

Appendix A: Self-assessment form

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

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

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

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

Section 1: Definition of a complaint

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
1.2	A complaint must be defined as: <i>‘an expression of dissatisfaction, however made, about the standard of service, actions or lack of action by the landlord, its own staff, or those acting on its behalf, affecting a resident or group of residents.’</i>	Yes	Included in Housing Landlord Complaints Policy Sefton Housing Landlord Complaints Policy	The Council has a Housing Landlord Complaints Policy in place and the definition contained within reflects the requirements of the Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code as follows: <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>
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	Yes	Sefton Housing Landlord Complaints Policy	Housing Landlord Complaints Policy states that ‘A complaint can be made by anyone who is receiving, seeking or impacted by a service from the Council through its landlord function’.

	in line with the landlord's complaints policy.			'A complaint can be made using any of the contact methods provided by the housing management agent.'
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	Sefton Housing Landlord Complaints Policy	The Housing Landlord Complaints Policy recognises the difference between a complaint and service request and provides examples of what a complaint might include and provides examples of what might be considered a service request and not covered under the policy.
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	Sefton Housing Landlord Complaints Policy	Where dissatisfaction is expressed with the response to a service request, residents have the right to make a complaint. This information will be made available to residents as well as communicated by any contact centre staff of the housing management agent. Actions will progress to ensure threat the service continues to a high level that the Council expects.

				Guidance is also available on the Council's website detailing how complaints can be made.
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	Sefton Housing Landlord Complaints Policy	Any surveys that the Council undertakes will be clearly communicated to tenants including the purpose for which information is being obtained. Any responses to surveys will be reviewed and where there is any expression of dissatisfaction, this will be discussed with details of how to make a complaint provided.

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	Sefton Housing Landlord Complaints Policy	Sefton's policy is clear in defining a complaint in accordance with the Complaint Handling Code. The policy provides examples of what a complaint may include and also examples of what is not covered by the policy, which includes service level failures that happened more than 12 months ago. The policy is also clear that anonymous complaints will be accepted and acted upon, though due to the nature, responses cannot be provided though details will be included in any complaint handling reports published by the Council. All complaints will be considered and responded

				to on their own merit with written explanation of any decision reached.
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	Sefton Housing Landlord Complaints Policy	Sefton's Housing Landlord Complaints Policy sets out at Section 4 examples that are not covered by the policy. These include: • Issues that involve ongoing legal action or a service failure that happened more than 12 months ago. • Complaints that have already been dealt with through the Council's formal complaints process. In the even where a complaint might not be considered or escalated, where contact information has been provided, the complainant will be contacted to explain the reason why in line with the policy.
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	Yes	Sefton Housing Landlord Complaints Policy	Complaints within 12-months will be accepted. The policy is clear that complaints that happened

	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.			more than 12-months ago is an example that is not covered by the policy.
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	Sefton Housing Landlord Complaints Policy	In the even where a complaint might not be considered or escalated, where contact information has been provided, the complainant will be contacted to explain the reason why in line with the policy.
2.5	Landlords must not take a blanket approach to excluding complaints; they must consider the individual circumstances of each complaint.	Yes	Sefton Housing Landlord Complaints Policy	The policy provides some examples of what is not covered by the policy and where a complaint may be excluded. These are examples only and each individual complaint will be dealt with 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	Sefton Housing Landlord Complaints Policy	Section 5 of the policy recognises that a complaint can be made by anyone receiving, seeking or impacted by a service. Complaints can be made by the individual affected, by a representative or anonymously. A range of contact methods are available to make a complaint.
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	Sefton Housing Landlord Complaints Policy	Complaints can be raised by any method of contact available to tenants and to any staff member. The Council's Housing Management Agent is aware of Sefton's Housing Complaints Policy and implements accordingly.
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	Yes	Quarterly Performance reports to the Council's Housing Advisory Board will demonstrate complaint handling activity and	Sefton is a new social housing landlord. Complaint activity and trends will be monitored as part of

	complaint volumes are potentially a sign that residents are unable to complain.		the context and background to any complaints received, learning and improvement.	ongoing performance monitoring and reported to the Housing Advisory Board on a quarterly basis ensuring oversight.
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	Sefton Council Housing Webpage Sefton Housing Landlord Complaints Policy	Policy is published on the Council's website and clearly available and accessible for all residents. For any residents requiring different formats, this can and will be provided. Policy clearly sets out the two-stage process and associated timescales.
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	Sefton Housing Landlord Complaints Policy	Monitoring, delivery and performance included in the policy.
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	Sefton Housing Landlord Complaints Policy	Section 5 of the policy is clear that complaints can be made directly by the person requiring a resolution or by a representative. Consent form is also in place to ensure authority to disclose personal information in these circumstances.

