

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 complaints 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 wording is used in the current Feedback & Complaints Policy & Procedure at 8.4.	We use the terms individual/s, person as well as resident, as policy covers other services as well as provision of housing. Note, we use the term Company, not organisation.
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 covered in the current policy at 8.4. It is current practice.	Complaints are received from third parties and representatives. Housing and support staff always verbally offer residents the chance to make a complaint. This may not be formally recorded.
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	Yes	This is covered in the current policy at 8.4. It is current practice.	Service requests for maintenance, repairs, or additional equipment in rooms are logged. They are monitored at monthly minuted meetings with the maintenance sub-

	recorded, monitored and reviewed regularly.			contractor and are reported to the Board.
1.5	A complaint must be raised when the resident expresses dissatisfaction with the response to their service request, even if the handling of the service request remains ongoing. Landlords must not stop their efforts to address the service request if the resident complains.	Yes	This is covered in the current policy at 8.4. It is current practice.	
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	Annual satisfaction survey is delivered to all residents. It contains information about how to 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 covered in the current policy at 8.5. It is current practice.	
2.2	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: • 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 covered in the current policy at 8.5. It is also current practice.	

	• 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 covered in the current policy at 8.5. It is also current practice.	Policy updated to state twelve months. Presented to June 2025 Board
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.	Yes	This is covered in the current policy at 8.5. It is also current practice.	We have never refused a complaint.
2.5	Landlords must not take a blanket approach to excluding complaints; they must consider the individual circumstances of each complaint.	Yes	This is covered in the current policy at 8.5. It is also current practice.	We have never refused a complaint.

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 covered in the current policy at 8.10 and in the leaflet. It is current practice.	All materials for residents that mention complaints explain the different channels. People can complain via: • Direct to staff • Form on leaflet • In writing • By telephone • By email • Through website contact form • Via social media
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 covered in the current policy at 8.10 and in the leaflet. It is current practice.	All residents are given a copy of the leaflet when they sign for a property. Staff go through this with the person. Frontline staff pass on all complaints to their team leader, who will escalate as necessary.

				Staff receive training on complaints as part of induction. Complaints is in the Operational Manual for staff on day-to-day operations. As above re channels. Staff are aware because they go through the leaflet with new residents. Slot at team meeting covers complaints and reinforces the message that all feedback is useful, and the procedure. Directors and staff are encouraged to use Housing Ombudsman learning resources. Strategic Operations Director has completed ACAS course on investigating complaints.
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	This is covered in the current policy at 8.2.	This message is reinforced in Board reports. Slot at team meeting covers complaints and reinforces the message that all feedback is useful, and the procedure.

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	This current policy and leaflet are in easy-read format. It is published on the website.	
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	This is covered in the current policy at 8.7.	
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	This is covered in the current policy at 8.10. It is current practice.	We always check that a representative has authorisation if the resident is not present, for data protection and confidentiality.
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 in the current policy at 8.12 and in the leaflet.	It is also included in the satisfaction survey and on the website.

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	Phil Rowland, Strategic Operations Director, is designated complaints officer for all Midlands properties. Sara Ward, Operations Director (South West) is designated complaints officer for Swindon.	Warwick complaints are dealt with by the Assistant Director in that area, with support from Phil Rowland.
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		Both Directors have authority and autonomy to resolve disputes. Both also have ready access to senior management team for decisions and speedy resolution if necessary.
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 current policy at 8.1 and 8.2. It is current practice. There are no resources issues.	It is covered in staff training and all staff receive training in complaints and feedback. Monthly minuted meeting with maintenance sub-contractor discusses all feedback.

				Annual learning and improvements meetings follow the satisfaction survey and include all senior managers; the maintenance sub-contractor; they also consider matters raised in complaints. This is reported to all frontline staff. Changes have been made in response to feedback, eg last year we increased the number of properties with CCTV at the request of residents who said this would make them feel safer.
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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	One policy is in place. It is current practice not to treat anyone differently, and residents are told this. Covered in policy 8.6	.
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	Yes	This is covered in the current policy at 8.11 It is current practice	.

	stages (such as 'stage 0' or 'informal complaint') as this causes unnecessary confusion.			
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 current policy.	There are only 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		N/A. We do not use third parties. We are aware of this requirement if we were to use them.
5.5	Landlords are responsible for ensuring that any third parties handle complaints in line with the Code.	Yes		N/A. We do not use third parties. We are aware of this requirement if we were to use them.
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,	Yes	This is covered in the current policy at 8.11. It is current practice.	Last year, our processes and systems for recording complaints were improved. They will remain under continuous improvement. For 2025-26 we have added columns on any reasonable adjustments needed, so that

	the resident must be asked for clarification.			this information is now with the complaint admin.
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 in the current policy at 8.11. It is current practice.	Records demonstrate that each aspect raised by a complainant is treated as an individual complaint. Policy amended to add this specifically. Updated policy to go to June 2025 Board meeting.
5.8	At each stage of the complaints process, complaint handlers must: 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 in the current policy at 8.11. It is current practice.	
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 the current policy at 8.11. It is current practice.	
5.10	Landlords must make reasonable adjustments for residents where appropriate under the Equality Act	Yes	This is covered in the current policy at 8.11. It is current practice.	Recording system has been updated to capture any reasonable adjustments

	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.			needed, or any disabilities disclosed.
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 in the current policy at 8.11. It is current practice.	
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	This is covered in the current policy at 8.11. It is current practice.	Recording system was improved in June 2024 and reviewed in June 2025.
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 current policy at 8.11. It is current practice.	

5.14	Landlords must have policies and procedures in place for managing 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.	Yes	This is covered in the current policy at 8.13. It is also current practice.	
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 current policy at 8.13. It is also current practice.	

