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Annual Assessment against the Housing Ombudsman's Code for Complaint Handling 2024

Registered Charity No: 1068017
Regulator For Social Housing Registration No. 4696



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	Policy-Compliments-Complaints-and-Comments-June-2024.pdf (solohousing.org) Leaflet-Making-a-Complaint-June-2024.pdf (solohousing.org)	Definition is contained within the Policy and Procedures <i>A complaint is 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, group of residents or person using or involved with the services of Solo Housing.</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 in line with the landlord's complaints policy.	Yes	Policy-Compliments-Complaints-and-Comments-June-2024.pdf (solohousing.org) Leaflet-Making-a-Complaint-June-2024.pdf (solohousing.org)	Explanation is contained within the Policy and Procedures <i>The word complaint does not have to be used for it to be treated as such.</i>

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	Policy-Compliments-Complaints-and-Comments-June-2024.pdf (solohousing.org) Leaflet-Making-a-Complaint-June-2024.pdf (solohousing.org)	<p>Contained in the Policy</p> <p><i>2.6 – We will accept a complaint unless there is a valid reason not to do so.</i></p> <p><i>b. A service request that can be resolved/responded to straight away.</i></p> <p>Records of service requests are logged on an internal database (TP Tracker & Arthur online). Examples are explained and discussed in staff Induction. E.g. a complaint about a service that should be provided i.e. support and a complaint about a repair that hasn't been reported and therefore we haven't been able to rectify it.</p>
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	Policy-Compliments-Complaints-and-Comments-June-2024.pdf (solohousing.org)	<p>Contained in the Policy.</p> <p><i>A complaint should be resolved at the earliest opportunity and action must continue to address an existing or related service request whilst the complaint is investigated.</i></p>



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	Policy-Compliments-Complaints-and-Comments-June-2024.pdf (solohousing.org)	Include on future surveys (TPS, exit surveys) And sign-up paperwork
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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	Policy-Compliments-Complaints-and-Comments-June-2024.pdf (solohousing.org) Leaflet-Making-a-Complaint-June-2024.pdf (solohousing.org)	<p>Where there is a valid reason not to accept the complaint, the resident is provided with this according to their preferred communication style and it is explained that they can refer the matter to the Housing Ombudsman.</p> <p><i>When Solo Housing decides that a matter is not considered to be a complaint, a detailed explanation will be provided to the complainant setting out the reasons why the matter is not suitable for the complaints process.</i></p>

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. • Matters that have previously been considered under the complaints policy. 	yes	<p>Policy-Compliments-Complaints-and-Comments-June-2024.pdf (solohousing.org)</p> <p>Leaflet-Making-a-Complaint-June-2024.pdf (solohousing.org)</p>	<p>In policy, ref section 2</p> <p><i>We will accept a complaint unless there is a valid reason not to do so. For example:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Matters that have already been considered under the complaints policy.</i> <i>A service request that can be resolved/responded to straight away.</i> <i>The issue giving rise to the complaint occurred over twelve months ago.</i> <i>Legal proceedings have started.</i> <i>Where the complainant is refusing to cooperate with the complaints process (e.g. failing to provide information to help progress the complaint or failing to advise of the preferred outcome to the complaint)</i> <i>A complaint about anti-social behaviour from a Solo Housing resident or between Solo Housing residents would not be regarded as a complaint unless the complaint is about Solo Housing’s handling of the anti-social behaviour service.</i>
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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	Policy-Compliments-Complaints-and-Comments-June-2024.pdf (solohousing.org) Leaflet-Making-a-Complaint-June-2024.pdf (solohousing.org)	<p>Included in the policy.</p> <p><i>Solo Housing will accept complaints within 12 months of the issue occurring or the resident becoming aware of the issue unless they are excluded on other grounds. Complainants are encouraged to bring the complaint forward as soon as possible, as a delay can make an investigation more difficult and may limit the action that can be taken. Solo reserve the right to apply discretion to complaints made outside of this time limit where there are good reasons to do so.</i></p>
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	Policy-Compliments-Complaints-and-Comments-June-2024.pdf (solohousing.org) Leaflet-Making-a-Complaint-June-2024.pdf (solohousing.org)	<p>Where there is a valid reason not to accept the complaint, the resident is provided with this according to their preferred communication style and it is explained that they can refer the matter to the Housing Ombudsman.</p>

