# 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.

# North Tyneside Housing and Property Services

# Housing Ombudsman Self Assessment May 2024

# Section 1: Definition of a complaint

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| Code provision | Code requirement | Comply: Yes / No | Evidence | Commentary / explanation |
| 1.2 | A complaint must be defined as:  *‘an expression of dissatisfaction, however made, about the standard of service, actions or lack of action by the landlord, its own staff, or those acting on its behalf, affecting a resident or group of residents.’* | Yes | .  [Corporate and Housing Services Complaints Procedure](https://my.northtyneside.gov.uk/sites/default/files/web-page-related-files/Corporate%20and%20Housing%20Services%20Complaint%20Procedure.docx) | The North Tyneside Council Corporate and Housing Services Complaints Procedure includes this definition.  Information can be found on page 3 of the procedure. |
| 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 | [Corporate and Housing Services Complaints Procedure](https://my.northtyneside.gov.uk/sites/default/files/web-page-related-files/Corporate%20and%20Housing%20Services%20Complaint%20Procedure.docx) | The North Tyneside Council Corporate and Housing Services Complaints Procedure includes this definition.  Information can be found on Page 4 of the procedure. |
| 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 | [Corporate and Housing Services Complaints Procedure](https://my.northtyneside.gov.uk/sites/default/files/web-page-related-files/Corporate%20and%20Housing%20Services%20Complaint%20Procedure.docx) | The North Tyneside Council Corporate and Housing Services Complaints Procedure describes the difference between a service request and complaint.  These explanations can be found on page 3 and page 4 of the procedure. |
| 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 | [Corporate and Housing Services Complaints Procedure](https://my.northtyneside.gov.uk/sites/default/files/web-page-related-files/Corporate%20and%20Housing%20Services%20Complaint%20Procedure.docx) | The North Tyneside Council Corporate and Housing Services Complaints Procedure acknowledges that a complaint can be raised when the resident expresses dissatisfaction with the response to their service request, even if the handling of the request remains ongoing.  This is referenced on page 5 of the procedure. |
| 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 | [Corporate and Housing Services Complaints Procedure](https://my.northtyneside.gov.uk/sites/default/files/web-page-related-files/Corporate%20and%20Housing%20Services%20Complaint%20Procedure.docx) | If a resident completes a service level survey, i.e. a customer satisfaction survey and expresses dissatisfaction in the services they are receiving, they are not, be default directed to the Corporate Complaints Procedure.  The resident will be asked to provide their contact details so that their dissatisfaction can be followed upon.  In the first instance every effort will be made to resolve their dissatisfaction through the provision of a service, but if this not possible, then the resident will be directed to the Corporate Complaints Procedure.  This is referenced on page 5 of the procedure. |

# Section 2: Exclusions

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 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 | [Corporate and Housing Services Complaints Procedure](https://my.northtyneside.gov.uk/sites/default/files/web-page-related-files/Corporate%20and%20Housing%20Services%20Complaint%20Procedure.docx) | The North Tyneside Council Corporate and Housing Services Complaint Procedure sets out the reasons and circumstances in which the Authority would not consider a complaint.  The Authority considers the individual circumstances of each complaint and does not adopt a blanket approach to refusing to accept a complaint.  If the Authority does not accept a complaint, a detailed explanation will be provided to the resident setting out the reasons why their complaint request has not been accepted.  This is explained on pages 14 - 15 of the procedure. |
| 2.2 | A complaints policy must set out the circumstances in which a matter will not be considered as a complaint or escalated, and these circumstances must be fair and reasonable to residents. Acceptable exclusions include:   * The issue giving rise to the complaint occurred over twelve months ago. * Legal proceedings have started. This is defined as details of the claim, such as the Claim Form and Particulars of Claim, having been filed at court. * Matters that have previously been considered under the complaints policy. |  | [Corporate and Housing Services Complaints Procedure](https://my.northtyneside.gov.uk/sites/default/files/web-page-related-files/Corporate%20and%20Housing%20Services%20Complaint%20Procedure.docx) | The North Tyneside Council Corporate and Housing Services Complaint Procedure sets out the reasons and circumstances where the Authority would not consider a complaint.  If the Authority does not accept a complaint, a detailed explanation will be provided to the resident setting out the reasons why their complaint request has not been accepted.  This is explained on pages 14 - 15 of the procedure, 1.2 Exemptions. |
| 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 | [Corporate and Housing Services Complaints Procedure](https://my.northtyneside.gov.uk/sites/default/files/web-page-related-files/Corporate%20and%20Housing%20Services%20Complaint%20Procedure.docx) | The North Tyneside Council Corporate and Housing Services Complaint Procedure sets out the reasons and circumstances where the Authority would not consider a complaint.  If the Authority does not accept a complaint, a detailed explanation will be provided to the resident setting out the reasons why their complaint request has not been accepted.  This is explained on pages 14 – 15 of the procedure. |
| 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 | [Corporate and Housing Services Complaints Procedure](https://my.northtyneside.gov.uk/sites/default/files/web-page-related-files/Corporate%20and%20Housing%20Services%20Complaint%20Procedure.docx) | The North Tyneside Council Corporate and Housing Services Complaint Procedure sets out the reasons and circumstances where the Authority would not consider a complaint.  The Authority considers the individual circumstances of each complaint and does not adopt a blanket approach to refusing to accept a complaint.  If the Authority does not accept a complaint, a detailed explanation will be provided to the resident setting out the reasons why their complaint request has not been accepted.  Ombudsman details will also be provided to the resident, so they can contact direct if they choose to do so.  This is referenced on pages 14 – 15 of the procedure. |
| 2.5 | Landlords must not take a blanket approach to excluding complaints; they must consider the individual circumstances of each complaint. | Yes | [Corporate and Housing Services Complaints Procedure](https://my.northtyneside.gov.uk/sites/default/files/web-page-related-files/Corporate%20and%20Housing%20Services%20Complaint%20Procedure.docx) | The North Tyneside Council Corporate and Housing Services Complaint Procedure sets out the reasons and circumstances where the Authority would not consider a complaint.  The Authority considers the individual circumstances of each complaint and does not adopt a blanket approach to refusing to accept a complaint.  This is referenced on page 14 of the procedure. |

