

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	<p>A complaint must be defined as:</p> <p><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></p>	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Section 1.1 of the Complaints Policy • In the templates for all responses. • Part of the quality matrix that all complaint responses are checked against 	<p>This is the definition we use for a complaint. We adopted this definition in 2022, November’s Complaint Policy change.</p>
1.3	<p>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.</p>	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intranet Post • Complaint Policy section 1.2 • Complaint Policy section 1.3 	<p>This has been communicated in our “complaint or service request” post on the staff Intranet, posted on the 6th June 2023.</p> <p>This is presented at all staff inductions, arranged through the HR Team.</p> <p>We are also arranging with our Communications Team for details to be advertised on TVs in the office.</p>

				We accept complaints from third parties and can formally respond with consent from our customers.
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intranet post • Section 1.5 Complaint Policy (<i>slight amendments to include links</i>) • Compliment and complaint Leaflets • Complaint poster • Insight Report • MyAccount Screenshots • On our website, on the complaints page: Feedback, compliments and complaints mhs homes 	<p>This has been detailed in our “complaint or service request” post on the Intranet that is discussed and shown at all staff inductions.</p> <p>This is outlined in our complaint policy.</p> <p>We have this detailed in our complaint leaflets and posters, with QR code links to report repairs, ASB or damp and mould.</p> <p>We also have the options to raise service requests before logging a complaint on MyAccount.</p> <p>If a complaint is made and we identify it is a service request, we follow our exclusions process. These cases are closed down as service requests and</p>

				<p>volumes reported on in our monthly Insight Report.</p> <p>If a customer visits our website and goes to the compliment and complaints page, we have detailed service requests at the start of the page before the complaint form.</p>
1.5	<p>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.</p>	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complaint Policy section 1.5 • Training material 	<p>We will log a complaint about any of the services we provide customers. If a customer wishes to complain about the handling of the service request, we will accept this. Raising a complaint does not stop any service request from being progressed.</p>
1.6	<p>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.</p>	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emails from the TSM survey handler raising complaints to the complaint's inbox • Complaint Policy section 1.6 • Survey statement 	<p>Our TSM survey process is that should the survey handler feel a complaint needs to be raised as the customer is showing signs of dissatisfaction and meets our complaint definition (not a service request), they can raise this on the customers behalf & educate the customer on how to raise a</p>

				<p>complaint via other routes in the future.</p> <p>We have found that our customers do not differentiate a Survey Handler to any another mhs employee, and by giving feedback, the customer may consider this as them raising a complaint.</p> <p>All other surveys have a statement detailing how they can raise a complaint outside of the survey process.</p>
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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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complaint Policy section 2.1 and 2.2 Exclusion template 	All complaints that meet our complaint definition, will be recorded as a complaint, unless they are excluded. Our exclusions are listed, alongside where we may offer discretion on a case-by-case basis.
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 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. 	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complaint Policy section 2.1 	We have provided a list of exclusions which are fair and reasonable.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Matters that have previously been considered under the complaints 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 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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complaint Policy section 2.2 	This is detailed within our discretion to exclusions and examples given where this would be considered.
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complaint Policy section 2.4 Exclusion template 	We write to all customers when an exclusion is applied, which outlines reasons for the decision and their right to contact the Housing Ombudsman. We will accept the complaint should the Housing Ombudsman request.
2.5	Landlords must not take a blanket approach to excluding complaints; they must consider the individual circumstances of each complaint.	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complaint Policy section 2.2 	We will consider each complaint on its own merit and decide whether an exclusion is appropriate or whether discretion should be 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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complaint Policy section 3.1 & 3.2 HDN Disability Accreditation feedback EqlA Complaints 	<p>We have had positive feedback from the Housing Diversity Network that we are accessible in accepting complaints in anyway the customer prefers.</p> <p>We have also completed an EqlA assessment of the Complaints Policy.</p>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complaint Policy section 3.1 Intranet post Staff Inductions 	As detailed above, we are accessible and accept complaints through all methods including, email, letter, phone or in person.
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Housemark Data top quartile of volumes of complaints received compared to other landlords per 1000 properties 	We understand that a high volume of new complaints about new issues can be a positive as it demonstrates a relationship with our customers where they feel safe to complain, know how to complain, are able to

