

Hillingdon Council Self-Assessment Form: Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code – Completed March 2025

Section 1: Definition of a complaint

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
1.2	A complaint must be defined as: <i>‘an expression of dissatisfaction, however made, about the standard of service, actions or lack of action by the landlord, its own staff, or those acting on its behalf, affecting a resident or group of residents.’</i>	Yes	The Corporate Complaints Procedure can be downloaded from this page Complaints - Hillingdon Council This definition is included in Section 1.	This precise wording is used in Hillingdon Council's Corporate Complaints Policy and Procedure.
1.3	A resident does not have to use the word 'complaint' for it to be treated as such. Whenever a resident expresses dissatisfaction landlords must give them the choice to make complaint. A complaint that is submitted via a third party or representative must be handled in line with the landlord's complaints policy.	Yes	Presentations were delivered virtually to all staff involved in the handling of complaints that the word "complaint" did not need to be used for us to progress by way of a complaint but where dissatisfaction is expressed it needs to be brought to the attention of the complaint team for advice. Complaint handling Masterclasses are delivered four times a year for all staff that handle complaints.	
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	Yes	The definition of a Service Request has been included in the Council's Corporate complaints procedure. They are logged, monitored and processed in the same way as complaints and Officers in the	The Council makes a distinction between a service request and a complaint.

	something right. Service requests are not complaints, but must be recorded, monitored and reviewed regularly.		complaints team have oversight on whether a complaint has been responded to or not. We keep records of Service Requests submitted.	
1.5	A complaint must be raised when the resident expresses dissatisfaction with the response to their service request, even if the handling of the service request remains ongoing. Landlords must not stop their efforts to address the service request if the resident complains.	Yes	This is part of the Council's Corporate complaints procedure which can be accessed at www.hillingdon.gov.uk/complaints	
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	We will advise someone responding to a survey where and how they can submit a complaint.	The Council recognises that survey responses may contain a 'complaint'. We ensure that appropriate signposting to the complaints service takes place, and we raise awareness of how to complain while conducting surveys.

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	This is included in the Council's Corporate complaints procedure in which we set out what complaints we can and cannot progress and this is also set out on the complaint web page: www.hillingdon.gov.uk/complaints	The Policy and Procedure includes the following text: "If we consider that a complainant is unreasonable or unreasonably persistent, we will refer the matter to a senior manager, who will consider whether further investigation of the complaint will be carried out."
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	This is included in the Corporate complaints procedure and contained within the complaint page: www.hillingdon.gov.uk/complaints	The Complaints Policy includes the following text: "We will not deal with issues through the complaint procedure where a claim has been made in a court such as a disrepair claim"

2.3	Landlords must accept complaints referred to them within 12 months of the issue occurring or the resident becoming aware of the issue, unless they are excluded on other grounds. Landlords must consider whether to apply discretion to accept complaints made outside this time limit where there are good reasons to do so.	Yes	This is contained within the Corporate complaints procedure which can be found on the following web page: www.hillingdon.gov.uk/complaints	<i>It states within our policy that "Anyone who uses our services and is dissatisfied with the standard of service we have provided or our lack of action. The Council will also accept complaints by an advocate on behalf of a resident, with appropriate consent. However, any complaint should be made within 12 months of the issue/incident complained of."</i>
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	Included within the Corporate complaint's procedure which can be found on the following web page: www.hillingdon.gov.uk/complaints	In practice a letter is sent if a complaint is not accepted and the policy states <i>"If we do not intend to progress your complaint, we will inform you of this in writing, tell you why we will do this and give you the contact details of the Ombudsman to whom you may escalate your complaint to for independent review."</i>
2.5	Landlords must not take a blanket approach to excluding complaints; they must consider the individual circumstances of each complaint.	Yes	Each complaint received is considered on its own merit	

Section 3: Accessibility and Awareness

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
3.1	Landlords must make it easy for residents to complain by providing different channels through which they can make a complaint. Landlords must consider their duties under the Equality Act 2010 and anticipate the needs and reasonable adjustments of residents who may need to access the complaints process.	Yes	This is set out within the Corporate complaints procedure which can be found on the following web page: www.hillingdon.gov.uk/complaints	Complaints can be made in person, by telephone, in writing, via our website or email. In addition, the policy document also states that “ <i>If you need an adjustment to be made, please call the complaint team.</i> ” We keep a log of all reasonable adjustments requested and our response to each request.
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	Information is available on Complaints and our handling of it is available on the Staff portal, setting out what they need to do and who to contact	
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	Volumes of Service Requests and formal complaints has risen when comparing 2023/24 with 2024/25 figures.	For 2023/24 we recorded 4,240 Service Requests and Formal complaints and so far for 2024/25 we have recorded 5,197 Service Requests and formal complaints. Data is benchmarked and shared with the Tenant Special Interest Group. We recognise that high

