

## 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>	<p>Yes we have adopted this definition. We allow non-residents access to our complaints process but make it clear they cannot refer the matter to the ombudsman</p>	
	<p>Does the policy have exclusions where a complaint will not be considered?</p>	<p>Yes if repeated or frivolous, or over 6 months. Issues raised in these instances will not be dismissed but will not be recorded as complaints</p>	
	<p>Are these exclusions reasonable and fair to residents?</p> <p>Evidence relied upon</p>	<p>The exclusions are in line with best practice and this self-assessment has been undertaken in conjunction with the chair of our Residents' Panel.</p>	

<b>2</b>	<b>Accessibility</b>		
	Are multiple accessibility routes available for residents to make a complaint?	Yes, we accept complaints by a variety of methods including phone, email, form, letter, in person or via third party	
	Is the complaints policy and procedure available online?	Yes	
	Do we have a reasonable adjustments policy?		No, however one is being developed and will be available in the New Year
	Do we regularly advise residents about our complaints process?	Yes through social media, residents' magazine and in our written and oral communication	
<b>3</b>	<b>Complaints team and process</b>		
	Is there a complaint officer or equivalent in post?	Yes- the Customer Experience Manager	
	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?		There is no third stage however our Residents' Panel are able to act as a designated person
	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?	Yes- this is included on the final stage response as well as our policy and guide to complaints	
	Do we keep a record of complaint correspondence including correspondence from the resident?	Yes	

	At what stage are most complaints resolved?	Informal (first stage response)	
<b>4</b>	<b>Communication</b>		
	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- residents are advised of the outcome of the investigation prior to being written to formally	
	Are all complaints acknowledged and logged within five days?	Yes	
	Are residents advised of how to escalate at the end of each stage?	Yes- in writing (e-mail or letter)	
	What proportion of complaints are resolved at stage one?	2019/20 – 100% Up to Q2 20/21 – 100%	*calculated on those not escalated.
	What proportion of complaints are resolved at stage two?	2019/20 -100% Up to Q2 20/21 – 100%	*calculated on those not escalated.
	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>	Date for 2019/20  75% 25% 100%	
	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	62% replied they were satisfied with outcome. Those dissatisfied rarely escalated further showing customer may not be happy but understood why that was the outcome.	
<b>5</b>	<b>Cooperation with Housing Ombudsman Service</b>		
	Were all requests for evidence responded to within 15 days?	Yes, except for where an extension was requested	
	Where the timescale was extended did we keep the Ombudsman informed?	Yes	
<b>6</b>	<b>Fairness in complaint handling</b>		
	Are residents able to complain via a representative throughout?	Yes	
	If advice was given, was this accurate and easy to understand?	Yes	
	How many cases did we refuse to escalate?  What was the reason for the refusal?	0	
	Did we explain our decision to the resident?	n/a	
<b>7</b>	<b>Outcomes and remedies</b>		
	Where something has gone wrong are we taking appropriate steps to put things right?	Yes	
<b>8</b>	<b>Continuous learning and improvement</b>		
	What improvements have we made as a result of learning from complaints?	Death of tenant policy re written and made clearer Pet policy revised and taken to Residents' Panel. Contractor's charter updated following feedback from residents on contractors.	
	How do we share these lessons with:		



		<p>It has led to a review of our complaints' policy which is currently being undertaken and will be presented to our board for approval in the New Year.</p> <p>We will then issue refresher training for all employees and ensure the process is clear and understood. There will be ongoing training for all staff to ensure the focus and momentum is maintained at all times.</p>	
	<p>What changes have we made?</p>	<p>We will introduce a reasonable adjustments policy and ensure the recording and monitoring of complaints is included in our digital transformation project that is starting shortly. This will ensure employees have the best software available to them to monitor and respond to complaints effectively.</p>	

