



Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code: Self-assessment form. December 2020.

Compliance with the Complaint Handling Code				
1	Definition of a complaint	Yes	No	Comments
	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		Very similar wording is included in our current policy. We will use this to review.
	Does the policy have exclusions where a complaint will not be considered?	Yes		The current policy provides examples of exclusions. This is an area we will expand when we update the complaints policy.
	Are these exclusions reasonable and fair to residents? Evidence relied upon	Yes		We will be clearer on this when we update the policy.
2	Accessibility			
	Are multiple accessibility routes available for residents to make a complaint?	Yes		Complaints can be made via a number of routes currently and we are working on expanding our online offer and the next phase in development is the ability for a customer to share a complaint via their online account.
	Is the complaints policy and procedure available online?	Yes		Customers are able to make a complaint online and information around timescales for a

				response is available. We will publish the updated policy on our website as soon as it is available.
	Do we have a reasonable adjustments policy?		No	Information on this in relation to complaints handling will be included in the updated policy.
	Do we regularly advise residents about our complaints process?		No	Customers can make a complaint online and some information around timescales for a response is available. We are reviewing what information is available to our customers.
3	Complaints team and process			
	Is there a complaint officer or equivalent in post?		No	Complaints are dealt with at a departmental level and the process is managed by the Customer Connect Team.
	Does the complaint officer have autonomy to resolve complaints?	Yes		Complaints are investigated by a case manager who will seek a resolution.
	Does the complaint officer have authority to compel engagement from other departments to resolve disputes?	Yes		We always encourage cross departmental working to resolve a complaint.
	If there is a third stage to the complaints procedure are residents involved in the decision making?	Yes.		We currently have a tenant Non-executive Director on the panel at a stage 3 hearing. We will review.
	Is any third stage optional for residents?		No	This is currently part of our internal process and we are reviewing it.
	Does the final stage response set out residents' right to refer the matter to the Housing Ombudsman Service?	Yes		We share this with customers throughout the process.
	Do we keep a record of complaint correspondence including correspondence from the resident?	Yes		Correspondence is recorded and held on CX, our Housing Management system

	At what stage are most complaints resolved?	94% (105 of 112) of complaints have been resolved at Stage one so far this year (01.12.20).		
4	Communication			
	Are residents kept informed and updated during the complaints process?	Yes		The case manager is in regular contact with the customer throughout the complaint.
	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		Case managers are in contact with the customer throughout the complaint. The customer is provided with details of how to escalate the complaint throughout the process.
	Are all complaints acknowledged and logged within five days?	Yes		We acknowledge within 48 hours.
	Are residents advised of how to escalate at the end of each stage?	Yes		We include an escalation paragraph on all complaint outcome letters.
	What proportion of complaints are resolved at stage one?	94% (105 out of 112) of complaints have been resolved at Stage one so far this year (01.12.20).		
	What proportion of complaints are resolved at stage two?	4% (5) have been resolved at stage 2 so far this year (01.12.20)		
	What proportion of complaint responses are sent within Code timescales? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stage one <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Stage one (with extension) • Stage two <ul style="list-style-type: none"> b) Stage two (with extension) 	71% of all cases were resolved within 14 days (01.12.20). We are confident that the 7 cases that have escalated beyond stage one will have been responded to within 7 days. We will review how we can report on this information going forward.		
	Where timescales have been extended did we have good reason?	Yes		The case manager communicates with the customer and agrees the extension. We will review how we report on this going forward.
	Where timescales have been extended did we keep the resident informed?	Yes		The case manager communicates with the customer to agree an extension.

	What proportion of complaints do we resolve to residents' satisfaction	For the period April - Sept 20 87% of customers were satisfied with the handling of their complaint. 67% Satisfied with the outcome and 75% satisfied with communication. We will use feedback received to feed into the review.		
5	Cooperation with Housing Ombudsman Service			
	Were all requests for evidence responded to within 15 days?	Yes		
	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?	N/a		
	How many cases did we refuse to escalate? What was the reason for the refusal?	This isn't something we currently record, and we will review this going forward.		
	Did we explain our decision to the resident?	Yes		We would always communicate this with the customer.
7	Outcomes and remedies			
	Where something has gone wrong are we taking appropriate steps to put things right?	Yes		We will review this to ensure a consistent approach is taken.
8	Continuous learning and improvement			
	What improvements have we made as a result of learning from complaints?	Learning outcomes are identified as part of the complaint and fed into the process. We will review how we do this as part of the new process.		
	How do we share these lessons with:			

	<p>c) residents?</p> <p>d) the board/governing body?</p> <p>e) In the Annual Report?</p>	<p>We will review what we share with customers.</p> <p>We produce an annual report to our Board on complaints which covers volumes and underlying themes with complaints.</p> <p>We will include in our annual report to customers.</p>		
	<p>Has the Code made a difference to how we respond to complaints?</p>	<p>Yes</p>		<p>We will be using the code to inform our new process.</p>
	<p>What changes have we made?</p>	<p>We will review and share upon completion of the project.</p>		