# 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 | <https://my.northtyneside.gov.uk/category/478/complain-about-council-services>  [Corporate and Housing Services Complaints Procedure](https://my.northtyneside.gov.uk/sites/default/files/web-page-related-files/Corporate%20and%20Housing%20Services%20Complaint%20Procedure.docx) | As a landlord and Authority we are committed to delivering services that ensure accessibility to all our residents.  This includes complaints and the different channels available to a resident to make a complaint.  Residents can make a complaint online, through our corporate Customer First Office by telephone, email or letter, or in person.  We consider our duties under the Equality Act 2010 and aim to anticipate the needs and reasonable adjustments of our residents that may need to use the corporate complaints procedure.  This is referenced on pages 12 – 13 of the procedure.  Equality and diversity e-learning training is mandatory for officers. |
| 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 | <https://my.northtyneside.gov.uk/category/478/complain-about-council-services>  [Corporate and Housing Services Complaints Procedure](https://my.northtyneside.gov.uk/sites/default/files/web-page-related-files/Corporate%20and%20Housing%20Services%20Complaint%20Procedure.docx) | As a landlord and Authority we are committed to delivering services that ensure accessibility to all our residents.  This includes complaints and the different channels available to residents to make a complaint.  Residents can make a complaint online, through our corporate Customer First Office by telephone, email or letter, or in person.  Residents wishing to make a complaint will be signposted to the Customer First Office who are the first point of contact for complaints, or their information will be shared with the Customer First Office for them to contact the resident and commence the complaint.  This is explained on page 6 of the procedure. |
| 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 | <https://my.northtyneside.gov.uk/category/478/complain-about-council-services>  [Corporate and Housing Services Complaints Procedure](https://my.northtyneside.gov.uk/sites/default/files/web-page-related-files/Corporate%20and%20Housing%20Services%20Complaint%20Procedure.docx) | As a landlord and Authority we are committed to delivering services that ensure they are accessible to all our residents.  This includes complaints and the different channels available to residents to make a complaint.  Information on how to complain is available on the Authority’s website.  Residents can make a complaint online, through our corporate Customer First Office by telephone, email or letter, or in person.  This is referenced on pages 12 and 18 of the procedure. |
| 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 | <https://my.northtyneside.gov.uk/category/478/complain-about-council-services>  [Corporate and Housing Services Complaints Procedure](https://my.northtyneside.gov.uk/sites/default/files/web-page-related-files/Corporate%20and%20Housing%20Services%20Complaint%20Procedure.docx) | The Corporate and Housing Services Complaints Procedure sets out our processes and response timeframes.  This is explained on pages 6 – 9 of the procedure.  The procedure is available on the Authority’s website. |
| 3.5 | The policy must explain how the landlord will publicise details of the complaints policy, including information about the Ombudsman and this Code. | Yes | <https://my.northtyneside.gov.uk/category/478/complain-about-council-services>  [Corporate and Housing Services Complaints Procedure](https://my.northtyneside.gov.uk/sites/default/files/web-page-related-files/Corporate%20and%20Housing%20Services%20Complaint%20Procedure.docx) | Information is publicised on the Authority’s website.  Governance and reporting is explained on page 19 of the procedure. |
| 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 | <https://my.northtyneside.gov.uk/category/478/complain-about-council-services>  [Corporate and Housing Services Complaints Procedure](https://my.northtyneside.gov.uk/sites/default/files/web-page-related-files/Corporate%20and%20Housing%20Services%20Complaint%20Procedure.docx) | Residents are provided with the opportunity to be supported through the complaints process by a representative.  Information can also be provided to the resident about local advocacy services to ensure they are supported.  This is explained on pages 12 – 13 of the procedure: Section 7 providing advocacy and support. |
| 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 | [Corporate and Housing Services Complaints Procedure](https://my.northtyneside.gov.uk/sites/default/files/web-page-related-files/Corporate%20and%20Housing%20Services%20Complaint%20Procedure.docx)  <https://my.northtyneside.gov.uk/category/478/complain-about-council-services> | Ombudsman information is available on the Authority’s website.  Resident letters also include Ombudsman information and their contact details. |

