

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	<p>A complaint must be defined as:</p> <p><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></p>	Yes	<p>The policy includes the following wording to define a complaint:</p> <p>“An expression of dissatisfaction, however made, about the standard of service, actions, or lack of action by our organisation, our staff, or those acting on our behalf, affecting an individual resident or group of residents.”</p> <p>Please also refer to the complaints policy:</p> <p>corporate-complaints-policy-december-2024.pdf</p>	<p>Hammersmith and Fulham Council has a complaints policy that addresses corporate complaints as well as those related to Adult Social Care and Children’s Services. Please refer to the link in the evidence. The policy is reviewed every three years, or sooner if there are relevant changes. It was last reviewed in December 2024.</p>
1.3	<p>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.</p>	Yes	<p>Please refer to the complaints policy pages 13 & 16</p> <p>corporate-complaints-policy-december-2024.pdf</p>	<p>Complaints are accepted formally, even without using the word 'complaint'. Complaints may be submitted through various channels: verbally, in person, online, by email, or in writing. A complaint submitted via a third party or representative will be addressed in accordance</p>

				with our complaints policy. We strive to manage expectations from the beginning by clearly communicating when a desired outcome is unreasonable or unrealistic.
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 recorded, monitored and reviewed regularly.	Yes	Please refer to complaints policy page 11: corporate-complaints-policy-december-2024.pdf	During triaging, complaints can be recognised as service requests. Our policy explains the difference between service requests and complaints. Residents can find information on how to submit a service request on the complaints landing page online.
The1.5	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	Commentary/explanation as evidence. corporate-complaints-policy-december-2024.pdf	Complaints may be lodged during the service request, and the service will proceed while the complaint is being resolved. Staff adhere to this procedure.
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	Yes	Commentary/explanation as evidence.	We have posters on estate noticeboards and our online Get Involved Hub explaining how to make a complaint.

	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.			Talk To Us – LBHF Get Involved The engagement team is also taking the opportunity to cascade this information at various resident events they attend.
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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	Please refer to the complaints policy page 7 corporate-complaints-policy-december-2024.pdf	Complaints are generally accepted and evaluated based on the policy's criteria. We will explain why the matter is not suitable for our complaints process and inform the resident of their right to escalate to the Housing Ombudsman.
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: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 	Yes	Please refer to the complaints policy pages 10 and 11 corporate-complaints-policy-december-2024.pdf	Our complaints policy outlines the reasons why a complaint may not be considered. This includes instances where the complaint will follow a different process, such as an appeal to a planning application. Each case is assessed individually.

	<p>Particulars of Claim, having been filed at court.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Matters that have previously been considered under the complaints policy. 			
2.3	<p>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.</p>	Yes	<p>Please refer to the complaints policy page 7</p> <p>corporate-complaints-policy-december-2024.pdf</p>	<p>Our complaints policy outlines the circumstances under which discretion may be exercised.</p>
2.4	<p>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.</p>	Yes	<p>Commentary/explanation as evidence. There are also clear guidelines within the complaints policy pages 10,11 and 12.</p> <p>corporate-complaints-policy-december-2024.pdf</p>	<p>If a complaint is denied, the response provided to the resident will include the reasons for the refusal and details of how to escalate the matter to the Ombudsman.</p>
2.5	<p>Landlords must not take a blanket approach to excluding complaints; they must consider the individual circumstances of each complaint.</p>	Yes	<p>Commentary/explanation as evidence.</p>	<p>Each case is assessed individually, with detailed explanations provided to the resident regarding any decisions to exclude certain aspects, as outlined in the</p>

				complaints policy. Additionally, information about accessing the Ombudsman is also supplied.
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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	<p>LBHF has a broad range of access channels available to make a complaint. This includes our 'Contact us' web page which allows customers to make a complaint in different ways.</p> <p>Contact us London Borough of Hammersmith & Fulham</p>	<p>Complaints are accepted formally even without using the word 'complaint'. They can be made through any channel, including calls, face-to-face, online, email, or written communication. Our 'Contact us' page offers various ways to lodge complaints. We comply with the Equalities Act by adapting procedures and policies to meet residents' needs and making reasonable adjustments.</p> <p>We collect specific needs on our self-service request form. Contact centres also capture these needs over the phone for residents. This information generates an alert for officers viewing the case.</p>

