

Housing Ombudsman Service Complaint Handling Code

L&Q Self-Assessment

This self-assessment form should be completed by the complaints officer and discussed at the landlord's governing body annually.

Evidence should be included to support all statements with additional commentary as necessary.

Explanations must also be provided where a mandatory 'must' requirement is not met to set out the rationale for the alternative approach adopted and why this delivers a better outcome.

Section 1 - Definition of a complaint

Mandatory 'must' requirements

Code section	Code requirement	Comply: Yes/No	Evidence, commentary and any explanations
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 organisation, its own staff, or those acting on its behalf, affecting an individual resident or group of residents.'</i>	Yes	We use this definition of a complaint in our Complaints Policy. L&Q Complaints Policy, page 2, section 3
1.3	The resident does not have to use the word 'complaint' for it to be treated as such. A complaint that is submitted via a third party or representative must still be handled in line with the landlord's complaints policy.	Yes	Customer contact which meets our definition of a complaint will be taken forward using our Complaints Policy, Our policy sets out our commitment to accepting complaints via appropriate third parties and representatives.

1.6	... if further enquiries are needed to resolve the matter, or if the resident requests it, the issue must be logged as a complaint.	Yes	Colleagues will log an enquiry as a complaint where requested by the resident.
1.7	A landlord must accept a complaint unless there is a valid reason not to do so.	Yes	We will accept all complaints, unless they fall outside the scope of L&Q's Complaints Policy. The policy clearly sets out the reasons why a complaint may not be accepted, may be closed or be dealt with through another process. L&Q Complaints Policy, page 3
1.8	A complaints policy must clearly set out the circumstances in which a matter will not be considered, and these circumstances should be fair and reasonable to residents.	Yes	Our Complaints Policy sets out a number of types of expressions of dissatisfaction that we may consider to fall outside the scope of the policy. Colleagues will always try to pick up enquiries through other available routes to resolve issues for the customer. L&Q Complaints Policy, page 3
1.9	If a landlord decides not to accept a complaint, a detailed 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.	Yes	Our Complaints Policy states that: "We will provide a detailed explanation if we don't accept a complaint or won't escalate it. Our customer can approach the Ombudsman if they do not agree with our decision." L&Q Complaints Policy, page 3

Best practice ‘should’ requirements

Code section	Code requirement	Comply: Yes/No	Evidence, commentary and any explanations
1.4	Landlords should recognise the difference between a service request , where a resident may be unhappy with a situation that they wish to have rectified, and a complaint about the service they have/have not received.	Yes	Section 4.2 of our Complaints Standard Operating Procedure sets out definitions of a complaint, service request and negative feedback.
1.5	Survey feedback may not necessarily need to be treated as a complaint, though, where possible, the person completing the survey should be made aware of how they can pursue their dissatisfaction as a complaint if they wish to.	Yes	Our Customer Service, Complaints and Development teams review negative feedback from our automated transactional surveys and follow-up with customers where possible to pick up the issues raised. Where issues are raised in follow-up calls that meet our complaints definition, colleagues will raise these using our Complaints Policy.

Section 2 - Accessibility and awareness

Mandatory 'must' requirements

Code section	Code requirement	Comply: Yes/No	Evidence, commentary and any explanations
2.1	Landlords must make it easy for residents to complain by providing different channels through which residents can make a complaint such as in person, over the telephone, in writing, by email and digitally. While the Ombudsman recognises that it may not be feasible for a landlord to use all of the potential channels, there must be more than one route of access into the complaints system.	Yes	Residents can submit a complaint by phone, email, post, web form (MyAccount for customers in the North West), Facebook, Twitter or in person to an L&Q colleague. L&Q Complaints Policy, page 4, section 4.1
2.3	Landlords must make their complaint policy available in a clear and accessible format for all residents. This will detail the number of stages involved, what will happen at each stage and the timeframes for responding.	Yes	Our Complaints Policy is available on L&Q's website at Make a new complaint L&Q Group (lqgroup.org.uk)
2.4	Landlord websites, if they exist, must include information on how to raise a complaint. The complaints policy and process must be easy to find on the website.	Yes	The L&Q website has dedicated complaints pages which summarise the Stage One and Stage Two process, as well as providing links L&Q's Complaints Policy which also outlines the process.
2.5	Landlords must comply with the Equality Act 2010 and may need to adapt normal policies, procedures, or processes to accommodate an individual's needs. Landlords must satisfy themselves that their policy sets out how they will respond to reasonable adjustments requests in line with the Equality Act and that complaints handlers have had appropriate training to deal with such requests.	Yes	Section 8.1.6 of our Complaints Standard Operating Procedure makes clear colleagues should consider protected characteristics and additional support needs when logging and investigating complaints. It also directs colleagues to refer to the provisions of the Equality Act, our Vulnerable Residents Policy and Accessible Service Policy.
2.6	Landlords must publicise the complaints policy and process, the Complaint Handling Code and the Housing Ombudsman Scheme in leaflets, posters, newsletters, online and as part of regular correspondence with residents.	Yes	Details of the Housing Ombudsman Service are publicised on our website, in our Complaints Policy, in complaint correspondence templates, resident newsletters and in a new poster which has been designed and is being distributed.

