
Self-assessment against the Housing Ombudsman Service's Complaints Handling Code 2025-26

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.



Elmbridge
Borough Council

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Section 1: Definition of a complaint

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
1.2	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	Complaint Handling Policy – “Complaint definition” section	We have adopted the Housing Ombudsman’s definition of a complaint within its policy, ensuring alignment with the Complaint Handling Code.
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	Complaint Handling Policy – “Complaint definition” and “Who can make a complaint?” sections	Our complaints policy details how we will deal with a tenant’s expression of dissatisfaction. Complaints are accepted via third parties.

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
1.4	Landlords must recognise the difference between a service request and a complaint. This must be set out in their complaints policy. A service request is a request from a resident to the landlord requiring action to be taken to put something right. Service requests are not complaints, but must be recorded, monitored and reviewed regularly.	Yes	Complaint Handling Policy – “Service requests” section	The policy clearly distinguishes between a service request and a complaint.
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	Complaint Handling Policy – “Complaint definition” and “Service requests” sections	This is reflected within the “Complaint definition” section of the policy.
1.6	An expression of dissatisfaction with services made through a survey is not	Yes	When surveys are carried out through TSM or resident	Residents are made aware of how to raise a complaint

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
	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.		engagement activities, residents are made aware of how they can raise a complaint.	when providing feedback through surveys and engagement activities.

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	Yes	Complaint Handling Policy – “What can you make a complaint about?” section	We will provide the reason why and the action a tenant can take, including approaching the Housing Ombudsman Service once

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
	considered on its own merits			our decision is received.
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	Complaint Handling Policy – exclusions within “What can you make a complaint about?”	Exceptions are detailed along with how it will be communicated to the tenant.

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 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	Complaint Handling Policy - "What can you make a complaint about?" section	Complaints are accepted within 12 months, with discretion applied where appropriate.
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	Complaint Handling Policy – exclusions within "What can you make a complaint about?"	Where a complaint is not accepted, residents are provided with a clear explanation and signposted to the Housing Ombudsman Service.
2.5	Landlords must not take a blanket	Yes	Complaint Handling Policy – "What	Each complaint is considered

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
	approach to excluding complaints; they must consider the individual circumstances of each complaint.		can you make a complaint about?"	individually, with no blanket exclusions applied.

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	Complaint Handling Policy – “Where to direct complaints”, “How to make a complaint” and “Reasonable adjustments” sections	Residents can make complaints through multiple channels including phone, email, website and in writing. Reasonable adjustments are considered and provided in line with the Equality Act 2010.

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
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	Complaint Handling Policy – “Roles and responsibilities” section	All staff are responsible for recognising complaints and directing them appropriately.
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	Complaint Handling Policy – “Learning from complaints”	Complaints are valuable source of feedback. The Council publishes its annual complaints performance and service improvement report on its website, setting out complaint volumes, outcomes and learning. This supports transparency and helps demonstrate that residents are able to raise concerns and that these are used to drive service

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
				improvements.
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	Complaint Handling Policy – “Complaint Process” Section & available on our website at: Complaints process for tenants Elmbridge Borough Council .	The policy clearly sets out the two-stage complaints process and is publicly available on the Council's website.
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	Complaint Handling Policy – Introduction, “How to make a complaint and contact us”, and “Complaint Process” sections	The policy sets out how residents can access and use the complaints process and how this is publicised. It also includes clear information on the Housing Ombudsman Service, including when and how residents can escalate their complaint.

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
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	Complaint Handling Policy – “Who can make a complaint?” section	Residents can appoint a representative to act on their behalf.
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	Complaint Handling Policy – “Complaint definition” section and “Complaint process” Section. Website & Correspondence with Tenants - Complaints process for tenants Elmbridge Borough Council/Complaint Handling Policy .	Residents are clearly informed of their right to contact the Housing Ombudsman Service at any stage of the complaints 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	Complaint Handling Policy – "Roles and responsibilities" section.	The Housing Team manages complaints, with the Head of Housing overseeing the process. There is also a designated elected member responsible for complaints, helping provide oversight and accountability at cabinet.
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	Complaint Handling Policy – "Roles and Responsibilities"	The Housing Team has access to relevant staff across the organisation and authority to resolve complaints, including agreeing remedies.

