



barcud

'Tell Us'

Comments, Compliments, Concerns and Complaints Policy

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Sylfeini cadarn | Firm foundations
Cartrefi gwell | Better homes
Cymunedau cryf | Strong communities

Comments, Compliments, Concerns and Complaints

Barcud is committed to providing high quality services to our tenants and other customers. However, we recognise that sometimes things can go wrong and the services we provide do not meet our tenants and customers changing needs. It is therefore important that we value all feedback, including comments, compliments, concerns and complaints and use them to direct, or where appropriate, make improvements and efficiencies in our services.

Your compliments are very much appreciated, as they highlight to our colleagues and service teams the areas of good practice within Barcud.

However, if something goes wrong or you are dissatisfied with our services, please tell us.

We are committed to dealing openly, honestly and effectively with any concerns or complaints you may have about our service. If we get something wrong or make a mistake, we will apologise and where possible, we will put things right.

We are committed to learning from our mistakes and improving our services.

This policy describes our complaints process and how to make a complaint.

What is a complaint?

We regard a complaint as any expression of dissatisfaction about our action or lack of action, or about the standard of service provided by us or on our behalf.

What can I complain about?

You can complain about things like:

- delays in responding to your enquiries and requests
- failure to provide a service
- our standard of service
- treatment by or attitude of a member of staff
- failure to follow our policy and procedure

Your complaint may involve more than one of our services or be about someone working on our behalf.

We will make sure that the services we provide to you do not suffer just because you have expressed a concern or made a complaint.

When this policy isn't used

There are some things we can't deal with through our complaints procedure. These include:

- a routine first-time request for a repair or service.
- anti-social behavior. This is dealt with through our anti-social behavior policy.
- requests for compensation. This will be dealt with through our compensation policy.
- issues that are in court or have already been heard by a court or a tribunal.
- an attempt to reopen a previously concluded complaint or to have a complaint reconsidered where we have already given our final decision following a stage 2 investigation. If you are still not satisfied, you can ask the Public Service Ombudsman for Wales for an independent review of the complaint.
- where you are following another procedure or rights of appeal to resolve your concerns, for example an appeal against your rent or service charges. We can give information and advice to help you with this.
- Subject Access Requests. To help us to understand the information you require, we will ask you to complete a subject access request form. Please ask if you need help to complete this form

Who can complain?

Anyone can make a complaint to us, including the representative of someone who is dissatisfied with our service. Please also read the section on 'Getting help to make your complaint'.

How do I complain?

You can express your concern in any of the ways below:

- you can ask for a copy of our form from the person with whom you are already in contact. Tell them that you want us to deal with your concern formally.
- you can get in touch with our central complaint contact point on 0300 111 3030 if you want to make your complaint over the phone.
- you can use the form on our website at www.barcud.cymru
- you can e-mail us at post@barcud.cymru
- you can write to us at the following address: Tell Us, Barcud Cyf., Ty Canol House, Ffordd Croesawdy, Newtown, Powys SY16 1AL
- You can speak to any Barcud colleague

It is easier for us to resolve complaints if you make them quickly and directly to the service concerned. So please talk to a member of our staff at the service you are complaining about. They can then try to resolve any problems on the spot.

When complaining, tell us:

- your full name and address
- as much as you can about the complaint
- what has gone wrong
- how you want us to resolve the matter

If you are acting on behalf of someone else, please also provide their details, including name and address, your relationship to them and why you are making a complaint on their behalf. We will need to see proof of the consent they have given you to act on their behalf.

What we ask of you

We believe that all complainants have the right to be heard, understood and respected. We do not view behaviour as unacceptable just because someone is forceful or determined.

However, we also consider that our colleagues have the same rights. We, therefore, expect you to be polite and courteous in your dealings with us. We will not tolerate aggressive or abusive behaviour, unreasonable demands or unreasonable persistence. We have a separate policy for how we manage situations where we find that someone's actions are unacceptable.

How long do I have to make a complaint?

Normally, you must make your complaint within six months of:

- the event you want to complain about, or
- finding out that you have a reason to complain, but no longer than 12 months after the event itself.

This is because it is better to look into your concerns while the issues are still fresh in everyone's minds.

In exceptional circumstances, we may be able to accept a complaint after the time limit. However, you will have to explain why you have not been able to bring it to our attention earlier and we will need to have sufficient information about the issue to allow us to consider it properly.

In any event, we will not consider any concerns about matters that took place more than three years ago.

What happens when I have complained?

We will always tell you who is dealing with your complaint. Our complaints procedure has two stages:

Stage one – Frontline Resolution

We aim to resolve complaints quickly and close to where we provided the service. This could mean an on-the-spot apology and explanation if something has clearly gone wrong, and immediate action to resolve the problem.