				<p>complain in a way that suits them and do not feel treated differently by complaining.</p> <p>A high volume of repeat failures where lessons have not been learnt is however an area that we will closely monitor in 2024-25 to ensure those types of complaints are not contributing to the higher volume.</p>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complaint Policy sections 5 and 6. • Mhs website link of the policy 	<p>Our Complaint Policy is available on our website. The policy details each stage of the complaint process, what will happen at each stage, as well as the timeframes.</p>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complaint Policy section 3.4 • Compliment & Complaint leaflet • Newsletters • Posters 	<p>We publicise our complaints process through various means including newsletters, leaflets and posters. The Housing Ombudsman's contact details are always provided alongside these.</p>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complaint Policy section 1.3 	We are happy to accept third party complaints on behalf of our customer's, providing consent has been given to share information with the third party. This is detailed within our Complaint Policy.
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Response templates • Compliment & complaint leaflet • Newsletters • Posters 	Customers are made aware on how to contact the Housing Ombudsman in both our stage one and stage two complaint responses. We also provide details in our publicised methods detailed in section 3.5 of the self-assessment.

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Job descriptions for stated roles 	We have a dedicated Customer Experience Team that respond to complaints and the Housing Ombudsman. The Customer Experience Team Leader reports to Leadership and the MRC's, who also feed into our Board.
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complaint Handler Training material • Service Managers and Team Leaders away day promoting one service 	Our complaint handlers are all leaders who have the knowledge of their area, or the skill and authority to obtain any information required in an investigation. Based on their position, they can make quick decisions and have a good understanding of their current policies and practices, or any relevant legislative guidance.
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	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complaint handler training • Bi-monthly complaint handler meeting • Complaint workshops 	We have trained all our complaint handlers in the importance of complaint handling in their initial

	importance of complaint handling. It is important that complaints are seen as a core service and must be resourced to handle complaints effectively			complaint handler training. We continue to offer training to all complaint handling staff through bi-monthly workshops. In our bi-monthly complaint handler meeting we also discuss key learnings from Housing Ombudsman investigations and other sources.
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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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Complaint Policy • Housemark data 	Our Complaint Policy covers each aspect of the complaint handling code. We do not treat our customers different because they complain. This can be shown by the volume of complaints we receive which would indicate customers feel they are able to complain without consequence.
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	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Complaint Policy • Intranet post 	We educate all employees at their staff induction on when to offer to log a complaint after signs of dissatisfaction are shown. We do not have any extra

	complaint') as this causes unnecessary confusion.			stages; only stage one and stage two as per our Complaint Policy.
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Complaint Policy 	We only have two complaint 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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Section 4.7 of the Complaint Policy • Letter to contractors 	We handle all of our complaints internally.
5.5	Landlords are responsible for ensuring that any third parties handle complaints in line with the Code.	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Section 4.7 of the Complaint Policy • Letter to contractors 	We do not have any third parties handling our complaints.
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In our acknowledgement template • In section 5.1 of the Complaint Policy 	We explain our understanding of each complaint in the acknowledgement stage. We also add what their desired outcome is, or if it has not been provided, we ask our customers to let us know what they are seeking as a resolution.

