

Appendix A: Self-assessment form

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

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

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

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

Section 1: Definition of a complaint The reference numbers for the complaints policy within the evidence column will require reconciliation with the revised policy following final formatting.

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
1.2	A complaint must be defined as: <i>‘an expression of dissatisfaction, however made, about the standard of service, actions or lack of action by the landlord, its own staff, or those acting on its behalf, affecting a resident or group of residents.’</i>	Yes	Section 3 of the complaints policy defines a complaint as: ‘An expression of dissatisfaction, however made, about the standard of service, actions or lack of action by the council’s own staff, or those acting on its behalf, affecting an individual or group of individuals.’	Slough Borough Council’s complaints policy was updated and is due to be approved by Cabinet on 20th July 2026. The revised policy reflects the feedback provided by the Housing Ombudsman in the letter dated 31 March 2026 and has now been amended to be compliant with the Housing Ombudsman’s Complaint Handling Code. This is a corporate policy that reflects all services and the definition refers to individuals rather than residents to reflect this. The policy contains this definition and has been published on our website.

1.3	A resident does not have to use the word 'complaint' for it to be treated as such. Whenever a resident expresses dissatisfaction landlords must give them the choice to make complaint. A complaint that is submitted via a third party or representative must be handled in line with the landlord's complaints policy.	Yes	Section 3 of the Corporate Complaints Policy states: 'An individual does not need to use the word "complaint" for a matter to be treated as such. Wherever dissatisfaction is expressed, the Council will ensure the individual is given the opportunity and choice to have their concerns handled as a complaint under this policy. Complaints submitted by a third party or representative acting on behalf of an individual will be accepted and managed in accordance with the Council's Complaints Procedure.' Section 3.1 of the policy states: 'The Council supports individuals to access the complaints process and encourages the use of advocates where needed.' Section 5 of the policy states:	Slough Borough Council's complaints policy was updated and is due to be approved by Cabinet on 20th July 2026. The revised policy reflects the feedback provided by the Housing Ombudsman in the letter dated 31 March 2026 and has now been amended to be compliant with the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code. Following the Ombudsman's recommendation that the Council should update its policy to give any resident expressing dissatisfaction the opportunity to make a complaint, the policy has been amended to comply with the Complaint Handling Code. This is a corporate policy, which covers all services of the council, including housing. This policy is compliant with the Housing Ombudsman Complaint
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			'A complaint may be made by any member of the public who has been affected by a Council service, action, or failure to act. Complaints may also be made by someone acting on behalf of another person, provided the individual's consent has been given or the Council is satisfied the representative is acting in their best interests. Where several people are affected by the same Council decision or issue, one person may act as a representative and submit a complaint on behalf of the group.'	Handling Code and will ensure that complaints raised by third parties are accepted.
1.4	Landlords must recognise the difference between a service request and a complaint. This must be set out in their complaints policy. A service request is a request from a resident to the landlord requiring action to be taken to put something right. Service requests are not complaints, but must be recorded, monitored and reviewed regularly.	Yes	Section of 3 of the Corporate Complaints Policy states: 3. What Is a Complaint? A complaint is defined as "An expression of dissatisfaction, however made, about the standard of service, actions or lack of action by the council's	Slough Borough Council's Corporate complaints policy was updated and is due to be approved by Cabinet on 20th July 2026. The revised policy reflects the feedback provided by the Housing Ombudsman in the letter dated 31 March 2026 and has now been amended to

			own staff, or those acting on its behalf, affecting an individual or group of individuals.” This is different from a service request which is defined as: “a request that the organisation provides or improves a service, fixes a problem or reconsiders a decision”.	be compliant with the Housing Ombudsman’s Complaint Handling Code. This policy, alongside the definition of a service request is published on our website. This is a corporate policy, which covers all services of the council, including housing. This policy is compliant with the Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code. Training on complaints handling was given to staff in March 2026, which reminded staff of how to recognise the difference between a complaint and a service request. Service requests are monitored and reviewed regularly.
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	Yes	Section 3 of the Corporate Complaints Policy states: A complaint may be raised when an individual expresses	Slough Borough Council’s Corporate complaints policy was updated and is due to be approved by Cabinet on 20th July 2026. The revised policy reflects the feedback

	the service request if the resident complains.		dissatisfaction with the response to their service request, even if the handling of the service request remains ongoing. The Council will not stop its efforts to address the service request if an individual chooses to complain. provided by the Housing Ombudsman in the letter dated 31 March 2026 and has now been amended to be compliant with the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code. After taking on board the recommendation from the Ombudsman to confirm that a complaint will not prevent or impact actions needed to resolve any service requests, the policy has been adjusted to be compliant with the Housing Ombudsman's complaints handling code. This is a corporate policy, which covers all services of the council, including housing. This policy is compliant with the Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code. Training on complaints handling was given to officers in March 2026,
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				which reminded them of how to recognise the difference between a complaint and a service request. It also included when a resident expresses dissatisfaction with the response to their service request, even if the handling of the service request remains ongoing.
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	23293 Sough Tenant Satisfaction 2025 Tenant survey.docx EL Research carries out the TSM surveys for Slough Borough Council - 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.	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.

Section 2: Exclusions

T	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	Section 4 of the Corporate Complaints Policy States: Each complaint will be considered on its own merit. Where the Council decides that an issue does not fall within the scope of this procedure, the reasons for this decision will be clearly explained to the individual. The Council will explain that the individual has the right to take that decision to the Ombudsman.	Slough Borough Council's Corporate complaints policy was updated and is due to be approved by Cabinet on 20 th July 2026. The revised policy reflects the feedback provided by the Housing Ombudsman in the letter dated 31 March 2026 and has now been amended to be compliant with the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code. Section 4 of the complaints policy ensures that each complaint will be considered on its own merit and will explain what type of complaints won't be considered under this complaints policy and ensures that residents will always be advised why

				their complaint has not been accepted. This is a corporate policy, which covers all services of the council, including housing. This policy is compliant with the Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code.
2.2	A complaints policy must set out the circumstances in which a matter will not be considered as a complaint or escalated, and these circumstances must be fair and reasonable to residents. Acceptable exclusions include: • The issue giving rise to the complaint occurred over twelve months ago. • Legal proceedings have started. This is defined as details of the claim, such as the Claim Form and Particulars of Claim, having been filed at court. • Matters that have previously been considered under the complaints policy.	Yes	Sections 3.2 of the Corporate Complaints Policy states 'The Council will not normally pursue anonymous complaints. There are other avenues for residents and service users to raise concerns anonymously, including: • Raising concerns about suspected fraud to the Council's fraud team Report fraud – Slough Borough Council • Raising concerns about safeguarding concerns Slough Safeguarding Partnership - Report Concerns • Raising concerns about illegality monitoringofficer@slough.gov.uk'	Slough Borough Council's corporate complaints policy was updated and is due to be approved by Cabinet on 20th July 2026. The revised policy reflects the feedback provided by the Housing Ombudsman in the letter dated 31 March 2026 and has now been amended to be compliant with the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code. The policy provides clear guidance on what has been accepted as part of the complaints policy. This is a corporate policy, which covers all services

