

Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code – Self-Assessment – Completed September 2022

This document details how Stoke on Trent Housing Society measures up against the Housing Ombudsman Complaints Handling Code. Throughout the self-assessment, you will see that the complaints policy is referenced. You can view the complaints policy on our website.

Section 1 - Definition of a complaint

Mandatory ‘must’ requirements

Code section	Code requirement	Comply: Yes/No	Evidence, commentary, and any explanations
1.2	A complaint must be defined as: <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>	Yes	Our definition is: <i>an expression of dissatisfaction, however made, about the standard of service, actions or lack of action by Stoke on Trent Housing Society, its own staff, or those acting on its behalf, affecting an individual resident or group of residents.</i> Evidenced in our Complaints Policy (Section 2)
1.3	The resident does not have to use the word ‘complaint’ for it to be treated as such. A complaint that is submitted via a third party or representative must still be handled in line with the landlord’s complaints policy.	Yes	A line has been added to our Complaints Policy (Section 2) advising that: <i>The word ‘complaint’ does not have to be used for a complaint to be identified and treated as one.</i> Although our policy contains a reference that complaints can be made by someone else or a designated person it does not state that it will be handled in line with the landlord’s complaints policy. This reference has now been added to our Complaints Policy (Section 3)
1.6	... if further enquiries are needed to resolve the matter, or if the resident requests it, the issue must be logged as a complaint.	Yes	Our policy states that: We will encourage customers to get in touch with us straight away if something has gone wrong and to give us the opportunity to put it right. This is often the quickest and easiest way to achieve a satisfactory outcome. If we cannot resolve the problem informally within an agreed timescale, or if the issue is complex or significant, we will record and investigate it as a complaint. This paragraph has now been amended to include <i>if the resident requests</i> it.

1.7	A landlord must accept a complaint unless there is a valid reason not to do so.	Yes	We have minimal reasons for not accepting a complaint, as set out in our Complaints Policy (Section 4), however a paragraph has been added to this section as follows: <i>We will exercise our discretion appropriately and make sure that any decision to exclude a complaint is fair and valid and that the reasons for the decision are clearly explained to the resident. In such cases the resident will be provided contact details for the Ombudsman so that any decision taken to exclude a complaint can be challenged.</i>
1.8	A complaints policy must clearly set out the circumstances in which a matter will not be considered, and these circumstances should be fair and reasonable to residents.	Yes	Addressed in 1.7
1.9	If a landlord decides not to accept a complaint, a detailed 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.	Yes	Addressed in 1.7

Best practice 'should' requirements

Code section	Code requirement	Comply: Yes/No	Evidence, commentary, and any explanations
1.4	Landlords should recognise the difference between a service request, where a resident may be unhappy with a situation that they wish to have rectified, and a complaint about the service they have/have not received.	Yes	Explained in our Complaints Policy (Section 4)
1.5	Survey feedback may not necessarily need to be treated as a complaint, though, where possible, the person completing the survey should be made aware of how they can pursue their dissatisfaction as a complaint if they wish to.	Partially	Although any surveys we have a field provided for further feedback we will need to update these to signpost to complaints info.

Section 2 - Accessibility and awareness

Mandatory 'must' requirements

Code section	Code requirement	Comply: Yes/No	Evidence, commentary, and any explanations
2.1	Landlords must make it easy for residents to complain by providing different channels through which residents can make a complaint such as in person, over the telephone, in writing, by email and digitally. While the Ombudsman recognises that it may not be feasible for a landlord to use all of the potential channels,	Yes	Complaints can be made in person, by phone, by e-mail, by letter, by social media or via the Society's website. Evidenced in our Complaints Policy (Section 5)

