

# Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code: Self-assessment form

Compliance with the Complaint Handling Code			
1	Definition of a complaint	Yes	No
	Does the complaints process use the following definition of a complaint?	✓	
	Does the policy have exclusions where a complaint will not be considered?	✓	
	Are these exclusions reasonable and fair to residents?  Evidence relied upon	✓  Exclusions in the Corporate Complaints Policy.  Advice given at contact points.  Recorded and reported as a complaint failure.	
2	Accessibility		
	Are multiple accessibility routes available for residents to make a complaint?	✓	
	Is the complaints policy and procedure available online?	✓	
	Do we have a reasonable adjustments policy?	✓  Accessibility pages and statement website <a href="http://www.islington.gov.uk/accessibility">www.islington.gov.uk/accessibility</a>	
	Do we regularly advise residents about our complaints process?	✓	

<b>3</b>	<b>Complaints team and process</b>		
	Is there a complaint officer or equivalent in post?	✓	
	Does the complaint officer have autonomy to resolve complaints?	✓	
	Does the complaint officer have authority to compel engagement from other departments to resolve disputes?	✓	
	If there is a third stage to the complaints procedure are residents involved in the decision making?	There are three points in the complaints policy where residents can get involved, Stage one/ Stage one Review and Chief Executive stage.	
	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?	✓	
	Do we keep a record of complaint correspondence including correspondence from the resident?	✓	
	At what stage are most complaints resolved?	Stage 1	
<b>4</b>	<b>Communication</b>		
	Are residents kept informed and updated during the complaints process?	✓	
	Are residents informed of the landlord's position and given a chance to respond and challenge any area of dispute before the final decision?	✓	
	Are all complaints acknowledged and logged within five days?	✓	
	Are residents advised of how to escalate at the end of each stage?	✓	
	What proportion of complaints are resolved at stage one?	2020/21, 94% (In line with corporate target of 21 Calendar days)	
	What proportion of complaints are resolved at stage two?	2020/21, 70% (In line with corporate target of 28 Calendar days)	

	<p>What proportion of complaint responses are sent within Code timescales?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stage one <u>Stage one (with extension)</u></li> <li>• Stage two <u>Stage two (with extension)</u></li> </ul>	<p>Current corporate response time is 21 Calendar days, as of 1.4.22 this will reduce to 10 working days (with additional 10 working days in exceptional cases) to comply with the HO Code</p> <p>Current corporate response time is 28 Calendar days, as of 1.4.22 this will reduce to 20 working days (with additional 10 working days in exceptional cases) to comply with the HO Code</p>	
	Where timescales have been extended did we have good reason?	✓	
	Where timescales have been extended did we keep the resident informed?	✓	
	What proportion of complaints do we resolve to residents' satisfaction	2020/21 95%	
<b>5</b>	<b>Cooperation with Housing Ombudsman Service</b>		
	Were all requests for evidence responded to within 15 days?	✓	
	Where the timescale was extended did we keep the Ombudsman informed?	✓	
<b>6</b>	<b>Fairness in complaint handling</b>		
	Are residents able to complain via a representative throughout?	✓	
	If advice was given, was this accurate and easy to understand?	✓	
	How many cases did we refuse to escalate?	No stats for 2020/21	
	What was the reason for the refusal?	No information for 2020/21	

	Did we explain our decision to the resident?	N/A	
<b>7</b>	<b>Outcomes and remedies</b>		
	Where something has gone wrong are we taking appropriate steps to put things right?	✓	
<b>8</b>	<b>Continuous learning and improvement</b>		
	What improvements have we made as a result of learning from complaints?	<p>Clarity on complainant's rights to go to the Housing Ombudsman after accepting compensation offered at the end of the council's complaints process.</p> <p>Policy change to compensation for gas service failures, previously a resident would be compensated if the service was out for more than 21 days. Following meetings and discussions, because of complaints this has changed to '5 days'. This is very significant, in improving response times and especially for vulnerable residents.</p> <p>To help provide a better service to vulnerable residents with hearing issues, we delivered basic sign language training for Repairs Team Leaders to communicate with residents.</p> <p>Increasing issue, as result of Covid.19 emergency, end of 2020/start of 2021 where more residents are reporting delays in repair appointments or that our operatives were arriving</p>	

		<p>with not enough time to complete their works. This was identified as a scheduling issue and feedback.</p> <p>In addition during the Covid.19 emergency there has been a significant increase in ASB issues</p>	
	<p>How do we share these lessons with:</p> <p>a) Residents?</p> <p>b) The board/governing body?</p> <p>c) In the Annual Report?</p>	<p>Part of the complaint response.</p> <p>Corporate Performance data</p> <p>Quarterly Political Leadership Meeting (PLM) upheld cases only.</p> <p>Quarterly Board meeting</p> <p>Yearly report to Audit committee</p>	
	<p>Has the Code made a difference to how we respond to complaints?</p>	<p>Overall, our Corporate Complaints Policy and practices meet the standard of the Housing Ombudsman Code. The code will confirm our commitment to good complaint handling as we make improvements to our service delivery and communication with residents.</p> <p>The code will act as a learning tool and reference guide for all</p>	

		complaint teams to ensure compliance.	
	What changes have we made?	we are reviewing our response time as a result of the code and new timelines for compliance will be start April 22	