

Appendix A: Self-assessment form

APPENDIX F

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:</p> <p>'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.</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 reviewed its complaints policy in March 2025 and has included 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.</p> <p>3.1 Complaints will be accepted in anyway, 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 has been obtained. • In writing. <p>3.4 A complaint can be made on behalf of a resident who has passed away. In these cases, we will accept</p>	<p>Slough Borough Council reviewed its complaints policy in March 2025 and has included this definition. It is set out in the policy, and it has been placed on our website.</p> <p>Training in complaints handling in line with the Housing Ombudsman Code has been rolled out to all housing staff in June 25, the policy and its application of it was covered in the training. As part of the training, customer dissatisfaction was covered and a choice to register a complaint would be</p>

		<p>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 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>3.2 Complaints will be logged on Intelex and managed in accordance with the policy regardless of whether the resident specifically used the word complaint.</p> <p>Section 5.3 of the Housing Service Complaints Policy states</p> <p>If there is any doubt about whether the complaint should be accepted, the customer should be advised to submit the complaint to the Council for consideration.</p> <p>Section 14.2 and 14.3 of the Housing Services Complaints Policy states:</p> <p>All Council officers in relevant services (including sub-contractors/partner organisations)</p>	<p>offered even if the word complaint was not mentioned.</p>
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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><u>Housing service complaints policy</u>. Section 4 of the Housing Service Complaints Policy states:</p> <p>Many of the reports that the council receive for Housing Management just require us to do, remove, fix or clean something. We will treat these as a request for us to do something (a service request) rather than a complaint unless you have already reported it, and we have failed to do something.</p> <p>Service requests are recorded on Intelex complaints, monitored and reviewed regularly at our weekly Housing Service Complaints Meeting.</p>	<p>Slough Borough Council's complaints policy sets this out in Section 4 and includes Various examples. The policy is published on our website.</p>
1.5	A complaint must be raised when the resident expresses dissatisfaction with the	Yes	<u>Housing service complaints policy</u>	This is set out in section 4.2 of the Housing Service

	<p>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.</p>		<p>Section 4.2 of the Housing Service Complaints Policy states:</p> <p>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 such as:</p> <p>A missed bin collection, graffiti removal, broken streetlights, litter, fly tipping, potholes, abandoned cars. Grass cutting.</p> <p>The council values complaints as unsolicited feedback that allows the service to remedy a mistake, resolve a problem and learn from residents' experiences when things go wrong.</p>	<p>Complaints Policy and was covered by the complaint handling training rolled out to all housing staff in June 25.</p>
1.6	<p>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.</p>	Yes	<p>MEL Research carries out the TSM surveys for Slough Borough Council - the statement below was used online and in their telephone script.</p> <p>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.</p>	<p>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.</p>

Section 2: Exclusions

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
2.1	<p>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</p>	Yes	<p>Housing service complaints policy. Section 5 of the Housing Service Complaints Policy advises of complaints that fall outside of this policy.</p> <p>However, Section 5.3 and 5.4 of the Housing Service Complaints Policy states:</p> <p>If there is any doubt about whether the complaint should be accepted, the customer should be advised to submit the complaint to the Council for consideration.</p> <p>If the Council receives a complaint and decides not to accept it, the complainant should be told why and, where possible, an alternative route should be suggested.</p>	<p>The Housing Service Complaints Policy states clearly what type of complaints will not be considered under the policy however if the customer is unsure, they are advised to submit it for consideration. If we decide not to accept it, we will advise why, and where possible, an alternative route will be suggested.</p>
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. 	Yes	<p>Housing service complaints policy. Section 5 and 6 of the Housing Service Complaints policy states:</p> <p>Complaints That fall outside the Tenant & Leaseholder Complaints Policy.</p> <p>Even though you may want to use the complaint's process, many of our services have an alternative</p>	<p>The Housing Service Complaints Policy was reviewed in March 2025 and has provided clear guidance of what will be excluded as part of the Policy.</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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. 		<p>formal review, appeal, challenge process or procedure that must be followed.</p> <p>This includes, not exclusively: First time service requests (see 4, what is a service request) In these cases, the formal complaint's process cannot be used, below are some examples, please note that this is not an exhaustive list:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Code of Conduct of Elected Members (Councillor's). The Monitoring Officer is responsible for considering complaints that a Councillor may have breached the Code of Conduct for Councillor's • Parking Charge Notices PCN (fines). • Education complaints Schools' admissions and exclusions appeals. It is a legal requirement for every school in the country to have a complaints policy and they should be accessible on their website or on request from the school office. In the first instance you should follow that policy. • Housing Benefit calculation. • Planning decisions. • All formal planning decisions are no longer eligible to be 	
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			<p>considered under the formal corporate complaints process as under the law we are unable to alter these.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• There is a separate appeal process for rejected planning applications.• Special Education Needs Tribunals.• Council Tax banding decisions.• A complaint has already been considered by the Council and completed both stages of the corporate complaint's procedure.• Refusals to disclose information under the Data Protection Act (DPA).• Representations from Trade Unions.• Complaints about suitability of interim housing.• Complaints about suitability of temporary accommodation and s.184 decisions (s.202 review). Disputes about the findings of s.202 review.• Decisions about housing priority band. Housing medical decisions.• Outcome of statutory enforcement action.	
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			<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Complaints from landlords about dilapidations in Private Sector Leased properties.• Matters of law or central government policy.• Service Charges or Major Work Invoices Where an issue is not upheld through the above processes, it is not uncommon for us to then receive a corporate complaint regarding the same or related issue. In these circumstances we are sorry, but the complaint will not be accepted.• Complaints from staff about personnel matters, including appointments, dismissals, pay, pensions and disciplinary action.• Complaints about a registered housing provider.• Requests for information (these are dealt with under separate procedures: the Freedom of Information Act – and Subject Access Requests)• Complaints about the merits of an insurance claim or matters that would be more appropriately considered by an insurer• Complaints where the customer or the	
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			<p>council has started (not threatened) legal proceedings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Complaints under statutory obligations• Complaints already been decided by a court or independent tribunal• Complaints that are criticisms or disagreement with council policy or decisions• Complaints that are submitted anonymously (although we may still investigate the issue) where the council has no power or duty to provide service. <p>5.3 If there is any doubt about whether the complaint should be accepted, the customer should be advised to submit the complaint to the council for consideration.</p> <p>5.4 If the council receives a complaint and decides not to accept it on the above grounds, the complainant should be told why and, where possible, an alternative route should be suggested.</p> <p>Section 6 .1 We will not normally consider a complaint that is made more than 12 months after the individual first became aware of the issue they want to</p>	
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			<p>complain about, as it is far easier to find out what happened and to put things right if complaints are received at the time.</p> <p>6.2 However, if there are exceptional circumstances (illness, changes in personal circumstances) provided by the complainant for the delay in submitting the complaint, the council may make a discretionary decision to consider the complaint providing the circumstances are evidenced. If the council receives a complaint and decides not to accept it on the above grounds the customer should be told why.</p>	
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>	Yes	<p><u>Housing service complaints policy.</u> Section 6 of the housing Service Complaints Policy states We will not normally consider a complaint that is made more than 12 months after the individual first became aware of the issue they want to complain about, as it is far easier to find out what happened and to put things right if complaints are received at the time.</p> <p>However, if there are exceptional circumstances (illness, changes in personal circumstances) provided</p>	<p>This is included in section 6 of the Housing Service Complaints Policy.</p>

