

Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code: Empower Self-assessment form (August 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>		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	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 complaints 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? First stage		
4	Communication		

	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?	95%	
	What proportion of complaints are resolved at stage two?	5%	
	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) 	100% for all	
	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	96%	
5	Cooperation 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?		
6	Fairness in complaint handling		
	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? All cases have been resolved without the need to escalate What was the reason for the refusal?	None	
	Did we explain our decision to the resident?	N/A	
7	Outcomes and remedies		
	Where something has gone wrong are we taking appropriate steps to put things right?	X	
8	Continuous learning and improvement		
	What improvements have we made as a result of learning from complaints? Data to be compiled for YTD 2021 and lessons learnt to be shared on website.		

	<p>How do we share these lessons with:</p> <p>a) residents? Feedback provided to tenants/their representatives after a complaint has been resolved.</p> <p>b) the board/governing body? Will be incorporated into wider governance review 2021.</p> <p>c) In the Annual Report? Within 2021/22 Annual report, plans are in place to include a section on complaints trends and lessons learnt.</p>		
	<p>Has the Code made a difference to how we respond to complaints? Sharpened approach to complaints and ensured Policy reviewed as a priority.</p>	X	
	<p>What changes have we made?</p> <p>Current Complaints Procedure is under review to ensure compliance with Complaints Handling Code and Regulatory requirements. To be completed August 2021 subject to subsequent Board approval.</p>		