				volumes of complaints is positive and used to improve the service we already provide.
3.4	Landlords must make their complaint policy available in a clear and accessible format for all residents. This will detail the two-stage process, what will happen at each stage, and the timeframes for responding. The policy must also be published on the landlord's website.	Yes	Published on our website and it sets out the 2 Stage Corporate complaints procedure – www.hillingdon.gov.uk/complaints	We have also been meeting with residents to discuss how else to advertise and we are exploring other options such as including complaint details on Council Tax demands, rent statements and our e-newsletter.
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 Corporate complaints policy is published on our website and advertised in our E-newsletter/. The policy contains information about how to submit a complaint, the contact details of the Ombudsmen and the Complaint Handling Codes are also published on our web page.	
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	The Corporate complaints procedure sets this out and it can be found at: www.hillingdon.gov.uk/complaints	The policy states that " <i>The Council will also accept complaints by an advocate on behalf of a resident, with appropriate consent.</i> "
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	Included within the Corporate complaint's procedure and it can be found at: www.hillingdon.gov.uk/complaints	

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	There is a dedicated Complaint and Members Enquiry Team that processes all complaints. The annual complaint report is put before the Corporate Resources & Infrastructure Select Committee for scrutiny and then published on the complaints page, which can be found at: www.hillingdon.gov.uk/complaints For 24/25 the Annual Complaints and Service Improvement report was put before Residents Services Select Committee and Housing [Landlord Complaints] were also considered by Corporate Resources & Infrastructure Select Committee as part of a wider Corporate Report	We have a corporate complaint handling team and a complaint manager responsible for processing complaints and providing advice and guidance to staff. An annual complaint report is provided for the Corporate Resources & Infrastructure Select Committee. The report contains information about complaints, compliments and Members Enquiries submitted.
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	A centralised complaint team is responsible for engaging with staff at all levels and where there are issues, they have access to senior managers for support and resolution.	We have a Corporate complaint handling team that is responsible for processing complaints, providing advice and guidance, delivering training sessions for officers across the Council and in attending management meetings to provide

				information and advice on the handling 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 importance of complaint handling. It is important that complaints are seen as a core service and must be resourced to handle complaints effectively	Yes	A centralised complaint team is in place, where staff have been trained to process complaints, with most staff having worked in the team for over 8+ years. The complaint portal has categories to capture learning, and this is reported on in the annual complaint report, which can be accessed at www.hillingdon.gov.uk/complaints	

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	Corporate complaints procedure is the policy that we use, and it can be accessed at www.hillingdon.gov.uk/complaints	
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	The Council's Corporate complaint procedure complies with the requirements set out in the Complaint Handling Codes namely a 2 Stage complaint process. www.hillingdon.gov.uk/complaints	
5.3	A process with more than two stages is not acceptable under any circumstances as	Yes	The Council's Corporate complaint procedure sets out our 2 Stage	

	this will make the complaint process unduly long and delay access to the Ombudsman.		complaint process. www.hillingdon.gov.uk/complaints	
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	The Corporate complaint procedure states that we will progress by way of a complaint expressions of dissatisfaction in relation to " <i>or those acting on its behalf</i> " <i>through our own procedure</i> . The Corporate complaints procedure can be accessed via our web page at: www.hillingdon.gov.uk/complaints	
5.5	Landlords are responsible for ensuring that any third parties handle complaints in line with the Code.	Yes	We will process complaints in accordance with the Corporate Complaints procedure. www.hillingdon.gov.uk/complaints	Where appropriate we will ask our contactor to respond to a complaint using their own complaint procedure but where a complainant is dissatisfied with the response they receive, we will log it as a formal complaint, investigate and respond to the complainant.
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	Within the acknowledgment we send to a complainant it will contain a summary of our understanding of the complaint and what they want by way of a resolution.	We will acknowledge receipt within 5 working days and inform the complainant of the reference number, who will be investigating, when they can expect a response to be sent to them, set out details of the complaint, etc. If anything is unclear, we will always ask for clarification before beginning the investigation.

