***COMPLAINTS***

We hope that residents will be happy during their stay with us, but recognise that we may not always get it right.

If there is something whichh is causing a resident or their family to be unhappy, we would like to encourage them to talk to someone so we are aware of the problem and can put it right.

This can be a member of staff or someone who visits the resident who will be able to talk to a staff member on their behalf.

Athena wishes to ensure any comments made about service provision are listened to, investigated and dealt with in a timely and sensitive manner.

All homes ensure that residents, family members and visiting professionals are aware of how to make comments on the services provided.

**Complaints**

The underlying principles of the complaints system are:

* To listen
* To be open and accountable
* To act fairly and proportionately
* To apologise and put things right
* To continually seek to improve

No individual making a complaint will be discriminated against for raising issue, which they believe require investigation.

**Definition**

**A complaint is a written or oral expression of dissatisfaction with a service provided, or a failure to provide, which requires a formal investigation and response**.

All complaints will be dealt with fairly, openly, with correspondence kept confidential and separate from residents’ records.

Athena’s policy has been written to meet expectations of compliance expected by the Care Quality Commission (CQC) and the Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales (CSSIW).

**Action following receipt of a complaint**

* The staff member receiving a complaint will listen to the issues being raised, making brief, factual, notes of what is being said
* The staff member will advise the complainant that their issues will be brought to the attention of the home manager
* The home manger will send an acknowledgement letter, stating the complaint has been received and include any actions instigated. This letter will be sent within 2 working days following receipt of the complaint
* The home manager is responsible for investigating and responding, in writing, to the complainant. Responses will be sent within 28 days following receipt of a complaint (English homes) and 14 days following receipt of a complaint (Welsh homes). If, for any reason, there is likely to be a delay in response, a “holding” letter will be sent outlining reasons for the delay.

**Investigating complaints**

The home manager, or a designated person who is deemed competent, will investigate the issues raised by the complainant.

The investigating officer will:

* Establish the facts around the issues raised by the complainant
* Keep the home manger briefed on progress
* Write a draft response letter

The home manager will:

* Send a draft response to the complaint to:
	+ The regional support manager
	+ The quality assurance executive

Once approved, the home manager will submit a response, retaining a copy on file at the home.

All responses to complaints should include:

* Details of actions taken to prevent repetition of the issue or reducing the likelihood of recurrence
* Address all issues raised
* Offer a meeting to discuss the written response
* Details of how to “appeal” the response

If the matter cannot be sorted out easily we will ask an independent person to look into the complaint and prepare a written report.

If the complaint remains unresolved the complainant has the right to contact the regional support manager for the home – details of which can be found on the complaints procedure displayed within the individual care home.

If the complainant is still not happy then they can put their concerns in writing to our Operations Director:-

Mandy Jackson

Athena Care Homes

Unit 2 Rima House

A13 Approach

Ripple Road

Barking

Essex

IG11 0RH Tel: 0208 517 5748

Our homes are regulated by the Care Quality Commission and if you do not feel that you have received a sufficient response you can contact them.

Care Quality Commission
Citygate
Gallowgate
Newcastle upon Tyne
NE1 4PA

Contact by phone on 03000 616161

Email: **enquiries@cqc.org.uk**

Website: **www.cqc.org.uk**

If you are not satisfied with the way that our regulators conduct any complaint investigation, you may use the following further services:

The Local Government Ombudsman

PO Box 4471, Coventry EV4 0EH

Phone: 0300 061 0614

Or 0845 602 1983

**Internal actions/responsibilities**

* Staff are expected to co-operate with any complaint investigation and, if requested, to write a statement of events
* Staff will discuss any complaints raised to ensure learning from events takes place

**Monitoring**

* The Operations Director is responsible for the monitoring of complaints for each home
* Issues relating to complaints, such as trends and actions, will be reviewed at Governance meetings by directors of Athena.