

# Have your say

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# Tell us how you want this information

If you would like this handbook in a different way, for example as a translation in another language, in Braille, audio tape, large print or on computer disc, please telephone 0117 924 4071 or email us at [solon@solonswha.co.uk](mailto:solon@solonswha.co.uk)

## POLISH

Jeżeli język angielski nie jest Twoim językiem ojczystym i wymagasz tłumaczenia, możemy to zapewnić.

## PORTUGUESE

Se o Inglês não é a sua língua materna e precisa de uma tradução, nós podemos obtê-la.

## PUNJABI

ਜੇਕਰ ਇੰਗਲਿਸ਼ ਤੁਹਾਡੀ ਪਹਿਲੀ ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਨਹੀਂ ਅਤੇ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਦੁਬਾਰਾ ਸੋਚਣ ਦੀ ਜ਼ਰੂਰਤ ਹੈ ਤਾਂ ਤੁਹਾਡੇ ਲਈ ਅਸੀਂ ਇਸਦਾ ਪ੍ਰਬੰਧ ਕਰ ਸਕਦੇ ਹਾਂ।

## SOMALI

Haddii Ingiriisku aanu ahayn afkaaga kowaad oo aad u baahan tahay turjumaad, annagaa kuu samayn karra.

## URDU

اگر انگریزی آپ کی پہلی زبان نہیں ہے اور آپ کو ترجمہ کی ضرورت ہے تو ہم آپ کے لئے فراہم کر سکتے ہیں۔

## VIETNAMESE

Nếu quý vị không thạo Anh văn và cần bản dịch, chúng tôi sẽ giúp quý vị một bản.

## ALBANIAN

Nëse anglishtja nuk është gjuha juaj amtare dhe keni nevojë për një përkthim, ne mund t'ua sigurojmë atë.

## BENGALI

ইংরেজী আপনার মাতৃভাষা না হলে এবং আপনার কোন অনুবাদের প্রয়োজন হলে আমরা তা প্রদান করতে সক্ষম।

## CHINESE

如果英文不是您的第一語言，而您需要翻譯的話，我們可以為您安排。

## GUJARATI

જો તમારી પહેલી ભાષા અંગ્રેજી ન હોય અને તમને ભાષાંતરની જરૂર હોય તો અમે તમને તે આપી શકીએ છીએ.

## HINDI

यदि अँग्रेज़ी आप की पहली भाषा नहीं है और आप को अनुवाद की आवश्यकता है तो यह हम आपको प्रदान कर सकते हैं

## KURDISH

Heke îngilîzî zimanê we yê yekem nîne û pêwîstîya we bi wergêr heye, em dikarin yekî ji we re bibînin

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# 1 How residents can get involved

## → What does it mean to 'get involved'?

We want all our residents to help us to make decisions about their homes and the service we provide. We want to know what you think about our service and what we should do to improve it. Most of all, we want to know how you would like us to work with you.

### Who can get involved?

Everyone! Whatever background you come from, we want to hear what you have to say.

We want to hear from you whether you are working or not, whether you have a large family or live alone, whether you have a disability or any special requirement.

The more opinions and feedback we get, the easier it is to make sure we provide an equal service to all residents.

### Why is it a good idea to tell Solon what you think?

You can help us to improve our service and have a real say in the way Solon is run. This makes our service better for everyone. You can also learn how the housing association works. And you can help others in your community by giving us their points of view.

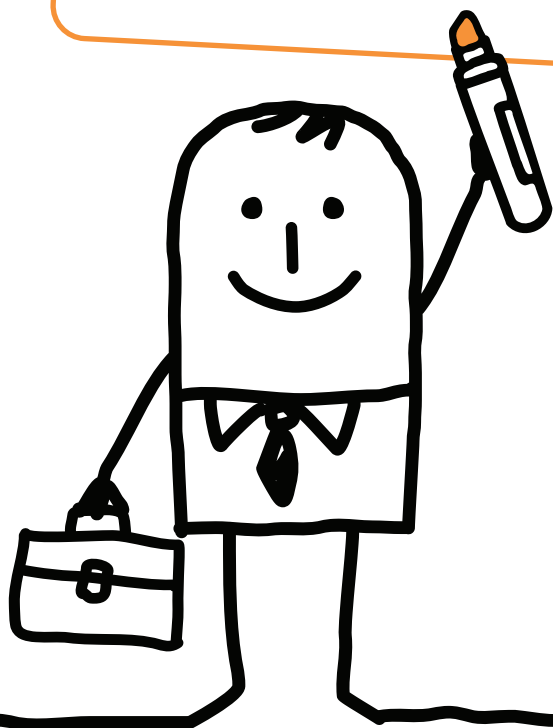
### How can I help to make the service better?