			Section 3.3 of the Corporate Complaints Policy States: ‘3.3 Time limits Complaints will be accepted up to 12 months after the issue occurred or an individual became aware of it. The Council will consider accepting complaints outside this timeframe where there are good reasons for the delay, in line with Ombudsman guidance. ‘ Section 4 of the Corporate Complaints Policy lists under which circumstances a matter will not be considered a complaint: • Matters with a statutory appeal or review process • Issues where there is a defined statutory right of appeal or review, including (but not limited to): • Planning and licensing decisions	of the council, including housing. This policy is compliant with the Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code.
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			• Parking penalties (Penalty Charge Notices) • Housing Benefit or Council Tax decisions • school admissions or exclusions • Decisions relating to an Education, Care and Health Plan within the remit of the First Tier Tribunal • homelessness decisions where there is a statutory right of review and appeal • In these cases, individuals are normally expected to use the relevant statutory appeal or review process rather than the complaints procedure. These matters are not applied as blanket exclusions, and complaints may still be considered where they relate to service failure, delay, communication, or failure to follow procedure.	
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			• Complaints about Councillors • Complaints relating to the conduct of Councillors are dealt with under the Members' Code of Conduct. • Personnel and employment matters • Complaints relating to Council employment matters, including recruitment, disciplinary issues, grievances, pay, or terms and conditions, are managed through internal Human Resources procedures. • School-based complaints • Complaints about schools, academies or colleges are managed through their own governing bodies or complaints procedures. • Insurance claims and legal matters • The Council will not normally investigate matters that	
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			are subject to legal proceedings, including insurance claims. This does not prevent the Council from considering complaints about service quality, delay, communication or the complaints procedure being utilised prior to the issue of proceedings. • Disagreement with policy decisions • The complaints process is to deal with service failure as opposed to challenging policy decisions made by the Council. However the complaints process can be used if an individual considers that the Council has not properly applied their policy to their situation. • Matters outside the Council's remit • Issues where the Council has no legal power or duty to	
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			act, or where responsibility rests with another organisation.	
2.3	Landlords must accept complaints referred to them within 12 months of the issue occurring or the resident becoming aware of the issue, unless they are excluded on other grounds. Landlords must consider whether to apply discretion to accept complaints made outside this time limit where there are good reasons to do so.	Yes	Section 3.3. of the complaints policy states: 3.3 Time limits Complaints will be accepted up to 12 months after the issue occurred or an individual became aware of it. The Council will consider accepting complaints outside this timeframe where there are good reasons for the delay, in line with Ombudsman guidance.	Slough Borough Council's Corporate complaints policy was updated and is due to be approved by Cabinet 20th July 2026. The revised policy reflects the feedback provided by the Housing Ombudsman in the letter dated 31 March 2026 and has now been amended to be compliant with the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code. This is a corporate policy, which covers all services of the council, including housing. This policy is compliant with the Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code. Section 3.3 of the Corporate complaints policy ensures that

				complaints will be accepted up to 12 months after the issue occurred.
2.4	If a landlord decides not to accept a complaint, an explanation must be provided to the resident setting out the reasons why the matter is not suitable for the complaints process and the right to take that decision to the Ombudsman. If the Ombudsman does not agree that the exclusion has been fairly applied, the Ombudsman may tell the landlord to take on the complaint.	Yes	Section 4 of the Corporate Complaints policy states: ‘The following set out exclusions from this policy. Where the Council decides that an issue does not fall within the scope of this procedure, the reasons for this decision will be clearly explained to the individual. The Council will explain that the individual has the right to take that decision to the Ombudsman.’	Slough Borough Council’s Corporate complaints policy was updated and is due to be approved by Cabinet on 20th July 2026. The revised policy reflects the feedback provided by the Housing Ombudsman in the letter dated 31 March 2026 and has now been amended to be compliant with the Housing Ombudsman’s Complaint Handling Code. After considering the Ombudsman’s recommendations to provide residents with an explanation of why their complaint has not been accepted and inform tenants that they have the right to go to the Ombudsman, the policy is compliant with the Ombudsman’s complaint handling code.

				This is a corporate policy, which covers all services of the council, including housing. This policy is compliant with the Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code.
2.5	Landlords must not take a blanket approach to excluding complaints; they must consider the individual circumstances of each complaint.	Yes	Section 4 of the policy states: Matters with a statutory appeal or review process: ‘These matters are not applied as blanket exclusions, and complaints may still be considered where they relate to service failure, delay, communication, or failure to follow procedure.’	Slough Borough Council’s Corporate complaints policy was updated and is due to be approved by Cabinet on 20th July 2026. The revised policy reflects the feedback provided by the Housing Ombudsman in the letter dated 31 March 2026 and has now been amended to be compliant with the Housing Ombudsman’s Complaint Handling Code. This is a corporate policy, which covers all services of the council, including housing. This policy is compliant with the Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code.

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	Section 2 of the Corporate Complaints Policy states: 2. Purpose of the Policy The purpose of this policy is to provide a fair; accessible and consistent complaints process and to learn from complaints to improve services. Section 6 of the complaints policy states: 6. How to Make a Complaint Complaints may be made via any channel, including online, email, telephone, letter, in person or via social media, and will be accepted and handled consistently regardless of how they are received. Slough Borough Council operates a no-wrong-door approach to complaints and will ensure that	Slough Borough Council's Corporate complaints policy was updated and is due to approved by Cabinet on 20th July 2026. The revised policy reflects the feedback provided by the Housing Ombudsman in the letter dated 31 March 2026 and has now been amended to be compliant with the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code. This is a corporate policy, which covers all services of the council, including housing. This policy is compliant with the Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code. The different channels to make a complaint are

			expressions of dissatisfaction are appropriately recognised and managed. Residents can raise their complaints in any way with any member of staff. The Council is committed to providing an accessible complaints service and will make this policy available in alternative formats on request. Reasonable adjustments will be made where required to enable individuals to access and progress a complaint, including support to make a complaint verbally, accepting complaints through a representative or advocate, providing information in alternative languages or formats, and making adjustments to communication methods or timescales where appropriate. The different channels to make a complaint are provided on the council website: Complaints and housing services – Slough Borough Council	provided on the council website. Staff members must complete mandatory training on Equality and Diversity every 6 months and make reasonable adjustments to services for residents accessing the complaints process.
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3.2	Residents must be able to raise their complaints in any way and with any member of staff. All staff must be aware of the complaints process and be able to pass details of the complaint to the appropriate person within the landlord.	Yes	Section 1.1.1 of the Corporate Complaints policy states: 1.1.1 This Corporate Complaints Policy applies to all Council services, except where a separate statutory complaints process applies, including Adult Social Care and Children's Services. This policy applies to all service areas including housing. Section 6 of the Corporate Policy states: Complaints may be made via any channel, including online, email, telephone, letter, in person or via social media, and will be accepted and handled consistently regardless of how they are received. Slough Borough Council operates a no-wrong-door approach to complaints and will ensure that expressions of dissatisfaction are appropriately recognised and managed. Residents can raise their complaints in any way with any member of staff.	Slough Borough Council's Corporate complaints policy was updated and is due to be approved by Cabinet on 20th July 2026. The revised policy reflects the feedback provided by the Housing Ombudsman in the letter dated 31 March 2026 and has now been amended to be compliant with the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code. Training on complaints handling was given to officers in March 2026, which reminded them of how to recognise the difference between a complaint and a service request. It also included when a resident expresses dissatisfaction with the response to their service request, even if the handling of the service request remains ongoing.
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			Complaints handling training for all housing staff was rolled out in March 2026, this covered the complaints handling process which is used within Slough Borough Council.	
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	Complaints Report 2025-26.docx The monthly average for Stage 1 complaints was 43 per month, with complaints peaking in September with 59 received in this month. There were a total number of 519 Stage 1 complaints covering the above areas and the volume of complaints for each of these areas is displayed below. There were 131 Stage 2 complaints received in 2025-26 giving a monthly average of just under 11, with complaints peaking in July with 19 received in this month.	Complaint volumes are monitored and reviewed with the Lead Member for Complaints. Complaints performance is also shared with the Housing Board and the Resident Performance Board and published on the Council website. The Council views complaints as positive feedback to improve services and as a sign of effective communication and transparency with residents.
3.4	Landlords must make their complaint policy available in a clear and	Yes		Slough Borough Council's Corporate complaints policy

