

Compliance with the Complaint Handling Code

1	Definition of a complaint	How we meet the standard
	<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 an individual resident or group of residents.</i></p>	<p>This definition is included in the Complaints Claims and Feedback policy and procedure - both are available on website on "About Us" page</p> <p>A link to the policy is also on the reporting a complaint page on website</p>
	<p>Does the policy have exclusions where a complaint will not be considered?</p>	<p>This information is included in a designated section of the Complaints Claims and Feedback policy</p>
	<p>Are these exclusions reasonable and fair to residents?</p> <p>Evidence relied upon</p>	<p>The Complaints Claims and Feedback policy has been assessed by our customer group and confirm these are fair and reasonable</p> <p>An Equality Impact Assessment has been completed on both the Complaints Claims and Feedback policy and procedure</p>
2	Accessibility	How we meet the standard
	<p>Are multiple accessibility routes available for residents to make a complaint?</p>	<p>Residents can submit complaints in any way that is convenient for them and includes the following channels:</p> <p>Website form Leaflet Letter Email Over phone Touchpoint store (face to face)</p>
	<p>Is the complaints policy and procedure available online?</p>	<p>The Complaints Claims and Feedback Policy and procedure are available on the website</p> <p>https://www.thirteengroup.co.uk/page/our-policies</p>
	<p>Do we have a reasonable adjustments policy?</p>	<p>Reasonable adjustments form part of the Equality & Diversity policy.</p>

	Do we regularly advise residents about our complaints process?	We have a dedicated page on our website for customers to either submit complaints or to view our policies and procedures We have incorporated the Housing Ombudsman website within this page along with the Handling Code
3	Complaints team and process	How we meet the standard
	Is there a complaint officer or equivalent in post?	We have a dedicated team in place responsible for the handling and investigation of complaints
	Does the complaint officer have autonomy to resolve complaints?	The team have received training and coaching in respect of complaint investigations and decision making
	Does the complaint officer have authority to compel engagement from other departments to resolve disputes?	The team engage effectively and appropriately via a number of methods to resolve disputes
	If there is a third stage to the complaints procedure are residents involved in the decision making?	Not applicable
	Is any third stage optional for residents?	Not applicable
	Does the final stage response set out residents' right to refer the matter to the Housing Ombudsman Service?	Our final letter includes a factsheet which outlines the next steps a resident can take if they remain unhappy with the response received. The factsheet includes contact details for the Housing Ombudsman
	Do we keep a record of complaint correspondence including correspondence from the resident?	Each case received is logged within the system. Each are allocated a unique ID number and when the case is created all correspondence linked to that complaint is saved to the case
	At what stage are most complaints resolved?	The majority of complaints are resolved at stage 1 2020-2021 - 7% of complaints escalated to stage 2
4	Communication	How we meet the standard
	Are residents kept informed and updated during the complaints process?	Residents receive an acknowledgement when the complaint is received and will be contacted throughout the process. They will then receive a further update to confirm the outcome

	Are residents informed of the landlord's position and given a chance to respond and challenge any area of dispute before the final decision?	With the response at each stage, residents are advised of the steps they can take if they wish to challenge the decision made
	Are all complaints acknowledged and logged within five days?	We acknowledge complaints within 24hrs
	Are residents advised of how to escalate at the end of each stage?	With the response at each stage, residents are advised of the steps they can take if they wish to challenge the decision made
	What proportion of complaints are resolved at stage one?	The majority of complaints are resolved at stage 1 2020-2021 - 93%
	What proportion of complaints are resolved at stage two?	2020-2021 - 7% of complaints escalated to stage 2
	What proportion of complaint responses are sent within Code timescales? Stage 1 - Stage 2 -	Our timescale to respond to stage 1 complaints is 5 working days 2020-2021 - 100% were closed within timescale Our timescale to respond to stage 2 complaints is 10 working days 2020-2021 - 95% were closed within timescale
	Where timescales have been extended did we have good reason?	Should we have to extend the deadline to respond, we make contact to advise the resident of the reasons why and provide them with an estimated completion date
	Where timescales have been extended did we keep the resident informed?	A holding letter is in place to advise the customer of the delay, but we will also try to make verbal contact with them
	What proportion of complaints do we resolve to residents' satisfaction	Satisfaction surveys are completed once a case has been closed 2020-21 - 57% of residents were satisfied with the outcome 70% of residents were satisfied with the handling 83% of residents were satisfied with the
5	Cooperation with Housing Ombudsman Service	How we meet the standard

	Were all requests for evidence responded to within 15 days?	All requests from the Housing Ombudsman have been responded to within the timescales given
	Where the timescale was extended did we keep the Ombudsman informed?	Not applicable
6	Fairness in complaint handling	How we meet the standard
	Are residents able to complain via a representative throughout?	A complaint can be made by a representative however we would gain authorisation before any investigation is done
	If advice was given, was this accurate and easy to understand?	Information is provide in plain English to ensure it is easy to understand
	How many cases did we refuse to escalate? What was the reason for the refusal?	Not applicable
	Did we explain our decision to the resident?	Not applicable We have not refused any escalation, however a letter is in place should it be required which will explain the reasons of the refusal to the customer
7	Outcomes and remedies	How we meet the standard
	Where something has gone wrong are we taking appropriate steps to put things right?	Our letters make reference to any improvements that are made as a result of the feedback received We work with the relevant service areas to highlight and suggest learning We produce monthly reports identifying trends and suggestions for improvement
8	Continuous learning and improvement	How we meet the standard

	<p>What improvements have we made as a result of learning from complaints?</p>	<p>Several improvements have been made around service delivery in many service areas.</p> <p>These include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A full review of investment within leasehold properties - A review of the adaptations process - Changes to systems within the repairs service and how we allocate work to contractors - Changes within finance to reduce manual changes which reduce the risk of errors - Improved inhouse communication in relation to progress around empty properties - Development of videos to inform customers of all the information they need to know when taking a tenancy
	<p>How do we share these lessons with:</p> <p>a) Residents?</p> <p>b) Board?</p> <p>c) In the Annual Report?</p>	<p>These are shared with Service Directors and Executive Directors</p> <p>Reviewed by the Performance and Complaints customer group</p> <p>Learning to be included in Annual Customer Report (Lead by Customer Engagement)</p> <p>Service Improvements will be published on website / Customer Newsletters</p> <p>Complaint analysis and learning to be reported to Board twice yearly</p> <p>Board get KPI data regularly</p>
	<p>Has the Code made a difference to how we respond to complaints?</p>	<p>Yes, we have made changes to our approach and continue to review this regularly</p>