				<p>Our Tenancy Management Team arranges home visits when needed. Safeguarding processes are followed, and the Resident Experience Team coordinates with Adult Social Care and Children's Services. Staff and complaint handlers are reminded to check the housing system for recorded vulnerabilities to ensure appropriate service delivery.</p> <p>Additionally, staff training needs are assessed through complaint investigations and feedback.</p>
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	Commentary/explanation as evidence.	<p>Council staff are informed about the complaints policies available on the website and can direct or help residents in accessing these services.</p> <p>Effectively handling complaints and providing assistance to residents and customers is one of LBHF's priorities, as emphasized</p>

				<p>during the Corporate Induction for all new staff members. Complaints workshops are conducted for all new housing services staff on a quarterly basis.</p> <p>All staff have access to the website and can provide signposting and assisted services to residents and customers at any time.</p> <p>Training and guidance within the Housing Service promote this approach, ensuring all staff are informed and act accordingly.</p>
3.3	<p>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.</p>		<p>Commentary/explanation as evidence.</p> <p>Reporting a complaint, comment or issue London Borough of Hammersmith & Fulham</p> <p>corporate-complaints-policy-december-2024.pdf</p>	<p>The council's complaints policy and processes are published on our website and on our estate, notice boards, to ensure accessibility for all.</p> <p>Our complaints process is well-publicised and accessible. This accessibility ensures that residents feel empowered to voice their concerns.</p>

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	<p>Commentary/explanation as evidence.</p> <p>Reporting a complaint, comment or issue London Borough of Hammersmith & Fulham</p> <p>corporate-complaints-policy-december-2024.pdf</p>	<p>The policy is published on our website and can be made available in other formats if requested.</p> <p>The website itself can be translated into other languages and offers a read aloud facility which can be used while browsing the complaints web pages, but this does not apply to linked documents such as the policy.</p> <p>British Sign Language (BSL) users can contact us using a BSL video interpreter.</p> <p>Our website includes a page with information on accessibility and information on how residents can get support with accessibility of our website and our services Accessibility statement London Borough of Hammersmith & Fulham</p>

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	Please refer to the complaints policy Page 10. corporate-complaints-policy-december-2024.pdf	This information is available within the complaints policy
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	Commentary/explanation as evidence. Please refer to the complaints policy Page 4. corporate-complaints-policy-december-2024.pdf	A complaint submitted through a third party or representative will be processed in accordance with our complaints policy, provided that consent from the complainant is obtained. With the complainant's approval, representatives may attend any meetings with the landlord concerning the issues raised in the complaint.
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	Commentary/explanation as evidence. Please refer to the complaints policy Page 10. corporate-complaints-policy-december-2024.pdf	Information regarding the resident's right to contact the Ombudsman service is available throughout the complaint process. Details are provided in the complaint acknowledgment and in response templates as needed.

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	Commentary/explanation as evidence	The Council has a central team called the Resident Experience Team, which coordinates and reports on complaint responses across the Council. All complaints are directed to this team and then allocated to the relevant departments for response. The Ombudsman Link Officer, who manages responses to the Ombudsman from various departments, is also part of this team. Additionally, the Resident Experience Team is responsible for providing complaint reports to the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) and members.
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	Commentary/explanation as evidence.	All investigators ensure complaints on housing matters are fully investigated and resolved and organisational learning captured.

