

Appendix A: Self-assessment form

This self-assessment form should be completed by the complaints officer and it must be reviewed and approved by the landlord's governing body at least annually.

Once approved, landlords must publish the self-assessment as part of the annual complaint's performance and service improvement report on their website. The governing body's response to the report must be published alongside this.

Landlords are required to complete the self-assessment in full and support all statements with evidence, with additional commentary as necessary.

We recognise that there may be a small number of circumstances where landlords are unable to meet the requirements, for example, if they do not have a website. In these circumstances, we expect landlords to deliver the intentions of the Code in an alternative way, for example by publishing information in a public area so that it is easily accessible.

Section 1: Definition of a complaint

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
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 landlord, its own staff, or those acting on its behalf, affecting a resident or group of residents.'</i>	Yes	This is evidenced on page 2 of the complaints policy.	The definition is not exactly the same however we will update this if required.
1.3	A resident does not have to use the word 'complaint' for it to be treated as such. Whenever a resident expresses dissatisfaction landlords must give them the choice to make complaint. A complaint that is submitted via a third party or representative must be handled in line with the landlord's complaints policy.	Yes	This is evidenced on page 2 and page 3 of the Council's complaints policy. Housing.Complaints.Procedure-Revised-Jun2024.pdf	We recognise that a customer does not have to use the word "complaint" as per our definition of a complaint on page 2.
1.4	Landlords must recognise the difference between a service request and a complaint. This must be set out in their complaints policy. A service request is a request from a resident to the landlord requiring action to be taken to put something right. Service requests are not complaints, but must be recorded, monitored and reviewed regularly.	Yes	This is evidenced on page 2 of the Council's complaints policy. Housing.Complaints.Procedure-Revised-Jun2024.pdf	This is referenced on page 2 of the complaints policy under the heading "definition of a service request".
1.5	A complaint must be raised when the resident expresses dissatisfaction with the response to their service request, even if	Yes	This is evidenced on page 2 of the Council's complaints policy.	This is referenced under the heading "definition of a service request".

	the handling of the service request remains ongoing. Landlords must not stop their efforts to address the service request if the resident complains.		Housing.Complaints.Procedure-Revised-Jun2024.pdf	
1.6	An expression of dissatisfaction with services made through a survey is not defined as a complaint, though wherever possible, the person completing the survey should be made aware of how they can pursue a complaint if they wish to. Where landlords ask for wider feedback about their services, they also must provide details of how residents can complain.	Yes	The complaints policy is published online which defines how residents can complain. Housing.Complaints.Procedure-Revised-Jun2024.pdf	We will sign post any residents to our policy during conversations, literature is also distributed during a new tenancy sign up given details of how residents can complain.

Section 2: Exclusions

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
2.1	Landlords must accept a complaint unless there is a valid reason not to do so. If landlords decide not to accept a complaint, they must be able to evidence their reasoning. Each complaint must be considered on its own merits	Yes	This is evidenced on page 3 of the complaint's procedure. Housing.Complaints.Procedure-Revised-Jun2024.pdf	<p>We will not investigate a matter that has previously been fully investigated through our internal complaints process and a written response given.</p> <p>We will not investigate an anonymous complaint where we are unable to verify the credibility of the complaint.</p> <p>We will not investigate a complaint that has an ongoing legal claim.</p>
2.2	<p>A complaints policy must set out the circumstances in which a matter will not be considered as a complaint or escalated, and these circumstances must be fair and reasonable to residents. Acceptable exclusions include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The issue giving rise to the complaint occurred over twelve months ago. Legal proceedings have started. This is defined as details of the claim, such as the Claim Form and Particulars of Claim, having been filed at court. 	Yes	This is evidenced on page 3 of the complaint's procedure. Housing.Complaints.Procedure-Revised-Jun2024.pdf	As above

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Matters that have previously been considered under the complaints policy. 			
2.3	Landlords must accept complaints referred to them within 12 months of the issue occurring or the resident becoming aware of the issue, unless they are excluded on other grounds. Landlords must consider whether to apply discretion to accept complaints made outside this time limit where there are good reasons to do so.	Yes	This is referenced on page 3 of the complaint's procedure. Housing.Complaints.Procedure-Revised-Jun2024.pdf	We will accept complaints made within 12 months of the issue occurring and may apply discretion based on the subject matter if it falls outside of this time frame.
2.4	If a landlord decides not to accept a complaint, an 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. If the Ombudsman does not agree that the exclusion has been fairly applied, the Ombudsman may tell the landlord to take on the complaint.			We do this however it is not explicitly set out in the Housing Complaints procedure, and we will amend the procedure to include wording that will cover this.
2.5	Landlords must not take a blanket approach to excluding complaints; they must consider the individual circumstances of each complaint.	Yes	This is referenced on page 3 of the complaint's procedure. Housing.Complaints.Procedure-Revised-Jun2024.pdf	Each complaint received is reviewed on its own merit and a decision is made to progress accordingly.

