

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 <i>Some complaints may be received which fall beyond the scope of our responsibilities and abilities, ie; a request for a service which the Group does not perform. In these circumstances we will aim to provide customers with the relevant information or signpost to other agencies who may be able to assist, such as Cornwall Council.</i>	√	
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?	√	
	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? <i>This will be included in the revised Policy from 01.04.21.</i>		√
	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 resolved? Stage 1 (86%) in 2019/20	Stage 1	
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 five days?	√	
	Are residents advised of how to escalate at the end of each stage?	√	
	What proportion of complaints are resolved at stage one? 79 of the 92 complaints received were resolved at Stage 1	86%	
	What proportion of complaints are resolved at stage two? 4 complaints progressed and were resolved at Stage 2. 2 complaints progressed to Stage 3 (2%) 7 complaints received in the year were withdrawn (8%)	4%	
	What proportion of complaint responses are sent within Code timescales? (HOS timeframes are 10 days at Stage 1, 20 days at Stage 2 and 20 days at Stage 3) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stage one (63 out of 79 were within the 10 days) Stage one (with extension) (16 were outside 10 days) Stage two (4 of the 6 complaints reviewed at Stage 2 were completed within Stage 2) Stage two (with extension) (2 complaints reviewed at stage 2 were outside 20 days) 	80% 20% 67.67% 33.3%	
	Where timescales have been extended did we have good reason?	√	
	Where timescales have been extended did we keep the resident informed?	√	
	What proportion of complaints do we resolve to residents' satisfaction	55%	
5	Cooperation with Housing Ombudsman Service		
	Were all requests for evidence responded to within 15 days?	√	
	Where the timescale was extended did we keep the Ombudsman informed?	n/a	
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?	n/a	
	How many cases did we refuse to escalate? None		
	What was the reason for the refusal?		

	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? 9 improvements were made during 2019/20 as reported to customers in the Autumn Customer newsletter.		
	How do we share these lessons with: a) residents? Customer newsletter annually and Customer Voice quarterly b) the board/governing body? Quarterly and Annual reports. c) In the Annual Report? Included within the Annual Report to customers	Yes Yes Yes	
	Has the Code made a difference to how we respond to complaints?	√	
	What changes have we made? None, but changes will follow in the Policy review during the fourth quarter of 2020/21.		