				Complaints can also be made anonymously.
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	Sefton Council Housing Webpage Sefton Housing Landlord Complaints Policy	Housing Ombudsman details provided on the Council's website and included within the policy.

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	Sefton Housing Landlord Complaints Policy	The complaint handling process is managed by the Council's appointed Housing Management Agent Crosby Housing Association. This is led by the HR and Governance Manager. Responsibility for Complaint Handling at Sefton sits with the Social Housing Manager or in their absence the Service Manager Housing and Investment. Reporting is provided to the Council's Housing Advisory Board which includes senior

				officers and Elected Members.
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	Sefton Housing Landlord Complaints Policy	Complaints will be co-ordinated by Crosby Housing Association, the Council's Housing Management Agent and led by the HR and Governance Manager. The Social Housing Manager is responsible for direct engagement with the Housing Management Agent and has access to staff at all levels.
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	Sefton Housing Landlord Complaints Policy	Sefton staff have attended sessions run by the Housing Ombudsman and regularly receive updates and information on complaints handling, best practice, guidance and advice. As part of Continuous Professional Development, training areas are identified and complaints are an important opportunity. Complaints are frequently monitored including

				oversight by the Council's Housing Advisory Board.
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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	Sefton Housing Landlord Complaints Policy	Single policy in place covering housing landlord 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	Sefton Housing Landlord Complaints Policy	Clear policy in place with no added 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	Sefton Housing Landlord Complaints Policy	Two-stage complaint process in place compliant with the Housing Ombudsman Code.
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	Yes	Sefton Housing Landlord Complaints Policy	Complaints are dealt with by Crosby Housing Association as the Council's appointed Housing Management Agent. The two-stage

	expected to go through two complaints processes.			process is clearly detailed in the policy.
5.5	Landlords are responsible for ensuring that any third parties handle complaints in line with the Code.	Yes	Sefton Housing Landlord Complaints Policy	Complaint handling monitored and reported.
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	Sefton Housing Landlord Complaints Policy	Any correspondence to the complainant will include understanding of the complaint and the outcome that is being sought. This is asked for early in the process and referenced in the policy. Where any clarification is needed, the complainant will be contacted.
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	Sefton Housing Landlord Complaints Policy	Correspondence with the complainant will make clear the understanding of the complaint and what will be addressed.
5.8	At each stage of the complaints process, complaint handlers must: a. deal with complaints on their merits, act independently, and have an open mind;	Yes	Sefton Housing Landlord Complaints Policy	All complaints will be dealt with fairly and independently Complainants will be contact during the [process

	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.			and if further information is needed.
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	Sefton Housing Landlord Complaints Policy	Where further time might be needed, the policy is clear that complainants will be contacted directly to discuss and kept updated throughout.
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	Sefton Housing Landlord Complaints Policy	Where customers have specific needs, require additional support or adjustments, every effort will be made to accommodate and records will be kept.
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	Sefton Housing Landlord Complaints Policy	The policy sets out the process for escalating a complaint to stage 2 if a complainant is not happy with a response. Complaints will be investigated and responded to on their own merit and where a

				escalation does not happen through all stages, this will be where there is a valid reason and in compliance with Section 2 of the Code.
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	Sefton Housing Landlord Complaints Policy	The complaint will be recorded on the day that it is received along with all relevant information relating to the complaint in a central location.
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	Sefton Housing Landlord Complaints Policy	At the earliest opportunity, complainants will be asked what they would like to put things right and to resolve their complaint at the earliest opportunity.
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	Sefton Housing Landlord Complaints Policy	Sefton became a landlord at the end of March 2026. During 2025/26, no restrictions have been put into place and/or needed to be kept under review. The policy is clear that unacceptable behaviour when dealing with

				complaints will be addressed in accordance with the Tenancy Agreement.
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	Sefton Housing Landlord Complaints Policy	No restrictions have been in place in 25/26. Where this might be required in future, this will be considered alongside 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 resolved promptly, and an explanation, apology or resolution provided to the resident.	Yes	Sefton Housing Landlord Complaints Policy	The policy sets out the steps to address complaints at the earliest opportunity with the complainant. All relevant complaints information will be recorded against the complaint.
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	Sefton Housing Landlord Complaints Policy	Policy in place with timescales included to comply with the Housing Ombudsman Code of Conduct. The policy confirms that all Stage 1 complaints will be acknowledged within 5 working days of receipt and assigned to the appropriate person.
6.3	Landlords must issue a full response to stage 1 complaints <u>within 10 working</u>	Yes	Sefton Housing Landlord Complaints Policy	Policy in place with timescales included to comply with the Housing