Section 3: Accessibility and Awareness

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
3.1	Landlords must make it easy for residents to complain by providing different channels through which they can make a complaint. Landlords must consider their duties under the Equality Act 2010 and anticipate the needs and reasonable adjustments of residents who may need to access the complaints process.	Yes	This is referenced on page 5 of the complaints policy. This is referenced on page 3 of the complaint's procedure. Housing.Complaints.Procedure-Revised-Jun2024.pdf	Residents can make a complaint via the following means. Write to: Sunderland City Council, Housing Management Service City Hall, Plater Way, Sunderland, SR1 3AA. Telephone: 0191 561 2715 Email: sunderlandhousing@ Sunderland.gov.uk Website: www.sunderland.gov.uk Via a local Councillor or Member of Parliament Social media: @SunderlandUK Facebook: Sunderland UK Official
3.2	Residents must be able to raise their complaints in any way and with any member of staff. All staff must be aware of the complaints process and be able to pass details of the complaint to the appropriate person within the landlord.	Yes	This is referenced on page 2 of the complaints policy.	All staff have been briefed on how a resident can make a complaint. Complaint literature is handed out to residents when they accept a property giving all details of how to make a complaint including contacting the Housing Ombudsman. Complaints is also an agenda item on Housing meetings.

3.3	High volumes of complaints must not be seen as a negative, as they can be indicative of a well-publicised and accessible complaints process. Low complaint volumes are potentially a sign that residents are unable to complain.	Yes	Complaints and resident feedback are encouraged. The complaints policy is readily available online.	Complaints policy is available online, we publish complaint stats as part of the annual report and view these as a positive.
3.4	Landlords must make their complaint policy available in a clear and accessible format for all residents. This will detail the two-stage process, what will happen at each stage, and the timeframes for responding. The policy must also be published on the landlord's website.	Yes	The policy is clear and accessible and outlines all of the complaint stages.	The complaints process is available online, in addition residents are issued literature during the tenancy sign up on how they are able to raise a complaint.
3.5	The policy must explain how the landlord will publicise details of the complaints policy, including information about the Ombudsman and this Code.	Yes	The policy is explained in full and has signposting information in relation to the Housing Ombudsman.	The policy is explained in full and has signposting information in relation to the Housing Ombudsman.
3.6	Landlords must 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.	Yes	Page 3 of the Complaints policy covers this.	We will allow a resident to have a representative assist them with a complaint as long as they have written consent to do so.

3.7	Landlords must provide residents with information on their right to access the Ombudsman service and how the individual can engage with the Ombudsman about their complaint.	Yes	This is covered on page 5 of the complaints policy.	This information is included within the complaints policy, literature is handed out during the tenancy sign up and staff will have conversations with residents promoting the Ombudsman service.
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Section 4: Complaint Handling Staff

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
4.1	Landlords must have a person or team assigned to take responsibility for complaint handling, including liaison with the Ombudsman and ensuring complaints are reported to the governing body (or equivalent). This Code will refer to that person or team as the 'complaints officer'. This role may be in addition to other duties.	Yes	This is covered on page 2 of the complaints policy.	The Housing Operations Manager has responsibility for investigating stage 1 complaints, the Council has a centralised complaints team who will investigate stage 2 complaints and who oversee the process including learning from complaints.
4.2	The complaints officer must have access to staff at all levels to facilitate the prompt resolution of complaints. They must also have the authority and autonomy to act to resolve disputes promptly and fairly.	Yes	This is covered on page 2 and 3 of the complaints policy.	The Housing Operations Manager and central complaints team have access to staff at all levels in the organisation to help resolve complaints.
4.3	Landlords are expected to prioritise complaint handling and a culture of learning from complaints. All relevant staff must be suitably trained in the importance of complaint handling. It is important that complaints are seen as a core service and must be resourced to handle complaints effectively	Yes	This is covered in the complaints policy.	The Council has a positive view towards complaints, there is a Complaints Team, and the service is resourced appropriately.