2.7	Landlords must provide residents with contact information for the Ombudsman as part of its regular correspondence with residents.	Yes	Details of the Housing Ombudsman Service are included in our complaints correspondence templates.
2.8	Landlords must provide early advice to residents regarding their right to access the Housing Ombudsman Service throughout their complaint, not only when the landlord's complaints process is exhausted.	Yes	Details of the Housing Ombudsman Service are included in our complaints correspondence templates.

Best practice 'should' requirements

Code section	Code requirement	Comply: Yes/No	Evidence, commentary and any explanations
2.2	Where a landlord has set up channels to communicate with its residents via social media, then it should expect to receive complaints via those channels. Policies should contain details of the steps that will be taken when a complaint is received via social media and how confidentiality and privacy will be maintained.	Yes	The need to handle social media enquiries in this way is set out in L&Q's Complaints Policy, page 5.

Section 3 - Complaint handling personnel

Mandatory 'must' requirements

Code section	Code requirement	Comply: Yes/No	Evidence, commentary and any explanations
3.1	Landlords must have a person or team assigned to take responsibility for complaint handling to ensure complaints receive the necessary attention, and that these are reported to the governing body. This Code will refer to that person or team as the "complaints officer".	Yes	As part of our approach to strengthen complaint handling, L&Q adopted a Target Operating Model for complaints, supported by a Complaints Policy and complaints Standard Operating Procedure. This approach includes a central team with overall responsibility for our complaints system. The responsibilities of wider teams in the complaints process is also outlined in the Standard Operating Procedure.
3.2	...the complaint handler appointed must have appropriate complaint handling skills and no conflicts of interest.	Yes	A new package of training was developed for complaints handlers and implemented across complaint handling teams during 2023.

Best practice 'should' requirements

Code section	Code requirement	Comply: Yes/No	Evidence, commentary and any explanations
3.3	Complaint handlers should: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • be able to act sensitively and fairly • be trained to handle complaints and deal with distressed and upset residents • have access to staff at all levels to facilitate quick resolution of complaints • have the authority and autonomy to act to resolve disputes quickly and fairly. 	Yes	L&Q's internal training for complaints handlers, Complaints Hub resources and support from relevant managers all aim to drive this approach.

