

Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code: Self-Assessment 2024/2025

Woking Borough Council is a member of the Housing Ombudsman Scheme as a local authority social housing landlord. Each year, we are required to complete and publish a self-assessment. This is published on our website.

The self-assessment was approved by the following:

- Communities and Housing Scrutiny Committee
- Resident and Landlord Partnership Panel

The following self-assessment was completed in March 2025 and submitted to the Housing Ombudsman and Regulator of Social Housing. Please be aware that the following wording is taken from the Housing Ombudsman Template for submission.

Appendix A: Self-assessment form

This self-assessment form should be completed by the complaints officer and it must be reviewed and approved by the landlord's governing body at least annually.

Once approved, landlords must publish the self-assessment as part of the annual complaints performance and service improvement report on their website. The governing body's response to the report must be published alongside this.

Landlords are required to complete the self-assessment in full and support all statements with evidence, with additional commentary as necessary.

We recognise that there may be a small number of circumstances where landlords are unable to meet the requirements, for example, if they do not have a website. In these circumstances, we expect landlords to deliver the intentions of the Code in an alternative way, for example by publishing information in a public area so that it is easily accessible.

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 is evident in the Woking Borough Council Complaints Procedure ‘what is a complaint?’ and Appendix 1: Housing Complaints Procedure ‘what is a housing complaint?’.	Page 7 – WBC Complaints Procedure.
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 evident in the Appendix 1: Housing Complaints Procedure ‘what is a housing complaint?’.	Mandatory training in May 2024 for all Housing staff. Please see page 7 and page 8 – WBC Complaints Procedure.
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 evidenced in the Woking Borough Council Complaints procedure ‘what is not a complaint?’ and detailed further in Appendix 1: Housing Complaints Procedure ‘what is not a housing complaint?’.	Please see page 7 – WBC Complaints Procedure.

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 evidenced in Appendix 1: Housing Complaints Procedure 'what is a housing complaint?' and 'what is not a housing complaint?'	Mandatory training in May 2024 for all housing staff. Please see Page 7 and 8 – WBC Complaints Procedure.
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 evidenced in Appendix 1: Housing Complaints Procedure 'what is not a housing complaint?'.	Please see page 8 – WBC Complaints Procedure.

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	The Complaint Procedure does specify “what is not a complaint” but this is fully detailed and evidenced in Appendix 1: Housing Complaints Procedure ‘what is not a housing complaint?’.	Please see page 7 and page 8 – WBC Complaints Procedure.
2.2	<p>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:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 evidenced in Appendix 1: Housing Complaints Procedure ‘what makes a housing complaint?’	Please see Page 7 – WBC Complaints Procedure.

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 evidenced in Appendix 1: Housing Complaint Procedure with the acceptance of complaints within 12 months detailed in 'what is a housing complaint?' and the discretion applied to exclude in 'what is not a housing complaint?'.	WBC has confirmed that discretion will be applied. Please see page 7 and 8 – WBC Complaints Procedure.
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 evidenced in Appendix 1: Housing Complaints Procedure 'what is not a housing complaint?'	WBC has clarified this in the procedure. Please see Page 8 – WBC Complaints Procedure.
2.5	Landlords must not take a blanket approach to excluding complaints; they must consider the individual circumstances of each complaint.	Yes	This is evidenced in Appendix 1: Housing Complaints Procedure 'what is not a housing complaint?'	This is confirmed on Page 8 - WBC Complaints Procedure.

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	This is evidenced in Appendix 1: Housing Complaints Procedure 'How do you make a housing complaint?'	This includes online eform, email, phone, writing, contact any member of the housing service. Face to face meetings can be organised and subject to availability of space. Complaints raised via WBC social media channels are provided to Housing Complaints to review. Please see page 8 – WBC Complaints Procedure.
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	This is evidenced in Appendix 1: Housing Complaints Procedure 'How do you make a housing complaint?' that residents can contact any member of the Housing Service.	Mandatory training for all housing staff in May 2024.
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	Housing Improvement Board has a culture workstream which includes encouraging a positive complaints culture. Resident and Landlord Partnership Panel is receiving the performance frameworks monthly with an ability to scrutinise complaint numbers further.	Housing Scrutiny and performance data scrutiny now occurs at Communities and Housing Scrutiny Committee and Resident and Landlord Partnership Panel.

