

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 complaint's 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	<p>A complaint must be defined as: “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.”</p>	Yes	<p>Housing service complaints policy – Slough Borough Council</p> <p>2.1 A complaint is defined as an expression of dissatisfaction, however made, about the standard of service provided, 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.</p>	<p>Slough Borough Council’s complaints policy includes this definition. It is set out in 2.1 of the policy and it has been placed on our website</p>
1.3	<p>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.</p>	Yes	<p>Housing service complaints policy – Slough Borough Council</p> <p>3.4 Complaints will be logged on Intelx and managed in accordance with this policy regardless of whether the resident has specifically used the word ‘complaint’.</p>	<p>We treat any indication of dissatisfaction as a complaint, and where we may be unsure, we engage with the resident to verify their request. It is set out in 3.4 of the Housing Service Complaints Policy that complaints will be logged and managed in accordance with the policy regardless of whether the</p>

			<p>3.2 Complaints will be accepted in any way, including (but not limited to)</p> <p>Verbally (either by phone or face to face)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By email • Via the Council's website • Through social media • Through an advocate, friend or family member where the resident's authority to do so has been obtained • In writing 	<p>resident has specifically used the word complaint.</p> <p>This is set out in 3.2 of the Housing Service Complaints Policy.</p>
1.4	<p>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.</p>	Yes	<p>Housing service complaints policy – Slough Borough Council</p> <p>2.1 "Please note that service requests (i.e., a resident makes an initial report of anti-social behaviour or requests a repair for the first time) are not complaints. If a service request is not responded to in a reasonable timescale or in a reasonable way, this lack of action or poor standard of response would be considered a complaint."</p>	<p>This is set out in 2.1 of the Housing Service Complaints Policy.</p>

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	Housing service complaints policy – Slough Borough Council 2.1 If a service request is not responded to in a reasonable timescale or in a reasonable way, this lack of action or poor standard of response would be considered a complaint.	This is set out in 2.1 of the Housing Service Complaints Policy. This is standard complaint handling practice.
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	MEL Research carried out the 2023 TSM surveys - the statement below was used online and in their telephone script Statement included: If you are dissatisfied with the service that has been provided, write to us and let us know. Details of our complaints process and access to the Housing Ombudsman can be found on our website Complaints and neighbourhood services – Slough Borough Council	A statement was included in our recent Tenant Satisfaction Measures Survey giving details of how to make a complaint we will continue to do this going forward. We are including statement in our feedback forms on our services.

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	Housing service complaints policy – Slough Borough Council 1.3 This policy does not apply to members' enquiries or complaints raised by locally elected Councillors or the MP. Complaints and enquiries raised by members will be managed in line with the Corporate Complaints Policy.	This is set out in 1.3 of the Housing Service Complaints Policy.
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: <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 	No	Section 6.2 of policy gives a general statement which needs to be expanded	The Housing Service Complaints Policy will be reviewed, and we will expand on the reasons on which a matter will not be considered as a complaint. A task and finish group has been created to review the policy which will be reviewed by March 2025

	<p>Particulars of Claim, having been filed at court.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Matters that have previously been considered under the complaints policy. 			
2.3	<p>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.</p>	No	Not stated in the Policy.	<p>The Housing Service Complaints Policy will be reviewed and include this in the policy by March 2025</p>
2.4	<p>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.</p>	No	The Policy does not state this.	<p>The Housing Service Complaints Policy will be reviewed and include this in the policy by March 2025</p>
2.5	<p>Landlords must not take a blanket approach to excluding complaints; they must consider the individual circumstances of each complaint.</p>	No	This is not stated in the Policy.	<p>The Housing Service Complaints Policy will be reviewed and include this in the policy by March 2025) alongside documented procedure.</p>

