

Complaints Policy and Procedure

Our aim:

Edmund Winder Watts Limited is committed to providing a quality service for its clients and working in an open and accountable way that builds the trust and respect of all Landlords, Tenants and residents. One of the ways in which we can continue to improve our service is by listening and responding to the views of our customers, and in particular by responding positively to complaints, and by putting mistakes right.

Therefore we aim to ensure that:

- making a complaint is as easy as possible;
- we treat a complaint as a clear expression of dissatisfaction with our service which calls for an immediate response;
- we deal with it promptly, politely and, when appropriate, confidentially;
- we respond in the right way - for example, with an explanation, or an apology where we have got things wrong, or information on any action taken etc;
- we learn from complaints, use them to improve our service, and review annually our complaints policy and procedures.

We recognise that some concerns will be raised informally, and dealt with quickly. Our aims are to:

- resolve informal concerns quickly;
- keep matters low-key;
- enable mediation between the complainant and the individual to whom the complaint has been referred.

An informal approach is appropriate when it can be achieved. But if concerns cannot be satisfactorily resolved informally, then the formal complaints procedure should be followed.

Preamble

Definition: Edmund Winder Watts Limited defines a complaint as 'any expression of dissatisfaction that relates to Edmund Winder Watts Limited or its contractors and that requires a formal response'.

Purpose: The formal complaints procedure is intended to ensure that all complaints are handled fairly, consistently and wherever possible resolved to the complainant's satisfaction.

Edmund Winder Watts Limited's responsibility will be to:

- acknowledge the formal complaint in writing;

- respond within a stated period of time;
- deal reasonably and sensitively with the complaint;
- take action where appropriate.

A complainant's responsibility is to:

- bring their complaint, in writing, to Edmund Winder Watts Limited's attention normally within 8 weeks of the issue arising;
- raise concerns promptly and directly with a member of staff in Edmund Winder Watts Limited;
- explain the problem as clearly and as fully as possible, including any action taken to date;
- allow Edmund Winder Watts Limited a reasonable time to deal with the matter;
- recognise that some circumstances may be beyond Edmund Winder Watts Limited's control.

Responsibility for Action: All Staff, and management of Edmund Winder Watts Limited.

Confidentiality: Except in exceptional circumstances, every attempt will be made to ensure that both the complainant and Edmund Winder Watts Limited maintain confidentiality. However the circumstances giving rise to the complaint may be such that it may not be possible to maintain confidentiality (with each complaint judged on its own merit). Should this be the case, the situation will be explained to the complainant.

Monitoring and Reporting: The Managing Director of Edmund Winder Watts Limited will receive a report of complaints made and their resolution.

Formal Complaints Procedure

Stage 1

In the first instance, if you are unable to resolve the issue informally, you should write to the member of staff who dealt with you so that he or she has a chance to put things right. If your complaint concerns a Manager of Edmund Winder Watts Limited rather than a member of Edmund Winder Watts Limited's staff, you should write formally to the individual concerned. In your letter you should set out the details of your complaint, the consequences for you as a result, and the remedy you are seeking.

You can expect your complaint to be acknowledged within 3 working days of receipt. You should get a response and an explanation within 15 working days.

Stage 2

If you are not satisfied with the initial response to the complaint then you can write to Edmund Winder Watts Limited's Managing Director and ask for your complaint and the response to be reviewed. A final viewpoint should be received from the Managing Director within 15 working days of the review request being made.

Edmund Winder Watts Limited's aim is to resolve all matters as quickly as possible. However, inevitably some issues will be more complex and therefore may require longer to be fully investigated. Consequently timescales given for handling and responding to complaints are indicative. If a matter requires more detailed investigation, you will receive an interim response describing what is being done to deal with the matter, and when a full reply can be expected and from whom.

Final Stage

If you are not satisfied with the subsequent reply from Edmund Winder Watts Limited's Managing Director, then you have the option of writing to the Property Ombudsman or Propertymark stating the reason why you are dissatisfied with the outcome. The Property Ombudsman can be contacted at the following address:-

The Property Ombudsman
Milford House
43-55 Milford Street
Salisbury
Wiltshire
SP1 2BP

Telephone: 01722 333306

Website: www.tpos.co.uk

Propertymark
Arbon House
6 Tournament Court
Edgehill Drive
Warwick
CV34 6LG

Telephone: 01926 496800

Website: www.propertymark.co.uk

You will need to submit your complaint to The Property Ombudsman or Propertymark within 12 months of receiving our final viewpoint letter, including any evidence to support your case. They will both require that all complaints are addressed through this in-house complaints procedure, before being submitted for an independent review.