

# Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code: Self-assessment form (covers Jan- December 2022)

Compliance with the Complaint Handling Code			
1	Definition of a complaint	Yes	No
	<p><b>Does the complaints process use the following definition of a complaint?</b></p> <p>An expression of dissatisfaction, however made, about the standard of service, actions, or lack of action by the organisation, its own staff, or those acting on its behalf, affecting an individual resident or group of residents.</p>	√	
	<p><b>Does the policy have exclusions where a complaint will not be considered?</b></p> <p>Our policy has the following exclusions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>complaints where court proceedings are underway against L&amp;Q / THT (defined as the Claim Form and Particulars of Claim having been filed at court). This can include disrepair cases and other legal cases. Legal liability such as insurance claims are also not covered. Should legal action start after the complaint has been raised, we will close the complaint.</li> <li>complaints being dealt with by another statutory agency that has the power to resolve the complaint (if this occurs after the complaint has been raised, we will close the complaint)</li> <li>anti-social behaviour as this is covered by L&amp;Q / THT's Anti-Social Behaviour policy. A complaint will be accepted if the customer is dissatisfied with how their case has been handled</li> <li>complaints over 6 months old unless there are exceptional circumstances.</li> <li>matters that have previously been considered under the complaints policy</li> </ul>	√	
	<p><b>Are these exclusions reasonable and fair to residents?</b></p> <p>THT follow guidance issued by the Housing Ombudsman when considering exclusions</p>	√	
2	<b>Accessibility</b>		
	<p><b>Are multiple accessibility routes available for residents to make a complaint?</b></p> <p><b>4.1 How to Complain</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>By phone to our customer service Centre on 0300 777 7777</li> <li>By email to <a href="mailto:customer.relationsteam@traffordhousingtrust.co.uk">customer.relationsteam@traffordhousingtrust.co.uk</a></li> </ul>	√	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Via social media – THT Facebook or Twitter</li> <li>• In writing to Resolution Team, Sale Point, 126-150 Washway Rd, Sale M33 6AG</li> <li>• Directly to any of our colleagues in person</li> <li>• Via a representative or advocate (with written permission from the customer)</li> </ul>		
	<b>Is the complaints policy and procedure available online?</b>	√	
	<b>Do we have a reasonable adjustments policy?</b> Our approach to reasonable adjustments is incorporated into our Accessible Services Policy.	√	
	<b>Do we regularly advise residents about our complaints process?</b> We detail our complaints process online and can be found here: <a href="#">Making a complaint   Trafford Housing Trust</a> Customers who make a complaint via our Customer Hub or in person to a THT colleague are advised of the process at first point of contact. We detail the next steps of our complaint's procedure in our Stage 1 and Stage 2 complaint letters	√	
<b>3</b>	<b>Complaints team and process</b>		
	<b>Is there a complaint officer or equivalent in post?</b> We have a Resolution Lead and 2 Customer Liaison Officers.	√	
	<b>Does the complaint officer have autonomy to resolve complaints?</b>	√	
	<b>Does the complaint officer have authority to compel engagement from other departments to resolve disputes?</b>	√	
<b>3.4</b>	<b>If there is a third stage to the complaint's procedure are residents involved in the decision making?</b> There is no third stage as it adds nothing to the process apart from time.		√
	<b>Is any third stage optional for residents?</b> There is no third stage	N/A	N/A
	<b>Does the final stage response set out residents' right to refer the matter to the Housing Ombudsman Service?</b>	√	
	<b>Do we keep a record of complaint correspondence including correspondence from the resident?</b>	√	
	<b>At what stage are most complaints resolved?</b>	<b>Stage 1</b>	

	2022 calendar year we had 366 complaints of which 285 were resolved at Stage 1- <b>78%</b>		
<b>4</b>	<b>Communication</b>		
	<b>Are residents kept informed and updated during the complaints process?</b> How we do this is detailed in our Complaints Procedure	√	
	<b>Are residents informed of the landlord's position and given a chance to respond and challenge any area of dispute before the final decision?</b> How we do this is detailed in our Complaints Procedure 4.2 the Complaints Stages	√	
	<b>Are all complaints acknowledged and logged within five days?</b>	√	
	<b>Are residents advised of how to escalate at the end of each stage?</b>	√	
	<b>What proportion of complaints are resolved at stage one?</b>	<b>78%</b>	
	<b>What proportion of complaints are resolved at stage two?</b>	<b>22%</b>	
	<b>What proportion of complaint responses are sent within Code timescales?</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stage one Stage one (with extension)</li> <li>• Stage two Stage two (with extension)</li> </ul>	<b>81%</b> <b>19%</b> <b>81%</b> <b>19%</b>	
	<b>Where timescales have been extended did we have good reason?</b>	√	
	<b>Where timescales have been extended did we keep the resident informed?</b>	√	
	<b>What proportion of complaints do we resolve to residents' satisfaction?</b> <b>72.2%</b> (Jan-Dec 2022)	<b>72.2%</b>	
<b>5</b>	<b>Cooperation with Housing Ombudsman Service</b>		
	<b>Were all requests for evidence responded to within 15 days?</b> We requested 2 extensions and both times we made the HOS aware and sought permission to do so	√	

	<b>Where the timescale was extended did we keep the Ombudsman informed?</b> Yes	√	
<b>6</b>	<b>Fairness in complaint handling</b>		
	<b>Are residents able to complain via a representative throughout?</b> Yes section 4.1 of our policy details this	√	
	<b>If advice was given, was this accurate and easy to understand?</b>	√	
	<b>How many cases did we refuse to escalate?</b>  <b>What was the reason for the refusal?</b>	<b>0</b>	
	<b>Did we explain our decision to the resident?</b>	<b>N/A</b>	
<b>7</b>	<b>Outcomes and remedies</b>		
	<b>Where something has gone wrong are we taking appropriate steps to put things right?</b>	√	
<b>8</b>	<b>Continuous learning and improvement</b>		
	<b>What improvements have we made as a result of learning from complaints?</b>  Improvements that we have made as a result of complaints and customer feedback are displayed on the THT website and updated quarterly and include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Having the ability to refer customers to an independent Occupational Therapist to help quickly identify any reasonable adjustments</li> <li>- A weekly review of any gas complaints with our contractor to escalate any matters</li> <li>- Producing a new style service charge booklet to provide clearer information</li> <li>- Publishing our service standards and our performance in meeting them to provide clearer information on our website</li> <li>- Making it quicker and easier to use our online services on a mobile phone</li> </ul>		
	<b>How do we share these lessons with?</b>  <b>a) residents?</b> On our website, social media, our customer newsletter, our involved customer newsletter and directly to the customers who have provided feedback.  <b>b) the board/governing body?</b> Quarterly complaint reports  <b>c) In the Annual Report?</b>		

	The Annual Report contains a “You said/we listened section” and a section on complaints		
	<b>Has the Code made a difference to how we respond to complaints?</b>	√	
	<b>What changes have we made?</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A review and update of the Complaints Policy in relation to the complaints handling code enhancements that came into effect from the 1<sup>st</sup> of October 2023</li> <li>• Complaint’s investigation and handling has been centralised and complaints officer roles created.</li> <li>• Information about the Housing Ombudsman is communicated more widely and regularly to customers.</li> <li>• Complaint’s learning is shared more widely with customers</li> <li>• An independent quarterly review of individual complaint outcomes and a review by Senior Managers.</li> </ul>		