



RIVERSIDE INQUIRERS  
Review of Complaint Handling  
Scrutiny Report  
February 2016



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## 1.0 Introduction

We are the Riverside Inquirers (RI's), the Scrutiny Panel for Riverside Care and Support (RCS). We were formed in 2012 and this is our third report. This review was undertaken by the following Inquirers

- ✚ Michael Pells - Supported Housing
- ✚ Dawn Foxley-Bulmer - Supported Housing
- ✚ David Green - Sheltered Housing
- ✚ Dominic Phelan – Supported Housing
- ✚ Sarah McCloy – Supported Housing
- ✚ Margaret Dernie (part of the review)
- ✚ Elizabeth Luke (part of the review)



We also received advice and guidance from Louise Thompson, who was our independent TPAS mentor.

## 2.0 Scope and methodology

After examining the performance information and customer intelligence provided by Riverside, we agreed that our next topic for review would be complaint handling. The reasons for this were

- STAR survey results from 2013 – showed high dis-satisfaction levels around complaint handling.
- Minutes from a Neighbourhood Services Forum (NSF) showed dis-satisfaction with complaints handling amongst tenants.
- The absence of any evidence showing feedback to tenants on complaints data and the lessons learnt from them.
- Compared to other possible topics, complaints handling scored highly on our scrutiny criteria matrix.

Once the topic had been chosen we spent time scoping it out and agreed that the following key lines of enquiry would be included in the review

- How easy is it to make a complaint?
- Do Riverside follow their complaints policy and does it meet the standards set down by the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA)?
- What is the tenant experience of making a complaint?
- What is the culture around complaints and how do Riverside learn from complaints?
- Are there any recommendations to improve complaint handling?
- Are there any areas of positive practice to be highlighted?

However, it was decided that the following areas would not be part of the review and were therefore out of scope

- The reasons why people are complaining
- Complaint handling relating to Anti-Social Behaviour
- Complaint handling relating to repairs once the complaint has been reported

Our methodology was a mix of desktop work and reality checking, see below:

#### **Desk top papers included**

- HCA standard for tenant involvement and empowerment which includes complaints
- Riverside Customer Feedback Policy
- NSF Minutes
- Housing Ombudsman website
- Annual Report
- Learning from complaints Chartered Institute of Housing
- 2013 STAR Survey
- Complaints data and performance reports
- Other Housing providers' complaints policies

#### **Reality Checking methods included**

- Customer Service Centre (CSC) visit
- Twitter Benchmarking Survey
- Tenant postal survey
- Tenant telephone survey
- Scheme visits to interview staff
- Face to face interviews with complaints staff and managers
- Complaints Panel survey

The results of all our feedback can be found in our evidence folder which is available for inspection on request.

### 3.0 Main body/findings

Key Line of Inquiry	Key findings
<p><b>Complaints satisfaction and equalities data</b></p>	<p>RCS no longer gathers satisfaction data on complaints handling as an assumption is made that if the case is closed at stage 1 then customers are satisfied. However, while this may give an indication of satisfaction with the outcome of a complaint, it does not encompass satisfaction with how the complaint was handled. In the customer surveys we undertook (Appendix 1 and 2) nine out of 19 respondents said they were not satisfied with the way their complaint was handled.</p> <p>The surveys also showed that complaint timescales were an issue with half of those customers who responded to our survey stating their complaint was not dealt with within the set timescales.</p> <p>RCS do not collect complainants profiling information such as age, ethnicity, disability. We found that the main reason for this was the incompatibility of the I.T systems used by RCS. There was, however an acknowledgement from RCS that this was inadequate and they were looking at resolving this issue.</p>
<p><b>Learning from complaints</b></p>	<p>Our research highlighted that the lessons learnt are not always logged on the One View system, something that Riverside themselves acknowledge. with one manager commenting that “we are not great at it but we know it’s important.”</p> <p>We also found a number of concerns after examining the customer feedback reports for Aug, Sept and Oct 2015 including</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. The reports don’t pull out any themes or trends so that any issues that are re-occurring across schemes are not identified. We expect that this information should be provided to managers in an additional report, as it is essential for them to understand the bigger picture as well as the detail of complaints.</li> <li>b. The reports are inconsistent. For example, the lessons learnt tab for Aug CF06 has lessons learnt on it. However, the report for lessons learnt in Sept and Oct is CF07 and this has no detail of lessons learnt. We are therefore unsure why this is the case and if any lessons were learnt in these months.</li> <li>c. RCS do not seem to look for lessons learnt if a complaint is not upheld. This would appear to be another missed opportunity as just because a complaint is not upheld it doesn’t mean that lessons can’t be learnt. For</li> </ol>