Section 4 - Complaint handling principles

Mandatory 'must' requirements

Code section	Code requirement	Comply: Yes/No	Evidence, commentary and any explanations
4.1	Any decision to try and resolve a concern must be taken in agreement with the resident and a landlord's audit trail/records should be able to demonstrate this. Landlords must ensure that efforts to resolve a resident's concerns do not obstruct access to the complaints procedure or result in any unreasonable delay. It is not appropriate to have extra named stages (such as 'stage 0' or 'pre-complaint stage') as this causes unnecessary confusion for residents. When a complaint is made, it must be acknowledged and logged at stage one of the complaints procedure within five days of receipt .	Yes	L&Q's Complaints Policy does not include a pre-complaints stage – we have a two stage process in compliance with the Code. Section 4.2 of our Complaints Policy sets out a 5 day acknowledgement requirement.
4.2	Within the complaint acknowledgement, landlords must set out their understanding of the complaint and the outcomes the resident is seeking. If any aspect of the complaint is unclear, the resident must be asked for clarification and the full definition agreed between both parties.	Yes	Section 8.4 of L&Q's Complaints Standard Operating Procedure sets out how colleagues should acknowledge complaints.
4.6	A complaint investigation must be conducted in an impartial manner.	Yes	Our Complaints Policy and Standard Operating Procedure, supported by resources in our Complaints Hub and colleague training all support colleagues to investigate complaints in a factual, impartial manner.
4.7	The complaint handler must: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> deal with complaints on their merits act independently and have an open mind 	Yes	Our package of training and support for complaints handlers is consistent with these principles.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> take measures to address any actual or perceived conflict of interest consider all information and evidence carefully keep the complaint confidential as far as possible, with information only disclosed if necessary to properly investigate the matter. 		
4.11	Landlords must adhere to any reasonable arrangements agreed with residents in terms of frequency and method of communication	Yes	The requirement for colleagues to agree a communication plan with a customer, including agreeing frequency and method of communication, is set out throughout L&Q's Standard Operating Procedure.
4.12	<p>The resident, and if applicable any staff member who is the subject of the complaint, must also be given a fair chance to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> set out their position comment on any adverse findings before a final decision is made. 	Yes	<p>Our Complaints Policy makes clear that 'complaints relating to staff conduct will be fully investigated in line with our Human Resources policies' rather than through the complaints process. Our HR policies provide fair and equitable processes in line with statutory requirements. (<i>L&Q Complaints Policy, page 3</i>)</p> <p>Section 4.2 of our Complaints Policy commits that we'll always seek to agree decisions and outcomes with our customers.</p>
4.13	A landlord must include in its complaints policy its timescales for a resident to request escalation of a complaint	Yes	An escalation timescale is set out on page 5 of our Complaints Policy.
4.14	A landlord must not unreasonably refuse to escalate a complaint through all stages of the complaints procedure and must have clear and valid reasons for taking that course of action. Reasons for declining to escalate a complaint must be clearly set out in a landlord's complaints policy and must be the same as the reasons for not accepting a complaint.	Yes	A list of reasons for rejection and refusal to escalate is set out on page 3 of our Complaints Policy and we are committed to providing a detailed explanation where this is the case.
4.15	A full record must be kept of the complaint, any review and the outcomes at each stage. This must include the	Yes	Our Complaints Standard Operating Procedure sets out in detail how cases

	original complaint and the date received, all correspondence with the resident, correspondence with other parties and any reports or surveys prepared.		should be recorded using our internal systems. This is reinforced through internal training.
4.18	Landlords must have policies and procedures in place for managing unacceptable behaviour from residents and/or their representatives when pursuing a complaint.	Yes	Our Complaints Policy sets out L&Q's approach. (L&Q Complaints Policy, pages 11-12)

Best practice 'should' requirements

Code section	Code requirement	Comply: Yes/No	Evidence, commentary and any explanations
4.3	Landlords should manage residents' expectations from the outset, being clear where a desired outcome is unreasonable or unrealistic	Yes	
4.4	A complaint should be resolved at the earliest possible opportunity, having assessed what evidence is needed to fully consider the issues, what outcome would resolve the matter for the resident and whether there are any urgent actions required.	Yes	Our Complaints Policy makes clear that where possible we aim to resolve a complaint there and then. We will always aim to resolve a complaint at the earliest opportunity. This is further emphasised in our Complaints Standard Operating Procedure. (L&Q Complaints Policy, page 4, section 4.2. SOP section 3.1.4)
4.5	Landlords should 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 where this is reasonable.	Yes	Section 4.1 of our Complaints Policy sets out our commitment to accepting complaints via appropriate third parties and representatives.
4.8	Where a key issue of a complaint relates to the parties' legal obligations landlords should clearly set out their understanding of the obligations of both parties.	Yes	Legal obligations would be outlined where relevant to a particular complaint. Colleagues can seek legal advice as required.
4.9	Communication with the resident should not generally identify individual members of staff or contractors.	Yes	The requirement not to mention individuals or teams is set out in section

			8.5.7 of our Complaints Standard Operating Procedure.
4.10	Landlords should keep residents regularly updated about the progress of the investigation.	Yes	Regular customer updates is a key principle in our approach, set out in section 3.2.1 of our Complaints Standard Operating Procedure
4.16	Landlords should seek feedback from residents in relation to the landlord's complaint handling as part of the drive to encourage a positive complaint and learning culture.	Yes	We send a survey to each complainant to gather feedback on their complaint experience (unless they have opted out of contact). (L&Q Complaints Policy, section 4.4)
4.17	Landlords should recognise the impact that being complained about can have on future service delivery. Landlords should ensure that staff are supported and engaged in the complaints process, including the learning that can be gained	Yes	We are committed to learning from complaints and do so through surveys, review of learning by internal groups and colleague training. In addition, we hold Complaint Handler Forums to support colleagues and are delivering Complaint Handler Days to bring together all involved colleagues. (L&Q Complaints Policy, page 7, section 4.4)
4.19	Any restrictions placed on a resident's contact due to unacceptable behaviour should be appropriate to their needs and should demonstrate regard for the provisions of the Equality Act 2010.	Yes	Section 16 of our Complaints Standard Operating Procedure makes clear that 'When a decision is made to put alternative contact arrangements in place, managers must ensure they consider (and evidence within the relevant Housing Management System) any vulnerabilities and how any associated risks to the resident will be mitigated.'

