

Cheshire West & Chester Council

# Council Housing

## Complaints Self-Assessment Form 2024-2025



Cheshire West  
and Chester

## Appendix A: Self-assessment form

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

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

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

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

## Section 1: Definition of a complaint

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
1.2	A complaint must be defined as: <i>'an expression of dissatisfaction, however made, about the standard of service, actions or lack of action by the landlord, its own staff, or those acting on its behalf, affecting a tenant or group of tenants.'</i>	Yes	Policy fully aligns to definition <a href="#">Complaints Policy</a>	
1.3	A tenant does not have to use the word 'complaint' for it to be treated as such. Whenever a tenant 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	Policy is clear that a tenant does not need to use the word 'complaint' for it to be treated as such and it's their decision if the complaint will be raised. The policy also states that complaints submitted by a third party/ representative will be handled in line with the policy <a href="#">Complaints Policy</a>	
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 tenant to the landlord requiring action to be taken to put something right. Service requests are not complaints, but must be	Yes	Policy fully aligns to definition <a href="#">Complaints Policy</a>	

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
	recorded, monitored and reviewed regularly.			
1.5	A complaint must be raised when the tenant expresses dissatisfaction with the response to their service request, even if the handling of the service request remains ongoing. Landlords must not stop their efforts to address the service request if the tenant complains.	Yes	Where a tenant expresses dissatisfaction with a service request, a complaint is raised. This does not affect the handling of the service request which would continue to deliver a resolution.	
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 tenants can complain.	Yes	Where surveys are completed, and a tenant expresses dissatisfaction they are advised how they can make a complaint if they wish.  External partners for example, Kwest who undertake the Tenant Satisfaction Measures are provided with the details of how-to make a complaint so they can share with a tenant if they express, they want to make a complaint. (planned works, informal and formal consultations etc)	

## Section 2: Exclusions

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
2.1	Landlords must accept a complaint unless there is a valid reason not to do so. If landlords decide not to accept a complaint they must be able to evidence their reasoning. Each complaint must be considered on its own merits	Yes	We will consider each complaint on its own merits and consider the individual circumstances. When a complaint is not accepted a record of the explanation given to the tenant is recorded on our housing management system.	
2.2	<p>A complaints policy must set out the circumstances in which a matter will not be considered as a complaint or escalated, and these circumstances must be fair and reasonable to tenants. Acceptable exclusions include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The issue giving rise to the complaint occurred over twelve months ago.</li> <li>• 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.</li> <li>• Matters that have previously been considered under the complaints policy.</li> </ul>	Yes	There will be exceptional situations when a matter will not be considered a complaint or escalated, and examples are set out in the policy, which we believe are fair and reasonable to tenants.	

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
2.3	Landlords must accept complaints referred to them within 12 months of the issue occurring or the tenant 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	Staff dealing with complaints are trained to identify the timeline of the complaint and if outside of this timescale, they are empowered to apply discretion where appropriate on a case-by-case basis.	
2.4	If a landlord decides not to accept a complaint, an explanation must be provided to the tenant 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	If we decide not to accept a complaint, an explanation will be provided to the tenant setting out the reasons why the matter is not suitable for the complaints process and the right to take that decision to the Housing Ombudsman. When a complaint is not accepted a record of the explanation given to the tenant is recorded on our housing management system.	
2.5	Landlords must not take a blanket approach to excluding complaints; they must consider the individual circumstances of each complaint.	Yes	Complaints are considered, on receipt, on an individual basis.	

### Section 3: Accessibility and Awareness

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
3.1	Landlords must make it easy for tenants 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 tenants who may need to access the complaints process.	Yes	The policy has been reviewed by the ForHousing Group Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Service Excellence Group and the Council's Equality and Diversity Team. The application of the Policy will be monitored to understand the impact on tenants ensuring Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion. Using the MHCLG guidance we will signpost tenants who tell us they need help to make a complaint to free advice organisations.	
3.2	Tenants 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	The policy details all ways in which tenants and their representatives can report a complaint. Tenants can raise a complaint with any member of staff or appointed contractors. All staff are aware of the complaints process and will pass a complaint to the Business Support team to record and manage.	
3.3	High volumes of complaints must not be seen as a negative, as they can be	Yes	We have an accessible publicised complaints process.	