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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	<p>Housing service complaints policy – Slough Borough Council</p> <p>3.2 Complaints will be accepted in any way, including (but not limited to)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Verbally (either by phone or face to face) • By email • Via the Council's website • Through social media • Through an advocate, friend or family member where the resident's authority to do so has been obtained (see 3.6 for complaints on behalf of deceased residents). • In writing <p>3.6 A complaint can be made on behalf of a resident who has passed away. In these cases, we will accept complaints from the executor or administrator of the deceased resident's estate (the complainant will need to supply documentation proving their status). In cases where the resident died intestate, we will accept a complaint from a Next of Kin (the complainant will</p>	This is set out in 3.2 and 3.6 of the Housing Service Complaints Policy

			<p>need to supply documentation confirming they are the Next of Kin).</p> <p>All Slough Borough Council members of staff must complete mandatory Equality in the workplace training which is renewed yearly.</p>	
3.2	<p>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.</p>	Yes	<p>Housing service complaints policy – Slough Borough Council</p> <p>3.2 Complaints will be accepted in any way, including (but not limited to)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Verbally (either by phone or face to face) • By email • Via the Council’s website • Through social media • Through an advocate, friend or family member where the resident’s authority to do so has been obtained (see 3.6 for complaints on behalf of deceased residents). • In writing <p>3.6 A complaint can be made on behalf of a resident who has passed away. In these cases, we will accept complaints from the executor or administrator of the deceased</p>	<p>This is set out in 3.2, 3.6,9.2 and 9.3 of the Housing Services Complaints Policy.</p> <p>As part of the work of the task and finish group that has been set up to review the Policy, Process and procedure we will include staff awareness as part of the training by March 2025.</p>

			<p>resident's estate (the complainant will need to supply documentation proving their status). In cases where the resident died intestate, we will accept a complaint from a Next of Kin (the complainant will need to supply documentation confirming they are the Next of Kin).</p> <p>9.2 All Council officers in relevant services (including sub-contractors/partner organisations) will be aware of the complaint's procedure relating to the Council's housing management function and be able to advise residents on how to access the process and what they can expect.</p> <p>9.3 It is the responsibility of all managers to ensure that officers are aware of the complaints process, how it can be accessed and how complaints relating to housing management services are managed.</p>	
3.3	<p>High <i>volumes</i> 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.</p>	No	<p>Slough Borough Council currently do not benchmark their complaints data against local boroughs, this is an area that will be reviewed which will include housing services.</p>	<p>Slough Borough Council will be reviewing their approach to complaints handling and will include this by March 2025</p>

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	<p>Housing service complaints policy – Slough Borough Council</p> <p>The policy is published on the Council Website and is easily accessible. It is a 2-stage process and details who will manage and respond to complaints. All complaints will be acknowledged within 2 working days of receipt and:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responded to within 10 working days at Stage 1 of the process • Reviewed and responded to within 20 working days at Stage 2 of the process. <p>This is detailed under the Housing Service Complaints Policy sections</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Stage 1 Complaints 6. Stage 2 Management Review 7. Stage 2 Complaint Response 8. Residents' Complaints Panel. <p>The Slough Borough Council website has an accessibility tab Accessibility – Slough Borough Council which provides information We want as many people as possible to be able to use this website. For example, that means you should be able to:</p>	This is set out in section 5, 6, 7 and 8 of the Housing Service Complaints Policy
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			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • change colours, contrast levels and fonts • zoom in up to 400% without the text spilling off the screen • navigate most of the website using just a keyboard • navigate most of the website using speech recognition software • listen to most of the website using a screen reader (including the most recent versions of JAWS, NVDA and Voiceover). <p>We have also made the website text as simple as possible to understand.</p> <p>AbilityNet has advice on making your device easier to use if you have a disability.</p>	
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	<p>Housing service complaints policy – Slough Borough Council</p> <p>9. Complaints Policy and Procedures 9.1 The council will promote this complaints policy and process to all Council tenants and leaseholders. This promotion will include: • Information on the Council’s website • Information in any resident newsletter • Routine</p>	This is set out in section 9.1 and 9.4 of the Housing Service Complaints Policy.

