



# Housing Ombudsman Service Self-Assessment

Compliance with the Complaint Handling Code			
<b>1</b>	<b>Definition of a complaint</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
	<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>In the main the above definition is in place. The Co-operative will be updating its complaints policy to align with the new universal definition.</p>		✓
	Does the policy have exclusions where a complaint will not be considered?	✓	
	Are these exclusions reasonable and fair to residents?	✓	
<b>2</b>	<b>Accessibility</b>		
	Are multiple accessibility routes available for residents to make a complaint?	✓	
	<p>Is the complaints policy and procedure available online?</p> <p>Indirect link available on the Co-operative's website. A new website format is to be launched in early 2021 with a direct link.</p>		✓
	<p>Do we have a reasonable adjustments policy?</p> <p>We do not have a separate policy on reasonable adjustments, however we currently offer responses in different formats and where required in different languages, as well as accepting complaints from third parties.</p>	✓	
	<p>Do we regularly advise residents about our complaints process?</p> <p>We also recognise that we need to do more of this in the future.</p>	✓	

<b>3 Complaints team and process</b>			
Is there a complaint officer or equivalent in post?		✓	
Does the complaint officer have autonomy to resolve complaints?		✓	
Does the complaint officer have authority to compel engagement from other departments to resolve disputes?		✓	
If there is a third stage to the complaints procedure are residents involved in the decision making?  The complaints policy was reviewed in 2020 from a three stage to a two-stage procedure. This was done in order to expediate a resolution. Stage 2 of the policy is where a committee members panel get involved in the decision making.		Not applicable	
Is any third stage optional for residents? n/a		Not applicable	
Does the final stage response set out residents' right to refer the matter to the Housing Ombudsman Service?		✓	
Do we keep a record of complaint correspondence including correspondence from the resident?		✓	
At what stage are most complaints resolved?		First stage	
<b>4 Communication</b>			
Are residents kept informed and updated during the complaints process?		✓	
Are residents informed of the landlord's position and given a chance to respond and challenge any area of dispute before the final decision?		✓	
Are all complaints acknowledged and logged within five days?		✓	
Are residents advised of how to escalate at the end of each stage?		✓	
What proportion of complaints are resolved at stage one? Figures relate to complaints received in the calendar year 2019 and 2020		66% (2 out of 3 complaints)	
What proportion of complaints are resolved at stage two?		33% (1 of 3 complaints)	
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>		1 out of 2 n/a n/a 1 out of 1	

	Where timescales have been extended did we have good reason?	✓	
	Where timescales have been extended did we keep the resident informed?	✓	
	What proportion of complaints do we resolve to residents' satisfaction? <i>As we have not been collecting this information, a satisfaction survey was introduced for the Cooperative October 2020. This information will therefore be available in the future.</i>	We do not hold this information for the Co-operative	
<b>5</b>	<b>Cooperation with Housing Ombudsman Service</b>		
	Were all requests for evidence responded to within 15 days?	Not applicable	
	Where the timescale was extended did we keep the Ombudsman informed?	Not applicable	
<b>6</b>	<b>Fairness in complaint handling</b>		
	Are residents able to complain via a representative throughout?	✓	
	If advice was given, was this accurate and easy to understand? <i>We believe so and this will be included in our satisfaction surveys going forward.</i>	✓	
	How many cases did we refuse to escalate? <i>None</i>  What was the reason for the refusal? <i>Not applicable</i>		
	Did we explain our decision to the resident?	Not applicable	
<b>7</b>	<b>Outcomes and remedies</b>		
	Where something has gone wrong are we taking appropriate steps to put things right?	✓	
<b>8</b>	<b>Continuous learning and improvement</b>		
	What improvements have we made as a result of learning from complaints?  <i>We have ensured regular meetings with contractors in order to focus on the complaints related to contractor performance.</i>  <i>We also carried out an audit of the complaint process and as a result made changes to the recording of complaints on a new platform as well as closer monitoring and reporting of complaints.</i>		
	How do we share these lessons with:		

<p>a) residents? <b>Plan to share that through correspondence and use of annual report and newsletter</b></p> <p>b) the board/governing body? <b>Through quarterly reports to the Co-op committee</b></p> <p>c) In the Annual Report? <b>Through reference to changes made to improve service.</b></p>	<p>✓</p> <p>✓</p>	<p>✓</p>
<p>Has the Code made a difference to how we respond to complaints?</p>	<p>✓</p>	
<p>What changes have we made?</p> <p><b>We have reviewed and made changes to our service delivery, improved our comms &amp; further embedded a customer driven culture around our complaints approach.</b></p> <p><b>Ensure complaint information is available on the website.</b></p> <p><b>Plan to provide more information to customers</b></p> <p><b>Introduce a survey for complaint satisfaction measuring</b></p>		