2.5	Landlords must not take a blanket approach to excluding complaints; they must consider the individual circumstances of each complaint.	Yes	<p>Policy-Compliments-Complaints-and-Comments-June-2024.pdf (solohousing.org)</p> <p>Leaflet-Making-a-Complaint-June-2024.pdf (solohousing.org)</p>	<p>In the policy- section 2</p> <p><i>When Solo Housing decides that a matter is not considered to be a complaint, a detailed explanation will be provided to the complainant setting out the reasons why the matter is not suitable for the complaints process.</i></p> <p><i>A resident has the right to challenge a decision by bringing the complaint to the Ombudsman and where appropriate the Ombudsman will instruct Solo Housing to take on the complaint.</i></p>
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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	Our Policies – Solo Housing	In policy <i>Complaints may be communicated verbally, electronically, or in writing, including via social media channels, such as Facebook and Linked In.</i> The written material can be provided in different languages and is accessible to download via the website.
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	Policy-Compliments-Complaints-and-Comments-June-2024.pdf (solohousing.org) Leaflet-Making-a-Complaint-June-2024.pdf (solohousing.org)	Complaints can be made verbally or in writing, including via social media. All staff are provided with training on the procedure as part of their induction. This is refreshed on an annual basis and during lessons learned following a complaint or service failure.
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	Number of complaints received	12 x Stage 1 2 x Stage 2 complaints received in 2023-24

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	<p>Our Policies – Solo Housing</p> <p>Policy-Compliments-Complaints-and-Comments-June-2024.pdf (solohousing.org)</p> <p>Leaflet-Making-a-Complaint-June-2024.pdf (solohousing.org)</p>	<p>Policy and Procedure is provided to all residents when moving in and reissued when they make a complaint.</p> <p>Complaint policy is available in print and can be adapted to required language and font size. This can also be explained verbally to residents.</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	<p>Policy-Compliments-Complaints-and-Comments-June-2024.pdf (solohousing.org)</p>	<p>In policy</p> <p><i>In relation to complaints Solo Housing has adopted the Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code and will promote the code with all relevant stakeholders and residents, including how the Ombudsman can advise a resident in making a complaint.</i></p> <p>The policy is publicised in leaflets, newsletters, online and through regular correspondence with residents.</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	<p>Policy-Compliments-Complaints-and-Comments-June-2024.pdf (solohousing.org)</p>	<p>Included in the policy, section 2</p> <p><i>Complaints may be made by residents (or someone acting on their behalf), other users of our services, landlords, neighbours, stakeholders or a member of the general public.</i></p>



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	Policy-Compliments-Complaints-and-Comments-June-2024.pdf (solohousing.org) Leaflet-Making-a-Complaint-June-2024.pdf (solohousing.org)	<p>Included in the policy section 2</p> <p><i>A resident has the right to challenge a decision by bringing the complaint to the Ombudsman and where appropriate the Ombudsman will instruct Solo Housing to take on the complaint.</i></p>
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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	Policy-Compliments-Complaints-and-Comments-June-2024.pdf (solohousing.org) Leaflet-Making-a-Complaint-June-2024.pdf (solohousing.org)	<p>The Leadership Team are assigned to investigate stage 1 complaints</p> <p>The Senior Leadership Team are assigned to investigate Stage 2 complaints.</p> <p>All complaints and outcome data are reported to The Board in Strategic Key Performance Indicators.</p>
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	Policy-Compliments-Complaints-and-Comments-June-2024.pdf (solohousing.org) Leaflet-Making-a-Complaint-June-2024.pdf (solohousing.org)	<p>Included in policy, section 4</p> <p><i>The Complaint Officer has access to staff at all levels to facilitate prompt resolution of the complaint and has authority and autonomy to act to resolve disputes promptly and fairly.</i></p>