			<p>communications, including emails and letters</p> <p>9.4 The Housing Ombudsman service will be widely promoted alongside the complaints process so that residents are aware that they can access the support provided by the Ombudsman.</p>	
3.6	<p>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.</p>	Yes	<p>Housing service complaints policy – Slough Borough Council</p> <p>3.2 Complaints will be accepted in any way, including (but not limited to)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Verbally (either by phone or face to face) • By email • Via the Council's website • Through social media • Through an advocate, friend or family member where the resident's authority to do so has been obtained (see 3.6 for complaints on behalf of deceased residents). • In writing <p>3.6 A complaint can be made on behalf of a resident who has passed away. In these cases, we will accept complaints from the executor or administrator of the deceased</p>	<p>This is set out in section 3.2, 3.6 and 8.4 of the Housing Services Complaints Policy, however it will be reviewed as part of the Housing Service Complaint's policy, process and procedure by March 2025.</p>

			<p>resident's estate (the complainant will need to supply documentation proving their status). In cases where the resident died intestate, we will accept a complaint from a Next of Kin (the complainant will need to supply documentation confirming they are the Next of Kin). If the service does not receive information from the complainant that they are either an executor, administrator, or Next of Kin they will not accept a complaint on behalf of a deceased resident.</p> <p>8.4 The Participation Officer will send the Complaints Pack to the complainant, to the Panel members and any officers, including representatives from Osborne Property Services, that will be attending the Panel meeting. The Participation Officer will ensure that invitations to the meeting and background documents are sent to everyone who will attend, including anyone the complainant would like to bring to support them (this could be a McKenzie Friend, a family member, neighbour, friend etc.). The meetings can be held virtually or in real life depending on the preference of the complainant and Panel members. The decision of the Chair is final when deciding whether the meeting is virtual or not.</p>	
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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	<p>Complaints and neighbourhood services – Slough Borough Council This information is available on Slough Borough Councils Website.</p> <p>Complaining to the Housing Ombudsman the Housing Ombudsman is an independent organisation which deals with disputes between tenants and landlords. The Housing Ombudsman will usually ask you to follow your social landlord's complaints procedure before escalating a complaint to the Ombudsman.</p> <p>Designated persons If you want to contact the Housing Ombudsman Service your complaint will first need to be considered by a designated person.</p> <p>Designated persons can include MPs, local councillors and designated tenants' panels. If you would like information about how to contact or start a tenants' panel, please contact us.</p>	<p>Complaints and neighbourhood services – Slough Borough Council This information is available on Slough Borough Councils Website. This will be reviewed alongside the Housing services Policy, process and procedure by March 2025.</p>

			<p>If you don't have a referral from a designated person</p> <p>You can refer your complaint directly to the Ombudsman without a referral from a designated person eight weeks after you have completed our internal procedure.</p> <p>Contact the Housing Ombudsman</p> <p>Website: Housing Ombudsman website.</p> <p>Telephone: 0300 111 3000 (lines are open Monday to Friday from 9:15 to 17:15)</p> <p>Email: info@housing-ombudsman.org.uk</p> <p>Address: Housing Ombudsman Service PO Box 152 Liverpool L33 7WQ.</p>	
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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.	No	Currently have different teams managing complaints for different service areas.	The Housing Service Complaints Policy will be reviewed and include this in the policy by March 2025
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.	No	We have a designated officer who will log and issue reports to housing management however does not have the authority to resolve disputes.	A review will be carried out to ensure best practice in line with the ombudsman code of complaint handling by March 2025
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	No	We prioritise complaint handling however we lack a culture of learning from complaints	A review will be carried out to ensure best practise in line with HOS code of complaint handling, Training of staff and learning from complaints will form part of this by March 2025