Section 5: The Complaint Handling Process

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
5.1	Landlords must have a single policy in place for dealing with complaints covered by this Code. Residents must not be treated differently if they complain.	Yes	The complaints policy covers this requirement.	The organisation has a single policy in place for dealing with Housing complaints and ensures residents are not treated unfairly if they choose to complain.
5.2	The early and local resolution of issues between landlords and residents is key to effective complaint handling. It is not appropriate to have extra named stages (such as 'stage 0' or 'informal complaint') as this causes unnecessary confusion.	Yes	This is covered in the complaints policy.	The aim is to resolve issues before they become a complaint and the Council's Housing team records those issues for future learning and improvement. There is no stage 0 or equivalent named in the policy.
5.3	A process with more than two stages is not acceptable under any circumstances as this will make the complaint process unduly long and delay access to the Ombudsman.	Yes	This is covered in the complaints policy.	The current process does not have more than two stages.
5.4	Where a landlord's complaint response is handled by a third party (e.g. a contractor or independent adjudicator) at any stage, it must form part of the two stage complaints process set out in this Code. Residents must not be expected to go through two complaints processes.	Yes	As above	As above
5.5	Landlords are responsible for ensuring that any third parties handle complaints in line with the Code.	Yes	As above	As above

5.6	When a complaint is logged at Stage 1 or escalated to Stage 2, landlords must set out their understanding of the complaint and the outcomes the resident is seeking. The Code will refer to this as “the complaint definition”. If any aspect of the complaint is unclear, the resident must be asked for clarification.	Yes	The complaint definition is included within the complaints policy.	We will obtain the outcome the resident is seeking during the initial investigation and outline this in the written response.
5.7	When a complaint is acknowledged at either stage, landlords must be clear which aspects of the complaint they are, and are not, responsible for and clarify any areas where this is not clear.	Yes	This is covered within the complaints policy.	The aspects of the complaint for which we are responsible will be highlighted in the written response and also during conversations with the resident.
5.8	At each stage of the complaints process, complaint handlers must: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. deal with complaints on their merits, act independently, and have an open mind. b. give the resident a fair chance to set out their position. c. take measures to address any actual or perceived conflict of interest; and d. consider all relevant information and evidence carefully. 	Yes	This is covered within the complaints policy.	The investigating officers deal with complaints independently and have had no prior involvement in a matter. We will also ensure the resident has an opportunity to set out their position whilst taking steps to address any conflict of interest. Each piece of evidence provided by the resident or through internal channels is reviewed when investigating a complaint.
5.9	Where a response to a complaint will fall outside the timescales set out in this Code, the landlord must agree with the resident suitable intervals for keeping them informed about their complaint.	Yes	This is covered in page 4 and 5 of the complaints policy.	If the response falls outside of the current timescale, we will contact the resident to explain why and follow that up in writing.

5.10	Landlords must make reasonable adjustments for residents where appropriate under the Equality Act 2010. Landlords must keep a record of any reasonable adjustments agreed, as well as a record of any disabilities a resident has disclosed. Any agreed reasonable adjustments must be kept under active review.	Yes	This is covered in page 5 of the complaints policy.	If a resident discloses a disability, we will record this on our Housing Management system. Any adjustments made will be kept under review.
5.11	Landlords must not refuse to escalate a complaint through all stages of the complaints procedure unless it has valid reasons to do so. Landlords must clearly set out these reasons, and they must comply with the provisions set out in section 2 of this Code.	Yes	This is covered on page 4 and 5 of the complaints policy.	If we receive an escalation request, we will progress that accordingly and acknowledge this with the resident.
5.12	A full record must be kept of the complaint, 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 relevant supporting documentation such as reports or surveys.	Yes	Electronic complaint file record.	A full record including the date, correspondence, and documentation is saved electronically on the council's complaints system.
5.13	Landlords must have processes in place to ensure a complaint can be remedied at any stage of its complaints process. Landlords must ensure appropriate remedies can be provided at any stage of the complaints process without the need for escalation.	Yes	This is covered in the complaints policy.	The ethos of the organisation is to resolve complaints at the first point of contact; however, all staff have the autonomy to do this throughout each stage of the complaint's procedure.
5.14	Landlords must have policies and procedures in place for managing	Yes	This is covered on page 7 of the complaints policy.	Any residents that behave in an unacceptable way will have