	there must be more than one route of access into the complaints system.		
2.3	Landlords must make their complaint policy available in a clear and accessible format for all residents. This will detail the number of stages involved, what will happen at each stage and the timeframes for responding.	Yes	Our Complaints policy is available electronically on our website and via email. It is also available in printed form and by post. Evidenced on our website - https://stokeontrenthousingsociety.org.uk/contact-us/
2.4	Landlord websites, if they exist, must include information on how to raise a complaint. The complaints policy and process must be easy to find on the website.	Yes	Our complaints policy is easily accessed on our website. There is a 'contact us' link on our home page that leads to a link for 'Make a complaint.' Evidenced on our website - https://stokeontrenthousingsociety.org.uk/contact-us/
2.5	Landlords must comply with the Equality Act 2010 and may need to adapt normal policies, procedures, or processes to accommodate an individual's needs. Landlords must satisfy themselves that their policy sets out how they will respond to reasonable adjustments requests in line with the Equality Act and that complaints handlers have had appropriate training to deal with such requests.	Yes	Evidence - Statement on Equality, diversity, and inclusion within our Complaints Policy (Section 11) The Society's Housing Management System contains a flag system for any residents where any known reasonable adjustments are required, and this is further supported by our Annual Tenancy visit programme.
2.6	Landlords must publicise the complaints policy and process, the Complaint Handling Code and the Housing Ombudsman Scheme in leaflets, posters, newsletters, online and as part of regular correspondence with residents.	Yes	Complaints information is clearly published on the website, and complaints correspondence to customers references the Housing Ombudsman. We will be doing more on this however, using existing communications channels (for example, tenant newsletters and our Facebook page).
2.7	Landlords must provide residents with contact information for the Ombudsman as part of its regular correspondence with residents.	No	This will be picked up within a letter review exercise for our new Housing Management System.
2.8	Landlords must provide early advice to residents regarding their right to access the Housing Ombudsman Service throughout their complaint, not only when the landlord's complaints process is exhausted.	Yes	All correspondence from acknowledgement through to the end of the complaints process refers to the Ombudsman service and that they can be contacted at any point.

Best practice 'should' requirements

Code section	Code requirement	Comply: Yes/No	Evidence, commentary and any explanations
2.2	Where a landlord has set up channels to communicate with its residents via social media, then it should expect to receive complaints via those channels. Policies should contain details of the steps that will be taken when a complaint is received via social media and how confidentiality and privacy will be maintained.	Yes	We accept complaints received via social media and our Complaints Policy (Section 5) sets out our approach as to how these will be managed.

Section 3 - Complaint handling personnel

Mandatory 'must' requirements

Code section	Code requirement	Comply: Yes/No	Evidence, commentary, and any explanations
3.1	Landlords must have a person or team assigned to take responsibility for complaint handling to ensure complaints receive the necessary attention, and that these are reported to the governing body. This Code will refer to that person or team as the "complaints officer".	Yes	As a small landlord, complaints are dealt with by the service lead that would deal with that area and appeals by the Housing Director. Service leads have been trained in handling complaints, likewise all staff have all been trained in our complaints policy. The complaints process is overseen by the Housing Director who is experienced in complaints handling through experience gained whilst working at larger HA's and LA's. Complaints are reported to the Society Board at each quarterly Board meeting along with details of any trends or themes that have been identified and the steps that have been taken to address these.
3.2	...the complaint handler appointed must have appropriate complaint handling skills and no conflicts of interest.	Yes	Addressed in 3.1 There are no conflicts of interest and staff do not investigate complaints relating to themselves or where they may have a personal interest. All staff are required to sign and complete the 'declaration of interest' form annually as per the Society's Standards of Conduct.

Best practice 'should' requirements

Code section	Code requirement	Comply: Yes/No	Evidence, commentary, and any explanations
3.3	Complaint handlers should: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • be able to act sensitively and fairly • be trained to handle complaints and deal with distressed and upset residents • have access to staff at all levels to facilitate quick 25 resolution of complaints • have the authority and autonomy to act to resolve disputes quickly and fairly. 	Yes	All staff are trained to manage complaints with empathy and to reach fair outcomes for our customers at the earliest opportunity. Housing Ombudsman press releases, webinars and website are used to ensure continued learning and best practise.