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	Please see Appendix 1 'WBC Housing Complaints Procedure' and the Housing Complaints page on the website.	The document is in an accessible format and checked by relevant service areas. The Housing Complaints Procedure has been added into the WBC Complaints Procedure so that all residents can view all complaint procedures in one place. There is an understanding that this will be reviewed before April 2026, in line with the LGO Complaint Handling Code.
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	Please see Appendix 1 'WBC Housing Complaints Procedure' and the Housing Complaints page on the website.	A Housing Complaints webpage details the procedure, Ombudsman details and the Complaint Handling Code. It is also seen and discussed within the Housing Complaints Procedure on page 9.
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 evidenced in Appendix 1: Housing Complaints Procedure 'Who can make a housing complaint?'	There have been a number of representatives who Housing Complaints have worked with in the last year.
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	This is evidenced in Appendix 1: Housing Complaints Procedure 'Escalation to the Housing Ombudsman'	All complaint letters include the right to contact and access the Ombudsman, at any point during the complaint process. This is also reiterated in

				person, email and phone contact.
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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 team as the 'complaints officer'. This role may be in addition to other duties.	Yes	Since February 2024, this sits within the Resident Engagement team. The Resident Engagement Team Leader has overall responsibility. Recruitment is currently occurring for a Housing Complaints and Insights Officer who will sit within the Resident Engagement Team.	There has been an understanding that workload increases in the Resident Engagement Team have resulted in the need for an allocated role 'Housing Complaints and Insights Officer'. Housing Complaints are reported quarterly to corporate. They are also reported monthly to Resident and Landlord Partnership panel with key focus sessions.
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 Resident Engagement Team sits under the Head of Housing Transformation and strategic director.	
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	New Housing Complaints and Insights role incoming to the service. Mandatory training for housing staff occurred in May 2024. Refresher training has occurred. Culture is a workstream in the Housing Improvement Board	Complaints Teams channel is being launched. Culture to continue to be a key theme in the Housing Improvement Board and was raised in the Housing Resident Engagement Strategy by residents. Resourcing will be reviewed.

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	This is evidenced in the Complaints Procedure and further relevant to Appendix 1: Housing Complaints Procedure	There is work occurring to improve complaints across the council.
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	This is evidenced in Appendix 1: Housing Complaints Procedure	There are no extra named stages.
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	This is evidenced in Appendix 1: Housing Complaints Procedure	There are two stages.
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	There is no third party.	WBCs complaint response is handled internally but contractors may be contacted to support a full and thorough investigation. The landlord's complaint process takes precedence.

5.5	Landlords are responsible for ensuring that any third parties handle complaints in line with the Code.	Yes	Work closely with contractors regarding housing complaints.	
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 complaint is unclear, the resident must be asked for clarification.	Yes		Letter templates support this. 5 working days to acknowledge allows for ability to gain the required information. The Housing Complaint team provides the complaint definition through bullet points agreed with the resident.
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		The Housing Complaint team will clarify this. Where another process or team is required for some of the issues raised, the team will advise, signpost or refer.
5.8	At each stage of the complaints process, complaint handlers must: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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	Mandatory Housing Complaint training for housing staff occurred in May 2024. Refresher training occurring 1 year on in March 2025 where this will be covered.	

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 evidenced in Appendix 1: Housing Complaints Procedure 'Stage 1 complaint' and 'Stage 2 complaint'.	Letter templates for extensions and delays are available and set clear timescales for keeping informed from the Housing Complaints Team. Housing Complaint training has continued to reiterate to managers that delays must be reasonable when requesting a delay to Housing Complaints Team.
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		The CRM includes disabilities the resident has disclosed. In letter templates and communication the reasonable adjustments are reminded. When a reasonable adjustment is raised, these are logged and kept under active review by the Housing Complaints Team.
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 evidenced in Appendix 1: Housing Complaints Procedure 'what is not a housing complaint'.	Please see page 7 – WBC Complaints Procedure.
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	Yes		The CRM system does support the recording of complaints, outcomes, correspondence. Another software, swordfish,

	correspondence with the resident, correspondence with other parties, and any relevant supporting documentation such as reports or surveys.			allows for the supporting documents and letters to be uploaded. The Housing Complaints Team provides a consistent approach to this. ACTION: explore options that will do this all under one system.
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	Mandatory staff training in May 2024 clarified this. Refresher training in March 2025 will address this.	Teams Channel currently being launched will provide guidance for remedies for investigating managers.
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 restrictions in place and must keep restrictions under regular review.	Yes	Woking Borough Council's Unreasonable Complaints Procedure.	
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	Woking Borough Council's Unreasonable Complaints Procedure.	