Section 5 - Complaint stages

Mandatory 'must' requirements

Stage 1

Code section	Code requirement	Comply: Yes/No	Evidence, commentary and any explanations
5.1	Landlords must respond to the complaint <u>within 10 working days</u> of the complaint being logged. Exceptionally, landlords may provide an explanation to the resident containing a clear timeframe for when the response will be received. This should not exceed a further 10 days without good reason.	Yes	Our Complaints Policy and Complaints Standard Operating Procedure adhere to these timescales. (L&Q Complaints Policy, section 4.2; Complaints Standard Operating Procedure sections 6.1, 8.4, 8.5)
5.5	A complaint response must be sent 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 expeditiously with regular updates provided to the resident.	Yes	Our Complaints Policy and Standard Operating Procedure comply with this requirement.
5.6	Landlords must address all points raised in the complaint and provide clear reasons for any decisions, referencing the relevant policy, law and good practice where appropriate.	Yes	Section 8.5 of our Standard Operating Procedure complies with this requirement.
5.8	Landlords must confirm the following in writing to the resident at the completion of stage one in clear, plain language: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the complaint stage • the decision on the complaint • the reasons for any decisions made • the details of any remedy offered to put things right • details of any outstanding actions • details of how to escalate the matter to stage two if the resident is not satisfied with the answer 	Yes	Section 8.5.7 of our Standard Operating Procedure sets this out and our complaint correspondence templates provide further support to colleagues.

Stage 2

Code section	Code requirement	Comply: Yes/No	Evidence, commentary and any explanations
5.9	If all or part of the complaint is not resolved to the resident's satisfaction at stage one it must be progressed to stage two of the landlord's procedure, unless an exclusion ground now applies. In instances where a landlord declines to escalate a complaint it must clearly communicate in writing its reasons for not escalating as well as the resident's right to approach the Ombudsman about its decision.	Yes	Section 9 of our Standard Operating Procedure complies with this requirement.
5.10	On receipt of the escalation request, landlords must set out their understanding of issues outstanding and the outcomes the resident is seeking. If any aspect of the complaint is unclear, the resident must be asked for clarification and the full definition agreed between both parties.	Yes	Section 10.1.1 of our Standard Operating Procedure complies with this requirement.
5.11	Landlords must only escalate a complaint to stage two once it has completed stage one and at the request of the resident.	Yes	This is set out on page 5 of our Complaints Policy.
5.12	The person considering the complaint at stage two, must not be the same person that considered the complaint at stage one.	Yes	Page 5 of our Complaints Policy commits that a colleague not involved in the Stage One complaint will carry out a Stage Two Review.
5.13	Landlords must respond to the stage two complaint <u>within 20 working days</u> of the complaint being escalated. Exceptionally, landlords may provide an explanation to the resident containing a clear timeframe for when the response will be received. This should not exceed a further 10 days without good reason.	Yes	Our Complaints Policy and Complaints Standard Operating Procedure adhere to this requirement. (L&Q Complaints Policy, page 5; Standard Operating Procedure, section 10.2.6)
5.16	Landlords must confirm the following in writing to the resident at the completion of stage two in clear, plain language: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the complaint stage • the complaint definition • the decision on the complaint • the reasons for any decisions made • the details of any remedy offered to put things right • details of any outstanding actions 	Yes	Our Complaints Standard Operating Procedure (section 10.2.9) adheres to this requirement. L&Q does not have a third stage – we have a Code compliant two stage complaints process.

