

# Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code: Self-assessment form

Compliance with the Complaint Handling Code			
<b>1</b>	<b>Definition of a complaint</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
	<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>		<p>No, there is a corporate definition of:</p> <p><i>An expression of dissatisfaction by one or more members of the public about the Council's action or lack of action or about the standard of a service, whether the action was taken or the service provided by the Council itself or a person or body acting on behalf of the Council.</i></p> <p>(Local Government Ombudsman)</p>
	Does the policy have exclusions where a complaint will not be considered?	<b>No</b>	
	<p>Are these exclusions reasonable and fair to residents?</p> <p>Evidence relied upon</p>		
<b>2</b>	<b>Accessibility</b>		
	Are multiple accessibility routes available for residents to make a complaint?	<b>Yes</b>	
	Is the complaints policy and procedure available online?	<b>Yes</b>	
	Do we have a reasonable adjustments policy?	<b>Yes</b>	
	Do we regularly advise residents about our complaints process?		<b>No</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>Complaints team and process</b>		

	Is there a complaint officer or equivalent in post?	<b>Yes</b>	
	Does the complaint officer have autonomy to resolve complaints?		<b>No - always referred to management through complaints process</b>
	Does the complaint officer have authority to compel engagement from other departments to resolve disputes?	<b>Yes</b>	
	If there is a third stage to the complaints procedure are residents involved in the decision making?		<b>No - we do not currently have a three-stage process</b>
	Is any third stage optional for residents?		<b>N/A</b>
	Does the final stage response set out residents' right to refer the matter to the Housing Ombudsman Service?	<b>Yes</b>	
	Do we keep a record of complaint correspondence including correspondence from the resident?	<b>Yes</b>	<b>To be reviewed</b>
	At what stage are most complaints resolved?	<b>Stage 1</b>	<b>To be reviewed</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>Communication</b>		
	Are residents kept informed and updated during the complaints process?	<b>No</b>	New processes being implemented - residents have been asked to be involved in a consultation to shape new policy
	Are residents informed of the landlord's position and given a chance to respond and challenge any area of dispute before the final decision?	<b>No</b>	New processes being implemented - residents have been asked to be involved in a consultation to shape new policy
	Are all complaints acknowledged and logged within five days?	<b>Yes</b>	
	Are residents advised of how to escalate at the end of each stage?	<b>Yes</b>	

	What proportion of complaints are resolved at stage one?		Research being done
	What proportion of complaints are resolved at stage two?		Research being done
	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>	<b>N/A</b>	Aligning with corporate timescales Stage 1 – 10 working days Stage 2 – 20 working days
	Where timescales have been extended did we have good reason?		No - extension requests under review and process to be updated after consultation with residents and staff
	Where timescales have been extended did we keep the resident informed?		No - extension requests under review and process to be updated after consultation with residents and staff
	What proportion of complaints do we resolve to residents' satisfaction		Not currently monitored. Survey to be sent out to complainants a week or so after stage response. Policy to be updated after staff consultation
<b>5</b>	<b>Cooperation with Housing Ombudsman Service</b>		
	Were all requests for evidence responded to within 10 days?	<b>Yes</b>	
	Where the timescale was extended did we keep the Ombudsman informed?	<b>Yes</b>	
<b>6</b>	<b>Fairness in complaint handling</b>		
	Are residents able to complain via a representative throughout?	<b>Yes - to be included in new policy. Would expect to have confirmation in writing from person giving consent.</b>	

	If advice was given, was this accurate and easy to understand?	<b>Inconsistent</b>	A highlighted training requirement
	How many cases did we refuse to escalate?  What was the reason for the refusal?	<b>None</b>	
	Did we explain our decision to the resident?	<b>N/A</b>	
<b>7</b>	<b>Outcomes and remedies</b>		
	Where something has gone wrong are we taking appropriate steps to put things right?	<b>Yes - recommendations to be made to be a standing item on all team meeting agendas (sharing good practice, policy review and learning)</b>	
<b>8</b>	<b>Continuous learning and improvement</b>		
	What improvements have we made as a result of learning from complaints?	<b>Ongoing with a commitment to continually review current policy and practice where applicable.</b>	
	How do we share these lessons with:  a) residents?  b) the board/governing body?  c) in the Annual Report?	<b>A) Under review subject to our future commitments to engage with tenants  B) N/A  C)Annual report in future will include lessons learnt and any changes made as a result of complaints</b>	
	Has the Code made a difference to how we respond to complaints?	<b>Yes</b>	

	<p>What changes have we made?</p>	<p><b>Review and change to policy under way with Action Plan to monitor progress and implementation to reflect the HO Code of Guidance and the expectations within the Housing White Paper.</b></p> <p><b>Policy to include review timeframe and to be updated accordingly.</b></p> <p><b>Identified staff training.</b></p> <p><b>Allocated a resolutions officer for the service.</b></p> <p><b>Engagement with previous complainants to influence our policy review.</b></p> <p><b>Training on new processes began to be rolled out in early 2021.</b></p>	
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Updated : 6<sup>th</sup> August 2021