There are many ways to tell us what you think, no matter how much or how little time you can give. The following pages explain the ways we hear our resident views and the ways that residents work with us. You can do some or all of these!

We hope there is a way to get involved that will suit everyone. If not, please tell us.

We have a member of staff who works to make sure that residents are fully represented.

Call any time  
on 0117 916 7768



## → How to find out more about Solon

We regularly send you information so you know what residents have asked us to do and how we are working to improve our service.

We publish as much information as possible on our website so it is up to date and always available.

### You can expect to receive:



**Newsletter**  
This is sent several times a year.



**Annual report of performance**  
This is also sent to your home.



**Letters and surveys**  
We regularly ask you about our service.



**Invitations**  
We organise events and meetings for our residents.

## 2 Ways to give us your views

We try to involve residents in everything we do and we ask for resident views in different ways. We also offer many ways that you can get in touch with us to tell us what you think.

**Here are some examples of what you can do.**



**Complete resident surveys and questionnaires.**

**Use the Solon Suggestion Box – see page 12.**

**Nominate and vote for Solon employees who you think are outstanding in the way they work.**

**Come along to the regular forum meetings that are held at our offices. You can join in at any time! See page 8 for more information about these meetings.**

**Help to produce our newsletter for residents (no experience needed).**

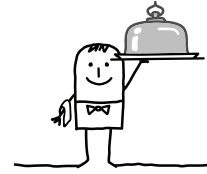
**Come along to a focus group or one of our special events to give us your views. We will invite you to these.**

## → Come along to our meetings

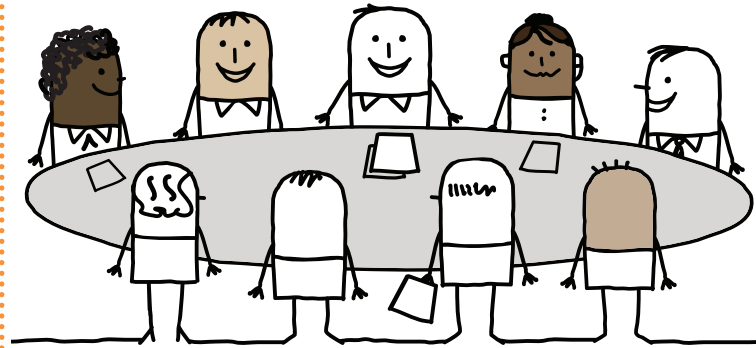
Through our regular forum meetings and other groups, Solon residents tell us how we should be doing things. We publish reports after each meeting so all residents can see what has been discussed and agreed.

### The Residents Forum

**This meets 6 times a year.  
Meetings last for 2 hours  
and include hot food.**

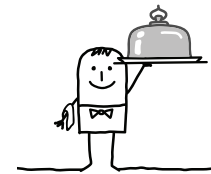


This is a regular meeting where residents discuss a wide range of issues about our policy and our service. Sometimes residents help set action plans or monitor our performance. This is the ideal place to give us your view about anything.



### The Maintenance Forum

**This meets 6 times a year.  
Meetings last for 2 hours  
and include hot food.**



Residents discuss specific issues about maintenance of their homes. They also help monitor the repairs service and suggest improvements and changes to the way we run things.



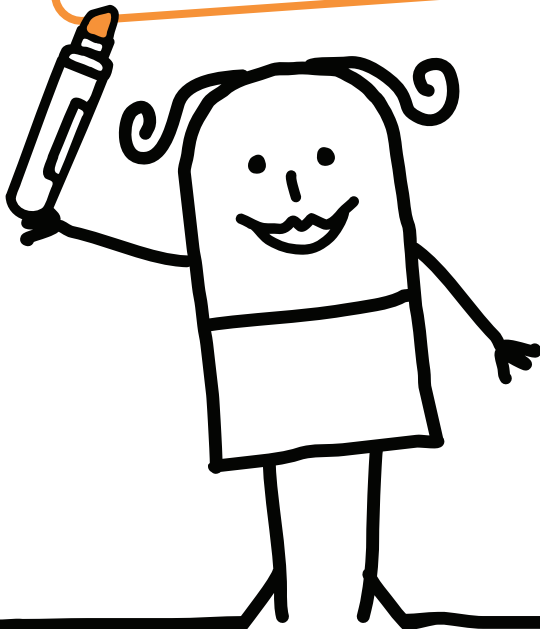
### We make meetings fun!

We want residents to enjoy coming along to meetings so we provide hot food and run a prize draw at every meeting.

