

South Liverpool Homes

Housing Ombudsman's Compliant Handling Code

Self-assessment

Section 1: Definition of a complaint

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
1.2	A complaint must be defined as: <i>'an expression of dissatisfaction, however made, about the standard of service, actions or lack of action by the landlord, its own staff, or those acting on its behalf, affecting a resident or group of residents.'</i>	Yes	This definition is stated within SLH's customer feedback policy (hereinafter referred to as the policy). Statement is also included on the SLH website.	N/A
1.3	A resident does not have to use the word 'complaint' for it to be treated as such. Whenever a resident expresses dissatisfaction landlords must give them the choice to make complaint. A complaint that is submitted via a third party or representative must be handled in line with the landlord's complaints policy.	Yes	This is captured in the policy.	System changes within Orchard now prompt colleagues to offer residents the option to raise a complaint where dissatisfaction is identified. This is supported by a user guide and reinforced through regular team briefings and communications to ensure consistent application across services.
1.4	Landlords must recognise the difference between a service request and a complaint. This must be set out in their complaints policy. A service request is a request from a resident to the landlord requiring action to be taken to put something right. Service requests are not complaints, but must be recorded, monitored and reviewed regularly.	Yes	This is captured in the policy. All service requests are recorded on the housing management system. In addition, two example flow charts are included within the customer feedback procedure to highlight examples of service requests and complaints.	Regular dialogue/comms carried out with teams to continue to raise awareness of the policy.

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Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
1.5	A complaint must be raised when the resident expresses dissatisfaction with the response to their service request, even if the handling of the service request remains ongoing. Landlords must not stop their efforts to address the service request if the resident complains.	Yes	This is captured in the policy. Customers may express dissatisfaction with a service/area and SLH will give them the choice to make complaint. All reports of dissatisfaction are recorded.	See 1.3
1.6	An expression of dissatisfaction with services made through a survey is not defined as a complaint, though wherever possible, the person completing the survey should be made aware of how they can pursue a complaint if they wish to. Where landlords ask for wider feedback about their services, they also must provide details of how residents can complain.	Yes	This is captured in the policy. For tenant satisfaction surveys (completed on SLH's behalf by IFF Research), IFF advise tenants that if they would like to raise a formal complaint about anything they have discussed during the survey, to contact SLH. Transactional satisfaction surveys are completed through CX feedback. These surveys provide details of how customers can log a complaint by email or telephone.	

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Section 2: Exclusions

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
2.1	Landlords must accept a complaint unless there is a valid reason not to do so. If landlords decide not to accept a complaint they must be able to evidence their reasoning. Each complaint must be considered on its own merits	Yes	This is captured in the policy. Record is kept of any complaints that have not been accepted, including the reasons why. Details of any complaints not accepted are included in the annual report.	
2.2	A complaints policy must set out the circumstances in which a matter will not be considered as a complaint or escalated, and these circumstances must be fair and reasonable to residents. Acceptable exclusions include: - The issue giving rise to the complaint occurred over twelve months ago. - Legal proceedings have started. This is defined as details of the claim, such as the Claim Form and Particulars of Claim, having been filed at court. - Matters that have previously been considered under the complaints policy.	Yes	This is captured in the policy and also on the SLH website. If a matter is not accepted as a complaint, this will be clearly communicated to the customer and signposted (if applicable) to the relevant service area. A detailed record in place to keep a record of complaints that have been excluded from the process. Details of any complaints not accepted are included in the annual report.	In addition to the acceptable exclusions listed in the code requirement, SLH policy states: - Initial request for a service for example reporting a repair. - Complaints about anti-social behaviour (ASB) or nuisance, such complaints will be handled by SLH's Anti-Social Behaviour Policy. Complaints about ASB will only be accepted under the Customer Feedback Policy where someone is unhappy with the way SLH has dealt with a case of ASB - Complaints from colleagues unless they are a tenant and it is a tenancy related issue - Claims for compensation as these will be dealt with by SLH's insurers