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	Policy-Compliments-Complaints-and-Comments-June-2024.pdf (solohousing.org) Leaflet-Making-a-Complaint-June-2024.pdf (solohousing.org)	<p>Complaints are considered as a mandatory training requirement for all staff.</p> <p>As a minimum all staff will complete the e learning modules via the Housing Ombudsman Centre for Learning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complaint handling Code • Spotlight on Knowledge and Information management • Attitudes, Respect and Rights • Spotlight on Damp and Mould • Dispute Resolution
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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	Policy-Compliments-Complaints-and-Comments-June-2024.pdf (solohousing.org) Leaflet-Making-a-Complaint-June-2024.pdf (solohousing.org)	<p>In policy, section 3</p> <p><i>Complainants are not disadvantaged as a result of making a complaint.</i></p>
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	Policy-Compliments-Complaints-and-Comments-June-2024.pdf (solohousing.org) Leaflet-Making-a-Complaint-June-2024.pdf (solohousing.org)	<p>In policy, section 4</p> <p><i>There will be no more than two stage to the Complaints Process.</i></p>
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	Policy-Compliments-Complaints-and-Comments-June-2024.pdf (solohousing.org) Leaflet-Making-a-Complaint-June-2024.pdf (solohousing.org)	<p>In policy, section 4</p> <p><i>There will be no more than two stage to the Complaints Process.</i></p>

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	Policy-Compliments-Complaints-and-Comments-June-2024.pdf (solohousing.org) Leaflet-Making-a-Complaint-June-2024.pdf (solohousing.org)	<p>In Policy, section 4</p> <p><i>When a complaint is made to Solo Housing where Solo Housing is the Managing Agent for another Landlord (known as the Substantive Landlord), Solo Housing will ensure that the complainant is promptly advised whether Solo Housing will investigate the complaint or refer it to the Substantive Landlord. This will not incur any additional stages or delays to the time scales as per the Housing Ombudsman Code.</i></p>
5.5	Landlords are responsible for ensuring that any third parties handle complaints in line with the Code.	yes	Policy-Compliments-Complaints-and-Comments-June-2024.pdf (solohousing.org) Leaflet-Making-a-Complaint-June-2024.pdf (solohousing.org)	Solo Complaints Policy is issued to all residents included those that receive support via a managing agent.
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	Policy-Compliments-Complaints-and-Comments-June-2024.pdf (solohousing.org) Leaflet-Making-a-Complaint-June-2024.pdf (solohousing.org)	<p>In policy, section 4</p> <p><i>All complaints will be logged including the definitions of the complaint and the outcomes required and achieved will be recorded.</i></p>

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	Policy-Compliments-Complaints-and-Comments-June-2024.pdf (solohousing.org) Leaflet-Making-a-Complaint-June-2024.pdf (solohousing.org)	<p>In policy, section 4</p> <p><i>At each stage of the complaints process the complainant will receive acknowledgement in writing setting out clear timeframes and expectations in accordance with the Complaints Procedure.</i></p>
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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	<p>Policy-Compliments-Complaints-and-Comments-June-2024.pdf (solohousing.org)</p> <p>Leaflet-Making-a-Complaint-June-2024.pdf (solohousing.org)</p>	<p><i>In Policy, section 3</i></p> <p><i>As part of this Policy and the accompanying Complaints Procedure:</i></p> <p><i>Complainants are listened to, understood, and treated sensitively and fairly.</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Complainants are given an opportunity to explain the outcome they are seeking before a decision is reached.</i> <i>Complainants are not disadvantaged as a result of making a complaint.</i> <i>Complaints are investigated promptly, thoroughly, honestly and openly.</i> <i>Complainants are given the opportunity to have a representative deal with their complaint on their behalf, and to be represented and / or accompanied at any meeting with Solo Housing where reasonable.</i> <i>Complainants are kept informed of the progress and outcome of the investigation.</i>
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				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> f. <i>Apologies are given where appropriate.</i> g. <i>Action to rectify the cause of the complaint is identified, implemented and evaluated.</i> h. <i>Learning from complaints informs service development and improvement.</i> i. <i>The complaints handling complies with confidentiality and data protection policies and is transparent.</i> j. <i>Persons responsible for complaint handling are given support and training to effectively deal with the complaint.</i> k. <i>The person dealing with the complaint (The Complaint Officer) will have the authority and autonomy to act to resolve disputes quickly and fairly. They should be competent, empathic and efficient.</i>
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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	Policy-Compliments-Complaints-and-Comments-June-2024.pdf (solohousing.org) Leaflet-Making-a-Complaint-June-2024.pdf (solohousing.org)	<p>In policy, section 4</p> <p><i>At each stage of the complaints process the complainant will receive acknowledgement in writing setting out clear timeframes and expectations in accordance with the Complaints Procedure.</i></p>
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	Policy-Compliments-Complaints-and-Comments-June-2024.pdf (solohousing.org) Leaflet-Making-a-Complaint-June-2024.pdf (solohousing.org)	<p>Preferred method of contact and any reasonable adjustments are agreed with the complainant and recorded on the Complaint Audit Record which is reviewed on a regular basis.</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	Policy-Compliments-Complaints-and-Comments-June-2024.pdf (solohousing.org) Leaflet-Making-a-Complaint-June-2024.pdf (solohousing.org)	<p>In policy, section 2</p> <p><i>Solo Housing will accept a complaint unless there is a valid reason not to do so. For example:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>g. Matters that have already been considered under the complaints policy.</i> <i>h. A service request that can be resolved/responded to straight away.</i> <i>i. The issue giving rise to the complaint occurred over twelve months ago.</i>

