

# POLICY FOR COMPLAINTS ABOUT SUPPORTING PEOPLE SERVICES

People who use services (referred to as clients) have the right to make a complaint about the support service they are receiving. If a client does make a complaint, this should not adversely affect the support service they receive. If a client needs help to make a complaint, assistance can come from a key or support worker, a friend, a relative, an independent agency such as Citizens' Advice Bureau (01803 297799), Vocal Advocacy Service (01803 528714), Age Concern (01803 555181), Disability Information Service (01803 292237), your local councillor (details from Torbay Council 01803 201201) or the Supporting People team. Clients should use their service provider's complaints policy in the first instance and use the alternative route if this is not effective.

## STAGE 1

**Complaints about the service you are receiving or about a manager or member of staff who provides the service must be made to the organisation providing the service.**

Housing related support services are provided under contract between Torbay Council (Council) and Supporting People Service Providers (Provider). It is a legal requirement for each Provider to have an accessible Complaints Policy that is understood by clients. The provider must help clients to make a complaint. Providers must record details of each complaint and how it was resolved.

The Supporting People Team monitors the number and type of complaints made against each Provider and this information helps to inform the outcome of the service review and ongoing contract and performance monitoring.

Clients must use their Service Providers' complaint procedure.

Service Providers must:

- Make it clear to the client or those representing them that their complaint(s) will not adversely affect the quality of support, they receive and should make this clear when a client takes up the service and at any other time they may need to be advised of this.

- Ensure a client can make a complaint about an individual support worker, directly to the worker's manager.
- If a client wishes to make a complaint about abuse, in line with Torbay Care Trust's policy on Protection of Vulnerable Adults from Abuse this may be done outside of the Providers' complaints procedure by contacting Torbay Adult Services, Union House, Union Street, Torquay, TQ1 3TL on (01803) 208500. The Emergency Social Services Duty Team can be contacted on 0845 056 8032.

## **STAGE 2**

**If you receive a service from a Housing Association or an organisation governed by a Board of Trustees and having used their complaints procedure you are not satisfied with the manager's decision on your complaint, your complaint can be referred to the Chief Executive or Board of Trustees for a decision as the second stage in the process.**

**Where the Service Provider is neither a Housing Association nor an organisation governed by a Board of Trustees and the service-user is not satisfied with the result of the provider's investigation and decision, the Supporting People Team may be asked to adjudicate, but only if:**

- The client has exhausted the Provider's complaints procedure and they are still not satisfied that the correct and fair process was applied.
- The client has a complaint about the person who delivers the service who is also the Manager or Owner of the service.

On receipt of a complaint the Supporting People Team will deal with the complaint in line with Torbay Council's complaints procedure and anti discrimination procedure. The Team will:

- ❖ Log the date, time and nature of the complaint in line with Torbay Council requirements for complaints monitoring
- ❖ Ask for the client's consent to talk to the Provider and look at any necessary documents.
- ❖ Check the complaint has been dealt with according to the Service Providers policy.

- ❖ Check the service has been provided to the Supporting People service standards.
- ❖ Carry out any necessary investigation, including interviews.
- ❖ Advise the provider and the client of the investigation outcome within 10 days, or where further information is required, acknowledge the complaint and advise the complainant when they can expect to receive a full response.
- ❖ Make recommendations concerning a change in practice or policy if appropriate.
- ❖ Keep a record of all complaints, investigations and action in line with Torbay Council requirements for complaints monitoring.

**Contact;**

Supporting People Manager  
Housing Services  
Torbay Council  
Pearl Assurance House  
101-107 Union Street  
Torquay, TQ1 3DW Tel 01803 208424  
E-mail [supporting.people@torbay.gov.uk](mailto:supporting.people@torbay.gov.uk)

