

# 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>	X	
	Does the policy have exclusions where a complaint will not be considered?	X	
	Are these exclusions reasonable and fair to residents?  <i>We have exclusions included in the Complaints policy in the section titled "Vexatious or unreasonable complaints"</i>  <i>No complaints were excluded in the year of 2019-2020</i>	X	
2	Accessibility		
	Are multiple accessibility routes available for residents to make a complaint?	X	
	Is the complaints policy and procedure available online?	X	
	Do we have a reasonable adjustments policy?	X	
	Do we regularly advise residents about our complaints process? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› <i>Customers informed of policy at move in</i></li> <li>› <i>Posters displayed in services</i></li> <li>› <i>Suggestion / complaints boxes provided</i></li> </ul> <i>To check with services these are all in place</i>	X	
3	Complaints team and process		
	Is there a complaint officer or equivalent in post?	X	
	Does the complaint officer have autonomy to resolve complaints?	X	
	Does the complaint officer have authority to compel engagement from other departments to resolve disputes?	X	

	If there is a third stage to the complaints procedure are residents involved in the decision making?		X
	Is any third stage optional for residents?		X
	Does the final stage response set out residents' right to refer the matter to the Housing Ombudsman Service?	X	
	Do we keep a record of complaint correspondence including correspondence from the resident?	X	
	At what stage are most complaints resolved?	<b>Stage 1</b>	
<b>4</b>	<b>Communication</b>		
	Are residents kept informed and updated during the complaints process?	X	
	Are residents informed of the landlord's position and given a chance to respond and challenge any area of dispute before the final decision?	X	
	Are all complaints acknowledged and logged within five days?	X	
	Are residents advised of how to escalate at the end of each stage?	X	
	What proportion of complaints are resolved at stage one?	<b>80%</b>	
	What proportion of complaints are resolved at stage two?	<b>20%</b>	
	What proportion of complaint responses are sent within Code timescales?  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› <b>Stage one – 78%</b>  <b>Stage one (with extension) – 78%</b></li> <li>› <b>Stage two – 100%</b>  <b>Stage two (with extension) – 100%</b></li> </ul>		
	Where timescales have been extended did we have good reason?	X	
	Where timescales have been extended did we keep the resident informed?	X	
	What proportion of complaints do we resolve to residents' satisfaction	<b>70%</b>	
<b>5</b>	<b>Cooperation with Housing Ombudsman Service</b>		
	Were all requests for evidence responded to within 15 days?	<b>N/A</b>	
	Where the timescale was extended did we keep the Ombudsman informed?	<b>N/A</b>	
<b>6</b>	<b>Fairness in complaint handling</b>		
	Are residents able to complain via a representative throughout?	X	
	If advice was given, was this accurate and easy to understand?	X	
	How many cases did we refuse to escalate? What was the reason for the refusal?	<b>3</b>	

	<i>It was decided that a stage 2 investigation was not necessary all evidence was looked at in the stage 1 investigation and it was deemed that the investigation was conducted without bias.</i>		
	Did we explain our decision to the resident?	X	
<b>7</b>	<b>Outcomes and remedies</b>		
	Where something has gone wrong are we taking appropriate steps to put things right?	X	
<b>8</b>	<b>Continuous learning and improvement</b>		
	What improvements have we made as a result of learning from complaints?  › <i>Increased complaints training with staff to educate on complaints handling and the value of complaints – to view complaints as a positive improvement process.</i>	X	
	How do we share these lessons with:  a) residents?  b) the board/governing body?  c) In the Annual Report?	N/A	
	Has the Code made a difference to how we respond to complaints?	X	
	What changes have we made? <b>1. Inform customers they can refer to the Ombudsman at any stage of the complaint.</b> <b>2. More in-depth monthly monitoring of stage 1 complaints to ensure high standard of investigation and correspondence.</b> <b>3. Report learning from complaints in our Annual report</b> <b>4. Following Housing Ombudsman code webinar course we have updated our definition of complaint and reviewed our policy and procedure.</b>	X	