

Complaints Policy



A Guide to the Complaints Procedure
February 2024

Making a complaint

We hope that the services you receive from us are of the quality you need. However, we know that there may be times when you are unhappy with the service you receive, or you may want to suggest a way to improve it.

The people who can best deal with most concerns are those who provide the service. We can normally resolve concerns, mistakes and misunderstandings quickly. However, if we cannot sort out your problem this way, the complaints procedure is here to help you.

Your complaints are important to us. They help us to:

- Put things right when they go wrong
- Listen and learn; and
- Change and improve the way we provide services.

So don't be worried about telling us your concerns

What is a complaint?

A complaint can be defined as '*an expression of dissatisfaction, however made, about the standard of service, actions or lack of action by the organisation, its own staff, or those acting on its behalf, affecting an individual resident or group of residents*'.

In contrast a service request is a request from a resident to their landlord requiring action to be taken to put something right. We record, monitor and review service requests regularly. A complaint should be raised when a resident raises dissatisfaction with the response to their service request.

There are certain matters that may not be considered a complaint. For example:

- A complaint that has already been considered and resolved in accordance with our complaints procedure.
- A matter that is or has already been dealt with through legal proceedings.
- Survey feedback.
- Some complaints that occurred more than six months ago
- A service request.
- A matter being considered via our appeals process.
- Enquiry about the progress of a repair.
- Reporting a neighbour dispute

We will look at all the facts of the case when deciding to exclude a complaint. Each case will be different and we will look at each situation on a cases by case basis.

If a resident expresses dissatisfaction with our response to a service request this will automatically be escalated to our stage 1 complaints. This will be the case even if the handling of the services request remains on-going.

Who can complain?

A complaint can be made by any person (not only residents) who believe that we have either failed to comply with our service standards, or if any other area of our services does not meet acceptable standards.

You can nominate a representative to make a complaint on your behalf. As long as we receive your written authority to SGH that your nominee can act on your behalf in relation to your complaint we are happy to liaise with them. We do not require any consent if you are wanting to bring someone along with you to a meeting with us.

When should I complain?

Our complaints procedure is intended for those times when you feel we have failed to deliver what we should. The standards we aim to achieve are set out in our service standards and customer service charter. If our service falls short, you should make a complaint. Examples of when to complain are if we:

- Fail to take action after you first contacted us.
- Failed to provide a service on time, or to the standard we promised.
- We are not patient, helpful and respectful in dealing with you.
- Provide a service that was unfair.
- Got something wrong.
- Dissatisfied with our response to a service request.

The complaints procedure is not for everyday matters such as enquiring about repair progress or reporting neighbour disputes.

We will always accept a complaint referred to us within 12 months of the issue occurring or the resident becoming aware of the issue unless they are excluded on other grounds. However, we may apply our discretion to accept complaints made outside this time limit where there are good reasons to do so.

How can I complain?

We want to make it as easy for you as possible to let us know if you feel something has gone wrong.

You can complain:

- by telephone on 01253 228944 Option 3
- in writing either by letter or completing a complaints form
- in person, at our offices
- over the internet by visiting www.stgeorgehousing.co.uk/
- by email complaints@stgeorgehousing.co.uk

If you need any help, please ask a member of staff.

You may also want to ask for help from your local councillor, a voluntary agency, relative or friend.

Further details about this complaints policy are publicized on our website at www.stgeorgehousing.co.uk.

Our complaints procedure

We have a simple two stage procedure for complaints

STAGE 1 We will acknowledge your complaint within two working days of receipt.
We aim to respond to your complaint within 10 working days. If there are any reasons why this will not be possible, we will contact you and give you a new date for our response.

STAGE 2 If you are not satisfied with the outcome at stage 1, you can take the matter further. We will include details of how you do this in your stage 1 response.

At stage 2 your complaint will be investigated by the relevant head of service. Again, we aim to acknowledge your complaint within 5 working days and respond to your complaint within 10 working days of Acknowledging your complaint.

STAGE 3 If you are still not happy after the stage 2 response, you can refer for your complaint to be dealt with by your local Councilor or Member of Parliament who will try to find a resolution to your complaint and who may refer your complaint to the Housing Ombudsman.

We will include details of how you do this in your stage 2 response

Should you not want to refer your complaint to your Councillor or M.P. you may refer your complaint to the Housing Ombudsman yourself. However, should you do this the Housing Ombudsman will not look into until the SGH complaints process has been completed and the issues remain unresolved. (i.e. the end of Stage 2). They can also help if SGH are not responding to your complaint.