	unacceptable behaviour from residents and/or their representatives. Landlords must be able to evidence reasons for putting any restrictions in place and must keep restrictions under regular review.			bespoke arrangements made such as having one point of contact within the organisation. This will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis and will be heard by an independent panel.
5.15	Any restrictions placed on contact due to unacceptable behaviour must be proportionate and demonstrate regard for the provisions of the Equality Act 2010.	Yes	This is covered in the complaints policy.	An Equality and Proportionality assessment will be carried out during the decision-making process for those individuals using information that we hold on to record or the residents gives us.

Section 6: Complaints Stages

Stage 1

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
6.1	Landlords must have processes in place to consider which complaints can be responded to as early as possible, and which require further investigation. Landlords must consider factors such as the complexity of the complaint and whether the resident is vulnerable or at risk. Most stage 1 complaints can be resolved promptly, and an explanation, apology or resolution provided to the resident.	Yes	This is covered on page 4 and 5 of the complaints policy.	We will work towards the timescales as set out in the code, if
6.2	Complaints must be acknowledged, defined and logged at stage 1 of the complaint's procedure <u>within five working days of the complaint being received.</u>	Yes	This is covered on page 4 of the complaints policy.	All complaints are acknowledged within 5 working days as part of our process.
6.3	Landlords must issue a full response to stage 1 complaints <u>within 10 working days</u> of the complaint being acknowledged.	Yes	This is covered on page 4 of the complaints policy.	A full response will be issued in writing within 10 working days, if we require further time the resident will be made aware verbally and in writing when doing so.
6.4	Landlords must decide whether an extension to this timescale is needed when considering the complexity of the complaint and then inform the resident of the expected timescale for response. Any extension must be no more than 10	Yes	This is covered on page 4 and 5 of the complaints policy.	If the response falls outside of the current timescale, we will contact the resident to explain why and follow that up in writing.

	working days without good reason, and the reason(s) must be clearly explained to the resident.			
6.5	When an organisation informs a resident about an extension to these timescales, they must be provided with the contact details of the Ombudsman.	Yes	This is covered in page 4 and 5 of the complaints policy.	We signpost the Housing Ombudsman at all stages of the complaints process.
6.6	A complaint response must be provided 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 promptly with appropriate updates provided to the resident.	Yes	This is covered on page 5 of the complaints policy.	We will respond within the codes timescales and track any actions that have been agreed, for example if a repair is due to be carried out the officer dealing with the complaint will track the progress and communicate this with the resident.
6.7	Landlords must address all points raised in the complaint definition and provide clear reasons for any decisions, referencing the relevant policy, law and good practice where appropriate.	Yes	This is covered in the complaints policy.	All points will be itemised and addressed within the stage one and two responses. We will refer to law, policy and good practice where possible.
6.8	Where residents raise additional complaints during the investigation, these must be incorporated into the stage 1 response if they are related, and the stage 1 response has not been issued. Where the stage 1 response has been issued, the new issues are unrelated to the issues already being investigated or it would unreasonably delay the response, the new issues must be logged as a new complaint.	Yes	This is evidenced on page 4 of the complaints policy.	

6.9	<p>Landlords must confirm the following in writing to the resident at the completion of stage 1 in clear, plain language:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. the complaint stage. b. the complaint definition. c. the decision on the complaint. d. the reasons for any decisions made. e. the details of any remedy offered to put things right. f. details of any outstanding actions; and g. details of how to escalate the matter to stage 2 if the individual is not satisfied with the response. 	Yes	This is covered in the complaints policy.	When the written response is issued it will clearly identify the stage, definition, decision, remedy and outstanding actions which will be tracked. Each response will have the details at the footer of the letter of how a resident can escalate a complaint.
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Stage 2

