

Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code: Self-Assessment 2023/2024

Woking Borough Council is a member of the [Housing Ombudsman Scheme](#) as a local authority social housing landlord. Each year, we are required to complete and publish a self-assessment and publish on [our website](#).

The following self-assessment was completed in May 2024 and submitted to the [Housing Ombudsman](#) and [Regulator of Social Housing](#) by 30 June 2024. Please be aware that the following wording is taken from the Housing Ombudsman template for submission.

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
1.1	A complaint must be defined as: ‘an expression of dissatisfaction, however made, about the standard of service, actions or lack of action by the landlord, its own staff, or those acting on its behalf, affecting a resident or group of residents.’	Yes	This is evident in the Woking Borough Council Complaints Procedure ‘what is a complaint?’ and Appendix 1: Housing Complaints Procedure ‘what is a housing complaint?’.	Page 7 – WBC Complaints Procedure .
1.2	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	This is evident in the Appendix 1: Housing Complaints Procedure ‘what is a housing complaint?’.	Complaint training included a mandatory training in May 2024 to ensure that all staff, whether frontline or managers, are able to identify dissatisfaction and reminded of internal processes to raise complaints. Please see page 7 and page 8 – WBC Complaints Procedure .
1.3	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	This is evidenced in the Woking Borough Council Complaints procedure ‘what is not a complaint?’ and detailed further in Appendix 1: Housing Complaints Procedure ‘what is not a housing complaint?’.	Please see page 7 – WBC Complaints Procedure .

1.4	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 evidenced in Appendix 1: Housing Complaints Procedure 'what is a housing complaint?' and 'what is not a housing complaint?'	Complaint training included a mandatory training in May 2024 to ensure that all staff, whether frontline or managers, are able to identify dissatisfaction and reminded of internal processes of service requests. Please see Page 7 and 8 – WBC Complaints Procedure .
1.5	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	This is evidenced in Appendix 1: Housing Complaints Procedure 'what is not a housing complaint?'	Please see page 8 – WBC Complaints Procedure .

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	The Complaint Procedure does specify “what is not a complaint” but this is fully detailed and evidenced in Appendix 1: Housing Complaints Procedure ‘what is not a housing complaint?’.	The CRM system has been updated and a letter template for not accepting a complaint will be used anytime a complaint is not able to be accepted/acknowledged. Please see Page 7 and 8 – WBC Complaints Procedure .
2.2	<p>A complaints policy must set out the circumstances in which a matter will not be considered as a complaint or escalated, and these circumstances must be fair and reasonable to residents. Acceptable exclusions include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The issue giving rise to the complaint occurred over 12 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 evidenced in Appendix 1: Housing Complaints Procedure ‘what makes a housing complaint?’	Please see Page 7 – WBC Complaints Procedure .

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 evidenced in Appendix 1: Housing Complaint Procedure with the acceptance of complaints within 12 months detailed in ‘what is a housing complaint?’ and the discretion applied to exclude in ‘what is not a housing complaint?’.	WBC has confirmed that they will apply discretion. Please see page 7 and 8 – WBC Complaints Procedure .
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	This is evidenced in Appendix 1: Housing Complaints Procedure ‘what is not a housing complaint?’	WBC has clarified this in the procedure. Please see Page 8 – WBC Complaints Procedure .
2.5	Landlords must not take a blanket approach to excluding complaints; they must consider the individual circumstances of each complaint.	Yes	This is evidenced in Appendix 1: Housing Complaints Procedure ‘what is not a housing complaint?’	This is confirmed on Page 8 – WBC Complaints Procedure .

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 evidenced in Appendix 1: Housing Complaints Procedure 'How do you make a housing complaint?'	This includes online eform, email, phone, writing, contacting any member of the housing service. Face to face meetings can be organised and subject to availability of space. Please see page 8 – WBC Complaints Procedure .
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	This is evidenced in Appendix 1: Housing Complaints Procedure 'How do you make a housing complaint?' that residents can contact any member of the Housing Service.	A complaints handling training session occurred in May 2024 and was mandatory for all housing staff. This training session ensured that all staff were aware of the housing complaints procedure and knew who to contact (Housing Complaints) and how. This complaint handling training also produced an action plan which will feed into the complaints improvement plan, a workstream for the Housing Improvement Board.
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	Yes	This was covered in the May 2024 Complaint Handling Training.	There was discussions and understanding that previously low levels in recent years support the need for the complaints improvement plan and work to

