

# Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code: Self-assessment form

Compliance with the Complaint Handling Code			
1	Definition of a complaint	Yes	No
	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>	√	
	Does the policy have exclusions where a complaint will not be considered?	√	
	Are these exclusions reasonable and fair to residents?  Evidence relied upon	Consultation with Resident Panels, Review of sector best practice and HOS guidance	
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?		Currently awaiting approval
	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?	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?	√	
	Do we keep a record of complaint correspondence including correspondence from the resident?	√	
	At what stage are most complaints resolved?	N/A Previously single stage process	

<b>4</b>	<b>Communication</b>		
	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?	Single stage process	
	What proportion of complaints are resolved at stage two?	<b>N/A</b> Previously single stage process	
	What proportion of complaint responses are sent within Code timescales?  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stage one Stage one (with extension)</li> <li>• Stage two Stage two (with extension)</li> </ul>	Our previous policy pre 1 January 2021 was a single stage policy (no stage 2). The response timescale was 15 working days. The new policy is aligned to the stages and timescales set out in the Code and we will report against the set criteria moving forward.	
	Where timescales have been extended did we have good reason?	√	
	Where timescales have been extended did we keep the resident informed?	In most instances	
	What proportion of complaints do we resolve to residents' satisfaction	<b>N/A</b>	We are currently reviewing the way we collate customer satisfaction across our services, which has impacted our reporting. We aim to have the new process in place in the early part of 2021.
<b>5</b>	<b>Cooperation with Housing Ombudsman Service</b>		
	Were all requests for evidence responded to within 15 days?		√ - extensions were agreed by the HOS
	Where the timescale was extended did we keep the Ombudsman informed?	√	
<b>6</b>	<b>Fairness in complaint handling</b>		
	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?	N/A – old policy was single stage process	
	Did we explain our decision to the resident?	N/A – see above	
<b>7</b>	<b>Outcomes and remedies</b>		
	Where something has gone wrong are we taking appropriate steps to put things right?	√	
<b>8</b>	<b>Continuous learning and improvement</b>		
	What improvements have we made as a result of learning from complaints?	Various improvements have taken place as reported to Resident Panels and Customer Services Committee	
	How do we share these lessons with:  a) residents?  b) the board/governing body?  c) In the Annual Report?	Shared with Resident Panels  Shared with Customer Services Committee  Shared with Board	Will be included in the next annual report
	Has the Code made a difference to how we respond to complaints?	√	
	What changes have we made?	Revised Policy, reviewed team structure and received Housing Ombudsman training.	