

Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code

Self-assessment form

Compliance with the Complaint Handling Code

1	Definition of a complaint	Yes / No	Other
	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>	Yes	
	Does the policy have exclusions where a complaint will not be considered? We consider all complaints put forward by our customers	No	
	Are these exclusions reasonable and fair to residents? Evidence relied upon	N/A	

2	Accessibility	Yes / No	Other
	Are multiple accessibility routes available for residents to make a complaint?	Yes	
	Is the complaints policy and procedure available online? The website maps out who is responsible and the timescales	Yes	
	Do we have a reasonable adjustments policy? Our complaints process is open to those with disabilities and the website is accessible	Yes	
	Do we regularly advise residents about our complaints process? Complaints are included in the Annual Report and the website page is updated quarterly	Yes	

3	Complaints team and process	Yes / No	Other
	Is there a complaint officer or equivalent in post?	Yes	
	Does the complaint officer have autonomy to resolve complaints?	Yes	
	Does the complaint officer have authority to compel engagement from other departments to resolve disputes?	Yes	

3	Complaints team and process	Yes / No	Other
	<p>If there is a third stage to the complaints procedure are residents involved in the decision making?</p> <p>We advertised for tenants to be involved in the complaints process and had no volunteers</p>	No	
	<p>Is any third stage optional for residents?</p> <p>We have a three stage process with a third stage investigation by a central team, signed off by an independent Assistant Director from a different service</p>	Yes	
	Does the final stage response set out residents' right to refer the matter to the Housing Ombudsman Service?	Yes	
	Do we keep a record of complaint correspondence including correspondence from the resident?	Yes	
	At what stage are most complaints resolved?		One

4	Communication	Yes / No	Other
	<p>Are residents kept informed and updated during the complaints process?</p> <p>This is the aim, acknowledged as an area for improvement for the action plan. Complaints logged on the new customer platform will flag contact. This could be an area for workflow automation</p>	Yes	
	<p>Are residents informed of the landlord's position and given a chance to respond and challenge any area of dispute before the final decision?</p> <p>Residents are informed of our decision at Stage 1 and Stage 2. If they remain dissatisfied they can take their complaint to Stage 3 where the central team conduct a fresh investigation, including all the customer provided and added. They work with an independent Assistant Director to ensure all has been looked at correctly, independently and that all the customer has said has been taken into account before the final appeal response is sent.</p>		
	<p>Are all complaints acknowledged and logged within five days?</p> <p>Acknowledgments will be automated in the future</p>	Yes	
	Are residents advised of how to escalate at the end of each stage?	Yes	
	What proportion of complaints are resolved at stage one?		90%
	What proportion of complaints are resolved at stage two?		71%

4	Communication	Yes / No	Other
	<p>What proportion of complaint responses are sent within Code timescales?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stage one Stage one (with extension) • Stage two Stage two (with extension) <p>We only have one measure for responded to within target which includes extended targets agreed with customers.</p>		92.3%
	Where timescales have been extended did we have good reason?	Yes	
	Where timescales have been extended did we keep the resident informed? Only extend after we have communicated	Yes	
	<p>What proportion of complaints do we resolve to residents' satisfaction</p> <p>We sent surveys to all complainants but only received around 6 completed surveys back each year. We are currently working on introducing a new resident account and will include end user satisfaction electronic surveys as part of this.</p>		Unknown

5	Cooperation with Housing Ombudsman Service	Yes / No	Other
	Were all requests for evidence responded to within 15 days?	Yes	
	Where the timescale was extended did we keep the Ombudsman informed?	Yes	

6	Fairness in complaint handling	Yes / No	Other
	Are residents able to complain via a representative throughout?	Yes	
	If advice was given, was this accurate and easy to understand?	Yes	
	<p>How many cases did we refuse to escalate?</p> <p>What was the reason for the refusal?</p> <p>N/A</p>		0
	Did we explain our decision to the resident?	N/A	

7	Outcomes and remedies	Yes / No	Other
	Where something has gone wrong are we taking appropriate steps to put things right?	Yes	

8	Continuous learning and improvement	Yes / No	Other
	What improvements have we made as a result of learning from complaints?		Many changes to processes, policies etc.
	How do we share these lessons with: a) residents? b) the board/governing body? c) In the Annual Report?		We report learning to the governing body quarterly and residents annually in the annual report,
	Has the Code made a difference to how we respond to complaints?	Yes	
	What changes have we made? We will change the definition of a complaint and will consider automating acknowledgements in the future		