

Compliance Self-assessment against the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code 2023

1	Definition of a complaint	YES	NO	Evidence relied upon/Remedial Action
	<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>	✓		Included in Board approved policy (Sept 2020)
	Does the policy have exclusions where a complaint will not be considered?	✓		Point 2.1 of our complaints policy offers the reasonable circumstances why we wouldn't consider a complaint.
	Are these exclusions reasonable and fair to residents?	✓		Point 2.1 of our complaints policy offers the reasonable circumstances why we wouldn't consider a complaint.
2	Accessibility	YES	NO	Evidence relied upon/Remedial Action
	Are multiple accessibility routes available for residents to make a complaint?	✓		Our complaint policy is available on our website. paper copies, large print and Easy Read versions are also available as requested. Points 4.2 - 5 of our complaints policy details the number of stages and outlines what will happen at each stage.
	Is the complaints policy and procedure available online?	✓		The complaint policy is on the company website, the process is not on the website
	Do we have a reasonable adjustments policy?	✓		<p>Reference is made to the Equality Act 2010 in point 8 of our complaints policy.</p> <p><i>Action: Draft, consult on and implement a reasonable adjustments policy and associated</i></p>

				<i>training for complaint handlers. Action: Publicise reasonable adjustments policy and include in complaints policy.</i>
	Do we regularly advise residents about our complaints process?	✓		Information is available on our website and we provide paper versions on request.
3	Complaints team and process	YES	NO	Evidence relied upon/Remedial Action
	Is there a complaint officer or equivalent in post?	✓		Customer Services Manager
	Does the complaint officer have autonomy to resolve complaints?	✓		Resources and training are available. Potential conflicts of interest are considered by the Customer Services Manager when a complaint is passed to a colleague for investigation
	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?			N/A
	Is any third stage optional for residents?			N/A
	Does the final stage response set out residents' right to refer the matter to the Housing Ombudsman Service?	✓		Policy/Process sets out that if the customer remains unhappy with the response at stage 2 they can go the Ombudsman, this is also provided in the standard response details sent to all complainants
	Do we keep a record of complaint correspondence including correspondence from the resident?	✓		Are these given unique reference numbers ?
	At what stage are most complaints resolved?	✓		Stage 1
4	Communication	YES	NO	Evidence relied upon/Remedial Action

Are residents kept informed and updated during the complaints process?	✓		Complaint investigators are expected to contact the customer to discuss the complaint and agree next steps including how they will communicate with the customer.
Are residents informed of the landlord's position and given a chance to respond and challenge any area of dispute before the final decision?	✓		This is covered in points 4.3 – 4.5 of the complaints policy.
Are all complaints acknowledged and logged within five days?	✓		The Code requires logging and ack within 5 working days
Are residents advised of how to escalate at the end of each stage?	✓		
What proportion of complaints are resolved at stage one?	✓		82% (16% remain open at time of assessment)
What proportion of complaints are resolved at stage two?	✓		2%
<p>What proportion of complaint responses are sent within Code timescales?</p> <p>Stage one Stage one (with extension)</p> <p>Stage two Stage two (with extension)</p>			<p>Stage one decision – 10 working days from receipt of complaint – if this is not possible, an explanation and a date by when the stage one response should be received. This should not exceed a further 10 days without good reason 99% RESPONDED WITHIN 10 DAYS</p> <p>Stage two response – 20 working days from request to escalate – if this is not possible 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 100% RESPONDED WITHIN 20 DAYS</p>
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	✓		100%
5	Cooperation with Housing Ombudsman Service	YES	NO	Evidence relied upon/Remedial Action
	Were all requests for evidence responded to within 15 days?			No complaints proceeding to the Ombudsman in the past year
	Where the timescale was extended did we keep the Ombudsman informed?			N/A
6	Fairness in complaint handling	YES	NO	Evidence relied upon/Remedial Action
	Are residents able to complain via a representative throughout?	✓		Policy - If you cannot make a complaint yourself we can accept a complaint from someone you have appointed such as a friend, relative, advocate, appointed deputy or legal representative.
	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?			3 complaints were not upheld as a failure in service could not be identified.
	Did we explain our decision to the resident?	✓		
7	Outcomes and remedies	YES	NO	Evidence relied upon/Remedial Action
	Where something has gone wrong are we taking appropriate steps to put things right?	✓		Actions have been taken to rectify the issue and in some cases compensation has been made to the tenant for inconvenience caused following the loss of service.

8	Continuous learning and improvement	YES	NO	Evidence relied upon/Remedial Action
	What improvements have we made as a result of learning from complaints?	✓		<p>Complaints handling has been integrated into our Housing management system to improve communication and response times.</p> <p>Quality team have been appointed in the repairs service to investigate and monitor repairs quality and service delivery.</p> <p>Tenants have had a greater involvement in complaints handling with the appointment of a dedicated tenant representative.</p>
	How do we share these lessons with: a) residents? b) the board? c) In the Annual Report?	✓		<p>Voices together and website share complaints data as well as the annual report.</p> <p>Board have an annual report detailing complaints as well as customer panel and inclusion committee.</p>
	Has the Code made a difference to how we respond to complaints?	✓		
	What changes have we made?	✓		Review against code prompts actions to improve service and policy where gaps are highlighted through self assessment.