	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.		Section 6 of the Corporate Complaints Policy states: The Council is committed to providing an accessible complaints service and will make this policy available in alternative formats on request. Reasonable adjustments will be made where required to enable individuals to access and progress a complaint, including support to make a complaint verbally, accepting complaints through a representative or advocate, providing information in alternative languages or formats, and making adjustments to communication methods or timescales where appropriate. Stage 7 of the complaints policy gives a detailed description of the 2-stage complaints process: .1 Stage 1 – Initial Investigation Stage 1 is the Council's first formal opportunity to investigate and resolve the complaint in a	was updated and is due to be approved by Cabinet on 20th July 2026. The revised policy reflects the feedback provided by the Housing Ombudsman in the letter dated 31 March 2026 and has now been amended to be compliant with the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code. The policy includes the recommendation from the Housing Ombudsman to provide accessible formats of the policy on request. This is a corporate policy, which covers all services of the council, including housing. This policy is compliant with the Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code. The two stages of the complaints process are published on the Council website and are easily accessible.
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		fair, proportionate and timely way. Complaints will be acknowledged within five working days of receipt. Acknowledgements at Stage 1 will confirm the Council's understanding of the complaint, the outcomes the complainant is seeking, and which aspects are and are not within the Council's responsibility. A full written response will normally be provided within ten working days of acknowledgement. Responses will be issued when the Council has carefully considered all the information and evidence and reached a view on the complaint, even where not all identified actions have been completed. Where actions remain outstanding, the response will clearly set these out and provide appropriate updates on progress.	
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			The Stage 1 response will address all points raised in the complaint and set out in clear, plain language: • The complaint stage; • The Council's understanding of the complaint • The decision on the complaint • The reason for for any decision 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 stage 2 of the complaints process if the individual is not satisfied with the response. Where all or part of the complaint remains unresolved at Stage 1, and dissatisfaction continues, the	
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			complaint will progress to Stage 2 upon request. Where a complaint is complex or requires input from more than one service area, the Council may need additional time to provide a full response. In such cases, a holding response will be issued before the applicable ten-working-day deadline, explaining the reason for the delay and confirming a revised response date. The Council will agree suitable intervals at which to keep the complainant informed of progress and will normally issue a full Stage 1 response no later than a further ten working days. Any Stage 1 extension will be applied only where there is good reason. Where additional related issues are raised during the Stage 1 investigation, the Council will confirm whether these issues can be reasonably addressed as part of the existing complaint, or whether they need to be logged	
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		separately. This will be explained clearly to the complainant. 7.2 Stage 2 – Review Stage 2 provides an independent review of the Stage 1 response and is intended to consider whether the complaint was handled appropriately and whether the outcome was reasonable and proportionate. Residents will not be required to explain their reasons for requesting a stage 2 consideration. A Stage 2 review can be requested where the complainant remains dissatisfied with the outcome at Stage 1. The Council will not refuse an escalation of a complaint unless it has valid reasons to do so and the Landlord will make reasonable efforts to understand why a	
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			resident remains unhappy as part of its stage 2 response. Stage 2 complaints will normally be acknowledged within five working days of receipt. Acknowledgements at Stage 2 will confirm the Council's understanding of the complaint, the outcomes the complainant is seeking, and which aspects are and are not within the Council's responsibility. A Stage 2 response will normally be issued within twenty working days of acknowledgement. The person considering the complaint at Stage 2 will not be the same person who considered the complaint at Stage 1. Stage 2 will include all suitable staff members needed to issue a response. Responses will be issued when the Council has reached its final position on the complaint, even if not all identified actions have been completed. Where actions remain outstanding, the response will clearly explain what	
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			these are and how the complainant will be kept updated. The Stage 2 response will address all points raised and set out in clear, plain language: • The complaint stage; • The Council's understanding of the complaint; • 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 if the individual remains dissatisfied. Where it is not possible to meet the twenty-working-day response	
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			timescale, the Council will inform the complainant of the delay, clearly explain the reasons, and provide a revised response date. The Council will normally issue its Stage 2 response no later than a further twenty working days. Any Stage 2 extension will be applied only where there is good reason	
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	Section 9 of the Corporate Complaints Policy states: The Council will publish an annual complaints performance and service improvement report and will regularly review its policy and procedures following self-assessment against both the Housing Ombudsman and Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman Complaint Handling Codes. The Council will also publish this Corporate Complaints Policy and information about the Housing Ombudsman and the Complaint	Slough Borough Council's Corporate complaints policy was updated and is due to be approved by Cabinet on 20th July 2026. The revised policy reflects the feedback provided by the Housing Ombudsman in the letter dated 31 March 2026 and has now been amended to be compliant with the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code. The policy includes the recommendation from the Housing Ombudsman to

			Handling Code alongside the self-assessment.	provide accessible formats of the policy on request. This is a corporate policy, which covers all services of the council, including housing. This policy is compliant with the Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code.
3.6	Landlords must give residents the opportunity to have a representative deal with their complaint on their behalf, and to be represented or accompanied at any meeting with the landlord.	Yes	Section 3 of the Corporate Complaints Policy states: Complaints submitted by a third party or representative acting on behalf of an individual will be accepted and managed in accordance with the Council's Complaints Procedure. Section 3.1 of the complaints policy states: The Council supports individuals to access the complaints process and encourages the use of advocates where needed.	Slough Borough Council's Corporate complaints policy was updated and is due to be approved by Cabinet on 20 July 2026. The revised policy reflects the feedback provided by the Housing Ombudsman in the letter dated 31 March 2026 and has now been amended to be compliant with the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code. This is a corporate policy, which covers all services of the council, including housing. This policy is

			Section 5 of the complaints policy states: Complaints may also be made by someone acting on behalf of another person, provided the individual's consent has been given or the Council is satisfied the representative is acting in their best interests. Where several people are affected by the same Council decision or issue, one person may act as a representative and submit a complaint on behalf of the group.	compliant with the Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code.
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	Section 4 of the policy states: Where the Council decides that an issue does not fall within the scope of this procedure, the reasons for this decision will be clearly explained to the individual. The Council will explain that the individual has the right to take that decision to the Ombudsman. Stage 7.3 of the complaints policy states that a stage 2 response:	Slough Borough Council's Corporate complaints policy was updated and is due to be approved by Cabinet on 20th July 2026. The revised policy reflects the feedback provided by the Housing Ombudsman in the letter dated 31 March 2026 and has now been amended to be compliant with the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code. This is a corporate policy, which covers all services of the council, including housing. This policy is