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	<p>Housing service complaints policy – Slough Borough Council</p> <p>1.1 Slough Borough Council performs a social landlord function in relation to its retained rented and leasehold housing stock. As a Registered Provider of social housing, the services are subject to the regulatory requirements of the Regulator of Social Housing as set out in the Regulatory Framework for Social Housing in England</p> <p>2.5 The Service means any service managed and delivered by the council that is funded wholly from the Housing Revenue Account</p>	This is set out in the Housing Services Complaints Policy. The policy stipulates that the Council Performs a landlord function to its rented and leasehold housing stock and this policy is in relation to any service managed and delivered from the Housing Revenue Account.
5.2	The early and local resolution of issues between landlords and residents is key to effective	Yes	<p>Housing service complaints policy – Slough Borough Council</p>	We have a two-stage process.

	complaint handling. It is not appropriate to have extra named stages (such as 'stage 0' or 'informal complaint') as this causes unnecessary confusion.			
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	Housing service complaints policy – Slough Borough Council 3.5 A two stage complaints process will be used to manage and respond to complaints. All complaints will be acknowledged within 2 working days of receipt and: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responded to within 10 working days at Stage 1 of the process • Reviewed and responded to within 20 working days at Stage 2 of the process 	This is set out under the Housing Services Policy sections 3.5 ,6,7 and 8.
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	Housing service complaints policy – Slough Borough Council 9.2 All Council officers in relevant services (including sub-contractors/partner organisations) will be aware of the complaint's procedure relating to the Council's housing management	Our compliant policy makes it clear that residents will go through Slough Borough Councils Housing Service Complaints Policy including subcontractor and partner organisations.

			function and be able to advise residents on how to access the process and what they can expect.	
5.5	Landlords are responsible for ensuring that any third parties handle complaints in line with the Code.	Yes	Housing service complaints policy – Slough Borough Council 9.2 All Council officers in relevant services (including sub-contractors/partner organisations) will be aware of the complaint's procedure relating to the Council's housing management function and be able to advise residents on how to access the process and what they can expect.	This is set out in 9.2 of the Housing Services Complaints Policy.
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.	No	Template Letters need to reflect this	Our template letters will be reviewed alongside the Housing Service Complaints Policy by March 2025.

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.	No	Template Letters need to reflect this	Our template letters will be reviewed alongside the Housing Service Complaints Policy by March 2025.
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. 	No	Not stated in current policy / documentation	The Housing Service Complaints Policy, process and procedure will be reviewed and include this in the review which will be undertaken by March 2025.
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.	No	Not stated in policy / no standard process however there are pockets of good practice being delivered around this within the organisation	The Housing Service Complaints Policy, process and procedure will be reviewed and include this in the review which will be undertaken by March 2025.

5.10	<p>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.</p>	Yes	<p>Equality and discrimination advice – Slough Borough Council</p>	<p>While we do not have a separate policy, reasonable adjustments can be requested as per the Equalities Act 2010.</p> <p>An example of this is our Interpreting services via ONCALL provides all modalities of interpreting services such as Face- to- Face, Telephone and Video, via its in-house, technologically driven platform 'NextGen'</p> <p>https://nextgeneu.oncallinterpreters.com as well as</p> <p>The website offers translation via google translate and we also provide qualified British Sign Language (BSL) interpreters to service users who are deaf on request as well as a text relay service which offers text-to-speech and speech-to-text translation services. Any reasonable adjustments requested will be noted on our housing management system.</p> <p>All staff within the council must complete Equality in the workplace mandatory training to ensure they understand what the act covers and how we ensure we include it in the workplace for residents and staff. This</p>
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				is an annual course for all employees .
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.	No	This is not set out clearly in the policy	The Housing Service Complaints Policy, process and procedure will be reviewed and include this in the review which will be undertaken by March 2025
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 with other parties, and any relevant supporting documentation such as reports or surveys.	Yes	Housing service complaints policy – Slough Borough Council 2.4 Intelx is the Council's complaints' management system 5.3 Details of all communication in relation to a complaint will be recorded on Intelx.	5.3 of the Housing Service Complaints Policy sets this out.
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	No	We do not have documented processes or procedures in place which clearly ensures a complaint can be remedied at any stage of its complaints process and that appropriate remedies can be provided at	The Housing Service Complaints Policy, process and procedure will be reviewed and include this in the review which will be undertaken by March 2025

	complaints process without the need for escalation.		any stage of the complaints process without the need for escalation.	
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	CO-5950 Layout 2 (slough.gov.uk) Management of unreasonable behaviour Policy.	Slough Borough Council have a Management of unreasonable Customer behaviour Policy. This is due for review.
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	CO-5950 Layout 2 (slough.gov.uk) Management of unreasonable behaviour Policy.	Please refer to the policy.