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Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
2.3	Landlords must accept complaints referred to them within 12 months of the issue occurring or the resident becoming aware of the issue, unless they are excluded on other grounds. Landlords must consider whether to apply discretion to accept complaints made outside this time limit where there are good reasons to do so.	Yes	This is captured in the policy. Detailed record in place to log all complaints, date received/acknowledged/responded to, et al.	
2.4	If a landlord decides not to accept a complaint, an explanation must be provided to the resident setting out the reasons why the matter is not suitable for the complaints process and the right to take that decision to the Ombudsman. If the Ombudsman does not agree that the exclusion has been fairly applied, the Ombudsman may tell the landlord to take on the complaint.	Yes	This is captured in the policy. If SLH will not consider a complaint, it will write to the customer advising them why it is unable to handle the matter in line with policy and advise them of their right to approach the Housing Ombudsman about this decision.	
2.5	Landlords must not take a blanket approach to excluding complaints; they must consider the individual circumstances of each complaint.	Yes	This is captured in the policy. SLH does consider the individual circumstances of each complaint. A detailed record is in place to keep a record of complaints that have been excluded from the process.	

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Section 3: Accessibility and Awareness

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
3.1	Landlords must make it easy for residents to complain by providing different channels through which they can make a complaint. Landlords must consider their duties under the Equality Act 2010 and anticipate the needs and reasonable adjustments of residents who may need to access the complaints process.	Yes	Complaints can be made in a range of ways, including in person, by telephone, email, online, via social media and in writing. All options are published on SLH's website and at the Parklands office. Details are included in the procedure and also on the SLH website.	
3.2	Residents must be able to raise their complaints in any way and with any member of staff. All staff must be aware of the complaints process and be able to pass details of the complaint to the appropriate person within the landlord.	Yes	Complaints can be made in a range of ways, including in person, by telephone, email, online, via social media and in writing. A list of methods is included in the customer feedback procedure and on the SLH website.	Regular dialogue/comms carried out with teams to continue to raise awareness of the policy.
3.3	High volumes of complaints must not be seen as a negative, as they can be indicative of a well-publicised and accessible complaints process. Low complaint volumes are potentially a sign that residents are unable to complain.	Yes	SLH does not view high volumes of complaints as a negative. Customer feedback is regularly discussed by the leadership team (monthly) and the Avela home service committee, customer services committee SLH board and the Avela board (quarterly). The customer feedback report is also shared with lead board member for complaints.	There is a key focus on learning from complaints and embedding learning across the organisation.

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Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
			Team meetings also focus on lessons learning, on a monthly basis.	
3.4	Landlords must make their complaint policy available in a clear and accessible format for all residents. This will detail the two stage process, what will happen at each stage, and the timeframes for responding. The policy must also be published on the landlord's website.	Yes	This information is included within the 'Complaints' section of the SLH website, including the policy. The website can be translated to other languages via Google Translate. A video is available on our website, which details our complaints process. In addition, social media campaigns are regularly held to raise awareness of the customer feedback process to tenants. As per SLH's equality, diversity and inclusion policy, SLH seek to ensure all written and digital communication follows accessibility guidelines and communication accessibility standards. SLH will provide information in alternative formats on request such as signing and other translation services.	
3.5	The policy must explain how the landlord will publicise details of the complaints policy, including information about the Ombudsman and this Code.	Yes	This is captured in the policy and also on the SLH website.	

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3.6	Landlords must give residents the opportunity to have a representative deal with their complaint on their behalf, and to be represented or accompanied at any meeting with the landlord.	Yes	This is captured in the policy and on the SLH website. The acknowledgement letter states the customer can have a representative deal with their complaint on their behalf.	
3.7	Landlords must provide residents with information on their right to access the Ombudsman service and how the individual can engage with the Ombudsman about their complaint.	Yes	A customer feedback leaflet is shared with the complainant when acknowledging their complaint explaining the complaints procedure; included within this are contact details for the Housing Ombudsman. These contact details are also available on the SLH website. Stage 1 and stage 2 response letters include further details of the Housing Ombudsman service.	

