, confirming key information in writing, or escalating the matter to a senior member of staff.

Requests for reasonable adjustments will be considered promptly, respectfully and on a case-by-case basis.

9. Stage one: initial review and response

When a complaint is received, Chambers Estate Agents will acknowledge it within three working days wherever reasonably practicable. The complaint will be reviewed by an appropriate member of staff or manager who was not directly responsible for the issue where reasonably practicable. The purpose of the stage one review is to understand the complaint, consider the relevant facts, review available records and provide a fair response.

Chambers Estate Agents will provide a stage one written response within fifteen working days of acknowledging the complaint wherever reasonably practicable. Where the matter is complex, requires information from a landlord, contractor, third party or external organisation, or requires further investigation, the company may require additional time. In that situation, the complainant will be informed of the reason for the delay and provided with a revised response timeframe.

The stage one response will normally summarise the complaint, explain what has been considered, set out the company's findings, confirm whether the complaint is upheld, partially upheld or not upheld, and explain any action the company proposes to take.

10. Stage two: senior management review

If the complainant remains dissatisfied with the stage one response, they may request a stage two review. A request for a stage two review should normally be made within ten working days of the stage one response. The complainant should explain why they remain dissatisfied and identify any part of the response they believe has not been addressed.

The stage two review will be undertaken by a Director, Senior Manager or another suitable senior person who has sufficient authority to review the matter objectively. Chambers Estate Agents will provide a final written response within fifteen working days of receiving the stage two request wherever reasonably practicable. Where further time is required, the complainant will be informed of the reason and provided with a revised timeframe.

The stage two response will normally be issued as Chambers Estate Agents' final viewpoint letter and will represent the company's final position on the complaint unless exceptional circumstances justify further internal review.

11. Final viewpoint letter

Where a complaint has completed the internal complaints process, Chambers Estate Agents will issue a final written response. The final response will explain the company's position and, where the complainant remains dissatisfied, will confirm their right to refer the matter to the Property Redress Scheme where the complaint falls within that scheme's jurisdiction.

The final response will include the contact details of the Property Redress Scheme, together with any relevant referral timescale required by that scheme.

12. Independent redress

Chambers Estate Agents is a member of the Property Redress Scheme, membership number PRS026998. If a complainant remains dissatisfied after the internal complaints procedure has been completed, or if the company has not resolved the complaint within the timescale required by the Property Redress Scheme, the complainant may be entitled to refer the complaint to the Property Redress Scheme.

Approved redress scheme:	Property Redress Scheme
Membership number:	PRS026998
Address:	Property Redress, Limelight, 1st Floor, Elstree Way, Borehamwood, Hertfordshire, WD6 1JH
Telephone:	0333 321 9418
Email:	info@propertyredress.co.uk
Website:	www.propertyredress.co.uk

Referral timescale: A complainant may refer the matter to the Property Redress Scheme if they remain dissatisfied after receiving Chambers Estate Agents' final viewpoint letter, or if 8 weeks have passed since the written complaint was made and the matter has not been resolved. Any referral must be made within the timescale required by the Property Redress Scheme rules in force at the relevant time.

Service users are made aware of the company's redress arrangements through the company's office information, website, client documentation and complaint correspondence. Chambers Estate Agents will cooperate with the Property Redress Scheme in accordance with the scheme's rules and the company's licence and regulatory obligations.

13. Rent Smart Wales

Chambers Estate Agents is licensed by Rent Smart Wales to carry out letting and management activities in Wales.

Rent Smart Wales Licence Number: LR-75096-91052

Rent Smart Wales is the licensing authority for landlords and agents under the Housing (Wales) Act 2014. Rent Smart Wales does not replace the company's internal complaints procedure or the Property Redress Scheme process for unresolved service complaints. However, service users may contact Rent Smart Wales where they have concerns about landlord registration, agent licensing, licence conditions, the Code of Practice, or compliance with Rent Smart Wales requirements.