				<p><i>j. Legal proceedings have started.</i></p> <p><i>k. Where the complainant is refusing to cooperate with the complaints process (e.g. failing to provide information to help progress the complaint or failing to advise of the preferred outcome to the complaint)</i></p> <p><i>l. A complaint about anti-social behaviour from a Solo Housing resident or between Solo Housing residents would not be regarded as a complaint, unless the complaint is about Solo Housing’s handling of the anti-social behaviour service.</i></p>
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	<p>Policy-Compliments-Complaints-and-Comments-June-2024.pdf (solohousing.org)</p> <p>Leaflet-Making-a-Complaint-June-2024.pdf (solohousing.org)</p>	<p>All details are recorded on the Complaint Audit Record and any relevant documents, emails, text or verbal correspondence is recorded and stored in a secure file as per the GDPR policy.</p> <p>Included withing the body of the policy.</p>

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	Policy-Compliments-Complaints-and-Comments-June-2024.pdf (solohousing.org) Leaflet-Making-a-Complaint-June-2024.pdf (solohousing.org)	Included within the body of the policy
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	Policy-Compliments-Complaints-and-Comments-June-2024.pdf (solohousing.org)	<p>In policy, section 4</p> <p><i>If a complainant displays threatening or abusive behaviour or language (whether verbal or written) that causes staff, residents or other users of the service to feel unsafe, or following investigation, the claimant's demands are found to be unreasonable, Solo Housing reserves the right to close the Complaints Process. Unreasonable demands can include seeking disproportionate amounts of information, demanding an unrealistic nature or scale of service, or seeking to prolong contact with Solo Housing by continually raising new issues throughout an investigation.</i></p> <p><i>This will be considered in line with the Unreasonable Behaviour Complaints Policy.</i></p>

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	Included in the Unacceptable Behaviour With Complaints Policy	<p>In Policy, section 5</p> <p><i>We understand that some residents have disabilities which may make it difficult for them to express themselves or communicate clearly, especially when they are anxious or upset. We also recognise that some disabilities can make it difficult for customers to assess the impact that their behaviour might have on other people.</i></p> <p><i>We will always consider making reasonable adjustments for a disabled resident or customer if we are asked to do so. For example, a different method of communication.</i></p>
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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	Included in the Complaint Handling Guidance for Staff	<p>Included in guidance.</p> <p><i>Every stage of the complaints procedure will be treated as a genuine opportunity to try to resolve a complaint and local resolution is encouraged at the earliest possible stage.</i></p> <p><i>Complaints will need to be considered on their complexity and the vulnerabilities of the residents. Most Stage 1 complaints can be resolved promptly, and an explanation, apology or resolution provided to be resident.</i></p>
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	<p>Policy-Compliments-Complaints-and-Comments-June-2024.pdf (solohousing.org)</p> <p>Leaflet-Making-a-Complaint-June-2024.pdf (solohousing.org)</p>	As identified in the policy and leaflet. This is an organisational KPI.