Section 4: Complaint Handling Staff

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
4.1	Landlords must have a person or team assigned to take responsibility for complaint handling, including liaison with the Ombudsman and ensuring complaints are reported to the governing body (or equivalent). This Code will refer to that person or	Yes	All complaints are dealt with by relevant service managers. A quality and performance team is in place, consisting of the Head of	

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	team as the 'complaints officer'. This role may be in addition to other duties.		Governance, Performance and Assurance (HoG), Quality & Performance (Q&P) Manager, who is responsible for managing and improving the customer feedback process, and the Complaints & Performance (C&P) Officer, who manages the administrative element of the customer feedback process.	
4.2	The complaints officer must have access to staff at all levels to facilitate the prompt resolution of complaints. They must also have the authority and autonomy to act to resolve disputes promptly and fairly.	Yes	The complaint handler is usually the service manager. Complaint responses are issued by service areas, with the majority reviewed and/or signed off by a senior member of staff. In addition, each complaint response is reviewed by the C&P Officer or the Q&P Manager or the HoG in their absence, to ensure that the response is appropriate. A learning management system is in place, which provides access to ongoing customer care training. All colleagues aware of probity framework which includes reference to conflicts of interest; these are declared by all colleagues at least annually or where a change occurs.	

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4.3	Landlords are expected to prioritise complaint handling and a culture of learning from complaints. All relevant staff must be suitably trained in the importance of complaint handling. It is important that complaints are seen as a core service and must be resourced to handle complaints effectively	Yes	SLH prioritises complaint handling and a dedicated team is in place to do so. Customer feedback is regularly discussed by leadership team (monthly) and the Avela board, Avela home service committee, customer services committee and SLH board (quarterly). The customer feedback report is also shared with lead board member for complaints. All colleagues are required to complete mandatory training via the organisation's learning management system, including annual customer feedback training, to ensure colleagues understand the importance of effective complaint handling and their role in delivering a high quality, consistent service. Furthermore, lessons learning forms part of team meeting agendas.	A complaint handler core principle guide has been developed to support complaint handlers in delivering fair, consistent, and high-quality complaint investigations in line with the Housing Ombudsman complaint handling code and SLH's Customer feedback policy and procedure.

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Section 5: The Complaint Handling Process

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
5.1	Landlords must have a single policy in place for dealing with complaints covered by this Code. Residents must not be treated differently if they complain.	Yes	Policy in place and published on the SLH website.	
5.2	The early and local resolution of issues between landlords and residents is key to effective complaint handling. It is not appropriate to have extra named stages (such as 'stage 0' or 'informal complaint') as this causes unnecessary confusion.	Yes	Stage 1 and 2 process in place and clearly defined in the policy. Section 6 of the policy – putting things right.	
5.3	A process with more than two stages is not acceptable under any circumstances as this will make the complaint process unduly long and delay access to the Ombudsman.	Yes	Stage 1 and 2 process in place and clearly defined in the policy and on the SLH website.	A 2025/26 Housing Ombudsman investigation found maladministration in our complaint handling, specifically identifying that a third stage had effectively been introduced. In this case, the resident contacted us following the stage 1 response regarding the level of compensation offered. While this was initially reviewed informally to explore resolution without escalation, the complaint should have been formally progressed to stage 2 at that point, in line with the Code.

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Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
				We recognise this was not appropriate, and learning from this, the Quality & Performance team will ensure consistent escalation decisions.
5.4	Where a landlord's complaint response is handled by a third party (e.g. a contractor or independent adjudicator) at any stage, it must form part of the two stage complaints process set out in this Code. Residents must not be expected to go through two complaints processes.	Yes	Avela Home Service's Repairs Process Manager responds to relevant complaints in line with the customer feedback policy. Therefore, there is a single complaints process in place.	
5.5	Landlords are responsible for ensuring that any third parties handle complaints in line with the Code.	Yes	Complaints are logged through the housing management system and the workflow is accessible to AHS colleagues.. Each complaint response is reviewed by the C&P Officer or the Q&P Manager or the HoGin their absence, to ensure that the response is appropriate.	
5.6	When a complaint is logged at Stage 1 or escalated to Stage 2, landlords must set out their understanding of the complaint and the outcomes the resident is seeking. The Code will refer to this as "the complaint definition". If any aspect of the	Yes	Included in the policy. A brief summary of concerns raised and details of the customer's expectations are included in acknowledgement letters.	