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	This is evidenced in Appendix 1: Housing Complaints Procedure 'what is a housing complaint' and 'stage 1 complaint'.	
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> .	Yes	This is evidenced in Appendix 1: Housing Complaints Procedure 'stage 1 complaint'.	Please see page 8 and 9 – WBC Complaints Procedure.
6.3	Landlords must issue a full response to stage 1 complaints <u>within 10 working days</u> of the complaint being acknowledged.	Yes	This is evidenced in Appendix 1: Housing Complaints Procedure 'stage 1 complaint'.	Please see page 8 and 9 – WBC Complaints Procedure.
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	Yes	This is evidenced in Appendix 1: Housing Complaints Procedure 'stage 1 complaint'.	Please see page 8 and 9 – WBC Complaints Procedure.

	10 working days without good reason, and the reason(s) must be clearly explained to the resident.			
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 evidenced in Appendix 1: Housing Complaints Procedure 'Escalation to the Housing Ombudsman'.	Please see page 9 – WBC Complaints Procedure. All delay/extension letter templates include the contact details of the Housing Ombudsman.
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 evidenced in Appendix 1: Housing Complaints Procedure 'stage 1 complaint'	Please see page 9 – WBC Complaints Procedure.
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	Refresher training March 2025 will discuss this in detail.	Further guidance and training opportunities to be identified. ACTION: Teams channel launch with guidance.
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	Yes	This is evidenced in Appendix 1: Housing Complaints Procedure 'stage 1 complaint'	Please see page 9 – WBC Complaints Procedure.

	delay the response, the new issues must be logged as a new complaint.			
6.9	Landlords must confirm the following in writing to the resident at the completion of stage 1 in clear, plain language: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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 format has been modified and included in the letter templates for stage 1 responses. Further refresher training in March 2025 for investigating managers.	

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 progressed to stage 2 of the landlord's procedure. Stage 2 is the landlord's final response.	Yes	This is evidenced in Appendix 1: Housing Complaints Procedure 'stage 2 complaint'	Please see page 9 – WBC Complaints Procedure.
6.11	Requests for stage 2 must be acknowledged, defined and logged at stage 2 of the complaints procedure	Yes	This is evidenced in Appendix 1: Housing Complaints Procedure 'stage 2 complaint'	Please see page 9 – WBC Complaints Procedure.

	within five working days of the escalation request being received.			
6.12	Residents must not be required to explain their reasons for requesting a stage 2 consideration. Landlords are expected to make reasonable efforts to understand why a resident remains unhappy as part of its stage 2 response.	Yes		The Housing Complaint Team do make contact to clarify but there is an understanding that they do not have to provide reasons.
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 evidenced in Appendix 1: Housing Complaints Procedure 'stage 2 complaint'	Please see page 9 – WBC Complaints Procedure.
6.14	Landlords must issue a final response to the stage 2 <u>within 20 working days</u> of the complaint being acknowledged.	Yes	This is evidenced in Appendix 1: Housing Complaints Procedure 'stage 2 complaint'	Please see page 9 – WBC Complaints Procedure.
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 evidenced in Appendix 1: Housing Complaints Procedure 'stage 2 complaint'	Please see page 9 – WBC Complaints Procedure.
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 evidenced in Appendix 1: Housing Complaints Procedure 'Escalation to the Housing Ombudsman'	Please see page 9 – WBC Complaints Procedure. Letter templates include contact details for the Housing Ombudsman.

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 evidenced in Appendix 1: Housing Complaints Procedure 'stage 2 complaint'	Please see page 9 – WBC Complaints Procedure.
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	Housing Complaints Team to support this. Refresher training March 2025 will discuss this in detail.	Further guidance and training opportunities to be identified. ACTION: Teams channel launch with guidance.
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 format has been modified and included in the letter templates for stage 2 responses. Further refresher training in March 2025 for investigating managers.	

