

The Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code Appendix 1

Self-Assessment

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 We are a small organisation with the housing office on site of the majority of our properties; we are in close contact with our tenants and complaints are made within a short space of time following service failure. We will not accept complaints where the complainant's behaviour is threatening or abusive or where the same complaint has been made with no new information.	✓	
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? Equality and Diversity Policy – March 2019. Section 6 Provision of housing and services <i>We will use our community-based location to understand each individual customer's needs and work with them to support them to access the services and opportunities available to them to improve their lives. This will include, where possible and practicable, providing choice, information and communication appropriate to the diverse needs of our tenants</i>	✓	

	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?		✓
	Is any third stage optional for residents?		✓
	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 dealt with? Stage one		
4	Communication		
	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 5 days?	✓	
	Are residents advised of how to escalate at the end of each stage?	✓	
	What proportion of complaints are resolved at stage one?	3/3 (100%)	
	What proportion of complaints are resolved at stage two?	N/A	
	What proportion of complaints responses are sent within Code timescales?		

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stage one Stage one (with extension) Stage two Stage two (with extension) 	2/3 (67%)	
	Where timescales have been extended did we have good reason?	✓	
	What proportion of complaints do we resolve to residents' satisfaction?	2/3 (67%)	
5	Cooperation with Housing Ombudsman Service – not applicable		
	Were all request of evidence responded to within 15 days?		
	Where the timescale was extended did we keep the Ombudsman informed?		
6	Fairness in complaint handling		
	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?	1 (33%)	
	What was the reason for the refusal? Abusive emails and letters received towards staff and no new evidence provided		
	Did we explain our decision to the resident?	✓	
7	Outcomes and remedies		
	Where something has gone wrong are we taking appropriate steps to put things right?	✓	
8	Continuous learning and improvement		
	What improvements have we made as a result of learning from complaints?		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Changes to the way we offer accommodation – confirm offer in writing in all cases regardless of initial contact (telephone, email) 		

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure we confirm in writing where there has been failed contact with the tenant via other methods in relation to repairs • Staff training as a result of an ASB complaint not being dealt with correctly. 		
	<p>How do we share these lessons with:</p> <p>a) Residents?</p> <p>Annual report – number and reason for service complaint reported but not lessons on resolution Response to annual survey – “You said, we did”</p> <p>b) The board/governing body?</p> <p>Complaints are reported quarterly to the Board as part of the Annual Plan performance report. The Housing Ombudsman annual report is discussed at Board annually.</p> <p>c) In the Annual Report?</p> <p>Annual report – number and reason for service complaint reported but not lessons on resolution Response to annual survey – “You said, we did”</p>		
	<p>Has the Code made a difference to how we respond to complaints?</p>	<p>✓</p>	
	<p>What changes have we made?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adding Service Complaints feedback to the tenants quarterly newsletter with the ASB and concerns feedback • Removed vexatious from the Complaint Policy • Devised an Unacceptable Behaviour Policy and use of Housing Ombudsman Advice Cards • Add resolution of complaints to Annual Report 		