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	complaint is unclear, the resident must be asked for clarification.		When a complaint is received but these details are not clear, the C&P Officer contacts the complainant to get an understanding of the issues they would like to raise and their expectations as a result of making the complaint.	
5.7	When a complaint is acknowledged at either stage, landlords must be clear which aspects of the complaint they are, and are not, responsible for and clarify any areas where this is not clear.	Yes	This is captured in the policy and is included in the acknowledgement letter.	
5.8	At each stage of the complaints process, complaint handlers must: a. deal with complaints on their merits, act independently, and have an open mind; b. give the resident a fair chance to set out their position; c. take measures to address any actual or perceived conflict of interest; and d. consider all relevant information and evidence carefully.	Yes	All complaints are dealt with on their own merits and through investigation is carried out by a senior member of staff. All colleagues aware of Probity Framework which includes reference to conflicts of interest; these are declared by all colleagues at least annually or where a change occurs. All colleagues are required to complete probity training every 3 years. All declarations of interest are captured on the Orchard system which highlights if a conflict arises and can therefore be managed appropriately.	

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5.9	Where a response to a complaint will fall outside the timescales set out in this Code, the landlord must agree with the resident suitable intervals for keeping them informed about their complaint.	Yes	This is captured in the policy.	
5.10	Landlords must make reasonable adjustments for residents where appropriate under the Equality Act 2010. Landlords must keep a record of any reasonable adjustments agreed, as well as a record of any disabilities a resident has disclosed. Any agreed reasonable adjustments must be kept under active review.	Yes	This is captured in the policy. A record is in place to capture all information regarding the complaint. If a customer discloses details of a disability, the housing management system is updated so that appropriate action can be taken.	
5.11	Landlords must not refuse to escalate a complaint through all stages of the complaints procedure unless it has valid reasons to do so. Landlords must clearly set out these reasons, and they must comply with the provisions set out in section 2 of this Code.	Yes	This is captured in the policy. In cases when SLH refuses a complaint, it will write to the customer advising them why it is unable to handle the matter in line with policy and advise them of their right to approach the Housing Ombudsman about this decision.	
5.12	A full record must be kept of the complaint, and the outcomes at each stage. This must include the original complaint and the date received, all correspondence with the resident, correspondence	Yes	There is a dedicated module to manage the complaints process within the housing management system. All documents are attached to the complaint within the housing	Learning from a recent Housing Ombudsman determination has reinforced the importance of maintaining a complete and accurate audit trail within the complaints process.

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	with other parties, and any relevant supporting documentation such as reports or surveys.		management system. An event log enables details of contacts to be recorded. Quality checks carried out by C&P Officer on each closed case to assess whether there are any gaps and will approach the relevant manager if information is missing.	This includes ensuring all contact with residents is consistently recorded within the event log, providing a clear record of communication, decisions, and actions taken. This also applies where complaints are extended, with reasons for extensions and supporting communication clearly documented. Expectations have been reinforced with complaint managers to ensure records are comprehensive and up to date. A complaint handler core principle guide has been developed to support consistent application.
5.13	Landlords must have processes in place to ensure a complaint can be remedied at any stage of its complaints process. Landlords must ensure appropriate remedies can be provided at any stage of the complaints process without the need for escalation.	Yes	Stage 1 and 2 process in place and clearly defined in the policy. Section 6 of the policy – putting things right.	
5.14	Landlords must have policies and procedures in place for managing unacceptable behaviour from residents and/or their representatives. Landlords must be able to evidence reasons for putting any	Yes	SLH's customer feedback policy and website details its approach to dealing with unacceptable behaviour, including aggressive or abusive behaviour and	

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Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
	restrictions in place and must keep restrictions under regular review.		unreasonable demands of complainants. Tenancy management policy is also in place.	
5.15	Any restrictions placed on contact due to unacceptable behaviour must be proportionate and demonstrate regard for the provisions of the Equality Act 2010.	Yes	This is captured in the policy. In the event a restriction on contact is implemented, a full audit trail of the decision making and rationale for doing so will be saved.	

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Section 6: Complaints Stages

Stage 1

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
6.1	Landlords must have processes in place to consider which complaints can be responded to as early as possible, and which require further investigation. Landlords must consider factors such as the complexity of the complaint and whether the resident is vulnerable or at risk. Most stage 1 complaints can be resolved promptly, and an explanation, apology or resolution provided to the resident.	Yes	SLH has processes in place to respond to complaints within the set timescales and as soon as possible, within these timescales.	
6.2	Complaints must be acknowledged, defined and logged at stage 1 of the complaints procedure <u>within five working days of the complaint being received.</u>	No	This is captured in the policy and detailed on the SLH website. SLH has acknowledgement timescales of 5 working days in line with the code. Acknowledgement letters, the website and customer feedback leaflet reflects this.	In 2025/26, seven stage 1 complaints were acknowledged out of target and 17 stage 1 complaints were responded to out of target. We recognise this is an area where we need to improve. Corrective actions have been taken to improve the process include: - We have improved our systems and reminded colleagues of the correct process for acknowledging complaints. - We now encourage the use of a central customer feedback inbox
6.3	Landlords must issue a full response to stage 1 complaints <u>within 10 working days</u> of the complaint being acknowledged.	No	This is captured in the policy and detailed on the SLH website. SLH has response timescales of 10 working days from date of acknowledgement in line with the code.	

