

Compliance with the Housing Ombudsman Code for Complaint Handling

The table below summarises our compliance against the Housing Ombudsman Code for Complaint Handling as of September 2021, compared to November 2020 when it was last assessed.

| Code requirement | Self Assessment | |
|--|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| | Sept 2021 | Nov 2020 |
| Definition of a complaint | | |
| Does the complaints process use the Code's definition of a complaint | Yes | Yes |
| Does the policy have exclusions where a complaint will not be considered? | Yes | Yes |
| Are these exclusions reasonable and fair to residents? | Yes | Yes |
| Are multiple accessibility routes available for residents to make a complaint? | Yes | Yes |
| Is the complaints policy and procedure available online? | Yes | Yes |
| Do we have a reasonable adjustments policy? | Yes Policy | Guidance Only |
| Do we regularly advise residents about our complaints process? | Yes | Yes |
| Complaints team and process | | |
| <i>*Service Manager or Executive Team Member replying to complaint</i> | | |
| Is there a complaint officer* or equivalent in post? | Yes | Yes |
| Does the complaint officer* have autonomy to resolve complaints? | Yes | Yes |
| Does the complaint officer* have authority to compel engagement from other departments to resolve disputes? | Yes | Yes |
| If there is a third stage to the complaints procedure are residents involved in the decision making? | No | No |
| Is any third stage optional for residents? | N/A | N/A |
| Does the final stage response set out residents' right to refer the matter to the Housing Ombudsman Service? | Yes | Yes |
| Do we keep a record of complaint correspondence including correspondence from the resident? | Yes | Yes |
| At what stage are most complaints resolved? | At stage 1 | At stage 1 |
| Communication | | |
| Are residents kept informed and updated during the complaints process? | Yes- needs to improve further | Yes- needs to improve further |
| 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- needs to improve further | Yes- needs to improve further |

| Code requirement | Self Assessment | |
|---|--|--|
| | Sept 2021 | Nov 2020 |
| Are all complaints acknowledged and logged within five days? | Yes logged, reporting for acknowledgements to be resolved. | |
| Are residents advised of how to escalate at the end of each stage? | Yes | Yes |
| What proportion of complaints are resolved at stage one? | 2021-22 (YTD Aug) 89% (96 of 108) | 2020-21 92% (245 of 266) |
| What proportion of complaints are resolved at stage two? | 2021-22 (YTD Aug) 7% (8 of 108) | 2020-21 7% (19 of 245) |
| Where timescales have been extended did we have good reason? | Our policy and procedures say we must but we need to improve, consistency of doing this. | |
| Where timescales have been extended did we keep the resident informed? | Our policy and procedures say we must but we need to improve, consistency of doing this. | |
| What proportion of complaints do we resolve to residents' satisfaction | 2021-22 Quarter 1 45.16% (annualised) | 2020-21 40% |
| Cooperation with Housing Ombudsman Service | | |
| Were all requests for evidence responded to within 15 days? | No 4/8 extended | Yes |
| Where the timescale was extended did we keep the Ombudsman informed? | Yes | N/A |
| Fairness in complaint handling | | |
| Are residents able to complain via a representative throughout? | Yes | Yes |
| If advice was given, was this accurate and easy to understand? | We need to ensure advice is consistent | We need to ensure advice is consistent |
| How many cases did we refuse to escalate? What was the reason for the refusal? | None | None There was one case where we did not escalate in a timely manner. |
| Did we explain our decision to the resident? | N/A | N/A |

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|---|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| | Sept 2021 | Nov 2020 |
| Outcomes and remedies | | |
| Where something has gone wrong are we taking appropriate steps to put things right? | Yes but improvements can be made | Yes but improvements can be made |
| Continuous learning and improvement | | |
| <p>What improvements have we made as a result of learning from complaints?</p> <p>Trends in learning identified</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communicate, communicate, communicate • In ASB and repair cases need to update tenants more regularly • Training needed for customer services in repairs diagnosis • Value of regular toolbox talks for Phoenix Repairs Service on procedures to follow in residents' homes • Benefits of joint working arrangements (more collaboration between teams) • Need for some process reviews <p>Examples of learning related to complaints process</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to improve ownership of complaints • Need to improve the timeliness of responses • More guidance on allocation of complaints (may link to complaints ownership, too) • Some more guidance may be helpful on investigating cases of staff conduct <p>Examples of learning completed</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updates to customer services and a toolbox talk on carbon monoxide • Phoenix Repairs Service now have access to our database, for logging and recording complaints (which we call CRM). • Toolbox talks in caretaking and PRS • A review of Gold Membership has started • The follow-on process was changed for responsive repairs and will be reviewed further • BIC (British Institute of Cleaning) training has been arranged • Re-procuring some contracts • Training for staff and regular monitoring meetings | | |

| Code requirement | Self Assessment | |
|--|-----------------|----------|
| | Sept 2021 | Nov 2020 |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New policy on managing difficult behaviour and making reasonable adjustments developed and approved. • Knowledge articles in complaints developed and updated twice since since July 2019 | | |

This assessment was approved by the Board in September 2021