

Complaint Handling Code Self-Assessment Form

The Housing Ombudsman Service requires landlords to carry out an annual self-assessment of their complaints handling procedures, against the Ombudsman’s Complaint Handling Code. Landlords must also publish the results of this assessment.

Salix Homes sets out the following evidence, so customers know what they can and should expect from us when things go wrong.

Section 1 - Definition of a complaint

Mandatory ‘must’ requirements

| Code section | Code requirement | Comply: Yes/No | Evidence, commentary and any explanations |
|--------------|--|----------------|--|
| 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 organisation, its own staff, or those acting on its behalf, affecting an individual resident or group of residents.</i> | Yes | Definition within Salix Homes’ Customer Feedback and Complaints Policy which is also published on the external website. |
| 1.3 | The resident does not have to use the word ‘complaint’ for it to be treated as such. A complaint that is submitted via a third party or representative must still be handled in line with the landlord’s complaints policy. | Yes | This is detailed within Salix Homes’ Customer Feedback and Complaints Policy which is also published on the external website. |
| 1.6 | ... if further enquiries are needed to resolve the matter, or if the resident requests it, the issue must be logged as a complaint. | Yes | This is detailed within Salix Homes’ Customer Feedback and Complaints Policy which is also published on the external website. Also reiterated within internal complaints training. |
| 1.7 | A landlord must accept a complaint unless there is a valid reason not to do so. | Yes | This is detailed within Salix Homes’ Customer Feedback and Complaints Policy which is also published on the external website. |

| | | | |
|-----|--|-----|--|
| 1.8 | A complaints policy must clearly set out the circumstances in which a matter will not be considered, and these circumstances should be fair and reasonable to residents. | Yes | This is detailed within Salix Homes' Customer Feedback and Complaints Policy which is also published on the external website. |
| 1.9 | If a landlord decides not to accept a complaint, a detailed 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. | Yes | <p>This is detailed within Salix Homes' Customer Feedback and Complaints Policy which is also published on the external website.</p> <p>The policy and procedure exclude complaints over six months old as they can be difficult to investigate fairly and fully. However, these will be investigated in exceptional circumstances.</p> <p>Further clarity is provided on complaints that will not be investigated at that time based on the current circumstances, rather than excluded. They may be investigated later if appropriate. This includes where the issue is subject to legal action and the complainant chooses the legal action rather than the complaint route and where there is actual or criminal activity, or complaints that are already open and have been referred to the Housing Ombudsman. The clarification of these ensures consistency and that complaints are treated appropriately.</p> <p>A record is kept of all suspended complaints.</p> |

Best practice 'should' requirements

| Code section | Code requirement | Comply: Yes/No | Evidence, commentary and any explanations |
|--------------|---|----------------|---|
| 1.4 | Landlords should recognise the difference between a service request , where a resident may be unhappy with a situation that they wish to have rectified, and a complaint about the service they have/have not received. | Yes | This is detailed within Salix Homes' Customer Feedback and Complaints Policy which is also published on the external website. Difference between a service request and complaint is reiterated within internal complaints training. |
| 1.5 | Survey feedback may not necessarily need to be treated as a complaint, though, where possible, the person completing the survey should be made aware of how they can pursue their dissatisfaction as a complaint if they wish to. | Yes | Customer satisfaction survey comments are captured and reviewed to identify and address any dissatisfaction. The survey advises customers how to raise a complaint if they wish to. |

Section 2 - Accessibility and awareness

Mandatory 'must' requirements

| Code section | Code requirement | Comply: Yes/No | Evidence, commentary and any explanations |
|--------------|---|----------------|---|
| 2.1 | Landlords must make it easy for residents to complain by providing different channels through which residents can make a complaint such as in person, over the telephone, in writing, by email and digitally. While the Ombudsman recognises that it may not be feasible for a landlord to use all of the potential channels, there must be more than one route of access into the complaints system. | Yes | Complaints can be made through various channels including digitally via the Salix Homes' website or social media pages, digitally via the customer's online portal, over the telephone, via email, in person, and in writing. |
| 2.3 | Landlords must make their complaint policy available in a clear and accessible format for all residents. This will detail the number of stages involved, what will happen at each stage and the timeframes for responding. | Yes | The customer feedback and complaints policy is written using plain English and details both stages involved and the timeframes for responding. |
| 2.4 | Landlord websites, if they exist, must include information on how to raise a complaint. The complaints policy and process must be easy to find on the website. | Yes | The complaints page on the website includes information on the complaints process. The complaints policy, procedure, and self-assessment can be downloaded by customers from this page. |
| 2.5 | Landlords must comply with the Equality Act 2010 and may need to adapt normal policies, procedures, or processes to accommodate an individual's needs. Landlords must satisfy themselves that their policy sets out how they will respond to reasonable adjustments requests in line with the Equality Act and that complaints handlers have had appropriate training to deal with such requests. | Yes | Reasonable adjustments are incorporated into the complaints policy. We have multiple ways of reporting complaints to Salix Homes. We welcome complaints from advocates with permission to act on behalf of tenants. The investigating managers have the flexibility to respond in the most appropriate way and to adjust their outcomes in a fair and just manner to reflect any vulnerabilities or needs of the complainant. |