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Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
			Acknowledgement letters, the website and customer feedback leaflet reflects this.	to ensure all complaints are managed consistently. - Complaint deadlines are actively monitored, with early alerts in place to prevent delays. - We have strengthened our administration processes to provide better oversight and smoother handovers. - We work closely with our contractors to monitor progress and manage complaints on time, with early action taken to prevent delays.
6.4	Landlords must decide whether an extension to this timescale is needed when considering the complexity of the complaint and then inform the resident of the expected timescale for response. Any extension must be no more than 10 working days without good reason, and the reason(s) must be clearly explained to the resident.	Yes	This is captured in the policy. If an extension is required, contact will be made with the resident providing the reason why the extension has been applied and a revised response date.	To ensure compliance, the C&P officer will actively review complaint extensions to alert complaint managers of any potential breaches to published timescales. From June 2026, our monthly customer feedback report to leadership now details the number of complaints requiring extension.

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Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
				Learning from a recent Housing Ombudsman determination has reinforced the expectation that any delays are clearly acknowledged and apologised for; a complaint handler core principle guide has been developed to support consistent application.
6.5	When an organisation informs a resident about an extension to these timescales, they must be provided with the contact details of the Ombudsman.	Yes	This is captured in the policy. Housing Ombudsman contact details are provided at complaint acknowledgement via the customer feedback leaflet, and this requirement is reinforced through the complaint handler core principles guide to ensure they are also issued consistently when extensions are communicated. These contact details are also available on the SLH website.	
6.6	A complaint response must be provided to the resident when the answer to the complaint is known, not when the outstanding actions required to address the issue are completed. Outstanding actions must still be tracked and actioned promptly with appropriate updates provided to the resident.	Yes	This is captured in the policy. A complaint response is provided at the earliest opportunity in all cases.	

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6.7	Landlords must address all points raised in the complaint definition and provide clear reasons for any decisions, referencing the relevant policy, law and good practice where appropriate.	Yes	This is captured in the policy. In complaint responses, every effort is made to address all of the points raised. This is checked by the C&P officer before the response is issued. Furthermore, the standard response letter template ensures all points are considered/captured.	
6.8	Where residents raise additional complaints during the investigation, these must be incorporated into the stage 1 response if they are related and the stage 1 response has not been issued. Where the stage 1 response has been issued, the new issues are unrelated to the issues already being investigated or it would unreasonably delay the response, the new issues must be logged as a new complaint.	Yes	This is captured in the policy.	A stage 2 complaint in June 2025 highlighted the need to log unrelated issues as separate complaints, rather than adding them to an existing case. This requirement has since been embedded into Q&P processes, ensuring alignment with the Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code. Learning from a recent Housing Ombudsman determination highlighted that additional issues raised at Stage 2, which were not part of the original Stage 1 complaint, should have been logged and managed as a new stage 1 complaint to remain compliant with the Code. We will ensure that the complaint summary

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Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
				within the stage 2 pack is sufficiently clear, so it is evident to the panel when new issues are being raised during the hearing.
6.9	Landlords must confirm the following in writing to the resident at the completion of stage 1 in clear, plain language: a. the complaint stage; b. the complaint definition; c. the decision on the complaint; d. the reasons for any decisions made; e. the details of any remedy offered to put things right; f. details of any outstanding actions; and g. details of how to escalate the matter to stage 2 if the individual is not satisfied with the response.	Yes	This is captured in the policy. Stage 1 response letter template reflects the requirements of the code.	