			Final Stage 2 responses will clearly signpost complainants to the appropriate Ombudsman, including full contact details: the Housing Ombudsman for housing landlord related complaints, and the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman for all other eligible complaints	compliant with the Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code.
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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	The Resident Involvement Manager has been assigned that role within Slough Borough Council. The Housing Complaints Officer sits within the Resident Involvement team.	
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 Housing Complaints Officer sends weekly overdue and outstanding reports to all service areas within housing. The Housing Complaints Officer or a member of the Resident Involvement Team, attend weekly complaints meetings to discuss caseloads of complaints and any escalations to the Ombudsman.	The complaints officer has access to staff within different teams at different levels to facilitate the prompt resolution of complaints.
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	Yes	Section 1 of the Corporate Complaints Policy States: The Council is committed to providing high-quality services and	A move towards more positive complaints handling culture, which promotes learning from complaints

	importance of complaint handling. It is important that complaints are seen as a core service and must be resourced to handle complaints effectively	welcomes feedback to help us improve. Section 2 of the Corporate Complaints Policy states: 2. Purpose of the Policy The purpose of this policy is to provide a fair; accessible and consistent complaints process and to learn from complaints to improve services. Section 9 of the Corporate Complaints Policy states: The Council seeks to have a positive complaints handling culture and sees complaints as a source of intelligence to identify issues and introduce positive changes in service delivery. Complaints handling training has been rolled out to all housing staff in March 2026. Since October 2025, at weekly complaints meetings, responses from previous stage 1 and 2	has taken place within Housing with key lessons learned from complaints being discussed at weekly meetings and the establishment of a Resident Complaints Scrutiny Panel. The training on complaints handling was delivered by an external partner in March 2026.
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			complaints are reviewed and improvements and key learnings are discussed between team managers. Since May 2026, a Resident Complaint Scrutiny Panel has been introduced, in which members of housing staff and tenants review redacted versions of complaints and responses and identify lessons learned and actions to be taken to improve services and complaints handling. Complaints Scrutiny Panel TOR.docx	
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Section 5: The Complaint Handling Process

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
5.1	Landlords must have a single policy in place for dealing with complaints covered by this Code. Residents must not be treated differently if they complain.	Yes	The Corporate Complaints Policy covers all services of Slough Borough Council, including housing. The policy was reviewed in July 2026 to be compliant with the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code.	Slough Borough Council's Corporate complaints policy was updated and is due to be approved by Cabinet on 20 th July 2026. The revised policy reflects the feedback provided by the Housing Ombudsman in the letter dated 31 March 2026 and

				has now been amended to be compliant with the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code. 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	Stage 7 of the Corporate Complaints Policy states: 7. Stages of the Complaint Process The Council operates a two-stage Corporate Complaints Procedure, designed to be accessible, fair, proportionate and timely. The process enables early resolution wherever possible and complies with the requirements of the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman and the Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Codes.	Slough Borough Council's Corporate complaints policy was updated and is due to be approved by Cabinet on 20th July 2026. The revised policy reflects the feedback provided by the Housing Ombudsman in the letter dated 31 March 2026 and has now been amended to be compliant with the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code. This is a corporate policy, which covers all services of the council, including housing. This policy is compliant with the Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code. The policy enables early resolution of issues and enforces 2-stage

				complaints handling process.
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	The Corporate Complaints Policy is a 2 stage complaints policy. Section 7 of the Corporate Complaints Policy: The Council operates a two-stage Corporate Complaints Procedure, designed to be accessible, fair, proportionate and timely.	Slough Borough Council's Corporate complaints policy was updated and is due to be approved by Cabinet on 20th July 2026. The revised policy reflects the feedback provided by the Housing Ombudsman in the letter dated 31 March 2026 and has now been amended to be compliant with the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code. This is a corporate policy, which covers all services of the council, including housing. This policy is compliant with the Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code. This policy is compliant with the Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code and enforces 2-stage complaints handling process.

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	Section 1.1. of the policy states: 1.1.1 This Corporate Complaints Policy applies to all Council services, except where a separate statutory complaints process applies, including Adult Social Care and Children's Services. Section 1.1.2 of the Corporate Complaints Policy states: 1.1.2 All third parties who deliver Council services will be expected to adhere to this policy and use Slough Borough Council's two-stage complaints process. The Council is responsible for ensuring that any third parties or external contractors delivering Council services adhere to this policy and handle complaints in line with the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman's and Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Codes, where applicable.	Slough Borough Council's Corporate complaints policy was updated and approved by Cabinet on 20th July 2026. The revised policy reflects the feedback provided by the Housing Ombudsman in the letter dated 31 March 2026 and has now been amended to be compliant with the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code. This is a corporate policy, which covers all services of the council, including housing. This policy is compliant with the Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code. Housing Repairs are carried out by CARDO, who use the Slough Borough Council's Complaints Policy and handle complaints according to the Housing Ombudsman Complaints Handling Code.
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5.5	Landlords are responsible for ensuring that any third parties handle complaints in line with the Code.	Yes	Section 1.1.2 of the Corporate Complaints Policy states: 1.1.2 All third parties who deliver Council services will be expected to adhere to this policy and use Slough Borough Council's two-stage complaints process. The Council is responsible for ensuring that any third parties or external contractors delivering Council services adhere to this policy and handle complaints in line with the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman's and Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Codes, where applicable.	Slough Borough Council's Corporate complaints policy was updated and is due to be approved by Cabinet on 20th July 2026. The revised policy reflects the feedback provided by the Housing Ombudsman in the letter dated 31 March 2026 and has now been amended to be compliant with the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code. This is a corporate policy, which covers all services of the council, including housing. This policy is compliant with the Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code. Housing Repairs are carried out by CARDO, who use the Slough Borough Council's Complaints Policy and handle complaints according to the Housing Ombudsman Complaints Handling Code. The Council is responsible for ensuring that CARDO adhere to this
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				policy and the Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code.
5.6	When a complaint is logged at Stage 1 or escalated to Stage 2, landlords must set out their understanding of the complaint and the outcomes the resident is seeking. The Code will refer to this as “the complaint definition”. If any aspect of the complaint is unclear, the resident must be asked for clarification.	Yes	Section 6 of the Corporate Complaints Policy States: Council officers may contact a complainant to clarify aspects of a complaint. This can include the following: • Clarify with the individual any aspects of the complaint they are unclear about; Section 7.1. of the Corporate Complaints Policy states: Acknowledgements at Stage 1 will confirm the Council’s understanding of the complaint, the outcomes the complainant is seeking, and which aspects are and are not within the Council’s responsibility. Section 7.2. of the Corporate Complaints Policy States:	Slough Borough Council’s Corporate complaints policy was updated and is due to be approved by Cabinet on 20th July 2026. The revised policy reflects the feedback provided by the Housing Ombudsman in the letter dated 31 March 2026 and has now been amended to be compliant with the Housing Ombudsman’s Complaint Handling Code. This is a corporate policy, which covers all services of the council, including housing. This policy is compliant with the Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code.

			Acknowledgements at Stage 2 will confirm the Council's understanding of the complaint, the outcomes the complainant is seeking, and which aspects are and are not within the Council's responsibility.	
5.7	When a complaint is acknowledged at either stage, landlords must be clear which aspects of the complaint they are, and are not, responsible for and clarify any areas where this is not clear.	Yes	Section 7.1 of the policy states: Acknowledgements at Stage 1 will confirm the Council's understanding of the complaint, the outcomes the complainant is seeking, and which aspects are and are not within the Council's responsibility. Stage 7.2. of the policy states: Acknowledgements at Stage 2 will confirm the Council's understanding of the complaint, the outcomes the complainant is seeking, and which aspects are and are not within the Council's responsibility.	Slough Borough Council's Corporate complaints policy was updated and is due to be approved by Cabinet on 20th July 2026. The revised policy reflects the feedback provided by the Housing Ombudsman in the letter dated 31 March 2026 and has now been amended to be compliant with the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code. This is a corporate policy, which covers all services of the council, including housing. This policy is compliant with the Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code.