			<p>by the complainant for the delay in submitting the complaint, the Council may make a discretionary decision to consider the complaint providing the circumstances are evidenced. If the Council receives a complaint and decides not to accept it on the above grounds the customer should be told why.</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>	Yes	<p><u>Housing service complaints policy.</u> Section 5 of the Housing Service Complaints Policy states: Complaints That fall outside the Tenant & Leaseholder Complaints Policy. Even though you may want to use the complaint's process, many of our services have an alternative formal review, appeal, challenge process or procedure that must be followed. Section 5.3 and 5.4 of the Housing Service Complaints Policy states If there is any doubt about whether the complaint should be accepted, the customer should be advised to submit the complaint to the Council for consideration. If the Council receives a complaint and decides not to accept it, the complainant should be told why and, where possible, an alternative route should be suggested.</p>	Noted.

2.5	<p>Landlords must not take a blanket approach to excluding complaints; they must consider the individual circumstances of each complaint.</p>	Yes	<p><u>Housing service complaints policy.</u></p> <p>Section 5.3 and 5.4 of the Housing Service Complaints Policy states If there is any doubt about whether the complaint should be accepted, the customer should be advised to submit the complaint to the Council for consideration.</p> <p>If the Council receives a complaint and decides not to accept it, the complainant should be told why and, where possible, an alternative route should be suggested.</p>	<p>This is included in Section 5 of the Housing Service Complaints Policy.</p>

Section 3: Accessibility and Awareness

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
3.1	<p>Landlords must make it easy for residents to complain by providing different channels through which they can make a complaint.</p> <p>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.</p>	Yes	<p>Housing service complaints policy.</p> <p>Section 3 of the Housing Service Complaints Policy states 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 has been obtained (see 3.4 for complaints on behalf of deceased residents). • In writing. <p>Section 3.4 of the Housing Service Complaints Policy states 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 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>Section 8 of the Housing Service Complaints Policy around support and advocacy states</p> <p>If you feel daunted at the prospect of making a complaint or are not sure how to go about it or how best to put your case, we will help.</p>	<p>This is covered by our Housing Service Complaints Policy, alongside training and publishing how residents can access the Housing Ombudsman Service.</p>

		<p>We will encourage you where possible to seek the support of friends, family, or other advocates such as the Citizen's Advice Bureau as they are independent.</p> <p>We will help you find such support and will assist people who have difficulty with written or spoken English and to those with a disability and require additional support.</p> <p>The Council will, where appropriate, accept complaints from advocates or third parties, provided the person affected gives written permission. In some cases, for example children or vulnerable people, if it seems that the person is unable to give permission, a judgement will be made as to whether it is appropriate to accept the complaint from an unconfirmed representative.</p> <p>Section 14 of the Housing Service Complaints Policy states</p> <p>The council will promote this complaints policy and process to all Council tenants and leaseholders. This promotion will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information on the Council's website. Information in any resident newsletter. Routine communication, including emails and letters. <p>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>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> <p>All Slough Borough Council members of staff must complete mandatory Equality in the workplace training which is renewed yearly.</p> <p>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>	
3.2	Residents must be able to raise their complaints	<p>Housing service complaints policy.</p> <p>Section 14.2 and 14.3 states that all Council officers in relevant services (including sub-contractors/partner organisations) will be aware of the</p>	Corporate Complaint handling Objective 25/26 which has

<p>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>		<p>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>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> <p>A Corporate Objective has been set around complaint handling for the organisation for 2025.</p>	<p>been set for all staff which states.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have a collaborative and co-operative approach towards resolving complaints, working with colleagues across teams and departments • Take collective responsibility for any shortfalls identified through complaints, rather than blaming others; and act within the professional standards for engaging with complaints as set by any relevant professional body.
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				complaint handling training was rolled out to the Housing Teams in June 2025 to refresh and embed our approach.
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	<p>Complaint volumes have risen in the first quarter of 2025 from the previous year.</p> <p>We are reaching out to similar sized local authorities in our area and have compared volumes in our Annual Complaints Report however there is no formal benchmarking group in the Berkshire Region.</p>	Noted Complaint volumes are being monitored and compared to previous years as part of our monthly review with the lead Member for Complaints and our quarterly review with CLT. Slough Borough Council are currently looking for a local benchmarking group to join. We share annual data with other local Councils for our Annual Complaint Handling Report.
3.4	Landlords must make their complaint policy available in a clear and accessible	Yes	<p><u>Housing service complaints policy.</u></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. Section 3.3 of the Housing Service Complaints Policy states A two stage complaints process will be used to manage and respond to complaints. All complaints</p>	The two stages are set out in the Housing Service Complaints Policy which is published