				Investigating Officers can facilitate prompt resolution by liaising with the relevant team or officers at all levels.
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	Commentary/explanation as evidence	<p>Complaint handling is prioritised, and we are fostering a culture of learning from complaints. This approach ensures that all relevant staff are well-trained in the importance of complaint handling, viewing it as a core service.</p> <p>By resourcing and handling complaints effectively, we can continuously improve services delivered to our residents and enhance resident satisfaction.</p> <p>All teams work closely to ensure complaints on housing matters are fully investigated and resolved and organisational learning captured.</p> <p>We have a specialist well-resourced team, the Complaint, Dispute and Resolution Team, within the</p>

				<p>Housing Service to effectively manage stage 1, stage 2, and Ombudsman complaints.</p> <p>Through training and guidance in the Housing Service a resident and customer centric ethos is championed to ensure all staff are aware and action appropriately.</p> <p>All investigators handling complaints within the Complaint, Dispute and Resolution Team and the Resident Experience Team have completed the HO online training.</p> <p>Continuous ongoing training with feedback to individual officers is in place across both teams.</p> <p>Training and guidance have been delivered to all wider housing teams to improve complaint handling across all Housing Services.</p>
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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	Commentary/explanation as evidence. corporate-complaints-policy-december-2024.pdf	Corporate complaints policy in place. All residents are treated fairly and in line with policies whether they have submitted a complaint or not.
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 stages (such as 'stage 0' or 'informal complaint') as this causes unnecessary confusion.	Yes	Please refer to the complaints policy details and the two-stage complaint process. corporate-complaints-policy-december-2024.pdf	The council operates a two stage complaints process as per our policy. There is no stage zero or informal complaint process. Our aim is to provide early resolution for our residents for any service failures prior to them becoming a complaint.
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	Please refer to the complaints policy details and the two-stage complaint process. corporate-complaints-policy-december-2024.pdf	The council operates a two-stage process as per our complaints policy.
5.4	Where a landlord's complaint response is handled by a third party (e.g. a	Yes	Commentary/explanation as evidence.	All complaints are responded via the councils'

	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.		Please refer to the complaints policy Page 10. corporate-complaints-policy-december-2024.pdf	complaints process with comments received from contractors, they do not provide their own responses.
5.5	Landlords are responsible for ensuring that any third parties handle complaints in line with the Code.	Yes	Commentary/explanation as evidence.	All complaint responses are via the council's process.
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, the resident must be asked for clarification.	Yes	Commentary/explanation as evidence.	We include a summary of the complaint in our acknowledgements together with the outcome the resident is expecting. At stage 1 the complaints resolution officer will contact the complainant (where possible) prior to the acknowledgement being sent. For all stage 2 complaints, the investigating officer contacts the complainant to discuss the complaint, communications preferences, and any outcomes they are seeking.

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	Commentary/explanation as evidence.	This is included in the complaint acknowledgement.
5.8	At each stage of the complaints process, complaint handlers must: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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	Commentary/explanation as evidence.	As part of the training, guidance and adherence to the code, all officers investigating complaints act independently and fairly. All investigators aim to resolve conflict and consider all aspects and evidence available to fairly review the complaint. Staff also must undertake understanding unconscious bias training.
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	Commentary/explanation as evidence. corporate-complaints-policy-december-2024.pdf	All service directorates received guidance and updates on the HO Complaint Handling Code including ensuring communication updates to complainants. This was completed in May 2024. Our policy details the timescales to respond to complaints and sets out

				what will we do if we need to agree an extension with the resident and how we will communicate with them.
5.10	Landlords must make reasonable adjustments for residents where appropriate under the Equality Act 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.	Yes	Commentary/explanation as evidence.	<p>In compliance with the Equalities Act we adapt our procedures and policies to meet residents' needs and make reasonable adjustments where necessary.</p> <p>Residents can specify their needs on the self-service request form.</p> <p>Contact centres can fill out the form over the phone for residents.</p> <p>Staff are trained to record housing supported needs in the NEC housing system.</p> <p>Training includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning from complaints • Impact on residents' wellbeing • Poor customer experience

