

Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code: Self-assessment form – 2019/2020

1	Definition of a complaint	Yes	No	Comments
	<p>Does the complaints process use the following definition of a complaint?</p> <p><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></p>	Yes		
	Does the policy have exclusions where a complaint will not be considered?	Yes		
	<p>Are these exclusions reasonable and fair to residents?</p> <p>Evidence relied upon</p>	Yes		<p>Requires approval from Head of Customer Experience & Assurance to exclude in line with Customer Complaints and Comments Policy Customer is advised in writing of reasons for not considering complaint</p>
2	Accessibility			
	Are multiple accessibility routes available for residents to make a complaint?	Yes		
	Is the complaints policy and procedure available online?	Yes		
	Do we have a reasonable adjustments policy?	Yes		

	Do we regularly advise residents about our complaints process?	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?	Yes		
	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?	Yes		
	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?	N/A	N/A	The majority of complaints are resolved at Stage 1 of the Customer Complaints and Comments Policy
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?	N/A	N/A	2019/20 – 97.75%
	What proportion of complaints are resolved at stage two?	N/A	N/A	2019/20 – 100%

	<p>What proportion of complaint responses are sent within Code timescales?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stage one Stage one (with extension) • Stage two Stage two (with extension) 	N/A	N/A	<p>2019/20 – 98.7%</p> <p>2019/20 – 1.3%</p> <p>2019/20 – 100%</p>
	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	N/A	N/A	2019/20 - 57.6%
5	Cooperation with Housing Ombudsman Service			
	Were all requests for evidence responded to within 15 days?	Yes		
	Where the timescale was extended did we keep the Ombudsman informed?	N/A		Where timescales were extended in agreement with the Housing Ombudsman, regular communication with the Housing Ombudsman's office is continued
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?			3 cases did not escalate through the process
	What was the reason for the refusal?			Issues raised did not fall within the Customer

				Complaints and Comments Policy and another was beyond the time to request an escalation
	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?			Lessons learnt are at an individual level, however trends are also identified and have influenced changes in practice, in amendments to policy's and improving our methods of communication i.e. website contact information
	How do we share these lessons with: a) Residents? b) The Board/Governing body?			We would include any lessons learned in a response to the resident. There has been information in the "In Touch" magazine about "You Said, We Did" All complaint reports are presented to the Executive Management Team, and lesson learned are reported. Quarterly reporting to Customer Focus Committee

	c) In the Annual Report?			<p>includes sharing lessons learned by example</p> <p>Annual Complaints Reporting to Customer Focus Committee includes lessons learned, also the Plymouth Community Homes Annual Report includes information</p>
	Has the Code made a difference to how we respond to complaints?	Yes		
	What changes have we made?			<p>The single definition of a complaint has been reflected within the Customer Complaints and Comments policy (2020)</p> <p>Sharing lessons learned from complaints is now shared with the Plymouth Community Homes board, as well as the Customer Focus Committee. Although information has been shared with residents using our magazine, this will be further enhanced and the website will include more regular information</p>