	days of the complaint being acknowledged.			Ombudsman Code of Conduct. The policy confirms that all Stage 1 complaints will be responded to within 10 working days.
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	Sefton Housing Landlord Complaints Policy	Complaints will be addressed according to the timescales detailed within the policy. The process
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	Sefton Housing Landlord Complaints Policy	Information for the Housing Ombudsman included in correspondence to complainant.
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	Sefton Housing Landlord Complaints Policy	Complainant will be provided with a written explanation of any decision reached through the complaints policy. If a complaint is upheld and action by the organisation is identified, the complainant will be kept up to date.
6.7	Landlords must address all points raised in the complaint definition and provide clear reasons for any decisions,	Yes	Sefton Housing Landlord Complaints Policy	Complainant will be provided with a written explanation of any decision

	referencing the relevant policy, law and good practice where appropriate.			reached through the complaints policy.
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	Sefton Housing Landlord Complaints Policy	When a complaint is made, the complaint will be recorded on the day that it is received, all relevant information relating to the complaint will be recorded and stored centrally. This will include any additional information and complaints.
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	Sefton Housing Landlord Complaints Policy	Following the completion of a stage 1 complaint, all information will be included in correspondence to the complainant.

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	Sefton Housing Landlord Complaints Policy	The complaints process is clearly set out within the policy. Appendix 1 confirms the process including the ability for complaints to move into stage 2 if they are not resolved at stage 1.
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	Sefton Housing Landlord Complaints Policy	Appendix 1 of the policy details the complaints process confirming that appeals can be made and will be acknowledged within 5 working days of receipt.
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	Sefton Housing Landlord Complaints Policy	On escalating a complaint to stage 2, residents can do so in writing or via email. Endeavours will be made to understand why the complaint has been escalated and why the complainant is unhappy.
6.13	The person considering the complaint at stage 2 must not be the same person that considered the complaint at stage 1.	Yes	Sefton Housing Landlord Complaints Policy	To ensure that there is no conflict of interest and to ensure a fair process, when a stage 2 complaint is received, the person considering will be different to the person that considered the stage 1 complaint.

6.14	Landlords must issue a final response to the stage 2 <u>within 20 working days</u> of the complaint being acknowledged.	Yes	Sefton Housing Landlord Complaints Policy	Appendix 1 of the policy details the complaint process and associated timescales. A final response to a stage 2 complaint will be made within 20 working days.
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	Sefton Housing Landlord Complaints Policy	The policy is clear that where more time may be needed to investigate a complaint, the complaint will be contacted and kept updated throughout.
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	Sefton Housing Landlord Complaints Policy	Details for the Housing Ombudsman will be provided in any correspondence to the resident.
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	Sefton Housing Landlord Complaints Policy	Complainant will be provided with a written explanation of any decision reached through the complaints policy. If a complaint is upheld and action by the organisation is identified, the complainant will be kept up to date.
6.18	Landlords must address all points raised in the complaint definition and	Yes	Sefton Housing Landlord Complaints Policy	Complainant will be provided with a written

	provide clear reasons for any decisions, referencing the relevant policy, law and good practice where appropriate.			explanation of any decision reached through the complaints policy.
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; and g. details of how to escalate the matter to the Ombudsman Service if the individual remains dissatisfied.	Yes	Sefton Housing Landlord Complaints Policy	Following the completion of a stage 2 complaint, all information will be included in correspondence to the complainant.
6.20	Stage 2 is the landlord's final response and must involve all suitable staff members needed to issue such a response.	Yes	Sefton Housing Landlord Complaints Policy	Residents will be advised where they may be able to seek further advice and including the Housing Ombudsman.

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	Yes	Sefton Housing Landlord Complaints Policy	The policy recognises when actions might be acceptable

	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; • Changing policies, procedures or practices.			to put things right and is clear that clarification will be sought from the complainant at the earliest opportunity.
7.2	Any remedy offered must reflect the impact on the resident as a result of any fault identified.	Yes	Sefton Housing Landlord Complaints Policy	The policy recognises that consideration will be given to a range of resolutions. At the earliest opportunity, clarification will be sought from the complainant on the steps they feel are necessary to put things right.
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	Sefton Housing Landlord Complaints Policy	Actions will be included in any correspondence to complainants.