6.20	Stage 2 is the landlord's final response and must involve all suitable staff members needed to issue such a response.	Yes		Stage 2 is the final response stage and has involvement from all relevant staff.
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Section 7: Putting things right

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
7.1	<p>Where something has gone wrong a landlord must acknowledge this and set out the actions it has already taken, or intends to take, to put things right. These can include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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. 	Yes	<p>Refresher training in March 2025 for all investigating managers.</p> <p>The data held for complaints requires understanding of the resolution and lessons learnt to be logged.</p>	
7.2	Any remedy offered must reflect the impact on the resident as a result of any fault identified.	Yes	<p>Mandatory May 2024 training for staff clarified this.</p> <p>Refresher training in 2025.</p>	Further training programme and continued refreshers. Teams channel launch for guidance.

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	Mandatory May 2024 training for staff clarified this. Refresher training in 2025.	Further training programme and continued refreshers. Teams channel launch for guidance.
7.4	Landlords must take account of the guidance issued by the Ombudsman when deciding on appropriate remedies.	Yes	Mandatory May 2024 training for staff clarified this. Refresher training in 2025.	Teams channel launch will provide availability for guidance to be updated and quick access for investigating managers. The Housing Complaints Team will act as a knowledge hub and keep the teams channel up to date.

Section 8: Putting things right

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
8.1	<p>Landlords must produce an annual complaints performance and service improvement report for scrutiny and challenge, which must include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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; 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. 	Yes	<p>Report going to Communities and Housing Scrutiny Committee in March.</p> <p>Report going to Resident and Landlord Partnership Panel in March.</p> <p>This will support publication and submission by June 2025.</p>	

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	This will be published via the meeting minutes and Housing Complaints Procedure Webpage.	
8.3	Landlords must also carry out a self-assessment following a significant restructure, merger and/or change in procedures.	Yes	This is evidenced in Appendix 1: Housing Complaints Procedure 'Housing Complaint Procedure'	Please see page 7.
8.4	Landlords may be asked to review and update the self-assessment following an Ombudsman investigation.	Yes	This is evidenced in Appendix 1: Housing Complaints Procedure 'Housing Complaint Procedure'	Please see page 7.
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 affected, and publish this on their website Landlords must provide a timescale for returning to compliance with the Code.	Yes	This is noted and Housing Complaints Team will lead on this.	

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	Staff are doing this. However, formally logging the learning is not yet in place.	ACTION: Process for Lessons learnt as these need to be reviewed. Complaints trends need to be reviewed.
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	This is subjective, but there is a Staffing & Culture workstream as part of the Housing Improvement Programme. It is important that this is a priority for the upcoming year to improve the complaint handling culture and reduce conduct complaints.	
9.3	Accountability and transparency are also integral to a positive complaint handling culture. Landlords must report back on wider learning and improvements from complaints to stakeholders, such as residents' panels, staff and relevant committees.	Yes	The Resident and Landlord Partnership Panel is integral for this, the scrutiny of complaints performance and wider learning/improvements. The Woking@Home publications and webpages will continue to be integral for updates. The Housing Resident Engagement Strategy will continue to be ensuring accountability and transparency.	

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	The Council's Monitoring Officer has overall responsibility for complaint handling corporately.	ACTION: Complaint Insight group and setting up regular meetings is required.
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	The Portfolio Holder for Housing is the MRC.	ACTION: Meetings with Portfolio Holder are required to focus on complaints.
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 covered through the Communities and Housing Scrutiny Panel.	
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;	Yes	This is being provided across the council to the relevant scrutiny panels and MRC. This is also occurring for the Resident and Landlord Partnership Panel but review of	

	<p>b. regular reviews of issues and trends arising from complaint handling;</p> <p>c. regular updates on the outcomes of the Ombudsman's investigations and progress made in complying with orders related to severe maladministration findings; and</p> <p>d. annual complaints performance and service improvement report.</p>		KPIs needs to occur to ensure that all points are addressed.	
9.8	<p>Landlords must have a standard objective in relation to complaint handling for all relevant employees or third parties that reflects the need to:</p> <p>a. have a collaborative and co-operative approach towards resolving complaints, working with colleagues across teams and departments;</p> <p>b. take collective responsibility for any shortfalls identified through complaints, rather than blaming others; and</p> <p>c. act within the professional standards for engaging with complaints as set by any relevant professional body.</p>	Yes	Mandatory training for all staff in May 2024. Refresher training in March 2025.	Launch of Teams channel to ensure collaborative and positive approach to complaints.