Where a complaint raises an issue that may affect the company's Rent Smart Wales licence conditions, Code of Practice compliance, fitness and propriety, landlord registration, agent licensing, or legal obligations, the matter will be escalated to Senior Management for review.

14. Urgent complaints and health and safety issues

Where a complaint involves an urgent health, safety or welfare issue, Chambers Estate Agents will prioritise the operational response. This may include matters such as gas safety concerns, electrical safety concerns, fire safety concerns, serious water leaks, loss of essential services, security concerns, damp and mould concerns, structural risks or any issue that may present a risk to occupiers or visitors.

The company may continue to progress the matter as a complaint while also taking urgent action to assess, instruct, report, escalate or resolve the underlying issue.

Where the matter is the landlord's responsibility and Chambers Estate Agents manages the property, the company will notify the landlord and seek instructions where required, while also considering any legal or safety obligations that may require prompt action.

15. Complaints involving discrimination, vulnerability or unfair treatment

Complaints involving alleged discrimination, harassment, victimisation, unfair treatment, refusal of service, failure to make reasonable adjustments, or poor handling of a vulnerable service user will be escalated to Senior Management. Chambers Estate Agents will consider such complaints carefully and in accordance with its Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy.

Where the complaint concerns a prospective contract-holder, contract-holder, tenant, applicant or landlord with a protected characteristic, disability, support need, vulnerability, family status or receipt of benefits, the company will consider whether any reasonable adjustment, additional support, alternative communication or corrective action is appropriate.

Where a complaint relates to an unsuccessful application, refusal of a viewing, refusal to provide property information, or alleged unfair applicant selection, Chambers Estate Agents will review the decision against its applicant handling, equality and diversity, and landlord instruction procedures.

The company will consider whether the decision was based on objective, lawful and recorded criteria.

The company will not tolerate discriminatory conduct by staff, landlords, contractors, suppliers or third parties acting on its behalf.

16. Complaints involving contractors or third parties

Where a complaint relates to a contractor, supplier, inventory clerk, referencing provider, viewing representative, maintenance contractor or other third party instructed by Chambers Estate Agents, the company will review the matter and consider whether the third party's conduct, performance or communication was acceptable.

Where appropriate, Chambers Estate Agents may seek information from the contractor or third party, review correspondence, inspect work, request remedial action, raise performance concerns, remove the contractor from future instruction or take other appropriate action.

Where a third party was instructed directly by a landlord, tenant, contract-holder or another person and not by Chambers Estate Agents, the company will explain the limits of its involvement where appropriate.

17. Complaints involving landlords

Where a complaint concerns the conduct, instructions or obligations of a landlord, Chambers Estate Agents will review the extent of the company's role and management responsibility.

Where Chambers Estate Agents manages the property or has been instructed to act on the landlord's behalf, the company will consider whether it needs to notify the landlord, seek instructions, provide advice, recommend action, escalate compliance concerns or take steps within the scope of its authority.

Chambers Estate Agents will not follow landlord instructions that are unlawful, discriminatory, unsafe, misleading or inconsistent with Rent Smart Wales requirements, the company's licence conditions, the Code of Practice or applicable housing legislation.

Where a landlord refuses to address a serious compliance issue, Senior Management will review the matter and consider appropriate action, which may include written advice to the landlord, escalation, withdrawal from management, signposting the complainant to the relevant authority, or reporting concerns where required or appropriate.

18. Remedies and outcomes

Where Chambers Estate Agents upholds or partially upholds a complaint, the company will consider an appropriate remedy. A remedy may include an apology, explanation, correction of information, further action to resolve an issue, review of a decision, staff guidance, contractor follow-up, process improvement, escalation to a landlord, review of documentation, refund of a fee where appropriate, goodwill gesture, or another reasonable outcome.