	<p>example, it maybe that policy has been followed so the complaint isn't upheld. However, this doesn't mean that the policy is right! It may well need reviewing in light of the complaint made. It may also be that the customers experience of how their complaint was handled was still poor. We believe that all complaints whether upheld or not provide vital feedback and they should all therefore be reviewed.</p> <p>It does seem therefore that opportunities are missed to make improvements and changes as a result of complaints because the lessons learnt are not logged or disseminated effectively.</p>
<p><b>Logging Complaints</b></p>	<p>The research showed that not all staff in supported housing log complaints onto the One View system. For example, one manager commented "Only if it doesn't go away will we log it on One View"</p> <p>The main reasons staff gave for not logging complaints were</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. they did not feel confident in using the One View system as they had either had no training or the training was inadequate</li> <li>b. they had been instructed by their managers to pass any complaints straight to them</li> <li>c. they make a judgement that they do not need to log the complaint because in their view it wasn't a formal or genuine complaint. For example, one member of staff alluded to this when commenting. "Nine out of ten complaints I receive aren't a genuine complaint about the service so they don't get taken any further." Other staff members felt that it wasn't a genuine complaint unless it was received in writing.</li> </ol> <p>We also found that although customers can take complaints to NSF these are not logged onto the system and customers are not given feedback.</p>
<p><b>Staff Training on Complaints</b></p>	<p>When we asked staff about their training on complaints they all focused on the One View system training rather than the customer feedback procedure or dispute resolution training. When we probed this issue further with senior staff we were told that there was an E learning module for complaints. When we asked to see this it transpired that there isn't a dedicated module but it is part of the customer service module. However, we have not seen this despite requesting that this be shared with us. There does therefore seem to be some confusion about what complaints training staff have undertaken and which staff have completed</p>

