

## Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code: Self-assessment form- Phoenix Community Housing Association FINAL APPROVED BY THE BOARD NOVEMBER 2020

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>	Y	
	Does the policy have exclusions where a complaint will not be considered?	Y	
	<b>Are these exclusions reasonable and fair to residents?</b>  <u>Evidence relied upon</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Comparison to the Housing Ombudsman guidance.</li> <li>• Asking our residents and staff in surveys.</li> <li>• Consulting with residents from our Gateway Committee, Scrutiny Panel and Policy Working Group.</li> </ul>	Y	

2	Accessibility	Yes	No
	Are multiple accessibility routes available for residents to make a complaint?	Y	
	Is the complaints policy and procedure available online?	Y	
	Do we have a reasonable adjustments policy?- we have guidance and will set a policy in January 2021		N
	Do we regularly advise residents about our complaints process?	Y	
	<u>Evidence relied upon</u>		

2	<b>Accessibility</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Website</li> <li>• Phoenix Flyer</li> <li>• Complaints Survey results</li> <li>• Handbook</li> <li>• Leaflet</li> <li>• Policy</li> <li>• Performance</li> </ul>		

3	<b>Complaints team and process</b> <i>*Service Manager or Executive Team Member replying to complaint</i>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
	Is there a complaint officer* or equivalent in post?	Y	
	Does the complaint officer* have autonomy to resolve complaints?	Y	
	Does the complaint officer* have authority to compel engagement from other departments to resolve disputes?	Y	
	If there is a third stage to the complaints procedure are residents involved in the decision making?		N
	Is any third stage optional for residents?	N/A	
	Does the final stage response set out residents' right to refer the matter to the Housing Ombudsman Service?	Y	
	Do we keep a record of complaint correspondence including correspondence from the resident?	Y	
	At what stage are most complaints resolved?  Most complaints are resolved at stage 1. From 2020-21 from April to September this was 97%. 3% were resolved at stage 2		
	<u>Evidence relied upon</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Quality checks-these show we need to improve consistency</li> <li>• Staff survey- these show we need to improve consistency</li> </ul>		

<b>3</b>	<b>Complaints team and process</b> <i>*Service Manager or Executive Team Member replying to complaint</i>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Policy</li> <li>• KPIs</li> </ul>		

<b>4</b>	<b>Communication</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
	Are residents kept informed and updated during the complaints process?	<b>Y</b>	
	Are residents informed of the landlord's position and given a chance to respond and challenge any area of dispute before the final decision?	<b>Y</b>	
	Are all complaints acknowledged and logged within five days?	<b>Y</b>	
	Are residents advised of how to escalate at the end of each stage?	<b>Y</b>	
	What proportion of complaints are resolved at stage one? <u>April September 2020</u>	<b>97%</b>	
	What proportion of complaints are resolved at stage two? <u>April September 2020</u>	<b>3%</b>	
	What proportion of complaint responses are sent within Code timescales? * <u>April September 2020</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stage one- 61% Stage one (with extension)- 39%</li> <li>• Stage two- 50% Stage two (with extension)- 50%</li> </ul> <p><i>*Our policy during this period included a shorter response time for stage 2 complaints than the Code (10 working days).</i></p>	<b>See below</b>	
	Where timescales have been extended did we have good reason?	Our policy and procedures say we must but we need to improve,	

4	Communication	Yes	No
		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 <u>April September 2020</u>	26% (11/42)	

5	Cooperation with Housing Ombudsman Service	Yes	No
	Were all requests for evidence responded to within 15 days?	Y	
	Where the timescale was extended did we keep the Ombudsman informed?	n/a	

6	Fairness in complaint handling	Yes	No
	Are residents able to complain via a representative throughout?	Y	
	If advice was given, was this accurate and easy to understand? We need to ensure advice is consistent^	Y^	
	How many cases did we refuse to escalate? There was one case April to September 2020 where we did not escalate in a timely manner  What was the reason for the refusal?	0  n/a	  n/a
	Did we explain our decision to the resident?	n/a	

<b>7</b>	<b>Outcomes and remedies</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
	Where something has gone wrong are we taking appropriate steps to put things right?	Y	

<b>8</b>	<b>Continuous learning and improvement</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
	<p>What improvements have we made as a result of learning from complaints?</p> <p><b>Trends in learning identified</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communicate, communicate, communicate</li> <li>• In ASB and repair cases need to update tenants more regularly</li> <li>• Training needed for customer services in repairs diagnosis</li> <li>• Value of regular toolbox talks for Phoenix Repairs Service on procedures to follow in residents' homes</li> <li>• Benefits of joint working arrangements (more collaboration between teams)</li> <li>• Need for some process reviews</li> </ul> <p><b>Examples of learning related to complaints process</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Need to improve ownership of complaints</li> <li>• Need to improve the timeliness of responses</li> <li>• More guidance on allocation of complaints (may link to complaints ownership, too)</li> <li>• Some more guidance may be helpful on investigating cases of staff conduct</li> </ul> <p><b>Examples of learning completed</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Updates to customer services and a toolbox talk on carbon monoxide</li> <li>• Phoenix Repairs Service now have access to our database, for logging and recording complaints (which we call CRM).</li> <li>• Toolbox talks in caretaking and PRS</li> <li>• A review of Gold Membership has started</li> <li>• The follow-on process was changed for responsive repairs</li> <li>• BIC (British Institute of Cleaning) training has been arranged</li> </ul>	Y	

8	<b>Continuous learning and improvement</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Re-procuring some contracts</li> </ul>		
	<p>How do we share these lessons with:</p> <p>a) residents? In newsletters and on website- but we need to include more examples</p> <p>b) the board/governing body?  An annual performance report.</p> <p>c) In the Annual Report?  Yes however we need to include more examples</p>	Y	
	<p>Has the Code made a difference to how we respond to complaints?</p> <p>It has helped us raise the profile of the importance of good, customer focused complaints handling with Board, Executive, managers and staff. We have seen some improvements and are committed to making more.</p>	Y	
	<p>What changes have we made?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reviewed of our policy and procedure with residents</li> <li>• Used the universal definition of a complaint but also included a shorter, simpler, definition underneath it; agreed with residents- because we received some feedback that the definition was too wordy.</li> <li>• Provided more examples of exclusions in our policy and on our website- this was recommended by residents.</li> <li>• Review of process on our database, for logging and recording complaints (which we call CRM).</li> <li>• Reviewed our letter templates and website content with residents on our Residents Communications Group.</li> <li>• Updated our procedure for logging complaints on our database and the manual for doing this.</li> </ul>		

8	<b>Continuous learning and improvement</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Refocused our KPIs on responses as well as final resolution and closure of a complaint.</li> <li>• Amended our complaint KPIs to align with the Code</li> <li>• Reviewed training on complaints handling and decided to make it mandatory for all managers, at induction for all staff and specific training for our contact centre.</li> <li>• Used the Code to help us consider our culture and use it to plan future discussions about how we structure our services to residents.</li> </ul> <p><u>Actions we will take to improve how we meet the Code</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ask residents again in a year for their feedback.</li> <li>• Deliver our complaints service improvement plan- this is summarised below.</li> </ul> <p>Complete new guidance  Review the complaints process for Hazelhurst Court our Extra Care Scheme  Report against this code every quarter to board  Embed new approach to training and induction  Embed new processes for escalation and support in complaints handling  Ask our scrutiny panel to check progress against this self- assessment and our service improvement plan</p>		