



Self-assessment against the new complaints handling code

We've reviewed 'Tell Us', our complaints and compliments policy and procedure, against the new complaints handling code to highlight actions needed and this self-assessment is available to view on our web-site. 'Tell Us' was last reviewed in May 2019 and was due for review by May 2022, but having regard to the publication of the new code we'll be working with our client scrutiny and involvement team to carry out an earlier review that will be completed by 31 August 2021.

| Provision in code | Evidence | Assessment |
|--|--|------------|
| Definition of a Complaint | | |
| <p>Does the complaints process use the following definition of a complaint?</p> <p><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 and individual resident or group of residents"</i></p> | <p>Our policy defines a complaint as:</p> <p><i>'where it is thought that one of our services has failed to meet its published standards, not met its responsibilities or followed policies or failed to provide an agreed services, not considered the right factors when making or carrying out a decision, acted unfairly, behaved rudely or discourteously.</i></p> <p>Our definition is broader but doesn't specifically mention staff. We're happy with our current definition, but this will be considered with our client scrutiny and involvement team as part of the planned review.</p> | |
| <p>Does the Policy have exclusions where a complaint will not be considered?</p> <p>If so, are they fair and reasonable to residents?</p> | <p>The only exclusions in our policy are who we accept complaints from and this doesn't exclude any clients. We believe our arrangements are fair and reasonable, but as part of the planned review we'll consider whether additional exclusions are required in line with the code to potentially exclude complaints that have already been dealt with.</p> | |
| Accessibility | | |
| <p>Are multiple accessibility routes available for residents to make a complaint?</p> | <p>Yes, people can complain in whatever format they like.</p> | |
| <p>Is the complaints policy and procedure available online?</p> | <p>Yes for staff on our intranet, but not for clients on our website, so we'll add this by 30 June 2021.</p> | |
| <p>Are residents regularly advised about the complaints process?</p> | <p>Yes – our induction, quality assurance process and client survey all pick this up.</p> | |
| Complaints Process | | |
| <p>Is the complaints procedure comprised of two stages?</p> | <p>Our procedure has three stages:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manager • Regional Director • Senior management team (which needs updating following the review of our senior management structure) <p>This will be considered with our client scrutiny and involvement team as part of the planned review .</p> | |

| Provision in code | Existing application | Assessment |
|---|---|------------|
| Where there's a third stage, are residents involved in this? | No and this would be hard to achieve with the nature of our client groups and our turnover, but we share learning with our client involvement scrutiny team. This will be considered with our client scrutiny and involvement team as part of the planned review. | |
| In the final decision the landlord's policy shall include the right to refer the complaint to the Housing Ombudsman Service. This should be through a designated person within eight weeks of the final decision or directly by the resident after eight weeks. | Yes - but we don't specify time frames, so this will be considered with our client scrutiny and involvement team as part of the planned review. | |
| The complaints handling code sets out the following maximum timescales: Logging and acknowledgement of complaint – 5 working days Stage 1 decision – 10 working days from receipt of complaint Stage 2 response – 20 working days from request to escalate Stage 3 response – 2 working days from request to escalate | We have timeframes in our procedure. We log complaints and acknowledge within five working days, but don't specify decision time frames. This will be considered with our client scrutiny and involvement team as part of the planned review. | |
| Other aspects of the code not considered in the above analysis | | |
| <p>Landlords should report back on wider learning and improvements from complaints to their resident's, managers and staff. Feedback shall be regularly provided to relevant scrutiny panels, committee's and boards and be discussed, alongside scrutiny of the Ombudsman's annual landlord performance report – We discuss complaints with our client scrutiny and involvement team, but in the planned review we'll consider with our client scrutiny and involvement team whether this could be shared more widely with clients.</p> | | |
| <p>Learning and improvements from complaints should be included in the landlord's annual report – Due to the nature of our clients and services we don't produce an annual report for tenants, but in the planned review we'll consider with our client scrutiny and involvement team whether we do so in future.</p> | | |
| <p>The Ombudsman expects landlord's to carry out regular self-assessment against the code and take appropriate action to ensure their complaint handling is in line with the code. This assessment should be completed by 31 December 2020 – This is our assessment.</p> | | |
| <p>The Ombudsman expects landlords to report the outcome of their self-assessment to board members – The outcome will be considered by our Board on 9 February 2021.</p> | | |
| <p>The Ombudsman expects landlords to publish the outcome of their self-assessments – In the planned review we'll consider with our client scrutiny and involvement team how best to do this.</p> | | |