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
6.10	If all or part of the complaint is not resolved to the resident's satisfaction at stage 1, it must be progressed to stage 2 of the landlord's procedure. Stage 2 is the landlord's final response.	Yes	This is evidenced on page 5 of the complaints policy.	A resident is notified of the next steps of the complaint process during verbal discussions and when the written response is issued.
6.11	Requests for stage 2 must be acknowledged, defined and logged at stage 2 of the complaint's procedure within five working days of the escalation request being received.	Yes	This is evidenced on page 5 of the complaints policy.	These are acknowledged and logged don the Council's complaints system.
6.12	Residents must not be required to explain their reasons for requesting a stage 2 consideration. Landlords are expected to make reasonable efforts to understand why	Yes	This is evidenced on page 5 of the complaints policy.	We contact residents and ask them what outcome they are seeking at every stage of the process.

	a resident remains unhappy as part of its stage 2 response.			
6.13	The person considering the complaint at stage 2 must not be the same person that considered the complaint at stage 1.	Yes	This is evidenced on page 5 of the complaints policy.	The stage 2 complaint will be dealt with by the Council's central complaints team who were not involved at stage 1.
6.14	Landlords must issue a final response to the stage 2 within 20 working days of the complaint being acknowledged.	Yes	This is evidenced on page 5 of the complaints policy.	Stage 2 responses are issued within 20 working days and the resident is made aware of this.
6.15	Landlords must decide whether an extension to this timescale is needed when considering the complexity of the complaint and then inform the resident of the expected timescale for response. Any extension must be no more than 20 working days without good reason, and the reason(s) must be clearly explained to the resident.	Yes	This is evidenced on page 5 of the complaints policy.	We aim to issue all stage 2 responses within 20 days whoever if we need additional time, we will contact the resident and explain this verbally and in writing.
6.16	When an organisation informs a resident about an extension to these timescales, they must be provided with the contact details of the Ombudsman.	Yes	This is evidenced on page 5 of the complaints policy.	The contact details for the Ombudsman are provided at this stage.
6.17	A complaint response must be provided 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 promptly with appropriate updates provided to the resident.	Yes	This is evidenced on page 5 of the complaints policy.	A response is issued when the answer is known, for example if there are outstanding action such as repairs to be concluded those will be tracked separately and the resident kept up to date. The case handler will continue to manage that part of the process.
6.18	Landlords must address all points raised in the complaint definition and provide clear reasons for any decisions, referencing the	Yes	This is evidenced within the complaints policy.	Each point the resident makes will be addressed in turn giving clear reasons for the decision

	relevant policy, law and good practice where appropriate.			and will reference policy, law and good practice.
6.19	Landlords must confirm the following in writing to the resident at the completion of stage 2 in clear, plain language: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. the complaint stage; b. the complaint definition; c. the decision on the complaint; d. the reasons for any decisions made; e. the details of any remedy offered to put things right; f. details of any outstanding actions; and g. details of how to escalate the matter to the Ombudsman Service if the individual remains dissatisfied. 	Yes	This is evidence on page 4 and 5 of the complaints policy.	In the written response the stage, definition, decisions, reasons and remedy are all included as standard in the response. This also includes signposting to the Housing Ombudsman.
6.20	Stage 2 is the landlord's final response and must involve all suitable staff members needed to issue such a response.	Yes	This is evidenced within the complaints policy.	The Council's central complaints team will work with the Housing Team to issue a response.

Section 7: Putting things right

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
7.1	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. These can include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apologising; 	Yes	Individual complaint files.	The Council is keen to put things right where they have gone wrong. Managers dealing with complaints will always have a mind to appropriate remedy in instances where things have gone wrong.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acknowledging where things have gone wrong; • Providing an explanation, assistance or reasons; • Taking action if there has been delay; • Reconsidering or changing a decision; • Amending a record or adding a correction or addendum; • Providing a financial remedy; • Changing policies, procedures or practices. 			
7.2	Any remedy offered must reflect the impact on the resident as a result of any fault identified.	Yes	This is evidenced on page 6 of the complaints policy.	Remedy may be made by way of a gesture or more likely financial compensation following the Housing Ombudsman's guidance on the subject.
7.3	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	This is evidenced on page 6 of the complaints policy.	If for example the remedy is financial compensation, a resident must agree the offer or negotiate to a settlement. At that point the resident will be asked to sign an acceptance form, and the payment will be monitored until such time the resident has received it.
7.4	Landlords must take account of the guidance issued by the Ombudsman when deciding on appropriate remedies.	Yes	This is evidenced on page 6 of the complaints policy.	When considering remedies, we will review the Ombudsman's guidance in order to make an informed decision.

