



GREENWICH WOMEN'S AID

COMMENTS, COMPLIMENTS AND COMPLAINTS POLICY AND PROCEDURE

1. AIM

Greenwich Women's Aid (GWA) seeks to provide a responsive service, to meet the needs of women experiencing domestic violence, and their children. Greenwich Women's Aid Mission Statement is:

"Greenwich Women's Aid seeks to work towards an end to violence against women and children in the home and outside."

At all times, GWA welcomes comments and feedback from service users, individuals and organisations about the service they have received. Feedback and comments will be collated and evaluated, in order to attain, maintain and develop quality service delivery.

2. POLICY COMMITMENT

GWA will actively encourage service users and external organisations to comment and provide feedback on the services we provide. We will do this in a number of ways:

- Responding to and recording verbal comments and compliments from women, both in the refuge and in the community
- Comments/suggestions boxes in all our refuges
- Encouraging women to use the comments/suggestions box
- Encourage all women to complete an Exit Interview, upon leaving the refuge
- Recording verbal feedback and comments, in the Comments Log
- Regular House Meetings, where women will be encouraged to give us feedback about their experiences of using our services
- Evaluation of all formal events/workshops/training sessions/conferences
- The Manager will monitor and evaluate all comments and report them regularly to the Trustee Board, to ensure we learn from users comments.
- Service users will be enabled to make comments and complaints through a process that meets the needs of the diverse community. This may include providing translated information, interpretation (including sign language interpretation), and information in alternative formats, where necessary.

3. POLICY GUIDANCE

1) Comments/compliments

a) Verbal Comments and Compliments:

All verbal feedback/comments will be recorded electronically, with the consent of the person making the comments.

b) Written Comments and Compliments

Any written comments and/or compliments from service users and external organisations will be filed in the central Comments and Compliments file and logged on the Recording Sheet in the Central File. This will include all comments in the Comments/Suggestions Boxes.

2) Complaints from a Service User about another Service User

a) Informal resolution

The service user is encouraged, in the first instance, to talk to the service user concerned and try and resolve the issue informally. The woman making the complaint may invite a member of staff or a friend to be present. The staff member will record the date and the fact of the meeting, including who is present and the agreed outcome/s.

b) Formal resolution

If a service user is not satisfied with the response, or wants to make a written complaint, they will be asked if they want assistance to record their complaint, given (or be read) a copy of the Complaints Leaflet (see Appendix One) inviting the service user to identify the nature of their complaint and what they would like us to do to rectify the situation.

The complaint will then be passed to the Key Worker, who will acknowledge the complaint, within five working days of receipt, and who will then investigate the issue and respond to the service user, in writing, within fifteen working days of receipt of the complaint.

The investigation may include interviewing any witnesses, examining any documents, and may include a meeting with the complainant and the other person involved, lead by the Key Worker, who may call witnesses, or present witness statements. All documents to be used by any party, at a Complaints Meeting, shall be presented to all parties, at least 48 hours in advance of the meeting. The Key Worker will consider the issue and give their decision, after due consideration.

If the service user is not satisfied with the response from the Key Worker, the service user can apply, in writing, to the Manager, for a review of their complaint, stating the reasons for their review request, to the Manager.

The Manager will acknowledge the review request, within 5 working days of receipt, investigate the issue and respond to the service user, in writing, within twenty working days of receipt of the review request.

If the service user is not satisfied with the Manager's decision, she can appeal to the Chair of the Management Committee, stating the reasons for the appeal. The Chair will acknowledge the appeal, within ten working days of receipt, investigate the issues and respond to the service user, in writing, within twenty working days of receipt of the appeal. The Chair's decision on the matter is final.

The woman making the complaint may be accompanied to any meetings by a companion of her choice. This could be a staff member or another current service user or a friend or family member. The role of the companion is to provide support to the woman, to remind her of any points she wants to make and to assist her where necessary.

Complaints from service users about a staff member/the manager or any other aspect of our service.

If a service user wants to make a complaint about the behaviour or action (or lack of action) of a member of **GWA staff** or any other aspect of our service, the service user is encouraged, in the first instance, to talk to the staff member concerned and try and resolve the issue informally.

If a service user is not satisfied with the response, or is unable to raise the issue with the staff member concerned, they will be given a copy of the Complaints Leaflet (see Appendix One) inviting the service user to identify the nature of their complaint and what they would like us to do to rectify the situation.

The complaint will then be passed to the Manager, who will acknowledge the complaint, within five working days of receipt, and who will then investigate the issue and respond to the service user within fifteen working days of receipt of the complaint.