				<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Potential breach of equalities legislation• Impact on the Housing Revenue Account <p>Staff check the housing system for recorded vulnerabilities to ensure services consider these needs.</p> <p>We have introduced an integration between our housing system and our casework system and information about vulnerabilities is transferred from the housing system to the casework system when a complaint is opened. This ensures reasonable adjustments are made during complaint investigations.</p> <p>Staff training needs are considered through complaint investigations and feedback.</p>
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				<p>Reasonable adjustments are made when managing complaints.</p> <p>Complainants can inform us of any accessibility or support needs. Appropriate actions are taken to ensure flexibility and manage priority needs.</p>
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	Commentary/explanation as evidence.	Within the complaints policy we clearly outline the process for an escalation to stage 2. Training and guidance on refusals unless valid has previously been delivered to senior managers of departments to cascade.
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	Commentary/explanation as evidence.	<p>Our case management system includes all details on each case at every stage and contains a full audit trail.</p> <p>The complaints management system enables comprehensive record keeping.</p>

				<p>All records of complaints are logged on our systems and original documents are files in our electronic document management systems.</p> <p>Any reviews, outcomes or other relevant correspondence relating to the complaints are also logged and recorded against the cases.</p> <p>All staff have been reminded of the importance of storing any documents relating to a complaint case within our casework system.</p>
5.13	<p>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.</p>	Yes	<p>Commentary/explanation as evidence.</p>	<p>We aim to provide a remedy and solution at the first point of contact and any stage of the complaint process, the complaint resolution is a priority.</p> <p>We aim to minimise the need for escalation by getting it right first time. This is embedded within training and guidance across the organisation.</p>

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	<p>Link to the policy referenced.</p> <p>H&F Council Unreasonable or Vexatious Behaviour Policy November 2024</p>	<p>We have a policy to deal with unacceptable behaviour from residents in pursuing complaints and this is published on our website.</p> <p>This policy was updated in November 2024.</p> <p>We use this policy when appropriate. Restrictions are time-limited and reviewed.</p>
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	<p>Commentary/explanation as evidence.</p>	<p>We only use this policy when appropriate. Restrictions are time - limited and reviewed. We do consider all aspects of contact and try to offer solutions and single points of contact initially to allow unrestricted communication arrangements to be in place. The arrangements are reasonable for the complainant and the council and demonstrate regard for the Equality Act 2010.</p>

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	Commentary/explanation as evidence.	<p>The complaints handling system includes criteria for resolution at the first point of contact. This allows for any initial resolutions to be recorded with outcomes and complainant agreements.</p> <p>Trained complaint investigators triage submitted complaints. If they identify opportunities for immediate resolution, they will coordinate with the complainant to agree on a solution and address any risks or vulnerabilities.</p>
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	<p>Please refer to the complaints policy pages 5 and 6</p> <p>corporate-complaints-policy-december-2024.pdf</p>	<p>This is included in our Corporate Complaints policy.</p>

6.3	Landlords must issue a full response to stage 1 complaints <u>within 10 working days</u> of the complaint being acknowledged.	Yes	Please refer to the complaints policy pages 5 and 6 corporate-complaints-policy-december-2024.pdf	This is included in our Corporate Complaints policy.
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 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.	Yes	Commentary/explanation as evidence. Please refer to the complaints policy pages 5, 6 and 9, corporate-complaints-policy-december-2024.pdf	If a response cannot be provided within 10 days, an extension of up to 10 additional days may be applied, provided that this is communicated to the resident. Should a conclusive response not be achievable within this extended period, an additional timeline and communication plan will be established in agreement with the resident. This procedure is outlined in our policy.
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	Commentary/explanation as evidence.	When an extension is applied, the resident is informed, we ensure the Ombudsman's details are provided.
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	Yes	Commentary/explanation as evidence.	Responses to Stage 1 complaints are issued within the established timeframes, with all outstanding actions