	<p>and</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • if the landlord has a third stage, details of how to escalate the matter to stage three • if this was the final stage, details of how to escalate the matter to the Housing Ombudsman Service if the resident remains dissatisfied. 		
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Stage 3

Code section	Code requirement	Comply: Yes/No	Evidence, commentary and any explanations
5.17	Two stage landlord complaint procedures are ideal. This ensures that the complaint process is not unduly long. If landlords strongly believe a third stage is necessary, they must set out their reasons for this as part of their self-assessment. A process with more than three stages is not acceptable under any circumstances.	Not applicable	L&Q does not have a third stage – we have a two stage complaints process in compliance with the Code.
5.20	Landlords must confirm the following in writing to the resident at the completion of stage three in clear, plain language: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the complaint stage • the complaint definition • the decision on the complaint • the reasons for any decisions made • the details of any remedy offered to put things right • details of any outstanding actions • details of how to escalate the matter to the Housing Ombudsman Service if the resident remains dissatisfied 	Not applicable	L&Q does not have a third stage – we have a two stage complaints process in compliance with the Code.

Best practice 'should' requirements

Stage 1

Code section	Code requirement	Comply: Yes/No	Evidence, commentary and any explanations
5.2	If an extension beyond 20 working days is required to enable the landlord to respond to the complaint fully, this should be agreed by both parties.	Yes	Section 4.2 of our Complaints Policy states that we'll seek to agree any further extension with our customer.
5.3	Where agreement over an extension period cannot be reached, landlords should provide the Housing Ombudsman's contact details so the resident can challenge the landlord's plan for responding and/or the proposed timeliness of a landlord's response.	Yes	Section 4.2 of our Complaints Policy makes clear a customer can contact the Housing Ombudsman Service if agreement cannot be reached. Details of the Ombudsman Service are included in all complaints correspondence templates.
5.4	Where the problem is a recurring issue, the landlord should consider any older reports as part of the background to the complaint if this will help to resolve the issue for the resident.	Yes	Section 8.5.3 of our Complaints Standard Operating Procedure requires colleagues to consider historic information and other useful background.
5.7	Where residents raise additional complaints during the investigation, these should be incorporated into the stage one response if they are relevant and the stage one response has not been issued. Where the stage one response has been issued, or it would unreasonably delay the response, the complaint should be logged as a new complaint.	Yes	Section 8.1.10 of our Complaints Standard Operating Procedure complies with this requirement.

Stage 2

Code section	Code requirement	Comply: Yes/No	Evidence, commentary and any explanations
5.14	If an extension beyond 10 working days is required to enable the landlord to respond to the complaint fully, this should be agreed by both parties.	Yes	Section 4.2 of our Complaints Policy states that we'll seek to agree any further extension with our customer.
5.15	Where agreement over an extension period cannot be reached, landlords should provide the Housing Ombudsman's contact details so the resident can challenge the landlord's plan for responding and/or the proposed timeliness of a landlord's response		Section 4.2 of our Complaints Policy makes clear a customer can contact the Housing Ombudsman Service if agreement cannot be reached. Details of the Ombudsman Service are included in all complaints correspondence templates.

Stage 3

Code section	Code requirement	Comply: Yes/No	Evidence, commentary and any explanations
5.18	Complaints should only go to a third stage if the resident has actively requested a third stage review of their complaint. Where a third stage is in place and has been requested, landlords must respond to the stage three complaint <u>within 20 working days</u> of the complaint being escalated. Additional time will only be justified if related to convening a panel. An explanation and a date for when the stage three response will be received should be provided to the resident.	Not applicable	L&Q does not have a third stage – we have a two stage complaints process in compliance with the Code.

5.19	Where agreement over an extension period cannot be reached, landlords should provide the Housing Ombudsman’s contact details so the resident can challenge the landlord’s plan for responding and/or the proposed timeliness of a landlord’s response.	Not applicable	L&Q does not have a third stage – we have a two stage complaints process in compliance with the Code.
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Section 6 - Putting things right

Mandatory ‘must’ requirements

Code section	Code requirement	Comply: Yes/No	Evidence, commentary and any explanations
6.1	Effective dispute resolution requires a process designed to resolve complaints. 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.	Yes	Our complaints decisions include how we intend to resolve the complaint and the timescales. L&Q Complaints Policy, section 4.2
6.2	Any remedy offered must reflect the extent of any service failures and the level of detriment caused to the resident as a result. A landlord must carefully manage the expectations of residents and not promise anything that cannot be delivered or would cause unfairness to other residents.	Yes	Section 8.5 of our Complaints Standard Operating Procedure requires colleagues to consider all aspects of a complaint before recommending an outcome and resolution.
6.5	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	Our complaints decisions include how we intend to resolve the complaint and the timescales. L&Q Complaints Policy, section 4.2
6.6	In awarding compensation, a landlord must consider whether any statutory payments are due, if any quantifiable losses have been incurred, the time and trouble a resident has been put to as well as any distress and inconvenience caused.	Yes	Section 4.2 of our Compensation Policy provides advice to colleagues on statutory payments and making discretionary payments for inconvenience and distress.