6.3	Landlords must issue a full response to stage 1 complaints within 10 working days of the complaint being acknowledged.	Yes	Policy-Compliments-Complaints-and-Comments-June-2024.pdf (solohousing.org) Leaflet-Making-a-Complaint-June-2024.pdf (solohousing.org)	As identified in the policy and leaflet. This is an organisational KPI
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	Policy-Compliments-Complaints-and-Comments-June-2024.pdf (solohousing.org) Leaflet-Making-a-Complaint-June-2024.pdf (solohousing.org)	<p>In policy, ref section 5</p> <p><i>If Solo Housing needs to extend the response timescale, this will be for good reason and no more than 10 working days. The reason(s) will be clearly explained to the resident and Solo Housing will provide the contact details of the Housing Ombudsman.</i></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	Policy-Compliments-Complaints-and-Comments-June-2024.pdf (solohousing.org) Leaflet-Making-a-Complaint-June-2024.pdf (solohousing.org)	<p>In policy, ref section 5</p> <p><i>If Solo Housing needs to extend the response timescale, this will be for good reason and no more than 10 working days or Stage 1 and 20 working days for Stage 2. The reason(s) will be clearly explained to the resident and Solo Housing will provide the contact details of the Housing Ombudsman.</i></p>

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	Policy-Compliments-Complaints-and-Comments-June-2024.pdf (solohousing.org) Leaflet-Making-a-Complaint-June-2024.pdf (solohousing.org)	<p>In policy, Ref. section 4</p> <p><i>A complaint should be resolved at the earliest opportunity and action must continue to address an existing or related service request whilst the complaint is investigated.</i></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	Policy-Compliments-Complaints-and-Comments-June-2024.pdf (solohousing.org) Leaflet-Making-a-Complaint-June-2024.pdf (solohousing.org)	<p>In policy Ref section 4</p> <p><i>All points within the complaint definition will be addressed and clear reasons for decisions will be provided referencing relevant policy, law and good practice where appropriate.</i></p>
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	Policy-Compliments-Complaints-and-Comments-June-2024.pdf (solohousing.org) Leaflet-Making-a-Complaint-June-2024.pdf (solohousing.org)	<p>In Policy Ref section 4</p> <p><i>Any additional related matters raised during the Stage 1 investigation will be incorporated into the Stage 1 response. Any matters raised after the Stage 1 response has been issued, or unrelated or matters that will unreasonably delay the Stage 1 response, will be treated and recorded as a new complaint.</i></p>

6.9	<p>Landlords must confirm the following in writing to the resident at the completion of stage 1 in clear, plain language:</p> <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; 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	Included within the staff guidance document	Guidance provided to accompany the Policy, including letter templates.
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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	Policy-Compliments-Complaints-and-Comments-June-2024.pdf (solohousing.org) Leaflet-Making-a-Complaint-June-2024.pdf (solohousing.org)	<p>Ref leaflet</p> <p><i>If you are not satisfied with the outcome of the complaint, you can request verbally or in writing that the complaint is escalated to the Senior Leadership Team of Solo Housing. <u>This is stage 2.</u></i></p>
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	Policy-Compliments-Complaints-and-Comments-June-2024.pdf (solohousing.org) Leaflet-Making-a-Complaint-June-2024.pdf (solohousing.org)	<p>In Policy, Ref section 4</p> <p><i>At each stage of the complaints process the complainant will receive acknowledgement in writing setting out clear timeframes and expectations in accordance with the Complaints Procedure.</i></p> <p>Also, KPI</p>

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	Policy-Compliments-Complaints-and-Comments-June-2024.pdf (solohousing.org) Leaflet-Making-a-Complaint-June-2024.pdf (solohousing.org)	<p>Ref in leaflet</p> <p><i>The responsible member of the Leadership Team will acknowledge the request in writing (or in accordance with the Reasonable Adjustment Policy) within 5 working days to escalate the complaint to Stage 2 and notify the Senior Leadership Team. You will have an opportunity to provide any information you feel is relevant if you wish to.</i></p>
6.13	The person considering the complaint at stage 2 must not be the same person that considered the complaint at stage 1.	Yes	Policy-Compliments-Complaints-and-Comments-June-2024.pdf (solohousing.org) Leaflet-Making-a-Complaint-June-2024.pdf (solohousing.org)	<p>In Policy Ref section 4</p> <p><i>The person considering the complaint at Stage 1 will not be the same person who considers the complaint at Stage 2</i></p>
6.14	Landlords must issue a final response to the stage 2 <u>within 20 working days</u> of the complaint being acknowledged.	Yes	Policy-Compliments-Complaints-and-Comments-June-2024.pdf (solohousing.org) Leaflet-Making-a-Complaint-June-2024.pdf (solohousing.org)	<p>Ref Policy</p> <p><i>The Senior Leadership Team will review the complaint and respond in writing with a final response (or in accordance with the Reasonable Adjustment Policy) to you within 20 working days from the date the Stage 2 complaint was acknowledged (unless otherwise agreed).</i></p> <p>KPI</p>