We will give you our decision at stage 1 in five working days or less, unless there are exceptional circumstances.

If we can't resolve your complaint at this stage, we will explain why. If you are still dissatisfied you can ask for your complaint to be investigated further through stage 2. We can help you with making this request.

Stage two – Investigation

Stage 2 deals with two types of complaint: those that have not been resolved at stage 1 and those that are complex and require detailed investigation.

When using stage 2 we will:

- acknowledge receipt of your complaint within three working days
- provide you with a complaint reference number
- tell you who we have asked to look into your concern or complaint
- set out our understanding of your concerns and ask you to confirm that our understanding is right
- ask you to tell us what outcome you're hoping for

The person who is investigating your concerns will aim to establish the facts. We will look at relevant evidence. This could include information you have provided, our case files, notes of conversations, letters, emails or whatever may be relevant to your particular concern.

In some instances, we may ask to meet with you to discuss your concerns. Occasionally, we might suggest mediation or another method to try to resolve disputes.

Outcome

If there is a simple solution to your problem, we may ask you if you are happy to accept this. For example, where you have asked for a service and we see straight away that you should have had it, we will offer to provide the service rather than investigate and produce a report.

If we make a mistake, we will always apologise for it.

We will aim to give you a full response to the complaint as soon as possible and within 20 working days.

If our investigation will take longer than 20 working days, we will tell you. We will agree revised time limits with you and keep you updated on progress.

What if I'm still dissatisfied?

If we do not succeed in resolving your complaint, you may complain to the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales. The Ombudsman is independent of Barcud and can look into your complaint if you believe that you personally, or the person on whose behalf you are complaining:

- have been treated unfairly or received a bad service through some failure on the part of the service provider
- have been disadvantaged personally by a service failure or have been treated unfairly

The Ombudsman normally expects you to bring your concerns to our attention first and to give us a chance to put things right.

You can contact the Ombudsman by:

- phone: 0300 790 0203
- e-mail: ask@ombudsman.wales
- the website: www.ombudsman.wales
- writing to: Public Services Ombudsman for Wales 1 Ffordd yr Hen Gae, Pencoed CF35 5LJ

There are also other organisations that consider complaints. For example, the Welsh Language Commissioner's Office deals with complaints about services in Welsh. We can advise you about such organisations.

Getting help to make your complaint

Our staff will help you make your concerns known to us.

We understand that you may be unable, or reluctant, to make a complaint yourself. We accept complaints from the representative of a person who is dissatisfied with our service. We can take complaints from a friend, relative, or an advocate. We will need to see the consent that you have given them to complain on your behalf.

If you need extra assistance, we will try to put you in touch with someone who can help. You may wish to contact Shelter, Age Concern, or another agency who may be able to assist you.

You can also use this concerns and complaints policy if you are under the age of 18. If you need help, you can speak to someone on the Meic Helpline:

- Phone 0808 802 3456
- Website www.meiccymru.org

or contact the Children's Commissioner for Wales. Contact details are:

- Phone 0808 801 1000
- Email post@childcomwales.org.uk
- Website www.childcom.org.uk

Learning Lessons

We take your concerns and complaints seriously and try to learn from any mistakes we have made.

Our Leadership Team and managers will consider a summary of all complaints received on a quarterly basis, and are made aware of all serious complaints.

Our Board Members also consider our response to complaints at least twice a year.

Where we need to make changes, they will be implemented and we will let you know when these changes have been made. This could include articles in the Barcud newsletter.

Our independent Tenant Group, the Barcud Monitoring Group (BMG), were involved in developing our policy and process for complaints. The group will also be provided with general data at their meetings with the Leadership Team which will enable them to monitor our process and outcomes. No personal information will be provided to the group at any time. This process is included in the Barcud Tenant Involvement Strategy & Action Plan, which is available on request.

Comments and Compliments

We welcome all feedback from tenants and customers, and use this to make improvements and efficiencies in our services. Comments and compliments can be made using the same method as complaints and concerns. We will pass on your compliments to individual colleagues or service teams and use this information to highlight good practice within Barcud.

We will report service improvements made following comments and compliments through our “You Said, We Did” feature in our newsletter.

And finally:

We are committed to making our service easy to use for all members of the community. In line with our statutory equalities duties, we will always ensure that reasonable adjustments are made to help tenants and customers access and use our services. If you have trouble putting your complaint in writing please tell us.

Copies of this policy and the complaint form can be made available in other languages and as audio or in large print. Please let us know if you want a copy in another format.

We aim to have ‘Tell Us’ leaflets available at all of our offices and public spaces.

If you would like any further information on Comments, Compliments, Concerns or Complaints, please contact us.