

Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code: Self-assessment form

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><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></p>	✓	
	Does the policy have exclusions where a complaint will not be considered?	✓	
	<p>Are these exclusions reasonable and fair to residents?</p> <p>Evidence relied upon</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Housing Ombudsman’s Code 2) Broader legislative framework overruling Local Government complaints handling 	✓	
2	Accessibility		
	Are multiple accessibility routes available for residents to make a complaint?	✓	
	Is the complaints policy and procedure available online?	✓	
	Do we have a reasonable adjustments policy?	✓	
	Do we regularly advise residents about our complaints process?	✓	
3	Complaints team and process		
	Is there a complaint officer or equivalent in post?	✓	
	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 complaints resolved?	*	
	Stage 1*		

4	Communication		
	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 five days?	✓	
	Are residents advised of how to escalate at the end of each stage?	✓	
	What proportion of complaints are resolved at stage one? See annual reports *	*	
	What proportion of complaints are resolved at stage two?	*	
	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) See annual reports *	*	
	Where timescales have been extended did we have good reason?	✓	
	Where timescales have been extended did we keep the resident informed?	✓	
	What proportion of complaints do we resolve to residents' satisfaction See annual reports *	*	
5	Cooperation with Housing Ombudsman Service		
	Were all requests for evidence responded to within 15 days? N/A*	*	
	Where the timescale was extended did we keep the Ombudsman informed? N/A*	*	
6	Fairness in complaint handling		
	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? 0 What was the reason for the refusal?	0	

	Did we explain our decision to the resident?	N/A	
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? See annual reports*	*	
	How do we share these lessons with: a) residents? b) the board/governing body? c) In the Annual Report? A) Via the complaint response. B) Reports to Chief Officer’s Board C) Annual report is considered at two public meetings. D) The report are also published on our website.* See annual reports*	*	
	Has the Code made a difference to how we respond to complaints?	✓	
	What changes have we made? To make the following changes (new text is shaded) <u>Housing Complaints, Compliments and Comments Procedure:</u> 1.4 This procedure has 2 stages ... At stage 1 a manager from the service you are complaining about the Housing Complaints Response Officer will usually respond to your complaint and try to put things right. 7 (e) Housing Conditions Claims (Disrepair Claims)* 7.1 Housing Conditions Claims (Disrepair Claims) (a) If you have reported that repairs are needed in your property and they are not done or unreasonably delayed, you should make a complaint in the first instance. Should you remain	*	

	<p>dissatisfied, you may instruct a solicitor to deal with this by bringing a legal disrepair claim.</p> <p>11.1 (c) We will appoint a Responding Officer to look into your complaint. This will usually be a manager or team leader from Housing or Building Services. This will usually be the Housing Complaints Response Officer.</p> <p>11.1 e) has been amended as follows:</p> <p>The Responding Officer will contact you with a thorough response within 10 working days from receipt of complaint... The Responding Officer will contact you with a thorough response within 10 working days of your complaint being acknowledged and logged...</p> <p>11.1 (i) If your complaint is about the manager of the service concerned Housing Complaints Response Officer, we may ask a manager from another service their line manager to look into your complaint. Where appropriate we will investigate your complaint at stage 2 of the procedure. This will depend on the nature of your complaint.</p> <p>11.2 b) has been amended as follows:</p> <p>At stage 2 we will send you an acknowledgement within 3 working days of the date we receive your complaint. At stage 2 we will acknowledge and log your complaint within three working days of receipt. If the outstanding issues are unclear, we will set out our understanding of the complaint in our acknowledgement and ask you to confirm/clarify your complaint within five working days.</p> <p>11.2 e) has been amended as follows:</p> <p>The Investigating Officer will contact you with a thorough response within 20 working days from request to escalate... The Investigating Officer will contact you with a thorough response within 20 working days of your complaint being escalated i.e. the date we acknowledge and log your complaint or the date you confirm/clarify your complaint. If you do not confirm/clarify your complaint, the timescale will start on the date the five working days clarification period elapses. In such cases, we will investigate your complaint as set out in the acknowledgement. If it is not possible to respond within 20 working days we will provide an explanation and a date when the stage two response will be received. This should not exceed a further 10 working days without good reason.</p>	
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	<p>17.2 Following the conclusion of each stage of the Council’s complaints procedure the Responding/Investigating Officer will send their response and any supporting documents to the Complaints and Information Governance Team. A copy of the response will also be uploaded to your tenancy record...</p> <p><u>Corporate Complaints, Compliments and Comments Procedure:</u></p> <p>11.1 (c) We will appoint a Responding Officer to look into your complaint. This will usually be a senior manager from the service you are complaining about or the Housing Complaints Response Officer.</p> <p>11.1 (j) If your complaint is about the senior manager of the service concerned we may ask a senior manager from another service to look into your complaint. If your complaint is about the Housing Complaints Response Officer, we may ask their line manager to look into your complaint. Where appropriate we will investigate your complaint at stage 2 of the corporate complaints procedure. This will depend on the nature of your complaint.</p>		
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Completed 15/03/2024

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