If the service user is not satisfied with the Manager's decision, she can appeal to the Chair of the Management Committee, stating the reasons for the appeal. The Chair will acknowledge the appeal, within ten working days of receipt, investigate the issues and respond to the service user within twenty working days of receipt of the appeal. The Chair's decision in the matter is final.

If a service user wants to make a complaint about the behaviour/actions of **the Manager**, the process will be similar to that outlined above; the complaint will be passed to a member of the Management Committee, who will investigate the complaint. The right of appeal will be to the Chair of the Management Committee, whose decision will be final.

The Independent Housing Ombudsman can investigate your complaint further but only when all GWA's internal processes have been exhausted. You may obtain further details of this from any member of GWA staff or independent advisory advice services.

The woman making the complaint may be accompanied to any meetings by a staff member (or another current service user); the role of the companion is to provide support to the woman, to remind her of any points she wants to make; it is not to ask or to answer questions on her behalf.

Appendixes 2 and 3 show our complaints process in easy to follow flow diagram

A separate file will be maintained for Complaints, including a Complaints Log, with a separate folder for all correspondence relating to each complaint.

3) Complaints from staff members about other staff members

Staff members will use the Grievance Procedure in cases where they have a complaint about the behaviour of either a colleague or the Manager.

4) London & Quadrant Housing Trust, Greenwich Council & The local government Housing Ombudsman

Where all avenues as described in this policy have been exhausted and the complainant is not satisfied with the outcome of the complaint resolution, they may refer their complaint to the, London and Quadrant Housing Trust or Greenwich Council or Local Government Housing Ombudsman. Please note all internal processes must have been exhausted before referring your complaint to the Ombudsman.

Details of how to refer your complaint using the above process will be given to the complainant, when responding to their original complaint

5) Reporting to the Management Committee

The Manager, at least every six months, will note and summarise all comments, compliments and complaints, and report to the Management Committee, proposing action to manage any issues that arise. This report will be recorded in the minutes of the meeting.

Date effective fromNovember 2005
Reviewed and Agreed by Management Committee31st July 2008
Reviewed30th October 2008
Agreed by Management Committee.....8th December 2008
Date of next review.....December 2010.

003/ Complaint Pol / 12.12.08

Other Policies that interact:

Training and Development Policy
Induction Policy
Support and Supervision Policy

GREENWICH WOMEN'S AID

COMPLAINTS LEAFLET

Greenwich Women's Aid (GWA) seeks to provide a responsive service, to meet the needs of women and children experiencing domestic violence. Our mission statement is:

"Greenwich Women's Aid seeks to work towards an end to violence against women and children in the home and outside."

If you have a complaint about any aspect of our service or the behaviour, actions of another resident or a staff member, please speak to the person concerned, to try and resolve the matter swiftly.

IF your complaint is about another resident, and you have tried to resolve the problem yourself but the problem is not resolved, or if you would prefer to make a written complaint, please complete the form below, put it in an envelope, and give it to your Key Worker. If your complaint is about a member of staff, please put it in an envelope addressed to the Manager, and give it to a member of staff. If you do not wish to do this you may send in your complaint directly to the manager to the following address:-

Greenwich Women's Aid, PO BOX 799 London SE7 8JD in addition the manager's contact details can be found on the notice board in each house.

Your Key Worker (or the Manager) will acknowledge your complaint within 5 working days of receipt; she will then investigate and inform you of their decision, in writing, within 15 working days of receipt. You may be called to a meeting, to discuss your complaint with the person you are complaining about or to give further details if your complaint is regarding a service provision. In all cases you have the right of appeal if you are still not satisfied with how we have responded to your complaint.

Further details of our complaints and appeals procedure can be found within our Complaints Policy.

IF YOU NEED HELP COMPLETING THIS FORM, PLEASE LET US KNOW.

Please describe what your complaint is about.

What action has been taken so far?

What could we do differently?

Your name: Your address:

Diversity Monitoring

Monitoring is an important way of building an accurate picture of our service users and how effective we are at delivering good quality services to them.

We want our services to reflect the diverse and cultural needs of our service users.

We use the monitoring information to promote diversity and helps us make sure that there is no discrimination in our service provision.

I do not wish to complete the Diversity Monitoring information

Greenwich Women's Aid

Equality & Diversity Monitoring Form

Greenwich Women's Aid wishes to ensure that its services are available to the whole of Greenwich's diverse community. In order to monitor this we ask if you would complete this monitoring form.