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.	No	The Housing Service Complaints Policy does set out the stages of the complaint however it does not define what can be responded to as early as possible and which will require further investigation.	The Housing Service Complaints Policy, process and procedure will be reviewed and include this in the review which will be undertaken by March 2025
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	Housing service complaints policy – Slough Borough Council 4. Acknowledging Complaints 4.1 All complaints will be acknowledged within 2 working days of receipt.	The Housing Service Complaints Policy sets out the timescale of logging stage 1 complaints
6.3	Landlords must issue a full response to stage 1 complaints <u>within 10 working</u>	Yes	Housing service complaints policy – Slough Borough Council	The Housing Service Complaints Policy sets out the timescale to issue a full response to Stage 1

	days of the complaint being acknowledged.		3.5 A two stage complaints process will be used to manage and respond to complaints. All complaints will be acknowledged within 2 working days of receipt and: • Responded to within 10 working days at Stage 1 of the process	complaints within 10 working days of the complaint being acknowledged.
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	Housing service complaints policy – Slough Borough Council 5.4 Where it is not possible to meet the timescales outlined above, due to annual leave or sickness absence etc, an extension of time should be agreed with the complainant and the date that they can expect a full response confirmed with them in writing	Albeit 5.4 of the Housing Service Complaints Policy does set this out as part of our complaints review this area will be looked at to see if further clarity needs to be given, this will be reviewed by March 2025
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.	No	Our template letters need to reflect this and be included in our procedures and staff training.	Our template letters will be reviewed alongside the Housing Service Complaints Policy, process and procedure by March 2025. This will inform the updated training that will need to be provided.
6.6	A complaint response must be provided to the resident when the answer to the	No	Housing service complaints policy – Slough Borough Council	5.2 and 7.3 The Housing Service Complaints Policy

	<p>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.</p>		<p>5.2 Responses to complaints at Stage 1 will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confirmation of the complaint stage • The description of the complaint, including all points to be investigated and addressed • The outcome of the complaint • The reasons for any decisions made • Details of any remedies offered to put things right • Details of any outstanding actions and a timeframe for addressing these • Details of how to escalate the matter if dissatisfied (to the Group Manager) • Details of how to contact the Housing Ombudsman service should the complainant wish to do so. <p>7.3 The Group Manager will respond, in full, to the complainant within 20 working days of receiving the request to escalate the complaint to Stage 2. The response will set out:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The description of the complaint, including all points to be investigated and addressed • The outcome of the review • The reasons for any decisions made 	<p>sets this out, however there is work to do around putting this into everyday practise within the team.</p>
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			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Details of any remedies offered to put things right • Details of any outstanding actions and a reasonable timeframe to resolve these • Details of how to contact the Housing Ombudsman service should the complainant wish to do so • Confirmation that the complaint has now reached the end of the Council's complaints procedure and will be closed • An explanation about why they are, or are not, referring the complaint to the Resident Complaints Panel. 	
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.	No	This will be picked up as part of the review and reflected in training and process instructions going forward.	The Housing Service Complaints Policy, process and procedure will be reviewed and include this in the review which will be undertaken by March 2025
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	No	This is not reflected in our policy or procedures	The Housing Service Complaints Policy, process and procedure will be reviewed and include this in