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	We will set out in our letter of acknowledgment our understanding of the complaint and what the complainant is seeking by way of a resolution. As part of the triaging of complaints, acknowledgement responses must confirm which aspects of the complaint will be considered.	We will acknowledge receipt within 5 working days and inform the complainant of the reference number, who will be investigating, when they can expect a response to be sent to them, etc. If anything is unclear, we will always ask for clarification before beginning the investigation.
5.8	At each stage of the complaints process, complaint handlers must: 1. deal with complaints on their merits, act independently, and have an open mind; 2. give the resident a fair chance to set out their position; 3. take measures to address any actual or perceived conflict of interest; and 4. consider all relevant information and evidence carefully.	Yes	This is set out within the policy statement in the Corporate complaints procedure which can be accessed at www.hillingdon.gov.uk/complaints	
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	In our letter of acknowledgment, we will advise complainants the date we aim to respond by and if this is not going to be met, we will always contact them again to advise them if more time is needed.	
5.10	Landlords must make reasonable adjustments for residents where appropriate under the Equality Act 2010. Landlords must keep a record of any	Yes	From April 2024 we keep a log of any reasonable adjustments requested which is held on our Sharepoint	

	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.			
5.11	Landlords must not refuse to escalate a complaint through all stages of the complaints procedure unless it has valid reasons to do so. Landlords must clearly set out these reasons, and they must comply with the provisions set out in section 2 of this Code.	Yes	This is set out in the Corporate complaints procedure which can be accessed at www.hillingdon.gov.uk/complaints	
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	All complaint data is stored on our complaint portal called GOSS including pictures, surveys, reports, etc	We also hold a record of the complaint and our responses on Sharepoint
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	Our aim is to resolve a complaint, where we can, either at a Service Request or formal complaint stages. This is set out in the Corporate complaint procedure which can be accessed at www.hillingdon.gov.uk/complaints	
5.14	Landlords must have policies and procedures in place for managing unacceptable behaviour from residents and/or their representatives. Landlords	Yes	We have our "Unreasonable or Unreasonably Persistent complainant" policy which can be	Where restrictions are put in place this information is held on the Council's Restricted Persons Register

	must be able to evidence reasons for putting any restrictions in place and must keep restrictions under regular review.		accessed at www.hillingdon.gov.uk/complaints	
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	We are required to follow the “Unreasonable or Unreasonably Persistent Complainants” Policy	This is set out in the ‘Unreasonable or Unreasonably Persistent Complainants Policy” and if someone is placed on the Restricted Persons Register (RPR) they are informed of the reason, how long they are on the RPR, how they can appeal it, etc. The Corporate Complaints Policy and Procedure review process will include consideration of specific reference to the Equality Act 2010.

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	Yes	Corporate complaints procedure sets this out which can be accessed at www.hillingdon.gov.uk/complaints	This is set out in the Council’s Corporate Complaints Procedure

	resolved promptly, and an explanation, apology or resolution provided to the resident.			
6.2	Complaints must be acknowledged, defined and logged at stage 1 of the complaint's procedure <u>within five working days of the complaint being received</u> .	Yes	Corporate complaints procedure sets this out which can be accessed at www.hillingdon.gov.uk/complaints	
6.3	Landlords must issue a full response to stage 1 complaints <u>within 10 working days</u> of the complaint being acknowledged.	Yes	Corporate complaints procedure sets this out which can be accessed at www.hillingdon.gov.uk/complaints	
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	Corporate complaints procedure sets this out. www.hillingdon.gov.uk/complaints	Since 1 January 2025, we have a log recording all extensions granted, at what complaint stage and the reason why the extension has been granted.
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	Staff in the complaint handling team ensure that when an extension is granted, the communication to the complainant provides them with the contact details of the Housing Ombudsman Service.	
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	Yes	The complaint response will set out the actions we have taken or if they are due to be taken, when that will happen. Services have in place procedures to follow up on outstanding actions	For complaints concluded by the Housing Ombudsman Service it is the Complaint and Enquiries Team that tracks actions/orders due for completion. The complaint is

	promptly with appropriate updates provided to the resident.			only closed once all the actions have been completed and the Ombudsman informed.
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	This is set out in the Corporate complaints procedure which can be accessed at www.hillingdon.gov.uk/complaints	
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	Where additional issues are raised after a complaint has been submitted, we will always add these in and ensure that it is responded to within the original response and if more time is needed to do this, we will inform a complainant of this. If new issues are raised after a response has been sent, we will treat as a new complaint.	
6.9	Landlords must confirm the following in writing to the resident at the completion of stage 1 in clear, plain language: a. the complaint stage; b. the complaint definition; c. the decision on the complaint; d. the reasons for any decisions made; e. the details of any remedy offered to put things right; f. details of any outstanding actions; and g. details of how to escalate the matter to stage 2 if the individual is not satisfied with the response.	Yes	This is included in the response that we send.	

