

## Self-Assessment against Complaint Handling Code 2020

1	<b>Definition of a complaint</b>	Compliant Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	
	<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>The definition is clearly stated within SLH's Customer Feedback Policy which was last reviewed in 2020</p>	<p><b>Evidence</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Customer Feedback Policy</li> <li>• SLH website</li> </ul>
	<p>Does the policy have exclusions where a complaint will not be considered?</p>	<p>Detailed in sections 4.1.2 on pages 4 to 5 of the policy. It provides a comprehensive (but not exhaustive) list of examples.</p>	
	<p>Are these exclusions reasonable and fair the residents? Evidence relied upon</p>	<p>As with all policies there was engagement with the SLH scrutiny panel before approval of the Customer Feedback Policy</p>	
2	<b>Accessibility</b>	Compliant Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	
	<p>Are multiple accessibility routes available for residents to make a complaint?</p>	<p>Detailed in section 4.1.3 of the policy.</p>	<p><b>Evidence</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Customer Feedback Policy</li> <li>• SLH website</li> <li>• Equality &amp; Diversity Policy</li> </ul>
	<p>Is the complaints policy and procedure available online?</p>	<p>Information is available on SLH's website</p>	
	<p>Do we have a reasonable adjustments policy?</p>	<p>Outlined in the Equality &amp; Diversity Policy.</p>	

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	Do we regularly advise residents about our complaints process?	Information on how to make a complaint is listed on the SLH Website. In addition the SLH Bulletin provides high level information on complaint performance and how tenants can make a complaint	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SLH Bulletin</li> </ul>
<b>3</b>	<b>Complaints team and process</b>	Compliant Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	
	Is there a complaint officer or equivalent in post?	Whilst all complaints are dealt with by relevant managers, a Performance Officer and Performance and Risk Team Leader assesses and manages the complaints process to ensure consistency of complaint handling	<b>Evidence</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complaints procedure</li> <li>• Stage 2 letter template</li> </ul>
	Does the complaint officer have autonomy to resolve complaints?	The Performance and Risk Team Leader has this ability to do so but would need to follow the correct procedure. Predominately the complaints would always be investigated by specific managers.	
	Does the complaint officer have authority to compel engagement from other departments to resolve disputes?	Complaints are assigned to managers and closely monitored to ensure, when appropriate, inter departmental engagement to attempt to resolve the complaint.	
	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?		
	Does the final stage response set out residents' right to refer the matter to the Housing Ombudsman Service?	The final response letter provided after a Stage 2 complaint details the complainant's rights and timescales required for Housing Ombudsman escalation	

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	Do we keep a record of complaint correspondence including correspondence from the resident?	All documents are attached to the complaint within the housing management software. Quality checks carried out by Performance Officer to ensure all letters are attached.	
	At what stage are most complaints resolved?	Stage 1 - in the past 12 months (Sept 2019 to Aug 2020) 88.5% of all complaints have been resolved at this stage. Stage 2 resolutions 2.9%. 8.6% complaints were withdrawn	
<b>4</b>	<b>Communication</b>	Compliant Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	
	Are residents kept informed and updated during the complaints process?	The procedure is that the manager who has been assigned the complaint to make contact where possible	<b>Evidence</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Customer Feedback Policy</li> <li>• Stage 1 and 2 letter templates</li> <li>• Monthly Customer Feedback Report</li> </ul>
	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, unless there were extenuating or exceptional circumstances.	
	Are all complaints acknowledged and logged within five days?	Yes. As we provide only 10 working days to resolve a complaint it is imperative we respond straight away. Any cases when this has not occurred are exceptions where a complaint may not have been logged or allocated correctly on the housing management system. In instances such as this the complainant is contacted immediately. Year to date 96% of all complaints have been acknowledged within timescales. 80% of all responses have been within 10 days	

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	Are residents advised of how to escalate at the end of each stage?	Stage 1 and 2 template letters advise of the complainant's options at both stages if they remain dissatisfied.
	What proportion of complaints are resolved at stage one?	Based on the last 12 months it equates to 88.5%.
	What proportion of complaints are resolved at stage two?	Based on the last 12 months it equates to 2.9%.
	What proportion of complaint responses are sent within Code timescales? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stage one Stage one (with extension)</li> <li>• Stage two Stage two (with extension)</li> </ul>	Stage 1 - 83% Stage 1 - 17% extended Stage 2 - 100%
	Where timescales have been extended did we have good reason?	This should only be done in extenuating circumstances, such as when further information is required from an external partner, when further investigation is required for a complex case, when a colleague is absent or when requested to do so by the complainant. The Complaint Manager must contact the customer to agree an extension, confirming the reason for this, agree a revised response date with the customer and update the event log accordingly.

	Where timescales have been extended did we keep the resident informed?	Our Customer Feedback policy states that should the investigating manager require additional time to review the complaint then a letter will need to be sent confirming the arranged date and reasons for the extension.
	What proportion of complaints do we resolve to residents' satisfaction	In 2019 87% of customers were satisfied with how their complaint had been handled.
<b>5</b>	<b>Cooperation with Housing Ombudsman Service</b>	Compliant Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
	Were all requests for evidence responded to within 15 days?	There have been no cases to report in the last 12 months however SLH will always engage promptly with the IHO
	Where the timescale was extended did we keep the Ombudsman informed?	N/A
<b>6</b>	<b>Fairness in complaint handling</b>	Compliant Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
	Are residents able to complain via a representative throughout?	Providing the correct level of authority has been granted then yes. If it is a complaint made via a appointed solicitor then this is not covered with the complaints policy and it dealt with via company legal representatives.
	If advice was given, was this accurate and easy to understand?	

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	How many cases did we refuse to escalate? What was the reason for refusal?	There have been no cases when the complainant has requested to escalate their complaint whilst within the policy timescales. The only refusals have been when request to escalate has been made outside of the policy timescales.	
	Did we explain our decision to the resident?	Yes.	

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7	<b>Outcomes and remedies</b>	Compliant Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	
	Where something has gone wrong are we taking appropriate steps to put things right?	Identification of policy or service failure and root cause of the complaint. Any learnings as a result of the complaint are documented with the service manager to investigate and implement improvements when appropriate. This is collated in a report that is shared with EMT and Scrutiny Panel for comment/follow up.	<b>Evidence</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Customer Feedback report</li> </ul>
8	<b>Continuous Learning and Improvement</b>	Compliant Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	
	What improvements have we made as a result of learning from complaints?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clarification on what items are chargeable on future kitchen replacements and ensure they are consistently delivered.</li> <li>• Staff member has been given specific advice how to manage a difficult conversation with a customer and this will also be fed back to other team members.</li> <li>• Ensure if appointments run over, the contractor will contact customers to inform them and re-arrange a convenient time and date</li> <li>• Community Safety Manager to review correspondence from their team to customers</li> <li>• Ensure that we check that an appointment has not made/re-arranged, before issuing formal noncompliance letter</li> </ul>	<b>Evidence:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Customer Feedback Report</li> <li>• Website</li> <li>• Bulletin</li> </ul>

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	How do we share these lessons with a) residents? b) the board/governing body? c) In the Annual Report?	Our bi-annual Bulletin and Scrutiny Panel. Annual complaints summary report. Included in annual report.	
	Has the Code made a difference to how we respond to complaints?	Yes.	
	What changes have we made?	Definition amended and policy now on website.	