

Section 1: Definition of a complaint

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
1.2	A complaint must be defined as: <i>expression of dissatisfaction, however made, about the standard of service, actions or lack of action by the landlord, its own staff, or those acting on its behalf, affecting a resident or</i>	Yes	Detailed within Housing Plus Group Complaints & Feedback Policy , point 3.	
1.3	A resident does not have to use the word 'complaint' for it to be treated as such. Whenever a resident expresses dissatisfaction landlords must give them the choice to make complaint. A complaint that is submitted via a third party or representative must be handled in line with the landlord's complaints policy.	Yes	Detailed within Housing Plus Group Complaints & Feedback Policy , point 7.	
1.4	Landlords must recognise the difference between a service request and a complaint. This must be set out in their complaints policy. A service request is a request from a resident to the landlord requiring action to be taken to put something right. Service requests	Yes	Detailed within Housing Plus Group Complaints & Feedback Policy , point 3.	

	are not complaints, but must be recorded, monitored and reviewed regularly.			
1.5	A complaint must be raised when the resident expresses dissatisfaction with the response to their service request, even if the handling of the service request remains ongoing. Landlords must not stop their efforts to address the service request if the resident complains.	Yes	Detailed within Housing Plus Group Complaints & Feedback Policy , point 3.	

An expression of dissatisfaction with services made through a survey is not defined as a complaint, though

1.6

Section 2: Exclusions

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
2.1	Landlords must accept a complaint unless there is			

2.3	Landlords must accept complaints referred to them within 12 months of the issue occurring or the resident becoming aware of the issue, unless they are excluded on other grounds. Landlords must consider whether to apply discretion to accept complaints made outside this time limit where there are good reasons to do so.	Yes	Detailed within Housing Plus Group Complaints & Feedback Policy , point 8.	
2.4	If a landlord decides not to accept a complaint, an explanation must be provided to the resident setting out the reasons why the matter is not suitable for the complaints process and the right to take that decision to the Ombudsman. If the Ombudsman does not agree that the exclusion has been fairly applied, the Ombudsman may tell the landlord to take on the complaint. Landlords must not take a blanket approach to	Yes	Detailed within Housing Plus Group Complaints & Feedback Policy , point 8.	All exclusion letters contain details how to escalate to the Housing Ombudsman

2.5

3.4 Landlords must make their complaint policy available in a clear and accessible format for all residents. This will detail the two stage process, what will happen at each stage, and the timeframes for responding. The policy must also be published on the

Section 4: Complaint Handling Staff

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
4.1	Landlords must have a person or team assigned to take responsibility for complaint handling, including liaison with the Ombudsman and ensuring complaints are reported to the governing body (or equivalent). This Code will refer to that person or team as the 'complaints officer'. This role may be in addition to other duties.	Yes	<p>A new Customer Advocacy Team is in place which will handle all complaints at both stages 1 & 2.</p> <p>This includes a dedicated officer to liaise with the Housing Ombudsman.</p> <p>Complaints are reported to the Board as part of the KPI reports and in-depth complaints report every six months (at half year and annual report).</p>	

important that complaints are seen as a core service and must be resourced to handle complaints effectively.

Committee that looks at high risk cases and tracks learning from complaints.

The customer advocacy team is trained in complaints handling.

Customer Experience Sub-3(b)-3(e)

Section 5: The Complaint Handling Process

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
5.1	Landlords must have a single policy in place for dealing with complaints covered by this Code. Residents must not be treated differently if they complain.	Yes	Housing Plus Group Complaints & Feedback Policy.	
5.2	The early and local resolution of issues between landlords and residents is key to effective complaint handling. It is not appropriate to have extra named stages (such as 'stage 0' or 'informal complaint') as this causes unnecessary confusion.	Yes	Housing Plus Group Complaints & Feedback Policy.	There are 2 stages in Homes Plus complaints process.
5.3	A process with more than two stages is not acceptable under any circumstances as this will make the complaint process unduly long and delay access to the Ombudsman.	Yes		

5.4 Where a landlord's complaint response is handled by a third party (e.g. a contractor or independent adjudicator) at any stage, it must form part of the two