<p>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.</p>	<p>will be acknowledged within 5 working days of receipt and: Responded to within 10 working days of the complaint being acknowledged at Stage 1 of the process. Reviewed and responded to within 20 working days of the complaint being acknowledged at Stage 2 of the process. Section 9 and 10 of the policy states.</p> <p>Stage 1 Complaints</p> <p>An appropriate designated officer will be responsible for investigating the complaint at Stage 1 of the process. They will be responsible for ensuring that they deal with the complaint on their merits, act independently, and have an open mind. Give the resident a fair chance to set out their position, take measures to address any actual or perceived conflict of interest; and consider all relevant information and evidence carefully.</p> <p>They will ensure that responses are comprehensive and comply with this policy.</p> <p>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. • Details of all communication in relation to a complaint will be recorded on Intelex. <p>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. They must be provided with the contact details of the Housing Ombudsman.</p> <p>Stage 2 Management review.</p>	<p>on our website and is easily accessible.</p>
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		<p>A senior officer will review the complaint and respond in full; the response will set out:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • description of the complaint, including all points to be addressed/ investigated: • 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. • 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. • The response 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>The senior officer considering the complaint at stage 2 will not be the same person that considered the complaint at stage 1.</p> <p>Request 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 senior officer.</p> <p>Residents must not be required to explain their reasons for requesting a stage 2 consideration.</p> <p>Stage 2 is our final response and must involve all suitable staff members needed to issue such a response.</p> <p>A copy of the Stage 2 response will be logged on Intelex and the complaint closed at this stage unless an extension of time has been agreed with the complainant.</p> <p>The Slough Borough Council website has an Accessibility tab 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> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • change colours, contrast levels and fonts 	
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			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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. 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.</p> <p>Section 14.4 of the Housing Service Complaints Policy states 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> <p>This promotion will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • information on the council's website. • information in any resident newsletter • https://www.slough.gov.uk/downloads/download/393/housing-highlights • Posters at our Resident Hubs • Routine communications, including emails and letters. <p>MEL Research carries out our TSM surveys - the statement below is used online and in their telephone script.</p> <p>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.</p>	<p>This is included in our Housing Service Complaints Policy which was reviewed in March 2025.</p>
3.6	Landlords must give residents the opportunity to have a representative	Yes	<p>Housing service complaints policy.</p> <p>Section 8 of the Housing Service Complaints Policy around support and advocacy states</p>	<p>This is included in our Housing Service Complaints policy</p>

	deal with their complaint on their behalf, and to be represented or accompanied at any meeting with the landlord.		<p>If you feel daunted at the prospect of making a complaint or are not sure how to go about it or how best to put your case, we will help. We will encourage you where possible to seek the support of friends, family, or other advocates such as the Citizen's Advice Bureau as they are independent.</p> <p>We will help you find such support and will assist people who have difficulty with written or spoken English and to those with a disability and require additional support.</p> <p>The Council will, where appropriate, accept complaints from advocates or third parties, provided the person affected gives written permission. In some cases, for example children or vulnerable people, if it seems that the person is unable to give permission, a judgement will be made as to whether it is appropriate to accept the complaint from an unconfirmed representative</p>	
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>Section 14.4 of the Housing Service Complaints Policy states 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> <p>This promotion will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> information on the council's website. information in any resident newsletter https://www.slough.gov.uk/downloads/download/393/housing-highlights Posters at our Resident Hubs Routine communications, including emails and letters. <p>MEL Research carries out our TSM surveys - the statement below is used online and in their telephone script.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>Section 7.2 of our Housing Services Policy states that our acknowledgement letter will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clarification of the nature of the complaint. Where this is unclear, the person responsible for logging the complaint will contact the complainant to clarify the complaint. 	Our Housing Service Complaints Policy. Process, Procedures and templates were all reviewed in March 2025.

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The date by which a formal response will be sent. • Details of the team or service that will be investigating and responding to the complaint. • Details of how the complainant can contact the Housing Ombudsman should they wish to do so. • A link to the Complaints Policy/Procedure on the council website. 	
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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	Head of Customer Services has been assigned that role within Slough Borough Council. The Corporate Complaints Team function now reports to her.	This function moved to the Head of Customer Service from October 2024.
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 Head of Customer Service sends weekly overdue and outstanding reports to all Directorates within the council. Attends a weekly meeting with operational leads including Director of Housing to discuss	The complaints officer has access to staff at different levels including senior Management and Chief Executive to facilitate the prompt resolution of complaints.

			<p>caseloads including any escalations.</p> <p>Attends quarterly CLT meetings to discuss complaint handling and provide assurance.</p>	
4.3	<p>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</p>	Yes	<p>A Corporate objective has been set for all staff regarding Complaint Handling from April 25.</p> <p>A review of the policy, process and templates for complaints has taken place in March 2025 and been rolled out to Housing Teams.</p> <p>Complaint handling Training has been rolled out to all housing staff in June 2025.</p>	<p>A move towards a positive compliant handling culture has taken place within Slough Borough Council. Starting with a corporate objective for everyone regarding complaint handling has been set since April 2025.</p> <p>The policy, procedures and templates have all been reviewed in March 2025, alongside Complaint handling training being rolled out by an external provider to all housing staff in June 2025.</p>

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.</p> <p>The Housing Service Complaints Policy was reviewed in March 2025 to ensure it complied with the HOS Code.</p>	The Housing Service Complaints Policy was reviewed in March 2025. This is the only policy in place for dealing with complaints covered by this code,
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	<p>Housing service complaints policy.</p> <p>The Housing Service Complaints Policy was reviewed in March 2025 to ensure it was compliant with the code.</p> <p>This is a two stage complaints policy.</p>	The Housing Service Complaints Policy was reviewed in March 2025 ensuring it had two stages, with no informal 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	<p>Housing service complaints policy.</p> <p>This is a two stage complaints policy which was reviewed in March 2025.</p>	The Housing Service Complaints Policy was reviewed in March 2025 ensuring it had two stages,