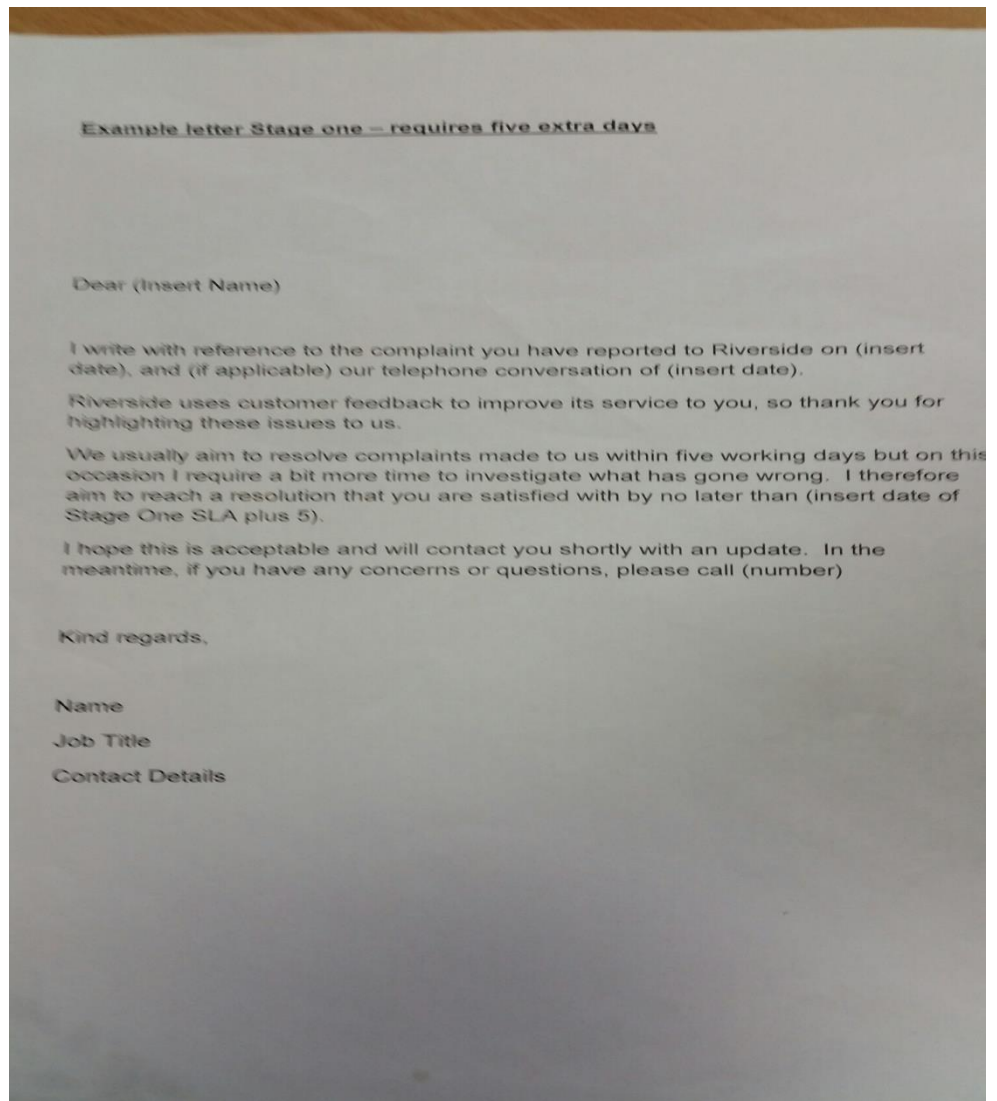
	<p>it. A selection of comments we received from staff when asked about training are below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Had Mary Goeber training and Riverside service standards but nothing on complaints</li> <li>• Just had one days training on the One View system</li> <li>• Not sure that temporary staff would be able to use the One View system</li> <li>• Not a huge amount of experience would need a manual</li> <li>• I have had no complaint investigation training</li> <li>• Went to Wembley for One View training but the system wasn't live so we just had a presentation.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) - Tenant Involvement and Empowerment standard</b></p>	<p>In relation to complaints the HCA's tenant involvement and empowerment standard states Registered Providers shall</p> <p><i>“have an approach to complaints that is clear, simple and accessible that ensures that complaints are resolved promptly, politely and fairly.”</i></p> <p><i>“shall offer a range of ways for tenants to express a complaint and set out clear service standards for responding to complaints, including complaints about performance against the standards, and details of what to do if they are unhappy with the outcome of a complaint. Providers shall inform tenants how they use complaints to improve their services. Registered providers shall publish information about complaints each year, including their number and nature, and the outcome of the complaints. Providers shall accept complaints made by advocates authorised to act on a tenant's/tenants' behalf.”</i></p> <p>We could find no evidence to show that Riverside Care and Support had met the above standard.</p> <p>We were informed initially that the required information could be found in the annual report but Riverside later acknowledged that this was not the case. We now note that that this information has just been published in Your Voice (the tenants' newsletter) Winter 2015 edition. However, having assessed the information published in Your Voice, we still feel that this falls short of the HCA requirements because of the complex way this information is presented.</p> <p>For example, it states as a result of your complaints we have</p> <p><i>“increased the authorisation level for our main repairs provider”</i></p> <p>Many tenants including ourselves, will have no idea what this statement means and how it will improve services.</p> <p>Also the figures at the beginning of article are confusing. It starts of by giving us the number of complaints, then proceeds to break down the data into percentages which makes it difficult to interpret.</p>