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
	indicative of a well-publicised and accessible complaints process. Low complaint volumes are potentially a sign that tenants are unable to complain.		Staff throughout the organisation have been trained to understand that complaints are not to be discouraged and are an opportunity to learn and improve services.	
3.4	Landlords must make their complaint policy available in a clear and accessible format for all tenants. This will detail the two stage process, what will happen at each stage, and the timeframes for responding. The policy must also be published on the landlord's website.	Yes	Policy is publicised on the website and outlines the two-stage process, timescales and what tenants should expect at each complaint stage. <a href="#">Complaints Policy</a>	
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	The policy states we will produce an annual complaints performance and service improvement report. This report is signed off by the Council Housing Management Board and the Cabinet Member for Homes and Planning, and is published in the complaints section of our website. <a href="#">Performance Report</a>	
3.6	Landlords must give tenants the opportunity to have a representative deal with their complaint on their behalf, and to be represented or	Yes	The policy states tenants can authorise a representative to make a complaint and act on their behalf. This could be a	

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
	accompanied at any meeting with the landlord.		friend, partner, relative or someone from an external organisation.	
3.7	Landlords must provide tenants with information on their right to access the Ombudsman service and how the individual can engage with the Ombudsman about their complaint.	Yes	This is publicised on the Councils and ForHousing's websites and all correspondence within the complaint handling process.	

## 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	ForHousing have in place a team with responsibility of complaints management. This includes a staff member who solely handles certain stage 1 complaints, supported by their line manager. An appropriate complaints handler is defined in the policy as located in the team responsible for the service, but who has not been involved in the source of the complaint sufficiently to have a conflict of interest.	
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	All complaint handlers have access to all staff and are empowered to resolve disputes promptly and fairly.	
4.3	Landlords are expected to prioritise complaint handling and a culture of learning from complaints. All relevant staff must be suitably trained in the importance of complaint handling. It is important that complaints are seen as a	Yes	We have embedded a culture which sees complaint handling as a priority and seeks to learn from the outcomes of complaints wherever possible.	

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
	core service and must be resourced to handle complaints effectively			

## 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. Tenants must not be treated differently if they complain.	Yes	There is one complaint policy in place to deal with all complaints covered by this code. Tenants are not treated differently should they complain <a href="#">Complaints Policy</a>	
5.2	The early and local resolution of issues between landlords and tenants 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	There are no additional stages to the complaint process and staff are trained to seek swift early resolution of complaints in agreement with tenants.	
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 policy has a two-stage complaints process	
5.4	Where a landlord's complaint response is handled by a third party (e.g. a contractor or independent adjudicator)	No		No complaints are dealt with by a third party.

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
	at any stage, it must form part of the two stage complaints process set out in this Code. Tenants must not be expected to go through two complaints processes.			
5.5	Landlords are responsible for ensuring that any third parties handle complaints in line with the Code.	No		No third parties handle complaints on our behalf.
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 tenant is seeking. The Code will refer to this as “the complaint definition”. If any aspect of the complaint is unclear, the tenant must be asked for clarification.	Yes	Acknowledgement letters issued to complainants at stage 1 set out our understanding of the complaint. Tenants are not required to explain their reasons for requesting Stage 2. We will make reasonable efforts to understand why a tenant remains unhappy as part of its Stage 2 response.	
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	Where part of a complaint is not the responsibility of ForHousing this would be made clear in the acknowledgement.	
5.8	At each stage of the complaints process, complaint handlers must:	Yes	Complaint handlers are trained to deal with complaints independently and on their own merits after considering all	