Section 8: Self-assessment, reporting and compliance

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
8.1	<p>Landlords must produce an annual complaints performance and service improvement report for scrutiny and challenge, which must include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. the annual self-assessment against this Code to ensure their complaint handling policy remains in line with its requirements. b. a qualitative and quantitative analysis of the landlord's complaint handling performance. This must also include a summary of the types of complaints the landlord has refused to accept; c. any findings of non-compliance with this Code by the Ombudsman; d. the service improvements made as a result of the learning from complaints; e. any annual report about the landlord's performance from the Ombudsman; and f. any other relevant reports or publications produced by the Ombudsman in relation to the work of the landlord. 	Yes		Information will be included in the annual complaints report where applicable.
8.2	The annual complaints performance and service improvement report must be reported to the landlord's governing body (or equivalent) and published on the on the section of its website relating to complaints.	Yes	The Member Responsible for Complaints (MRC) will present the information required to the Housing Management Board.	

	The governing body's response to the report must be published alongside this.			
8.3	Landlords must also carry out a self-assessment following a significant restructure, merger and/or change in procedures.	Yes	The council is aware that this is a requirement and will undertake as necessary.	
8.4	Landlords may be asked to review and update the self-assessment following an Ombudsman investigation.	Yes	This will be undertaken when there has been an Ombudsman investigation.	
8.5	If a landlord is unable to comply with the Code due to exceptional circumstances, such as a cyber incident, they must inform the Ombudsman, provide information to residents who may be affected, and publish this on their website Landlords must provide a timescale for returning to compliance with the Code.	Yes	If this happens, we will follow this process. The website may not be accessible however our Business Continuity Plans would allow us to manage complaints.	

Section 9: Scrutiny & oversight: continuous learning and improvement

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
9.1	Landlords must look beyond the circumstances of the individual complaint and consider whether service improvements can be made as a result of any learning from the complaint.	Yes	The Council would always consider whether improvements could be made to a service beyond the individual complaint.	
9.2	A positive complaint handling culture is integral to the effectiveness with which landlords resolve disputes. Landlords must use complaints as a source of intelligence to identify issues and introduce positive changes in service delivery.	Yes	Complaints are used to identify themes and trends.	
9.3	Accountability and transparency are also integral to a positive complaint handling culture. Landlords must report back on wider learning and improvements from complaints to stakeholders, such as residents' panels, staff and relevant committees.	Yes	Any learning and improvements are reported in future annual reports.	
9.4	Landlords must appoint a suitably senior lead person as accountable for their complaint handling. This person must assess any themes or trends to identify potential systemic issues, serious risks, or policies and procedures that require revision.	Yes	The Council has a dedicated Complaints Team.	
9.5	In addition to this a member of the governing body (or equivalent) must be appointed to have lead responsibility for complaints to support a positive complaint		The Housing Operations Manager is the appointed Member Responsible for Complaints (MRC) and is also a	

	handling culture. This person is referred to as the Member Responsible for Complaints ('the MRC').		member of the governing body (the Housing Management Board)	
9.6	The MRC will be responsible for ensuring the governing body receives regular information on complaints that provides insight on the landlord's complaint handling performance. This person must have access to suitable information and staff to perform this role and report on their findings.		Updates will be presented to the Housing Management Board as and when required by the Member Responsible for Complaints (MRC).	
9.7	As a minimum, the MRC and the governing body (or equivalent) must receive: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. regular updates on the volume, categories and outcomes of complaints, alongside complaint handling performance; b. regular reviews of issues and trends arising from complaint handling; c. regular updates on the outcomes of the Ombudsman's investigations and progress made in complying with orders related to severe maladministration findings; and d. annual complaints performance and service improvement report. 		Updates will be presented to the Housing Management Board as and when required by the Member Responsible for Complaints (MRC).	
9.8	Landlords must have a standard objective in relation to complaint handling for all relevant employees or third parties that reflects the need to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. have a collaborative and co-operative approach towards resolving complaints, working with colleagues across teams and departments; 	Yes	The Council's expectations regarding responsibility for the process is set out on page 2 of the complaints policy.	

	<p>b. take collective responsibility for any shortfalls identified through complaints, rather than blaming others; and</p> <p>c. act within the professional standards for engaging with complaints as set by any relevant professional body.</p>			
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