	<p>the issue are completed. Outstanding actions must still be tracked and actioned promptly with appropriate updates provided to the resident.</p>			<p>and repairs tracked until completion. The repairs team oversees and manages any ongoing work to ensure completion, while the case officer serves as the single point of contact.</p> <p>Stage 2 cases with pending repairs are monitored and managed by the stage 2 repairs team. The complainant receives a contact within 5 working days for updates. Once repairs are finished, a completion letter is sent to the resident. All stage 2 repairs are signed off by a surveyor.</p> <p>Non-repair Housing complaints will be monitored by stage 2 officers. Contact will be made within five working days, and the resident will receive a named contact from the team.</p>
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				This can be tracked through the case management system.
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	Commentary/explanation as evidence	The council clarifies the complaint definition in the acknowledgment. We contact the complainant to gather all relevant information before starting the investigation.
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 investigated or it would unreasonably delay the response, the new issues must be logged as a new complaint.	Yes	Commentary/explanation as evidence	We have trained and guided all investigators to address relevant issues during investigations. Our goal is to resolve complaints promptly without needing new complaints. If issues would cause unreasonable delays, a new complaint is raised with the resident's agreement.
6.9	Landlords must confirm the following in writing to the resident at the completion of stage 1 in clear, plain language: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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; 	Yes	Commentary/explanation as evidence.	Our case management system templates guide officers through each of the seven elements to ensure compliance with the code. All officers receive feedback and regular training, which includes insights from our quality assurance

	<p>f. details of any outstanding actions; and</p> <p>g. details of how to escalate the matter to stage 2 if the individual is not satisfied with the response.</p>			<p>framework to ensure that all relevant areas are adequately addressed.</p> <p>Senior officers review stage 1 and stage 2 responses to ensure quality and address all issues before issuing them.</p>
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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	<p>Commentary/explanation as evidence.</p> <p>corporate-complaints-policy-december-2024.pdf</p>	<p>Our policy includes a clear 2-stage process. We inform complainants about the independent review and Housing Ombudsman contact points.</p> <p>We have trained council staff to ensure that stage 2 complaints are investigated upon request.</p>
6.11	Requests for stage 2 must be acknowledged, defined and logged at stage 2 of the complaints procedure within five working days of the escalation request being received.	Yes	<p>Commentary/explanation as evidence.</p> <p>Please refer to the complaints policy page 8.</p>	Our complaints policy states that all stage 2 complaint acknowledgements include a summary of the issues and desired outcomes. All stage 2 complainants are contacted by phone (or the

			corporate-complaints-policy-december-2024.pdf	resident's preferred method) to clarify the scope of the complaint, communication preferences, and desired outcomes.
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	Commentary/explanation as evidence	Through training and guidance all staff have been advised of the process to escalate to stage 2
6.13	The person considering the complaint at stage 2 must not be the same person that considered the complaint at stage 1.	Yes	Commentary/explanation as evidence	There are distinct teams and officers/managers responsible for handling stage 1 and stage 2 complaints. This process ensures that the individual who reviews the complaint at stage 1 does not review it at stage 2.
6.14	Landlords must issue a final response to the stage 2 <u>within 20 working days</u> of the complaint being acknowledged.	Yes	Commentary/explanation as evidence. Please refer to the complaints policy page 8. corporate-complaints-policy-december-2024.pdf	The Complaint, Dispute and Resolution Team, along with investigating officers, are monitored daily for policy adherence and performance on open cases.
6.15	Landlords must decide whether an extension to this timescale is needed	Yes	Commentary/explanation as evidence.	In instances where resolution is not achieved

	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.		Please refer to the complaints policy page 8. corporate-complaints-policy-december-2024.pdf	within 20 working days, or requires an additional 20-day extension, we proactively communicate with the resident to agree on the revised timelines and ensure they are regularly informed of the actions being undertaken.
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	Commentary/explanation as evidence	We provide the Ombudsman contact details on all case extensions.
6.17	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	Commentary/explanation as evidence. Please refer to the complaints policy page 6. corporate-complaints-policy-december-2024.pdf	Stage 2 cases with outstanding repair works are monitored and managed until completion by the stage 2 repairs project team. Once outstanding works are finished, a completion letter is sent to the resident. A surveyor signs off all stage 2 repairs. The complainant is assigned a named contact within the team, who will reach out within 5 working days and provide

				<p>appropriate updates to the resident.</p> <p>Non-repair related housing complaints will be monitored by the stage 2 monitoring team. Residents will be contacted within five working days and given a named contact.</p> <p>This can be tracked through the case management system.</p>
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	Commentary/explanation as evidence	The council clarifies the complaint definition in the acknowledgment. We aim to contact the complainant to gather all relevant information before starting the investigation.
6.19	<p>Landlords must confirm the following in writing to the resident at the completion of stage 2 in clear, plain language:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 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; 	Yes	Commentary/explanation as evidence	Our case management system includes templates to guide officers through each required element, ensuring compliance with the code. Senior officers review stage one and two responses for quality and completeness before issuance.

