



## **CYMDEITHAS TAI CANTREF**

### **COMPLAINTS POLICY**

#### **Policy Statement**

Cantref aims to provide a high quality service at all times but recognises that there will be occasions when users believe that service delivery falls short of the standards set.

When this happens, it is important that we hear about it so that we can correct any failures in our systems and provide redress to those affected by those failures.

We therefore welcome and take very seriously any complaints that are made to us about the standard of service provided by Cantref. We recognise that in learning from our mistakes we can improve the way we work in the future.

**Purpose of Policy:** The aims and objectives of this policy are as follows:

- To demonstrate that customer care is important to Cantref.
- To demonstrate that Cantref is prepared to listen to our users.
- To demonstrate that we are willing to learn from our mistakes.
- To demonstrate that Cantref is continually trying to improve our services.
- To demonstrate that complaints are viewed as a positive medium to improve our services and so to improve the satisfaction of our users.
- To solve complaints as soon as possible.
- To take complaints seriously and investigate them thoroughly.

#### **What is a complaint?**

**“.....any dissatisfaction (with an organisation) whether justified or not”.**

**Source – CMSAS (Complaint Management Scheme Assessment Standard).**

Dissatisfaction may arise:

- with the way in which Cantref’s policies have been applied/interpreted **or**
- with the way in which a member of staff has dealt with a particular problem **or**
- with a service an user has received **or**
- because of the lack of action by the Association.

#### **Who can complain?**

- Everyone who has received or asks for a service from Cantref or people acting for Cantref. This includes tenants (including former tenants), applicants and leaseholders or persons/organisations who are authorised to act on their behalf, e.g. advocate, Member of Parliament.

It is expected that complaints are received within 3 months of the date of the “occurrence/incident” causing the complaint (unless there are exceptional circumstances). In the case of former tenants, it is expected that the complaint is received within 3 months of the end of tenancy. Unless there are exceptional circumstances complaints which do not conform with the 3 month timescale will not be considered.

**COMPLAINTS SYSTEM – INTERNAL TO CANTREF:**

- Will not consist of more than 3 stages – these being:

**Stage 1** – Referral to Manager (or highest ranking officer) responsible for the service being complained about. Investigation and response to be carried out within 10 working days of receipt of user dissatisfaction. **If user still not satisfied then**, complainant must inform Cantref within 15 working days and complaint will be carried on to.

**Stage 2** – Referral to Director of Service. Investigation and response to be carried out within another 10 working day period. **If user still not satisfied then**, complainant must inform Cantref within 15 working days and complaint will be carried on to.

**Stage 3** – Referral to impartial panel consisting of 3 Board of Management members. (It is aimed that 1 of these be a Tenant Board Member and the other 2 shareholders) serviced by the Chief Executive or a member of staff appointed by him. (Panel Members to be appointed by the Chairman.) Panel to give decision no more than 8 weeks from original receipt of user complaint. User may attend hearing to present case and be accompanied by a friend/advocate. However, representation by a solicitor will not be acceptable.

**External to Cantref:**

The complainant may at any stage of the complaints process (but usually after receiving a first reply from Cantref) refer the matter to the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales. The Ombudsman can also consider matters which have not been referred to Cantref’s complaints procedure. The contact details are as follows:

Public Services Ombudsman for Wales 1 Ffordd yr Hen Gae Pencoed CF35 5LJ	Tel: 0845 601 0987 (local rate) Fax: 01656 641199 E-mail: <a href="mailto:ask@ombudsman-wales.org.uk">ask@ombudsman-wales.org.uk</a> Website: <a href="http://www.ombudsman-wales.org.uk">www.ombudsman-wales.org.uk</a>
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**Recording of Complaints:**

All complaints will be logged and receive a unique reference number from Cantref’s computer system (Academy) Customer Services Module complaint data base.

Progress of complaints through stages and timescales will be monitored and noted together with summary of action taken.

**Monitoring/Reporting of Complaints:**

Annual report will be presented to the Board of Management which will:

- Provide a breakdown of the number of complaints received within the different service areas.
- Provide the responses and outcomes for each of the complaints.
- Note Complainants ethnic origin and tenure status.
- Note changes or improvements to be made or which have been made as a result of the complaints.
- Provide analysis of user satisfaction surveys which are sent to the user once complaints have been dealt with. (User feedback)

### **Information to Users:**

#### **General:**

- Cantref literature will be produced as free of jargon as possible. Complaints Procedure will be user friendly and understandable and provide necessary information.
- Information leaflet will be available from Cantref's offices.
- Complaints procedure will be advertised in newsletters and set out in Tenants Handbook.
- Questionnaire will be sent to all complainants when their complaint is resolved to gather constructive feedback on the process.
- Users will be kept informed of the progress of their complaint.
- Statistics will be published in tenants' literature.
- The Ombudsman leaflet 'How to Complain about a Public Body' will be available from Cantref's Offices.

#### **Staff Training:**

Staff responsible for administrating the procedure and investigating matters will receive appropriate training.

They will be trained to see complaints as a positive medium for service improvement.

#### **Possible Effective Responses to Individual Complaints:**

- Acknowledge where Cantref has made a mistake and apologise.
- Explanation.
- Immediate resolution where possible.
- Give appropriate compensation where Cantref has caused harm or significant inconvenience.
- Inform user of changes made as a result.
- Action Plan.
- Tell user where we think they are being unreasonable.

#### **Confidentiality:**

- Users will have the opportunity if they wish to complain in confidence. (However in some circumstances this will not be possible.)
- There will be no adverse consequences in users relationship with Cantref.