5.4	<p>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.</p> <p>Residents must not be expected to go through two complaints processes.</p>	Yes	<p><u>Housing service complaints policy.</u></p> <p>Section 13.1 and 31.2 states:</p> <p>Complaints against our contractors/partners</p> <p>Several services are currently delivered on our behalf by private suppliers or are undertaken by our partners. Complaints can be made to Slough Council so we can log and monitor in the same way we do for services delivered by council staff.</p> <p>This will allow us to monitor complaints via the contract monitoring process and continually ensure we put our residents first.</p>	<p>The Housing Service Complaints Policy reflects this and was reviewed in March 2025.</p> <p>Meetings with third party contractors are in place where complaints are discussed as standing agenda item.</p> <p>Operational staff are co located with our Repairs and Maintenance Contractor to ensure they can respond swiftly to resolve any issues regarding complaints.</p> <p>The Repairs and Maintenance Contractor attends the Resident Board Meetings where complaints are discussed.</p>
5.5	Landlords are responsible for ensuring that any third	Yes	<p><u>Housing service complaints policy.</u></p> <p>Section 13.1 and 31.2 states:</p> <p>Complaints against our contractors/partners</p>	The Housing Service Complaints Policy

	<p>parties handle complaints in line with the Code.</p>	<p>Several services are currently delivered on our behalf by private suppliers or are undertaken by our partners. Complaints can be made to Slough Council so we can log and monitor in the same way we do for services delivered by council staff.</p> <p>This will allow us to monitor complaints via the contract monitoring process and continually ensure we put our residents first.</p>	<p>reflects this and was reviewed in March 2025.</p> <p>Meetings with third party contractors are in place where complaints are discussed as standing agenda item.</p> <p>Operational staff are co located with our Repairs and Maintenance Contractor to ensure they can respond swiftly to resolve any issues regarding complaints.</p> <p>The Repairs and Maintenance Contractor attends the Resident Board Meetings where complaints are discussed and attended</p> <p>complaint handling training alongside all housing staff in June 2025.</p>
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5.6	<p>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.</p>	Yes	<p><u>Housing service complaints policy.</u></p> <p>Section 7 of the Housing Service Complaints Policy states: All complaints will be acknowledged within 5 working days of receipt.</p> <p>The acknowledgement will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clarification of the nature of the complaint. Where this is unclear, the person responsible for logging the complaint will contact the complainant to clarify the complaint. The date by which a formal response will be sent. Details of the team or service that will be investigating and responding to the complaint. Details of how the complainant can contact the Housing Ombudsman should they wish to do so. A link to the Complaints Policy/Procedure on the council website. 	<p>Our Housing Service Complaints Policy, Process and Templates were reviewed in March 2025 to ensure compliance with the Housing Ombudsman Code. This was rolled out to our Housing Teams, Complaint training to refresh and embed our new ways of working was rolled out to all housing staff in June 2025.</p>
5.7	<p>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.</p>	Yes	<p><u>Housing service complaints policy.</u></p> <p>Section 7 of the Housing Service Complaints Policy states: Acknowledging Complaints</p> <p>All complaints will be acknowledged within 5 working days of receipt.</p> <p>The acknowledgement will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clarification of the nature of the complaint. Where this is unclear, the person responsible for logging the complaint will contact the complainant to clarify the complaint. The date by which a formal response will be sent. Details of the team or service that will be investigating and responding to the complaint. Details of how the complainant can contact the Housing Ombudsman should they wish to do so. 	<p>The Housing Service Complaints Policy, Process and Templates were reviewed in March 2025 to ensure they were compliant with the HOS code and ensuring which aspects of the complaint we are, and are not, responsible for</p>

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A link to the Complaints Policy/Procedure on the council website. 	and clarify any areas where this is not clear. This was rolled out to operational teams and training was conducted in June 2025 to refresh and embed.
5.8	<p>At each stage of the complaints process, complaint handlers must:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> deal with complaints on their merits, act independently, and have an open mind. give the resident a fair chance to set out their position. take measures to address any actual or perceived conflict of interest; and consider all relevant information and evidence carefully. 	Yes	<p><u>Housing service complaints policy.</u></p> <p>Section 9.1 of the Housing Service Complaints Policy states</p> <p>An appropriate designated officer will be responsible for investigating the complaint at Stage 1 of the process. They will be responsible for ensuring that they deal with the complaint on their merits, act independently, and have an open mind. Give the resident a fair chance to set out their position, take measures to address any actual or perceived conflict of interest; and consider all relevant information and evidence carefully.</p> <p>Section 10.2 states the senior officer considering the complaint at stage 2 will not be the same person that considered the complaint at stage.</p>	Complaints training was rolled out to all housing teams in June 2025 and was designed to promote a positive complaint handling culture and embed our approach. The policy, process and templates were reviewed to ensure we were compliant with the Housing Ombudsman code and best practise.