| | | | |
|------------|--|-----|---|
| 2.6 | Landlords must publicise the complaints policy and process, the Complaint Handling Code and the Housing Ombudsman Scheme in leaflets, posters, newsletters, online and as part of regular correspondence with residents. | Yes | Complaints policy and process and links to Housing Ombudsman scheme are published on the website: www.salixhomes.co.uk/our-complaints-process . Marketing and communications team are incorporating this information as part of their review of communications to customers. |
| 2.7 | Landlords must provide residents with contact information for the Ombudsman as part of its regular correspondence with residents. | Yes | Marketing and communications team is considering this as part of their review of communications to customers. Reference to the Ombudsman is made throughout the complaints process as well as in regular newsletters to customers. |
| 2.8 | Landlords must provide early advice to residents regarding their right to access the Housing Ombudsman Service throughout their complaint, not only when the landlord's complaints process is exhausted. | Yes | This advice is included in all standard correspondence to residents from the acknowledgement of their complaint throughout the complaints process. |

Best practice 'should' requirements

| Code section | Code requirement | Comply: Yes/No | Evidence, commentary and any explanations |
|---------------------|--|-----------------------|---|
| 2.2 | Where a landlord has set up channels to communicate with its residents via social media, then it should expect to receive complaints via those channels. Policies should contain details of the steps that will be taken when a complaint is received via social media and how confidentiality and privacy will be maintained. | Partial | Dissatisfaction expressed via social media is raised as a complaint where appropriate. This will be incorporated in our social media policy review. |

Section 3 - Complaint handling personnel

Mandatory 'must' requirements

| Code section | Code requirement | Comply: Yes/No | Evidence, commentary and any explanations |
|--------------|---|----------------|---|
| 3.1 | Landlords must have a person or team assigned to take responsibility for complaint handling to ensure complaints receive the necessary attention, and that these are reported to the governing body. This Code will refer to that person or team as the "complaints officer". | Yes | The dedicated complaints support team and customer service manager are specifically assigned the responsibility for complaint handling. |
| 3.2 | ...the complaint handler appointed must have appropriate complaint handling skills and no conflicts of interest. | Yes | The complaints support team is experienced in complaints handling and there are no conflicts of interest. |

Best practice 'should' requirements

| Code section | Code requirement | Comply: Yes/No | Evidence, commentary and any explanations |
|--------------|---|----------------|---|
| 3.3 | Complaint handlers should: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • be able to act sensitively and fairly • be trained to handle complaints and deal with distressed and upset residents • have access to staff at all levels to facilitate quick resolution of complaints • have the authority and autonomy to act to resolve disputes quickly and fairly. | Yes | The complaints support team is experienced in complaints handling and have the necessary customer service and soft skills required to support residents. They also provide support, advice and training to the rest of the business which includes responding managers. There are designated managers in each service area to deal with complaints and they have the autonomy to resolve the complaint. |

Section 4 - Complaint handling principles

Mandatory 'must' requirements

| Code section | Code requirement | Comply: Yes/No | Evidence, commentary and any explanations |
|--------------|--|----------------|--|
| 4.1 | Any decision to try and resolve a concern must be taken in agreement with the resident and a landlord's audit trail/records should be able to demonstrate this. Landlords must ensure that efforts to resolve a resident's concerns do not obstruct access to the complaints procedure or result in any unreasonable delay. It is not appropriate to have extra named stages (such as 'stage 0' or 'pre-complaint stage') as this causes unnecessary confusion for residents. When a complaint is made, it must be acknowledged and logged at stage one of the complaints procedure within five days of receipt . | Yes | Our target for acknowledging complaints is within two working days of receipt. During the financial year 2021-2022, 100% of complaints were acknowledged within 5 days and 92% within 2 days of receipt. Where a customer is happy for the complaint to be de-escalated, they receive confirmation in writing including the reason for the de-escalation so they are clear the issue will not continue down the formal complaints process. |
| 4.2 | Within the complaint acknowledgement, landlords must set out their understanding of the complaint and the outcomes the resident is seeking. If any aspect of the complaint is unclear, the resident must be asked for clarification and the full definition agreed between both parties. | Yes | This is standard in all complaint acknowledgement letters. |
| 4.6 | A complaint investigation must be conducted in an impartial manner. | Yes | Complaints are investigated by the manager of the service area. Where this may not be appropriate, another independent manager will be selected to investigate and respond. |