The appropriate remedy will depend on the facts of the complaint, the impact on the complainant, the company's responsibility, relevant legal obligations, redress scheme guidance and what is fair and proportionate in the circumstances.

19. Complaint records

Chambers Estate Agents will keep records of complaints received and how they were handled.

Complaint records may include the complainant's details, property address, complaint summary, date received, acknowledgement date, staff involved, documents reviewed, investigation notes, response dates, outcome, remedial action, escalation, redress referral information and any lessons learned.

Complaint records will be retained securely and handled in accordance with applicable data protection requirements.

Complaint records will normally be retained for a minimum of six years from closure, unless a longer period is required because of legal, regulatory, redress, insurance or ongoing dispute reasons.

Complaint records may be reviewed as part of internal compliance monitoring, staff training, service improvement, redress scheme requirements or Rent Smart Wales audit readiness.

20. Monitoring and service improvement

Chambers Estate Agents will monitor complaints to identify patterns, recurring issues, service weaknesses, training needs or compliance risks. Senior Management may periodically review complaints relating to repairs, communication, contractor performance, deposits, fees, landlord instructions, applicant handling, discrimination, vulnerability, reasonable adjustments, property management or documentation.

Where complaint outcomes identify a need for improvement, Chambers Estate Agents may update procedures, provide staff guidance, improve templates, change contractor arrangements, amend website information, review landlord communication or introduce additional compliance controls. The purpose of monitoring is to ensure that complaints are not only resolved individually, but also used to improve the quality and consistency of the company's service.

21. Staff responsibilities

All staff are expected to understand this complaints policy and to deal with complaints professionally. Staff must recognise that a complaint does not need to be made formally or use the word "complaint" to require proper handling. Any expression of dissatisfaction that requires a response should be treated seriously.

Staff must record complaints promptly, acknowledge concerns courteously, avoid defensive or dismissive responses, preserve relevant evidence, escalate serious matters, and follow the company's internal process. Complaints involving health and safety, discrimination, vulnerability, serious service failure, landlord non-compliance, regulatory risk or potential Rent Smart Wales licence concerns must be escalated to Senior Management without delay.

22. Communication of this policy

Chambers Estate Agents makes service users aware of this complaints policy through appropriate client and customer communications. A copy of this policy is available on request and the company's complaints and redress information is displayed or made available through the company's office, website and relevant client or customer documentation.

The policy is available through the company's office and may be provided by email, post or other reasonable means upon request. Information about the complaints process and the company's approved redress scheme is also made available through the company's website and relevant service documentation. Landlords are informed of the complaints process through client documentation and the company's terms of business. Prospective contract-holders, contract-holders, tenants and applicants may be informed through website content, office information, tenancy or occupation related communications, complaint correspondence and direct request.

Senior Management is responsible for ensuring that complaints information remains current, accessible and consistent with Rent Smart Wales expectations, redress scheme requirements and the company's regulatory obligations.

23. Data protection and confidentiality

Chambers Estate Agents will handle complaint information confidentially and in accordance with applicable data protection requirements. Complaint information will only be collected, used, shared and retained where there is a lawful and legitimate reason to do so. This may include investigating the complaint, communicating with the complainant, obtaining information from staff, landlords, contractors or third parties, complying with legal obligations, cooperating with a redress scheme, responding to regulatory enquiries, or demonstrating compliance.

Where a complaint involves sensitive personal information, health information, vulnerability, disability, financial circumstances, family circumstances or allegations of discrimination, the company will take particular care to handle the information appropriately and proportionately.

24. Review of this policy

This policy will be reviewed at least annually and sooner where required by legal change, Rent Smart Wales guidance, redress scheme requirements, audit feedback, complaint outcomes, changes in business practice or identified compliance risk. The Directors / Senior Management are responsible for approving the policy and ensuring that it remains suitable for the company's estate agency, lettings and property management activities.

Thanks you.

**We hope this
Information
has helped.**