5.8	At each stage of the complaints process, complaint handlers must: - 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	Section 6 of the Corporate Complaints Policy states: Council officers may contact a complainant to clarify aspects of a complaint. This can include the following: - Clarify with the individual any aspects of the complaint they are unclear about; - Give the individual an opportunity to clearly set out their position; - Consider any concerns about actual or perceived conflicts of interest in relation to who investigates a complaint; Section 7 of the Corporate Complaints Policy states: The council, when handling complaints, will deal with complaints on their own merit,	Slough Borough Council's Corporate complaints policy was updated and is due to be approved by Cabinet on 20th July 2026. The revised policy reflects the feedback provided by the Housing Ombudsman in the letter dated 31 March 2026 and has now been amended to be compliant with the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code. This is a corporate policy, which covers all services of the council, including housing. This policy is compliant with the Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code.

			act independently and have an open mind.	
5.9	Where a response to a complaint will fall outside the timescales set out in this Code, the landlord must agree with the resident suitable intervals for keeping them informed about their complaint.	Yes	Section 7.1 of the Corporate Complaints Policy states: Where a complaint is complex or requires input from more than one service area, the Council may need additional time to provide a full response. In such cases, a holding response will be issued before the applicable ten-working-day deadline, explaining the reason for the delay and confirming a revised response date. The Council will agree suitable intervals at which to keep the complainant informed of progress and will normally issue a full Stage 1 response no later than a further ten working days.	Slough Borough Council's Corporate complaints policy was updated and is due to be approved by Cabinet on 20th July 2026. The revised policy reflects the feedback provided by the Housing Ombudsman in the letter dated 31 March 2026 and has now been amended to be compliant with the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code. This is a corporate policy, which covers all services of the council, including housing. This policy is compliant with the Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code.

5.10	Landlords must make reasonable adjustments for residents where appropriate under the Equality Act 2010. Landlords must keep a record of any reasonable adjustments agreed, as well as a record of any disabilities a resident has disclosed. Any agreed reasonable adjustments must be kept under active review.	Yes, but further focus required	Section 6 of the Corporate Complaints Policy states: Reasonable adjustments will be made where required to enable individuals to access and progress a complaint, including support to make a complaint verbally, accepting complaints through a representative or advocate, providing information in alternative languages or formats, and making adjustments to communication methods or timescales where appropriate. The Council will keep a record of any reasonable adjustments agreed and a record of any disabilities disclosed by residents.	Slough Borough Council's Corporate complaints policy was updated and is due to be approved by Cabinet on 20th July 2026. The revised policy reflects the feedback provided by the Housing Ombudsman in the letter dated 31 March 2026 and has now been amended to be compliant with the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code. The Resident Complaints Scrutiny Panel has recently identified a lack of consistent recording and acknowledgement of resident vulnerabilities and reasonable adjustments. The Council's policy is compliant with this provision. Work is underway to ensure consistent recording of vulnerabilities and reasonable adjustments within Intalex, with integration to NEC tenancy data. This action will be completed by January 2027,
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				with compliance reviewed quarterly.
5.11	3.1 Landlords must not refuse to escalate a complaint through all stages of the complaints procedure unless they have 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	Section 7.2.of the Corporate Complaints Policy states: A Stage 2 review can be requested where the complainant remains dissatisfied with the outcome at Stage 1. The Council will not refuse an escalation of a complaint unless it has valid reasons to do so. Acknowledgements at Stage 2 will confirm the Council's understanding of the complaint, the outcomes the complainant is seeking, and which aspects are and are not within the Council's responsibility.	Slough Borough Council's Corporate complaints policy was updated and approved by Cabinet on 20th July 2026. The revised policy reflects the feedback provided by the Housing Ombudsman in the letter dated 31 March 2026 and has now been amended to be compliant with the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code. It has recently been identified by the Resident Complaints Resident Scrutiny Panel that there is a lack of recording and acknowledging vulnerabilities and reasonable adjustments of residents, The Council is currently exploring how to record vulnerabilities of complainants on Intellex and match this to the data from tenancy audits on NEC.

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	The new Policy states Recording, Data and Oversight The Council will maintain accurate records of all complaints, monitor performance against Complaint Handling Code timescales, and report complaint trends, themes and learning to senior management and elected members. Complaint data will be actively used to identify service risks, drive organisational learning, and inform continuous service improvement.	Records of complaint handling is recorded on Intellex, the Council's Complaint Handling System. In practice, all complaints , related actions, outcomes, learnings, documents and correspondence are logged and recorded on Intellex.
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	Section 8 of the Corporate Complaints Policy states: Where a complaint is upheld, the Council will acknowledge this and set out the actions it has already taken or intends to take to put things right. Section 8 of the Corporate Complaints Policy states: Remedies will be fair, reasonable and proportionate, taking account of the individual	Slough Borough Council's Corporate Complaints Policy and Housing Financial Remedies Policy and Compensation Policy both acknowledge that remedies should be used to put things right for the complainant. Slough Borough Council's Corporate complaints policy was updated and is due to

		circumstances and relevant Ombudsman guidance. Remedies can be provided at any stage of the complaints process without the need for escalation. Section 7 of the Housing Financial Remedies Policy states: 7. Process & Timescales The offer of a financial remedy must be reviewed and reassessed as cases progress to ensure any remedy remain proportionate to the level of impact. Reassessment should take place where earlier consideration underestimated the severity or duration of the issue and should not be limited to escalation at Stage 2. Stage 1 complaints will be responded to within 10 working days, and Stage 2 complaints within 20 working days. Where a financial remedy is offered, payment will normally be made within 28 days. To avoid	be approved by Cabinet on 20th July 2026. The revised policy reflects the feedback provided by the Housing Ombudsman in the letter dated 31 March 2026 and has now been amended to be compliant with the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code Slough Borough Council's Housing Financial Remedies Policy is due to be approved by Cabinet in July 2026 and was written to be compliant with the Housing Ombudsman guidance and Complaint Handling Code.
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			unnecessary delay, the Council may issue lower-value payments without requiring formal signed acceptance from the individual.	
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	Management of unreasonable customer behaviour Policy was reviewed in March 2025. Management of unreasonable customer behaviour Section 5.1 of the Corporate Complaints Policy States: 5.1. Managing Unreasonable Complaints The Council will ensure all complaints are handled fairly and proportionately. In a small number of cases, the way a complaint is pursued may affect the Council's ability to progress it effectively. In these instances, the Council may treat the matter as an unreasonable complaint. This relates to the complaint and how it is pursued, not the individual.	Slough Borough Council has a Management of Customer Behaviour Policy, which all housing staff must adhere to. In addition to this section 5.1 of the Corporate Complaints Policy details what is classed as unreasonable behaviour.

			A complaint may be considered unreasonable where there is: • disproportionate or unclear demands; • persistent contact about the same issue without new information; • abusive or inappropriate language; • excessive or repetitive contact; • multiple issues raised in a way that prevents effective investigation. Before taking action, the Council will normally explain its concerns and give the individual an opportunity to modify their approach.	
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	Management of unreasonable customer behaviour Policy was reviewed in March 2025. Management of unreasonable customer behaviour	Slough Borough Council has a Management of Customer Behaviour Policy, which all housing staff must adhere to.

