

Customer Dispute Ombudsman Service (England, Wales & N. Ireland)

For resolution of disputes under the Greenbelt arrangement, Greenbelt offers an impartial Ombudsman service. The role of the Ombudsman is to investigate and resolve individual and multiple customer disputes, including situations where Greenbelt has been managing and maintaining a development for some time.

The Ombudsman will provide an impartial assessment or decision as required by the parties, thus reducing any need for escalation of a dispute into political or formal legal arenas. Typical of the type of dispute which can be referred to the Ombudsman service is a case where a client has refused to pay Greenbelt's bill, because it is alleged there has been a lack of maintenance or that Greenbelt's charges are too high, and initial attempts by the client and Greenbelt to resolve the matter through established internal procedures have been unsuccessful.

Potential outcomes of the Ombudsman service include:

- Instructing a Greenbelt contractor to carry out remedial work
- Face-to-face meeting with the client and an apology
- An offer of a credit/discount to the client's bill
- A mixture of all of these

To ensure this service is, and is seen to be, completely impartial, the Ombudsman will be a chartered surveyor who has been independently appointed by the Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors (RICS), which is a professional body with no official ties to Greenbelt or any parties involved.

Note: The Ombudsman is a chartered surveyor who is appointed to the role by RICS for a fixed period of 12 months. RICS undertakes checks to ensure an appointed Ombudsman is properly qualified, independent of Greenbelt and prepared to make themselves available, as far as reasonably possible, to undertake the role as and when required.

Issues can be referred to the independent Ombudsman as and when required by Greenbelt and/or a client. The Ombudsman's appointment will be reviewed/refreshed annually on application by Greenbelt to RICS.

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