

Self-assessment form

Compliance with the Complaint Handling Code

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Definition of a complaint

Does the complaints process use the following definition of a complaint?

Yes

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.

Does the policy have exclusions where a complaint will not be considered?

Yes

Are these exclusions reasonable and fair to residents?

Yes

Evidence relied upon

1. The exclusions are made clear, and advice and guidance can be sought if residents are not sure about any exclusions to the policy.
2. An Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) has been carried out on the whole policy by the Council's Policy, Scrutiny and Comms Officer and signed off by the Head of Corporate Services.

We are seeking feedback from tenants on the policy which can be used to make further improvements where necessary.

Accessibility

Are multiple accessibility routes available for residents to make a complaint?

Yes

Is the complaints policy and procedure available online?

Yes

Do we have a reasonable adjustments policy?

Yes

Do we regularly advise residents about our complaints process?

Yes

Complaints team and process

Is there a complaint officer or equivalent in post?

Yes

Does the complaint officer have autonomy to resolve complaints?

Yes

Does the complaint officer have authority to compel engagement from other departments to resolve disputes?

Yes

If there is a third stage to the complaints procedure are residents involved in the decision making?

n/a

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?

Yes

Do we keep a record of complaint correspondence including correspondence from the resident?

Yes

At what stage are most complaints resolved?

Yes

Stage 1

Communication

Are residents kept informed and updated during the complaints process?

Yes

Are residents informed of the landlord's position and given a chance to respond and challenge any area of dispute before the final decision? (paragraph is included that offers to discuss the matter further if required)

Yes

Are all complaints acknowledged and logged within five days?

Yes

Are residents advised of how to escalate at the end of each stage?

Yes

What proportion of complaints are resolved at stage one?

Yes

The majority are resolved at stage 1.

34 stage 1 complaints were recorded for 2019/20, 2 of which escalated to stage 2

What proportion of complaints are resolved at stage two?

The majority.

1 of the stage 2 complaints during 2019/20 was dealt with by the Ombudsman

What proportion of complaint responses are sent within Code timescales?

- Stage one
Stage one (with extension)
- Stage two
Stage two (with extension)

The Council has a local Performance Indicator reported to Cabinet, that 80% of all stage 1 complaints are monitored and responded to within 15 working days. For 2019/20 82% was achieved.

Where timescales have been extended did we have good reason?

Yes

Where timescales have been extended did we keep the resident informed?

Yes

What proportion of complaints do we resolve to residents' satisfaction?

2019/20:

16 not upheld

8 partially upheld

10 upheld

There is an offer in each reply of who to contact to discuss the content of the complaint response further if required.

Cooperation with Housing Ombudsman Service

Were all requests for evidence responded to within 15 days?

Yes

Where the timescale was extended did we keep the Ombudsman informed?

n/a

Fairness in complaint handling

Are residents able to complain via a representative throughout?

Yes

If advice was given, was this accurate and easy to understand?

Yes

How many cases did we refuse to escalate?

None

What was the reason for the refusal?

Outcomes and remedies

Where something has gone wrong are we taking appropriate steps to put things right?

Yes

Continuous learning and improvement

What improvements have we made as a result of learning from complaints?

Detailed Report was provided to the service containing (8) service improvements as part of year end statistics for final checks, and any follow up action and analysis of performance as required.

How do we share these lessons with:

a) residents?

Include details in the complaint reply where appropriate to do so. Plans to include this in the 'In Touch' tenants newsletter which is produced twice annually, also have periodical articles in the tenants digital newsletter

b) the board/governing body?

c) In the Annual Report? **YES**, we refer to making service improvements where appropriate as a result of complaints made.

Service Improvements identified throughout the year are also provided to the service as part of year end reporting for final checks, any necessary follow up action, and analysis of performance as required.

Has the Code made a difference to how we respond to complaints?

We are aiming to improve on response time frames where possible and appropriate to do so.

What changes have we made?

Refreshed complaints policy to take into account the above. 'Urgent matters will be dealt with as a matter of priority'.

Plus to raise awareness and provide information about the Code and the Council's complaints policy we have:

- Refreshed the website
- Updated the policy
- Created new posters for customer areas
- Inclusion in Tenant's 'In Touch' Mag
- Staff newsletter raising awareness: H/O Code, Refreshed policy, Overview & Scrutiny approval of Annual Reports, LGSCO New Complaint guidance
- Sought feedback from our tenants ,tenant and resident groups(TRAs) BATRA, and Bassetlaw Tenant Forum members
- Inclusion in the new tenant e-newsletter
- As a matter of good practice we will raise awareness and seek feedback routinely to ensure the complaints policy and procedure remains fit for purpose.
- Final refresh of complaints policy to be undertaken by 31.3.21