

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>	The newly drafted Housing Complaints and Compliments Policy includes a definition which is closely aligned to the definition provided by the Housing Ombudsman.	
	Does the policy have exclusions where a complaint will not be considered?	Yes.	
	<p>Are these exclusions reasonable and fair to residents?</p> <p>Evidence relied upon</p>	Yes.	
2	Accessibility		
	Are multiple accessibility routes available for residents to make a complaint?	Yes. Stated in policy.	

	Is the complaints policy and procedure available online?	Yes.	
	Do we have a reasonable adjustments policy?	There is a generic easy read version which will need to be reviewed.	
	Do we regularly advise residents about our complaints process?	The new Housing Complaints and Compliments Policy will need to be circulated to all tenants.	
3	Complaints team and process		
	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.	
	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?	Yes.	
	Do we keep a record of complaint correspondence including correspondence from the resident?	Yes.	
	At what stage are most complaints resolved?	Stage One	

4	Communication		
	Are residents kept informed and updated during the complaints process?	Yes.	
	Are residents informed of the landlord's position and given a chance to respond and challenge any area of dispute before the final decision?	Yes.	
	Are all complaints acknowledged and logged within five days?	Yes.	
	Are residents advised of how to escalate at the end of each stage?	Yes.	
	What proportion of complaints are resolved at stage one?	Vast.	
	What proportion of complaints are resolved at stage two?	Very minimal.	
	<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) 	All. Holding Letter would be sent if there was ever an exception.	
	Where timescales have been extended did we have good reason?	Yes.	
	Where timescales have been extended did we keep the resident informed?	Yes.	

	What proportion of complaints do we resolve to residents' satisfaction		We do not formally collect this data however we always aim to resolve complaints to the tenant's satisfaction.
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?	Yes.	
	If advice was given, was this accurate and easy to understand?		We do not formally collect feedback with regard to this but always aim to provide advice that is accurate and easy to understand.
	How many cases did we refuse to escalate? What was the reason for the refusal?	n/a	
	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?	Yes.	
8	Continuous learning and improvement		
	What improvements have we made as a result of learning from complaints?	Examples include: introducing fortnightly housing update meetings with managers of more problematic properties; introducing spot checks by Property Services e.g. on gardeners etc.	
	How do we share these lessons with: a) residents? b) the board/governing body? c) In the Annual Report?		We certainly make efforts to learn from any complaints provided in relation to housing however we presently do not share information in relation to lessons and improvements. This is something that we could do in the future.
	Has the Code made a difference to how we respond to complaints?	After considering the Code, we have written a separate policy for housing related complaints.	
	What changes have we made?	Newly drafted Housing Complaints and Compliments Policy.	

		Letters sent to tenants following housing complaints will be amended to reflect suggestions made by the Ombudsman.	
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