5.9	<p>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.</p>	Yes	<p><u>Housing service complaints policy.</u></p> <p>Section 9.5 of the Housing Service Complaints Policy states 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. They must be provided with the contact details of the Housing Ombudsman.</p>	<p>The Housing Service Complaints policy was reviewed in March 2025 which included agreeing keeping residents informed about their complaint.</p>
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><u>https://www.slough.gov.uk/strategies-plans-policies/equality-diversity</u></p> <p><u>Services equality data – Slough Borough Council</u></p> <p>Reasonable adjustments are made for our residents and any disabilities disclosed are recorded on our Housing management System. These are actively reviewed.</p> <p>We also record and report on this information on a Core Form to the Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government.</p> <p>An updating tenancy information form was sent out to every social housing property in March 2025 asking them several questions for us to keep our information up to date including our equalities data which disabilities was one of the criteria.</p>	<p>Equality information of which disability is one of the criteria is recorded on NEC our housing management system and data is shared with contractors so that reasonable adjustments can be made to service provision. Tenancy checks are undertaken and updated on resident's needs and when residents call requesting a service if appropriate, they are asked if they have any needs we should take</p>

				into consideration so that information is kept up to date.
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	<p><u>Housing service complaints policy.</u></p> <p>Section 10.4 of the Housing Service Complaints Policy states: Residents must not be required to explain their reasons for requesting a stage 2 consideration.</p>	Our Housing Service Complaints Policy was reviewed in March 2025. Complaint handling training was rolled out to all housing staff in June 2025 which included the Housing Ombudsman Code and our updated Housing Complaints Policy.
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	<p><u>Housing service complaints policy.</u></p> <p>Section 2 of the Housing Service Complaints Policy states Intelex is the Council's complaints' management system.</p> <p>Section 3.2 states Complaints will be logged on Intelex and managed in accordance with this policy regardless of whether the resident has specifically used the word 'complaint'.</p> <p>Section 9.4 states Details of all communication in relation to a complaint will be recorded on Intelex.</p> <p>Section 10.6 states A copy of the Stage 2 response will be logged on Intelex and the complaint closed at this stage unless an extension of time has been agreed with the complainant.</p>	<p>Records of complaint handling is recorded on Intelex, the Councils Complaint management System.</p> <p>Complaint handling training was rolled out to</p>

				<p>all housing staff in June 2025. Record keeping was part of this to ensure a full record of the complaint was recorded.</p>
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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	<p>Slough Borough Council reviewed its Housing Service Complaints Policy ensuring compliance with the Housing Ombudsman's Code of practise.</p> <p>The council values complaints as unsolicited feedback that allows the service to remedy a mistake, resolve a problem and learn from residents' experiences when things go wrong. Remedies can be put in place at any stage of the process without the need for escalation.</p>	Complaints Training was rolled out to all housing staff in June 2025 ensuring we are complaint with the Housing Ombudsman code of practise.
5.14	<p>Landlords must have policies and procedures in place for managing unacceptable behaviour from residents and/or their representatives.</p> <p>Landlords must be able to evidence reasons for putting any restrictions in place and must keep</p>	Yes	<p>Management of unreasonable customer behaviour Policy was reviewed in March 2025</p> <p>https://www.slough.gov.uk/downloads/file/558/management-of-unreasonable-customer-behaviour</p>	The Management of unreasonable behaviour policy was reviewed in March 2025 and has been published on our website.

	restrictions under regular 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	<p>Management of unreasonable customer behaviour Policy was reviewed in March 2025</p> <p>https://www.slough.gov.uk/downloads/file/558/management-of-unreasonable-customer-behaviour</p>	<p>There is an internal procedure in place to monitor and review.</p>

Section 6: Complaints Stages

Stage 1

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
6.1	<p>Landlords must have processes in place to consider which complaints can be responded to as early as possible, and which require further investigation.</p> <p>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.</p>	No	<p>There is evidence that this happens operationally however there is no official process to ensure consistency.</p>	<p>A logging process will be developed and rolled out to our teams by October 2025 which will take these factors into account.</p>
6.2	<p>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></p>	No	<p>Section 7.1 of the Housing Service Complaints Policy states all Complaints will be acknowledged within 5 working days of receipt.</p>	<p>The Housing Service Complaints Policy was reviewed in March 2025 and is on our website. It includes this timescale which was rolled out to our team who are endeavouring to meet this target. Previously due to resource issues which have now been addressed the 5-day target was not always met. This has now been monitored and discussed at</p>

				weekly housing Complaints meeting.
6.3	Landlords must issue a full response to stage 1 complaints <u>within 10 working days</u> of the complaint being acknowledged.	No	<p><u>Housing service complaints policy.</u></p> <p>Section 3.3 of the Housing Service Complaints Policy states that All complaints will be acknowledged within 5 working days of receipt and responded to within 10 working days of the complaint being acknowledged at Stage 1 of the process.</p>	<p>The Housing Service Complaints Policy was reviewed in March 2025 and rolled out to operational teams. They are aware of the timescales set. Previously due to resource issues which have now been addressed the target date has not always been met. Complaints Performance is reviewed on a weekly basis at the Housing Operations Complaints Meeting including discussion on overdue and outstanding to ensure residents are kept informed and resolutions are put in place as quickly as possible. Performance is improving and this is tracked and monitored in weekly reports for visibility and transparency.</p>

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	<p><u>Housing service complaints policy.</u></p> <p>Section 9.5 of the Housing Service Complaints Policy states 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. They must be provided with the contact details of the Housing Ombudsman.</p>	The Housing Service Complaints Policy was reviewed in March 2025 and rolled out to operational teams. They are aware of the timescales set and keeping residents informed if timescales cannot be met. Complaints Performance is reviewed on a weekly basis at the Housing Operations Complaints Meeting including discussion on overdue and outstanding to ensure residents are kept informed and resolutions are put in place as quickly as possible. Performance is tracked and monitored in weekly reports for visibility and transparency.
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	<p>Section 9.5 of the Housing Service Complaints Policy states</p> <p>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</p>	The Housing Service Complaints Policy, Process and Procedure was reviewed in March 2025 and rolled out to operational teams. Training was rolled out in June 2025 to refresh

			<p>complainant and the date that they can expect a full response confirmed with them in writing. They must be provided with the contact details of the Housing Ombudsman.</p>	and embed the HOS good practise.
6.6	<p>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.</p>	Yes	<p><u>Housing service complaints policy.</u></p> <p>Section 9.3 of the Housing Service Complaints policy states</p> <p>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 	<p>This is included in the Housing Service complaints Policy and templates which were reviewed in March 2025 and rolled out to the Housing Team.</p> <p>Complaint Training was rolled out to housing teams in June 2025.</p>