5.7	When a complaint is acknowledged at either stage, landlords must be clear which aspects of the complaint they are, and are not, responsible for and clarify any areas where this is not clear.	Yes	This is detailed within our procedures.	<p>Acknowledgement emails are sent to customers which set out the understanding of the complaint and responses will be clear what part of the complaint is being answered and which are not and why.</p> <p>This is addressed via training and 1:1 coaching.</p>
5.8	<p>At each stage of the complaints process, complaint handlers must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. deal with complaints on their merits, act independently, and have an open mind; b. give the resident a fair chance to set out their position; c. take measures to address any actual or perceived conflict of interest; and <p>Consider all relevant information and evidence carefully.</p>	Yes	<p>A new Customer Advocacy Team is in place who will handle all complaints at both stages 1 & 2.</p> <p>Complaints are not knowingly assigned to someone involved in a complaint.</p> <p>The customer advocacy officers are trained in complaint handling. Managers complete regular one-to-one with staff where complaints handling is discussed.</p> <p>Complaints are also subject to regular quality audits and internal audits.</p>	
5.9	Where a response to a complaint will fall outside the timescales set out in this Code, the landlord must agree with the resident suitable intervals for keeping			

	them informed about their complaint.			
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5.10

Landlords must make reasonable adjustments for residents where appropriate under the Equality Act 2010. Landlords must keep a record of any reasonable adjustments agreed, as well as a record of any

5.13	Landlords must have processes in place to ensure a complaint can be remedied at any stage of its complaints process. Landlords must ensure appropriate remedies can be provided at any stage of the complaints process without the need for escalation.	Yes	The new customer advocacy team will ensure remedies are provided at any stage of the complaints process. Detailed in the complaints process.	
5.14	Landlords must have policies and procedures in place for managing unacceptable behaviour from residents and/or their representatives. Landlords must be able to evidence reasons for putting any restrictions in place and must keep restrictions under regular review.	Yes		

Section 6: Complaints Stages

Stage 1

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
6.1	Landlords must have processes in place to consider which complaints can be responded to as early as possible, and which require further investigation. Landlords must consider factors such as the complexity of the complaint and whether the resident is vulnerable or at risk. Most stage 1 complaints can be resolved promptly, and an explanation, apology or resolution provided to the resident.	Yes	The new customer advocacy team will use the first 5 working days to triage the complaint and ensure early resolution where possible, ensuring any vulnerabilities are taken into consideration. Included in complaints process.	
6.2	Complaints must be acknowledged, defined and logged at stage 1 of the complaint's procedure within five working days of the complaint being received.	Yes	Detailed within Housing Plus Group Complaints & Feedback Policy , point 9.	
6.3	Landlords must issue a full response to stage 1 complaints within 10 working days of the complaint being acknowledged.	Yes	Detailed within Housing Plus Group Complaints & Feedback Policy , point 9.	
6.4	Landlords must decide whether an extension to this timescale is needed when considering the complexity of the complaint and then inform the resident	Yes	Detailed within Housing Plus Group Complaints & Feedback Policy , point 9.	

	of the expected timescale for response. Any extension must be no more than 10 working days without good reason, and the reason(s) must be clearly explained to the resident.			
6.5	When an organisation informs a resident about an extension to these timescales, they must be provided with the contact details of the Ombudsman.	Yes	Detailed within Housing Plus Group Complaints & Feedback Policy , point 9.	
6.6	A complaint response must be provided to the resident when the answer to the complaint is known, not when the outstanding actions required to address the issue are completed. Outstanding actions must still be tracked and actioned promptly with appropriate updates provided to the resident.	Yes	Detailed within Housing Plus Group Complaints & Feedback Policy , point 9.	Priority Repairs Team in place to monitor repairs from complaints. There are trackers in place to monitor remedies.
6.7	Landlords must address all points raised in the complaint definition and provide clear reasons for any decisions, referencing the relevant policy, law and good practice where appropriate.	Yes	Detailed within complaints process.	Quality checks are carried out to ensure that response letters are complying with this.
6.8	Where residents raise additional complaints during the investigation, these must be incorporated into the stage 1 response if they are related, and the stage 1 response has not been issued. Where the stage 1 response	Yes	Detailed within complaints process.	

