




Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code:

Self-assessment form (December 2021)

Compliance with the Complaint Handling Code			
1	Definition of a complaint	Yes	No
	<p>Does the complaints process use the following definition of a complaint?</p> <p>An expression of dissatisfaction, however made, about the standard of service, actions or lack of action by the organisation, it's own staff, or those acting on its behalf, affecting an individual resident or group of residents.</p>	✓	
	<p>Does this policy have exclusions where a complaint wil not be considered?</p>	✓	
	<p>Are these exclusions reasonable and fair to residents?</p> <p>Evidence relied upon:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The HOS code has been used as a guide • HOS determinations have also been used i.e. in cases being referred to the FTT or cases considered outside of the HOS jurisdiction • Resident scrutiny i.e. Customer Advisory Panel 	✓	
2	Accessibility	Yes	No
	<p>Are multiple accessibility routes available for residents to make a complaint?</p>	✓	
	<p>Is the complaints policy and procedure available online?</p>	✓	
	<p>Do we have a reasonable adjustments policy?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We have a Vulnerable Policy and this will be looked at to incorporate reasonable adjustments, which is specific to disabled customers and links to the Equality Act 2010. 		✓
	<p>Do we regularly advise residents about our complaints process?</p>	✓	

3	Complaints team and process	Yes	No
	Is there a complaint officer or equivalent in post? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is a dedicated complaints and resolution (C&R) service/team. 	✓	
	Does the complaint officer have autonomy to resolve complaints?	✓	
	Does the complaint officer have authority to compel engagement from other departments to resolve disputes?	✓	
	If there is a third stage to the complaints procedure are residents involved in the decision making?		✓
	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?	✓	
	At what stage are most complaint resolved?	Stage 1	
4	Communication	Yes	No
	Are residents kept informed and updated during the complaints process?	✓	
	Are residents informed of the landlord's position and given a chance to respond and challenge any area of dispute before the final decision?	✓	
	Are all complaints acknowledged and logged within 5 days?	✓	
	Are residents advised of how to escalate at the end of each stage?	✓	
	What proportion of complaints are resolved at stage 1?	94%	
	What proportion of complaints are resolved at stage 2?	98%	
	What proportion of complaint responses are sent within Code timescales? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stage 1 Stage 1 (with extension) Stage 2 Stage 2 (with extension) 	70% 30% 74% 26%	
	Where timescales have been extended did we have a good reason?	✓	

4	Communication	Yes	No
	Where timescales have been extended did we keep the resident informed?	✓	
	What proportion of complaints do we resolve to residents' satisfaction? *This is the first customer satisfaction measure (December 2021) since the introduction of the new code.	*79%	
5	Cooperation with Housing Ombudsman Service	Yes	No
	Were all requests for evidence responded within 15 days?		✓
	Where the timescale was extended did we keep the Ombudsman informed?	✓	
6	Fairness in complaint handling	Yes	No
	Are residents able to complain via a representative throughout?	✓	
	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?		9 not residents
	Did we explain our decision to the resident?	✓	
7	Outcomes and remedies	Yes	No
	Where something has gone wrong are we taking appropriate steps to put things right?	✓	
8	Continuous learning and development	Yes	No
	What improvement have we made as a result of learning from complaints? A number of lessons that can be cited from complaint recording which has benefitted the business and our customers including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improving communication with customer, reducing repeat contact and complaints – 'Customer First' training and development delivered across Customer Experience teams and now approved for roll-out across Operations, including our repairs contractors, during 21/22. • A new Hub in our leasehold team for improved communication and first-time resolution. • Removal and replacement of underperforming estate service contracts. • Internal and external communications on damp, mould and 		

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • condensation. increased focus on surveys when issues are reported, and focus on supporting customers when internal environmental factors are a factor (e.g. working extractors and ventilation). • Housing for the Future – A project team set up within Housing Services to analyse and address key issues that drive complaints in the first place and ensure effective handling of complaints supporting the complains and resolution service within the new framework. • Dedicated Complaint champion oversight –Supporting services to introduce a single point of responsibility for responding to complaints within the required timeframes, ensuring the role can sit across the C&R Service and business for a consistent approach to learning from complaint handling. 		
	<p>How do we share these lessons with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Residents - 'you said, we did' campaigns describing improvements made as a result of insights and complaints, delivered internally through the intranet, externally via the internet and incorporated into the customer annual report and articles in Home magazine. • The Board/governing body - minimum half yearly specific Group Board reporting and quarterly reporting into the Customer Advisory Panel for oversight and scrutiny, which is also fed into group Board. • In the annual report - performace is featured in the annual report • and the annual customer report. KPIs focus on performance and % resolved at stage 1 and 2 and %of complaints escalated to the HOS. 		
	<p>Has the Code made a difference to how we respond to complaints?</p>		
	<p>What changes have we made?</p> <p>Whilst the key focus of the last twelve months has remained on managing volumes and responsiveness, we have continued to track and reference areas of learning lessons and improvements made.</p>		