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Acknowledgement template 	<p>We let our customers know if something they have complained about, is not something we are responsible for.</p> <p>In some cases, this would be an exclusion as it does not meet our complaint definition where it is not about our service. If this relates to only a section of their complaint, we will let them know why we will not be investigating that element.</p>
5.8	<p>At each stage of the complaints process, complaint handlers must:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> deal with complaints on their merits, act independently, and have an open mind; give the resident a fair chance to set out their position; take measures to address any actual or perceived conflict of interest; and consider all relevant information and evidence carefully. 	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complaint handler training Section 4.5 of the Complaint Policy 	<p>We have trained all of our complaint handling staff to investigate fairly and impartially, considering all evidence provided.</p> <p>Complaint handlers have been trained on conflicts of interest including perceived ones. Alternative complaint handlers will be allocated the case instead if this is reported.</p>
5.9	Where a response to a complaint will fall outside the timescales set out in this Code, the landlord must agree with	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Section 5.7 of the Complaint Policy 	We contact all customers if we are unable to respond within the extension

	the resident suitable intervals for keeping them informed about their complaint.			timescales. We ask the customer if they would like to agree and alternative date or escalate the complaint.
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vulnerability flags on One • Section 3.2 of the Complaint Policy • EqlA for complaints 	<p>We record all known vulnerabilities on the records of customers.</p> <p>Our Individual Needs policy is in development. The policy sets out how customers inform us of their needs, how we record them and what service adjustments they require. The policy will be supported by an Individual Needs process doc which will detail how we will adjust our services to meet the needs.</p>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complaint Policy section 2.1 and 2.2 	We will not refuse a complaint unless an exclusion applies.
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One Housing case management • Complaint Handler email 	All records are kept on our EDM and One Housing system. All complaint handlers have been informed and trained to complete this.

	any relevant supporting documentation such as reports or surveys.			
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complaint Policy section 7.1 & 8.1 	<p>We have complaint handlers that have the authority to make decisions on remedies within their service area.</p> <p>We have trained all complaint handlers to use the Housing Ombudsman's remedies guidance when making decisions.</p> <p>All responses are quality checked to ensure decisions are appropriate.</p> <p>A remedies policy is in the process of being created by Q1 of 2024-25.</p>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Managing Unreasonable Behaviour Policy Section 5.5 Complaint Policy 	We have our own policy and process to manage unreasonable behaviour.
5.15	Any restrictions placed on contact due to unacceptable behaviour must be	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Managing Unreasonable Behaviour Policy 	All cases will be considered on a case-by-case basis,

	proportionate and demonstrate regard for the provisions of the Equality Act 2010.			taking into account the circumstances of the individual and any known protected characteristics.
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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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quick resolution section of the Complaint Handler training 	Our Complaints Assistants are trained to complete quick resolution complaints. These are low level, one issue complaints. This is to resolve lower-level issues quicker and to avoid added demand on complaint handlers who are handling more complex or high-risk cases.
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complaint Policy section 5.6 	This is detailed within our complaints policy and monitored on a daily basis to ensure the target is met.
6.3	Landlords must issue a full response to stage 1 complaints <u>within 10 working days</u> of the complaint being acknowledged.	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complaint Policy section 5.6 	This is detailed within our complaints policy and monitored on a daily basis to ensure the target is met.
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.	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complaint Policy section 5.6 and 5.7 	We have agreed that complaint handlers can inform us of a complex case by day five of the investigation and we will

	Any extension must be no more than 10 working days without good reason, and the reason(s) must be clearly explained to the resident.			<p>inform the customer. This is to allow complaint handlers time to consider the complexities and whether it is possible to respond within the expected timescales.</p> <p>Any extension requests after day five for a complex case, will be recorded as a late but an extension letter sent, and the customer updated.</p>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Holding Response template 	The Housing Ombudsman's details are provided in the extension letter we send out.
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complaint handler training • Complaint response template 	<p>We have trained all complaint handlers to list any outstanding actions in their complaint response, and respond once the determination can be given, not when actions are completed. The outstanding actions are monitored by complaint handlers.</p> <p>In 2024-25 we will be working with ICT to create a tracking system for all outstanding actions.</p>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Response template • Effective response writing workshop material • Quality assurance checks • Email reminder 	This was given in the complaint handler training. Since it has also been communicated and reminded to all complaint handlers. We have included this as part of our quality assurance checks on all complaint responses.
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Section 5.8 of the Complaint Policy 	<p>This is detailed in our complaint policy and is considered on a case-by-case basis, taking into account when the additional point was raised, the investigation required into the additional point, who is able to address the additional point and whether another complaint handler is best placed.</p> <p>We will always try to add to an existing complaint unless it would delay the response going out after considering the above points.</p>
6.9	Landlords must confirm the following in writing to the resident at the completion of stage 1 in clear, plain language: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. the complaint stage; b. the complaint definition; c. the decision on the complaint; 	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Section 6.3 of the Complaint Policy • Complaint templates • Quality assurance checks 	This is included in all of our complaint responses as it forms part of our complaint response templates and quality assurance checks.

