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| **Liversage Trust** **Policies and procedures****Governance**  | **Almshouse Residents and Visitors Complaints Policy** **August 2021**  |
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| **1** | **INTRODUCTION**  |
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| 1.1 | The Liversage Trust is committed to providing the best possible services to all our residents and visitors. However, we recognise that from time to time there may be occasions when individuals may not be satisfied with the quality of services provided and may wish to complain. It is important that these instances are brought to our attention quickly as we can then review our actions so that they can provide us with an opportunity to put things right and learn from any mistakes. |
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| 1.2 | We therefore treat complaints very seriously, viewing them as a valuable source of feedback on our services and a leaning opportunity. While we note that some people may be reluctant to complain, we can only resolve problems and improve services if those affected by our services speak up when they are not happy with something that we have or have not done. No individual will ever receive any adverse treatment because they have made a complaint. |
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| **2** | **AIMS AND OBJECTIVES** |
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| 2.1 | When dealing with a complaint, we aim to:  |
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|  | * increase resident and customer satisfaction by resolving complaints promptly, politely, fairly and in a consistent manner
* achieve continuous improvement by recording and reviewing areas of the service which cause dissatisfaction amongst residents and wider customers and learning from any trends that are identified.
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| 2.2 | This will be achieved by: |
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|  | * setting out a consistent framework for dealing with complaints
* making sure the process is focused on the complainant and is customer-friendly
* giving staff and residents alike a clear set of expectations as to how residents’ complaints will be dealt with
* clarifying who can make a complaint and who will deal with the complaint at various stages
* setting out the procedures to be followed for resolving complaints.
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| **3** | **WHAT IS A COMPLAINT?** |
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| 3.1 | A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction, however it is made, about the standard of service, actions or lack of action by the Liversage Trust or individual member of staff, affecting an individual resident or group of residents and where a response is required. |
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| 4.  | **WHO CAN MAKE A COMPLAINT?**  |
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| 4.1 | A complaint can be made by any resident or residents, visitor or any person acting on their behalf who has received services from the Liversage Trust, or been affected by our actions, omissions or decisions. This can be made to any member of staff when they visit residents in their home, or by calling into our main office. Alternatively, a complaint can be made to us by phone, by email, by letter or by using the form at the end of this policy. |
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| 4.2 | Where a resident is unable to make a complaint or where they would prefer someone to act in their place, then they may ask a representative to make a complaint on their behalf. This could be a family member, friend or support agency/worker. In these cases, the Liversage Trust would require formal authorisation in writing, so that details of the case can be discussed with the third party.  |
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| 4.3 | In all cases the collection, storage, access to, provision and disclosure of data will be undertaken in accordance with data protection legislation. |
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| **5** | **PROCEDURE FOR DEALING WITH COMPLAINTS** |
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|  | **Initial contact** |
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| 5.1 | We hope to resolve most minor complaints when you first make contact with us without the need for a written response. This will mainly be dealt with by your first point of contact where we will provide you with a clear explanation, tell you how we will resolve the matter if required, and offer an apology where necessary. |
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| 5.2 | If we are unable to deal with your complaint straight away, or it requires further investigation, we will acknowledge your complaint and aim to resolve it within 5 working days or in a mutually agreed timescale. All members of staff must inform the General Manager when they receive your complaint and what they have already done or are proposing to do about it. |
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|  | **Stage 1 – Review by General Manager** |
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| 5.3 | If you are dissatisfied with the action proposed / taken, then you should complain to the General Manager who will carry out a review. The General Manager will acknowledge your complaint, clarifying any points/issues as necessary and will aim to write to you with a response within 10 working days of receiving your request. |
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| 5.4 | If you are not happy with the action / decision taken by the General Manager, you have 15 working days to ask, in writing, for a further review by the Chair of the Estates Committee.  |
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|  | **Stage 2 – Review by Chair of Estates Committee** |
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| 5.5 | The Chair will acknowledge your complaint and aim to provide you with a formal written response within 15 working days of receiving your review request.  |
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| 5.6 | The letter will tell you that if you are still not satisfied, you have 15 working days in which to refer the matter, in writing, to the Chair of the Board and request an Appeal. The letter will also give you information on the Appeals process. |
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|  | **Stage 3 – Appeal to Trustee Panel** |
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| 5.7 | Complaints that go to an Appeal will be heard by a Trustee Panel consisting of three Trustees – usually the Chair and Vice Chair of the Board and another Trustee. The members of this Panel will, if possible, have had no direct involvement in the case. The Panel will elect one of their number as Chair. |
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| 5.8 | The Trustee Appeal Panel will meet as soon as possible, but not later than 20 working days from the date the Chair of the Board receives your Appeal request. |
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| 5.9 | The General Manager will arrange for copies of all correspondence relating to the complaint to be sent to members of the Trustee Panel and to the complainant in advance of the Panel meeting. |
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| 5.10 | The Panel will consider all the facts relating to the complaint and decide whether the decision should be changed or upheld. If new information is forthcoming and/or there are obvious gaps in information reviewed, then the Panel may also decide that these aspects of the complaint or investigation should be reviewed and re-considered, before making a final decision.  |
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| 5.11 | A written response will normally be sent within 10 working days of the Panel meeting. This will set out the decision of the Panel and the reasons why the decision has been reached. The decision of the Panel is final. The correspondence will also provide details of how to take the complaint further. |
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| 5.12 | If we are unable to resolve your complaint and you want to take it further, you can: |
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|  | * refer the matter to a designated person **or**
* wait 8 weeks and refer the matter directly to the Housing Ombudsman.