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	Policy-Compliments-Complaints-and-Comments-June-2024.pdf (solohousing.org) Leaflet-Making-a-Complaint-June-2024.pdf (solohousing.org)	<p>In policy Ref section 5</p> <p><i>If Solo Housing needs to extend the response timescale, this will be for good reason and no more than 10 working days or Stage 1 and 20 working days for Stage 2. The reason(s) will be clearly explained to the resident and Solo Housing will provide the contact details of the Housing Ombudsman.</i></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	Policy-Compliments-Complaints-and-Comments-June-2024.pdf (solohousing.org) Leaflet-Making-a-Complaint-June-2024.pdf (solohousing.org)	<p>In policy Ref section 5</p> <p><i>If Solo Housing needs to extend the response timescale, this will be for good reason and no more than 10 working days or Stage 1 and 20 working days for Stage 2. The reason(s) will be clearly explained to the resident and Solo Housing will provide the contact details of the Housing Ombudsman.</i></p>
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	Policy-Compliments-Complaints-and-Comments-June-2024.pdf (solohousing.org) Leaflet-Making-a-Complaint-June-2024.pdf (solohousing.org)	<p>In policy, Ref. section 4</p> <p><i>A complaint should be resolved at the earliest opportunity and action must continue to address an existing or related service request whilst the complaint is investigated.</i></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	Policy-Compliments-Complaints-and-Comments-June-2024.pdf (solohousing.org) Leaflet-Making-a-Complaint-June-2024.pdf (solohousing.org)	<p>In policy Ref section 4</p> <p><i>All points within the complaint definition will be addressed and clear reasons for decisions will be provided referencing relevant policy, law and good practice where appropriate.</i></p>
6.19	<p>Landlords must confirm the following in writing to the resident at the completion of stage 2 in clear, plain language:</p> <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; 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	Included in staff guidance document	All details included in staff guidance document and letter template provided

6.20	Stage 2 is the landlord’s final response and must involve all suitable staff members needed to issue such a response.	Yes	<p>Policy-Compliments-Complaints-and-Comments-June-2024.pdf (solohousing.org)</p> <p>Leaflet-Making-a-Complaint-June-2024.pdf (solohousing.org)</p>	<p>In policy ref section 4</p> <p><i>There will be no more than two stage to the Complaints Process</i></p> <p>Information leaflet – <i>The Senior Leadership Team will review the complaint and respond in writing with a final response (or in accordance with the Reasonable Adjustment Policy) to you within 20 working days from the date the Stage 2 complaint was acknowledged (unless otherwise agreed).</i></p> <p><i>The Senior Leadership Team will record the outcome of the complaint on the Complaint Audit Record. Any learning from the complaint will also be recorded and necessary adjustments made where relevant.</i></p>
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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; • 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. 	Yes	<p>Policy-Compliments-Complaints-and-Comments-June-2024.pdf (solohousing.org)</p> <p>Leaflet-Making-a-Complaint-June-2024.pdf (solohousing.org)</p>	<p>In policy ref section 6</p> <p><i>Where something has gone wrong, Solo Housing will acknowledge this and set out the actions it has already taken, or intends to take, to put things right.</i></p> <p><i>Solo Housing will acknowledge and apologise for any failure identified, give an explanation, and where possible, inform the complainant of the changes or actions taken to prevent the issue from happening again.</i></p> <p><i>Solo Housing recognises that putting things right is the first step to repairing and rebuilding the relationship with the complainant. It is important to make sure expectations are managed and Solo Housing do not promise anything that cannot be delivered or would be unfair to other residents or users of the Solo Housing services.</i></p> <p>Also, in Section 7 – Appropriate Remedy</p>

7.2	Any remedy offered must reflect the impact on the resident as a result of any fault identified.	Yes	Policy-Compliments-Complaints-and-Comments-June-2024.pdf (solohousing.org) Leaflet-Making-a-Complaint-June-2024.pdf (solohousing.org)	<p>In policy, ref section 7</p> <p><i>In awarding compensation, Solo Housing will consider whether any statutory payments are due if any quantifiable losses have been incurred, as well as any time and trouble the complainant has been put to, as well as any distress and inconvenience caused. This will be awarded in line with the Housing Ombudsman guidelines.</i></p>
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	Policy-Compliments-Complaints-and-Comments-June-2024.pdf (solohousing.org) Leaflet-Making-a-Complaint-June-2024.pdf (solohousing.org)	<p>In policy, ref section 7</p> <p><i>Any remedy must be agreed with the complainant and followed through to completion.</i></p>
7.4	Landlords must take account of the guidance issued by the Ombudsman when deciding on appropriate remedies.	Yes	Included in guidance document.	Any remedy offered reflects the Housing Ombudsman Remedy Guidance