	<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 stage 2 if the individual is not satisfied with the response.</p>			
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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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Section 6.5 and 6.9 of the Complaint Policy Response template 	We will accept any request to stage two, providing it does not meet an exclusion.
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complaint Policy section 5.6 	We monitor daily our acknowledgement timescales to ensure complaints are logged within five working days.
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Email informing complaint handlers Section 6.5 and 6.6 of the Complaint Policy 	All complaint handlers have been informed that the Customer Experience Team will log and acknowledge stage two complaints, even if a reason has not been given. It is expected for the stage two handler to make contact with the resident to

				understand why they remained dissatisfied.
6.13	The person considering the complaint at stage 2 must not be the same person that considered the complaint at stage 1.	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complaint Policy section 4.2 and 4.3 	We have different levels of complaint handlers to ensure stage one and stage two are never considered by the same person.
6.14	Landlords must issue a final response to the stage 2 within 20 working days of the complaint being acknowledged.	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complaint Policy section 5.6 	This is detailed within our complaints policy and monitored on a daily basis to ensure the target is met.
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complaint Policy section 5.6 and 5.7 	<p>We have agreed that complaint handlers can inform us of a complex case by day five of the investigation and we will inform the customer. This is to allow complaint handlers time to consider the complexities and whether it is possible to respond within the expected timescales.</p> <p>Any extension requests after day five for a complex case, will be recorded as a late but an extension letter sent, and the customer updated.</p>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Holding response template 	The Housing Ombudsman's details are provided in the extension letter we send out.

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complaint handler training 	<p>We have trained all complaint handlers to list any outstanding actions in their complaint response, and respond once the determination can be given, not when actions are completed. The outstanding actions are monitored by complaint handlers.</p> <p>In 2024-25 we will be working with ICT to create a tracking system for all outstanding actions.</p>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Response template Effective response writing workshop material Quality assurance checks Email reminder 	This was given in the complaint handler training. Since it has also been communicated and reminded to all complaint handlers. We have included this as part of our quality assurance checks on all complaint responses.
6.19	Landlords must confirm the following in writing to the resident at the completion of stage 2 in clear, plain language: <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; 	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complaint Policy section 6.8 	This is included in all of our complaint responses as it forms part of our complaint response templates and quality assurance checks.

	<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	<p>Stage 2 is the landlord's final response and must involve all suitable staff members needed to issue such a response.</p>	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complaint policy section 6.9 Template response to stage two 	<p>Stage two handlers are more senior complaint handlers to that of stage one. Often Heads of Service or Director level. This is to ensure we are satisfied that the complaint has been fully considered and address.</p>

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; 	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Section 7.1 and 8.1 of the Complaint Policy. 	<p>We use all of these remedies, as stated within our Complaint Policy.</p> <p>Our quality assurance checks of each complaint response ensures that apologies are given when fault is identified, as well as appropriate remedies for the situation.</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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. 			We are in the process of introducing a remedies policy in Q1 of 2024-25 which will expand on these.
7.2	Any remedy offered must reflect the impact on the resident as a result of any fault identified.	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complaint handler training • Compensation workshop 	Complaint handlers have been trained to follow the Remedies Guidance from the Housing Ombudsman.
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Template responses that say to give a date or timeframe. • Complaint Policy section 5.9 	<p>We have completed training with all complaint handlers and ask them to always provide a date where possible. If a date cannot be provided, then we will give a reasonable and expected timeframe.</p> <p>As part of our contact commitment detailed in the complaint policy, we will provide regular updates to the customer during this period.</p>
7.4	Landlords must take account of the guidance issued by the Ombudsman	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Email to complaint handlers with remedies guidance attached 	We train all of our complaint handlers to use the Housing Ombudsman's remedies

