

Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code: Self-assessment form

Compliance with the Complaint Handling Code			
1	Definition of a complaint	Yes	No
	<p>Does the complaints process use the following definition of a complaint?</p> <p><i>An expression of dissatisfaction, however made, about the standard of service, actions or lack of action by the organisation, its own staff, or those acting on its behalf, affecting an individual resident or group of residents.</i></p>	x	
	Does the policy have exclusions where a complaint will not be considered?	x	
	<p>Are these exclusions reasonable and fair to residents?</p> <p>Evidence relied upon Our procedure stipulates a timeframe exclusion as follows: Complaints should be made within 3 months of the incident giving rise to the concern, however Connexus may, at its discretion, consider complaints raised after 3 months</p> <p>Our procedure also states that we may stop a complaint at an earlier stage, but we would explain why. This is, in accordance with Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code</p>	x	
2	Accessibility		
	Are multiple accessibility routes available for residents to make a complaint?	x	
	Is the complaints policy and procedure available online?	x	
	<p>Do we have a reasonable adjustments policy?</p> <p>Connexus has an Equality & Diversity Policy in place and all new policies are also subject to an equality impact assessment to ensure that no customer is disadvantaged by a policy</p>	x	
	Do we regularly advise residents about our complaints process?	x	

3	Complaints team and process		
	Is there a complaint officer or equivalent in post?	x	
	Does the complaint officer have autonomy to resolve complaints?	x	
	Does the complaint officer have authority to compel engagement from other departments to resolve disputes?	x	
	If there is a third stage to the complaints procedure are residents involved in the decision making?	n/a	
	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?	x	
	Do we keep a record of complaint correspondence including correspondence from the resident?	x	
	At what stage are most complaints resolved?	1	
4	Communication		
	Are residents kept informed and updated during the complaints process?	x	
	Are residents informed of the landlord's position and given a chance to respond and challenge any area of dispute before the final decision?	x	
	Are all complaints acknowledged and logged within five days?		x 1 missed
	Are residents advised of how to escalate at the end of each stage?	x	
	What proportion of complaints are resolved at stage one?	77%	
	What proportion of complaints are resolved at stage two?	23%	
	What proportion of complaint responses are sent within Code timescales? January 2021 – June 2021 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stage one Stage one (with extension) Stage two Stage two (with extension) 	68% 26% 100%	
	Where timescales have been extended did we have good reason?	x	
	Where timescales have been extended did we keep the resident informed?	x	
	What proportion of complaints do we resolve to residents' satisfaction? 100% of complainants completing the satisfaction survey were satisfied with our complaint response, however, only 27% of complainants have completed the survey. We therefore also look at the number of complaints that are resolved at stage 1 as an indication that customers are satisfied with the outcome.	100% 77%	

5	Cooperation with Housing Ombudsman Service		
	Were all requests for evidence responded to within 15 days?	x	
	Where the timescale was extended did we keep the Ombudsman informed?	n/a	
6	Fairness in complaint handling		
	Are residents able to complain via a representative throughout?	x	
	If advice was given, was this accurate and easy to understand?	x	
	How many cases did we refuse to escalate? What was the reason for the refusal? 1. One complaint related to historic incidences with no new evidence. The complaint had already been investigated 2. The second complaint related to issues from many years previous, all of which had been investigated/resolved.	2	
	Did we explain our decision to the resident?	x	
7	Outcomes and remedies		
	Where something has gone wrong are we taking appropriate steps to put things right?	x	
8	Continuous learning and improvement		
	What improvements have we made as a result of learning from complaints? Be clear on the expectations of service delivery of Connexus The delivery of service is inconsistent which is reflected in the feedback and complaints that we receive. We will review our Customer Offer (service standards) and seek feedback from customers, but also from colleagues, to fully understand the barriers to consistently delivering a good service. Once the new Customer Offer has been defined, we will ensure customers and colleagues are clear on what customers can expect and what is expected of colleagues. Do what we say we will A simple, but clear message from the feedback is that we need to do what we say we will, in particular around calling our customers back. To address this, Senior Management Team has agreed to use one system to record customer call back requests and the subsequent interaction, so that there is more transparency between teams and it is possible to track that calls are returned. This will be implemented from Oct-21 Keeping customers informed Training was delivered to colleagues to help improve their confidence in responding to enquiries and complaints which in		

	<p>turn will help address the issue that customers were not receiving information or being kept informed.</p> <p>Proactive instead of reactive Complaints and feedback show that we are often reactive rather than proactive. The customer feedback forum considered opportunities to change this. The group discussed simple things such as advising customers of work which will be undertaken that will impact them, or if we become aware of an issue that could affect them, then make contact and advise. This will take time to implement. However, there are opportunities to do simple proactive work immediately, and where these are seen, the Head of Communities and the Customer Services Manager in particular are highlighting to the relevant area of the business.</p>	
	<p>How do we share these lessons with:</p> <p>a) residents? Learning from complaints is updated on our website every six months. Information about complaints is included in our customer newsletter at least once a year.</p> <p>b) the board/governing body? A bi-annual report on customer feedback is provided to the Customer Service Committee which includes details of complaints and the learning from these.</p> <p>c) In the Annual Report? The last annual report only showed the volume of complaints as per the regulatory requirements, however, for 2021, our business intelligence team and complaints manager will work together to ensure information is provided to customers and stakeholders on the learning and changes to service as a result of this learning.</p>	

	Has the Code made a difference to how we respond to complaints?	x	
	<p>What changes have we made?</p> <p>The policy and procedure were updated in line with the requirements of the code.</p> <p>We appointed a Complaints Manager to improve consistency in complaint handling, so in the main, all stage 1's are investigated by the same manager</p> <p>We monitor and ensure that there is more contact with the customer during the complaint and we discuss the complaint outcome with customers before they receive the final written response.</p>		