7.4	Landlords must take account of the guidance issued by the Ombudsman when deciding on appropriate remedies.	Yes	Sefton Housing Landlord Complaints Policy	Housing Ombudsman guidance on remedies to be taken into account along with any other relevant guidance and best practice.
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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 summary of the types of complaints the landlord has refused to accept; - any findings of non-compliance with this Code by the Ombudsman; - the service improvements made as a result of the learning from complaints; - any annual report about the landlord's performance from the Ombudsman; and - any other relevant reports or publications produced by the Ombudsman in relation to the work of the landlord.	Yes	Not applicable for Sefton for 2025/26.	Sefton took ownership of its first new social housing stock on 24/03/2026. These new homes were not occupied until early April 2026. As a result, and following engagement with the Housing Ombudsman, the Ombudsman has confirmed that for 2025/26, Sefton's submission should include: - A copy of the complaints policy - Completed self-assessment against the code - Governing Body Statement (to demonstrate how it has assured the self-assessment)

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	Not applicable for Sefton for 2025/26.	Sefton took ownership of its first new social housing stock on 24/03/2026. These new homes were not occupied until early April 2026. As a result, and following engagement with the Housing Ombudsman, the Ombudsman has confirmed that for 2025/26, Sefton's submission should include: • A copy of the complaints policy • Completed self-assessment against the code Governing Body Statement (to demonstrate how it has assured the self-assessment)
8.3	Landlords must also carry out a self-assessment following a significant restructure, merger and/or change in procedures.	Yes	Not applicable for Sefton for 2025/26.	A significant restructure, merger and/or change in procedures has not occurred for Sefton in 2025/26. If this were to happen in future a self-assessment would be completed.

8.4	Landlords may be asked to review and update the self-assessment following an Ombudsman investigation.	Yes	N/A	If the Council were asked to review and update the self-assessment following an Ombudsman investigation, then this would take place.
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	N/A	If exceptional circumstances were to occur, the Housing Ombudsman and any affected residents would be notified.

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	Sefton Housing Landlord Complaints Policy	Sefton's Housing Advisory Board monitor complaint handling performance as well as understanding the context to complaints and the nature issues requiring investigation. The policy sets out how monitoring, delivery and performance will be addressed highlighting how lessons learned will be captured, recorded, shared and published where appropriate.
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	Sefton Housing Landlord Complaints Policy	The council takes a proactive approach to learning lessons from complaints and recognises the importance of this to make positive changes to the organisation, policies or processes to improve services for residents.
9.3	Accountability and transparency are also integral to a positive complaint handling culture. Landlords must report	Yes	Sefton Housing Landlord Complaints Policy	As the Council is now operational as a landlord, going forward learning and

	back on wider learning and improvements from complaints to stakeholders, such as residents' panels, staff and relevant committees.			improvements from complaints will be reported and approved by the Council's Housing Advisory Board. It will be made publically available to tenants and published on the Council's website.
9.4	Landlords must appoint a suitably senior lead person as accountable for their complaint handling. This person must assess any themes or trends to identify potential systemic issues, serious risks, or policies and procedures that require revision.	Yes	Sefton Housing Landlord Complaints Policy	Sefton's Social Housing Manager oversees the housing management contract in place with the Council's appointed Housing Management Agent. Within the Housing Management Agent, a complaints lead is identified working closely with the Senior Management Team.
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	Sefton Governing Body Response	Sefton's Housing Advisory Board have oversight of complaints through quarterly meetings and performance monitoring reports. The Member Responsible for Complaints chairs this board. Annual complaint reports will be prepared and brought to the board for consideration and approval.

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	Sefton Housing Landlord Complaints Policy Sefton Governing Body Response	Sefton's Housing Advisory Board have oversight of complaints through quarterly meetings and performance monitoring reports. The Member Responsible for Complaints chairs this board. Annual complaint reports will be prepared and brought to the board for consideration and approval.
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	Sefton Housing Landlord Complaints Policy Sefton Governing Body Response	Sefton's Housing Advisory Board have oversight of complaints through quarterly meetings and performance monitoring reports. The Member Responsible for Complaints chairs this board. Annual complaint reports will be prepared and brought to the board for consideration and approval.
9.8	Landlords must have a standard objective in relation to complaint	Yes	Sefton Housing Landlord Complaints Policy	Sefton's policy is clear from the opening statement that it is committed to providing

	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.			a high-quality services to tenants but recognises that things may sometimes go wrong. Where this is the case, feedback and complaints are encouraged to enable failures in performance to be identified and corrected and services to residents improved.
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