Section 4 - Complaint handling principles

Mandatory 'must' requirements

Code section	Code requirement	Comply: Yes/No	Evidence, commentary, and any explanations
4.1	Any decision to try and resolve a concern must be taken in agreement with the resident and a landlord's audit trail/records should be able to demonstrate this. Landlords must ensure that efforts to resolve a resident's concerns do not obstruct access to the complaints procedure or result in any unreasonable delay. It is not appropriate to have extra named stages (such as 'stage 0' or 'pre-complaint stage') as this causes unnecessary confusion for residents. When a complaint is made, it must be acknowledged and logged at stage one of the complaints procedure within five days of receipt.	Yes	Our Complaints Policy makes it clear that customers can ask for any issues to be resolved as a service request and that any such decision is to be taken in agreement with the customer. Customers are made aware that the opportunity to raise a formal complaint is there from the outset and they are reminded of this in any subsequent communications until an issue is resolved. Our Complaints Policy (Section 7 – Complaints process) clearly states that: We will acknowledge the Stage 1 complaint within five working days of receipt of the complaint and pass it on to the relevant service manager to investigate, doing what we can to resolve the matter straight away.
4.2	Within the complaint acknowledgement, landlords must set out their understanding of the complaint and the outcomes the resident is seeking. If any aspect of the complaint is unclear, the resident must be asked for clarification and the full definition agreed between both parties.	Yes	Our Acknowledgement letters reflect this requirement and can be evidenced.
4.6	A complaint investigation must be conducted in an impartial manner.	Yes	Addressed in 3.1, 3.2 & 3.3
4.7	The complaint handler must: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • deal with complaints on their merits • act independently and have an open mind • take measures to address any actual or perceived conflict of interest • consider all information and evidence carefully • keep the complaint confidential as far as possible, with information only disclosed if necessary to properly investigate the matter. 	Yes	Addressed in 3.1, 3.2 & 3.3 Complaints correspondence is stored electronically in a folder only accessible to the management team. Our Complaints Policy (Section 5) states: <i>At all times, the Society will maintain the confidentiality of complainants and the content of their complaints and only those Society staff that are designated to do so, will investigate complaints.</i>
4.11	Landlords must adhere to any reasonable arrangements agreed with residents in terms of frequency and method of communication	Yes	Although officers already do agree frequency and communication methods during their investigation stage, this is not stated anywhere in our Complaints Policy. A sentence has therefore been added to our Complaints Policy (Section 7) to reference this.
4.12	The resident, and if applicable any staff member who is the subject of the complaint, must also be given a fair chance to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • set out their position • comment on any adverse findings before a final decision is made. 	Yes	Investigation responses inform resident of the Society's position and gives the customer the right to respond and request a review of the complaint investigation by a more senior manager. Where the complaint is about a particular staff member, the Investigating Officer will talk to that person as part of their investigation.

4.13	A landlord must include in its complaints policy its timescales for a resident to request escalation of a complaint	Yes	Our Complaints policy states that the complainant can request a review of the original complaint decision within 20 working days of our response to the Stage 1 complaint. Evidenced in our Complaints Policy (Section 7)
4.14	A landlord must not unreasonably refuse to escalate a complaint through all stages of the complaints procedure and must have clear and valid reasons for taking that course of action. Reasons for declining to escalate a complaint must be clearly set out in a landlord's complaints policy and must be the same as the reasons for not accepting a complaint.	Yes	Our Complaints Policy (Section 4) clearly outlines the circumstances in which we would not accept a complaint.
4.15	A full record must be kept of the complaint, any review and the outcomes at each stage. This must include the original complaint and the date received, all correspondence with the resident, correspondence with other parties and any reports or surveys prepared.	Yes	An electronic folder is kept that contains all information relating to complaints, including correspondence, letters etc. This folder also contains a spreadsheet to monitor performance and outcomes. Moving forward, from April 2023, we plan to hold this information in our new Housing Management System.
4.18	Landlords must have policies and procedures in place for managing unacceptable behaviour from residents and/or their representatives when pursuing a complaint.	Partially	Although Section 4 of our Complaints Policy mentions unacceptable behaviour there is currently no specific policy in place to specifically cover this issue and the various problems that can arise. An Unacceptable Behaviour Policy has been draft ready for approval at our Dec 22 Board.

Best practice 'should' requirements

Code section	Code requirement	Comply: Yes/No	Evidence, commentary, and any explanations
4.3	Landlords should manage residents' expectations from the outset, being clear where a desired outcome is unreasonable or unrealistic	Yes	Officers are trained and experienced to manage customer expectations and as a small team discussion with the Housing Director and Company Secretary is encouraged to discuss "difficult" complaints.
4.4	A complaint should be resolved at the earliest possible opportunity, having assessed what evidence is needed to fully consider the issues, what outcome would resolve the matter for the resident and whether there are any urgent actions required.	Yes	Our process in handling complaints is designed to do this.
4.5	Landlords should give residents the opportunity to have a representative deal with their complaint on their behalf, and to be represented or accompanied at any meeting with the landlord where this is reasonable.	Yes	We are compliant, as long as we have the authority to discuss with a representative. Section 3 of the policy covers this in part. Officers are also experienced to assess whether offering a representative approach to the complainant might help to reach a solution and offer assurance.
4.8	Where a key issue of a complaint relates to the parties' legal obligations landlords should clearly set out their understanding of the obligations of both parties.	Yes	Where necessary our legal obligations and tenant legal obligations will always be referenced in our communication. This can be evidenced in our previous casework. Also, where required legal advice would always be sought.
4.9	Communication with the resident should not generally identify individual members of staff or contractors.	Yes	Officers are trained not to apportion blame to individuals when things go wrong and to take collective responsibility.