	<p>We therefore feel that Riverside could do much better in how it presents and feeds back its complaint information to customers.</p> <p>Finally, we also feel that RCS could have taken this opportunity to demonstrate RCSs positive attitude and approach to complaints as set down in their Customer Feedback procedure.</p> <p>It could have encouraged and inspired customers to give their feedback and explained to them that RCS sees feedback as “gold” which they can use to generate improved services.</p>
<p><b>Customer Feedback Procedure</b></p>	<p>We found that parts of the customer feedback procedure are not applied or adhered to consistently across the organisation. The evidence to support this is outlined below</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. The policy says “All complaints should be logged onto the customer feedback data base within one view” (P3 1.1.1) but all complaints are not logged onto One View as outlined previously.</li> <li>b. The policy states that a complaint may be made verbally to a member of staff (in person or over the telephone), submitted via the website or in writing (letter or complaints form). However, our research showed that some managers are requesting that customers put their complaints in writing before they consider it formally. Some managers also said that complaints must be reported to them and no other channels should be used, with one manager stating in a residents meeting that “the CSC has been receiving a lot of complaints from residents, any complaint a resident has they should take it up with me”</li> <li>c. The policy sets down clear timescales in which complaints should be dealt with. However, the tenant survey indicates that timescales are not being met. Also the customer feedback reports we received do not report in whether timescales are being met and it is unclear how targets are monitored.</li> <li>d. RCS service standards treat complaints as “pure gold” and <b>on paper</b> there is a culture of encouraging feedback and using it to improve services. However, we found evidence to suggest that in practice this isn’t the case. For example, the feedback policy section 1.2 suggests that tenants who have made comments and complements would be suitable people to become involved tenants. However, this invitation is not extended to complainants which seems very negative. Surely if they are bringing the</li> </ul>



organisation “gold” they are worthy of being invited to become involved tenants! Also a senior staff member with responsibility for complaints stated that they don’t encourage people to complain although the policy section 1.3 is all about encouraging feedback which includes complaints.

- e. We were given copies of standard letters (see example below) that should be used when responding to complaints. These were of a good standard conveying a positive approach to complaints. However, we found in one scheme that standard letters are not used and as a result the quality of communication can be poor, see letter 2 on next page



	<div data-bbox="472 191 691 254" style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; margin-bottom: 10px;">Letter 2</div> <div data-bbox="472 268 1520 1066" style="background-color: #e0e0e0; padding: 10px;"> <p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Outcome of Complaint regarding communal kitchen</u></b></p> <p>Following on from your complaint regarding the communal; I believe that you spoke with [redacted] regarding the complaint in my absence.</p> <p>As a result, the complaint was upheld, as the kitchen could've been cleaned before usage rather than the kitchen just being closed.</p> <p>The following actions will/have take place:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. A Sunday luncheon club procedure has already been devised and is live.</li> <li>2. A procedure around the general use of the communal kitchen to be drafted by me, which will include ensuring the kitchen is cleaned after use, and ready for use at the next occasion.</li> </ol> <p>If you are not satisfied with the outcome of this then you are able to take this to a stage 2, within 30 days of this letter.</p> <p>Many thanks</p> <p>Yours sincerely</p> </div>
<p><b>How easy is it to make a complaint</b></p>	<p>We tested the complaints leaflet out with a small group of tenants and the feedback was</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It is long with too many pages which would put people off complaining</li> <li>• The language used is confusing and vague.</li> <li>• Not value for money. There is lots of white space and photos taking up additional pages that are not needed.</li> <li>• Shouldn't have to pay to return the form – should be freepost</li> </ul> <p>Like many companies Riverside has a uniformed, one size fits approach to complaints. It does not accommodate or reflect the specific challenges customers in supported living face when it comes to making complaints. This is especially true for those customers with mental health problems or those who may have been homeless. These customers may not be confident enough to engage with such a formal system, or they may feel unable to complain to workers who they are so reliant on for support, but this shouldn't mean they are left without a voice to give feedback on the services they receive.</p>

<b>Areas of positive practice</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) We found the CSC staff to be extremely professional and helpful when we sat in with them.</li> <li>2) The timescales for dealing with complaints are fair and reasonable and managers liked them, although there could be challenges if staff worked shifts or were on holiday</li> <li>3) There was no deliberate attempt to ignore or by pass policy. All staff we spoke to believed that they were doing the right thing for the right reasons when handling complaints.</li> </ol>
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**4.0 Recommendations**

	Recommendation	Why this is needed	How should this be implemented	Suggested Timescales
1.	<p><b>Complaints data and Information</b></p> <p>RCS should collect satisfaction on complaint handling. The Tenants’ complaints Panel should be tasked with this – see section 5</p> <p>Work should be done to ensure that the relevant I.T systems work together to provide profiling information. Complaints reports based on this information should be generated and analysed to ensure any themes or common issues are identified and acted upon.</p>	<p>Without customer feedback it is difficult to see how RCS know if their complaints handling processes are operating effectively and if they need improving. As a result, customers may remain dis-satisfied.</p> <p>The lack of diversity information means RCS is unable to identify if any customers with protected characteristics are experiencing particular problems with their services. This appears to compromise their own Equality and Diversity policy which states “Riverside will strive to ensure policies, practices and procedures do not cause discrimination”</p>	To be agreed at the challenge meeting	To be completed at the challenge meeting