# Section 4: Complaint Handling Staff

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 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 | <https://my.northtyneside.gov.uk/category/478/complain-about-council-services>  [Corporate and Housing Services Complaints Procedure](https://my.northtyneside.gov.uk/sites/default/files/web-page-related-files/Corporate%20and%20Housing%20Services%20Complaint%20Procedure.docx) | As a landlord, there is a dedicated team, the Customer Relations Team within the service that are responsible for receiving, investigating, and responding to complaints received about the service.  Corporately there is a Customer First Office, who are the Authority’s first point of contact for any resident wishing to make a complaint.  The Authority’s Complaint Officer sits within the corporate team and is the point of contact for the Ombudsman.  The Complaints Manager engages with the landlord team for them to collate information for Ombudsman requests and respond to any Ombudsman enquiries.  The Customer Relations Team is responsible for producing reports and information as required and for the reporting of the information to the governing body. |
| 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 |  | The Corporate Complaints Manager liaises directly with the team manager of the Customer Relations Team and all relevant roles within the Authority to discuss and resolve complaints.  This is referenced on 17 of the procedure. |
| 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 |  | The importance of complaints and the handling of them is recognised through the provision of a dedicated customer relations team within the landlord service to prioritise, receive, investigate and respond to complaints within required timescales.  Learning is included in reports produced by the team.  Officers are supported to attend all relevant complaint handling training available to ensure they are qualified and competent to undertake their duties.  Officer training requirements is reviewed as part of our internal IPR’s, 1:1’s and team meetings. |