Section 6: Complaints Stages

Stage 1

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
6.1	Landlords must have processes in place to consider which complaints can be responded to as early as possible, and which require further investigation. Landlords must consider factors such as the complexity of the complaint and whether the resident is vulnerable or at risk. Most stage 1 complaints can be resolved promptly, and an explanation, apology or resolution provided to the resident.	Yes	The policy encourages early resolution and the majority of complaints are resolved at Stage 1. There is evidence that reviews of complaints happens operationally in weekly complaints taskforce meetings,	There is evidence that this happens operationally in weekly complaints taskforce meetings, The Council currently does not have a formalised early-resolution triage process. A documented triage process will be implemented to assess complexity, risk and vulnerability at receipt, by January 2027.
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	Section 7.1 of the Corporate Complaints Policy States: Complaints will be acknowledged within five working days of receipt. Acknowledgements at Stage 1 will confirm the Council's understanding of the complaint, the outcomes the complainant is	The Corporate Complaints Policy was reviewed in July 2026. It includes this timescale and complaints training has ensured that housing staff are aware that a stage 1 complaints must be acknowledged within 5 working days. Staff are aware of this and meet this deadline.

			seeking, and which aspects are and are not within the Council's responsibility.	
6.3	Landlords must issue a full response to stage 1 complaints <u>within 10 working days</u> of the complaint being acknowledged.	Yes, but continued area of focus	Section 7.1 of the Corporate Complaints Policy States: 7.1 Stage 1 – Initial Investigation A full written response will normally be provided within ten working days of acknowledgement	T While the policy is compliant with the Code timescales, operational performance has not always been consistently achieved. A performance improvement plan is in place, with weekly monitoring, escalation routes, and revised holding response templates. Compliance will be reviewed quarterly.
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	Section 7.1 of the Corporate Complaints Policy States: Where a complaint is complex or requires input from more than one service area, the Council may need additional time to provide a full response. In such cases, a holding response will be issued before the applicable	Corporate complaints policy was updated and is due to be approved by Cabinet on 20 th July 2026. The revised policy reflects the feedback provided by the Housing Ombudsman in the letter dated 31 March 2026 and has now been amended to be compliant with the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code.

			ten-working-day deadline, explaining the reason for the delay and confirming a revised response date. The Council will agree suitable intervals at which to keep the complainant informed of progress and will normally issue a full Stage 1 response no later than a further ten working days. Any Stage 1 extension will be applied only where there is good reason.	This is a corporate policy, which covers all services of the council, including housing. This policy is compliant with the Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code. At the Weekly Housing Complaints Task Force meetings, complaints which are at risk of receiving an overdue response are discussed to ensure that holding responses are sent out, which explain why an extension is needed to issue a stage 1 response. Overdue cases are then continuously monitored at these meetings. This ensures that residents are kept informed and resolutions are put in place as quickly as possible.
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, but to be an area of focus	The Corporate Complaints Policy States: When the Council informs the resident of an extension to the Stage 1 response, the Council	Although the policy has been updated, the provision of Ombudsman contact details in extension letters is not yet consistently

			will provide the resident with the details of the Ombudsman.	embedded in practice. Staff handling complaints will be reminded of this and holding response templates will be updated.
6.6	A complaint response must be provided to the resident when the answer to the complaint is known, not when the outstanding actions required to address the issue are completed. Outstanding actions must still be tracked and actioned promptly with appropriate updates provided to the resident.	Yes	Section 7.1. of the Corporate Complaints Policy states: Responses will be issued when the Council has carefully considered all the information and evidence and reached a view on the complaint, even where not all identified actions have been completed. Where actions remain outstanding, the response will clearly set these out and provide appropriate updates on progress.	Slough Borough Council's Corporate complaints policy was updated and approved by Cabinet on 20 th July 2026. The revised policy reflects the feedback provided by the Housing Ombudsman in the letter dated 31 March 2026 and has now been amended to be compliant with the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code. This is a corporate policy, which covers all services of the council, including housing. This policy is compliant with the Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code.

6.7	Landlords must address all points raised in the complaint definition and provide clear reasons for any decisions, referencing the relevant policy, law and good practice where appropriate.	Yes	Stage 7.1 of the Corporate Complaints policy states: The Stage 1 response will address all points raised in the complaint and set out in clear, plain language: • The complaint stage; • The Council's understanding of the complaint • The decision on the complaint • The reason for any decision 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 stage 2 of the complaints process if the individual is	The revised policy reflects the feedback provided by the Housing Ombudsman in the letter dated 31 March 2026 and has now been amended to be compliant with the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code.
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			not satisfied with the response.	
6.8	Where residents raise additional complaints during the investigation, these must be incorporated into the stage 1 response if they are related and the stage 1 response has not been issued. Where the stage 1 response has been issued, the new issues are unrelated to the issues already being investigated or it would unreasonably delay the response, the new issues must be logged as a new complaint.	Yes	Section 7.1 of the Corporate Complaints policy states: Where additional related issues are raised during the Stage 1 investigation, the Council will confirm whether these issues can be reasonably addressed as part of the existing complaint, or whether they need to be logged separately. This will be explained clearly to the complainant.	The revised policy reflects the feedback provided by the Housing Ombudsman in the letter dated 31 March 2026 and has now been amended to be compliant with the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code.
6.9	Landlords must confirm the following in writing to the resident at the completion of stage 1 in clear, plain language: a. the complaint stage; b. the complaint definition; c. the decision on the complaint; d. the reasons for any decisions made; e. the details of any remedy offered to put things right; f. details of any outstanding actions; and	Yes	Section 7.1 of the Corporate Complaints policy states: Acknowledgements at Stage 1 will confirm the Council's understanding of the complaint, the outcomes the complainant is seeking, and which aspects are and are not within the Council's responsibility. The Stage 1 response will address all points raised in the	. The revised policy reflects the feedback provided by the Housing Ombudsman in the letter dated 31 March 2026 and has now been amended to be compliant with the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code.

	g. details of how to escalate the matter to stage 2 if the individual is not satisfied with the response.		complaint and set out in clear, plain language: • The complaint stage; • The Council's understanding of the complaint • The decision on the complaint • The reason for any decision 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 stage 2 of the complaints process 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	If all or part of the complaint is not resolved to the resident's satisfaction at stage 1, it must be progressed to stage 2 of the landlord's procedure. Stage 2 is the landlord's final response.	Yes	Section 7.1. of the Corporate Complaints Policy states: Where all or part of the complaint remains unresolved at Stage 1, and dissatisfaction continues, the complaint will progress to Stage 2 upon request. Section 7.3 of the Corporate Complaints Policy states: A Stage 2 response represents the Council's final response under the Corporate Complaints Procedure and once concluded, the complaint will be considered exhausted.	The revised policy reflects the feedback provided by the Housing Ombudsman in the letter dated 31 March 2026 and has now been amended to be compliant with the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code.
6.11	Requests for stage 2 must be acknowledged, defined and logged at stage 2 of the complaints procedure within five working days of the escalation request being received.	Yes	Section 7.2. of the policy states: Stage 2 complaints will normally be acknowledged within five	

			working days of receipt. Acknowledgements at Stage 2 will confirm the Council's understanding of the complaint, the outcomes the complainant is seeking, and which aspects are and are not within the Council's responsibility.	
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	Section 7.2 of the Corporate Complaints Policy States: Stage 2 provides an independent review of the Stage 1 response and is intended to consider whether the complaint was handled appropriately and whether the outcome was reasonable and proportionate. Residents will not be required to explain their reasons for requesting a stage 2 consideration and the Landlord will make reasonable efforts to understand why a resident remains unhappy as part of its stage 2 response.	Slough Borough Council's Corporate Complaints Policy does not specify that residents must not be required to explain their reasons for requesting a stage 2 consideration.