2.	<p><b>Timescales:</b></p> <p>Performance management reports should include data on timescales. Targets should be set for managers and performance reported on the website</p>	<p>Dealing with complaints within the published set timescales is important to tenants. Therefore, performance on timescales should be measured and posted on the website. This will ensure staff are motivated to meet the timescales and that they are held accountable for poor performance.</p>		
3.	<p><b>Staff Training:</b></p> <p>A separate E learning module on the customer feedback procedure and One View system should be developed.</p> <p>All staff should undertake it with refresher training being offered on a regular basis.</p> <p>Also additional training must be given to combat the lack of a consistent understanding of the role customer feedback plays in the complaints procedure</p> <p>All staff, including temporary and agency staff, to undertake the <b>free</b> Housing Ombudsman conflict resolution Training.</p>	<p>Riverside needs to address staff concerns about the complexity of the One View system with regular training and retraining.</p> <p>It also needs to plug the customer feedback procedure and dispute resolution knowledge gap that currently exists amongst staff.</p> <p>Unless this is done the good intentions outlined in the procedure will never be implemented and complaint handling will remain problematic.</p>		
4.	<p><b>Logging Complaints</b></p> <p>All complaints must be logged in line with the customer feedback procedure. Staff should receive further training on how to do this (see recommendations on training) and managers should</p>	<p>Unless robust steps are taken to log all complaints the opportunity to improve services will be missed.</p>		

	<p>ensure that this is raised as an issue at team meetings.</p>	<p>Customers will also feel frustrated as they do not feel their complaints are taken seriously as they are not “put on the system”</p> <p>Unless staff are able to log complaints themselves they will not be able to practice Riverside’s “OWL” philosophy as they will pass on complaints rather than taking ownership of them themselves</p> <p>The Panel feels that all complaints are a valuable source of information particularly where front line staff are dealing with the same kind of issues on a regular basis. We also feel that RCS policy supports this yet the reality is that complaints are not being logged so this information is simply lost.</p>		
<p>5.</p>	<p><b>Learning from complaints</b></p> <p>Expand the role of the existing Tenants’ Complaints Panel to look at</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• themes/trends and review cases to see if any lessons learnt. Gateshead Housing is a good example of how</li> </ul>	<p>Unless Riverside look at the lessons learnt, the “gold” they talk about will remain “unmined” This means services will not improve for customers and staff will be wasting time dealing with re-occurring</p>		

	<p>this works in practice. See appendix 4</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contact a selection of customers who have made a complaint to ask them about their satisfaction with the way complaint dealt with</li> <li>• Work with staff to compile a quarterly complaints feedback article for tenants using accessible and meaningful language and figures</li> </ul>	<p>problems. We appreciate that in the current financial climate resources may not be available to undertake this work, so we would like to see more tenant involvement in this. We understand from the survey we undertook with the Tenants' Complaints Panel (Appendix 3) that they are not fully utilised and feel that this would be an excellent opportunity for them to put their skills and knowledge to good use.</p>		
<p>6.</p>	<p><b>Change to RCS complaints policy, procedure and leaflet:</b></p> <p>We would like to see the word <b>feedback</b> instead of complaints used consistently across all Riverside policies and publications.</p> <p>The policy should be changed to invite people who complain to become tenant panel members</p> <p>A simple and eye catching leaflet and flyer should be introduced in place of the leaflet. We have designed one that we think would be appropriate. See appendix 5</p> <p>Standard letters must be used to communicate with the customers who make a complaint.</p>	<p>Using the word feedback will create the right culture and ensure the "gold" is mined</p> <p>All customers should be encouraged to get involved and often the ones who take time to complain can be real assets to improving services.</p> <p>A simple and easy to read leaflet would make it easier for customer to give feedback. It would also save money as it would be cheaper to produce</p> <p>Use of standard letters will ensure that communication with customers is of an acceptable standard.</p>		