Section 8: Self-assessment, reporting and compliance

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 	yes	Our Reports – Solo Housing	Report completed and uploaded to website

	f. any other relevant reports or publications produced by the Ombudsman in relation to the work of the landlord.			
8.2	The annual complaints performance and service improvement report must be reported to the landlord's governing body (or equivalent) and published on the on the section of its website relating to complaints. The governing body's response to the report must be published alongside this.	Yes	Policy-Compliments-Complaints-and-Comments-June-2024.pdf (solohousing.org) Leaflet-Making-a-Complaint-June-2024.pdf (solohousing.org)	<p>In policy, ref section 8</p> <p><i>Solo Housing will produce an annual Complaints Performance and Service Improvement Report and publish this on the website alongside the Solo Housing Board response to the report.</i></p>
8.3	Landlords must also carry out a self-assessment following a significant restructure, merger and/or change in procedures.	Yes	Policy-Compliments-Complaints-and-Comments-June-2024.pdf (solohousing.org) Leaflet-Making-a-Complaint-June-2024.pdf (solohousing.org)	<p>In policy, ref section 8</p> <p><i>Solo Housing will complete an annual self-assessment against the code or will review the self-assessment following a significant restructure, merger and / or change in procedures.</i></p>
8.4	Landlords may be asked to review and update the self-assessment following an Ombudsman investigation.	Yes	Policy-Compliments-Complaints-and-Comments-June-2024.pdf (solohousing.org) Leaflet-Making-a-Complaint-June-2024.pdf (solohousing.org)	<p>In policy, ref section 8</p> <p><i>Solo Housing will complete an annual self-assessment against the code or will review the self-assessment following a significant restructure, merger and / or change in procedures.</i></p>

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	Policy-Compliments-Complaints-and-Comments-June-2024.pdf (solohousing.org) Leaflet-Making-a-Complaint-June-2024.pdf (solohousing.org)	<p>In Policy ref section 8</p> <p><i>If Solo Housing are unable to comply with the code due to exceptional circumstances, the Ombudsman and affected residents will be notified and information will be published on the website, including timescales for returning to compliance with the code.</i></p>
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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	Our Reports – Solo Housing	Any learning and service improvement is recorded and reported on.
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	Our Reports – Solo Housing	Any learning and service improvement is recorded and reported on.
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	Our Reports – Solo Housing	Lessons learned approach across Solo Housing with findings shared with residents and staff.
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	Zoe Webb – Operations Lead	Senior Manager, PG Dip in Housing Studies and significant experience across the housing sector to identify any systemic issues and ability to address and request implementation of revised policies and procedures to the MRC and the board.

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	Tracey Dowse	Appointed MRC from 2022
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	MRC also member of the Audit and Risk Committee and provides feedback to the board of trustees	Quarterly reports produced for the MRC and the Board
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;	Yes	Our Reports – Solo Housing	As above.

	<p>c. regular updates on the outcomes of the Ombudsman’s investigations and progress made in complying with orders related to severe maladministration findings; and</p> <p>d. annual complaints performance and service improvement report.</p>			
9.8	<p>Landlords must have a standard objective in relation to complaint handling for all relevant employees or third parties that reflects the need to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. have a collaborative and co-operative approach towards resolving complaints, working with colleagues across teams and departments; b. take collective responsibility for any shortfalls identified through complaints, rather than blaming others; and c. act within the professional standards for engaging with complaints as set by any relevant professional body. 	Yes	<p>Policy-Compliments-Complaints-and-Comments-June-2024.pdf (solohousing.org)</p> <p>Leaflet-Making-a-Complaint-June-2024.pdf (solohousing.org)</p>	<p>Solo Housing have implemented shared organisational objective and KPI’s</p> <p>Take an organisational learning approach Adopted the NHF Code of conduct 2022</p>