	sign that residents are unable to complain.			promote the process and accessibility for residents.
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	Please see Appendix 1 'WBC Housing Complaints Procedure'	The document is in an accessible format and checked by relevant service areas. The Housing Complaints Procedure has been added into the WBC Complaints Procedure so that all residents can view all complaint procedures in one place. There is an understanding that this will be reviewed before April 2026, in line with the LGO Complaint Handling Code.
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	Please see Appendix 1 'WBC Housing Complaints Procedure' and Complaints page on the website.	A Housing Complaints page has been set up to clarify this, detailing the procedure, Ombudsman details and the Complaint Handling Code. It is also seen and discussed within the Housing Complaints Procedure on page 9.
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	This is evidenced in Appendix 1: Housing Complaints Procedure 'Who can make a housing complaint?'	Housing Complaints staff will always ask if they would like others to attend a meeting (whether online or face to face). In the last year, a number of meetings have occurred with residents and a representative, especially external organisations such as Citizens Advice.
3.7	Landlords must provide residents with information on their right to access the	Yes	This is evidenced in Appendix 1: Housing	All Complaint process letters and communication templates have

	Ombudsman service and how the individual can engage with the Ombudsman about their complaint.		Complaints Procedure 'Escalation to the Housing Ombudsman'	been updated to ensure that the right to contact and access the Ombudsman, at any point during the complaint process, is advised to residents at all opportunities.
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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	Since February 2024, this is within the Resident Engagement Team, with overall responsibility sitting with the Resident Engagement Team Leader who manages Housing Complaints.	Housing complaints are scrutinised by corporate quarterly. Housing complaints are also reviewed and scrutinised by the resident and landlord partnership panel monthly.
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 structure of the Housing Service supports this with Resident Engagement sitting under the Head of Housing and Strategic Director.	
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	This was covered in the May 2024 Complaint handling training which was mandatory for all staff.	The Housing Improvement Board has a workstream called 'staffing and culture', culture changes and learning from complaints will come into this, along with actioning long-term training programmes. Resourcing of the service will continue to be reviewed regularly.

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	This is evidenced in the Complaints Procedure and further relevant to Appendix 1: Housing Complaints Procedure	
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	This is evidenced in Appendix 1: Housing Complaints Procedure	There are no extra named stages.
5.3	A process with more than two stages is not acceptable under any circumstances as this will make the complaint process unduly long and delay access to the Ombudsman.	Yes	This is evidenced in Appendix 1: Housing Complaints Procedure	There are 2 stages.
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		WBCs complaint response is handled internally but contractors may be contacted to support a full and thorough investigation. The landlord's complaint process takes precedence.

5.5	Landlords are responsible for ensuring that any third parties handle complaints in line with the Code.	Yes		
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		The 5 working days to acknowledge provides time for the housing complaint team to clarify any unclear areas of the complaint. The letter templates and acknowledgements support this. Detailing the complaint definition through bullet points agreed with the resident.
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		The Housing Complaint team will clarify this. Where another process or team is required for some of the issues raised, the team will advise, signpost or refer.
5.8	At each stage of the complaints process, complaint handlers must: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. deal with complaints on their merits, act independently, and have an open mind; b. give the resident a fair chance to set out their position; c. take measures to address any actual or perceived conflict of interest; and d. consider all relevant information and evidence carefully. 	Yes	This was clarified in the May 2024 Training for all housing staff.	

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	This is evidenced in Appendix 1: Housing Complaints Procedure 'Stage 1 complaint' and 'Stage 2 complaint'.	Letter templates for extensions/delays have been created and are available to be provided, when required. The May 2024 training for all housing staff clarified that delays must be reasonable when requesting a delay to the Housing Complaints Team.
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		The CRM includes disabilities the resident has disclosed. In letter templates and communication the reasonable adjustments are reminded. When a reasonable adjustment is raised, these are logged and kept under active review by the Housing Complaints Team.
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 evidenced in Appendix 1: Housing Complaints Procedure 'what is not a housing complaint'.	Please see page 7 – WBC Complaints Procedure .
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	Yes		The CRM system was updated on 1 April 2024 and supports the additional recording of complaints, outcomes, correspondences and relevant supporting documents. The

	any relevant supporting documentation such as reports or surveys.			Housing Complaints Team also provides a consistent approach to this.
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	This was clarified in the May 2024 training for all housing staff.	
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	Woking Borough Council's Unreasonable Complaints Procedure.	
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	Woking Borough Council's Unreasonable Complaints Procedure.	