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Details of how to escalate the matter if dissatisfied 	
6.7	<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>	Yes	<p><u>Housing service complaints policy.</u></p> <p>Section 9.3 of the Housing Service Complaints policy states</p> <p>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 	<p><u>Housing service complaints policy.</u></p> <p>Section 9.3 of the Housing Service Complaints policy states</p> <p>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

				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Details of how to escalate the matter if dissatisfied
6.8	Where residents raise additional complaints during the investigation, these must be incorporated into the stage 1 response if they are related and the stage 1 response has not been issued. Where the stage 1 response has been issued, the new issues are unrelated to the issues already being investigated or it would unreasonably delay the response, the new issues must be logged as a new complaint.	No	This is not documented in our procedures.	A complaint logging procedure needs to be produced to ensure we are compliant with the code and all members of staff are logging complaints with a consistent process. This will be developed and rolled out to the Housing Complaints Team by end October 2025.
6.9	Landlords must confirm the following in writing to the resident at the completion of stage 1 in clear, plain language: <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 stage 2 if the individual is not satisfied with the response. 	Yes	<p><u>Housing service complaints policy.</u></p> <p>Section 9.3 of the Housing Service Complaints policy states</p> <p>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 Housing Service Complaints Policy, process, procedure and template letters were reviewed in March 2025 and rolled out to our operational teams. Complaints training was rolled out in June 2025 to refresh and embed our approach in line with the HOS code.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 <p>Our template letters will include:</p> <ul 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. • details of how to escalate the matter to stage 2 if the individual is not satisfied with the response. 	
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Stage 2

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
6.10	<p>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.</p>	Yes	<p><u>Housing service complaints policy.</u></p> <p>Section 10.4 and Section 10.5 of the Housing Service Complaints Policy states</p> <p>Residents must not be required to explain their reasons for requesting a stage 2 consideration.</p> <p>Stage 2 is our final response and must involve all suitable staff members needed to issue such a response.</p>	<p>The Housing Service Complaints Policy and Procedure was reviewed in March 2025 and rolled out to our operational teams. Complaint training was rolled out in June 2025 to all housing staff to refresh and embed the HOS code.</p>
6.11	<p>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.</p>	No	<p><u>Housing service complaints policy.</u></p> <p>Section 7.1 and 7.2 of the Housing Service Complaints Policy states</p> <p>1.1 All complaints will be acknowledged within 5</p>	<p>The Housing Service Complaints Policy was reviewed in March 2025 and is on our website. It includes this timescale which was rolled out to our team who are endeavouring to meet this target. Previously due to resource issues which have now been addressed the 5-day</p>

		<p>working days of receipt.</p> <p>1.2 The acknowledgement will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clarification of the nature of the complaint. Where this is unclear, the person responsible for logging the complaint will contact the complainant to clarify the complaint. • The date by which a formal response will be sent. • Details of the team or service that will be investigating and responding to the complaint. • Details of how the complainant can contact the Housing 	<p>target was not always met. This has now been monitored and discussed at weekly housing Complaints meeting.</p>
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			<p>Ombudsman should they wish to do so.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A link to the Complaints Policy/Procedure on the council website. 	
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	<p><u>Housing service complaints policy.</u></p> <p>Section 10.4 of the Housing Service Complaints Policy states</p> <p>Residents must not be required to explain their reasons for requesting a stage 2 consideration.</p> <p>Section 10.1 states A senior officer will review the complaint and respond in full; The response will set out:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • description of the complaint, including all points to be addressed/ investigated. • The outcome of the review. • The reasons for any 	<p>The Housing Service Complaints policy process and procedure was reviewed and rolled out to our operational team in March 2025. Complaint Training was rolled out to all housing teams in June 2025 to ensure awareness of the code.</p>

			<p>decisions made.</p> <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.• 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.• The response must address all points raised in the complaint definition and provide clear reasons for any decisions, referencing the relevant policy, law, and good practice	
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			where appropriate.	
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><u>Housing service complaints policy.</u></p> <p>Section 10.2 of the Housing Service Complaints Policy states</p> <p>The senior officer considering the complaint at stage 2 will not be the same person that considered the complaint at stage</p>	The Housing Service Complaints Policy was reviewed in March 2025. When escalations are logged, they are passed to the senior officer to investigate, and it is checked it is not the same officer who considered the complaint at stage 1.
6.14	Landlords must issue a final response to the stage 2 <u>within 20 working days</u> of the complaint being acknowledged.	No	<p><u>Housing service complaints policy.</u></p> <p>Section 3.3 of the Housing Service Complaints Policy states</p> <p>A two stage complaints process will be used to manage and respond to complaints.</p> <p>All complaints will be acknowledged within 5 working days of receipt and responded to within 10 working days of the complaint being acknowledged at Stage 1 of the process.</p>	The Housing Service Complaints Policy was reviewed in March 2025 and is on our website. It includes this timescale which was rolled out to our team who are endeavouring to meet this target. Previously due to resource issues which have now been addressed the 20-day target was not always met. This has now been monitored and discussed at

			Reviewed and responded to within 20 working days of the complaint being acknowledged at Stage 2 of the process.	weekly housing Complaints meeting to ensure compliance with the policy and code.
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	<p><u>Housing service complaints policy.</u></p> <p>Section 9.5 of the Housing Service Complaints Policy states.</p> <p>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. They must be provided with the contact details of the Housing Ombudsman.</p>	A process is now in place where the senior officer will call the resident to discuss and agree an extension of time and be provided with the Housing Ombudsman Contact details.
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	<p><u>Housing service complaints policy.</u></p> <p>Section 9.5 of the Housing Service Complaints Policy states.</p>	A process is in place where the senior officer will call the resident to discuss and agree an extension of time and be provided with