# 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 | [Corporate and Housing Services Complaints Procedure](https://my.northtyneside.gov.uk/sites/default/files/web-page-related-files/Corporate%20and%20Housing%20Services%20Complaint%20Procedure.docx) | The Authority has a Corporate and Housing Services Complaints Procedure. |
| 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 | [Corporate and Housing Services Complaints Procedure](https://my.northtyneside.gov.uk/sites/default/files/web-page-related-files/Corporate%20and%20Housing%20Services%20Complaint%20Procedure.docx) | The Authority has a two-stage process in place to address and resolve complaints.  Early interaction and engagement with residents is encouraged as part of these processes. This may include telephone contact and home visits/inspections to understand and resolve their complaint. |
| 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 | [Corporate and Housing Services Complaints Procedure](https://my.northtyneside.gov.uk/sites/default/files/web-page-related-files/Corporate%20and%20Housing%20Services%20Complaint%20Procedure.docx) | A two-stage process is in place.  This is explained on pages 6 – 9 of the procedure. |
| 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. | N/A |  | The Authority is responsible for receiving, investigating and replying to resident complaints.  There is no third party involvement in complaint handling. |
| 5.5 | Landlords are responsible for ensuring that any third parties handle complaints in line with the Code. | N/A |  | The Authority is responsible for receiving, investigating and replying to resident complaints.  There is no third party involvement in complaint handling. |
| 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 | [Corporate and Housing Services Complaints Procedure](https://my.northtyneside.gov.uk/sites/default/files/web-page-related-files/Corporate%20and%20Housing%20Services%20Complaint%20Procedure.docx) | When a complaint is received through the Customer First Office, an officer will contact the resident to establish the reason for their complaint and the outcome they are seeking. This information is recorded on a ‘statement of complaint’ and approved with the resident prior to it being logged on the IT system and shared with the service area.  This approach is adopted for Stage Two escalations too.  If required, clarification is sought with the resident prior to the complaint being logged and investigated.  This explanation is on pages 6 – 9 of the procedure. |
| 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 | [Corporate and Housing Services Complaints Procedure](https://my.northtyneside.gov.uk/sites/default/files/web-page-related-files/Corporate%20and%20Housing%20Services%20Complaint%20Procedure.docx) | The Authority’s Corporate and Housing Services Complaint Procedure confirms that it will be made clear to the resident which aspects of the complaint the landlord is and is not responsible for.  This is explained on pages 6 - 9 of the procedure. |
| 5.8 | At each stage of the complaints process, complaint handlers must:   1. deal with complaints on their merits, act independently, and have an open mind; 2. give the resident a fair chance to set out their position; 3. take measures to address any actual or perceived conflict of interest; and 4. consider all relevant information and evidence carefully. | Yes | [Corporate and Housing Services Complaints Procedure](https://my.northtyneside.gov.uk/sites/default/files/web-page-related-files/Corporate%20and%20Housing%20Services%20Complaint%20Procedure.docx) | The Authority’s Corporate and Housing Services Complaint Procedure covers the approach that our officers will adopt when receiving, investigating and responding to complaints.  This is explained on page 6 of the procedure. |
| 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 | [Corporate and Housing Services Complaints Procedure](https://my.northtyneside.gov.uk/sites/default/files/web-page-related-files/Corporate%20and%20Housing%20Services%20Complaint%20Procedure.docx) | If a complaint response will fall outside of the required response times and/or it is necessary to extend the response time, this will be done in agreement with the resident.  This will be confirmed in writing to them, setting out the reasons for the extension, with Ombudsman details provided, in case they wish to contact them direct.  This is explained on page 6 of the procedure. |
| 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 | [Corporate and Housing Services Complaints Procedure](https://my.northtyneside.gov.uk/sites/default/files/web-page-related-files/Corporate%20and%20Housing%20Services%20Complaint%20Procedure.docx) | As a landlord and an Authority, we will give due regard and consideration to our duties under the Equality Act 2010.  Records will be kept of any reasonable adjustment requirements and any disabilities disclosed by a resident.  This is explained on page 12 of the procedure. |
| 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 | [Corporate and Housing Services Complaints Procedure](https://my.northtyneside.gov.uk/sites/default/files/web-page-related-files/Corporate%20and%20Housing%20Services%20Complaint%20Procedure.docx) | As a landlord and Authority, we will only refuse to escalate a complaint through all stages of the complaints process, if there are valid reasons to do so and these reasons comply with the provisions set out in section 2 of the Code.  This is explained on page 14 of the procedure. |
| 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 | [Corporate and Housing Services Complaints Procedure](https://my.northtyneside.gov.uk/sites/default/files/web-page-related-files/Corporate%20and%20Housing%20Services%20Complaint%20Procedure.docx) | Each complaint received is logged on our corporate IT system.  All subsequent contact with the resident and any relevant information is recorded on the system too, including the complaint outcome at each stage.  This is explained on page 19 of the procedure.  As a landlord information is also recorded and maintained within individual address case files for each resident complaint. |
| 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 | [Corporate and Housing Services Complaints Procedure](https://my.northtyneside.gov.uk/sites/default/files/web-page-related-files/Corporate%20and%20Housing%20Services%20Complaint%20Procedure.docx) | As a landlord and an Authority, we acknowledge at all stages of a complaint response when something has not been right or below our service expectations and how this will be rectified.  This is explained on page 10 of the procedure. |
| 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 | <https://my.northtyneside.gov.uk/category/478/complain-about-council-services>  [Corporate and Housing Services Complaints Procedure](https://my.northtyneside.gov.uk/sites/default/files/web-page-related-files/Corporate%20and%20Housing%20Services%20Complaint%20Procedure.docx) | There is a Corporate Unacceptable Behaviour Restricting Access Procedure and Guidance available on the Authority’s website.  This sets out our approach with individuals who display unacceptable behaviour and whose access needs to be restricted and subject to review.  The Authority website also holds a Delivering Safe Customer Service Procedure for managing unacceptable behaviour. Section 3 of this procedure covers equality, diversity, and inclusion. |
| 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. |  | <https://my.northtyneside.gov.uk/category/478/complain-about-council-services> | The Delivering Safe Customer Service Procedure for managing unacceptable behaviour, Section 3 covers equality, diversity, and inclusion.  This includes any restricted access being proportionate and demonstrating regard for the Equality Act 2010. |