Stage 2

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
6.10	If all or part of the complaint is not resolved to the resident's satisfaction at stage 1, it must be progressed to stage 2 of the landlord's procedure. Stage 2 is the landlord's final response.	Yes	This is set out in the Corporate complaints procedure which can be accessed at www.hillingdon.gov.uk/complaints	The formal complaint responses at Stages 1 and 2 will inform a complainant how to progress their complaint to the next stage of the process.
6.11	Requests for stage 2 must be acknowledged, defined and logged at stage 2 of the complaint's procedure within five working days of the escalation request being received.	Yes	This is set out in the Corporate complaints procedure which can be accessed at www.hillingdon.gov.uk/complaints	
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	This is set out in the Corporate complaints procedure which can be accessed at www.hillingdon.gov.uk/complaints	We will always ask a complainant for clarification otherwise the response that is sent at Stage 2 will mirror that sent at Stage 1, if we do not know what they are dissatisfied with.
6.13	The person considering the complaint at stage 2 must not be the same person that considered the complaint at stage 1.	Yes	This is set out in the Corporate complaints procedure which can be accessed at www.hillingdon.gov.uk/complaints	At Stage 1 a Team Leader or Head of Service will investigate and respond and at Stage 2, this will either be a Head of Service or Director, depending on who has investigated and responded at Stage 1.
6.14	Landlords must issue a final response to the stage 2 <u>within 20 working days</u> of the complaint being acknowledged.	Yes	This is set out in the Corporate complaints procedure which can be accessed at www.hillingdon.gov.uk/complaints	

6.15	Landlords must decide whether an extension to this timescale is needed when considering the complexity of the complaint and then inform the resident of the expected timescale for response. Any extension must be no more than 20 working days without good reason, and the reason(s) must be clearly explained to the resident.	Yes	This is set out in the Corporate complaints procedure which can be accessed at www.hillingdon.gov.uk/complaints	A log is kept of all extensions granted since 1 January 2025 and this includes the reason why an extension was granted.
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	Staff in the complaint handling team ensure that an extension communication provides the Housing Ombudsman contact details	
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	The complaint response will set out the actions we have taken or if they are due to be taken, when that will happen. Services have in place procedures to follow up on outstanding actions	
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	This is included in the response that we send.	
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;	Yes	The letters that we send at each stage of the process sets out our findings, the decision, the remedy (where appropriate) and to whom a complainant can request an escalation to including the Ombudsman at the final stage.	

	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	The Investigating officer will collate information from all relevant staff before issuing our final response	

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: • 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;	Yes	This is included in the response that we send	

	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	This is included in the response that we send	
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	This is included in the response that we send	
7.4	Landlords must take account of the guidance issued by the Ombudsman when deciding on appropriate remedies.	Yes	The Complaint Handling Codes are available and key staff have received additional training from an officer in the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman.	

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: - the annual self-assessment against this Code to ensure their complaint handling policy remains in line with its requirements. - a qualitative and quantitative analysis of the landlord's complaint handling performance. This must also include a	Yes	An annual complaint report is provided for the Corporate Resources & Infrastructure Select Committee . From April 2025, the Resident Services Select Committee will additionally scrutinise an annual report relating to complaints managed by the landlord service during 2024/25.	

	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.			
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.	No	For 2024/25 the annual complaints performance and service improvement report was put before the Residents Services Select Committee and the Corporate Resources & Infrastructure Select Committee, we acknowledge that it should have been the Cabinet as the governing body, and we will do so for 2025/26. The 2024/25 report is published on the following web page: www.hillingdon.gov.uk/complaints The governing Body's response has been revised and will also be published on the above web page.	Going forward, the annual complaints performance and service improvement report will be put before the Cabinet each year commencing in the Summer of 2026, after which it will be published on our web page at www.hillingdon.gov.uk/complaints We will also ensure that the governing body's response will be from the Cabinet Member for Planning Housing and Growth.
8.3	Landlords must also carry out a self-assessment following a significant	Yes	A submission is required to Cabinet where any changes are made to the Corporate complaints procedure. We	

	restructure, merger and/or change in procedures.		will undertake self-assessments when required.	
8.4	Landlords may be asked to review and update the self-assessment following an Ombudsman investigation.	Yes	As a result of decisions made by the Ombudsman, senior managers are made aware of the decision and actions are monitored to ensure that they are completed. Changes made are then noted and the self-assessment is then changed/added to when next reviewed.	
8.5	If a landlord is unable to comply with the Code due to exceptional circumstances, such as a cyber incident, they must inform the Ombudsman, provide information to residents who may be affected, and publish this on their website Landlords must provide a timescale for returning to compliance with the Code.	Yes	This has not happened, but it is noted.	