			<p>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. They must be provided with the contact details of the Housing Ombudsman.</p>	<p>the Housing Ombudsman Contact details.</p>
6.17	<p>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.</p>	Yes	<p><u>Housing service complaints policy.</u></p> <p>Section 10.1 of the Housing Service Complaints Policy states</p> <p>A senior officer will review the complaint and respond in full,</p> <p>The response will set out:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • description of the complaint, including all points to be addressed/ investigated. • The outcome of the review. • The reasons for any decisions made. • Details of any remedies offered to put things right. 	<p>The Housing Service Complaints policy, process and procedure was rolled out to operational teams in March 2025. Templates have been created to assist to ensure compliance with the code. Complaints training was rolled out in June 2025 to refresh and embed our approach in line with the HOS Code.</p>

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Details of any outstanding actions and a reasonable timeframe to resolve. • 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. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The response 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. 	
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	<p><u>Housing service complaints policy.</u></p> <p>Section 10.1 of the Housing Service Complaints Policy states</p> <p>A senior officer will review the complaint and respond in full,</p>	The Housing Service Complaints Policy, Procedure and templates were reviewed and rolled out to operational teams in March 2025, Complaint training was rolled out to refresh and embed our approach in June 2025. A

		<p>The response will set out:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • description of the complaint, including all points to be addressed/ investigated. • 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. • 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. • The response 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>weekly meeting is held with operational teams regarding overdue and outstanding complaints and escalations to ensure we are aiming to resolve and reply to the complaint in full.</p>
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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"> 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	<p><u>Housing service complaints policy.</u></p> <p>Section 10.1 of the Housing Service Complaints Policy states</p> <p>A senior officer will review the complaint and respond in full, The response will set out:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • description of the complaint, including all points to be addressed/ investigated. • 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. • 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. 	<p>The Housing Service Complaint Policy, Process and Procedure and template letters were reviewed in March 2025.</p> <p>These were rolled out to operational team in March 2025.</p> <p>The template letters guide the officer to ensure all the above points are covered and documented in the response to the resident.</p>
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			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The response 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. 	
6.20	Stage 2 is the landlord's final response and must involve all suitable staff members needed to issue such a response.	Yes	<p><u>Housing service complaints policy.</u></p> <p>Section 10.5 of the Housing Service Complaints Policy states</p> <p>Stage 2 is our final response and must involve all suitable staff members needed to issue such a response.</p>	<p>The Housing Service Complaints Policy was reviewed in March 2025 in compliance with the HOS Code.</p> <p>This was rolled out to housing teams, training was carried out to refresh and embed our approach to ensure compliance with HOS code.</p>

Section 7: Putting things right

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
7.1	Where something has gone wrong a landlord must acknowledge this and set out the actions it has already taken, or intends to take, to put things right. These can include:	Yes	<u>Housing service complaints policy.</u>	The Housing Service Policy, Procedure and template letters were reviewed in March 2025. Complaint

	<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. 		<p>Housing Complaints Policy has been reviewed and is published on our website</p> <p>Housing Complaints Procedure and Template letters has been reviewed and updated to reflect HOS code</p> <p>This has been rolled out to Operational Heads of Service at weekly Housing Complaints task force meeting.</p>	<p>handling training was rolled out in June 2025 to ensure HOS best practise is embedded.</p>
7.2	Any remedy offered must reflect the impact on the resident as a result of any fault identified.	No	The Housing Complaints Policy, Procedures and Template Letters have all been reviewed in March 2025 to reflect the impact on the resident, however, the compensation policy is still to be reviewed to ensure its compliant with the HOS Code of practise and rolled out. This will be reviewed in Qtr. 3.	Further work needs to be completed around this area and delivered in Qtr.3.
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	Our template letters have been reviewed and rolled out to take this into account, Complaint training has been rolled out in June 2025 to ensure we are embedding HOS best practise.	Complaint training has been rolled out to housing staff in June 2025 to refresh and embed HOS code. Further work is planned around refreshing compensation best practise.

7.4	<p>Landlords must take account of the guidance issued by the Ombudsman when deciding on appropriate remedies.</p>	No	<p>Our compensation policy needs to be reviewed to consider HOS Best Practise and Guidance. This will be reviewed by Qtr. 3. Training around complaint handling, remedies and learnings however has been delivered in June 2025.</p>	<p>Further work needs to be completed around this area and delivered in Qtr.3.</p>
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Section 8: Self-assessment, reporting and compliance

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><u>Appendix D - Statutory and Corporate Complaints report 2023-24.pdf</u></p> <p>Housing Ombudsman Self Assessment 2024- <u>Appendix E Housing Ombudsman self-assessment.pdf</u></p>	<p>Annual Complaints Report was produced; the HOS self-assessment was an appendix to this report and was taken to our Audit and Corporate governance Committee. The minutes of the meeting alongside our report are recorded and available on our website.</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	<p><u>Appendix D - Statutory and Corporate Complaints report 2023-24.pdf</u></p> <p><u>Appendix E Housing Ombudsman self-assessment.pdf</u></p> <p><u>Agenda for Audit and Corporate Governance Committee on Wednesday, 13th September, 2023, 6.30 pm</u></p> <p><u>Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code - self assessment 2024 – Slough Borough Council</u></p> <p><u>https://www.slough.gov.uk/council/council-improvement/2</u></p>	<p>The Annual Complaints performance and Service Improvement Report is attached alongside the HOS Self-Assessment and Agenda for the Audit and Corporate Governance Committee. The Committee is recorded and the link to the agenda will allow the meeting to be viewed.</p> <p>The Annual Complaints Report 24/25 is on the forward plan for September 2025. Once this is signed off by the Committee it will be published on our website along with the Housing Ombudsman Self-Assessment. Complaints work stream has already been identified in our Improvement and recovery plan which is</p>