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
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	Complaint Handling Policy – “Training” section	Staff receive training and briefings to ensure complaints are handled consistently and in line with the Code.

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	Complaint Handling Policy – “Where to direct complaints”	A single complaints policy is in place.
5.2	The early and local resolution of issues	Yes	Complaint Handling Policy –	The policy has been updated

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
	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.		"Complaint Process"	to remove wording relating to 'follow-on responses' to ensure there is no ambiguity around additional stages. The complaints process now clearly reflects a single, two-stage process in line with the Complaint Handling Code.
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	Complaint Handling Policy – "Complaint Process"	As Above
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	Complaint Handling Policy – "Where to direct complaints?" and "Complaint process" sections	The policy has been updated to clearly set out how complaints involving the managing agent are managed, including how complaints submitted directly to the Council are handled,

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
				escalation routes, and that Stage 1 complaints are managed by the agent with Stage 2 responses issued by the Council. Oversight arrangements are also set out to ensure complaints handled by third parties remain compliant with the Complaint Handling Code.
5.5	Landlords are responsible for ensuring that any third parties handle complaints in line with the Code.	Yes	Complaint Handling Policy – “Where to direct complaints?”, “and “Complaint process” sections	The Council retains oversight of complaints handled by its managing agent. This includes monitoring Stage 1 complaints and providing the Stage 2 response.
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.	Yes	Complaint Handling Policy – “Complaints Process” Section	The policy has been updated to confirm that complaint acknowledgements at both stages will clearly set out our

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
	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.			understanding of the complaint, the outcomes sought by the resident, and any areas requiring clarification to ensure there is a shared understanding from the outset.
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	Complaint Handling Policy – “Complaints Process” Section.	The policy has been updated to confirm that complaint acknowledgements at both stages will clearly set out which aspects of the complaint the Council is and is not responsible for, ensuring residents understand the scope of the investigation and any limitations from the outset.
5.8	At each stage of the complaints process, complaint handlers must:	Yes	Complaint Handling Policy	Staff are trained to ensure complaints are handled on

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
	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.			their merits, independently and with an open mind.
5.9	Where a response to a complaint will fall outside the timescales set out in this Code, the landlord must agree with the resident suitable intervals for keeping them informed about their complaint.	Yes	Complaint Handling Policy – “Complaints Process” Section.	Additional wording has been included to confirm that where complaint responses fall outside the timescales set out within the Complaint Handling Code, suitable update intervals will be agreed with

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
				residents and maintained until a full response is provided.
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	Complaint Handling Policy – “Reasonable Adjustments” Section.	The managing agent records disabilities and vulnerabilities where known, and reasonable adjustments are recorded and reviewed through their systems.
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	Complaint Handling Policy – “What can you make a complaint about?”	Our reasons for not accepting a complaint are outlined in our Complaint Handling policy. This list is not exhaustive, and each case will be looked at on its own merit
5.12	A full record must be kept of the complaint, and the outcomes at each	Yes	We use a dedicated logging system for complaints and relevant	A full record including the date, correspondence, and

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
	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.		details of each case are kept.	documentation is saved electronically on the council's complaints system.
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	Complaint Handling Policy	Our complaint handling policy outlines our approach to solutions. Through training, we help complaint handlers identify a satisfactory resolution from the start.
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	Yes	Complaint Handling Policy – Unreasonable Tenant Behaviour	We have detailed what we will do if there is unacceptable behaviour in our Complaint Handling Policy and the actions we will take.

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
	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	Complaint Handling Policy – Unreasonable Tenant Behaviour	Our policy ensures that any restrictions put in place are done so in regard for the provisions of the Equality Act 2010 to ensure they are reasonable and proportionate.

