

Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code: Self-assessment form

Compliance with the Complaint Handling Code			
1	Definition of a complaint	Yes	No
	<p>Waverley Borough Council's definition of a complaint encompasses the Housing Ombudsman Service definition of a complaint. Waverley's definition is as follows and is used by all service areas including Housing.</p> <p><i>An expression of dissatisfaction, however made, about the standard of service, actions or lack of action by Waverley (or by a contractor or partner of Waverley which requires a response.</i></p>	√	
	Does the policy have exclusions where a complaint will not be considered?		√
	<p>Are these exclusions reasonable and fair to residents?</p> <p>N/A</p>		
2	Accessibility		
	Are multiple accessibility routes available for residents to make a complaint?	√	
	Is the complaints policy and procedure available online?	√	
	Do we have a reasonable adjustments policy?	√	
	Do we regularly advise residents about our complaints process?	√	
3	Complaints team and process		
	Is there a complaint officer or equivalent in post?	√	
	Does the complaint officer have autonomy to resolve complaints?	√	
	Does the complaint officer have authority to compel engagement from other departments to resolve disputes?	√	
	If there is a third stage to the complaints procedure are residents involved in the decision making?		√
	Is any third stage optional for residents?		√

	Does the final stage response set out residents' right to refer the matter to the Housing Ombudsman Service?	√	
	Do we keep a record of complaint correspondence including correspondence from the resident?	√	
	At what stage are most complaints resolved? Level 1		
4	Communication		
	Are residents kept informed and updated during the complaints process?	√	
	Are residents informed of the landlord's position and given a chance to respond and challenge any area of dispute before the final decision?	√	
	Are all complaints acknowledged and logged within five days?	√	
	Are residents advised of how to escalate at the end of each stage?	√	
	What proportion of complaints are resolved at stage one? In 2019/20 77% of complaints were resolved at Level 1.		
	What proportion of complaints are resolved at stage two? In 2019/20 23% of complaints were resolved at Level 2.		
	What proportion of complaint responses are sent within Code timescales? The Council's timescales are the same or slightly shorter than the timescales in the Code. In 2019-20 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Level one - 82% of responses sent within the Council's target of 10 working days. • Level two –90% of responses sent within the Council's target of 15 working days. 		
	Where timescales have been extended did we have good reason?	√	
	Where timescales have been extended did we keep the resident informed?	√	

	<p>What proportion of complaints do we resolve to residents' satisfaction?</p> <p>The Council is currently looking at ways to obtain accurate data on complainant's satisfaction with both the outcome of their complaint and the way in which their complaint was handled.</p>		
5	Cooperation with Housing Ombudsman Service		
	Were all requests for evidence responded to within 15 days?		√
	Where the timescale was extended did we keep the Ombudsman informed?	√	
6	Fairness in complaint handling		
	Are residents able to complain via a representative throughout?	√	
	If advice was given, was this accurate and easy to understand?	√	
	<p>How many cases did we refuse to escalate?</p> <p>None</p> <p>What was the reason for the refusal?</p> <p>N/A</p>		
	<p>Did we explain our decision to the resident?</p> <p>N/A</p>		
7	Outcomes and remedies		
	Where something has gone wrong are we taking appropriate steps to put things right?	√	
8	Continuous learning and improvement		
	<p>What improvements have we made as a result of learning from complaints?</p> <p>Improvements are made as a result of lessons learned and implemented as quickly as possible. These improvements are also reported to elected Members in an annual report on complaints handling. Quarterly performance reports are also made to the Council's Senior Management Team.</p>		
	<p>How do we share these lessons with:</p> <p>a) residents? Yes</p> <p>b) the board/governing body? Yes</p>		

	<p>c) In the Annual Report? Yes in the annual complaints handling report to Members. This information will also be included in the Landlord's Annual Report for 2020/21.</p>		
	<p>Has the Code made a difference to how we respond to complaints?</p>	<p>√</p>	
	<p>What changes have we made?</p> <p>We are currently refreshing officers' understanding of what constitutes a complaint and that complaints can be received from residents in any form.</p>		