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. deal with complaints on their merits, act independently, and have an open mind;</li> <li>b. give the tenant a fair chance to set out their position;</li> <li>c. take measures to address any actual or perceived conflict of interest; and</li> <li>d. consider all relevant information and evidence carefully.</li> </ul>		<p>relevant information. The complaint handler will contact the tenant to give them an opportunity for them to set out their position. Any conflict of interest would be addressed.</p>	
5.9	<p>Where a response to a complaint will fall outside the timescales set out in this Code, the landlord must agree with the tenant suitable intervals for keeping them informed about their complaint.</p>	Yes	<p>Where it is not possible to respond to the complaint within the timescales set out in the code, agreement is reached with the tenant, and this is recorded on the housing management system.</p>	
5.10	<p>Landlords must make reasonable adjustments for tenants 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 tenant has disclosed. Any agreed reasonable adjustments must be kept under active review.</p>	Yes	<p>The policy states we will endeavor to understand and make any reasonable adjustments required for customers in line with Reasonable Adjustment Statement and the Equality Act 2010. Any reasonable adjustment provided will be recorded and kept under active review.</p>	

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
5.11	Landlords must not refuse to escalate a complaint through all stages of the complaints procedure unless it has valid reasons to do so. Landlords must clearly set out these reasons, and they must comply with the provisions set out in section 2 of this Code.	Yes	The policy explains this as repeated complaints which appear to have no substance, or which have already been through and exhausted our complaints handling. Should such circumstances arise, the tenant will receive the reasons in writing.	
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 tenant, correspondence with other parties, and any relevant supporting documentation such as reports or surveys.	Yes	Complaints are recorded in full on our housing management system. This includes details of contact with the complainant and other relevant parties	
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	Staff have been trained to work with tenants to identify a resolution to their complaint. This resolution can be provided at any stage in the complaint process. We would not expect a tenant to have to escalate their complaint to achieve the resolution.	
5.14	Landlords must have policies and procedures in place for managing unacceptable behaviour from tenants and/or their representatives. Landlords must be able to evidence reasons for	Yes	An Unacceptable Behaviour Policy is in place  <a href="#">Unacceptable Behaviour Policy</a>	

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
	putting any restrictions in place and must keep restrictions under regular review.			
5.15	Any restrictions placed on contact due to unacceptable behaviour must be proportionate and demonstrate regard for the provisions of the Equality Act 2010.	Yes	<p>Vulnerabilities are accounted for in any service adjustment and a culture of person-centred practice and decision making is enabled by our strategy framework:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Equity, Diversion and Inclusion strategy</li> <li>• Tenant Voice strategy</li> <li>• Wellbeing strategy</li> </ul> <p>We have a set of clear values that drive our culture, behaviours, and activities. Role modelling these values will support us to achieve our Vision and Missions. Our THRIVE values help remind us of our public service ethos and guide everything we do.</p> <p>Staff undertake mandatory training on the Equality Act 2010 on an ongoing basis.</p>	

## 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 tenant is vulnerable or at risk. Most stage 1 complaints can be resolved promptly, and an explanation, apology or resolution provided to the tenant.	Yes	When a new complaint is received it is triaged and the tenant contacted to discuss the detail of the complaint. At this point those complaints which can be provided with an early response or those which require further investigation are identified.	
6.2	Complaints must be acknowledged, defined and logged at stage 1 of the complaints procedure <b><u>within five working days of the complaint being received.</u></b>	Yes	Complainants are contacted within 5 working days of the complaint being received. This allows details of the complaint definition and preferred resolution to be clarified. An acknowledgement is given confirming these details.	
6.3	Landlords must issue a full response to stage 1 complaints <b><u>within 10 working days</u></b> of the complaint being acknowledged.	Yes	Complaints are responded to within 10 working days of being acknowledged. This is monitored for compliance and reported on weekly. Reports are also provided to the Council Housing	

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
			Management Board, the Complaints Panel (both of which consist of lead councillors and tenant board members) and to senior officers at the Council.	
6.4	Landlords must decide whether an extension to this timescale is needed when considering the complexity of the complaint and then inform the tenant 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 tenant.	Yes	Staff handling complaints have been trained that extensions should be the exception and only where there is a good reason. No complaint will be extended without contact being made with the complainant to explain the reasons.	
6.5	When an organisation informs a tenant about an extension to these timescales, they must be provided with the contact details of the Ombudsman.	Yes	Investigating officers are trained to share the Ombudsman details when extending a complaint timescale.	
6.6	A complaint response must be provided to the tenant 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 tenant.	Yes	Staff handling complaints have been trained that they should provide a response to the complaint as soon as possible, without waiting for the resolution to be delivered, in line with the code. Actions that for part of the resolution of a complaint are monitored and only closed once	