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.	Yes	Complaint Handling Policy – “Complaint process” section	All complaints are assessed to understand what is required to fully consider the issues and resolutions. The officer

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
	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.			dealing with the complaint will seek to identify any vulnerabilities and risk during first contact with tenant in line with the timescales within our Complaint Handling Policy.
6.2	Complaints must be acknowledged, defined and logged at stage 1 of the complaints procedure <u>within five working days of the complaint being received</u> .	Yes	Complaint Handling Policy – “Complaint process” Section	Complaints are acknowledged, defined and logged within five working days. The policy sets out the information that will be confirmed at this stage to ensure clarity for residents.
6.3	Landlords must issue a full response to stage 1 complaints <u>within 10 working days</u> of the complaint being acknowledged.	Yes	Complaint Handling Policy – “Complaint process” Section	The policy has been updated to clarify that Stage 1 responses will be issued within 10 working days from the date the complaint is acknowledged, providing

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
				greater clarity for residents.
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	Complaint Handling Policy – “Complaint process” Section	Where more time is needed to respond to a Stage 1 complaint, the resident will be told why and the response may be extended by up to a further 10 working days where there is good reason. The policy also confirms that suitable update intervals will be agreed with the resident until the full response is provided.
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	Complaint Handling Policy – “Complaint process” Section	Where the resident is informed that a Stage 1 response requires an extension, they will also be provided with the Housing Ombudsman Service contact details. This ensures

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
				residents know where they can seek independent advice if they are unhappy with the delay.
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	Complaint Handling Policy – “Complaint process” Section	The policy has been strengthened to confirm that complaint responses will be issued once the outcome is known, rather than waiting for all actions to be completed. Residents will continue to receive updates on outstanding actions until completion.
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	Complaint Handling Policy – “Complaint process” Section	All points raised are addressed within responses, with clear reasons provided and reference made to relevant policy, law and good practice where appropriate.

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
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	Complaint Handling Policy – “Complaint process” Section	We will add additional complaints to the Stage 1 response unless we have already responded or it would delay further the response. Where this is the case, we will log it 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	Yes	Complaint Handling Policy – “Complaint process” Section	This is set out in the Complaints letter templates to give guidance and ensure all points are addressed.

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
	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.			

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	Yes	Complaint Handling Policy – "Complaint process" Section	Additional wording has been included to confirm that discretion may be applied where residents request

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
	the landlord's final response.			escalation outside of the normal timescales and there is a valid reason for doing so."
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	Complaint Handling Policy – "Complaint process" Section	The policy has been updated to clarify that Stage 2 complaints will be acknowledged, defined and logged within five working days of the escalation request being received.
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	Complaint Handling Policy – "Complaint process" Section	The policy has been updated to explicitly confirm that residents are not required to explain their reasons for requesting escalation to Stage 2, although reasonable efforts will be made to understand ongoing dissatisfaction.
6.13	The person considering the complaint at stage 2 must not be the same person that	Yes	Complaint Handling Policy –	Stage 2 complaints are reviewed and responded to by

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
	considered the complaint at stage 1.		"Complaint process" Section	EBC, with the Head of Housing providing the final response. Stage 1 complaints are handled by the managing agent on the Council's behalf. This ensures appropriate separation between Stage 1 and Stage 2, so that the same person is not responsible for reviewing both stages and a fair, independent review is provided.
6.14	Landlords must issue a final response to the stage 2 <u>within 20 working days</u> of the complaint being acknowledged.	Yes	Complaint Handling Policy – "Complaint process" Section	The policy has been updated to clarify that final Stage 2 responses will be issued within 20 working days from the date the complaint is acknowledged.
6.15	Landlords must decide whether an extension to this timescale is needed	Yes	Complaint Handling Policy –	Where an extension is required, residents are

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
	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.		"Complaint process" Section	informed of the reason and provided with a revised response date.
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	Complaint Handling Policy – "Complaint process" Section	Contact details of the Housing Ombudsman are included in letters confirming the extension of the timescale.
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	Complaint Handling Policy – "Complaint process" Section	Additional wording has been included to confirm that following the issue of a Stage 2 response, residents will continue to receive updates on any outstanding actions until completion.