<p>Consider if an alternative customer feedback procedure would be more appropriate for supported Housing.</p> <p>This could include trialing an internal scheme log, perhaps called #dailydealings where staff can log customers’ feedback on service issues or repair problems. This will assure customers that their issue is being taken seriously as it is being logged in the “book” and it also ensure that people can see what has been reported and what is happening with it. The log should be available for all people to view and should be updated regularly. The TV’s in the schemes should also be used to show the #dailydealings log</p> <p>Making a complaint for a customer in supported housing can be a big deal. The way it is handled can play a significant part in that customers rebuilding process. Handled well, it can be empowering but handled badly it can completely demoralising. Supported customers therefore have very different life experiences to other Riverside customers and we feel that thus should be reflected in the customer feedback procedure.</p>	<p>Supported Housing is very different to both general needs and retirement living in terms of the people it houses, the staff it employs (often temporary, agency and shift workers) and the kind of services it provides. Careful consideration is therefore needed to explore whether a different approach to customer feedback is needed. Only by doing this can RCS ensure it provides the best possible service to all its customers regardless of tenure.</p>		
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## 5.0 Action Plan following challenge meeting on 17th Feb 2016

Following the challenge meeting held with Riverside staff on the 17<sup>th</sup> February 2016, the Panel has added the following table to the report. This highlights the original recommendations, comments from staff, revised recommendations and the actions the Panel would like to see endorsed by the Board.

	Original Recommendation	Accepted by Riverside at Challenge meeting YES/NO/PARTIALLY	Comments from challenge meeting	Our comments and Revised recommendation if appropriate	Required Actions
1.	Collect satisfaction data on complaint handling.	Yes	Started a rolling survey from April 2016 to collect this data on a monthly basis	Happy with this and look forward to seeing the feedback from the survey	Provide Panel with feedback from survey in June 2016
2.	Collect diversity information in relation to complaints	Yes	Yes, accepted this and know it's important Depends on IT system work – not a high priority. Don't think it will be done in next 12 months May try to collect when doing rolling survey work	Until IT system work is done we would like to see the profiling information collected when undertaking the above survey.  Feel this should be made a priority. Needs to be scheduled in to a future work plan	Share profiling data when completing above action.  Provide Panel with evidence to show that this has been logged as requested work



7.	Performance management reports should include data on timescales.	Yes	New format for reports has been put in place which includes timescales.  Will send Panel a copy of this.	Yes, good to hear this but would like to see a copy of this	Provide Panel with a copy of the new report by end of March 2016
8.	Targets should be set for managers and performance reported on the website	Didn't cover due to time constraints		It is important that performance is reported in an open and transparent way to ensure accountability. Would therefore want to see this recommendation implemented	Provide Panel written response to this recommendation by 10 <sup>th</sup> March 2016
9.	A separate E learning module on the customer feedback procedure and One View system should be developed.  All staff should undertake it with refresher training being offered on a regular basis	Yes	Will provide a new training programme covering all ethos and process training. Will give Panel a copy of this by end of April 2016	Yes, happy with this and look forward to seeing the training programme – would like a presentation on it and opportunity to give feedback on it.	Provide Panel with copy of new training plan and deliver presentation by April 2016  Provide update on roll out and outcomes of training Dec 2016

10.	All staff, including temporary and agency staff, to undertake the <b>free</b> Housing Ombudsman conflict resolution Training.	Yes	Liked the sound of this. Will explore how long it takes with a view to implementing as part of the new training plan	Would like to see this included as part of the proposed new training plan	As above
11.	All complaints must be logged in line with the customer feedback procedure.	Yes	Shocked that they are not logged as this is opposite of policy.  Training is the issue here. Need ensure all staff understand the procedure and ethos around complaints.	Welcome this response. As this a key issue and we will look to test out if training has been successful in dealing with this issue	Panel to re-test this in 12 months
12.	Expand the role of the existing Tenants' Complaints Panel to look at <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• themes/trends</li> <li>• satisfaction with the way complaint dealt with</li> <li>• compile a quarterly</li> </ul>	Partially	Accepted was under used and did want to look at giving them a more active role. However, there is a Governance review taking place and will need to wait and see the outcome of this before we can do anything more on this.  Have now introduced new "button" where	OK - Would like to see a copy of the Governance review when completed and then feedback on the decision made in relation to our recommendation around the Complaints Panel.	Provide Panel with a copy of the Governance review and feedback on if this recommendation will be implemented April 2016