	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.			the review which will be undertaken by March 2025
6.9	<p>Landlords must confirm the following in writing to the resident at the completion of stage 1 in clear, plain language:</p> <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 <p>details of how to escalate the matter to stage 2 if the individual is not satisfied with the response.</p>	No	<p>Housing service complaints policy – Slough Borough Council</p> <p>5.2 Responses to complaints at Stage 1 will include: • Confirmation of the complaint stage • The description of the complaint, including all points to be investigated and addressed • The outcome of the complaint • The reasons for any decisions made • Details of any remedies offered to put things right • Details of any outstanding actions and a timeframe for addressing these • Details of how to escalate the matter if dissatisfied (to the Group Manager) • Details of how to contact the Housing Ombudsman service should the complainant wish to do so.</p>	<p>5.2 of the Housing Service Complaints Policy sets this out. However, our template letters need to be updated to reflect this this will be included in the policy, procedures and process review to be undertaken by March 2025.</p>

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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.	No	The policy does not clearly state this.	The Housing Service Complaints Policy, process and procedure will be reviewed and include this in the review which will be undertaken by March 2025
6.11	Requests for stage 2 must be acknowledged, defined and logged at stage 2 of the complaint's procedure within five working days of the escalation request being received.	No	This is not stipulated in our policy / procedure.	The Housing Service Complaints Policy, process and procedure will be reviewed and include this in the review which will be undertaken by March 2025
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.	No	This is not clearly set out in our policy/procedures.	The Housing Service Complaints Policy, process and procedure will be reviewed and include this in the review which will be undertaken by March 2025

6.13	The person considering the complaint at stage 2 must not be the same person that considered the complaint at stage 1.	Yes	<p>Housing service complaints policy – Slough Borough Council</p> <p>There is an escalation detailed in the policy who will investigate / review stage 1 and stage 2.</p> <p>5. Stage 1 Complaints 5.1 An Operational Manager (e.g., Tenancy Team Leader level) or an appropriate, designated, officer will be responsible for investigating the complaint at Stage 1 of the process. They will produce background information for the relevant Service Manager (e.g., Neighbourhood Manager level) to use when they respond to the complainant at Stage 1. The Service Manager will be responsible for ensuring that responses are comprehensive, cover all the points raised by the resident and comply with this policy. A response must be sent to the complainant within 10 days of receipt.</p> <p>6. Stage 2 management review 6.1 All requests to escalate a</p>	5.1 and 6.1 of the Housing Service Complaints Policy sets this out.
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			<p>complaint to Stage 2 will be sent to the appropriate Group Manager setting out</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The reason for the request to escalate• The Stage 1 complaint and the response <p>Requests to escalate to Stage 2 must be received (date sent via email or date of postmark if hard copy) within 1 calendar month of the date the Stage 1 response was sent. Requests received outside of this timescale will only be reviewed at the discretion of the relevant Group Manager.</p>	
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6.14	Landlords must issue a final response to the stage 2 <u>within 20 working days</u> of the complaint being acknowledged.	Yes	Housing service complaints policy – Slough Borough Council 3.5 A two stage complaints process will be used to manage and respond to complaints. All complaints will be acknowledged within 2 working days of receipt and: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responded to within 10 working days at Stage 1 of the process • Reviewed and responded to within 20 working days at Stage 2 of the process 	This is set out in the Housing Service Complaints Policy.
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.	No	This is not clearly set out in the policy.	The Housing Service Complaints Policy, process and procedure will be reviewed and include this in the review which will be undertaken by March 2025
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.	No	This is not clearly set out in the policy.	The Housing Service Complaints Policy, process and procedure will be reviewed and include this in the review which will be undertaken by March 2025

