

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> <p><i>Revised Complaints Policy uses the above definition:</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:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Tuntum list the exclusions within the complaints policy, so that this provides transparency.</i> <i>Tuntum also advise that there may be other circumstances where it is not appropriate to follow the complaints policy – for example, where a complaint relates to a Right to Buy or Right to Acquire process. In these circumstances the policy advises that a member of the Directorate team will contact the complainant in writing to explain why the complaint cannot be considered under the policy; they will also signpost the complainant to the most appropriate service or team to progress the matter in the suitable way.</i> 		
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><i>Reasonable Adjustment Policy is to be presented to Committee/Board before March 2021 for approval.</i></p>		x
	<p>Do we regularly advise residents about our complaints process?</p> <p><i>The Tuntum website includes information on how to raise a complaint</i></p>	x	
3	Complaints team and process		
	<p>Is there a complaint officer or equivalent in post?</p> <p><i>Yes – Customer Excellence Leader</i></p>	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	

	<i>The Customer Excellence Leader has access to all staff and resources within the organisation and can escalate to the Head of Service, Director of Resources and Chief Executive.</i>		
	If there is a third stage to the complaints procedure are residents involved in the decision making? <i>Yes, but this is optional and can be bypassed. The Complaints Policy includes an option to refer to the Independent Complaint Panel (ICP)</i>	x	
	Is any third stage optional for residents? <i>Yes, but this is optional and can be bypassed.</i>	x	
	Does the final stage response set out residents' right to refer the matter to the Housing Ombudsman Service? <i>This is included in standard letters.</i>	x	
	Do we keep a record of complaint correspondence including correspondence from the resident? <i>All complaints are logged on the complaints module of Omniledger. A full record is kept of the complaint, any review and the outcomes at each stage. This includes the original complaint and the date received; all correspondence with the complainant, correspondence with other parties and any reports or documentation.</i>	x	
	At what stage are most complaints resolved? <i>The vast majority of complaints are resolved at stage 1 of the complaints process.</i>		
4	Communication		
	Are residents kept informed and updated during the complaints process? <i>All residents are kept informed by the allocated staff member. If there are any delays anticipated, then residents are informed.</i>	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? <i>Residents are informed of the landlord's position in stage 1 and stage 2 and have the opportunity to challenge before going to the Housing Ombudsman. The option to refer to the Independent Complaint Panel (ICP) is also there.</i>	x	
	Are all complaints acknowledged and logged within five days?	x	
	Are residents advised of how to escalate at the end of each stage? <i>Yes, included in standard letters.</i>	x	
	What proportion of complaints are resolved at stage one? <i>In 2019/20 - 88.37% were resolved at Stage 1</i>		
	What proportion of complaints are resolved at stage two? <i>In 2019/20 - 100% were resolved at Stage 2</i>		
	What proportion of complaint responses are sent within Code timescales? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stage one – 88.37% • Stage one (with extension) – 11.63% • Stage two – 100% • Stage two (with extension) – N/A 		
	Where timescales have been extended did we have good reason? <i>Yes, usually availability of residents and staff to meet. Some delays due to staff absences.</i>	x	

	Where timescales have been extended did we keep the resident informed?	x	
	What proportion of complaints do we resolve to residents' satisfaction? <i>In 2019/20 - 100% were resolved to residents satisfaction.</i>		
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? <i>Complaints Policy includes use of advocates.</i>	x	
	If advice was given, was this accurate and easy to understand?	N/A	
	How many cases did we refuse to escalate? <i>In 2019/20 Tuntum refused to escalate one case</i>		
	What was the reason for the refusal? <i>Did not meet the criteria for escalation.</i>		
	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? <i>This will form part of the new quarterly performance reporting on lessons learned to the Committee/Board</i>	x	
8	Continuous learning and improvement		
	<i>What improvements have we made as a result of learning from complaints?</i>		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Lessons learnt approach in progress of implementation</i> • <i>Dedicated member of staff to lead on complaint resolution</i> • <i>Enhanced KPI Reporting</i> • <i>Review of the complaints policy and procedure</i> • <i>Updated the company website</i> • <i>Corporate training on complaint handling</i> 		
	How do we share these lessons with:		
	<p>a) residents? – <i>to be publicised in Engage – resident newsletter, the Tuntum website and Tuntum social media platforms.</i></p> <p>b) the board/governing body? – <i>regular updates on the volume, category and outcome of complaints and confirmation that the complaint handling code is being applied to be reported to Board/sub-committee</i></p> <p>c) In the Annual Report? – <i>review issues and trends arising from complaints handling, inclusion of lessons learnt and improvement from complaints to be included in the annual report from 2021/22.</i></p>		

	Has the Code made a difference to how we respond to complaints? <i>Revised Complaints Policy</i>	x	
	<p>What changes have we made?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Complaints policy revised</i> • <i>Timescales revised</i> • <i>Dedicated lead on complaints</i> • <i>Template letters for staff to use</i> • <i>Updated website with information in this area</i> • <i>Once the revised policy is approved then this will be published online under 'Make a complaint' to make it easier to find and make a complaint</i> • <i>Tuntum will provide residents with contact information for the Ombudsman as part of its regular correspondence with residents.</i> • <i>Tuntum's response letters provide early advice to residents regarding their right to access the Housing Ombudsman Service, not only at the point they have exhausted the landlord's complaints process. The Housing Ombudsman Service can assist residents throughout the life of a complaint. This affords the resident the opportunity to engage with the Ombudsman's dispute support advisors</i> • <i>Publish the self-assessment online.</i> 		