			We are compliant unless the complaint is about a staff member.
4.10	Landlords should keep residents regularly updated about the progress of the investigation.	Yes	Addressed in 4.11
4.16	Landlords should seek feedback from residents in relation to the landlord's complaint handling as part of the drive to encourage a positive complaint and learning culture.	Yes	Feedback survey being introduced this year (TP11 & TP12)
4.17	Landlords should recognise the impact that being complained about can have on future service delivery. Landlords should ensure that staff are supported and engaged in the complaints process, including the learning that can be gained	Yes	'Lessons learnt' are shared with Board and staff members during staff information sessions. Outcomes are also discussed with individual staff members where necessary.
4.19	Any restrictions placed on a resident's contact due to unacceptable behaviour should be appropriate to their needs and should demonstrate regard for the provisions of the Equality Act 2010.	Yes	Addressed in 4.18

Section 5 - Complaint stages

Mandatory 'must' requirements

Stage 1

Code section	Code requirement	Comply: Yes/No	Evidence, commentary, and any explanations
5.1	Landlords must respond to the complaint within 10 working days of the complaint being logged. Exceptionally, landlords may provide an explanation to the resident containing a clear timeframe for when the response will be received. This should not exceed a further 10 days without good reason.	Yes	The target response times set out in our Complaints Policy (Section 7) are aligned to the Code.
5.5	A complaint response must be sent 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 expeditiously with regular updates provided to the resident.	Partially	Our timescales are set out in the policy however at times we may need to improve communication with the resident by providing more regular updates. This will be picked up in training.
5.6	Landlords must address all points raised in the complaint and provide clear reasons for any decisions, referencing the relevant policy, law and good practice where appropriate.	Yes	We have letter templates for staff to use and refer to. On examining a cross section of complaints as part of this self-assessment exercise, this is something that, for the most part, we get right. Any training needs identified will be taken up.
5.8	Landlords must confirm the following in writing to the resident at the completion of stage one in clear, plain language: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the complaint stage • the decision on the complaint • the reasons for any decisions made 	Yes	As above.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the details of any remedy offered to put things right • details of any outstanding actions • details of how to escalate the matter to stage two if the resident is not satisfied with the answer 		
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Stage 2

Code section	Code requirement	Comply: Yes/No	Evidence, commentary, and any explanations
5.9	If all or part of the complaint is not resolved to the resident's satisfaction at stage one it must be progressed to stage two of the landlord's procedure, unless an exclusion ground now applies. In instances where a landlord declines to escalate a complaint it must clearly communicate in writing its reasons for not escalating as well as the resident's right to approach the Ombudsman about its decision.	Yes	Addressed in 4.14
5.10	On receipt of the escalation request, landlords must set out their understanding of issues outstanding and the outcomes the resident is seeking. If any aspect of the complaint is unclear, the resident must be asked for clarification and the full definition agreed between both parties.	Yes	A cross section of complaints have been examined as part of this self-assessment exercise and this is something that we generally do well.
5.11	Landlords must only escalate a complaint to stage two once it has completed stage one and at the request of the resident.	Yes	We are compliant. The policy demonstrates this.
5.12	The person considering the complaint at stage two, must not be the same person that considered the complaint at stage one.	Yes	Generally, the service manager will deal with the stage one complaint and the Housing Director the stage 2 complaint. To cover instances where the Housing Director may have to deal with a stage one complaint a sentence has now been inserted into the policy as follows: Where the Housing Director has dealt with the stage one complaint, the stage 2 complaint will be dealt with by the Company Secretary.
5.13	Landlords must respond to the stage two complaint within 20 working days of the complaint being escalated. Exceptionally, landlords may provide an explanation to the resident containing a clear timeframe for when the response will be received. This should not exceed a further 10 days without good reason.	Yes	We are compliant. The policy demonstrates this.
5.16	Landlords must confirm the following in writing to the resident at the completion of stage two in clear, plain language: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the complaint stage • the complaint definition • the decision on the complaint • the reasons for any decisions made • the details of any remedy offered to put things right 	Yes	A cross section of complaints have been examined as part of this self-assessment exercise and this is something that we generally do well. Note – there is no third stage.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • details of any outstanding actions and • if the landlord has a third stage, details of how to escalate the matter to stage three • if this was the final stage, details of how to escalate the matter to the Housing Ombudsman Service if the resident remains dissatisfied. 		
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Stage 3

