

If your housing management complaint remains unresolved at the end of Exeter City Council's complaints process you have two options available to you:

1. Approach a designated person with your complaint to try and resolve this at a local level
2. Wait **eight weeks** and take your complaint directly to the Housing Ombudsman.

WHO ARE DESIGNATED PERSONS?

The introduction of designated persons is intended to involve local politicians and people in resolving local housing issues. This is part of the Government's localism policy.

'Designated persons' are:

- MPs (any member of parliament)
- Exeter City Council Councillors
- Tenant Panels set up to deal with complaints.

You can go to any available designated person at the end of our complaints process if the issue remains unresolved.

WHAT IS THE ROLE OF THE DESIGNATED PERSON?

During the eight weeks after Exeter City Council's complaints process has been completed, a designated person can help resolve the complaint in one of three ways:

1. They can mediate to help Exeter City Council and yourself find a solution

2. They can seek to suggest a resolution
3. They can refer the complaint straight to the Housing Ombudsman.

If they refuse to do any of the above, you can contact the Housing Ombudsman straight away with your case.

The designated person can work with you and the landlord to try and put things right in whichever way they think may work best. If the problem remains unresolved, either you or the designated person can refer the complaint to the Housing Ombudsman before the eight weeks have expired.

You must give the designated person your written permission to look at your complaint, request your personal information from Exeter City Council and refer the complaint to the Housing Ombudsman on your behalf.

DESIGNATED TENANT PANELS

These are independent panels set up by tenants to try and resolve complaints with landlords locally. If there is no available tenant panel, you should approach an MP or Exeter City Council Councillor as your designated person.

Please call **01392 265100** to find out whether Exeter City Council currently recognises any tenant panels and for information on how to contact the panel.

CAN I USE MORE THAN ONE DESIGNATED PERSON?

Yes. You can approach as many designated persons as you wish to help resolve your complaint. Please let your designated person(s) know whether they have your permission to speak to the other designated persons you have already spoken to.

DO I HAVE TO USE A DESIGNATED PERSON?

No. You can go directly to the Housing Ombudsman if you do not wish your complaint to be looked at by a designated person.

However, if you do not use a designated person you must wait **eight weeks** from the end of our internal complaints process before approaching the Housing Ombudsman.

You will need to advise the Housing Ombudsman of your reasons for not using a designated person.

WHAT WILL THE HOUSING OMBUDSMAN DEAL WITH?

The Housing Ombudsman will deal with complaints about the management of Exeter City Council's social homes and the management of properties let through the private sector leasing scheme.

If the complaint has not gone through a designated person first, it is possible the Housing Ombudsman may ask for this to happen before they will investigate your complaint.

WHAT WILL THE HOUSING OMBUDSMAN NOT DEAL WITH?

The Housing Ombudsman will not investigate complaints which:

- Refer to the level or increase of rent or service charges
- Are about housing advice or homelessness (please refer to the Local Government Ombudsman)
- Are about housing strategy
- Are more than six months old (e.g. you did not refer the complaint to the Housing Ombudsman within six months of finishing our internal complaints process)
- Have been referred less than eight weeks after the end of our complaints process UNLESS the designated person refers the complaint straight away to the Housing Ombudsman with your written permission or refuses to deal with the complaint
- Are already the subject of legal proceedings
- Are referred by a designated person without your written authority
- Seek to raise matters which any other Ombudsman has already made a decision on
- Are about matters which relate to the processes and decisions concerning governance structures
- Concern matters which, in the Housing Ombudsman's opinion, do not significantly affect the customer
- Are not possible to deal with because the customer is seeking an outcome which is not within the Housing Ombudsman's authority to provide.

CAN I GO ANYWHERE ELSE AFTER THE HOUSING OMBUDSMAN?

No. The Housing Ombudsman's decision is final. There is no right of appeal.



Exeter City Council

HOUSING

WHERE CAN I GO NOW?

DESIGNATED PERSONS AND THE HOUSING OMBUDSMAN SERVICE

HOUSING OMBUDSMAN CONTACT DETAILS:

HOUSING OMBUDSMAN SERVICE
81 ALDWYCH
LONDON
WC2B 4HN

Tel: 0300 111 3000

info@housing-ombudsman.org.uk

www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk

This leaflet was produced with tenants and residents of Exeter City Council homes

AVAILABILITY IN DIFFERENT FORMATS

This leaflet is available in large print, on CD and in other languages. Please contact: Neighbourhood Management on 01392 265033 or Fax 01392 265181

or write to:

Neighbourhood Management,
Exeter City Council, Civic Centre,
Paris St, Exeter, EX1 1RQ.



www.exeter.gov.uk

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Exeter City Council

HOUSING