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
			the tenant has confirmed that they are satisfied	
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	Staff handling complaints have been trained to cover all points raised within a complaint and provide a reason for any decisions given. Where appropriate relevant policies, law and good practice are referenced.	
6.8	Where tenants 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	Policy fully aligns to guidance.	
6.9	Landlords must confirm the following in writing to the tenant at the completion of stage 1 in clear, plain language: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. the complaint stage;</li> <li>b. the complaint definition;</li> <li>c. the decision on the complaint;</li> <li>d. the reasons for any decisions made;</li> </ul>	Yes	We use a letter template for the stage 1 response to ensure these details are provided in stage 1 responses	

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
	<p>e. the details of any remedy offered to put things right;</p> <p>f. details of any outstanding actions; and</p> <p>g. details of how to escalate the matter to stage 2 if the individual is not satisfied with the response.</p>			

## **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 tenant'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	Where a tenant expresses that the resolution given at stage 1 is not to their satisfaction, the complaint is escalated to stage 2. These escalations are handled by the Business Support function, recording any reason for refusal and notifying the tenant in line with the 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	Escalations are acknowledged within 5 working days of receipt. Acknowledgement includes definition of the complaint.	
6.12	Tenants must not be required to explain their reasons for requesting a	Yes	An explanation of the reasons why a tenant wishes to escalate	

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
	stage 2 consideration. Landlords are expected to make reasonable efforts to understand why a tenant remains unhappy as part of its stage 2 response.		are not a requirement for escalation. The staff member who is assigned the stage 2 complaint will contact the tenant to discuss and understand the issues as part of the process.	
6.13	The person considering the complaint at stage 2 must not be the same person that considered the complaint at stage 1.	Yes	Stage 2 complaints are handled by a senior manager with no prior involvement in the case	
6.14	Landlords must issue a final response to the stage 2 <b><u>within 20 working days</u></b> of the complaint being acknowledged.	Yes	Stage 2 complaints have a timescale to respond set at 20 working days, in line with the code. The focus is to review whether the stage 1 complaint was fully dealt with in line with the policy and therefore the code. This will provide a review of the complaint to inform learning.	
6.15	Landlords must decide whether an extension to this timescale is needed when considering the complexity of the complaint and then inform the tenant 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 tenant.	Yes	Where a stage 2 complaint is particularly complex and will require an extension, this is discussed with the complainant and an extension agreed. An extension beyond 20 working days would be for exceptional circumstances only.	

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
6.16	When an organisation informs a tenant about an extension to these timescales, they must be provided with the contact details of the Ombudsman.	Yes	Investigating officers are trained to share the Ombudsman details when extending a complaint timescale.	
6.17	A complaint response must be provided to the tenant 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 tenant.	Yes	Staff handling complaints have been trained that they should provide a response to the complaint as soon as possible, without waiting for the resolution to be delivered. Actions that for part of the resolution of a complaint are monitored routinely. The action is only closed once the tenant has confirmed that they are satisfied.	
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	Staff handling complaints have been trained to cover all points raised within a complaint and provide a reason for any decisions given. Where appropriate relevant policies, law and good practice are referenced.	
6.19	Landlords must confirm the following in writing to the tenant at the completion of stage 2 in clear, plain language: a. the complaint stage; b. the complaint definition;	Yes	We use a letter template for the stage 2 responses to ensure these details are provided in the response.	

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
	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.			
6.20	Stage 2 is the landlord's final response and must involve all suitable staff members needed to issue such a response.	Yes	On receipt of a stage 2 complaint the complaint handler will coordinate input with appropriate staff members to provide a comprehensive complaint response and resolve the issues.	

## Section 7: Putting things right

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
7.1	Where something has gone wrong a landlord must acknowledge this and set out the actions it has already taken, or intends to take, to put things right. These can include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Apologising;</li> </ul>	Yes	Stage1 & 2 responses always set out actions which have been taken or will be taken to resolve the issue. Where something has gone wrong this will be acknowledged in the response along with an apology.	