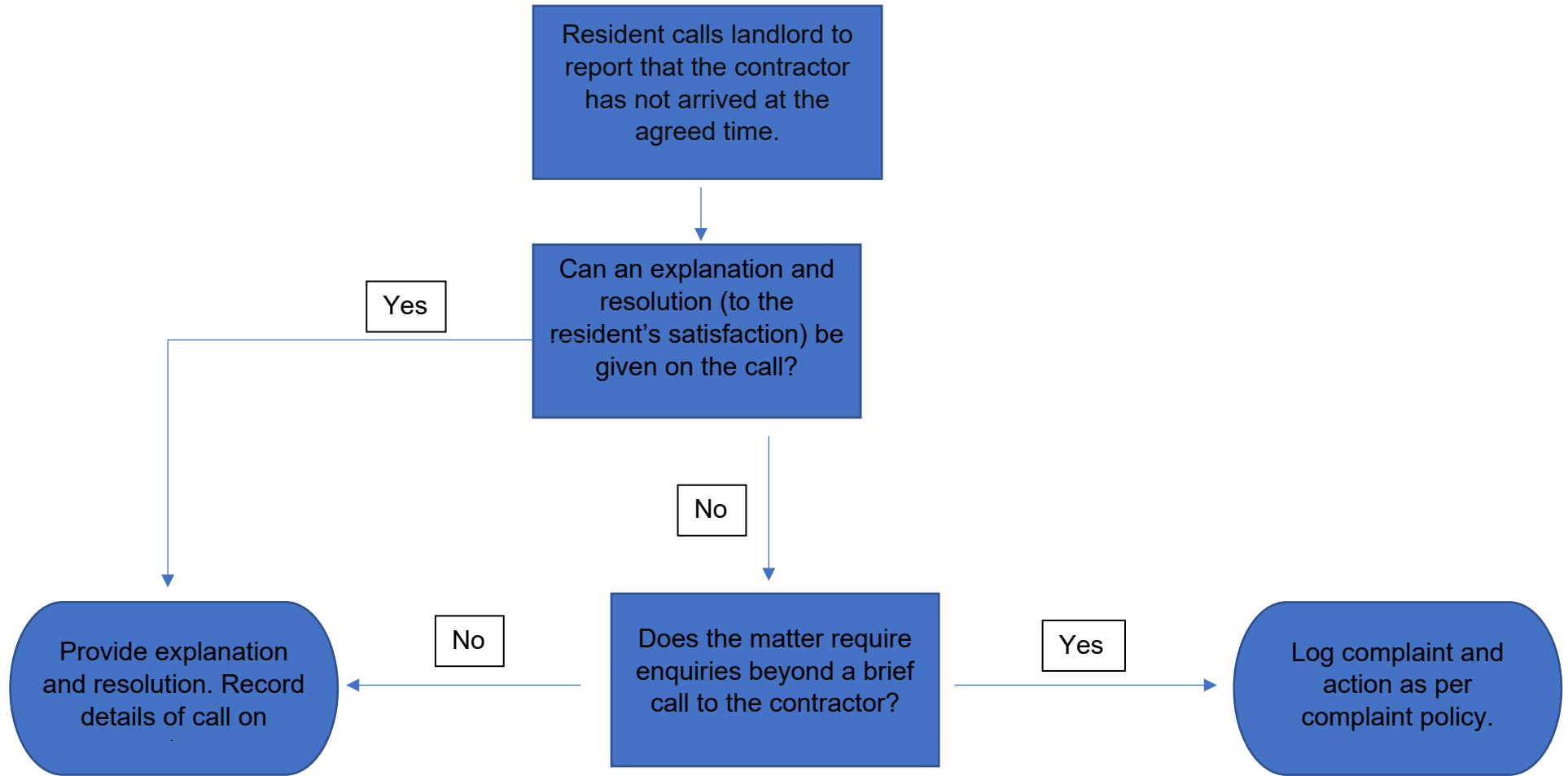
The contact details for the Housing Ombudsman are:

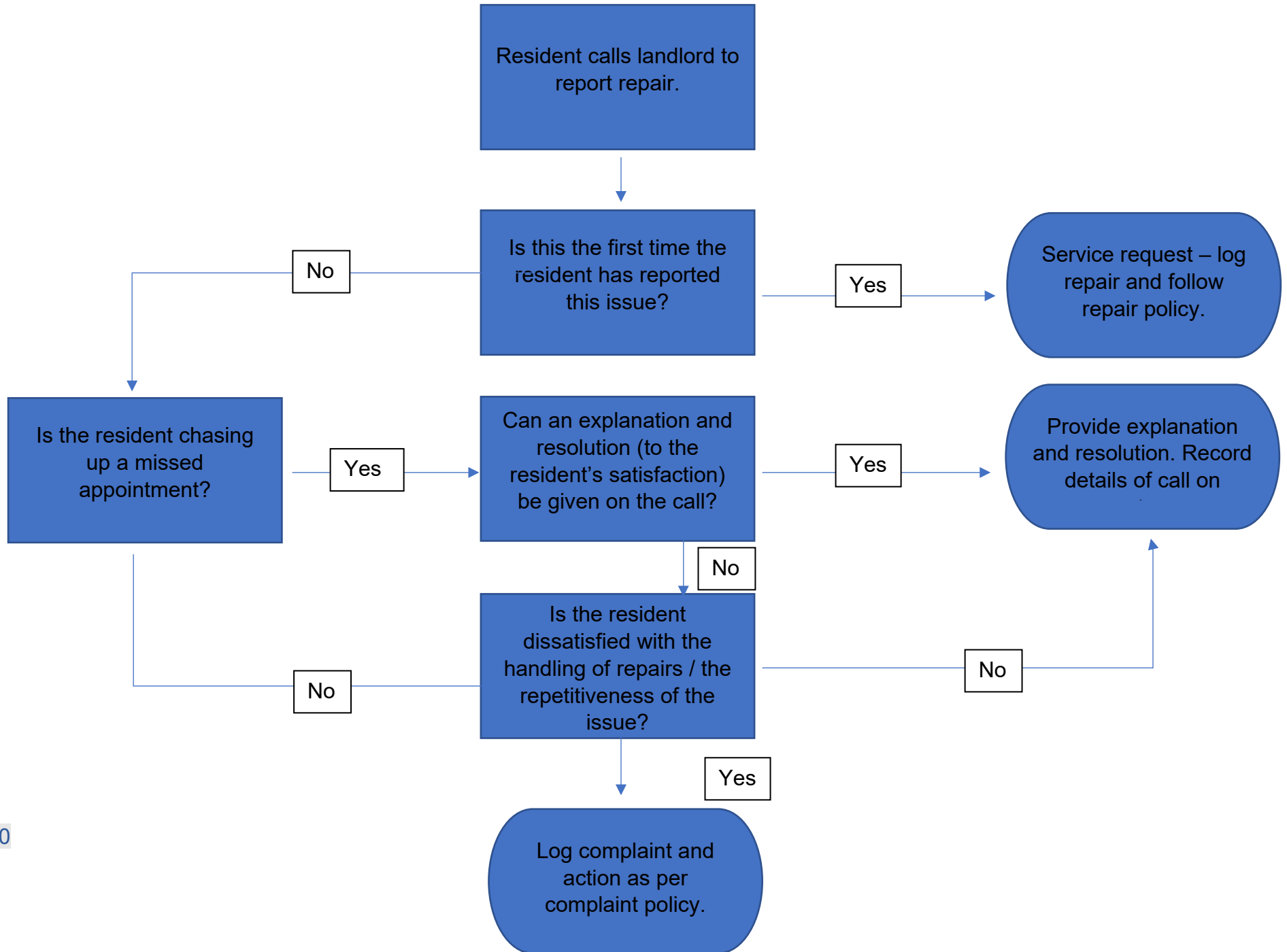
Housing Ombudsman Service
PO Box 152
Liverpool
L33 7WQ
Telephone : 0300 111 3000
Fax : 020 7831 1942
Email : info@housing-ombudsman.org.uk
Website: www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk

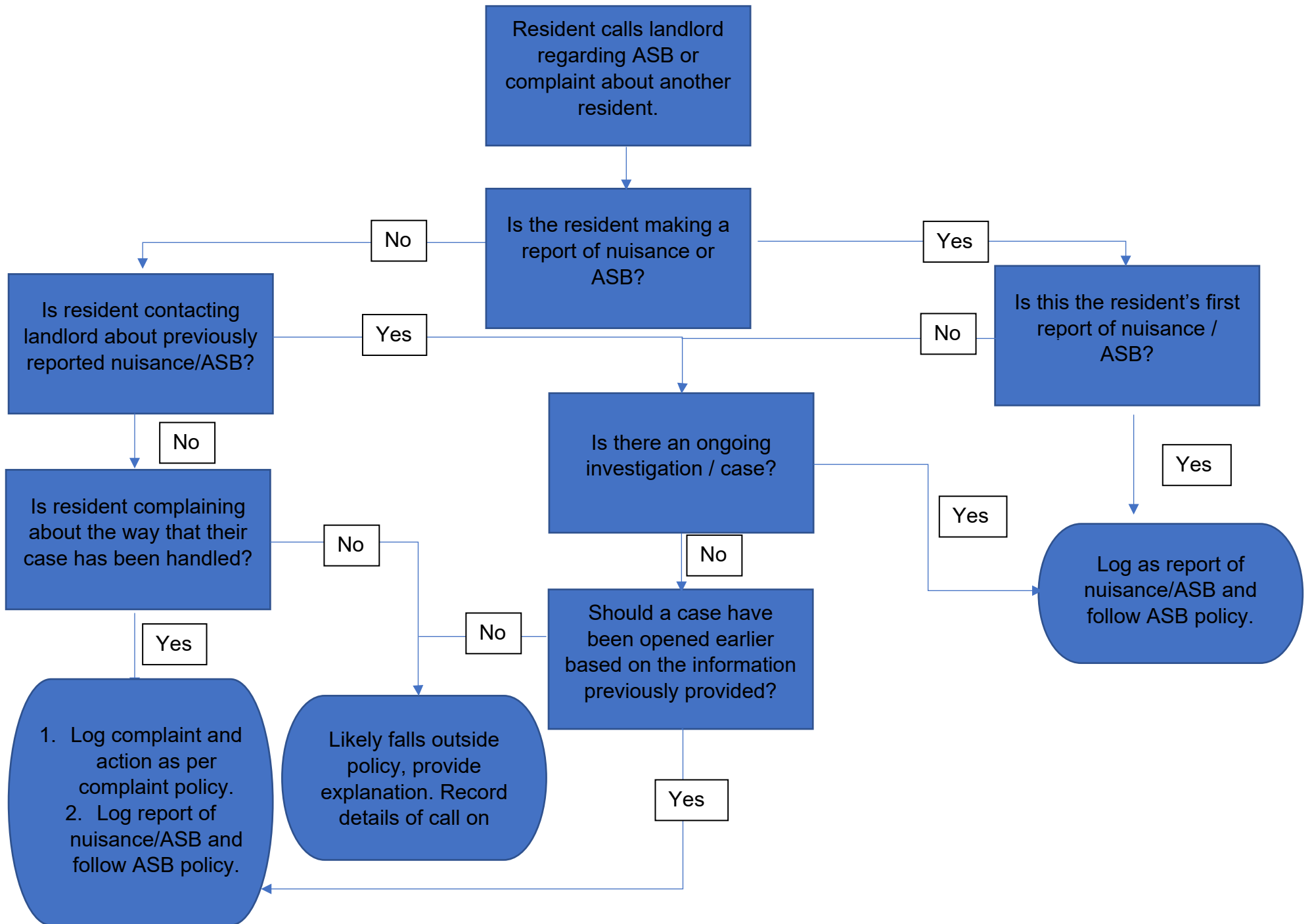
Only the following people can make complaints against a member landlord for investigation by the Ombudsman;

- (a) A person who has (or had at the time of the matter complained of) a lease, tenancy, license to occupy, service agreement or other arrangement to occupy premises owned or managed by a member landlord;
- (b) A person who is or was liable to pay (or who at the time of the matter complained of) a service charge to a member landlord;
- (c) An applicant for a property owned or managed by a member landlord;
- (d) A representative of any of the people above who is authorised by them to make and pursue the complaint on their behalf;
- (e) A representative of a person otherwise entitled to complain where the Ombudsman is satisfied in the circumstances that that person cannot pursue the complaint on their own behalf.

Appendix A – Service request or complaint – flow charts







Complaint form

Your details

Your name:
Your address:

Contact

Day:	Evening:
Email address:	

Details of your complaint:

Please tell us as much as possible about your complaint

Please use additional sheets if necessary

Have you contacted us before about this matter? Yes No

If yes, who did you contact?

Complaint form

What actions will you like us to take to resolve this complaint or put things right

Signed

Date

If you have any letters or documents to support your complaint, such as letters from us, please send a copy with this form.

Please answer the following questions to help us make sure we provide a fair service to all people in the community. We will keep this information strictly confidential and it will not affect how we investigate your complaint

Please tick the appropriate boxes

Are you: Male? Female?

Are you: 16 - 25 26 – 45 46 - 64 65 or above

Do you have a disability? Yes No

Are you: Asian African Caribbean UK black White

Turkish or Turkish Cypriot Greek or Greek Cypriot

Other, please state

***Please return form to: Customer Care Team
SGH
Office 1574, High Street, East Ham
London,
E6 2J6
Or you can email the form to:
info@stgeorgehousing.co.uk***