	when deciding on appropriate remedies.		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Compensation workshop presentation and follow on email showing the guidance• Complaint handler training with link provided	<p>guidance when making decisions. This has been reminded by email and in the Compensation workshop.</p> <p>We are in the process of developing a new learnings system to capture and track learnings in Q1 of 2024-25.</p>
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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 Ombudsman in relation to the work of the landlord. 	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Annual Service Improvement Report 	<p>We have completed the annual service improvement report. This is on our mhs website in an accessible format for customers.</p>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mhs website 	This has been completed and put on the mhs website.
8.3	Landlords must also carry out a self-assessment following a significant restructure, merger and/or change in procedures.	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • n/a – not yet completed 	<p>We will carry out a self-assessment if there are any significant restructures or mergers / changes in procedures.</p> <p>We are currently in the process of going through a restructure. This is due to be completed by early August. A new self-assessment will be conducted afterwards.</p>
8.4	Landlords may be asked to review and update the self-assessment following an Ombudsman investigation.	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No evidence required as not yet applicable 	We have not been asked to carry out a review of the self-assessment by the Housing Ombudsman following an investigation. If we were, we would complete this.
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	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ICT Security Policy 	This has been included in our ICT Security Policy.

	residents who may be affected, and publish this on their website Landlords must provide a timescale for returning to compliance with the Code.			
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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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complaint handler training around learnings 	<p>We train all of our complaint handlers that on some occasions we may identify an area of improvement outside of the initial complaint. These are still considered a learning from the investigation but may not be relevant to share with the customer.</p> <p>We are in the process of developing a new learnings system to capture and track learnings in Q1 of 2024-25.</p>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complaint handler training • Learnings from complaints form • Insight Reports • Presentations from complaint handler meeting • You said we did • Newsletters • Training All stars 	<p>We understand the true value in a complaint by seeing it as an opportunity to learn and improve our services. All cases must consider what has been learnt as a result. This is included in our quality checks and leadership reports.</p>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The newsletter • Presentation for the CSP • 'You said, we did' on the mhs website • The annual service improvement report 	We are focusing on sharing more of our learnings with customers throughout 2024-25.
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Section 4.4 of the Complaint Policy 	<p>We have two MRC's. One on the Board and one on the Executive Team.</p> <p>We also have key employees that report on trends, the Interim Business Improvement Manager and the Customer Experience Team Leader.</p>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Section 4.4 of the Complaint Policy 	We have two MRC's. One on the Board and one on the Executive Team.

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Section 4.4 of the Complaint Policy 	The executive MRC is responsible for the operational oversight of complaints. The Board member is responsible to requesting suitable information and querying any trends or outcomes.
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 complying with orders related to severe maladministration findings; and d. annual complaints performance and service improvement report. 	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular meetings with the MRC • Emails to update the MRC on significant changes • Insight Report at Board 	Each month we have an Insight Report that details the requirements of this section. Our board will also request information that they may want to see in addition to these points.
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: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. have a collaborative and co-operative approach towards resolving 	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complaint handler training around no blame • One Service promotion • Service managers and team leaders away day 	All complaint handlers are in a position of leadership and have regular meetings. An away day was attended by all complaint handlers in

	<p>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>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NHF conduct policy all staff to sign 	<p>2023-24 to reinforce working as one service.</p> <p>All employees have mandatory reads on the NHF conduct policy. We will also be looking into new employees having this as part of their contracts in 2024-25.</p>
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