

## Self-Assessment Form: Concept Housing Association October 2022

This self-assessment form should be completed by the complaints officer and discussed at the landlord's governing body annually.

Evidence should be included to support all statements with additional commentary as necessary.

Explanations must also be provided where a mandatory 'must' requirement is not met to set out the rationale for the alternative approach adopted and why this delivers a better outcome.

### 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	Stated in Complaint Policy (version September 2020)
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	<b>Action</b> - <b><i>This statement will be included in the Complaints Policy</i></b>
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	
1.7	A landlord must accept a complaint unless there is a valid reason not to do so.	Yes	Occasionally a complaint may be received from someone who is not our resident, however we help where we can / signpost

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	Page 4 of the Complaints Policy sets out the circumstances
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	Included on Page 4 of the Complaints Policy

## 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, there must be more than one route of access into the complaints system.	Yes	Page 3 of Complaints Policy  Contacts for complaints posted on notice boards  <b>Actions</b> - <b>Include contacts in start-up pack</b> - <b>Penalties to be imposed via PPMF for non-compliance</b>
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	Complaints Policy on website  <b>Action</b> - <b>include in start-up pack</b>
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	Complaints Policy easy to find on the website. The webpage includes a form for on-line submission of a complaint
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	There is a range of accommodation available which caters for individual needs, however if there were needs greater than provision then this case would be referred to the Birmingham City Council / Adult Social Care
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.	No	<b>Action</b> - <b>Review to be undertaken of resident correspondence and communication to ensure that those elements are included as appropriate</b>

2.7	Landlords must provide residents with contact information for the Ombudsman as part of its regular correspondence with residents.	No	<b>As above (although included in Complaints Policy)</b>
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.	No	<b>Actions</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>To be included in start-up pack and on notice boards</b></li> <li>- <b>Penalties to be imposed via PPMF for non-compliance</b></li> </ul>

### 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	Resident and Community Engagement Team  Designated Complaints Manager
3.2	...the complaint handler appointed must have appropriate complaint handling skills and no conflicts of interest.	Yes	Complaints Manager and RACE Team have appropriate skills and experience. No conflicts of interest

## 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 <b>within five days of receipt.</b>	Yes	Two-stage complaints process only Complaints logged within 5 days of receipt and automatic response given when logging a complaint via the website.  <b>Action</b> - <b>document complaints procedure for internal audit purposes</b>

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	Recorded via PACE
4.6	A complaint investigation must be conducted in an impartial manner.	Yes	No conflict of interests in the RACE Team.  Restructure of RACE Team includes recruitment to expand the team
4.7	The complaint handler must: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• deal with complaints on their merits</li> <li>• act independently and have an open mind</li> <li>• take measures to address any actual or perceived conflict of interest</li> <li>• consider all information and evidence carefully</li> <li>• keep the complaint confidential as far as possible, with information only disclosed if necessary to properly investigate the matter.</li> </ul>	Yes	<b>Action</b> - <b>these elements to be included in job role profile of RACE Team</b>
4.11	Landlords must adhere to any reasonable arrangements agreed with residents in terms of frequency and method of communication	Yes	Residents are updated throughout the complaints process. This is usually by email or in person given the individual / specific needs / vulnerabilities of residents
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"> <li>• set out their position</li> <li>• comment on any adverse findings before a final decision is made.</li> </ul>	Yes	Safeguarding matters linked to a complaint are given utmost importance and any staff linked to such a complaint are removed from the case / investigated  Managing agents are given the opportunity to respond to a complaint from a resident and are informed when the final decision is made
4.13	A landlord must include in its complaints policy its timescales for a resident to request escalation of a complaint	No	<b>Action</b> - <b>to be included in the Complaints Policy</b>

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.	No	<b>Action</b> - <b>wording to this effect to be added to the Complaints Policy.</b>
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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	All stages of the complaint and all associated correspondence is logged on PACE
4.18	Landlords must have policies and procedures in place for managing unacceptable behaviour from residents and/or their representatives when pursuing a complaint.	Yes	<b>Action</b> - <b>consider if it is appropriate to include in the SLA the responsibilities of the managing agent to facilitate the complaints process jointly with CHA and to co-operate in investigations.</b>

## 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 <b><u>within 10 working days</u></b> 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	Exceptional circumstances relate to where there are difficulties in communicating with the resident.
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.	Yes	Resident is kept updated during the process and the complaint closed when the resident has been informed of the outcome.

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	All points raised in a complaint are logged and addressed, reference to policy, law, good practice where appropriate.
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"> <li>• the complaint stage</li> <li>• the decision on the complaint</li> <li>• the reasons for any decisions made</li> <li>• the details of any remedy offered to put things right</li> <li>• details of any outstanding actions</li> <li>• details of how to escalate the matter to stage two if the resident is not satisfied with the answer</li> </ul>	Yes	This is generally undertaken by telephone or face to face due to the needs of the residents.  Where in writing this is usually by email.  <b>Action</b> - <b>communication with resident to be explicit in terms of escalating the matter to stage two</b>



### 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	Complaints Policy has 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"> <li>• the complaint stage</li> <li>• the complaint definition</li> <li>• the decision on the complaint</li> <li>• the reasons for any decisions made</li> <li>• the details of any remedy offered to put things right</li> <li>• details of any outstanding actions</li> </ul> details of how to escalate the matter to the Housing Ombudsman Service if the resident remains dissatisfied	Yes	This is generally undertaken by telephone or face to face due to the needs of the residents.  Where in writing this is usually by email.  <b>Action</b> <b>communication with resident to be explicit in terms of escalating the matter HOS if resident remains dissatisfied</b>

## 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	Included in Complaints Policy  <b>Action</b> - <b>Report to Customer Committee on lessons learnt via action plan to ensure there are service improvements as a result</b>
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	
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	
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	Included in Complaints Policy

## 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.	No	<b>Action</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- <b><i>CII Strategy being progressed October 2022 onwards</i></b></li><li>- <b><i>reporting on wider learning and improvements to be included in annual report and in reporting to residents / staff / Customer Panel</i></b></li></ul>

## 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	To be reported to Customer Committee 13 <sup>th</sup> October 2022
8.2	Landlords must also carry out a self-assessment following a significant restructure and/or change in procedures.	Yes	
8.3	<p>Following each self-assessment, a landlord must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>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</li> <li>publish the outcome of their assessment on their website if they have one, or otherwise make accessible to residents</li> <li>include the self-assessment in their annual report section on complaints handling performance</li> </ul>	Yes	<p>To be reported to Customer Committee 13<sup>th</sup> October 2022</p> <p>To be published on website on Board approval December 2022</p>