Stage 2

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
6.10	If all or part of the complaint is not resolved to the resident's satisfaction at stage 1, it must be	Yes	Stage 2 process is captured in the policy.	See 5.3

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Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
	progressed to stage 2 of the landlord's procedure. Stage 2 is the landlord's final response.		This process is followed. We maintain an audit trail of all stage 1 complaints including those that have progressed to stage 2.	
6.11	Requests for stage 2 must be acknowledged, defined and logged at stage 2 of the complaints procedure within five working days of the escalation request being received.	No	Stage 2 process is captured in the policy. SLH has stage 2 acknowledgement timescales of 5 working days in line with the code. Acknowledgement letters, the website and customer feedback leaflet reflects this.	In 2025/26, one stage 2 complaint was acknowledged out of target due to an administrative oversight. Corrective actions have been taken to improve the process include: • We have improved our systems and reminded colleagues of the correct process for acknowledging complaints. • We now encourage the use of a central customer feedback inbox to ensure all complaints are managed consistently. • We have strengthened our administration processes to provide better oversight and smoother handovers.
6.12	Residents must not be required to explain their reasons for requesting a stage 2 consideration. Landlords are expected to make reasonable efforts	Yes	Stage 2 process is captured in the policy.	

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	to understand why a resident remains unhappy as part of its stage 2 response.			
6.13	The person considering the complaint at stage 2 must not be the same person that considered the complaint at stage 1.	Yes	This is captured in the policy. In the majority of cases, the service manager will deal with complaints at stage 1. In the unlikely instance where a complaint is investigated by an Executive Director at stage 1 and is then escalated to stage 2, a different Executive Director will participate in the stage 2 complaints review panel, alongside an SLH board member. If an SLH Board member is unavailable to attend a panel meeting, an independent committee member will be asked to attend. Failing this, two executive directors will make up the panel on the proviso this is agreed with the tenant.	
6.14	Landlords must issue a final response to the stage 2 <u>within 20 working days</u> of the complaint being acknowledged.	No	This is captured in the policy.	In 2025/26, two stage 2 complaints were responded to out of target. We recognise this is an area where we need to improve. Corrective actions have been taken to improve the process include:

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				- Complaint deadlines are actively monitored, with early alerts in place to prevent delays. - We have strengthened our administration processes to provide better oversight and smoother handovers. - We work closely with our contractors to monitor progress and manage complaints on time, with early action taken to prevent delays.
6.15	Landlords must decide whether an extension to this timescale is needed when considering the complexity of the complaint and then inform the resident of the expected timescale for response. Any extension must be no more than 20 working days without good reason, and the reason(s) must be clearly explained to the resident.	Yes	This is captured in the policy.	To ensure compliance, the C&P officer will actively review complaint extensions to alert complaint managers of any potential breaches to published timescales.
6.16	When an organisation informs a resident about an extension to these timescales, they must be provided with the contact details of the Ombudsman.	Yes	This is captured in the policy. Housing Ombudsman contact details are provided at complaint acknowledgement via the customer	

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			feedback leaflet, and this requirement is reinforced through the complaint handler core principles guide to ensure they are also issued consistently when extensions are communicated. These contact details are also available on the SLH website .	
6.17	A complaint response must be provided to the resident when the answer to the complaint is known, not when the outstanding actions required to address the issue are completed. Outstanding actions must still be tracked and actioned promptly with appropriate updates provided to the resident.	Yes	This is captured in the policy. A complaint response is provided at the earliest opportunity in all cases. An action tracker is in place to capture and monitor any outstanding actions from complaint responses, ensuring these are followed up and not overlooked. This is reported to the leadership team on a monthly basis.	
6.18	Landlords must address all points raised in the complaint definition and provide clear reasons for any decisions, referencing the relevant policy, law and good practice where appropriate.	Yes	This is captured in the policy. In complaint responses, every effort is made to address all of the points raised. This is reviewed and approved by the review panel (Executive Director and SLH board member) before the response is issued.	

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6.19	Landlords must confirm the following in writing to the resident at the completion of stage 2 in clear, plain language: a. the complaint stage; b. the complaint definition; c. the decision on the complaint; d. the reasons for any decisions made; e. the details of any remedy offered to put things right; f. details of any outstanding actions; and g. details of how to escalate the matter to the Ombudsman Service if the individual remains dissatisfied.	Yes	This is captured in the policy. Stage 2 response template reflects the requirements of the code.	
6.20	Stage 2 is the landlord's final response and must involve all suitable staff members needed to issue such a response.	Yes	This is captured in the policy. All stage 2 complaints are heard by a board member and member of the executive leadership team.	See 6.13

Section 7: Putting things right

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
7.1	Where something has gone wrong a landlord must acknowledge this and set out the actions it has	Yes	This is captured in the policy. Stage 1 and stage 2 letters reflect the requirements.	

