

*How to
complain to the
Housing
Ombudsman*



Epping Forest District Council
www.eppingforestdc.gov.uk

April 2013

The Housing Ombudsman may be able to look into your case if you disagree with the final decision we have made on your housing related complaint. The Housing Ombudsman is an independent watchdog appointed by the Government.

This leaflet explains how to make a complaint to the Housing Ombudsman. The procedure for making a complaint to the Housing Ombudsman is laid down by law, not by the Council. It is very important that you follow this otherwise it could prevent the Housing Ombudsman from being able to deal with your complaint quickly and effectively.

First of all, you must wait until we have told you that we have reached a final decision on your complaint before you can start the process for making a complaint to the Housing Ombudsman. This will usually not be until you have gone through all the steps in our own complaints procedure. If you make your complaint before you have done so, the Housing Ombudsman will have to tell you that you need to complete our own complaints procedure before he can consider looking into your case.

There are two ways in which a complaint can be made to the Housing Ombudsman.

1. You can make the complaint yourself but, by law, you must wait at least 8 weeks after we have told you we have completed our own investigation before you can do so. Contact details for the Housing Ombudsman are on the back page of this leaflet.
2. As soon as we have confirmed to you that we have completed our own investigation, you can ask a Designated Person to refer your complaint to the Housing Ombudsman.

Who is a Designated Person?

A Designated Person is any Epping Forest District Councillor, or any MP anywhere in the country.

A full list of our Councillors and their contact details is on our website at www.eppingforestdc.gov.uk. A printed list is also available from:

- Civic Offices, High St, Epping.
- Limes Farm Housing Office, Limes Centre, Limes Avenue, Chigwell.
- Broadway Housing Office, 63 The Broadway, Loughton.

Details of MPs can be found on the government website: www.parliament.uk or by telephoning the House of Commons Information Office on 0207 219 4272.

You will need to send your chosen Designated Person details of your complaint, explain why you think the decision we made on it was wrong and ask if they are willing to now refer your complaint to the Housing Ombudsman.

What will the Designated Person do?

The Designated Person will review your complaint and the decision we made on it.

If the Designated Person thinks we made the right decision, they will tell you that and explain why. They will also confirm that, because of this, they are not willing to refer your complaint to the Housing Ombudsman. They will also tell the Housing Ombudsman they are not supporting your complaint. In that event, you can then make your complaint to the Housing Ombudsman yourself and you do not have to wait 8 weeks from the date of our final decision before doing so.

If the Designated Person thinks we made the wrong decision or they are not sure, they will tell you they are willing to refer your complaint to the Housing Ombudsman. They will also tell the Housing Ombudsman that they feel he should investigate your complaint. You can then send full details of your complaint to the Housing Ombudsman.

In both cases, you must wait until the Designated Person has told you what their decision is before you can do anything yourself.

Advice and further information

If you need more advice on how to make a complaint to the Housing Ombudsman, please contact either:

- The Council's Complaints Officer
Email: jfilby@eppingforestdc.gov.uk
Telephone: 01992 564512
- The Housing Ombudsman's website:
www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk
- The Housing Ombudsman's office:
Telephone: 0300 111 3000

You can submit your complaint to the Housing Ombudsman by either:

Email: info@housing-ombudsman.org.uk
Post: Housing Ombudsman Service,
81 Aldwych, London WC2B 4HN

You can ask someone else to act for you when contacting either a Designated Person or the Housing Ombudsman. That could be a friend, a relative, an Epping Forest District Councillor or a Citizens Advice Bureau. If you do ask someone else, you will need to provide a letter or email confirming that this person will be acting for you.



**Epping Forest
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High Street
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CM16 4BZ

Telephone: 01992 564000
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