Best practice 'should' requirements

Code section	Code requirement	Comply: Yes/No	Evidence, commentary and any explanations
6.3	Landlords should look beyond the circumstances of the individual complaint and consider whether anything needs to be 'put right' in terms of process or systems to the benefit of all residents.	Yes	Section 8.6.5 of our Complaints Standard Operating Procedure states that before a case can be closed, our colleagues 'must record any action L&Q might take to avoid similar problems in the future and ensure lessons are learned from complaints.' In addition, learning is considered by senior colleagues at Complaints Operations Group and Complaints Monitoring and Learning Group.
6.7	In some cases, a resident may have a legal entitlement to redress. The landlord should still offer a resolution where possible, obtaining legal advice as to how any offer of resolution should be worded.		Complaints colleagues work closely with our legal team and other specialist internal colleagues as appropriate.

Section 7 - Continuous learning and improvement

Mandatory 'must' requirements

Code section	Code requirement	Comply: Yes/No	Evidence, commentary and any explanations
7.2	Accountability and transparency are integral to a positive complaint handling culture. Landlords must report back on wider learning and improvements from complaints in their annual report and more frequently to their residents, staff and scrutiny panels.	Yes	Our commitment to delivering a complaints change project is set out in our Annual Financial Statements. Our resident-led Resident Services Board receives a detailed update on complaints improvement progress at every meeting.

		Updates on our complaints change project have been included in our resident newsletter and shared with colleagues.
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Best practice ‘should’ requirements

Code section	Code requirement	Comply: Yes/No	Evidence, commentary and any explanations
7.3	A member of the governing body should be appointed to have lead responsibility for complaints to support a positive complaint handling culture. This role will be responsible for ensuring the governing body receives regular information on complaints that provides insight to the governing body on the landlord’s complaint handling performance.	Yes	A member of Group Board and Resident Services Board has been appointed as the Board Complaints Champion.
7.4	As a minimum, governing bodies should receive: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular updates on the volume, categories and outcome of complaints, alongside complaint handling performance including compliance with the Ombudsman’s orders • Regular reviews of issues and trends arising from complaint handling, • The annual performance report produced by the Ombudsman, where applicable • Individual complaint outcomes where necessary, including where the Ombudsman made findings of severe maladministration or referrals to regulatory bodies. The implementation of management responses should be tracked to ensure they are delivered to agreed timescales. The annual self-assessment against the Complaint Handling Code for scrutiny and challenge. 	Yes	We are committed to providing this information to our governing bodies.
7.5	Any themes or trends should be assessed by senior management to identify potential systemic issues, serious risks or policies and procedures that require revision. They should also be used to inform staff and contractor training.	Yes	Complaints performance, themes and emerging issues are considered by Complaint Operations Group, a director-led Complaints Monitoring and Learning Group and are reported to Customer Group.

7.6	<p>Landlords should have a standard objective in relation to complaint handling for all employees that reflects the need to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • have a collaborative and co-operative approach towards resolving complaints, working with colleagues across teams and departments • take collective responsibility for any shortfalls identified through complaints rather than blaming others • act within the Professional Standards for engaging with complaints as set by the Chartered Institute of Housing. 	Yes	As part of our annual performance setting for 2023/4 we're introducing a revised complaints objective for all colleagues who handle complaints or support complaints handling.
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Section 8 - Self-assessment and compliance

Mandatory 'must' requirements

Code section	Code requirement	Comply: Yes/No	Evidence, commentary and any explanations
8.1	Landlords must carry out an annual self-assessment against the Code to ensure their complaint handling remains in line with its requirements.	Yes	The annual self-assessment was carried out in December 2023.
8.2	Landlords must also carry out a self-assessment following a significant restructure and/or change in procedures.	Yes	We will carry out a further self-assessment in the event of a significant restructure of change in procedures.
8.3	<p>Following each self-assessment, a landlord must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • report the outcome of their self-assessment to their governing body. In the case of local authorities, self-assessment outcomes should be reported to elected members • publish the outcome of their assessment on their website if they have one, or otherwise make accessible to residents • include the self-assessment in their annual report section on complaints handling performance 	Yes	

Self-assessment completed: 20 December 2023