Code section	Code requirement	Comply: Yes/No	Evidence, commentary, and any explanations
5.17	Two stage landlord complaint procedures are ideal. This ensures that the complaint process is not unduly long. If landlords strongly believe a third stage is necessary, they must set out their reasons for this as part of their self-assessment. A process with more than three stages is not acceptable under any circumstances	Yes	Our Complaints Policy consists of two stages only.
5.20	Landlords must confirm the following in writing to the resident at the completion of stage three in clear, plain language: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the complaint stage • the complaint definition • the decision on the complaint • the reasons for any decisions made • the details of any remedy offered to put things right • details of any outstanding actions • details of how to escalate the matter to the Housing Ombudsman Service if the resident remains dissatisfied 	NA	NA

Best practice 'should' requirements

Stage 1

Code section	Code requirement	Comply: Yes/No	Evidence, commentary, and any explanations
5.2	If an extension beyond 20 working days is required to enable the landlord to respond to the complaint fully, this should be agreed by both parties.	Yes	We do this as part of our process, and it is stated in our policy.
5.3	Where agreement over an extension period cannot be reached, landlords should provide the Housing Ombudsman's contact details so the resident can challenge the landlord's plan for responding and/or the proposed timeliness of a landlord's response.	Yes	Our letters evidence this.

5.4	Where the problem is a recurring issue, the landlord should consider any older reports as part of the background to the complaint if this will help to resolve the issue for the resident.	Yes	Investigating Officers will review all the history of a case as part of their investigation.
5.7	Where residents raise additional complaints during the investigation, these should be incorporated into the stage one response if they are relevant, and the stage one response has not been issued. Where the stage one response has been issued, or it would unreasonably delay the response, the complaint should be logged as a new complaint.	Yes	We are compliant.

Stage 2

Code section	Code requirement	Comply: Yes/No	Evidence, commentary, and any explanations
5.14	If an extension beyond 10 working days is required to enable the landlord to respond to the complaint fully, this should be agreed by both parties.	Yes	We do this as part of our process, and it is stated in our policy.
5.15	Where agreement over an extension period cannot be reached, landlords should provide the Housing Ombudsman's contact details so the resident can challenge the landlord's plan for responding and/or the proposed timeliness of a landlord's response	Yes	Our letters evidence this.

Stage 3

Code section	Code requirement	Comply: Yes/No	Evidence, commentary, and any explanations
5.18	Complaints should only go to a third stage if the resident has actively requested a third stage review of their complaint. Where a third stage is in place and has been requested, landlords must respond to the stage three complaint within 20 working days of the complaint being escalated. Additional time will only be justified if related to convening a panel. An explanation and a date for when the stage three response will be received should be provided to the resident.	N/A	Our Complaints Policy consists of two stages only.
5.19	Where agreement over an extension period cannot be reached, landlords should provide the Housing Ombudsman's contact details so the resident can challenge the landlord's plan for responding and/or the proposed timeliness of a landlord's response.	N/A	

Section 6 - Putting things right

Mandatory 'must' requirements

Code section	Code requirement	Comply: Yes/No	Evidence, commentary, and any explanations
6.1	Effective dispute resolution requires a process designed to resolve complaints. 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.	Yes	Although we do this as part of dealing with a complaint, until recently we had no formal policy or guidance for staff or customers. A complaint handling guide is now available to staff which incorporates possible remedies and compensation.
6.2	Any remedy offered must reflect the extent of any service failures and the level of detriment caused to the resident as a result. A landlord must carefully manage the expectations of residents and not promise anything that cannot be delivered or would cause unfairness to other residents.	Yes	Complaint handling guide is now available to staff which incorporates possible remedies and compensation.
6.5	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	Complaint handling guide is now available to staff which incorporates possible remedies and compensation.
6.6	In awarding compensation, a landlord must consider whether any statutory payments are due, if any quantifiable losses have been incurred, the time and trouble a resident has been put to as well as any distress and inconvenience caused.	Yes	As above