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
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	Complaint Handling Policy – “Complaint process” Section	All points will be bullet pointed and addressed within stage one and two responses. We will refer to law, policy and good practice where possible.
6.19	Landlords must confirm the following in writing to the resident at the completion of stage 2 in clear, plain language: a. the complaint stage; b. the complaint definition; c. the decision on the complaint; d. the reasons for any decisions made; e. the details of any remedy offered to put things right; f. details of any outstanding actions;	Yes	Complaint Handling Policy – “Complaint process” Section	This is set out in the Complaints letter templates to give guidance and ensure all points are addressed. This also includes signposting to the Housing Ombudsman.

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
	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	Complaint Handling Policy – "Complaint process" & "Roles & Responsibilities" section	In preparing the response, the Council works with the managing agent and relevant staff to gather all necessary information. This ensures the final response is comprehensive and informed by all appropriate parties involved in the service delivery.

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	Yes	All Officers are provided with Housing Ombudsman response guidance to ensure we comply with this requirement, this is evident in our complaint responses.	Our policy and complaint response templates ensure that apologies, explanations, and remedies are clearly set out in line with Housing Ombudsman guidance.

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
	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	Complaint Handling Policy – “What we can do to put things right” section	The impact of the tenant is considered as part of the complaint response and any remedies are considered and offered, in line with the Complaint Handling Policy.
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	Complaint Handling Policy – “What we can do to put things right” and “Complaint process” sections	We send a response as soon as we know the outcome of the complaint. The response will include the action plan for any remaining actions with expected completion dates. Offer of compensation in a

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
				response will detail the next steps, if the tenant wishes to accept the offer
7.4	Landlords must take account of the guidance issued by the Ombudsman when deciding on appropriate remedies.	Yes	Complaint Handling Policy – “What we can do to put things right”	When considering remedies, we refer to the Housing Ombudsman’s guidance to help ensure our decisions are fair and appropriate.

Section 8: Self-assessment, reporting and compliance

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
8.1	Landlords must produce an annual complaints performance and service improvement report for scrutiny and challenge, which must include: a. the annual self-assessment	Yes	Council website – annual complaints performance and service improvement report and self-assessment - Complaints process for tenants Elmbridge	Information is included in the Council’s annual complaints performance and service improvement report, which is published on the website. The

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
	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		Borough Council	Council also completes and publishes its self-assessment in line with the Complaint Handling Code.

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
	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.	Yes	Complaints performance and service improvement report is produced and shared with the governing body, with the governing body's response published alongside this	Our governing body's response to the report will also be published alongside this - Complaints process for tenants Elmbridge Borough Council
8.3	Landlords must also carry out a self-assessment following a significant restructure, merger and/or change in procedures.	Yes	The self-assessment is reviewed and updated where required, including following changes to the Complaint Handling Code or operational changes.	
8.4	Landlords may be asked to review and update the self-assessment following an	Yes	The Council will review and update its self-assessment following any relevant findings or determinations	

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
	Ombudsman investigation.		to ensure continued compliance with the Complaint Handling Code.	
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	There are no current barriers to compliance with the Complaint Handling Code. The Council keeps its approach under review to ensure ongoing compliance.	

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	Yes	The Council uses complaints to identify trends and areas for improvement. Learning is captured	

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
	improvements can be made as a result of any learning from the complaint.		and used to improve services.	
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	Learning from complaints is shared across the service, alongside the Managing Agent, to support continuous improvement and better outcomes for residents.	
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	Annual complaints performance and service improvement report	Information on complaints performance and learning is reported to The Member Responsible for Complaints (MRC) through the annual complaints performance and service improvement report.
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	Yes	The Head of Housing is the lead person accountable.	

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
	potential systemic issues, 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	The Member Responsible for Complaints has access to the information and support required to effectively oversee complaint handling and report on performance.	

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
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	Regular updates are provided on complaint volumes, outcomes and performance to support oversight and accountability.	

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
9.8	Landlords must have a standard objective in relation to complaint handling for all relevant employees or third parties that reflects the need to: a. have a collaborative and co-operative approach towards resolving complaints, working with colleagues across teams and departments; b. take collective responsibility for any shortfalls identified through complaints, rather than blaming others; and c. act within the professional standards for engaging with complaints as set by any relevant professional body.	Yes	Complaint Handling Policy	Staff are expected to work collaboratively, take ownership of complaints and contribute to resolving issues and improving services.