

## Hafod's Complaints and Feedback Policy

This policy provides clarity on how feedback and complaints are managed and demonstrates our compliance in accordance with the criteria, expectations and targets set by Welsh Government and the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales.

### Customer impact

A customer is anyone who engages with any of our services. We want all our customers to be able to contact us at any point regarding the quality of a service they receive, whether in relation to a compliment or a complaint.

Hafod recognises the importance that customer feedback plays in ensuring that the needs of our customers are met and that we strive to continuously improve our services.

### What is a complaint?

A complaint is:

- An expression of dissatisfaction or concern
- Written or spoken or made by any other communication method
- Made by one or more members of the public
- About Hafod's action or lack of action or the standard of service provided
- Something which requires a response

A complaint is not:

- A request for a service (eg. reporting a repair)
- A request for information or explanation
- A policy decision
- An issue already being actively addressed

A complaint can be raised in the following ways:

- By completing the form on our website
- Getting in touch with our complaint's co-ordinator – [complaint.handling@hafod.org.uk](mailto:complaint.handling@hafod.org.uk)
- Speaking to or emailing a colleague to raise an issue
- Sending a direct message on one of our Social Media channels

It is our preference that complaints are submitted online via our website, however any of the above methods can be used.

### Policy Objectives

The objectives of this policy are to:

- **Ensure a consistent approach to complaints within agreed timescales**  
We aim to deal with complaints quickly and to find a solution to a problem as

soon as we become aware of it. Where that isn't possible, we will keep the customer informed of what is happening and how long it is likely to take to decide about what action we can, or cannot, take as a result of their concerns.

- **Provide a fair outcome**

We want everyone who makes a complaint to us to feel that they have been treated fairly and that their concerns have been properly and thoroughly considered, alongside any other information available.

- **Empower colleagues to identify effective solutions to complaints at the first point of contact**

Customer-facing colleagues will be able to resolve most complaints as soon as they become aware of them. This 'informal' way of dealing with complaints is intended to make sure that we put things right quickly.

- **Simplify the way that complaints can be made, ensuring accessibility for all**

We will help customers to feed back their concerns so that everyone has equal access to our complaints process.

- **Enable continuous improvement through complaints and feedback analysis**

We will use complaints to learn about what we can do better, and to improve the way that we do things.

- **Encourage a culture of sharing and best practice**

We will actively celebrate compliments and successes to replicate those interactions that customers value.

- **Comply with legal and regulatory requirements**

We will take our legal and regulatory requirements into consideration when dealing with feedback.

## The Policy

The Complaints & Feedback Policy is used where the customer is contacting Hafod within 6 months of the issue or incident occurring. This is because it's better to look into matters whilst the issues are still fresh in everyone's mind. In exceptional circumstances, we may consider investigating a complaint which relates to an issue or incident outside a 6-month window.

## Compliments

We value positive customer feedback and will ensure that it is shared with colleagues to recognise great customer service and celebrate successes.

## Informal complaints

Customer facing colleagues will be able to resolve most complaints as soon as they become aware of them. When we receive a complaint, we should attempt to resolve the situation as quickly as possible. If we receive a complaint that we believe can be resolved quickly and easily without the need for a detailed investigation, we consider the complaint 'informal'. We should aim to reach a resolution for all informal complaints within 10 working days.

An informal complaint can be handled by anyone receiving the complaint. The focus will

be on finding a quick resolution and putting things right. If the complainant is satisfied with the outcome, the complaint can be recorded and closed immediately within the 10-day period.

If we do not believe we can resolve the complaint informally or the complainant is unhappy with our proposed resolution, the complainant will be informed that we will carry out a formal investigation. The complaint should be logged as a formal complaint and passed to the relevant Senior person to investigate as appropriate.

## **Formal complaints**

A formal complaint can be made in a variety of formats and will be investigated thoroughly to allow us to establish what has happened. When carrying out a formal complaint investigation, the investigating officer should ensure we formally acknowledge the complaint within 5 working days and contact the complainant to introduce themselves. The investigating officer will usually need to see any relevant files. It is important permission is given from the complainant to do this.

Hafod will aim to agree a resolution to all complaints as soon as possible and within a maximum of 20 working days. Where additional time is required to fully investigate and respond to a complaint, this must be clearly communicated to the customer and a revised timescale for a response agreed.

In our complaint response we will explain how and why we came to our conclusions. If we made a mistake or found a fault in our processes, we will explain how we plan to change things to stop this happening again.

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

## **Subject access request complaints**

Under the 2025 Data (Use and Access) Act (DUAA), individuals now have a statutory right to complain directly to an organisation if they believe their personal data was used unlawfully. Organisations must help individuals make these complaints by having a process in place and must inform complainants of their right to contact the Information Commissioner's Office if the matter isn't resolved.

## **Lessons learnt**

Compliments and complaints help us improve the services we provide to our customers. Where our customers tell us we did a great job, we will share feedback with colleagues and seek to update our processes to reflect good practice. Similarly, we will learn when our customers tell us we could have performed better and we will update our processes to ensure that the same thing doesn't happen again.

## **Public Services Ombudsman for Wales (PSOW)**

Where customers are still unhappy, they can contact the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales.

