

Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code: Self-assessment form October 2020 – March 2021

Compliance with the Complaint Handling Code			
1	Definition of a complaint	Yes	No
	<p>Does the complaints process use the following definition of a complaint? <i>An expression of dissatisfaction, however made, about the standard of service, actions or lack of action by the organisation, its own staff, or those acting on its behalf, affecting an individual resident or group of residents.</i></p>	Yes	
	<p>Does the policy have exclusions where a complaint will not be considered?</p>	Yes	
	<p>Are these exclusions reasonable and fair to residents? <i>Exclusions include the following;</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>A request for service</i> • <i>A request for information</i> • <i>An enquiry</i> • <i>An explanation of policies and procedures</i> • <i>External issues that the association cannot control</i> • <i>Repairs that are still outstanding but within our published timescales</i> • <i>Any complaint where more than six months have elapsed between the cause of the complaint and it being brought to the attention of PFH. In such cases PFH can apply discretion whether we accept the complaint.</i> <p><i>Further to this, there are other instances of feedback from residents that are handled under different policies, this includes;</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Insurance claims - these will be dealt with via PFH's Insurance Policy and Procedures. Any complaint that is also being dealt with as an insurance claim will be suspended whilst the insurance claim is dealt with</i> • <i>Allegations of malpractice -these will be dealt with via PFH's Public Interest Disclosure policy and procedures</i> • <i>Anti-social Behaviour, will be dealt with via our Anti-Social Behaviour Policy and Procedures</i> • <i>Domestic Abuse will be dealt with via our Domestic Abuse Policy and Procedures</i> • <i>Harassment - will be dealt with via our Harassment Policy and Procedures</i> 		

2	Accessibility		
	Are multiple accessibility routes available for residents to make a complaint? <i>Complaints can be sent in in a variety of forms, this includes in person, over the telephone, in writing or social media</i>	Yes	
	Is the complaints policy and procedure available online?	Yes	
	Do we have a reasonable adjustments policy? <i>PFH has a Equality and Diversity Policy Statement which covers this area under Fair Access to homes and services section. Furthermore within the Complaints, Compliments and Suggestions policy there is a section relating to PFH's commitment to equalities detailing additional support PFH can provide</i>		No
	Do we regularly advise residents about our complaints process? <i>This is done via the Residents Committee – Performance data shared with the group at this meeting four times a year. The most recent meeting was in October 2020 Annual Report – Last issued September 2020 detailing feedback performance data for 2019-2020 People First Magazine – August 2020 included an article informing residents how many complaints PFH had received Further to this and posters are displayed in communal areas advising residents of how they can make a complaint</i>	Yes	
3	Complaints team and process		
	Is there a complaint officer or equivalent in post?	Yes	
	Does the complaint officer have autonomy to resolve complaints? <i>Complaints are primarily handled by the relevant manager, however subject to internal policy and financial regulations the Customer Experience Manager will support the resolution process to avoid escalation or preventing overcomplication when involving multiple departments.</i>	Yes	
	Does the complaint officer have authority to compel engagement from other departments to resolve disputes?	Yes	
	If there is a third stage to the complaints procedure are residents involved in the decision making? <i>Not applicable PFH has a two stage process (Policy review 2020)</i>		No
	Is any third stage optional for residents?		No
	Does the final stage response set out residents' right to refer the matter to the Housing Ombudsman Service?	Yes	
	Do we keep a record of complaint correspondence including correspondence from the resident?	Yes	
	At what stage are most complaints resolved? <i>For the period October 2020 – March 2021 16 complaints were received, 15 were resolved at Stage 1 (94%)</i>		

4	Communication		
	Are residents kept informed and updated during the complaints process?	Yes	
	Are residents informed of the landlord's position and given a chance to respond and challenge any area of dispute before the final decision? <i>Residents are informed at Stage 1 if they are dissatisfied with the outcome they can respond detailing what they wish the outcome to be and this will get passed to the relevant director to investigate further at Stage 2 within 20 working days.</i>	Yes	
	Are all complaints acknowledged and logged within five days? <i>For the period October 2020 – March 2021 PFH received 16 complaints, all 16 were acknowledged within 5 days (100%)</i>	Yes	
	Are residents advised of how to escalate at the end of each stage?	Yes	
	What proportion of complaints are resolved at stage one? <i>For the period October 2020 – March 2021 16 complaints were received, 15 were resolved at Stage 1 (94%)</i>		
	What proportion of complaints are resolved at stage two? <i>For the period October 2020 – March 2021 16 complaints were received, 1 was resolved at Stage 2 (6%)</i>		
	What proportion of complaint responses are sent within code timescales? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stage one 88% Stage one (with extension) n/a • Stage two 100% Stage two (with extension) n/a 		
	Where timescales have been extended did we have good reason? 2 complaints had the stage 1 letters sent out outside timescales, in both cases the complainants were communicated with throughout the process.	N/A	
	Where timescales have been extended did we keep the resident informed? <i>As above</i>	N/A	
	What proportion of complaints do we resolve to residents' satisfaction <i>7 responses received as follows</i> <i>Very Satisfied – 50%</i> <i>Fairly Satisfied – 38%</i> <i>Fairly dissatisfied – 12% (escalated to Stage 2)</i>		
5	Cooperation with Housing Ombudsman Service		
	Were all requests for evidence responded to within 15 days?	n/a	

	Where the timescale was extended did we keep the Ombudsman informed?	n/a	
6	Fairness in complaint handling		
	Are residents able to complain via a representative throughout?	Yes	
	If advice was given, was this accurate and easy to understand?	Yes	
	How many cases did we refuse to escalate? 0 What was the reason for the refusal? N/A		
	Did we explain our decision to the resident? N/A		
7	Outcomes and remedies		
	Where something has gone wrong are we taking appropriate steps to put things right?	Yes	
8	Continuous learning and improvement		
	What improvements have we made as a result of learning from complaints? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Review of the guidance issued to our emergency call handling team regarding shower repairs that considers residents health to determine what action should next be taken.</i> • <i>Ensuring we're clearer that that when we offer preliminary dates for sign up that this is subject to change</i> • <i>All installation of new woodwork (fence/gates etc) to have at least one coat of paint (previously left until cyclical decoration was due in area)</i> • <i>Critical System monitoring for residents with heating and/or hot water failures</i> • <i>Window and door replacements to be brought forward from 2025/2026 to 2021/2022 on one site.</i> 		
	How do we share these lessons with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) residents? – Article to be placed in People First summer magazine. Self-assessment to be published on website b) the board/governing body? – Report to go to Board of Trustees in May 2021 c) In the Annual Report? – To be published in September 2021 		

	Has the Code made a difference to how we respond to complaints?	Yes	
	<p>What changes have we made? <i>In October 2020 PFH have used the Housing Ombudsman Services Complaint Handling Code to undertake a full policy and procedure review. This identified areas that needed improvement and therefore the policy and procedure has been reviewed and updated to comply with the code, this includes all correspondence associated with the process.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>We have introduced a continuous learning log to capture the lessons learnt from complaint handling. This log also documents times where complaints have been avoided by positive action so trends can be observed where necessary.</i> • <i>PFH will be rolling out full complaints training provided by the Housing Ombudsman Service online to all members of staff.</i> • <i>Complaints Handling is now overseen by the Customer Experience Manager who supports staff throughout complaints and monitors the performance in this area.</i> 		