Best practice 'should' requirements

Code section	Code requirement	Comply: Yes/No	Evidence, commentary, and any explanations
6.3	Landlords should look beyond the circumstances of the individual complaint and consider whether anything needs to be 'put right' in terms of process or systems to the benefit of all residents.	Yes	Learning from complaints is recognised by the Society as an important aspect of putting things right and ensuring the continuous improvement of the services that we offer. It is also mentioned in our Complaints Policy (Section 9)
6.7	In some cases, a resident may have a legal entitlement to redress. The landlord should still offer a resolution where possible, obtaining legal advice as to how any offer of resolution should be worded.	Yes	We recognise that the complaints process can still play an effective role in resolving complaints (or part of a complaint) which involve legal action being taken (or proposed) by the customer.

Section 7 - Continuous learning and improvement

Mandatory 'must' requirements

Code section	Code requirement	Comply: Yes/No	Evidence, commentary, and any explanations
7.2	Accountability and transparency are integral to a positive complaint handling culture. Landlords must report back on wider learning and improvements from complaints in their annual report and more frequently to their residents, staff and scrutiny panels.	Partially	Whilst we do share learning with staff and board there is more work to do in terms of sharing this info via our website, newsletter with customers,

Best practice 'should' requirements

Code section	Code requirement	Comply: Yes/No	Evidence, commentary, and any explanations
7.3	A member of the governing body should be appointed to have lead responsibility for complaints to support a positive complaint handling culture. This role will be responsible for ensuring the governing body receives regular information on complaints that provides insight to the governing body on the landlord's complaint handling performance.	Yes	The Housing Director oversees complaints, taking reports to meetings with managers and the Society Board.
7.4	As a minimum, governing bodies should receive: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular updates on the volume, categories and outcome of complaints, alongside complaint handling performance including compliance with the Ombudsman's orders • Regular reviews of issues and trends arising from complaint handling, • The annual performance report produced by the Ombudsman, where applicable • Individual complaint outcomes where necessary, including where the Ombudsman made findings of severe maladministration or referrals to regulatory bodies. The implementation of management responses should be tracked to ensure they are delivered to agreed timescales. The annual self-assessment against the Complaint Handling Code for scrutiny and challenge. 	Yes	We currently take quarterly reports on complaints to the Society Board. We will be including this self-assessment in our December Board meeting report and will include the Ombudsman's annual performance report as an appendix in the end of year operations update.
7.5	Any themes or trends should be assessed by senior management to identify potential systemic issues, serious risks or policies and procedures that require revision. They should also be used to inform staff and contractor training.	Yes	Complaint reports are discussed at our management meetings and any concerns would be raised and discussed at senior management team discussions. Staff and contractors are kept informed of any issues that are found around complaints.
7.6	Landlords should have a standard objective in relation to complaint handling for all employees that reflects the need to:	Yes	Training emphasises how complaints are 'everyone's business,' and is embedded in one-to-ones with staff (our 121 template includes a section specifically for complaint learning).

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • have a collaborative and co-operative approach towards resolving complaints, working with colleagues across teams and departments • take collective responsibility for any shortfalls identified through complaints rather than blaming others • act within the Professional Standards for engaging with complaints as set by the Chartered Institute of Housing. 		
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Section 8 - Self-assessment and compliance

Mandatory 'must' requirements

Code section	Code requirement	Comply: Yes/No	Evidence, commentary, and any explanations
8.1	Landlords must carry out an annual self-assessment against the Code to ensure their complaint handling remains in line with its requirements.	Yes	Evidenced as per this document and we intend to repeat this exercise annually from now on.
8.2	Landlords must also carry out a self-assessment following a significant restructure and/or change in procedures.	Yes	Not applicable currently, but we would do this if a change in circumstances required it.
8.3	Following each self-assessment, a landlord must: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • report the outcome of their self-assessment to their governing body. In the case of local authorities, self-assessment outcomes should be reported to elected members • publish the outcome of their assessment on their website if they have one, or otherwise make accessible to residents • include the self-assessment in their annual report section on complaints handling performance 		This assessment is to be published once approved by the Society Board in December 2022. Complaints performance has been included in previous annual reports to tenants and will continue to be cascaded to tenants.