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	<p>Housing service complaints policy – Slough Borough Council</p> <p>5.2 Responses to complaints at Stage 1 will include: • Confirmation of the complaint stage • The description of the complaint, including all points to be investigated and addressed • The outcome of the complaint • The reasons for any decisions made • Details of any remedies offered to put things right • Details of any outstanding actions and a timeframe for addressing these • Details of how to escalate the matter if dissatisfied (to the Group Manager) • Details of how to contact the Housing Ombudsman service should the complainant wish to do so.</p> <p>7.3 The Group Manager will respond, in full, to the complainant within 20 working days of receiving the request to escalate the complaint to Stage 2. The response will set out: •</p>	5.2 and 7.3 of the Housing Service Complaints Policy sets this out.
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			<p>The description of the complaint, including all points to be investigated and addressed • The outcome of the review • The reasons for any decisions made • Details of any remedies offered to put things right • Details of any outstanding actions and a reasonable timeframe to resolve these • Details of how to contact the Housing Ombudsman service should the complainant wish to do so • Confirmation that the complaint has now reached the end of the Council's complaints procedure and will be closed • An explanation about why they are, or are not, referring the complaint to the Resident Complaints Panel.</p>	
6.18	<p>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.</p>	No	<p>This is not detailed in our Policy/ procedures</p>	<p>7.3 The Group Manager will respond, in full, to the complainant within 20 working days of receiving the request to escalate the complaint to Stage 2. The response will set out: • The description of the complaint, including all points to be investigated and addressed</p>

				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The outcome of the review • The reasons for any decisions made • Details of any remedies offered to put things right • Details of any outstanding actions and a reasonable timeframe to resolve these • Details of how to contact the Housing Ombudsman service should the complainant wish to do so • Confirmation that the complaint has now reached the end of the Council's complaints procedure and will be closed
6.19	<p>Landlords must confirm the following in writing to the resident at the completion of stage 2 in clear, plain language:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> the complaint stage; the complaint definition; the decision on the complaint; the reasons for any decisions made; the details of any remedy offered to put things right; details of any outstanding actions; and details of how to escalate the matter to the Ombudsman 	No	<p>Housing service complaints policy – Slough Borough Council This is set in in 7.3 of the Policy.</p> <p>7.3 The Group Manager will respond, in full, to the complainant within 20 working days of receiving the request to escalate the complaint to Stage 2. The response will set out:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The description of the complaint, including all points to be investigated and addressed • 	<p>This is set out in the housing Service Complaints Policy; However, our template letters need to be updated to reflect this this will be included in the policy, procedures and process review to be undertaken by March 2025.</p>

	Service if the individual remains dissatisfied.		The outcome of the review • The reasons for any decisions made • Details of any remedies offered to put things right • Details of any outstanding actions and a reasonable timeframe to resolve these • Details of how to contact the Housing Ombudsman service should the complainant wish to do so • Confirmation that the complaint has now reached the end of the Council's complaints procedure and will be closed	
6.20	Stage 2 is the landlord's final response and must involve all suitable staff members needed to issue such a response.	No	The Policy/ procedures do not clearly state this.	The Housing Service Complaints Policy, process and procedure will be reviewed and include this in the review which will be undertaken by March 2025

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. 	No	The service takes all these points into account however it is not documented in our policy, process or procedures.	The Housing Service Complaints Policy, process and procedure will be reviewed and include this in the review which will be undertaken by March 2025, will also ensure it is built into its training.
7.2	Any remedy offered must reflect the impact on the resident as a result of any fault identified.	No	There is a compensation policy however this needs to be reviewed to ensure its compliant with the HOS Code	The Housing Service Complaints Policy, process and procedure will be reviewed and include this in the review which will be undertaken by March 2025,

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.	No	This needs to be reviewed and built into our compensation to ensure it is following the HOS code.	The Compensation Policy, process and procedure will be reviewed and include this in the review which will be undertaken by March 2025,
7.4	Landlords must take account of the guidance issued by the Ombudsman when deciding on appropriate remedies.	No	This needs to be built into our processes, procedures and training.	This will be included in our review of complaints handling which will be undertaken by March 2025.