	complaints feedback article for tenants using accessible and meaningful language and figures		complaints cannot be closed unless the lessons learnt log is completed.	Welcome this and hope this will help to improve services	
13.	Use feedback instead of complaints used consistently across all Riverside policies and publications.	No	Do like the work feedback but hard to use this word across the organisation. For example, the HCA/Ombudsman talks about complaints not feedback.	When leaflets and publications are reviewed consideration should be given to using the word "feedback" where possible	None
14.	Ensure that the customer feedback policy invites people who complain to become tenant panel members	Yes	An oversight – the customer feedback procedure will be amended to ensure tenants who complain are invited to get involved in a panel		Copy of amendment to be sent to Panel for confirmation that this has been completed. Ed of April 2016
15.	Introduce new leaflet as per our example	Partially	We consulted with 200 tenants and they told us they liked the original leaflet. They like the white space and pictures.	We still want this looked at as we feel the current leaflet is not fit for purpose or value for money. We	Provide Panel with details of the consultation so they can assess whether they still

			Has to have corporate identity.	have seen the new tenant involvement leaflet and feel that this style and approach needs to be adopted for the feedback leaflet. We would also like to see a tenants' editorial panel set up with a representative sample of tenants from all divisions.	feel this needs to be looked at. March 2016  Discuss possibility of using Panels leaflet with Communications team and feedback to Panel on outcome by March 2016
16.	Standard letters must be used to communicate with the customers who make a complaint.	No	There are no standard letters as previous tenants told us that they didn't like them. Do however instruct staff to include certain information	Ok happy to withdraw this recommendation as happy with the personalisation element of the letters but need to ensure quality check the standard of letters for spelling and grammar	Provide panel with feedback that this quality checking has taken place at the end of Dec 2016
17.	Consider if an alternative customer feedback procedure	No	Have to ensure that all staff follow the same	Ok happy to withdraw this recommendation	See actions on training plan

	would be more appropriate for supported Housing.		policy and procedure as per "One Riverside"	but need to ensure that staff are given the training to understand and apply the policy/procedure correctly. Staff cannot be "subjective" in deciding what is logged or what is a complaint. It has to be checked and managed effectively.	
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## **6.0 Conclusion**

We feel we have undertaken a fair and robust review of how complaint handling at Riverside Care and Support. Our main conclusions are

- The written procedures and theory that underpin complaints at Riverside are excellent, but this is not what happens in practice, particularly in supported housing. This is largely due to the fact that staff do not understand what is expected of them when it comes to complaints handling
- Opportunities to learn from complaints and improve are missed due to poor data collection and analysis
- Communication and feedback to tenants about complaints is patchy and complex
- Supported housing poses different challenges for complaints handling that perhaps need to be addressed in a different way. This should be explored more by working with supported tenants and staff.

To ensure that the above issues are addressed effectively, we have identified a number of recommendations that we feel will improve customer satisfaction, support staff in their working day and provide good value for money.

Finally, we would ask that Riverside provide us with a quarterly written updates to indicate what progress has been made in implementing the recommendations, and ask that they track any impact our recommendations have made.

## **7. Acknowledgements**

We are grateful to all tenants, residents and members of staff, who took part in this review and provided us with valuable information as to how they perceived Complaints Handling across Riverside Care and Support. Special thanks also to the tenant Inspectors for helping us with the telephone survey.

## 7.0 Appendices

### Appendix 1

#### Organisation: Scrutiny Riverside ECHG

#### Customer Survey Results

#### Project – Complaints

How did you Log your complaint?

Website	Twitter	Email	Telephone	Letter	Other (forms, in person etc.)
2	1	3	3	1	3

Was your Deal within the Timescales stated?

Yes	No
5	5

Did your complaint get resolved at Stage 1?

Yes	No
2	8

Were you satisfied with how your complaint was handled?

Yes	No
7	3

Were you satisfied with the outcome of your complaint?

Yes	No
6	4

Do you feel improvements could be made to the complaints process?

Yes	No
6	3

### Improvement Comments

- Bypass Middle management go directly to C.E.O /MPs
- Treat complaints with Respect
- Get feedback on complaints
- To allow access to your home or repairs if customer is not home.
- Jobs to be done quicker; people don't get back to me to let me know;

### Appendix 2

#### **Organisation: Scrutiny Riverside ECHG Telephone Survey (Supported) Results Project – Complaints**

Was your Dealt within the Timescales stated?