Residents help Solon to improve our service. They do this by giving us their views. If more residents get involved, our service works better for everyone.

### **Project groups**

These groups usually meet a few times to address a particular part of our service. For example, we set up a group to look at the standard for the homes we relet. Another group helped us to review our policy on vulnerable persons.



## → More ways to have your say

We all like to do things in different ways. Here are some more ways you can get involved in the work of Solon.

### **Become a mystery shopper**

We offer training to help residents to test our services. It is called 'mystery shopping' because you do it without Solon knowing! It is very important feedback for us to help us improve our service.

### **Help to choose our contractors**

Through the Maintenance Forum we set up groups that help select our main suppliers for maintenance and repairs – the call-out service that our residents rely upon.

### **Join the Customer Service Improvement Committee**

This is a strong and active committee that is part of the Solon Board of Management. It was set up to monitor Solon's performance, check on the service we provide and make sure that residents are properly represented. The committee meets 4 times a year.

### **Join the Solon Board**

Join the Board of Management. There are 3 resident Board members. When there is a vacancy, we advertise it to all residents. As a Board member you are expected to attend up to 11 meetings a year. You can find out more about how the Solon Board is organised in the **Welcome** section of this handbook.

**Want more information about getting involved?**

Visit the Solon website at:

**[www.solonswha.co.uk](http://www.solonswha.co.uk)**



### 3 Why your feedback is important

We aim to provide a high-quality and efficient service at all times but we realise that sometimes you may not be satisfied.

We value your views and comments, positive and negative, as they help us to learn and to improve the way we do things.

If you give us feedback, we will acknowledge it and act upon it quickly and without fuss.

#### → Need some help to tell us what you think?

If you need help to make a comment, compliment or complaint, please ask. Solon will arrange for translation, interpreting or support services if you need them.

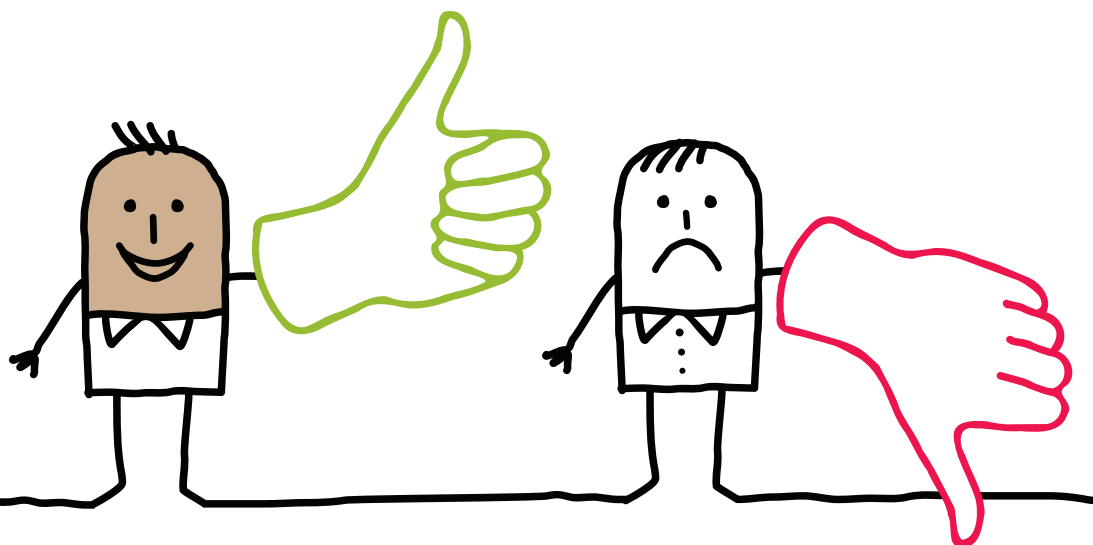
#### → How to give Solon your feedback

Have a look at the table on the next page to see the different ways you can give us your feedback.

We do not have a feedback form because we believe it is better to be as flexible and open as possible.

Instead we say that residents can:

- pick up the phone at any time to tell us something or give us their suggestions or their views
- give feedback to any member of the Solon staff
- use the many different ways we offer to feed back to us – this can include making a formal complaint. See page 12 for ways to get in touch.