Section 9: Scrutiny & oversight: continuous learning and improvement

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
9.1	Landlords must look beyond the circumstances of the individual complaint and consider whether service improvements can be made as a result of any learning from the complaint.	Yes	Set out in the Corporate complaints procedure www.hillingdon.gov.uk/complaints	There is a dedicated complaint manager at a senior level that produces the annual complaint and service improvement report. The complaint manager ensures that once a complaint has been responded to, officers will identify any learning and set out what has gone wrong

				and what is being done to put this right. This includes the identification of any underlining themes and where there are issues associated with perceptions around fairness and respect.
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	Set out in the Corporate complaints procedure which can be accessed at www.hillingdon.gov.uk/complaints	We are using Power BI to provide a suite of reports for staff to access which provides all staff with real time data on complaints received, lessons learnt, compensation paid, etc. This data is then used to make changes to operational practice, the review of services and to inform staff training and development.
9.3	Accountability and transparency are also integral to a positive complaint handling culture. Landlords must report back on wider learning and improvements from complaints to stakeholders, such as residents' panels, staff and relevant committees.	Yes	The Council manages complaint through the complaint portal which records feedback both complaints and compliments. Together with the use of Power BI it enables much more flexible and comprehensive reporting. We have a complaint and compliment special interest group which meets quarterly where complaints data including learning and case studies is reported into our governance structure.	From 2026, we will be changing our complaint system as our contract with our previous provider comes to an end. Our new reporting platform will increase the depth and breath of data which can be collected and reported on.
9.4	Landlords must appoint a suitably senior lead person as accountable for their	Yes	There is a dedicated complaint manager at a senior level that	Quarterly and annual corporate reports show

	complaint handling. This person must assess any themes or trends to identify potential systemic issues, serious risks, or policies and procedures that require revision.		produces the annual complaint report for the Select committee. This has been enhanced by the new role covered by the Cabinet Member for Planning Housing and Growth who will act as the Member Responsible for Complaints.	themes and what action was taken to address them. A new IT based system for complaints handling is being installed which will enable much more flexible and comprehensive reporting. This will increase the extent to which the council is able to learn from complaints, share the learning and institute improvements. We will also have in place the Cabinet Member for Planning, Housing and Growth as the MRC and that the Cabinet of the Council will be the governing body.
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').	No	For 2024/25, the Chair of the Resident Services Select Committee, has acted as the Member Responsible for Complaints. However, we acknowledge that it needs to be a Cabinet Member and this role will now be undertaken by the Cabinet Member for Planning Housing and Growth.	This role will from 2025 be performed by the Cabinet Member for Planning Housing and Growth.
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	Yes	A quarterly report has been developed that provides regular updates.	A rolling quarterly report is also produced for the landlord board, Corporate Management Team leads and

	performance. This person must have access to suitable information and staff to perform this role and report on their findings.			lead Cabinet member for the landlord service.
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	A quarterly report is being used to provide the Cabinet Member for Planning, Housing and Growth with regular updates.	Rolling quarterly report is also produced for the landlord board, Corporate Management Team leads and lead Cabinet member for the landlord service
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	Yes	"The Council is committed to putting people at the centre of everything we do and aims to provide the best possible service to residents. However, sometimes things can go wrong and if you are not happy with the service you have received from the Council then please tell us so that we can, where possible, sort out the problem.	We have a standard housing objective in relation to complaints which is also incorporated in our procedures and explains that staff involved in the management and response to complaints are responsible for: • working collaboratively to resolve resident issues • taking shared responsibility for addressing areas of

	complaints as set by any relevant professional body.		We will carry out enquiries fairly, deal with your complaint as quickly and effectively as we can while maintaining confidentiality and keeping you informed of progress. We want to reassure you that the service you get will not be affected if you raise concerns or make a complaint. The policy and procedure: • allows managers to address issues of unsatisfactory service and seek improvements in service delivery; • ensures that customers are treated fairly and consistently; • ensures that a proper and adequate investigation takes place before any action is taken; • requests for reasonable adjustments will be considered in line with the Equality Act 2010 and appropriate training is provided for staff; and	development identified through complaints • Acting in accordance with any relevant professional registration that they hold.
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			• safeguards the integrity and good reputation of the Council.”	
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Governance			
Effective from:	November 2025	Review Date:	March 2026
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Report Author:	Ian Anderson, Business Manager – Complaints and Enquiries		
Approved by:	Landlord Board and Corporate Management Team Housing Leads		
Version Number:	1.01		