**Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code:**

**Self-assessment form Reviewed 02 March 2022**

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| **Compliance with the Complaint Handling Code** | | | |
| **1** | **Definition of a complaint** | **Yes/No** | **Comments** |
|  | 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 | <https://www.nwleics.gov.uk/files/documents/complaints_procedure/Complaints%20Procedure%20-%20Nov%202019.pdf> |
|  | Does the policy have exclusions where a complaint will not be considered? | Yes | Where the nature of the enquiry is reporting a fault |
|  | Are these exclusions reasonable and fair to residents?  Evidence relied upon | Yes | Link within policy to ‘Have your Say’ form |
| **2** | **Accessibility** |  |  |
|  | Are multiple accessibility routes available for residents to make a complaint? | Yes | Have your Say form, Customer Services, MP, Councillor, Housing Officer, Support Worker, In person or in writing |
|  | Is the complaints policy and procedure available online? | Yes |  |
|  | Do we have a reasonable adjustments policy? | Yes |  |
|  | Do we regularly advise residents about our complaints process? | Yes | Performance & Finance Working Group, NWLDC Website, Resident Involvement |
| **3** | **Complaints team and process** |  |  |
|  | Is there a complaint officer or equivalent in post? | Yes | Kerry Spiers/Feedback Team/Dave Thorpe/David Moxon |
|  | 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 | Stage 1, Stage 2 & Ombudsman  Stage 3 is discretionary and only to be used where landlord believes it to be ‘absolutely necessary’ |
|  | 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? | Stage 1 |  |
| **4** | **Communication** |  |  |
|  | Are residents kept informed and updated during the complaints process? | Yes | Written confirmation upon receipt and following investigation |
|  | 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 | Resident will be informed of decision but will always have the right to appeal as ask for independent evaluation |
|  | 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? | 100% | to Q3 21/22 For 20/21 = 100% |
|  | What proportion of complaints are resolved at stage two? | 100% | to Q3 21/22 For 20/21 = 100% |
|  | What proportion of complaint responses are sent within Code timescales?   * Stage one   Stage one (with extension)   * Stage two   Stage two (with extension) | 100%  No data  100%  No data | to Q3 21/22 For 20/21 100%  to Q3 21/22 For 20/21 100% |
|  | Where timescales have been extended did we have good reason? | Yes | To ensure full and proper investigation |
|  | Where timescales have been extended did we keep the resident informed? | Yes | 10 day holding letter/email is sent to customer |
|  | What proportion of complaints do we resolve to residents’ satisfaction | 100% | To Q3 21/22 |
| **5** | **Cooperation with Housing Ombudsman Service** |  |  |
|  | Were all requests for evidence responded to within 15 days? | Yes |  |
|  | Where the timescale was extended did we keep the Ombudsman informed? | Yes | Telephone/email request to extend |
| **6** | **Fairness in complaint handling** |  |  |
|  | Are residents able to complain via a representative throughout? | Yes | As per our complaints policy |
|  | If advice was given, was this accurate and easy to understand? | Yes | Option always exists for advice to be challenged |
|  | 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 | Learnings from complaints |
| **8** | **Continuous learning and improvement** |  |  |
|  | What improvements have we made as a result of learning from complaints? |  | Examples include   * Improving the wording on RTB letters to clarify timescales * Capturing of works following inspections into responsive works timeframes * Improvement contract management in particular where multiple contractors are involved in the same case * Improved analysis and investigation where multi skilled operatives are required to effect the repair * Impact of lockdown on ASB cases – upskilling Ward Councillors to better respond to cases at first contact. * Being aware of local surroundings when discussing tenancy issues * Increased flexibility where covid restrictions mean the service is unable to fully support/engage e.g. mutual exchanges visits |
|  | How do we share these lessons with:   1. residents? 2. the board/governing body? 3. In the Annual Report? | Yes | Performance & Finance Working Group, Resident Involvement  Monthly and Quarterly Performance Reporting |
|  | Has the Code made a difference to how we respond to complaints? | Yes |  |
|  | What changes have we made? |  | Raised the profile and importance of responding to Ombudsman enquiries |