EQUALITY MONITORING FORM

ETHNICITY

Ethnic group	
White	
White British	
White Irish	
White - any other background	
Black	
Black – African	
Black – Caribbean	
Black – any other background	
Black Somali	
Mixed	
White and Black Caribbean	
White and Black African	
White and Asian	
Any other mixed background	

Asian or Asian British

Indian	
Pakistani	
Bangladeshi	
Any other Asian background	
Chinese or Ethnic groups	
Chinese	
Vietnamese	
Other	

DISABILITY

Do you consider you have a disability?	
No	
Yes	

How would you describe your sexuality

Heterosexual	
Lesbian	
Bisexual	
I do not wish to answer this question	

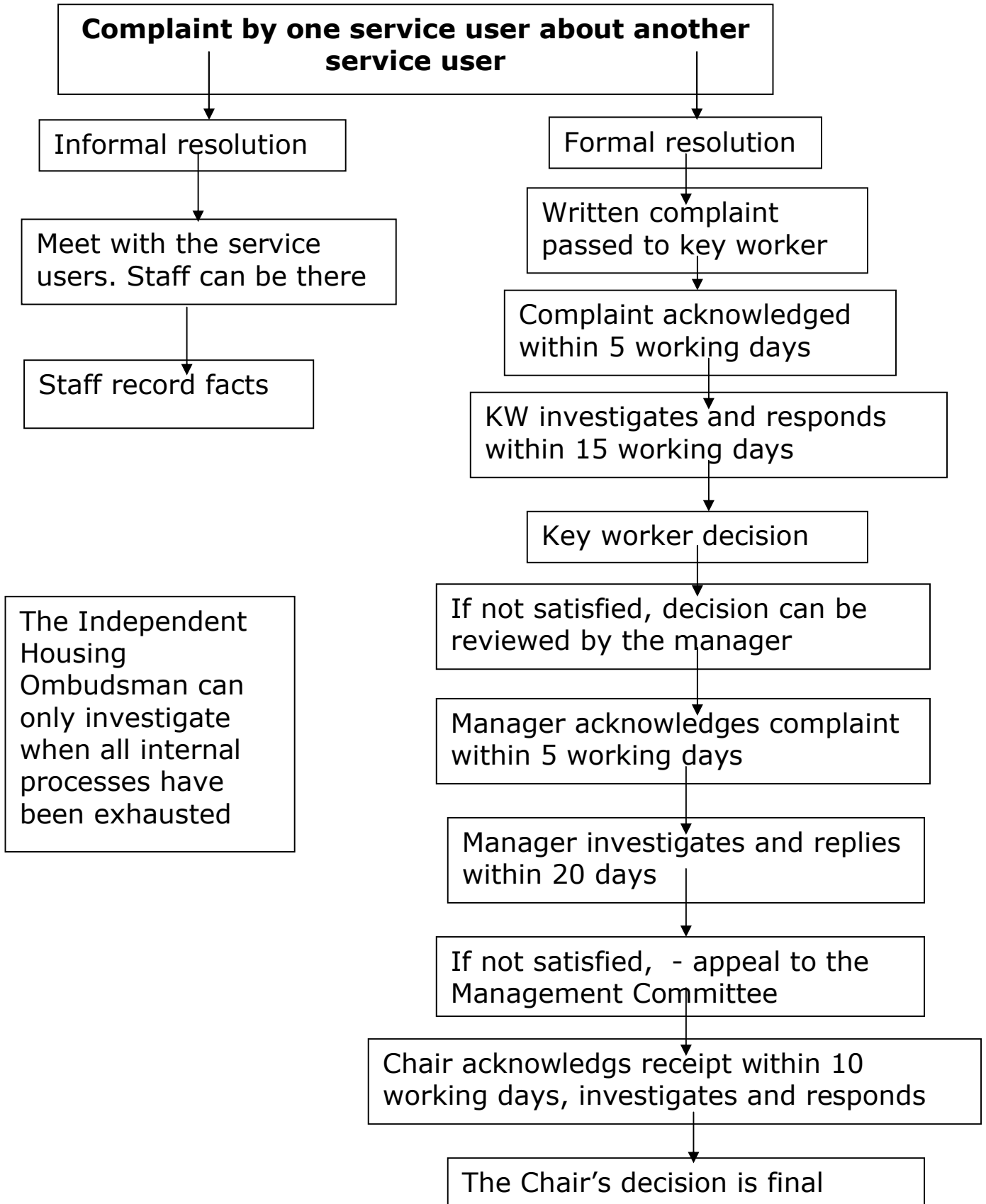
EMPLOYMENT STATUS

Employment status	
Employed	
Self Employed	
Unemployed in receipt of benefits	
Retired/No income	
Student	