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Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
	already taken, or intends to take, to put things right. These can include: • Apologising; • Acknowledging where things have gone wrong; • Providing an explanation, assistance or reasons; • Taking action if there has been delay; • Reconsidering or changing a decision; • Amending a record or adding a correction or addendum; • Providing a financial remedy; • Changing policies, procedures or practices.		SLH strives to continually improve the service it provides and welcomes complaints as this helps to highlight issues it may not have been aware of. When this happens, SLH will investigate and resolve the issue pragmatically, learn from the experience and change the way it does things to ensure that it does not happen again. Identification of policy or service failure and root cause of the complaint is carried out as part of the complaint investigation. The complaint handler is usually the service manager. All complaint responses are responded to and / or signed off by a senior member of staff from the respective service area. In addition, each complaint response is reviewed by the C&P Officer, or the Q&P Manager or the Head of Governance and Assurance in their	

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			absence, to ensure that the response is appropriate.	
7.2	Any remedy offered must reflect the impact on the resident as a result of any fault identified.	Yes	This is captured in the policy.	
7.3	The remedy offer must clearly set out what will happen and by when, in agreement with the resident where appropriate. Any remedy proposed must be followed through to completion.	Yes	As per the customer feedback policy, redress needs to be appropriate to the complaint. SLH will ask the customer at the start of the complaint how they would like things put right. As far as possible, the customer should be put in the position they would have been in, had things not gone wrong. Guidelines for compensation in relation to customer feedback are included as an appendix within the customer feedback procedure to ensure consistency in our approach. In addition, as detailed above, the complaint handler is usually the service manager. All complaint responses are responded to and / or signed off by a senior member of staff from the respective service area. In addition, each complaint response is reviewed by the C&P Officer, or the Q&P Manager, or the Head of Governance	Compensation guidelines have been reviewed and updated following new Housing Ombudsman compensation guidelines, issued with effect from 1 April 2026. C&P officer has held compensation workshop with complaint managers, to promote our approach and assist with compliance.

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			and Assurance in their absence, to ensure that the response is appropriate.	
7.4	Landlords must take account of the guidance issued by the Ombudsman when deciding on appropriate remedies.	Yes	This is captured in the policy. All remedies are considered in conjunction with the policy.	See 7.3

Section 8: Putting things right

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
8.1	Landlords must produce an annual complaints performance and service improvement report for scrutiny and challenge, which must include: a. the annual self-assessment against this Code to ensure their complaint handling policy remains in line with its requirements. b. a qualitative and quantitative analysis of the landlord's complaint handling performance. This must also include a summary of the types of complaints the landlord has refused to accept; c. any findings of non-compliance with this Code by the Ombudsman; d. the service improvements made as a result of the learning from complaints;	Yes	This is captured in the policy. Annual report produced on an annual basis.	

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	e. any annual report about the landlord's performance from the Ombudsman; and f. any other relevant reports or publications produced by the Ombudsman in relation to the work of the landlord.			
8.2	The annual complaints performance and service improvement report must be reported to the landlord's governing body (or equivalent) and published on the on the section of its website relating to complaints. The governing body's response to the report must be published alongside this.	Yes	Section 9 of the policy. The annual complaints reported is presented to and reviewed by the executive and senior leaderships teams, customer services committee and board. The board response to the 2025/26 annual report is published on the SLH website.	
8.3	Landlords must also carry out a self-assessment following a significant restructure, merger and/or change in procedures.	N/A at point of self-assessment, although included in the policy at section 9.		
8.4	Landlords may be asked to review and update the self-assessment following an Ombudsman investigation.	N/A at point of self-assessment, although included in the policy at section 9. Whilst we have not been instructed to update our self-assessment, we have included evidence/strengthened processes as a result of HO determinations.		
8.5	If a landlord is unable to comply with the Code due to exceptional circumstances, such as a cyber incident, they must inform the Ombudsman, provide information to residents who may be	N/A at point of self-assessment, although included in the policy at section 9.		

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Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
	affected, and publish this on their website Landlords must provide a timescale for returning to compliance with the Code.			