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	This is evidenced in Appendix 1: Housing Complaints Procedure 'what is a housing complaint' and 'stage 1 complaint'.	
6.2	Complaints must be acknowledged, defined and logged at stage 1 of the complaints procedure within five working days of the complaint being received .	Yes	This is evidenced in Appendix 1: Housing Complaints Procedure 'stage 1 complaint'.	Please see page 8 and 9 – WBC Complaints Procedure .
6.3	Landlords must issue a full response to stage 1 complaints within 10 working days of the complaint being acknowledged.	Yes	This is evidenced in Appendix 1: Housing Complaints Procedure 'stage 1 complaint'.	Please see page 8 and 9 – WBC Complaints Procedure .
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	Yes	This is evidenced in Appendix 1: Housing Complaints Procedure 'stage 1 complaint'.	Please see page 8 and 9 – WBC Complaints Procedure .

	more than 10 working days without good reason, and the reason(s) must be clearly explained to the resident.			
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	This is evidenced in Appendix 1: Housing Complaints Procedure 'Escalation to the Housing Ombudsman'.	Please see page 9 – WBC Complaints Procedure . All delay/extension letter templates include the contact details of the Housing Ombudsman.
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	This is evidenced in Appendix 1: Housing Complaints Procedure 'stage 1 complaint'.	Please see page 9 – WBC Complaints Procedure .
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 was clarified in the May 2024 training for all housing staff.	This is also encouraged by the letter templates for the stage 1 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	Yes	This is evidenced in Appendix 1: Housing Complaints Procedure 'stage 1 complaint'.	Please see page 9 – WBC Complaints Procedure .

	unrelated to the issues already being investigated or it would unreasonably delay the response, the new issues must be logged as a new complaint.			
6.9	<p>Landlords must confirm the following in writing to the resident at the completion of stage 1 in clear, plain language:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. the complaint stage; b. the complaint definition; c. the decision on the complaint; d. the reasons for any decisions made; e. the details of any remedy offered to put things right; f. details of any outstanding actions; and g. details of how to escalate the matter to stage 2 if the individual is not satisfied with the response. 	Yes	This format is provided in the letter templates for stage 1 response.	

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 evidenced in Appendix 1: Housing Complaints Procedure 'stage 2 complaint'	Please see page 9 – WBC Complaints Procedure .
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	This is evidenced in Appendix 1: Housing Complaints Procedure 'stage 2 complaint'	Please see page 9 – WBC Complaints Procedure .
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		The Housing Complaint Team do make contact to clarify but there is an understanding that they do not have to provide reasons.
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 evidenced in Appendix 1: Housing Complaints Procedure 'stage 2 complaint'	Please see page 9 – WBC Complaints Procedure .
6.14	Landlords must issue a final response to the stage 2 within 20 working days of the complaint being acknowledged.	Yes	This is evidenced in Appendix 1: Housing Complaints Procedure 'stage 2 complaint'	Please see page 9 – WBC Complaints Procedure .
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	Yes	This is evidenced in Appendix 1: Housing Complaints Procedure 'stage 2 complaint'	Please see page 9 – WBC Complaints Procedure .

	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.			
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	This is evidenced in Appendix 1: Housing Complaints Procedure 'Escalation to the Housing Ombudsman'.	Please see page 9 – WBC Complaints Procedure . All delay/extension letter templates include the contact details of the Housing Ombudsman.
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	This is evidenced in Appendix 1: Housing Complaints Procedure 'stage 2 complaint'.	Please see page 9 – WBC Complaints Procedure .
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 was clarified in the May 2024 training for all housing staff.	This is also encouraged by the letter templates for the stage 2 response.
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;	Yes	This format is provided in the letter templates for stage 2 response.	

