

Letting agent redress schemes

What is a letting agent redress scheme?

A letting agent redress scheme can resolve disputes between letting agents and their customers, either landlords or tenants.

Both landlords and tenants can complain to a scheme if they feel that the agent they used has not delivered the services offered, or resolved their complaints in a satisfactory manner.

All agents, no matter how big or small, must join one of the government approved redress schemes:

- The Property Ombudsman (TPO)
- The Property Redress Scheme

Your agent must display the name of the scheme they belong to in their offices and on their website. This information should be accessible to customers when visiting their premises or their website.

The council can fine letting agents up to £5000 if they don't join a redress scheme.

Complaints a redress scheme can deal with

You can complain to a scheme about issues such as:

- failure to explain things properly
- avoidable delays
- hidden fees
- rudeness

If you are a tenant you can't usually complain about things which are the fault or responsibility of the landlord unless the agent has contributed to the problem.

In addition you can't use the redress scheme to complain about deductions from, or failure to comply with Deposit Protection legislation. If your complaint is about non-return or deductions from your deposit at the end of your tenancy, use your tenancy deposit dispute resolution service instead.

How to complain

You must give the letting agent a chance to deal with the problem before you complain to a redress scheme.

This document was last amended on July 2018 and was considered accurate at that time. Changes to legislation after this date will not be reflected in the content. This document should not be considered comprehensive, nor should it take the place of legal advice where this is required.

You should use the agent's internal complaints procedure or if they don't have one write to the manager directly. You should keep copies of all correspondence and allow reasonable time for your complaint to be acknowledged and addressed.

If you don't not feel you have received an adequate response, or no response has been received you can proceed to the Redress scheme.

You can complain to the redress scheme if either of the following apply:

- you're unhappy with the final response from the agent
- 8 weeks have passed since your initial complaint and the issue is unresolved

Follow the instructions for making a complaint on the redress scheme's website:

The Property Ombudsman (TPO)

<https://www.tpos.co.uk/consumers/how-to-make-a-complaint>

01722 333306

The Property Redress Scheme

<https://www.theprs.co.uk/Complain>

0333 321 9418

What happens next

The redress scheme will investigate your complaint.

If your complaint is upheld, the scheme can order the letting agent to:

- apologise
- reimburse you for financial loss
- pay compensation for avoidable distress or inconvenience

The scheme's decision is binding on both parties.

Other ways to resolve a dispute

You could consider:

- a complaint to Trading Standards
- a complaint to Propertymark if your agent is a member
- court action to claim compensation*

*You should also be aware that the Redress schemes won't deal with your complaint if you've already started court action.

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