Section 9: Scrutiny & oversight: continuous learning and improvement

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
9.1	Landlords must look beyond the circumstances of the individual complaint and consider whether service improvements can be made as a result of any learning from the complaint.	Yes	This is captured in the policy.	
9.2	A positive complaint handling culture is integral to the effectiveness with which landlords resolve disputes. Landlords must use complaints as a source of intelligence to identify issues and introduce positive changes in service delivery.	Yes	SLH has a positive complaint handling culture that is integral to the effectiveness with which SLH resolves disputes. SLH uses complaints as a source of intelligence to identify issues and introduce positive changes in service delivery. Complaint performance is regularly reviewed by the leadership team. The customer services committee, AHS committee and Avela board reviews complaints performance on a quarterly basis and reports into the SLH board.	
9.3	Accountability and transparency are also integral to a positive complaint handling culture. Landlords must report back on wider learning and	Yes	This is captured in the policy.	Feedback to all customers is provided on our website through Your Bulletin and on

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Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
	improvements from complaints to stakeholders, such as residents' panels, staff and relevant committees.		Complaint performance is regularly reviewed by the leadership team. The customer services committee reviews complaints performance on a quarterly basis and reports into the SLH board.	social media on how SLH learn from complaints to raise confidence in customers reporting issues
9.4	Landlords must appoint a suitably senior lead person as accountable for their complaint handling. This person must assess any themes or trends to identify potential systemic issues, serious risks, or policies and procedures that require revision.	Yes	This is captured in the policy. A Q&P team is in place, including theHoG, Q&P Manager, C&P Officer and Performance Data Analyst. The team is responsible for complaint handling, with the C&P Officer responsible for the day to day management of complaints. The team assess any themes or trends to identify potential systemic issues, serious risks, or policies and procedures that require revision.	
9.5	In addition to this a member of the governing body (or equivalent) must be appointed to have lead responsibility for complaints to support a positive complaint handling culture. This person is referred to as the Member Responsible for Complaints ('the MRC').	Yes	This is captured in the policy. A board member has been appointed to have lead responsibility for complaints to support a positive complaint handling culture. This person is referred to as the Member	

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Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
			Responsible for Complaints ('the MRC').	
9.6	The MRC will be responsible for ensuring the governing body receives regular information on complaints that provides insight on the landlord's complaint handling performance. This person must have access to suitable information and staff to perform this role and report on their findings.	Yes	This is captured in the policy. As per 9.5. The MRC has access to to appropriate information via the Q&P team to support effective oversight.	
9.7	As a minimum, the MRC and the governing body (or equivalent) must receive: a. regular updates on the volume, categories and outcomes of complaints, alongside complaint handling performance; b. regular reviews of issues and trends arising from complaint handling; c. regular updates on the outcomes of the Ombudsman's investigations and progress made in complying with orders related to severe maladministration findings; and d. annual complaints performance and service improvement report.	Yes	This is captured in the policy. Complaint performance is regularly reviewed by the leadership team. The customer services committee reviews complaints performance on a quarterly basis and reports into the SLH board. Annual complaints report is presented to board. The MRC is a member of the committee and board. Following a request by the MRC, a stage 2 feedback process has been introduced to enable panel members to provide structured feedback. This will support the identification of areas for	

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Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
			improvement in how Stage 2 complaints are administered and responded to, helping to strengthen consistency, quality and learning across the organisation.	
9.8	Landlords must have a standard objective in relation to complaint handling for all relevant employees or third parties that reflects the need to: a. have a collaborative and co-operative approach towards resolving complaints, working with colleagues across teams and departments; b. take collective responsibility for any shortfalls identified through complaints, rather than blaming others; and c. act within the professional standards for engaging with complaints as set by any relevant professional body.	Yes	SLH has a five year corporate plan that has been approved by board. To support delivery of the plan, five strategies are in place; people (colleagues), people (residents), place, planet and pound. An action plan is developed each year and approved by board, to support delivery of the plan and associated strategies. Objectives are set on an annual basis, that link to our corporate plan. Details of these objectives, including progress against them are published on our website: Corporate Plan South Liverpool Homes	

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Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
			Progress against the objectives is reported to board. All SLH colleagues have a responsibility to support a collaborative approach towards resolving complaints, working with colleagues across teams and departments to help identify, record and respond to complaints and identify and embed learning.	