	<p>d. the reasons for any decisions made;</p> <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 the Ombudsman Service if the individual remains dissatisfied.</p>			
6.20	Stage 2 is the landlord's final response and must involve all suitable staff members needed to issue such a response.	Yes		Stage 2 is the final response stage and has involvement from all relevant staff.

Section 7: Putting things right

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
7.1	<p>Where something has gone wrong a landlord must acknowledge this and set out the actions it has already taken, or intends to take, to put things right. These can include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apologising; • Acknowledging where things have gone wrong; • Providing an explanation, assistance or reasons; • Taking action if there has been delay; 	Yes	An actions for resolution section is provided in all complaint response letter templates to encourage the following.	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reconsidering or changing a decision; • 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	This was clarified in the May 2024 Training for all housing staff.	More guidance to be produced.
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 was clarified in the May 2024 Training for all housing staff.	More guidance to be produced as part of the complaints improvement plan.
7.4	Landlords must take account of the guidance issued by the Ombudsman when deciding on appropriate remedies.	Yes	This was clarified in the May 2024 Training for all housing staff.	The Housing Complaints Team will also act as a knowledge hub, keeping up to date on new Ombudsman guidance and sharing these with staff who are then able to use these when deciding appropriate remedies.

Section 8: Putting things right

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
8.1	<p>Landlords must produce an annual complaints performance and service improvement report for scrutiny and challenge, which must include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) the annual self-assessment against this Code to ensure their complaint handling policy remains in line with its requirements. b) a qualitative and quantitative analysis of the landlord's complaint handling performance. This must also include a summary of the types of complaints the landlord has refused to accept; c) any findings of non-compliance with this Code by the Ombudsman; d) the service improvements made as a result of the learning from complaints; e) any annual report about the landlord's performance from the Ombudsman; and f) any other relevant reports or publications produced by the 	Yes		<p>Required data and full set of relevant KPIs to meet these have been set up and started from April 2024. The first report will come to the governing board and Resident and Landlord Partnership in May 2025.</p>

	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 will go to them in May 2025 and published on the website by July 2025.
8.3	Landlords must also carry out a self-assessment following a significant restructure, merger and/or change in procedures.	Yes	This is evidenced in Appendix 1: Housing Complaints Procedure 'Housing Complaint Procedure'	Please see page 7
8.4	Landlords may be asked to review and update the self-assessment following an Ombudsman investigation.	Yes	This is evidenced in Appendix 1: Housing Complaints Procedure 'Housing Complaint Procedure'	Please see page 7
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 will be further addressed in the Complaint Improvement Plan to ensure consistency in these exceptional circumstances.

Section 9: Scrutiny and 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		
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	The Complaint Improvement Plan as a workstream for the Housing Improvement Board is using complaints as a source for positive change in the service.	
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 Resident and Landlord Partnership Panel is integral for this, the scrutiny of complaints performance and wider learning/ improvements. The Woking@Home publications and webpages will continue to be integral for updates as the engagement strategy is drafted and consulted on.	Moving forward, for consistency, this will also be covered by the Council's new Communities and Housing Scrutiny Committee.
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,	Yes	The Council's Monitoring Officer has overall responsibility for complaint handling corporately.	

	serious risks, or policies and procedures that require revision.			
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 Portfolio Holder for Housing is the MRC.	
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		Moving forward, for consistency, this will be covered by the Council's new Communities and Housing Scrutiny Committee.
9.7	As a minimum, the MRC and the governing body (or equivalent) must receive: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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 	Yes		Moving forward, for consistency, this will be within the forward programme for the 2024/2025 municipal year. This will be presented in the format requested and available to be published easily.

	<p>complying with orders related to severe maladministration findings; and</p> <p>d. annual complaints performance and service improvement report.</p>			
9.8	<p>Landlords must have a standard objective in relation to complaint handling for all relevant employees or third parties that reflects the need to:</p> <p>a. have a collaborative and co-operative approach towards resolving complaints, working with colleagues across teams and departments;</p> <p>b. take collective responsibility for any shortfalls identified through complaints, rather than blaming others; and</p> <p>c. act within the professional standards for engaging with complaints as set by any relevant professional body.</p>	Yes		