The PSOW deals with general complaints about public services in Wales, providing a free and impartial service. They will usually, but not always, have expected the person making a complaint to have been through the organisation's complaints process.

However, they may look into a complaint at any stage if they deem it to be appropriate to do so.

Our Assurance & Compliance Lead is the main point of liaison and contact for the organisation with the Ombudsman.

## Recording and reporting

All compliments and complaints will be recorded on a central system and monitored through monthly reporting to the Senior Leadership Team. A summary of complaints key performance indicators will be reported to the Board on a quarterly basis.

## Relevant legislation and regulation

- Welsh Government Regulatory Standards
- Public Services Ombudsman (Wales) Act 2019
- Regulation and Inspection of Social Care (Wales) Act 2016 (RISCA)
- Social Services & Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2015

## Mission links

**Getting the Basics Right;** We do not always get it right. But we are committed to continuous learning and evolving all that we do.

**Connect with You;** We will listen to your concerns and seek to understand, and resolve, your complaint situation.

**Invest in the Future;** We will develop our processes and actions through learning from our previous experiences to improve our services in the future.

## Equality

Everyone has the right to always be treated with dignity and respect. We stand together in our belief that discrimination, of any form, has no place in our organisation and will not be tolerated. Our fundamental value of inclusivity applies to our customers and communities, as well as to our colleagues, and our services.

Reasonable adjustments will be made where necessary to provide services in a fair and equitable manner. Copies of this policy and procedure will be made available in different formats / languages on request.

## Compliance Information

Name of Policy	Hafod's Feedback Policy
Policy Owner	Chief Finance Officer
Reviewed by	Policy Group
Approved by	Executive Team
Date Approved	January 2026
Date of next review	January 2028

**YOU MAY WISH TO READ THESE RELATED POLICIES:**

Disciplinary Policy and Procedure

Safeguarding Policies

Raising Concerns at Work Policy

Grievance Policy

Data Protection Policy

EDI Policy

Housing Management Policy (Housing and housing related support business areas)

[Unreasonable Complainant Behaviour Procedure](#)

[Vexatious Complainant Procedure](#)

Information Security Policy

Domestic Abuse Policy and associated procedures

**Our Policies apply to all Hafod colleagues, Board and Committee Members and all activity carried out by the Hendre Group**

- All colleagues must comply with this policy and any procedure relating to it. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action.
- This policy does not form part of any colleague's contract of employment.
- Colleagues should refer to their individual contract of employment for details of their contractual benefits.
- If there is inconsistency between the policy and any provisions in your contract of employment the terms of the contract of employment will be used.
- Where a colleague has questions about any aspect of this policy, they should check with their line manager in the first instance and, if necessary, seek clarification from the People team.
- Where needed, training, guidance or support will be provided (by L and D, external providers or operational teams) to embed the policy.
- Policies are reviewed regularly to ensure the organisation's practices remain up to date with best practice, legislative and regulatory changes and are aligned with the mission.

## Hafod's Complaints Procedure

The below procedures support the policy by setting out how we will log and deal with both informal and formal complaints.

### Informal Complaints

1. A complaint is considered to be informal when there has been a service failure which can be rectified in a reasonable timescale.
2. We are committed to doing everything we can to address a complaint at the first point of contact, avoiding the need to escalate the matter further.
3. Informal complaints should be recorded on our system and should take no longer than 10 working days to resolve.
4. Informal complaints will be handled either by the person receiving the complaint, or it will be passed onto the person who is best placed to resolve it quickly and satisfactorily.
5. Time should be spent with the customer to fully understand their concerns around our service failure and what it is that they wish to happen to resolve the matter.
6. The complaint should then be recorded on our system, and the customer offered the best available options to achieve a solution.
7. Once a solution has been agreed, this should be recorded and confirmed to the customer.
8. A diary note or follow-up action should be recorded on the system to ensure that what we have set out as a resolution for the customer does actually happen to avoid the matter escalating further.

### Formal Complaints

1. A complaint is considered to be formal when it has already been treated under our informal process and has not been resolved satisfactorily, when a customer has made a direct request for the matter to be treated as a formal complaint or when the matter is serious and complex enough not to be able to be resolved informally.
2. All formal complaints will be coordinated by the Complaints Coordinator.
3. All formal complaints will be acknowledged within 5 working days of receipt. The acknowledgement date forms the 'start date' for our investigation which should be completed within 20 working days.

4. We will carry out a full investigation into the complaint which will involve liaising with colleagues and teams across the business to ascertain where our service has failed, what lessons can be learnt and how we can best put things right for the customer.
5. If our investigation is likely to extend beyond the 20 working days, we will advise the customer of this and explain the reasons for the delay, providing them with an alternative expected response date.
6. Our response letter will be based on the standardised template and will include:
  - a. A summary of the customer's complaint
  - b. Confirmation that an investigation has taken place
  - c. Confirmation on whether the complaint has been upheld, partially upheld or not upheld
  - d. An explanation of any action we propose to take as a result of their complaint
  - e. An apology where we have identified failings in our processes
  - f. Information on how to complain to the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales if they are not satisfied with the outcome we have provided
7. All formal complaints will be monitored on a daily basis by the Complaints Coordinator.
8. Any outcomes agreed as part of a formal complaint will be monitored through to completion.