# Section 6: Complaints Stages

Stage 1

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Code provision | Code requirement | Comply: Yes / No | Evidence | Commentary / explanation |
| 6.1 | Landlords must have processes in place to consider which complaints can be responded to as early as possible, and which require further investigation. Landlords must consider factors such as the complexity of the complaint and whether the resident is vulnerable or at risk. Most stage 1 complaints can be resolved promptly, and an explanation, apology or resolution provided to the resident. | Yes | [Corporate and Housing Services Complaints Procedure](https://my.northtyneside.gov.uk/sites/default/files/web-page-related-files/Corporate%20and%20Housing%20Services%20Complaint%20Procedure.docx) | Each complaint received is dealt with on an individual basis, this includes any complaint complexities and resident vulnerabilities that need to be taken into consideration.  A complaint response is issued to the resident when the outcome to the complaint is known.  Early resolution of a complaint is advocated.  This is explained on page 6 of the procedure. |
| 6.2 | Complaints must be acknowledged, defined and logged at stage 1 of the complaints procedure **within five working days of the complaint being received**. | Yes | [Corporate and Housing Services Complaints Procedure](https://my.northtyneside.gov.uk/sites/default/files/web-page-related-files/Corporate%20and%20Housing%20Services%20Complaint%20Procedure.docx) | The Corporate Customer First Office is the first point of contact for complaints being received, defined, and logged. This is done within five working days.  Once on the corporate IT system, the dedicated customer relations team within the landlord service area accept responsibility for the complaint. |
| 6.3 | Landlords must issue a full response to stage 1 complaints **within 10 working days** of the complaint being acknowledged. | Yes | [Corporate and Housing Services Complaints Procedure](https://my.northtyneside.gov.uk/sites/default/files/web-page-related-files/Corporate%20and%20Housing%20Services%20Complaint%20Procedure.docx) | A complaint will received, investigated and responded to within 10 working days of the complaint being acknowledged.  The resident will receive their complaint response letter via email or post. |
| 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 | [Corporate and Housing Services Complaints Procedure](https://my.northtyneside.gov.uk/sites/default/files/web-page-related-files/Corporate%20and%20Housing%20Services%20Complaint%20Procedure.docx) | If a complaint falls outside of the required response times and/or it is necessary to extend the response time, this will be done in agreement with the resident.  The extension will not be greater than 10 working days with the details being confirmed in writing to them, with Ombudsman details provided, in case they wish to contact.  This is explained on pages 6 – 9 of the procedure. |
| 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 | [Corporate and Housing Services Complaints Procedure](https://my.northtyneside.gov.uk/sites/default/files/web-page-related-files/Corporate%20and%20Housing%20Services%20Complaint%20Procedure.docx) | Any correspondence to the resident requesting and agreeing to an extension, will include Ombudsman details, in case they wish to contact them direct.  This is explained on pages 6 – 9 of the procedure. |
| 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 | [Corporate and Housing Services Complaints Procedure](https://my.northtyneside.gov.uk/sites/default/files/web-page-related-files/Corporate%20and%20Housing%20Services%20Complaint%20Procedure.docx) | A complaint is responded to at either stage when all the information for the response is known.  Reference will be made in the response regarding any outstanding tasks that will be completed after the letter has been issued.  This is explained on page 6 of the procedure. |
| 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 | [Corporate and Housing Services Complaints Procedure](https://my.northtyneside.gov.uk/sites/default/files/web-page-related-files/Corporate%20and%20Housing%20Services%20Complaint%20Procedure.docx) | All points within a complaint are addressed, with clear reasoning provided for decisions that are made.  If appropriate to do, reference will be made to relevant policy, law and good practice,  This is explained on pages 6 - 9 of the procedure. |
| 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 | [Corporate and Housing Services Complaints Procedure](https://my.northtyneside.gov.uk/sites/default/files/web-page-related-files/Corporate%20and%20Housing%20Services%20Complaint%20Procedure.docx) | If additional information is received that is related to the current complaint and the Stage One response has not been issued, the additional information will be included in the complaint.  If the response has been issued, or the new information is unrelated to the existing complaint then a new complaint will be accepted.  This is explained on page 8 of the procedure. |
| 6.9 | Landlords must confirm the following in writing to the resident at the completion of stage 1 in clear, plain language:   1. the complaint stage; 2. the complaint definition; 3. the decision on the complaint; 4. the reasons for any decisions made; 5. the details of any remedy offered to put things right; 6. details of any outstanding actions; and 7. details of how to escalate the matter to stage 2 if the individual is not satisfied with the response. | Yes | [Corporate and Housing Services Complaints Procedure](https://my.northtyneside.gov.uk/sites/default/files/web-page-related-files/Corporate%20and%20Housing%20Services%20Complaint%20Procedure.docx) | Response letters to residents clearly cover all points required for inclusion at Stage One.  This is explained on pages 6 – 9 of the procedure. |

