

## COMPLAINTS RESOLUTION PROCESS

Elmhurst Energy Systems (Elmhurst) aim to provide high quality services to its Members and their Customers. Where complaints arise they will be dealt with promptly and professionally. The Elmhurst approach is to understand the root cause of complaints and develop its services using an ethos of continuous improvement.

### Reporting a complaint

We will consider the following complaints from stakeholders or Members:

- Complaints about the quality of an Energy Certificate<sup>1</sup>
- Complaints about the conduct of a Member of a Certification/Accreditation scheme operated by Elmhurst
- Complaints about Elmhurst Energy Systems Limited

<sup>1</sup>Where a stakeholder has commissioned an Energy Certificate from an Elmhurst Member, we request that any complaint is directed in the first instance to the Member who was instructed to carry out the assessment. If for whatever reason the complaint is unresolved, complainants should visit Elmhurst's website, and record their complaint via an online form.

All complainants should record their complaint via our [online form](#) on our website; this has been designed to capture the required information to enable us to make an initial investigation of the issue. Complainants are advised to have some key information to hand to facilitate the process:

1. Accreditation Number or Name of Member who carried out the work in question if applicable
2. EPC/Survey number if applicable
3. Date energy assessment was completed
4. Description of issue or complaint
5. Complainant's contact details

### Investigation and Response

Elmhurst aim to respond within five working days of a complaint being logged; This response will consist of an initial assessment of the issue, potentially identifying a resolution and contacting the person who raised the complaint either by telephone or e-mail.

N.B. If an audit of an Energy Certificate is required, in accordance with the Scheme Operating Requirements this may take up to 6 weeks. In any event the complainant will receive periodic updates, unless advised otherwise. Failure by the complainant to respond to an email from Elmhurst within 30 days will result in the complaint being closed and archived.

Once an investigation is complete, the complainant will be advised of the outcome by email.

### Statutory Rights

The legal statutory rights of the consumer/stakeholder are not affected should they wish to participate in Elmhurst's complaints resolution process.

There will be no cost to stakeholders who participate in Elmhurst's complaints resolution process.

### Escalation

**Stage 1.** If the complainant remains dissatisfied with the response to their complaint and believes they have a valid reason for Elmhurst to review it, the complaint will be escalated to the next tier of management; relevant Business Unit Team Leader/Manager, and they become responsible for the resolution of the complaint.

**Stage 2.** If the complainant subsequently appeals the decision then the matter will be referred to the Certification Committee. The Certification Committee consists of professional individuals employed by Elmhurst, who have not previously been involved with this case.

**Stage 3.** Appeal to an Independent Third Party Appeals Panel. This is available only in the following circumstances;

- Stakeholders who have been subject to stages 1 and 2 and wish to appeal the decision of the Certification Committee.
- Members who have had their certification or accreditation revoked and wish to appeal the decision of the Certification Committee.

Complainants wishing to access Stage 3 of the process must set out the grounds for the appeal and include either:

- Sufficient justification for an appeal, or
- New information, not previously disclosed

The Independent Third Party Appeals Panel is convened by the chair of our Oversight Board, itself composed of persons independent of Elmhurst who meet regularly throughout the year. Whilst we will endeavour to get the appeal expedited, due to logistics, there may be an unavoidable wait before it can be heard by the panel.

N.B. Where a complaint is found to be vexatious (see Appendix 1) we may refuse the complainant access to our complaints process; should this occur we will write to the complainant explaining our reasoning.

## Appendix 1: Vexatious complaints

### Vexatious as defined in the Scheme Operating Requirements:

'A vexatious complaint is one that is pursued, regardless of its merits, with intention to harass, annoy or subdue somebody; something that is unreasonable, without foundation, frivolous, repetitive, burdensome or unwarranted.' Section 7.4, Level 2 Scheme Operating Procedures, [www.easob.uk](http://www.easob.uk)

Elmhurst consider a complaint as vexatious where the complainant:

- Persists in pursuing or escalating the complaint, without providing reasonable justification or new information when the complaint has already been addressed.
- Seeks to prolong contact by continually changing the substance of a complaint or by continually raising further concerns or questions whilst the complaint is being addressed.
- Fails to clearly identify the substance of a complaint, or the precise issues which may need to be investigated despite reasonable efforts by the manager to assist them.
- Complains solely about trivial matters to an extent which is out of proportion to their significance.
- Makes excessive contact with the manager or seeks to impose unreasonable demands or expectations on resources, such as responses being provided more urgently than is reasonable or necessary
- Makes continual complaint about the methodology of Energy Certificates, such that the scheme cannot offer any further assistance beyond an explanation of how the methodology works.