				published on our website.
8.3	Landlords must also carry out a self-assessment following a significant restructure, merger and/or change in procedures.	Yes	Noted	Noted
8.4	Landlords may be asked to review and update the self-assessment following an Ombudsman investigation.	Yes	Noted	Noted
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	Noted	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	<p>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.</p> <p>https://www.slough.gov.uk/council/council-improvement/2</p>	<p>There is a complaints workstream as part of our Improvement and Recovery Plan which is published on our website and includes root cause analysis and learning from complaints. There is a Recovery Board where progress will be reported, tracked and monitored to ensure this approach is embedded in the organisation.</p>
9.2	<p>A positive complaint handling culture is integral to the effectiveness with which landlords resolve disputes.</p> <p>Landlords must use complaints as a source of intelligence to identify issues</p>	No	<p>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. Slough Borough Council have included a complaints workstream as part of their Improvement and Recovery programme which is published on our website.</p>	<p>Work is being carried out by our Transformation Team applying systems thinking principles and practices around complaints. They are exploring how we focus on getting a significantly higher first-time resolution to reduce and preferably eliminate the common and predictable causes for residents' complaints. This work is in the exploratory phase and links in with the improvement and Recovery workstream on Complaints.</p>

	and introduce positive changes in service delivery.		<u>https://www.slough.gov.uk/council/council-improvement/2</u>	There are weekly task force meetings around complaints, lessons learnt are now being noted and the first quarterly report around complaint performance including learnings has been presented to our CLT.
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	<p><u>Appendix D - Statutory and Corporate Complaints report 2023-24.pdf</u> Housing Ombudsman Self Assessment 2024- <u>Appendix E Housing Ombudsman self-assessment.pdf</u></p> <p><u>https://www.slough.gov.uk/council/council-improvement/2</u></p> <p>Annual Complaints report that is produced for the Audit and Corporate Governance Committee and is published on our website with appendices re the HOS self-Assessment and the LGSCO self-assessment.</p> <p>There are quarterly complaints report that is being produced for our Corporate Leadership Team reporting on performance and wider learnings. This has started this financial year and is on the forward plan for CLT in July, October, January and April.</p>	Further work around root cause analysis and learnings is part of the Improvement and Recovery plan workstream around complaints.

			<p>Monthly Report to MRC on wider learnings and improvements</p> <p>Housing Power BI dashboards that are distributed weekly to operational leads – this is discussed at a weekly complaints task force meeting.</p> <p>Complaints are discussed at Resident board Meetings</p>	
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	Head of Customer Service has been appointed as Senior Lead Person as accountable for Complaint Handling.	Corporate Complaints has been moved to the larger Customer Service Arena wef 01/10/2024.
9.5	In addition to this a member of the governing body (or equivalent) must be appointed to have lead	Yes	<u>Councillor details - Councillor Mabu Shaik</u>	Cllr Mabu Shaik is our MRC.

	<p>responsibility for complaints to support a positive complaint handling culture. This person is referred to as the Member Responsible for Complaints ('the MRC').</p>			
9.6	<p>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.</p>	Yes	<p>Monthly meeting held with Head of Customer Service and Director of Strategy Change and Resident Engagement and pack provided to MRC with information on complaints and insight.</p>	<p>A monthly meeting is in the calendar every month with the MRC, a pack is produced in advance of the meeting and discussed.</p>

9.7	<p>As a minimum, the MRC and the governing body (or equivalent) must receive:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> regular updates on the volume, categories and outcomes of complaints, alongside complaint handling performance; regular reviews of issues and trends arising from complaint handling; regular updates on the outcomes of the Ombudsman's investigations and progress made in complying with orders related to severe maladministration findings; and annual complaints 	Yes	<p>Annual Complaints Report 2023/2024 – <u>Appendix D - Statutory and Corporate Complaints report 2023-24.pdf</u></p> <p>Housing Ombudsman Self Assessment 2024- <u>Appendix E Housing Ombudsman self-assessment.pdf</u></p> <p>Monthly meetings held with the MRC. A pack giving monthly updates on volumes, categories and outcomes from complaints alongside performance.</p> <p>Top trends and issues are also addressed including information regarding the ombudsman investigations.</p> <p>An annual complaints report is compiled and sent to our Audit and Corporate Governance Committee on an annual basis. The Housing ombudsman Self-Assessment and the LGSCO Self-Assessment is also attached as appendices and mentioned in the report.</p> <p>Have attached links 2023/2024 Annual Complaints Report and the Housing Ombudsman Self-Assessment which was carried out in 2024</p> <p>A Complaints Service Improvement plan has been signed off by our Corporate Leadership Team and our Corporate Service Improvement Board. This is a work stream in our Improvement and Recovery plan.</p> <p><u>https://www.slough.gov.uk/council/council-improvement/2</u></p>	<p>Monthly meetings are preplanned with MRC and diary invites sent out in advance with the pack that is produced.</p> <p>Annual Complaints report for 25/26 this is on the forward plan for the Audit and Corporate Governance Committee 10th September 2025. The Housing Ombudsman Self-Assessment and the LGSCO Self-Assessment will also be attached as appendices and mentioned in the report.</p> <p>When this is signed off it will be shared on our website.</p> <p>Our Improvement and Recovery plan (complaints service improvement workstream is a part of this and published externally.</p> <p><u>https://www.slough.gov.uk/council/council-improvement/2</u></p>
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	performance and service improvement report.			
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</p>	Yes	<p>A Corporate Objective around complaint handling has been set for all staff members as part of the objective setting process for 2025/2026 which states.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have a collaborative and co-operative approach towards resolving complaints, working with colleagues across teams and departments • Take collective responsibility for any shortfalls identified through complaints, rather than blaming others; and • Act within the professional standards for engaging with complaints as set by any relevant professional body. 	<p>Corporate Complaint handling Objective 25/26 which has been set for all staff which states.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have a collaborative and co-operative approach towards resolving complaints, working with colleagues across teams and departments • Take collective responsibility for any shortfalls identified through complaints, rather than blaming others; and • Act within the professional standards for engaging with complaints as set by any relevant professional body. <p>Objectives are discussed and monitored at individual team members supervisions.</p>

		blaming others; and c. act within the professional standards for engaging with complaints as set by any relevant professional body.	
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