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 in the current policy at 8.11. It is current practice.	Frontline staff try to resolve complaints themselves. These are reported to team leaders and to the complaints officer. Any complaints that frontline staff and team leaders cannot resolve themselves are escalated to the complaints officer to resolve.
6.2	Complaints must be acknowledged, defined and logged at stage 1 of the complaints procedure <u>within five working days of the complaint being received</u> .	Yes	This is covered in the current policy at 8.11. It is current practice.	
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 in the current policy at 8.11. It is current practice.	
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	Yes	This is covered in the current policy at 8.11. It is current practice.	In practice, the timescale has only needed to be extended in situations involving unavoidable

	of the expected timescale for response. Any extension must be no more than 10 working days without good reason, and the reason(s) must be clearly explained to the resident.			issues such as sickness absence of any staff who need to be consulted eg if there is a dispute about what was said
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 the current policy at 8.11. It is current practice.	
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 in the current policy at 8.11. It is current practice.	
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 current policy at 8.11. It is current practice.	
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	Yes	This is covered in the current policy at 8.11. It is current practice.	

	investigated or it would unreasonably delay the response, the new issues must be logged as a new complaint.			
6.9	Landlords must confirm the following in writing to the resident at the completion of stage 1 in clear, plain language: 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 current policy at 8.11. It is current practice.	

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 covered in the current policy at 8.11. It is current practice.	
6.11	Requests for stage 2 must be acknowledged, defined and logged at stage 2 of the complaints procedure	Yes	This is covered in the current policy at 8.11. It is current practice.	

	within five working days of the escalation request being received.			
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 a resident remains unhappy as part of its stage 2 response.	Yes	This is covered in the current policy at 8.11. It is current practice.	
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 covered in the current policy at 8.11. It is current practice.	
6.14	Landlords must issue a final response to the stage 2 <u>within 20 working days</u> of the complaint being acknowledged.	Yes	This is covered in the current policy at 8.11. It is current practice.	
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 covered in the current policy at 8.11. It is current practice.	In practice, the timescale has only needed to be extended in situations involving unavoidable issues such as sickness absence of any staff who need to be consulted eg if there is a dispute about what was said
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 covered in the current policy at 8.11. It is current practice.	
6.17	A complaint response must be provided to the resident when the answer to the complaint is known, not when the	Yes	This is covered in the current policy at 8.11. It is current practice.	

	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.			
6.18	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 current policy at 8.11. It is current practice.	
6.19	Landlords must confirm the following in writing to the resident at the completion of stage 2 in clear, plain language: 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 covered in the current policy at 8.11. It is current practice.	
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 covered in the current policy at 8.11. It is current practice.	

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: • Apologising; • 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.	Yes	This is covered in the current policy at 8.11. It is current practice.	
7.2	Any remedy offered must reflect the impact on the resident as a result of any fault identified.	Yes	This is covered in the current policy at 8.11. It is current practice.	
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 covered in the current policy at 8.11. It is current practice.	

7.4	Landlords must take account of the guidance issued by the Ombudsman when deciding on appropriate remedies.	Yes	This is covered in the current policy at 8.11. It is current practice.	
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Section 8: Putting things right

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
8.1	Landlords must produce an annual complaints performance and service improvement report for scrutiny and challenge, which must include: 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	This is covered in the current policy at 8.9. It is current practice.	Report on 2024-25 complaints has been prepared and will be submitted to the Ombudsman within the specified timescale

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. The governing body's response to the report must be published alongside this.	Yes	This is covered in the current policy at 8.9. It is current practice.	Derventio report will go to the June 2025 Board meeting. Once their response is received, it will be added to a new section on our website.
8.3	Landlords must also carry out a self-assessment following a significant restructure, merger and/or change in procedures.	Yes		We are aware of this requirement if it were to apply
8.4	Landlords may be asked to review and update the self-assessment following an Ombudsman investigation.	Yes		We are aware of this requirement if it were to apply
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		We are aware of this requirement if it were to apply This has not occurred to date.

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	This is covered in the current policy at 8.1. It is current practice.	Monthly minuted meetings with maintenance sub-contractor consider issues raised as complaints. Complaints officer routinely considers service improvements when complaints received.
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	This is covered in the current policy at 8.1. It is current practice.	We also use our annual satisfaction survey (response rate 37% in 2023-24) to identify issues and make changes in service delivery. All senior operational managers are involved in these meetings; staff are given a summary of the findings.
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	This is covered in the current policy at 8.1. It is current practice.	There are no residents' panels or committees, but every house receives a copy of the Resident Report, which explains the findings of the satisfaction survey. There is also a section on complaints.

				For staff, one team learning slot a year at team meetings is allocated to complaints
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 Strategic Operations Director is a senior manager.	
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 handling culture. This person is referred to as the Member Responsible for Complaints ('the MRC').	Yes		Agreed at the June 2024 Board meeting
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.	Yes		Unchanged from 2024-25
9.7	As a minimum, the MRC and the governing body (or equivalent) must receive: a. regular updates on the volume, categories and outcomes of complaints,	Yes	This is covered in the current policy at 8.9. It is current practice. Jackie Carpenter, Assistant Director Operations, who is	Currently reported to the Board at each meeting.

	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.		responsible for corporate reporting to the Board, includes complaints in each Board report.	
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: a. have a collaborative and co-operative approach towards resolving complaints, working with colleagues across teams and departments; b. take collective responsibility for any shortfalls identified through complaints, rather than blaming others; and c. act within the professional standards for engaging with complaints as set by any relevant professional body.	Yes	This is covered in the current policy at 8.3. It is current practice.	