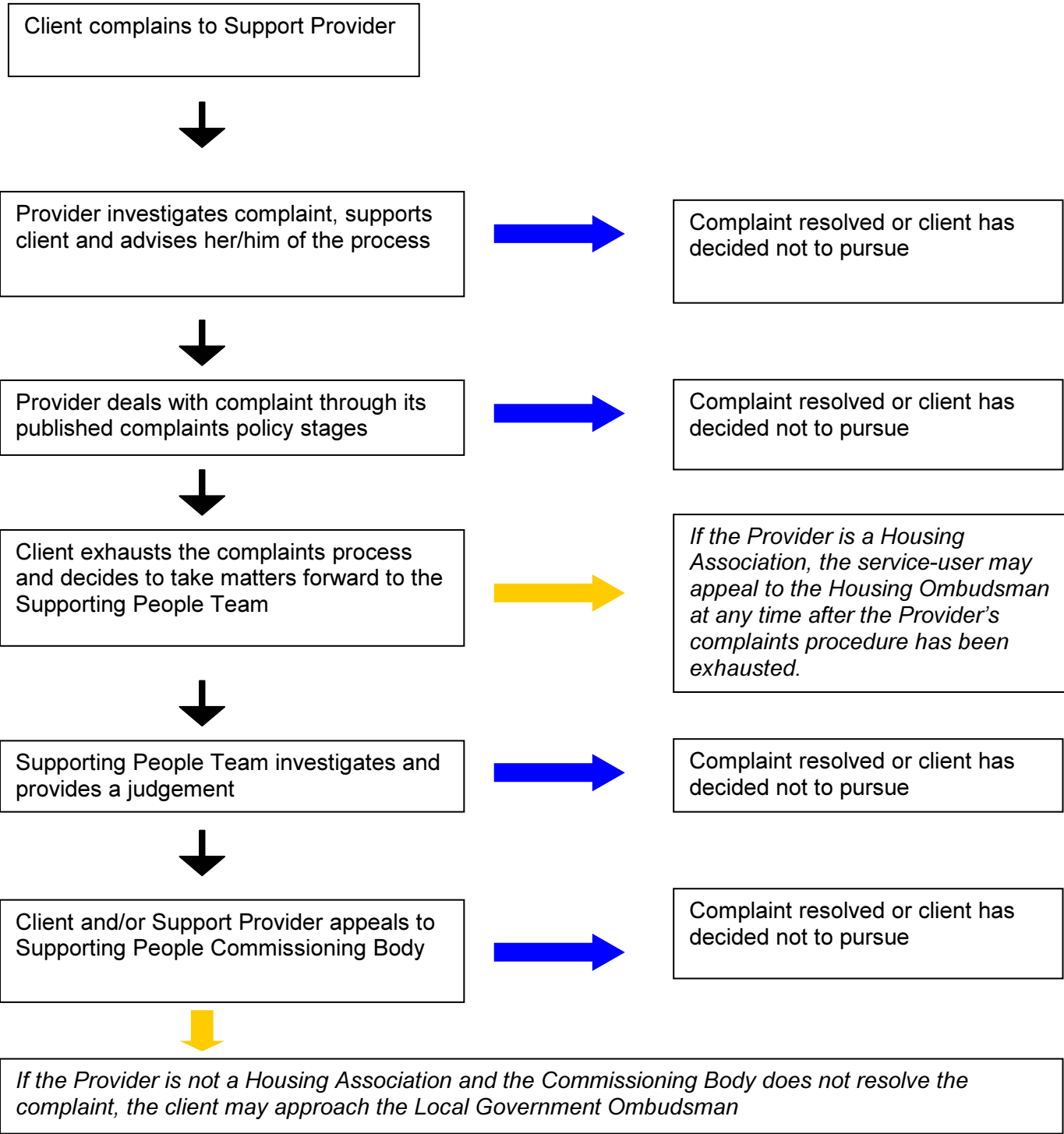
**THE HOUSING OMBUDSMAN SERVICE**

If the client's Provider is a Housing Association, once its complaints procedures have been exhausted, the client may contact the Housing Ombudsman at any point, for advice and support in resolving the complaint:

Housing Ombudsman  
Norman House  
105 – 109 Strand  
London WC2 0AA

Tel: 0207 836 3630 or 0845 712 5973

**COMPLAINTS FLOW CHART**



A Housing Association can also be referred to as an RSL (registered social landlord)