			A Stage 2 review can be requested where the complainant remains dissatisfied with the outcome at Stage 1. The Council will not refuse an escalation of a complaint unless it has valid reasons to do so. Stage 2 complaints will normally be acknowledged within five working days of receipt. Acknowledgements at Stage 2 will confirm the Council's understanding of the complaint, the outcomes the complainant is seeking, and which aspects are and are not within the Council's responsibility.	
6.13	The person considering the complaint at stage 2 must not be the same person that considered the complaint at stage 1.	Yes	Section 7.2 of the Corporate Complaints Policy States: The person considering the complaint at Stage 2 will not be the same person who considered the complaint at Stage 1.	. The revised policy reflects the feedback provided by the Housing Ombudsman in the letter dated 31 March 2026 and has now been amended to be compliant with the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code. .

6.14	Landlords must issue a final response to the stage 2 <u>within 20 working days</u> of the complaint being acknowledged.	Yes, but area of focus	Section 7.2 of the Corporate Complaints Policy States: A Stage 2 response will normally be issued within twenty working days of acknowledgement.	The Policy includes this timescale and complaints training has ensured that housing staff are aware that a stage 2 response must be issued within 20 working days of acknowledgement. . While the policy is compliant with the Code timescales, operational performance has not been consistently achieved. A performance improvement plan is in place, with weekly monitoring, escalation routes, and revised holding response templates. Compliance will be reviewed quarterly.
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	Section 6.15 of the Corporate Complaints policy states: Where it is not possible to meet the twenty-working-day response timescale, the Council will inform the complainant of the delay, clearly explain the reasons, and provide a revised response date.	The revised policy reflects the feedback provided by the Housing Ombudsman in the letter dated 31 March 2026 and has now been amended to be compliant with the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code.

			The Council will normally issue its Stage 2 response no later than a further twenty working days.	At the Weekly Housing Complaints Task Force meetings, complaints which are at risk of receiving an overdue response are discussed to ensure that holding responses are sent out, which explain why an extension is needed to issue a stage 2 response. Overdue cases are then continuously monitored at these meetings. This ensures that residents are kept informed and resolutions are put in place as quickly as possible.
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, but area of focus	of the Policy States: When the Council informs the resident of an extension to the Stage 2 response, the Council will provide the resident with the details of the Ombudsman.	Although the policy has been updated, the provision of Ombudsman contact details in extension letters is not yet consistently embedded in practice. Holding response templates will be updated and compliance monitored from 1 January 2027.

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	Section 7.2 of the Policy States: Responses will be issued when the Council has reached its final position on the complaint, even if not all identified actions have been completed. Where actions remain outstanding, the response will clearly explain what these are and how the complainant will be kept updated.	The revised policy reflects the feedback provided by the Housing Ombudsman in the letter dated 31 March 2026 and has now been amended to be compliant with the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code.
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	Section 7.2 of the Corporate Complaints Policy States: The Stage 2 response address all points raised and set out in clear, plain language: • The complaint stage; • The Council's understanding of the complaint; • The decision on the complaint;	. The revised policy reflects the feedback provided by the Housing Ombudsman in the letter dated 31 March 2026 and has now been amended to be compliant with the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code.

			• 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 if the individual remains dissatisfied.	
6.19	Landlords must confirm the following in writing to the resident at the completion of stage 2 in clear, plain language: a. the complaint stage; b. the complaint definition; c. the decision on the complaint; d. the reasons for any decisions made; e. the details of any remedy offered to put things right; f. details of any outstanding actions; and g. details of how to escalate the matter to the Ombudsman Service if the individual remains dissatisfied.	Yes	Section 7.2 of the Corporate Complaints Policy States: The Stage 2 response will set out in clear, plain language: • The complaint stage; • The Council's understanding of the complaint; • The decision on the complaint; • The reasons for any decisions made; • The details of any remedy offered to put things right;	Slough Borough Council's The revised policy reflects the feedback provided by the Housing Ombudsman in the letter dated 31 March 2026 and has now been amended to be compliant with the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code.

			- Details of any outstanding actions; and - Details of how to escalate the matter to the Ombudsman if the individual remains dissatisfied.	
6.20	Stage 2 is the landlord's final response and must involve all suitable staff members needed to issue such a response.	Yes	Section 7.2 of the Corporate Complaints Policy states: The person considering the complaint at Stage 2 will not be the same person who considered the complaint at Stage 1. Stage 2 will include all suitable staff members needed to issue a response. Section 7.3 of the Corporate Complaints Policy states: A Stage 2 response represents the Council's final response under the Corporate Complaints Procedure and once concluded, the complaint will be considered exhausted	The revised policies reflect the feedback provided by the Housing Ombudsman in the letter dated 31 March 2026 and have now been amended to be compliant with the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code.

Section 7: Putting things right

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
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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: • Apologising; • Acknowledging where things have gone wrong; • Providing an explanation, assistance or reasons; • Taking action if there has been delay; • Reconsidering or changing a decision; • Amending a record or adding a correction or addendum; • Providing a financial remedy; • Changing policies, procedures or practices.	Yes	Section 8 of the Corporate Complaints Policy States: Where a complaint is upheld, the Council will acknowledge this and set out the actions it has already taken or intends to take to put things right. Remedies are intended to acknowledge any fault, address the impact on the complainant, and prevent recurrence. Remedies can be provided at any stage of the complaints process without the need for escalation. Remedies may include: • a clear explanation and apology. • an acknowledgement where things have gone wrong. • providing an explanation, assistance or reasons. • taking action to resolve the outstanding issue. • reconsidering or changing a decision.	. The revised policies reflect the feedback provided by the Housing Ombudsman in the letter dated 31 March 2026 and have now been amended to be compliant with the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code.
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			•amending a record or adding a correction or addendum. •providing a financial remedy. changing policies, procedures or practices	
7.2	Any remedy offered must reflect the impact on the resident as a result of any fault identified.	Yes	Section 8 of the Corporate Complaints Policy states: Remedies are intended to acknowledge any fault, address the impact on the complainant, and prevent recurrence.	The revised policy reflects the feedback provided by the Housing Ombudsman in the letter dated 31 March 2026 and has now been amended to be compliant with the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code.
7.3	The remedy offer must clearly set out what will happen and by when, in agreement with the resident where appropriate. Any remedy proposed must be followed through to completion.	Yes	Section 8 of the Corporate Complaints Policy states: The remedy offer should clearly set out what will happen and by when, in agreement with the individual if appropriate. Any remedy proposed should be followed through to completion.	. The revised policy reflects the feedback provided by the Housing Ombudsman in the letter dated 31 March 2026 and has now been amended to be compliant with the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code.

7.4	Landlords must take account of the guidance issued by the Ombudsman when deciding on appropriate remedies.	Yes	Section 8 of the Corporate Complaints Policy states: Remedies will be fair, reasonable and proportionate, taking account of the individual circumstances and relevant Ombudsman guidance.	The revised policy reflects the feedback provided by the Housing Ombudsman in the letter dated 31 March 2026 and has now been amended to be compliant with the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code.
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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 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	Annual housing complaints report 2025-26.docx Appendix 1 - Response to Housing Ombudsman's review of complaints policy.docx Appendix 3 – Annual Report on Complaints 2025-26 2026-03-31 - Slough Borough Council - Policy Review Outcome.pdf Complaints Report 2025-26.docx HO 25-26 Oct-April.xlsx Agenda for Cabinet Committee on Thursday, 16th July, 2026, 4.30 pm	An Annual Complaints Report was produced; the HOS self – assessment was an appendix to this report and was taken to Cabinet in July 2026. The minutes of the meeting alongside our report are recorded and available on our website. The link is attached.