## The different ways to get in touch with Solon

<b>Suggestion box</b>	You can drop a suggestion into our box in reception, phone us on <b>0117 924 4071</b> , use the form on the back of the newsletter or send an email to: <b>suggestionbox@solonswha.co.uk</b>
<b>Contact our staff</b>	You can do this in writing, by phone or by arranging to speak face-to-face with a member of staff. You can come to our office or we can visit you in your home. Translation and interpretation services can be provided.
<b>Resident meetings</b>	We let residents know when our meetings will take place via the newsletter and on the website. Contact our Resident Involvement Officer if you want to discuss things before the meeting.
<b>Email us</b>	<b>solon@solonswha.co.uk</b>
<b>Use our website</b>	<b>www.solonswha.co.uk</b>
<b>Use the works order</b>	When work is carried out at your home, a works order is sent to you. This has a section for any comments you might have about the contractor or the work carried out. A prepaid envelope is included. We really appreciate your feedback via the works order because it also helps us assess the contractors we use.
<b>Tell a Board member or tenant representative</b>	Call the Solon office on <b>0117 924 4071</b> and we can arrange for you to speak to the right person.
<b>Arrange a petition</b>	Collect signatures and present them to Solon.
<b>Ask a solicitor, advice centre or other advocate to contact us</b>	See the <b>Useful contacts</b> section or ask Solon who might be able to help.

## 4 How to make a complaint

We aim to give you the highest standard of service, but we accept that from time to time we can make mistakes. When something goes wrong, we want to put the problem right as soon as we can. We also use the information you give us to see where we can improve our service.

If you are not happy with the service that we give you, try to speak to the person you usually deal with, for example your Housing Officer (unless the complaint is about that person). You should do this as soon as possible.

All our staff are trained and encouraged to take a resident complaint. We are all familiar with Solon policy and procedure for dealing with complaints.

Most problems are sorted out quickly and easily. If you have spoken to someone and you are still not happy, you can report a complaint by using any of the ways to give us feedback – see page 12.

If you are not sure who to contact, call us on 0117 924 4071 and we will tell you. You can also email us at [solon@solonswha.co.uk](mailto:solon@solonswha.co.uk) or visit us at our office.



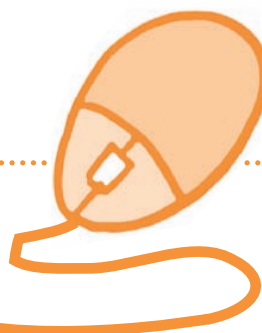
### Need help to make a complaint?

You can ask our staff to help you or ask someone else to complain for you. This could be a friend, a family member, a carer or a member of the Solon Residents Forum or the Citizens Advice Bureau.

#### Our complaints procedure

Ask us for a leaflet or visit our website:

[www.solonswha.co.uk](http://www.solonswha.co.uk)



## → What happens if I make a complaint?

### Stage 1

#### The Department Manager

Once you let us know that you are not happy, your complaint will be recorded. It will then be passed to the relevant manager, who will investigate and send you their response.

### Stage 2

#### The Customer Services Director

If you are not happy with the response from the Department Manager, you can ask for your complaint to be passed to the Customer Services Director, or you can ask for a meeting with them.

### Stage 3

#### The Complaints Panel

If you are still not happy with the response, you can ask for your complaint to be passed to the Complaints Panel. This is made up of the Chief Executive and two members of the Solon Board of Management.

### After Stage 3...

#### The Independent Housing Ombudsman

If you are still not satisfied, you can get in touch with the Independent Housing Ombudsman within 12 months of reaching the end of our procedure. You can contact them at:

Independent Housing Ombudsman  
81 Aldwych  
London WC2B 4HN  
Tel: 0300 111 3000  
[www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk](http://www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk)

The Ombudsman will only accept a complaint if it has been through all the stages of our procedure.

The Ombudsman is mainly concerned with something we may have done wrong, something we should not have done or if we have failed to do something we should have done. They do not deal with complaints about rent, neighbour disputes or matters that are usually dealt with by other organisations.

If you would like a leaflet about the Ombudsman service, call Solon. See our **Useful contacts** section for more information.

## → Will I be able to claim compensation?

In some circumstances you may be entitled to claim compensation. For more information, contact us to request a copy of our compensation policy. This is also available on our website: [www.solonswaha.co.uk](http://www.solonswaha.co.uk)

## 5 Protecting your privacy and your right to information

The Data Protection Act limits the information that we can hold about you. It also restricts who we can pass information to without your permission.

Personal information will only be given to other organisations where it is essential to maintain your tenancy, for example, to arrange for a repair contractor to carry out work on your home, or if the information is needed to prevent or help detect a crime.

You have a right of access, under the Data Protection Act, to certain computer and other information held by Solon.

You also have a right of access to view your tenancy file, except for any information that has been given to us in confidence by a third party.

If you wish to see your file, please make an appointment with Solon. We will charge for copies of your file if you request them. Please give us 2 weeks' notice if you do require copies.

