**Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code:**

**Self-assessment form**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Compliance with the Complaint Handling Code** | | | | |
| **1** | **Definition of a complaint** | **Yes** | **No** |
|  | Does the complaints process use the following definition of a complaint?  *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*. | Yes |  |
|  | Does the policy have exclusions where a complaint will not be considered? | Yes |  |
|  | Are these exclusions reasonable and fair to residents?  Evidence relied upon  *Complaints, Comments and Compliments Policy provides details of all exemptions. All complaints are investigated and exemptions ensure that the complaints process is suspended and the correct process is used, for example complaints regarding safeguarding concerns are investigated via our Safeguarding Children and Adults at Risk Policy.* | Yes |  |
| **2** | **Accessibility** |  |  |
|  | Are multiple accessibility routes available for residents to make a complaint? | Yes |  |
|  | Is the complaints policy and procedure available online? | Yes |  |
|  | Do we have a reasonable adjustments policy?  *We do not have a stand alones reasonable adjustments policy however reasonable adjustments are considered within the scope of the procedures and our Equality Diversity and Inclusion Policy must be applied when handling complaints.* |  | No |
|  | Do we regularly advise residents about our complaints process? | Yes |  |
| **3** | **Complaints team and process** |  |  |
|  | Is there a complaint officer or equivalent in post? | Yes |  |
|  | Does the complaint officer have autonomy to resolve complaints? | Yes |  |
|  | Does the complaint officer have authority to compel engagement from other departments to resolve disputes? | Yes |  |
|  | If there is a third stage to the complaints procedure are residents involved in the decision making? |  | No |
|  | Is any third stage optional for residents? |  | N/A |
|  | Does the final stage response set out residents’ right to refer the matter to the Housing Ombudsman Service? | Yes |  |
|  | Do we keep a record of complaint correspondence including correspondence from the resident? | Yes |  |
|  | At what stage are most complaints resolved?  *Our 2019 Annual Complaints Report evidenced that 36 out of 37 complaints received during the year were resolved at stage one.* | One |  |
| **4** | **Communication** |  |  |
|  | Are residents kept informed and updated during the complaints process? | Yes |  |
|  | Are residents informed of the landlord’s position and given a chance to respond and challenge any area of dispute before the final decision? | Yes |  |
|  | Are all complaints acknowledged and logged within five days? | Yes |  |
|  | Are residents advised of how to escalate at the end of each stage? | Yes |  |
|  | What proportion of complaints are resolved at stage one? | 97% |  |
|  | What proportion of complaints are resolved at stage two? | 3% |  |
|  | What proportion of complaint responses are sent within Code timescales?   * Stage one   Stage one (with extension)   * Stage two   Stage two (with extension)  *Information based upon our 2019 Annual Complaints Report, response times based upon Depaul UK standard response times, which are less than the Code timescales. All Stage One* | 57%  5%  100%  0% |  |
|  | Where timescales have been extended did we have good reason? | Yes |  |
|  | Where timescales have been extended did we keep the resident informed? | Yes |  |
|  | What proportion of complaints do we resolve to residents’ satisfaction  *Information taken from our 2019 Annual Complaints Report and includes where complaints are identified as satisfied, withdrawn by complainant and where a complainant did not respond to feedback.* | 84% |  |
| **5** | **Cooperation with Housing Ombudsman Service** |  |  |
|  | Were all requests for evidence responded to within 15 days?  *No complaints referred to the Housing Ombudsman to date.* | N/a | N/a |
|  | Where the timescale was extended did we keep the Ombudsman informed? | N/a | N/a |
| **6** | **Fairness in complaint handling** |  |  |
|  | Are residents able to complain via a representative throughout? | Yes |  |
|  | If advice was given, was this accurate and easy to understand? | Yes |  |
|  | How many cases did we refuse to escalate?  What was the reason for the refusal? | None  N/a |  |
|  | Did we explain our decision to the resident? | N/a |  |
| **7** | **Outcomes and remedies** |  |  |
|  | Where something has gone wrong are we taking appropriate steps to put things right? | Yes |  |
| **8** | **Continuous learning and improvement** |  |  |
|  | What improvements have we made as a result of learning from complaints? | See below |  |
|  | How do we share these lessons with:   1. residents?   *Our updated complaints policy and information will be published on our website early 2021.*   1. the board/governing body?   *Updates are reported to our Board and Sub-committees via meetings, our Services Committee received an Annual Complaints Report that includes lessons and developments.*   1. In the Annual Report?   *We will publish an Annual Complaints Report in 2021 that includes improvements.* |  |  |
|  | Has the Code made a difference to how we respond to complaints? | Yes |  |
|  | What changes have we made?  *We have fully reviewed our complaints, comments and compliments policy and procedure, our procedures will be made significantly shorter and easier to follow as a result of aligning this to the new code. Our process has been reduced from three stages to two stages. We are reviewing how we collect data and information from complaints to ensure that this gives us better performance information and enables us to make improvements.* |  |  |