

Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code: Self-assessment form

Compliance with the Complaint Handling Code		Yes	No	Additional information
1	Definition of a complaint			
	Does the complaints process use the following definition of a complaint? <i>An expression of dissatisfaction, however made, about the standard of service, actions or lack of action by the organisation, its own staff, or those acting on its behalf, affecting an individual resident or group of residents.</i>	✓		
	Does the policy have exclusions where a complaint will not be considered?	✓		
	Are these exclusions reasonable and fair to residents? Evidence relied upon	✓		
2	Accessibility			
	Are multiple accessibility routes available for residents to make a complaint?	✓		Email, online services, via the website, by telephone, in person, via social media and in writing
	Is the complaints policy and procedure available online?	✓		A summary of the process and also access to full policy
	Do we have a reasonable adjustments policy?	✓		Affordable Housing Customer Service Alerts
	Do we regularly advise residents about our complaints process? <i>We need to consider regular articles in our publication/consider having this on the back of letters etc.</i>		✓	
3	Complaints team and process			
	Is there a complaint officer or equivalent in post?	✓		Customer Focus Team who centrally log complaints
	Does the complaint officer have autonomy to resolve complaints?		✓	The responding manager has the autonomy to resolve
	Does the complaint officer have authority to compel engagement from other departments to resolve disputes?		✓	Not in their current role
	If there is a third stage to the complaint's procedure are residents involved in the decision making?	✓		Customers have the option of taking their complaints to the

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			Independent Complaints Panel
	Is any third stage optional for residents?	✓	
	Does the final stage response set out residents' right to refer the matter to the Housing Ombudsman Service?	✓	
	Do we keep a record of complaint correspondence including correspondence from the resident?	✓	End to end details of all complaints saved to file
	At what stage are most complaints resolved?	Stage 1	

4	Communication		
	Are residents kept informed and updated during the complaints process?	✓	Manager keep them updated and agree further deadlines if required.
	Are residents informed of the landlord's position and given a chance to respond and challenge any area of dispute before the final decision?	✓	The final response, should be in conjunction with communicating with the customer and a resolution agreed.
	Are all complaints acknowledged and logged within five days?	✓	
	Are residents advised of how to escalate at the end of each stage?	✓	Information provided at the end of Stage 1 and 2
	What proportion of complaints are resolved at stage one?		88%
	What proportion of complaints are resolved at stage two?		98%
	What proportion of complaint responses are sent within Code timescales? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stage one Stage one (with extension) Stage two Stage two (with extension) 		
	Where timescales have been extended did we have good reason?	✓	
	Where timescales have been extended did we keep the resident informed?	✓	If an extension is required, The responding manager

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			agrees a new deadline with the customer
	What proportion of complaints do we resolve to residents' satisfaction		
5	Cooperation with Housing Ombudsman Service		
	Were all requests for evidence responded to within 15 days?	✓	
	Where the timescale was extended did we keep the Ombudsman informed?	N/A	We do not currently have this data, we will be collecting it from 2021.
6	Fairness in complaint handling		
	Are residents able to complain via a representative throughout?	✓	Customer can complaint via a 3 rd party as long as we have acquired a permission to act
	If advice was given, was this accurate and easy to understand?		
	How many cases did we refuse to escalate? What was the reason for the refusal?		We would not refuse to escalate a complaint. Once it completes the process, we would advise of the Housing Ombudsman Service
	Did we explain our decision to the resident?		
7	Outcomes and remedies		
	Where something has gone wrong are we taking appropriate steps to put things right?		
8	Continuous learning and improvement		
	What improvements have we made as a result of learning from complaints?		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recommendations/ lessons learned are actioned and shared with the wider teams
	How do we share these lessons with: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> residents? the board/governing body? In the Annual Report? 		
	Has the Code made a difference to how we respond to complaints?	Yes	

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What changes have we made?

Changed our process to two stages

Our procedure now clarifies that an investigating officer must speak with the complainant and

We have:

- **changed our process to two stages**
- **provided extra training to staff in effective management and resolution of complaints**
- **provided customers with an easy downloadable guide to our policy on our website**
- **we now publish more detail about our performance**
- **our policy now clarifies the investigating officer must speak with the customer and understand what resolution the customer wants.**