

# Riverside Tenants' and Residents' Complaints Panel

If your complaint is not resolved by Riverside you can take your complaint to a designated person.

This could be an MP, the local councillor for your area or a recognised tenant panel.

The recognised panel for Riverside is the Riverside Tenants' and Residents' Complaints Panel. It is trained in complaint mediation including data protection, equality and diversity. This panel can help you resolve your complaint against Riverside.

A group of tenants and residents who are supported by, but are independent of Riverside, make up the panel. The panel members are volunteers who have been trained in resolving complaints.

This panel is known as a 'designated panel', and is different from other tenant and resident panels because it only looks at complaints.

Its role is to assist in resolving tenants' and residents' complaints and issues locally. The members of the panel provide a fresh and impartial insight on complaints, recommending solutions that may not have been considered by Riverside.

## What will the Riverside Tenants' and Residents' Complaints Panel do?

The panel can either try to resolve the complaint or if it feels the complaint is too complicated, refer it straight to the Housing Ombudsman Service. The panel can recommend solutions it thinks will work best. This could be for example, providing a review of the way the complaint has been handled or being more proactive and recommending actions.

If the complaint is not resolved by the panel, it can refer the complaint to the Ombudsman. The law says that this referral has to be in writing and must be with the permission of the person making the complaint.

## Why has the Riverside Tenants' and Residents' Complaints Panel been set up?

A change in the law in 2011 said from April 2013, tenants of housing associations could ask for their complaints to be considered by a 'designated person' when their landlord's internal complaints procedure is finished. One of these 'designated persons' is a group of tenants acting as a designated tenant panel.

## What do 'recognised' or 'designated' mean?

Legislation describes 'designated persons' as an MP, a local district councillor or a designated tenant panel.

To be a 'designated' tenant panel must be 'recognised' by the landlord. And the Riverside Tenants' and Residents' Complaints Panel has been recognised by Riverside.

A designated tenant panel may be recognised by more than one landlord. A landlord may recognise more than one tenant panel.

The Housing Ombudsman keeps a register of tenant panels which deal with complaints. It is the landlord's responsibility to register a panel with the Ombudsman once it has been recognised and to inform him of any subsequent changes. This will help the Ombudsman identify whether a complaint is referred by a designated tenant panel.

Only designated tenant panels acting as designated persons -dealing with individual complaints, should be registered with the Ombudsman.

### **What powers does Riverside Tenants' and Residents' Panel have?**

The panel, like other 'designated persons' has the power of persuasion, negotiation and conciliation. It has the power to refer complaints to the Ombudsman once the landlord's complaint process is finished.

Although the panel will not have power over Riverside's policies and procedures it may suggest ways they could be improved.

### **How do I contact the Riverside Tenants' and Residents' Panel?**

If you would like to refer your complaint to Riverside Tenants' and Residents' Panel you can:

Email: [complaintspanel@riverside.org.uk](mailto:complaintspanel@riverside.org.uk)

Ask a member of our team or visit your local office.

Telephone: **0345 111 0000**

Write to: **Riverside Tenants' and Residents' Complaints Panel,  
C/O Customer Service Centre, 2 Estuary Boulevard, Estuary Commerce Park,  
Liverpool L24 8RF**

### **How do I find out more about designated panels?**

You can find out more about designated panels on the websites below:

[www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk](http://www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk)

[www.nationaltenants.org/tenantpanels](http://www.nationaltenants.org/tenantpanels)

[www.homesandcommunities.co.uk](http://www.homesandcommunities.co.uk)