Stage 2

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| 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 | [Corporate and Housing Services Complaints Procedure](https://my.northtyneside.gov.uk/sites/default/files/web-page-related-files/Corporate%20and%20Housing%20Services%20Complaint%20Procedure.docx) | A complaint will be accepted at Stage Two if the resident remains dissatisfied with the response at Stage One.  This is explained on page 8 of the procedure. |
| 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 | [Corporate and Housing Services Complaints Procedure](https://my.northtyneside.gov.uk/sites/default/files/web-page-related-files/Corporate%20and%20Housing%20Services%20Complaint%20Procedure.docx) | The Corporate Customer First Office will acknowledge, define and log the complaint at Stage Two within the required timescale.  Once registered on the corporate IT system, the landlord will accepted responsibility for the complaint.  This is explained on page 8 of the procedure. |
| 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 | [Corporate and Housing Services Complaints Procedure](https://my.northtyneside.gov.uk/sites/default/files/web-page-related-files/Corporate%20and%20Housing%20Services%20Complaint%20Procedure.docx) | Stage Two requests will be accepted that do not include a resident’s reasoning for escalation.  This is explained on page 8 of the procedure. |
| 6.13 | The person considering the complaint at stage 2 must not be the same person that considered the complaint at stage 1. | Yes | [Corporate and Housing Services Complaints Procedure](https://my.northtyneside.gov.uk/sites/default/files/web-page-related-files/Corporate%20and%20Housing%20Services%20Complaint%20Procedure.docx) | The Stage Two complaint will be investigated and responded to by a person that did not consider the complaint at Stage One.  This is explained on page 8 of the procedure. |
| 6.14 | Landlords must issue a final response to the stage 2 **within 20 working days** of the complaint being acknowledged. | Yes | [Corporate and Housing Services Complaints Procedure](https://my.northtyneside.gov.uk/sites/default/files/web-page-related-files/Corporate%20and%20Housing%20Services%20Complaint%20Procedure.docx) | A complaint will be responded to within 20 working days.  The resident will receive their complaint response letter via email or post. |
| 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 | [Corporate and Housing Services Complaints Procedure](https://my.northtyneside.gov.uk/sites/default/files/web-page-related-files/Corporate%20and%20Housing%20Services%20Complaint%20Procedure.docx) | If a complaint falls outside of the required response times and/or it is necessary to extend the response time, this will be done in agreement with the resident.  The extension will not be greater than 20 working days and will be confirmed in writing to them, explaining the reason why, with Ombudsman details provided, in case they wish to contact them direct.  This is explained on pages 6 – 9 of the procedure. |
| 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 | [Corporate and Housing Services Complaints Procedure](https://my.northtyneside.gov.uk/sites/default/files/web-page-related-files/Corporate%20and%20Housing%20Services%20Complaint%20Procedure.docx) | Any correspondence to the resident requesting and agreeing to an extension, will include Ombudsman details, in case they wish to contact them direct.  This is explained on pages 6 – 9 of the procedure. |
| 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 | [Corporate and Housing Services Complaints Procedure](https://my.northtyneside.gov.uk/sites/default/files/web-page-related-files/Corporate%20and%20Housing%20Services%20Complaint%20Procedure.docx) | A complaint is responded to at either stage when all the information for the response is known.  Reference will be made in the response regarding any outstanding tasks that will be completed after the letter has been issued.  This is explained on page 6 of the procedure. |
| 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 | [Corporate and Housing Services Complaints Procedure](https://my.northtyneside.gov.uk/sites/default/files/web-page-related-files/Corporate%20and%20Housing%20Services%20Complaint%20Procedure.docx) | All points within a complaint are addressed, with clear reasoning provided for decisions that are made.  If appropriate to do, reference will be made to relevant policy, law and good practice,  This is explained in pages 6 -9 of the procedure. |
| 6.19 | Landlords must confirm the following in writing to the resident at the completion of stage 2 in clear, plain language:   1. the complaint stage; 2. the complaint definition; 3. the decision on the complaint; 4. the reasons for any decisions made; 5. the details of any remedy offered to put things right; 6. details of any outstanding actions; and 7. details of how to escalate the matter to the Ombudsman Service if the individual remains dissatisfied. | Yes | [Corporate and Housing Services Complaints Procedure](https://my.northtyneside.gov.uk/sites/default/files/web-page-related-files/Corporate%20and%20Housing%20Services%20Complaint%20Procedure.docx) | Complaint response letters to residents clearly cover all points required for inclusion at Stage Two.  This is explained on pages 6 – 9 of the procedure. |
| 6.20 | Stage 2 is the landlord’s final response and must involve all suitable staff members needed to issue such a response. | Yes | [Corporate and Housing Services Complaints Procedure](https://my.northtyneside.gov.uk/sites/default/files/web-page-related-files/Corporate%20and%20Housing%20Services%20Complaint%20Procedure.docx) | Stage Two is the landlord and Authority final complaint response.  Suitable officers are involved in the collation and agreement of the response.  This is explained on pages 6 – 9 of the procedure. |