Section 8: Self-assessment, reporting and compliance

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	No	https://democracy.slough.gov.uk/documents/s76955/Annual%20Complaints%20Report%20Appendix%20C%20-%20Statutory%20and%20Corporate%20Complaints%20Report%202022-23.pdf Agenda for Audit and Corporate Governance Committee on Wednesday, 13th September, 2023, 6.30 pm (slough.gov.uk)	Complaints Report 22/23 and response from the governing body. This does not include all areas under the code requirement. The annual report cannot be completed for this period until the HO/LGSC O annual

	<p>requirements.</p> <p>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;</p> <p>c. any findings of non-compliance with this Code by the Ombudsman;</p> <p>d. the service improvement</p>			<p>letters are issued. Once we are in receipt of this, the report will be presented to the Audit and Corporate Governance Committee and published on our website in line with our Governance schedule.</p>
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	<p>nts made as a result of the learning from complaints; 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.</p>			
8.2	<p>The annual complaints performance and service improve</p>	Yes	<p>https://democracy.slough.gov.uk/documents/s76955/Annual%20Complaints%20Report%20Appendix%20C%20-%20Statutory%20and%20Corporate%20Complaints%20Report%202022-23.pdf</p>	<p>Complaints Report 22/23 and response from</p>

	<p>nt 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.</p>		<p>Agenda for Audit and Corporate Governance Committee on Wednesday, 13th September, 2023, 6.30 pm (slough.gov.uk)</p>	<p>Governing Body</p> <p>The annual report cannot be completed for this period until the HO/LGSC O annual letters are issued. Once we are in receipt of this, the report will be presented to the Audit and Corporate Governance Committee in Quarter 2 and published</p>
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				on our website in line with our Governance schedule in Quarter 3.
8.3	Landlords must also carry out a self-assessment following a significant restructure, merger and/or change in procedures.	Yes		Noted
8.4	Landlords may be asked to review and update the self-assessment following an Ombudsman	Yes		Noted

	investigation.			
8.5	<p>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</p> <p>Landlords must provide a timescale for returning to compliance with the Code.</p>	Yes		Noted

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.	No	There are pockets of learnings throughout the different services in Housing however this needs to be formalised, tracked and monitored to ensure they are embedded into the organisation.	Learning from complaints will form part of the review to be completed by March 2025.
9.2	A positive complaint handling culture is integral to the effectiveness with which landlords resolve	No	There are pockets of learnings throughout the different services in Housing however this needs to be formalised, tracked and monitored to ensure they are embedded into the organisation.	Learning from complaints will form part of the review to be completed

	disputes. Landlords must use complaints as a source of intelligence to identify issues and introduce positive changes in service delivery.			by March 2025.
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'	No	There needs to be a process developed for this.	Learning from complaints will form part of the review to be completed by March 2025.

	panels, staff and relevant committees.			
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.	No	A senior lead will be appointed as part of the review.	The review will take place by March 2025.
9.5	In addition to this a member of the governing body (or	Yes	Councillor details - Councillor Mabu Shaik (slough.gov.uk)	We have a lead Elected member who is the

	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').			Cabinet Member responsible for Lead Member for I.T., Customer Services, Revenue & Benefits, Procurement and Performance including 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	No	Preset fortnightly meetings with MRC, Director of Strategy Change and Resident Engagement and Service leads are currently in place. Information around complaint handling performance needs to be developed for it to be useful for the MRC to perform their role.	A dashboard will be built to provide information on complaints that provides insight on complaint handling performance, this will

	performance. This person must have access to suitable information and staff to perform this role and report on their findings.			form part of the complaints review to be undertaken by March 2025.
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	No	https://democracy.slough.gov.uk/documents/s76955/Annual%20Complaints%20Report%20Appendix%20C%20-%20Statutory%20and%20Corporate%20Complaints%20Report%202022-23.pdf Agenda for Audit and Corporate Governance Committee on Wednesday, 13th September, 2023, 6.30 pm (slough.gov.uk)	This process will be reviewed by March 2025.

	<p>trends arising from complaint handling;</p> <p>c. This will be reviewed by March 2025. 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>			
9.8	Landlords must have a	No	There is no standard objective set in relation to complaint handling.	This will be raised

	<p>standard objective in relation to complaint handling for all relevant employees or third parties that reflects the need to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">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			<p>Cooperatively with our CLT (Corporate Leadership Team) colleagues to review and take forward. this will be reviewed by March 2025.</p>
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	blaming others; and c. act within the professional standards for engaging with complaints as set by any relevant professional body.			
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