Yes	No
5	5

Did your complaint get resolved at Stage 1?

Yes	No
5	5

Were you satisfied with how your complaint was handled?

Yes	No
5	4

Were you satisfied with the outcome of your complaint?

Yes	No
4	4



Do you feel improvements could be made to the complaints process?

Yes	No
7	3

### Improvement Comments

- Procedure can be improved – no suggestions at the moment
- Better communication better response
- Complaint not resolved – better communication face to face.
- Quicker response
- No written response was given no meetings with Riverside staff, ended up homeless – so better communication needed, written confirmation of complains.
- Riverside gave a good response but the contractors were poor, therefore better contractors.
- Ongoing problem with Night staff
- More staff training on complaints
- 

## Appendix 3

### Organisation: Scrutiny Riverside ECHG

#### Complaints Panel Survey Results

#### Project – Complaints

Do you have any evidence to show that tenants find the “Making a comment and complaint leaflet” difficult to understand?

No	4	
Yes		If yes, please tell us what?

Do you feel Riversides complaints process is effective?

Yes	No
3	1

Do you feel Riversides complaints process is efficient?

Yes	No
3	1

As a member of the complaints panel have you identified any weaknesses in the complaints process?

Yes	No
2	2

Are there any improvements to the complaints process that you have identified?

Yes	No
2	2

## Comments

- As a panel: ongoing training for the call centre staff – aiming to achieve the response time on the complaints procedure. Providing the information required by the panel, when dealing with a third stage complaint on request.
- The panel is completely ineffective. During panel meetings certain members hi-jack the meetings for their own agenda. Meetings are poorly organised by Riverside and I feel very little had been achieved during the time the panel had been in place. Riverside need to do more to ensure that the panel is properly representative of residents, instead of being made up of 'usual' volunteers.  
Much more training needs to be given to the panel members to ensure that it is able to adjudicate effectively. As it stands I feel the complaints panel adds no value to the organisation/ residents/ homeowners and unless improvements are made I shall be reconsidering my role as a panel member. Also home owners are completely miss-represented / understood – there was talk of further training at the last meeting but this has not been followed through. Better communication needs to take place between meetings.

## Appendix 4

# Complaint Scrutiny Panel

The role of the panel is to scrutinise the company's complaints performance to ensure trends are identified and service improvements are implemented.

This involves:

- Reviewing complaint performance to make sure they are handled effectively and efficiently
- Ensuring complaints are analysed to highlight recurring trends
- Ensuring action is taken to improve services and satisfaction for customers

### Useful for:

Giving members the opportunity to challenge performance in a meaningful way, while increasing the company's and its partners' accountability and responsibility to customers.

### Key features:

The panel consists of a pool of customers and officers who meet bi-monthly. Members are selected through a recruitment process and are given the relevant training needed to support them in their role.

Expressions of interest can be put in at any time for an annual recruitment process during the summer.



# Give us your feedback



Happy?



Not happy?

Tell us what you think by

- Talking to a staff member
- Calling us 0345 111 0000 (24 hours seven days a week)
- Logging on to our website
- E mailing [info@Riverside.co.uk](mailto:info@Riverside.co.uk)
- Tweeting us @Riverside.uk

Please note we can only take feedback about Riverside services.

If you contact us, we promise to

- Listen carefully and take your feedback seriously
- Log all feedback, regardless of how you tell us, on our computer system so there is a record of what you have told us. We will give you a reference number relating to your feedback to help you track it.
- Treat you respectfully
- Tell people what has changed as a result of your feedback
- Keep you informed and updated even if nothing is happening
- Meet our timescales

And if you tell us you are not happy we promise to

1. Try to sort it there and then
2. If we can't sort it out it will become a formal complaint at stage 1 of our process. We then will look into it and contact you within 5 days to tell you about our findings.
3. If you are not happy with our findings, you can ask for someone more senior to look at it. This is called stage 2 of process. We will then contact you within 20 days to tell you about our findings.
4. If you are still not happy you can either ask our independent tenants complaint panel, MP or councillor to look at it, or wait 8 weeks and then go to the Housing Ombudsman.