



# Property Redress Scheme Accessibility Policy

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## Introduction

We at the Property Redress Scheme (PRS) are committed to making our services as widely accessible as possible for our members and our users.

We recognise that some customers we come into contact with will need additional support.

We have a duty and responsibility to make all reasonable adjustments to help people access our services, where their personal circumstances may put them at a higher risk of disadvantage. It's important to us that:

- *all* our consumers and members are able to access our services without being disadvantaged
- any risks of harm to welfare are minimised and that users and members are treated fairly
- we commit to creating a culture of fair treatment and providing a high standard of customer service, by taking into account the best way to communicate whatever needs to be delivered, in a clear and concise way
- this policy applies to all consumers and members of our scheme. It focuses on those who meet the definition of being vulnerable. This includes the following protected characteristics:
  - age
  - disability
  - gender reassignment
  - pregnancy and maternity (which includes breastfeeding)
  - race
  - religion or belief
  - sex
  - sexual orientation

We have a process in place to identify, consider, and where appropriate put in place a range of adjustments for users and members who may need them. This process is particularly important as each individual's circumstances are different and allows us to consider the individual's needs.

We will always consider additional adjustments which our consumers and members may need, in order for them to have full access to our service. We may be unable to make adjustments which are considered unreasonable.

## How do we support our customers?

### Our people

We make sure all relevant employees receive induction and refresher training in how to identify and respond appropriately to a vulnerable customer. In addition we have a 'champion' in the team who is available to help vulnerable customers use our services.

### Communicating

We recognise that many consumers and members who need reasonable adjustments will not be vulnerable. However, for some people, a disability such as being blind means communication needs are different. We also recognise that a language barrier, particularly when combined with other factors such as age or social isolation, may lead to individuals being potentially vulnerable. This means we can offer plain, simple and easy to read documents in:

- large print
- digital or paper copies
- a selection of languages

## Taking you through the complaints process

### Raising your complaint

You can raise a complaint through our website, in a number of different languages. You can also request a copy of our complaint form to be emailed or posted to you.

If you are raising your complaint over the phone, we have fully trained call handlers who can help you with starting your complaint.

### During the complaint

We can support you through the process by;

- Helping you complete the paperwork you need to make a complaint
- Communicating with someone on your behalf (such as a care worker or family member) with your permission

- Agreeing how you would prefer to communicate, where calls or emails aren't appropriate.
- Uploading the evidence you email or post to us during your complaints investigation
- Offering extensions on the return of documents or acceptance of a resolution
- Recording all your communication and service needs accurately in line with the GDPR

#### Why we may be unable to accept a complaint

Unfortunately we are unable to deal with all types of complaints and will not consider your complaint if:

- the agent is not a member of our scheme
- it is about something that happened before the agent joined our scheme
- you have not complained to the agent before contacting us
- it has been longer than 12 months since you had the agent's final response to your complaint
- it has been, or is being, dealt with in court
- it's about alleged criminal activity or negligence claims
- it needs a full legal decision, a penalty or other legal action
- the compensation you ask for is more than £25,000

#### Physical Access

If there is a specific need for anyone to attend our office then it is accessible for wheelchair users.

#### Accessing our website

We are always looking at ways to improve our website by adding new features and maintaining its security. Please visit our website <https://www.theprs.co.uk/accessibility> to see the options for accessing our services.

## Downloads

All of our documents are available in a PDF format. In order to view our documents you will need Adobe Acrobat Reader. Most computer devices will have this software already installed. If you don't have the software and would like to download the latest version for free, you can do so from the Adobe website.

## Additional support

If you require support in a way which hasn't been listed in this document, please contact us. We will consider all requests and we will make reasonable adjustments. Please note that we cannot guarantee all requested adjustments can, or will, be made.

For any more information, or if you would like to access one of our services, please contact us using the information below:

Phone: 0333 321 9418

Email: [info@theprs.co.uk](mailto:info@theprs.co.uk)

## Managing expectations

While we will make every effort to be flexible and considerate when dealing with anyone who want to use our services, there are certain things which we are unable to do.

### What we can't do

Unfortunately we are unable to:

- Sign any paperwork on your behalf
- Accept a decision on your behalf

### What if we can't help?

If we are unable to help with your complaint, you may find advice from;

- Citizens advice (all consumers) <https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/housing/>
- Shelter (tenants only) [https://england.shelter.org.uk/housing\\_advice](https://england.shelter.org.uk/housing_advice)
- HF Assist (letting agents only) <https://www.hfassist.co.uk/>
- Landlord Action (landlords only) <https://www.landlordaction.co.uk/>
- Leasehold Advisory Service (leaseholders only) <https://www.lease-advice.org/>

We may also refer you to Trading Standards who regulate our members.

We would welcome your feedback on how accessible you found our website and services. If you would like to leave feedback please contact us at [info@theprs.co.uk](mailto:info@theprs.co.uk).