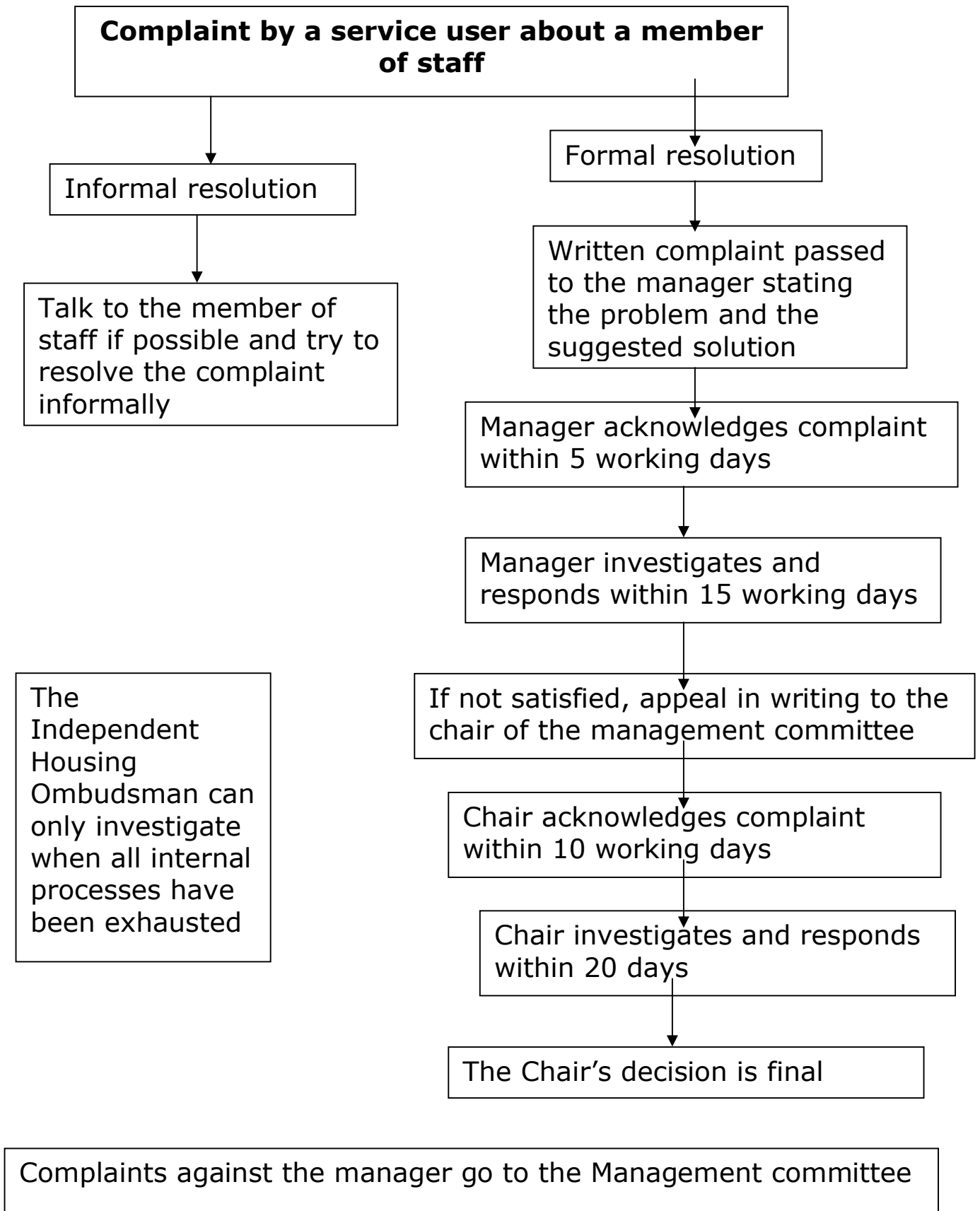
Age of clients

Age:18 and under	
Age: 19-25	
Age: 26-50	
Age: 51-65	
Age: 66-80	
Age: 80+	
Language needs	
Language/communication Needs – None	
Language/communication – Requires interpreter/mediator with language (including BSL) skills	

Complaints Procedure



Complaints Procedure



Document Quality Control Record	
Name of Document	Complaint Policy
Ref No. / Version Control	003/ Complaint Pol / 12.12.08
Date of Policy	31.07.08
Date of Previous Review (if any)	29.09.08
Date Staff consulted/advised	
Date Signed off by Committee	08.12.08
Date of next Review	Dec 2010
Master Copy Holder & Folder No & Location	Kim Wallace

003/ Complaint Pol / Appendix 1 - GWA Complaints Leaflet