# Section 7: Putting things right

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| Code provision | Code requirement | Comply: Yes / No | Evidence | Commentary / explanation |
| 7.1 | Where something has gone wrong a landlord must acknowledge this and set out the actions it has already taken, or intends to take, to put things right. These can include:   * Apologising; * Acknowledging where things have gone wrong; * Providing an explanation, assistance or reasons; * Taking action if there has been delay; * Reconsidering or changing a decision; * Amending a record or adding a correction or addendum; * Providing a financial remedy; * Changing policies, procedures or practices. | Yes | [Corporate and Housing Services Complaints Procedure](https://my.northtyneside.gov.uk/sites/default/files/web-page-related-files/Corporate%20and%20Housing%20Services%20Complaint%20Procedure.docx) | If something has gone wrong this will be acknowledged in the complaint response at either stage, and will include how we aim to put things right.  This is explained on pages 10 -11 of the procedure, Solutions and remedies. |
| 7.2 | Any remedy offered must reflect the impact on the resident as a result of any fault identified. | Yes | [Corporate and Housing Services Complaints Procedure](https://my.northtyneside.gov.uk/sites/default/files/web-page-related-files/Corporate%20and%20Housing%20Services%20Complaint%20Procedure.docx) | When determining any remedy to be offered consideration is given to:   * The impact on the resident as the result of any identified fault. * Remedy guidance issued by the Ombudsman.   This is explained on pages 10 -11 of the procedure. |
| 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 | [Corporate and Housing Services Complaints Procedure](https://my.northtyneside.gov.uk/sites/default/files/web-page-related-files/Corporate%20and%20Housing%20Services%20Complaint%20Procedure.docx) | The remedy offer will set out what will happen, and by when if the resident is in agreement with the offer.  The remedy offer will be followed through to conclusion.  This is referred to on pages 10 -11 of the procedure. |
| 7.4 | Landlords must take account of the guidance issued by the Ombudsman when deciding on appropriate remedies. | Yes | [Corporate and Housing Services Complaints Procedure](https://my.northtyneside.gov.uk/sites/default/files/web-page-related-files/Corporate%20and%20Housing%20Services%20Complaint%20Procedure.docx) | Remedy guidance issued by the Ombudsman is considered when a remedy offer is being considered.  This is referred to on page 10 of the procedure. |

# Section 8: Putting things right

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| Code provision | Code requirement | Comply: Yes / No | Evidence | Commentary / explanation |
| 8.1 | Landlords must produce an annual complaints performance and service improvement report for scrutiny and challenge, which must include:   1. the annual self-assessment against this Code to ensure their complaint handling policy remains in line with its requirements. 2. 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; 3. any findings of non-compliance with this Code by the Ombudsman; 4. the service improvements made as a result of the learning from complaints; 5. any annual report about the landlord’s performance from the Ombudsman; and 6. any other relevant reports or publications produced by the Ombudsman in relation to the work of the landlord. | Yes | <https://my.northtyneside.gov.uk/sites/default/files/web-page-related-files/Annual%20Complaints%20Report%202023.pdf> | An annual report is produced and published, as is the self assessment.  The report includes complaint outcomes, including Ombudsman decisions, and our leaning and improvement from complaints. |
| 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 | [Complaint Governance Framework 2024-25](https://northtyneside.sharepoint.com/sites/Complaints481/Shared%20Documents/General/Governance/Complaint%20Governance%20Framework%202024-25.docx?web=1) | A corporate complaint governance framework has been developed which sets out frequency of information being shared and with whom. |
| 8.3 | Landlords must also carry out a self-assessment following a significant restructure, merger and/or change in procedures. | Yes |  | Any change to procedure or service redesign that may impact on the self-assessment will result in it being reviewed and revised, with the updated form being submitted to the Ombudsman and published online. |
| 8.4 | Landlords may be asked to review and update the self-assessment following an Ombudsman investigation. | Yes |  | Any request to review and update the self-assessment following any Ombudsman investigation and decision will be adhered too, with the revised self-assessment being submitted to the Ombudsman and published online. |
| 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 |  | Any incident that occurs that may result in the landlord and the authority being unable to comply with the Code will be reported on and published online. |

