

VOLUNTARY RIGHT TO BUY APPEAL PROCESS FOR APPLICANTS WITH A PILOT SCHEME UNIQUE REFERENCE NUMBER

HOW AND WHEN CAN AN APPEAL BE MADE?

You have the right to appeal against a decision we have made about your final eligibility for the Voluntary Right to Buy (VRTB) scheme and/or about a decision concerning the implementation of our VRTB Policy and VRTB Portability Policy.

National guidance on the VRTB states that applicants should have an opportunity to appeal a decision made using the housing provider's existing complaints process. To speed things up for applicants and ensure a prompt decision for all parties we have put together a VRTB Appeal Process which is set out below.

How do I Appeal?

Appeals must be made no later than twelve working days after the date of our decision on eligibility. You must appeal in writing.

Appeal applications will be acknowledged within two working days and usually determined within 12 working days of receipt.

What Is the Purpose of the Appeal?

The appeal will allow you the opportunity to explain why you think:

- our decision on your eligibility for VRTB is wrong and should be changed; and/or
- we have not followed our policy/ies.

Who Will Hear the Appeal?

An appeal will be considered and decided by an Executive Director of the Housing Plus Group or their nominated representative.

Putting Your Case

You are required to confirm the reasons for your appeal and explain why you think you are eligible for the VRTB and/or where the Group has not followed policy. As advised above, this explanation must be provided in writing.

The Director will:

- consider the reasons for the appeal;
- information used by staff to decide the outcome of your application to buy your home;
- contact you if further information is needed to assist the Director in making a decision.

The Director will make their decision once they have all the information they consider they need.

We aim to provide a decision within 12 working days of receipt of the appeal request. This timescale may be extended if, following receipt of the request, we need additional information from you.

How Will The Director Make Their Decision?

The Director will be looking to see that:

- all relevant information has been considered;
- our policy/ies have been implemented appropriately;
- national legislation and guidance have been adhered to; and
- the decision that was taken was reasonable and appropriate.

The decision of the Director is final and is the end of the internal appeals process. If at this point you remain dissatisfied with the decision we have made and communicated to you, you can, if you wish, refer the matter to the Independent Housing Ombudsman, either independently or seek resolution with the assistance of a designated person (usually a local Councillor or Member of Parliament). The contact details for the Housing Ombudsman service are set out below.

Housing Ombudsman Service
Exchange Tower
Harbour Exchange Square
Isle of Dogs
London, E14 9GE

0300 111 3000

info@housing-ombudsman.org.uk

www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk

We will co-operate with the Housing Ombudsman/Designated Person as required (i.e. responding to requests for information, or explaining decisions). It should be noted that the Housing Ombudsman operates its own timescales and targets for responding to queries and we will respond as required within these.

If you want independent advice about a VRTB appeal, you may wish to speak to a Citizens' Advice representative, solicitor, or similar organisation. Please be aware that you may incur fees for receipt of advice.