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Acknowledging where things have gone wrong;</li> <li>• Providing an explanation, assistance or reasons;</li> <li>• Taking action if there has been delay;</li> <li>• Reconsidering or changing a decision;</li> <li>• Amending a record or adding a correction or addendum;</li> <li>• Providing a financial remedy;</li> <li>• Changing policies, procedures or practices.</li> </ul>			
7.2	Any remedy offered must reflect the impact on the tenant as a result of any fault identified.	Yes	The remedy offered in the resolution will consider the impact the fault has had on the complainant. The aim of the remedy is to return the tenant to the position they would have been in had the service failure not occurred.	
7.3	The remedy offer must clearly set out what will happen and by when, in agreement with the tenant where appropriate. Any remedy proposed must be followed through to completion.	Yes	Stage 1 & 2 responses set out the remedy and the timescale in which this will happen. Actions following complaints are monitored to completion.	
7.4	Landlords must take account of the guidance issued by the Ombudsman when deciding on appropriate remedies.	Yes	When deciding on a remedy the Housing Ombudsman guidance will be considered.	

## Section 8: Self-assessment, reporting and compliance

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
8.1	<p>Landlords must produce an annual complaints performance and service improvement report for scrutiny and challenge, which must include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. the annual self-assessment against this Code to ensure their complaint handling policy remains in line with its requirements.</li> <li>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;</li> <li>c. any findings of non-compliance with this Code by the Ombudsman;</li> <li>d. the service improvements made as a result of the learning from complaints;</li> <li>e. any annual report about the landlord's performance from the Ombudsman; and</li> <li>f. any other relevant reports or publications produced by the</li> </ul>	Yes	Report will be produced including points as required by the code.	

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
	Ombudsman in relation to the work of the landlord.			
8.2	The annual complaints performance and service improvement report must be reported to the landlord's governing body (or equivalent) and published on the on the section of its website relating to complaints. The governing body's response to the report must be published alongside this.	Yes	This report will be presented to the Council who commission the services, the Complaints Panel and the Council Housing Management Board both of which have councillors and tenants on them. This report will be signed off by the Cabinet Member for Homes and Planning who is also chair of the Council Housing Management Board.	
8.3	Landlords must also carry out a self-assessment following a significant restructure, merger and/or change in procedures.	Yes	A self-assessment would be carried out following any of these circumstances taking place.	
8.4	Landlords may be asked to review and update the self-assessment following an Ombudsman investigation.	Yes	If requested a review will be carried out	
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 tenants who may be affected, and publish this on their website Landlords	Yes	If such circumstances were to occur these actions would be taken.	

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
	must provide a timescale for returning to compliance with the Code.			

## 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	<p>As part of each complaint investigation, consideration is given to any improvements which can be made as a result. Additionally, the outcome of each complaint is recorded to allow trends and themes to be identified which is used to inform improvements.</p> <p>The Complaints Panel made up of Tenant Board Members, representatives from the Council and ForHousing review a selected sample of closed and current cases on a quarterly basis, and this forms part of their brief, and any improvements identified are reported to the Council Housing Management Board. In addition to the complaint sample undertaken by the Complaints Panel, an</p>	

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
			<p>Exceptions Report is also provided to the Panel which provides further detail on areas such as: complaint themes, details of complaints for individual service areas so that both the Panel and the Council Housing Management Board can recommend further service improvement where deemed required.</p>	
9.2	<p>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.</p>	Yes	<p>The outcomes of complaints are used as a key source of intelligence for improving services. Where the outcome of a complaint identifies an improvement, implementation of this is monitored via a Business Improvement Plan.</p> <p>All positive changes are reported to the Council Housing Management Board and the Complaints Panel as part of the quarterly report.</p>	
9.3	<p>Accountability and transparency are also integral to a positive complaint handling culture. Landlords must report back on wider learning and improvements from complaints to</p>	Yes	<p>The outcomes of a sample of complaints are reported to the Complaint Panel where they are reviewed and where appropriate challenged by tenant panel</p>	