# Section 9: Scrutiny & oversight: continuous learning and improvement

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| 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 | [Corporate and Housing Services Complaints Procedure](https://my.northtyneside.gov.uk/sites/default/files/web-page-related-files/Corporate%20and%20Housing%20Services%20Complaint%20Procedure.docx) | All complaints received and responded too will be reviewed to identify if any service improvement is required because of a complaint outcome.  This is explained on page 10 of the procedure. |
| 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 | [Corporate and Housing Services Complaints Procedure](https://my.northtyneside.gov.uk/sites/default/files/web-page-related-files/Corporate%20and%20Housing%20Services%20Complaint%20Procedure.docx) | All complaints received and responded too will be used a source of intelligence to recommend and introduce any change to service delivery.  This is referenced on page 18 of the procedure. |
| 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 | [Corporate and Housing Services Complaints Procedure](https://my.northtyneside.gov.uk/sites/default/files/web-page-related-files/Corporate%20and%20Housing%20Services%20Complaint%20Procedure.docx) | Pages 17 – 22 of the procedure cover our governance arrangements. |
| 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 | [Corporate and Housing Services Complaints Procedure](https://my.northtyneside.gov.uk/sites/default/files/web-page-related-files/Corporate%20and%20Housing%20Services%20Complaint%20Procedure.docx) | There is a dedicated team within the landlord service that receives, investigates and responds to complaints.  The manager of this team is responsible for the collation and analysing of resident complaint reasons and produce reports and recommendations that include learning to be taken forward within service improvement plans and service delivery that improve the resident experience. |
| 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 | [Corporate and Housing Services Complaints Procedure](https://my.northtyneside.gov.uk/sites/default/files/web-page-related-files/Corporate%20and%20Housing%20Services%20Complaint%20Procedure.docx) | The Elected Member with lead responsibility for Housing is the appointed MRC for the landlord.  Governance arrangements are covered in pages 17 -22 of the procedure. |
| 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 | [Corporate and Housing Services Complaints Procedure](https://my.northtyneside.gov.uk/sites/default/files/web-page-related-files/Corporate%20and%20Housing%20Services%20Complaint%20Procedure.docx) | Governance arrangements are covered in pages 17 -22 of the procedure. |
| 9.7 | As a minimum, the MRC and the governing body (or equivalent) must receive:   1. regular updates on the volume, categories and outcomes of complaints, alongside complaint handling performance; 2. regular reviews of issues and trends arising from complaint handling; 3. regular updates on the outcomes of the Ombudsman’s investigations and progress made in complying with orders related to severe maladministration findings; and 4. annual complaints performance and service improvement report. | Yes | [Corporate and Housing Services Complaints Procedure](https://my.northtyneside.gov.uk/sites/default/files/web-page-related-files/Corporate%20and%20Housing%20Services%20Complaint%20Procedure.docx)  [North Tyneside Council: Decision making](https://democracy.northtyneside.gov.uk/mgAi.aspx?ID=7004) | Governance arrangements are covered in pages 17 -22 of the procedure.  Minutes from Cabinet meeting are published on the Authority’s website following the annual complaints performance and service improvement report |
| 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:   1. have a collaborative and co-operative approach towards resolving complaints, working with colleagues across teams and departments; 2. take collective responsibility for any shortfalls identified through complaints, rather than blaming others; and 3. act within the professional standards for engaging with complaints as set by any relevant professional body. | Yes | [Corporate and Housing Services Complaints Procedure](https://my.northtyneside.gov.uk/sites/default/files/web-page-related-files/Corporate%20and%20Housing%20Services%20Complaint%20Procedure.docx) | As a landlord and Authority all officers involved in complaint handling adopt a collaborative approach to resolve complaints through effective and robust working relationships with colleagues within the service areas.  Any identification of where things have gone wrong or service expectations have not been met will be co-owned, with service improvements and recommendations agreed in partnership.  All officers carry out their duties in accordance with corporate and professional standards. |