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|  | **Stage 4 – Designated Person** |
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| 5.13 | Residents can ask for their complaint to be considered by a ‘designated person’. Designated persons were introduced by Government in April 2013 to improve the chances of complaints about housing being resolved locally. Derby Homes Tenants Panel has agreed to act in this capacity for Liversage Trust residents, and we will refer complaints to them on request. A designated person will help resolve the complaint in one of two ways; they can try to resolve the complaint themselves or they can refer the complaint straight to the Ombudsman. If they refuse to do either, or if the problem is still not resolved following the intervention of the designated person, you can contact the Ombudsman directly. |
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|  | **Stage 5 – Housing Ombudsman Service** |
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| 5.14 | Complaints to the Ombudsman do not have to be referred by a designated person but, if they are not, there must be at least 8 weeks from the end of the Trust’s complaint process before the Ombudsman can consider the case. You can get a leaflet about the Housing Ombudsman service from the Trust.  |
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| 5.15 | The Ombudsman can be contacted at: |
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|  | Housing Ombudsman Service81 AldwychLondonWC2B 4HN |
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|  | Telephone: 0300 111 3000 |
|  | Fax: 020 7831 1942 |
|  | Email: info@housing-ombudsman.org.uk |
|  | Website: housing-ombudsman.org.ukPlease note – telephone lines for the Housing Ombudsman Service are currently open Monday to Friday, 8.30am to 5.30pm, excluding bank holidays |
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| **Title:** | Liversage Trust– Almshouse Residents – Complaints Policy |
| **Approved by:** | Board  |
| **Approved on:** | 26 July 2021 (originally 28 September 2015) |
| **Effective date:** | Originally 1 October 2015. Revised 1 August 2021 |
| **Review period:** | 5 years from effective date or to comply with any new statutory requirement |
| **Developed by:** | Andrew Mellors  |
| **Associated policy/procedure(s):** | Liversage Court Residents – Complaints Policy Equalities and Diversity PolicyData protection |

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| **LIVERSAGE TRUST** |
| **COMPLAINT FORM** |
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| **Please write clearly in black ink. We are happy to accept feedback or a complaint from your representative. If you use a representative, we will write to them, and send you a copy of our response.** |
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| **WHICH SERVICE IS YOUR COMPLAINT ABOUT?** | **(please tick box)** |
| **Repairs** |  |  **Rents** |  |  |
| **Residents’ Support** |  |  **Other** |  |  |
| **YOUR FEEDBACK** |
| **Please give details of your complaint. If you want, tell us what action you think we should take. Continue on the back of this sheet.** |
| **RESIDENT** |
| **Name:** |  |
| **Address:** |  |
| **Telephone:** |  | **Email:** |  |
| **RESIDENT’S REPRESENTATIVE – IF APPLICABLE** |
| **Name:** |  |
| **Address:** |  |
| **Telephone:** |  | **Email:** |  |
| **Relationship to resident:** |  |
| **Further details of your complaint. Attach extra sheets if necessary.** |
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| **Signature of resident or resident’s representative** | **Date:** |
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| **PLEASE RETURN THIS FORM TO:****LIVERSAGE TRUST, BOARD ROOM, LONDON ROAD, DERBY DE1 2QW** |
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| **FOR OFFICE USE ONLY** |
| **Name of employee first receiving feedback:** |  |
| **Date received:** |  |
| **Action taken / proposed:** |
| **Date General Manager informed:** |  |
| **Action taken by General Manager:** |