

# Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code: Self-assessment form

| Compliance with the Complaint Handling Code |   |     |    |
|---|---|-----|----|
| 1   | Definition of a complaint   | Yes | No |
|   | Does the complaints process use the following definition of a complaint?<br><br><i>An expression of dissatisfaction, however made, about the standard of service, actions or lack of action by the organisation, its own staff, or those acting on its behalf, affecting an individual resident or group of residents.</i>  | X   |    |
|   | Does the policy have exclusions where a complaint will not be considered?   | X   |    |
|   | Are these exclusions reasonable and fair to residents?<br><br>Evidence relied upon<br><br>The majority of complaints received by Framework are legitimate and provide an opportunity for learning, however, some complaints may be unreasonable or abusive or considered vexatious or repetitive.<br>When these circumstances occur Framework will reserve the right to ignore or close vexatious or unreasonable complaints either from the outset or at the point when an investigation has shown them to be unfounded. | X   |    |
| 2   | Accessibility   |     |    |
|   | Are multiple accessibility routes available for residents to make a complaint?  | X   |    |
|   | Is the complaints policy and procedure available online?  | X   |    |
|   | Do we have a reasonable adjustments policy?   | X   |    |
|   | Do we regularly advise residents about our complaints process?  | X   |    |
| 3   | Complaints team and process   |     |    |
|   | Is there a complaint officer or equivalent in post?   | X   |    |
|   | Does the complaint officer have autonomy to resolve complaints?   |     | X  |
|   | Does the complaint officer have authority to compel engagement from other departments to resolve disputes?  | X   |    |
|   | If there is a third stage to the complaints procedure are residents involved in the decision making?  |     | X  |
|   | Is any third stage optional for residents?  | X   |    |
|   | Does the final stage response set out residents' right to refer the matter to the Housing Ombudsman Service?  | X   |    |

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|          | Do we keep a record of complaint correspondence including correspondence from the resident?   | X   |  |
|          | At what stage are most complaints resolved?<br><br>Most Complaints are managed at the 'Fix and Resolve' stage. This is the initial stage of the complaint process which requires a complaint to be resolved within 5 working days. In the event this can't occur then Framework escalates the complaint for further investigation. The complainant is involved and informed throughout. |     |  |
| <b>4</b> | <b>Communication</b>  |     |  |
|          | Are residents kept informed and updated during the complaints process?  | X   |  |
|          | Are residents informed of the landlord's position and given a chance to respond and challenge any area of dispute before the final decision?  | X   |  |
|          | Are all complaints acknowledged and logged within five days?  | X   |  |
|          | Are residents advised of how to escalate at the end of each stage?  | X   |  |
|          | What proportion of complaints are resolved at stage one?  | 73% |  |
|          | What proportion of complaints are resolved at stage two?  | 27% |  |
|          | What proportion of complaint responses are sent within Code timescales?<br><br><ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stage one 95%</li> <li>    Stage one (with extension)</li> <li>• Stage two 95%</li> <li>    Stage two (with extension)</li> </ul>   |     |  |
|          | Where timescales have been extended did we have good reason?  | X   |  |
|          | Where timescales have been extended did we keep the resident informed?  | X   |  |
|          | What proportion of complaints do we resolve to residents' satisfaction  | 90% |  |
| <b>5</b> | <b>Cooperation with Housing Ombudsman Service</b>   |     |  |
|          | Were all requests for evidence responded to within 15 days?   | N/A |  |
|          | Where the timescale was extended did we keep the Ombudsman informed?  | N/A |  |
| <b>6</b> | <b>Fairness in complaint handling</b>   |     |  |
|          | Are residents able to complain via a representative throughout?   | X   |  |
|          | If advice was given, was this accurate and easy to understand?  | X   |  |
|          | How many cases did we refuse to escalate?   | 0   |  |

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|          | <p>What was the reason for the refusal?<br/>We received no requests to escalate ant complaints to the Ombudsman</p>   |     |  |
|          | Did we explain our decision to the resident?  | n/a |  |
| <b>7</b> | <b>Outcomes and remedies</b>  |     |  |
|          | Where something has gone wrong are we taking appropriate steps to put things right?   | X   |  |
| <b>8</b> | <b>Continuous learning and improvement</b>  |     |  |
|          | <p>What improvements have we made as a result of learning from complaints?</p> <p>Framework have re-written its complaints Policy and Procedure based on the results of the Service User Satisfaction Survey, completed annually. This was done in consultation with Service users and SEA, an advocacy service.</p> <p>Framework has also split its processes in to two streams; Fix and Resolve (5day resolution) and investigation (15day resolution). This was in response to a request to reduce the length of time required to resolve a complaint and to ensure that issues that can be quickly fixed are done so efficiently, without need for unnecessary paperwork and process.</p> <p>Framework are currently in the process of implementing a new digital system for recording complaints, Datix. The data extracted will allow Framework to conduct trending analysis to identify organisational issues to improve complaint resolution, service delivery and customer satisfaction.</p> |     |  |
|          | <p>How do we share these lessons with:</p> <p>a) residents?<br/>A member of the Service User Advisory Group attends the Board and is provided with KPI analysis on Complaints. Service users and SEA are also consulted when the Policy and Procedure is reviewed, which is every three years in accordance with Framework's review process.</p> <p>The new Datix system will allow Framework to extract quarterly and annual data and trending analysis that can compiled in a report and fed back to service users and residents.</p> <p>b) the board/governing body?<br/>The Board and Committee members receive quarterly KPI complaints reporting and this is a discussion item at Board meetings.</p>   |     |  |

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|  | <p>c) In the Annual Report?<br/> As Framework's system was a manual system this information was not included in an annual report. With the introduction of Datix Framework will be able to extract accurate data to inform an annual report.</p>   |                 |  |
|  | <p>Has the Code made a difference to how we respond to complaints?<br/> The Code has triggered an in-depth review of Framework's Complaints Policy and Procedure to ensure compliance. Framework will also implement a Digital Complaints Recording system, currently a manual process, to compare data and to produce trends and learning.</p>  | <p><b>X</b></p> |  |
|  | <p>What changes have we made?<br/> The changes to the Policy and Procedure has streamlined the process for resolving complaints and has improved communication between Framework and the Complainant. The implementation of a new system will allows Framework to analysis complaints to extract trending and systemic issues, which will lead to improvement in service delivery and customer satisfaction.<br/> Complaints are reviewed at all senior tiers and filtered in to services to ensure learning from complaints reaches all members of staff, volunteers and service users.</p> |                 |  |