

Information can on request be made available in Braille, on tape, in large print and in different languages. For further information please telephone Housing on 01595 744360, or email housing@sic.Shetland.gov.uk

For further information please contact us at:
**Housing,
Fort Road,
Lerwick**

telephone **01595 744360**
freephone **0800 212 829**
fax **01595 744395**

In an emergency out with office hours please contact:
Homelessness: **01595 695611**
Council House Repairs: **01595 693972**
Available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year

Email: Housing@shetland.gov.uk
Website: www.shetland.gov.uk/Housing

Our Office is Open
Monday to Thursday 9 am to 5 pm,
&
Friday 9 am to 4 pm
We are open during lunchtimes.

Information on the various housing options available in Shetland can be found online in the Housing Options Guide



Shetland Islands Council
Executive Services
Housing

Do you have Feedback or a Complaint about SIC Housing?

We are an organisation committed to continual improvement, and see customer feedback and complaints as an essential part of that process.

If you have any feedback or would like to make a complaint, please let us know.

We feel it is important that we have the opportunity to hear your complaints and work together to resolve these without delay.

Please Note:

There is a separate and specific process for appealing decisions on homelessness applications, and you should contact **SIC Housing on 01595 744360**

For more information.

Feedback & Complaints

General Advice

This leaflet offers some general advice for people who would like to provide feedback or make a complaint about SIC Housing.

If you have any feedback or would like to make a complaint, please let us know.

We welcome your feedback as this allows us the opportunity to make changes and improve our service so that we can work together to resolve any issues without delay.

How to feedback or make a complaint:

The following is a list of some of the ways that you can leave Feedback or make a Complaint to SIC Housing?

- In writing to Housing, Fort Road Office, Lerwick, ZE1 0LW
- By telephone to 01595 744360
- In person to a member of Housing Staff.
- By leaving feedback online at www.shetland.gov.uk/housing/FeedbackandComplaints.asp
- By emailing housing@shetland.gov.uk
- Take part in a survey
- By following the SIC Corporate Complaints process.
- By referring to the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman at www.spsos.org.uk or telephone 0970 377 7330

In Person

Problems may be so urgent that you have no choice but to make your complaint in person to a member of Housing Service staff. If you choose to make your complaint in person it is very important that you state that you are making a formal complaint and that you wish the information that you provide to be treated as such.

You should also make sure that you keep a note of what is said, including any statements about what will be done to address your problem, the name and position of the person, and time and date of the call.

Remember to follow-up any conversation in writing to confirm your understanding of what has been said and ask for acknowledgement of your letter.

We recommend that you write to us, addressing your letter to a Service Manager, because then you will have a record of events to draw upon at a later date.

Online Feedback

You can make your complaint online using the online feedback facility available on our website. To access the online feedback you should go to www.shetland.gov.uk/housing/howtomakeacomplaint then go to the bottom right menu on this screen and click on **How to feedback or complain online**. When leaving online feedback please follow the guidelines for **Writing a Complaint**.

Email

Alternatively you can email us at housing@sic.shetland.gov.uk. When sending an email complaint please follow the above guidelines for **Writing a Complaint**.

Survey

Surveys give tenants the opportunity to feedback and make comments on specific areas of the service we provide.
www.shetland.gov.uk/housing/ConsultationandEngagement.asp

The complaint will then be sent to the Head of Service to deal with.

Following this, if you are still dissatisfied and wish to take the matter further, it is, on request, referred to the Chief Executive for investigation.

You also have the right to make a formal complaint to the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman, who deals with complaints in Scotland about Local Government and other public services, and can be contacted at www.spsso.org.uk, telephone 0870 377 7330.

Telephone

You can make a complaint to Housing Service over the telephone. If you choose to do this it is important that you state that you are making a formal complaint and that you wish the information that you provide to be treated as such.

Although telephone complaints may seem easier, it can sometimes be difficult to get through to the appropriate person. It can also be difficult to prove that you complained in the first place if you do not feel adequate action is taken as a result of your conversation.

Of course, your problem may be so urgent that you have no choice but to complain over the telephone. If this is the case, make sure you keep notes of what is said, including any statements about what will be done to address your problem, the name and position of the person, and time and date of the call.

Remember to follow-up any conversation in writing to confirm your understanding of the conversation and ask for acknowledgement of your letter.

What will SIC Housing do?

We will;

- Acknowledge your comments or complaint within three working days.
- Send you a written response within 10 working days.
- If you are not satisfied with our response, we will tell you how you can take your complaint further either through the Council Corporate Procedure or through an independent organisation such as the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman.

We promise to:

- Write to you in plain English.
- Address all the points raised by you and explain what we will do to resolve your complaint.
- Provide a solution if we are at fault.
- Explain to you how to appeal if you are not satisfied with our response.

SIC Housing's complaints procedure does not replace your rights to use the Shetland Islands Council's Corporate Complaints Procedure or the right to refer a complaint to the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman. Further information is available at www.spsso.org.uk or telephone 0870 377 7330.

You should note that there is a separate and specific process for appealing decisions on homelessness applications. For more information you can contact us on 01595 744360.

In Writing

In order to put your complaint to us in writing you may need, in the first instance, to telephone us to clarify the issues and identify the Service Manager responsible for dealing with your complaint.

This call will also help you to find out whether there are any special procedures for lodging your complaint.

It is good practice to write down the name and position of the person you are speaking to as well as the time and date of the call.

Who should I address my complaint to?

Address your complaint to the Service Manager responsible for the person or area you have a problem with.

Housing's Service Manager – Business Support is responsible for:

- Administration Support
- Policy and Information
- Supported Accommodation
- Asset Management

Housing's Service Manager - Housing Estate and Property is responsible for:

- Estate Management
- Homelessness Service
- Outreach Support Service

Address: Housing Service, Fort Road, Lerwick, ZE1 0LW

You can seek independent advice from Shetland Citizen Advice Bureau, Market House, 14 Market Street—01595 694696

And you can also seek independent advocacy assistance from Advocacy Shetland—01595 743929/743930

What should I include in the letter?

You should try to summarise your problem, including:

- When and what happened
- Who was involved
- Why the situation is unfair or wrong
- Details of any conversations or meetings that have taken place
- Attach copies of any relevant correspondence or documents

Make it clear that you want your concerns addressed and even tell us what action you think should be taken to resolve the problem, bearing in mind that your requests should be reasonable. It is also useful to ask for an acknowledgement of your letter and an indication of how and when your complaint will be dealt with.

You may also wish to indicate that you will take the matter to a higher authority, such as the Head of Service, Chief Executive of Shetland Islands Council or the Local Government Ombudsman if your complaint is not appropriately addressed.

Anything else?

It is important to keep copies of all letters and materials you send and receive and to keep a record of telephone calls including dates, times and what was said. This information may help you further down the track if we fail to adequately address your complaint.

What if this doesn't work?

If the above steps don't work within a reasonable time, you may decide to take your complaint further.

You may wish to make a formal complaint to Shetland Islands Council. This can be done either through writing a letter or by completing the Council Corporate Complaint form and sending it to:

Chief Executive's Office
Shetland Islands Council
Town Hall,
Hillhead,
Lerwick, ZE1 0HB