has been issued, the new issues are
unrelated

Stage 2

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
6.10	If all or part of the complaint is not resolved to the resident's satisfaction at stage 1, it must be progressed to stage 2 of the landlord's procedure. Stage 2 is the landlord's final response.	Yes	Detailed within Housing Plus Group Complaints & Feedback Policy , point 10.	
6.11	Requests for stage 2 must be acknowledged, defined and logged at stage 2 of the complaints procedure within five working days of the escalation request being received.	Yes	Detailed within Housing Plus Group Complaints & Feedback Policy , point 10.	
6.12	Residents must not be required to explain their reasons for requesting a stage 2 consideration. Landlords are expected to make reasonable efforts to understand why a resident remains unhappy as part of its stage 2 response.	Yes	Senior Customer Advocacy Officers will call the customer to understand the complaint, detailed in the complaints process	
6.13	The person considering the complaint at stage 2 must not be the same person that considered the complaint at stage 1.			

6.14

Landlords must confirm the following in writing to the resident at the completion of stage 2 in clear, plain language:

- a. the complaint stage;
- b. the complaint definition;
- c. the decision on the complaint;
- d. the reasons for any decisions made;
- 6.19 e. the details of any remedy offered to put things right;
- f. details of any outstanding actions; and

Section 7: Putting things right

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
7.1	<p>Where something has gone wrong a landlord must acknowledge this and set out the actions it has already taken, or intends to take, to put things right.</p> <p>These can include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Apologising. Acknowledging where things have gone wrong. Providing an explanation, assistance, or reasons. Taking action if there has been delay. Reconsidering or changing a decision; Amending a record or adding a correction or addendum; Providing a financial remedy; Changing policies, procedures or practices. 	Yes	Detailed in complaints process and standard letter templates.	<p>Regular quality audits undertaken to ensure compliance.</p> <p>Responses are approved by a senior manager</p>
7.2	Any remedy offered must reflect the impact on the resident as a result of any fault identified.	Yes	<p>Training and procedures are in place to ensure impact and vulnerabilities are considered.</p> <p>Compensation policy is in place.</p>	

7.3	The remedy offer must clearly set out what will happen and by when, in agreement with the resident where appropriate. Any remedy proposed must be followed through to completion.	Yes	<p>There is a priority repairs team in place to ensure repairs from complaints are carried out promptly.</p> <p>Trackers are in place to track remedies</p>	
7.4	Landlords must take account of the guidance issued by the Ombudsman when deciding on appropriate remedies.	Yes	<p>Compensation policy in place which refers to the Housing Ombudsman guidance on remedies.</p> <p>There is a separate staff guidance that takes account of the Ombudsman guidance on remedies</p>	

Section 8: Putting things right

Code



Section 9: Scrutiny & oversight:

			<p>Operational reports are developed for service areas to help identify trends in complaints and data obtained from customer surveys. These reports are monitored monthly by the Customer Experience team who document all improvements made as a result of customer feedback.</p>	
9.3	<p>Accountability and transparency are also integral to a positive complaint handling culture. Landlords must report back on wider learning and improvements from complaints to stakeholders, such as residents' panels, staff and relevant committees.</p>	Yes	<p>Customer Experience Committee will review complaints performance on a quarterly basis which will in turn, support the development of the overall annual complaint's performance and service improvement report, which will be published annually from 2024 for stakeholders, customers and relevant Boards and Committees.</p>	<p>This will be delivered by the Customer Experience Committee.</p> <p>The complaints performance and service improvement report and self-assessments will also nBT/F</p>

				culture. You said we did, published in our communications and on websites.
9.4	Landlords must appoint a suitably senior lead person as accountable for their complaint handling. This person must assess any themes or trends to identify potential systemic issues, serious risks, or policies and procedures that require revision.	Yes	Les Clarke , Executive Director of Housing and Care is Homes Plus I	

