

# 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?  Evidence relied upon  <i>There are some complaints that we will not usually investigate. This is included in our Complaints Policy and are as follows:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>complaints about something that happened more than twelve months ago</i></li> <li>• <i>complaints about something outside of our control (for example, we cannot deal with complaints about other organisations but may be able to give you advice about who you should complaint to)</i></li> <li>• <i>matters that are already the subject of legal action</i></li> <li>• <i>Personnel/staffing matters related to a Local Space employee</i></li> <li>• <i>Complaints concerning the content of an approved policy.</i></li> </ul>	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?	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 complaint's 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?  <i>Most are resolved at Stage One</i>		

<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?  <i>19/20 - 19 Stage One complaints</i> <i>20/21 – so far this year we have received 7 Stage One complaints</i>		
	What proportion of complaints are resolved at stage two?  <i>19/20 – no complaints escalated to Stage Two</i> <i>20/21 – so far this year no complaints have escalated to Stage Two</i>		
	What proportion of complaint responses are sent within Code timescales?  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Stage one <i>19/20 was 89% (18 out of 20 Stage One complaints)</i> <i>20/21 so far 86% (6 out of 7 Stage One complaints)</i></li> <li>Stage one (with extension) <i>n/a</i></li> <li>Stage two <i>n/a</i></li> <li>Stage two (with extension) <i>n/a</i></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  <i>Very few formal complaints (i.e., at least Stage 1) have been made, meaning we have only received 10 satisfaction survey results since April 2018. Of these 10, 3 customers reported being satisfied with the outcome of their complaint. Note that none of our complaints have recently escalated to Stage 2.</i>		
<b>5</b>	<b>Cooperation with Housing Ombudsman Service</b>		
	Were all requests for evidence responded to within 15 days?	X	
	Where the timescale was extended did we keep the Ombudsman informed?	X	
<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?  <i>We have not refused to escalate any complaints received.</i>  What was the reason for the refusal?  <i>n/a</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>		
	<p>What improvements have we made as a result of learning from complaints?</p> <p><i>Recent examples include:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Changed process to ensure meter readings are taken throughout the void period and that any debt is cleared before the customer moves back into their home.</i></li> <li>• <i>Discussions with staff to ensure they take ownership straight away when customers contact us with an urgent issue.</i></li> </ul>		
	<p>How do we share these lessons with:</p> <p>a) residents? b) the board/governing body? c) In the Annual Report?</p> <p><i>We will use our customer newsletters and annual report to let customers know about our complaints approach, what lessons we have learnt, and how we have introduced improvements as a result of feedback and complaints. We provide updates on these areas to our Board on an ad hoc basis.</i></p>		
	Has the Code made a difference to how we respond to complaints?	X	
	<p>What changes have we made?</p> <p><i>We have updated our policy – clarifying definition, process, and identified additional ways to share lessons learnt with customers and our Board.</i></p>		