



COMPLAINTS HANDLING POLICY

Complaints Handling Philosophy

Complaints are inevitable in any service industry and the efficient handling of any customer dissatisfaction is central to our philosophy. At Killens, we strive ensure that our service lives up to the expectations of our clients. We believe that there are many benefits to having a clear and straightforward complaint handling process, which aims to:-

- ◆ Ensure that we provide the level of service deserved by our customers
- ◆ Allow us to learn from our mistakes
- ◆ Preserve our reputation in the market-place and maintain customer loyalty

This document summarises our approach to complaints handling and is designed to give an outline of the process involved and our commitment to a fair and equitable resolution.

Definition of a Complaint

Complaints can come in many different forms with varying degrees of seriousness. Whilst we acknowledge that any situation which prompts a customer to contact us to express dissatisfaction is important, for the purpose of this document and our obligations under the Property Ombudsman Scheme, we define a complaint as such where it includes one or more of the following:

- ❖ Breach of Rules or Guidance issued by any Regulatory Authority to which Killens LLP is subject
- ❖ Failure to comply with any legal obligation
- ❖ Negligence leading to material loss, inconvenience or distress
- ❖ Misrepresentation, bad faith or other malpractice

A complaint involving the above will be handled in accordance with our internal complaints handling procedure which govern the acknowledgement, investigation and response to complaints. This document is designed to provide a high level overview of those procedures.

Please be aware that:

- ❖ We are unable to consider disputes between landlords and tenants which must be dealt with locally; our lettings teams will always endeavour to assist both parties to resolve any such issues.
- ❖ This formal complaint procedure is also not appropriate for end-of-tenancy deposit disputes which would generally be referred to the appropriate tenancy deposit protection scheme for independent adjudication.

Complaints Handling Procedures

Our Complaints Handling Procedures detail the stages through which a complaint will pass and lay down the turnaround standards that we work to.

Stage One

In the first instance, we ask you to raise your initial concerns with the senior staff within the office with whom you have had dealings. We will consider the details thoroughly, investigate and discuss the nature of your dissatisfaction with you and aim to reach an amicable solution as soon as possible.

If you are not happy with the process or the outcome, you should escalate the matter within the firm (Stage Two below)

Stage Two

If after investigation and communication with you, we are unable to resolve your complaint, please put the nature of your complaint in writing, by post or email, giving full details to ensure that we have a full understanding of the nature of your dissatisfaction.

Your written complaint should be directed to:

Tom Killen MRICS FAAV
Killens LLP
The Cake House, Upper Lodge Farm
Ston Easton, Somerset BA3 4DH

tom@killens.org.uk

Please ensure that your complaint includes:

- the office and staff member(s) you have been in contact with,
- the service we are engaged to carry out,
- how you consider that we have failed to meet expected standards, and
- what solution you would ideally like to achieve.

Your complaint will be considered as quickly as possible and we will acknowledge receipt of your complaint within 7 days. We may request further information or clarification from you. We will aim to respond to you within 28 calendar days of receipt of your complaint, or, if we are not able to give you a full response at that time, update you as to when you may reasonably expect a reply.

Stage Three

If we are unable to agree on how to resolve your complaint within 40 days of receipt, then you have the opportunity to take your complaint to an independent redress provider, as approved by the RICS Regulatory Board.

There are different providers for individuals and organisations, and for the particular service your complaint relates to. We will recommend in our Final Response which redress scheme is appropriate.

For Consumer Clients in relation to Residential Estate Agencies, Lettings Agencies or Property Management:

Consumers using the services of our estate agents, letting agents, and property managers, whether buying, selling, renting or letting a property or where property managers are involved acting for the freeholder, leaseholder or resident's management company can be assured that a complaint can be resolved by an independent third party agency who has experience in dealing with consumer complaints.

The Property Ombudsman (TPO)

The Property Ombudsman is a free and independent scheme established to resolve complaints about property agents from customers using their services. They have been approved by the Chartered Fair Trading Institute to run a redress scheme.

The Scheme only comes into operation after the complaints procedure operated by us has been completed and a "Final Response" letter issued (or after 8 weeks from the date when the complaint was submitted to Killens). If you wish to make a complaint to The Property Ombudsman then it should be made within 12 months.

The address of the scheme is as follows:



The Property Ombudsman
Milford House
43 – 55 Milford Street
Salisbury
Wiltshire SP1 2BP
Tel: 01722 333306
Email: admin@tpos.co.uk
www.tpos.co.uk

For Consumer Clients in relation to Surveying and Professional Services:

CEDR is free to consumers and can consider any consumer complaints except for residential agency (sales, lettings, property management). We would recommend their services for complaints relating to valuations, building surveys, land measurement, professional advice, and project management.

Centre for Effective Dispute Resolution (CEDR)
70 Fleet Street, London, EC4Y 1EU
0207 520 3800
applications@cedr.co.uk
www.cedr.com

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