

Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code: Self-assessment form – January to December 2021

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>	Yes 3.1	
	Does the policy have exclusions where a complaint will not be considered?	Yes 3.8	
	Are these exclusions reasonable and fair to residents? Evidence relied upon – *The policy was approved by Orwell’s Resident task & finishing group	Yes *	
2	Accessibility		
	Are multiple accessibility routes available for residents to make a complaint? *phone, face to face, website, letter, email & via social media	Yes *	
	Is the complaints policy and procedure available online? *Easy read & assessable version also available	Yes *	
	Do we have a reasonable adjustments policy? *We do not have a separate policy but it is included in our Equality policy	Yes *	
	Do we regularly advise residents about our complaints process? E-news, Tenants annual reports, posters are displayed in supported schemes, website and via Social Media	Yes *	
3	Complaints Team and Process		
	Is there a complaint officer or equivalent in post?	Yes	
	Does the complaint officer have autonomy to resolve complaints? *However, the officer does manage the procedure and ensures complaints are fully responded to within our timeframes and will challenge responses if considered necessary.	No*	

	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? *Designated residents panel offered as part of the Designated Person/Panel	No *	
	Is any third stage optional for residents?	No	
	Does the final stage response set out residents' right to refer the matter to the Housing Ombudsman Service?	Yes	
	Do we keep a record of complaint correspondence including correspondence from the resident?	Yes	
	At what stage are most complaints resolved?	1	
4	Communication		
	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	
	Are all complaints acknowledged and logged within five days?	Yes	
	Are residents advised of how to escalate at the end of each stage?	Yes	
	What proportion of complaints are resolved at stage one?	83.33%	
	What proportion of complaints are resolved at stage two?	16.67%	
	What proportion of complaint responses are sent within Code timescales? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stage one Stage one (with extension) • Stage two Stage two (with extension) 	90% 10% 100% 0%	
	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? 1) satisfied with the complaints process and 2) with the outcome	1)53.5% 2)46.5%	
5	Co-operation with Housing Ombudsman Service		
	Were all requests for evidence responded to within 15 days?	N/A	
	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?	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? 1 x Complainant did not engage – unable to conclude 1 x Escalated as a disrepair claim	2	
	Did we explain our decision to the resident?	Yes	
7	Outcomes and Remedies		
	Where something has gone wrong are we taking appropriate steps to put things right?	Yes	
8	Continuous Learning and Improvement		
	What improvements have we made as a result of learning from complaints? * Improvement/change to current procedure Installed key safe to communal area to avoid delays with works Damp specialist report at initial stage to identify issues within the property Improved communication, verbally and written in various areas of the business and external contractors Improved monitoring procedure for large projects Improved communication and consultation for planned tree works Improved recording to evidence communication/actions in supported schemes Purchasing better quality materials from local suppliers rather than cheap option on-line Improved communication and planning with Tenants in supported schemes (Please see appendix 6 for more details)	See details*	
	How do we share these lessons with: a) residents? E-News & Annual Report to Tenants	Yes	

	<p>b) the board/governing body? Annual review of complaints</p> <p>c) In the Annual Report? Yes, in the Annual Report to Tenants</p>		
	<p>Has the Code made a difference to how we respond to complaints?</p>	<p>Yes</p>	
	<p>What changes have we made? *Introduction of an acknowledgment letter within 5 days, reduced our 3-stage procedure to only 2, extended stage 2 response timescale from 10 calendar days to 20 calendar days. Introduced a tenancy panel as part of our designated person/panel. Closure of complaints and offering escalation once response and action plan provided, instead of waiting for works to be completed which can cause delays with closure.</p>	<p>Please see *</p>	