	<p>f. details of any outstanding actions; and</p> <p>g. details of how to escalate the matter to the Ombudsman Service if the individual remains dissatisfied.</p>			All officers receive feedback and regular training, including insights from our quality assurance framework.
6.20	Stage 2 is the landlord's final response and must involve all suitable staff members needed to issue such a response.	Yes	Commentary/explanation as evidence	<p>A dedicated team within Housing handles stage 2 complaints.</p> <p>However, certain complaint investigations necessitate senior-level management support. In such instances, a suitable individual will either assist with the investigation or complete it and respond accordingly, whilst adhering to the established policy and CHC guidelines.</p>

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:	Yes	Commentary/explanation as evidence.	Our process aims to resolve complaints efficiently. Complaints and Dispute Resolution officers are trained in our compensation

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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. 		<p>The Council's compensation policies are available on the website.</p> <p>Reporting a complaint, comment or issue London Borough of Hammersmith & Fulham</p>	<p>policies to address resident issues.</p> <p>When mistakes occur, we apologise, often in person, offer compensation, and work with residents to quickly rectify problems and agree on outcomes.</p> <p>The team tracks the resolution through to completion.</p>
7.2	Any remedy offered must reflect the impact on the resident as a result of any fault identified.	Yes	<p>Commentary/explanation as evidence.</p> <p>The Council's compensation policies are available on the website.</p> <p>Reporting a complaint, comment or issue London Borough of Hammersmith & Fulham</p>	<p>We have guidelines in place on compensation and remedies following Ombudsman recommendations.</p> <p>We address this in training and refer to the tenancy/lease agreement for guidance on responsibilities.</p>
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	<p>Commentary/explanation as evidence.</p>	<p>For complaints regarding repairs, our responses will include appointments or, in some cases, a schedule of works that provides details of timescales.</p>

				<p>We have improved our follow-up on repairs after stage two complaints. A dedicated repairs project team manages outstanding repairs until completion. Once a complaint is closed, the team will contact the resident within 5 working days to provide updates.</p> <p>Upon completion of all outstanding works, a letter confirming the completion will be sent to the resident.</p> <p>The stage 2 monitoring team will oversee any unresolved housing complaints that are not related to repairs. Residents will be contacted within five working days and provided with a named contact within the team.</p> <p>All stage 2 repair works must be approved by a surveyor.</p>
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7.4	Landlords must take account of the guidance issued by the Ombudsman when deciding on appropriate remedies.	Yes	Commentary/explanation as evidence. The Council's compensations policies are available on the website. Reporting a complaint, comment or issue London Borough of Hammersmith & Fulham	Included in our compensation policy and follow Ombudsman guidelines on compensation.
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Section 8: Self-assessment, reporting and compliance

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
8.1	<p>Landlords must produce an annual complaints performance and service improvement report for scrutiny and challenge, which must include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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	Links to the reports are detailed below.	The annual complaints report is published on the LBHF website and includes sections a-f.

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	London Borough of Hammersmith & Fulham - Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman Publication scheme London Borough of Hammersmith & Fulham	<p>The annual complaints report and self-assessment follow the Council's governance processes. These include reports to the Strategic Leadership Team, Members briefings, and Audit Committees. The Member Responsible for Complaints (MRC) reviews all reports.</p> <p>This CHC self-assessment has adhered to the governance process.</p>
8.3	Landlords must also carry out a self-assessment following a significant restructure, merger and/or change in procedures.	Yes	Commentary/explanation as evidence.	Self – assessments will be carried out when there are significant changes or restructures.
8.4	Landlords may be asked to review and update the self-assessment following an Ombudsman investigation.	Yes	Commentary/explanation as evidence.	This will be completed if requested by the HO.
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	Commentary/explanation as evidence.	This is included in the Business Continuity plans and we have email contacts for the HO to be able to provide updates.