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.		Annual housing complaints report 2025-26.docx Local Government Self Assessment (2025 from website) Improvement and Recovery Plan 2025-2026 Agenda for Cabinet Committee on Thursday, 16th July, 2026, 4.30 pm	The Annual Complaints performance and Service Improvement Report is attached alongside the HOS Self-Assessment and Agenda for Cabinet. The Cabinet meeting is recorded and the link to the agenda will allow the meeting to be viewed. Complaints work stream has already been identified in our Improvement and recovery plan which is 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	Not Applicable	Slough Borough Council and its housing services have not had a significant restructure.
8.4	Landlords may be asked to review and update the self-assessment following an Ombudsman investigation.	Yes	Not Applicable	Slough Borough Council will review and update the self-assessment if asked to do so following an Ombudsman investigation.
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	Yes	Not Applicable	Slough Borough Council has not experienced exceptional circumstances that have caused a failure to comply with the Housing Ombudsman Complaint

	publish this on their website Landlords must provide a timescale for returning to compliance with the Code.			Handling Code. If such an instance occurs, Slough Borough Council will inform the Ombudsman, provide information to affected residents, publish this information on its website and provide a timescale for returning to compliance with the Code.
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Section 9: Scrutiny & oversight: continuous learning and improvement

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
9.1	Landlords must look beyond the circumstances of the individual complaint and consider whether service improvements can be made as a result of any learning from the complaint.	Yes	Section 1 of the Corporate Complaints Policy states: The Council is committed to providing high-quality services and welcomes feedback to help us improve. Section 2 of the Corporate Complaints Policy states: 2. Purpose of the Policy The purpose of this policy is to provide a fair; accessible and consistent complaints process and to learn from complaints to improve services. Section 9 of the Corporate Complaints Policy states: The Council seeks to have a positive complaint handling culture and sees complaints as a source of intelligence to identify issues and introduce positive changes in service delivery.	Intelex, the Housing Complaints Handling system, allows officers to record the key learnings from service improvement. Complaints and responses are reviewed and discussed in weekly Housing Complaints Task Force Meetings. From these discussions Lessons Learned on complaints handling and how to prevent similar issues from reoccurring are identified and fed back to housing colleagues.

9.2	A positive complaint handling culture is integral to the effectiveness with which landlords resolve disputes. Landlords must use complaints as a source of intelligence to identify issues and introduce positive changes in service delivery.	Yes	Section 9 of the Corporate Complaints Policy states: The Council seeks to have a positive complaints handling culture and sees complaints as a source of intelligence to identify issues and introduce positive changes in service delivery. Intelex, the Housing Complaints Handling system, allows officers to record the key learnings from service improvement. Complaints and responses are reviewed and discussed in weekly Housing Complaints Task Force Meetings. From these discussions Lessons Learned on complaints handling and how to prevent similar issues from reoccurring are identified and fed back to housing colleagues. Lessons Learned Activity Log.xlsx A new Resident Complaints Scrutiny Panel was set up in June 2026. The panel meets once a week to discuss Housing teams' lessons learned from	. The revised policy reflects the feedback provided by the Housing Ombudsman in the letter dated 31 March 2026 and has now been amended to be compliant with the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code. Housing is working towards developing a more positive complaints handling culture through reviewing complaints and responses in weekly task force meetings and at a Resident Complaints Scrutiny Panel.
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			complaints and reviews complaints and responses to identify further areas of improvement. Complaints Scrutiny Panel TOR.docx Feedback from intro session .docx	
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	Section 9 of the Corporate Complaints Policy states: The Council will publish annual complaints performance and service improvement report and will regularly review its policy and procedures following a self-assessment against both the Housing Ombudsman and Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman Complaint Handling Codes. These will be reported and published to relevant member bodies and may be subject to resident review by representative groups.	Annual Complaints Reports are sent to cabinet and reports on lessons learned from complaints the Resident Performance Board.

			Annual housing complaints report 2025-26.docx Complaints Report 2025-26.docx Appendix 3 – Annual Report on Complaints 2025-26 Appendix 1 - Response to Housing Ombudsman's review of complaints policy.docx Local Government Self Assessment (2025 from website) HO 25-26 Oct-April.xlsx Annual Complaints Reports are sent to cabinet and reports on lessons learned from complaints the Resident Performance Board. In addition to this, a new Resident Complaints Scrutiny Panel was set up in June 2026. The panel meets once a week to discuss Housing teams' lessons learned from complaints and reviews complaints and	
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			responses to identify further areas of improvement. Complaints Scrutiny Panel TOR.docx	
9.4	Landlords must appoint a suitably senior lead person as accountable for their complaint handling. This person must assess any themes or trends to identify potential systemic issues, serious risks, or policies and procedures that require revision.	yes	The Resident Involvement Manager has been assigned that role within Slough Borough Council. The Housing Complaints Officer sits within the resident involvement team.	This function has moved under this service since July 2026, due to legal advice.
9.5	In addition to this a member of the governing body (or equivalent) must be appointed to have lead responsibility for complaints to support a positive complaint handling culture. This person is referred to as the Member Responsible for Complaints ('the MRC').	Yes	The lead member for housing is the Member Responsible for Housing Complaints. The Leader of the Council is the lead member for governance and has overall responsibility at a political level for complaints handling. Each cabinet member is responsible for ensuring that complaints about service delivery in their relevant portfolio are utilised to support service improvements. Councillor details - Councillor Iftakhar Ahmed	Cllr Ifakhar Ahmed, the lead member for Housing, Homelessness & Communities is the MRC for housing.

9.6	The MRC will be responsible for ensuring the governing body receives regular information on complaints that provides insight on the landlord's complaint handling performance. This person must have access to suitable information and staff to perform this role and report on their findings.	Yes	Monthly meetings are held with the MRC and the Director of Housing. A pack on complaints is produced ahead of each meeting and discussed.	Monthly meetings are held with the MRC and the Director of Housing. A pack on complaints is produced ahead of each meeting and discussed.
9.7	As a minimum, the MRC and the governing body (or equivalent) must receive: a. regular updates on the volume, categories and outcomes of complaints, alongside complaint handling performance; b. regular reviews of issues and trends arising from complaint handling; c. regular updates on the outcomes of the Ombudsman's investigations and progress made in complying with orders related to severe maladministration findings; and d. annual complaints performance and service improvement report.	Yes	Annual housing complaints report 2025-26.docx Complaints Report 2025-26.docx Appendix 3 – Annual Report on Complaints 2025-26 Appendix 1 - Response to Housing Ombudsman's review of complaints policy.docx HO 25-26 Oct-April.xlsx Monthly meetings held with the MRC. A pack giving monthly updates on volumes, categories and outcomes from complaints alongside performance. Top trends and issues are also addressed including information	Monthly meetings are held with the MRC. The annual Complaints Report will be taken to Cabinet in July. The Housing Ombudsman self-assessment was attached as an appendix.

			regarding the ombudsman investigations. An annual complaints report is compiled and sent to cabinet on an annual basis. The Housing Ombudsman self-assessment is attached as an appendix. Complaints Service Improvement plan is incorporated into our Improvement and Recovery plan. Improvement and Recovery Plan 2025-2026	
9.8	Landlords must have a standard objective in relation to complaint handling for all relevant employees or third parties that reflects the need to: a. have a collaborative and co-operative approach towards resolving complaints, working with colleagues across teams and departments; b. take collective responsibility for any shortfalls identified through complaints, rather than blaming others; and c. act within the professional standards for engaging with complaints as set by any relevant professional body.	Yes	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. • 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	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. • Have a collaborative and co-operative approach towards resolving complaints, working with colleagues across teams and departments • Take collective responsibility for any

			• Act within the professional standards for engaging with complaints as set by any relevant professional body.	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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