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
	stakeholders, such as tenants' panels, staff and relevant committees.		members. Appropriate Service Managers attend the panel to assist in providing context. Learning from complaints forms the basis of 'You Said, We Did' which is published quarterly on the ForHousing website. Also a number of examples are featured in the <a href="#">TTC Annual Report 2024-25</a>	
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	A Senior Manager is responsible for complaint handling.	
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 Chair of the Council Housing Management Board who is also the Cabinet Member for Homes and Planning is the Member Responsible for Complaints.	
9.6	The MRC will be responsible for ensuring the governing body receives regular information on complaints that provides insight on the landlord's	Yes	A Complaint Handling Summary Report is provided to the Council Housing Management Board and	

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
	complaint handling performance. This person must have access to suitable information and staff to perform this role and report on their findings.		the Complaints Panel on a quarterly basis	
9.7	<p>As a minimum, the MRC and the governing body (or equivalent) must receive:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. regular updates on the volume, categories and outcomes of complaints, alongside complaint handling performance;</li> <li>b. regular reviews of issues and trends arising from complaint handling;</li> <li>c. regular updates on the outcomes of the Ombudsman’s investigations and progress made in complying with orders related to severe maladministration findings; and</li> <li>d. annual complaints performance and service improvement report.</li> </ul>	Yes	As above a Complaint Handling Summary Report is provided to the Council Housing Management Board and the Complaints Panel that covers all the opposite requirements.	
9.8	<p>Landlords must have a standard objective in relation to complaint handling for all relevant employees or third parties that reflects the need to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. have a collaborative and co-operative approach towards resolving complaints, working with colleagues across teams and departments;</li> </ul>	Yes	Every employee has a “behavioural objective” based on the ForHousing LIVEIT Behavioural Framework. The framework has our values at its centre. It outlines the core behaviours which define ‘how’ we approach our work. These sit	

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
	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.		alongside 'what' we do, as outlined in each of our role profiles and service plans. By demonstrating these behaviours, colleagues will shape our culture along with HEART, our customer service commitment. All this contributes to our culture and ensures we meet the complaint handling objectives as described.	

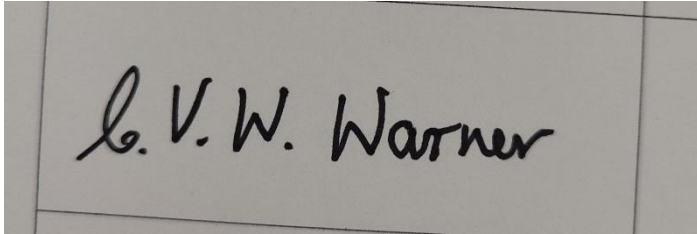
### Statement from the Council Housing Management Board

As a Board, we are passionate about putting the needs of our tenants at the heart of everything we do, and we want the services we provide to our tenants to be responsive to their needs.

We want to ensure that wherever possible we get things right first time however, we recognise that sometimes we will get things wrong, and we want tenants to tell us when we haven't performed as well as we should have. This year (2024-25) has been particularly challenging as we have not always been able to respond to all complaints within the Code's timelines due to the high volume of complaints received however, the complainant has always been kept informed of any delay. To address this going forward, the Board have approved additional staff resources which will not only help ensure that all complaints are responded to within the Code's timeline but will also enable us to strengthen our ability to identify patterns, predict emerging issues, and implement preventative measures. We are keen to use the complaints process to learn from our mistakes and make improvements to the services we provide, so that going forward our tenants can receive services that continually improve. This annual report details the lessons learnt and our Together with Tenants Charter Annual Report also features examples of where we have learnt from the comments we have received from our tenants.

We want to ensure that our tenants receive the best housing management services that meet their housing needs and allow our tenants to live in good quality housing in safe and secure communities.

**Sign off by Chair of the Council Housing Management Board**

A photograph of a handwritten signature in black ink on a light-colored document. The signature reads "C. V. W. Warner". The document has some faint lines, possibly from a table or form.

Councillor Christine Warner

**Chair of the Council Housing Management Board and  
Cabinet Member for Homes and Planning.**