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	Commentary/explanation as evidence.	<p>The Complaints Learning Board is being relaunched and will report monthly to analyse complaints and trends within the housing services teams to guide service improvements across housing.</p> <p>Each case is considered based on individual outcomes, and improvement plans can be incorporated into the complaints management system if applicable.</p>
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	Commentary/explanation as evidence.	<p>Bespoke reporting is used to gain insights for complaint management and fostering a positive culture in housing service improvements.</p> <p>A Complaints Learning Board is being relaunched to report monthly on the learning from complaints</p>

				and trends across the housing services teams. Their goal is to inform service improvement across housing.
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	Commentary/explanation as evidence.	<p>Tenant Satisfaction Measures are collected via surveys, which also gather feedback on complaints.</p> <p>The Director of Housing newsletter updates residents on services, complaints, and improvements. The Director's report, presented at the Housing Representatives Forum, also covers these topics.</p> <p>Jointly at resident groups we are reviewing their forward plan and have included an annual report which will incorporate feedback on complaints and lesson learnt.</p> <p>Lessons learnt and improvements: Following CHC guidelines, we identify</p>

				<p>primary and root causes of complaints after completing investigations.</p> <p>Performance Monitoring and Improvements: Currently, performance and insights are presented weekly on Housing Ombudsman cases and complaints to the Chief Executive, Directors, and Assistant Directors for Housing Complaints. This includes detailed reports on the management of repair complaints with contractors and the Direct Labour Organisation (DLO).</p>
9.4	<p>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.</p>	Yes		<p>Key Performance Indicators for complaints upheld is reported to services monthly and reported to Strategic Leadership Team (SLT) quarterly.</p> <p>Quarterly performance in respect of Ombudsman cases is provided to SLT and they also receive reports on the annual performance data and the</p>

				annual letter from the Housing Ombudsman. Complaint handling performance is reported quarterly to the Lead Member (MRC)
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	Commentary/explanation as evidence.	<p>The Director Chief Operating Officer of Corporate Services oversees the CHC self-assessment and related actions.</p> <p>The Director Chief Operating Officer reports key performance indicators and route cause analysis of corporate complaints to the SLT and relevant member committees.</p> <p>The post holder is the owner of the corporate complaints policy and complaints handling procedures.</p> <p>Cabinet Member Cllr Ree is the Council's Member Responsible for Complaints.</p>
9.6	The MRC will be responsible for ensuring the governing body receives	Yes	Commentary/explanation as evidence.	Cabinet Member Cllr Ree (MRC) has oversight of all

	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.			governance reports on Complaints council wide. Cabinet Member Cllr Umeh oversees Housing and receives weekly updates on the current status to manage and review complaints.
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, 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.	Yes	Commentary/explanation as evidence.	The Cabinet Member Cllr Ree (MRC) is updated on a regular basis with an overview of the current complaint handling categories and outcomes. The CHC code self-assessment, the annual complaints reports and SLT quarterly reports are shared.
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	Yes	Commentary/explanation as evidence.	Investigators within the Complaint, Dispute, and Support Team, as well as the Resident Experience Team, adhere to a

	<p>complaints, working with colleagues across teams and departments;</p> <p>b. take collective responsibility for any shortfalls identified through complaints, rather than blaming others; and</p> <p>c. act within the professional standards for engaging with complaints as set by any relevant professional body.</p>			<p>standardized objective for complaint handling. All Housing Services staff are evaluated on their performance in complaint management through their appraisals.</p> <p>This approach promotes collaboration across teams and departments, with a focus on identifying issues and resolving complaints. It has eliminated a blame culture, ensuring professional handling, ownership, and resolution of complaints.</p>
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