| | | | |
|------|--|-----|--|
| 4.7 | <p>The complaint handler must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • deal with complaints on their merits • act independently and have an open mind • take measures to address any actual or perceived conflict of interest • consider all information and evidence carefully • keep the complaint confidential as far as possible, with information only disclosed if necessary to properly investigate the matter. | Yes | |
| 4.11 | Landlords must adhere to any reasonable arrangements agreed with residents in terms of frequency and method of communication | Yes | Customers' preferred method of communication is captured on our customer relationship management system within the initial raising of the complaint. If a customer would like more regular contact throughout the complaints process, this will be accommodated. |
| 4.12 | <p>The resident, and if applicable any staff member who is the subject of the complaint, must also be given a fair chance to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • set out their position • comment on any adverse findings before a final decision is made. | Yes | This would form part of the investigation and involve People Services where appropriate. |
| 4.13 | A landlord must include in its complaints policy its timescales for a resident to request escalation of a complaint | Yes | This information is clearly stated in our complaints policy and also in standard complaint responses. |
| 4.14 | A landlord must not unreasonably refuse to escalate a complaint through all stages of the complaints procedure and must have clear and valid reasons for taking that course of action. Reasons for declining to escalate a complaint must be clearly set out in a landlord's complaints policy and must be the same as the reasons for not accepting a complaint. | Yes | Even where customers have requested an escalation to stage 2 review outside of the timescale, this will be reasonably considered and escalated if possible. In the rare event that a complaint is not escalated, this is clearly explained to the customer in writing. |
| 4.15 | A full record must be kept of the complaint, any review 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 reports or surveys prepared. | Yes | Full records of the complaint, including all documents and notes, are kept within our customer relationship management system. |

| | | | |
|-------------|---|-----|--|
| 4.18 | Landlords must have policies and procedures in place for managing unacceptable behaviour from residents and/or their representatives when pursuing a complaint. | Yes | Nuisance to landlord process in place to manage unacceptable behaviour from residents when pursuing a complaint. |
|-------------|---|-----|--|

Best practice 'should' requirements

| Code section | Code requirement | Comply: Yes/No | Evidence, commentary and any explanations |
|---------------------|--|-----------------------|--|
| 4.3 | Landlords should manage residents' expectations from the outset, being clear where a desired outcome is unreasonable or unrealistic | Yes | Complaints training is delivered to the customer service centre who raise the majority of complaints and this includes managing customer expectations. |
| 4.4 | A complaint should be resolved at the earliest possible opportunity, having assessed what evidence is needed to fully consider the issues, what outcome would resolve the matter for the resident and whether there are any urgent actions required. | Yes | Where possible, complaints are resolved at the earliest opportunity. Within the customer service centre 'Tier 2' advisors with advanced repairs and tenancy/income knowledge help resolve dissatisfaction as soon as possible for customers. |
| 4.5 | Landlords should 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 where this is reasonable. | Yes | Complaints can be raised by those with authority to act on behalf of the customer which also includes local Council representatives. Accommodation would be made for a customer to be accompanied to any meeting with Salix Homes where appropriate. |
| 4.8 | Where a key issue of a complaint relates to the parties' legal obligations landlords should clearly set out their understanding of the obligations of both parties. | Yes | |

| | | | |
|-------------|--|---------|---|
| 4.9 | Communication with the resident should not generally identify individual members of staff or contractors. | Yes | |
| 4.10 | Landlords should keep residents regularly updated about the progress of the investigation. | Partial | Where a customer requests regular updates on the progress of an investigation, this will be accommodated. If a complaint investigation is taking longer than expected, the customer will be sent a holding letter giving the reasons for any delay and a new response deadline. |
| 4.16 | Landlords should seek feedback from residents in relation to the landlord's complaint handling as part of the drive to encourage a positive complaint and learning culture. | Yes | A complaint satisfaction survey regarding the handling of the complaint is sent to the customer once their complaint has been concluded. |
| 4.17 | Landlords should recognise the impact that being complained about can have on future service delivery. Landlords should ensure that staff are supported and engaged in the complaints process, including the learning that can be gained | Yes | A comprehensive learning from complaints process is in place and regular support is offered by the complaints support team to staff engaged in the complaints process. |
| 4.19 | Any restrictions placed on a resident's contact due to unacceptable behaviour should be appropriate to their needs and should demonstrate regard for the provisions of the Equality Act 2010. | Yes | |

Section 5 - Complaint stages

Mandatory 'must' requirements

Stage 1

| Code section | Code requirement | Comply: Yes/No | Evidence, commentary and any explanations |
|--------------|---|----------------|---|
| 5.1 | Landlords must respond to the complaint <u>within 10 working days</u> of the complaint being logged. Exceptionally, landlords may provide an explanation to the resident containing a clear timeframe for when the response will be received. This should not exceed a further 10 days without good reason. | Yes | In 2021/22, 72% of stage one responses were sent within 10 working days of the complaints being received. 96% of customers where the response exceeded 10 working days received a holding letter within the deadline explaining the reason for the delay and giving a new deadline. |
| 5.5 | A complaint response must be sent 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 expeditiously with regular updates provided to the resident. | Yes | Any outstanding works and timeframes are documented within the response including agreed frequency of any contact to support the customer until full completion of the works. |
| 5.6 | Landlords must address all points raised in the complaint and provide clear reasons for any decisions, referencing the relevant policy, law and good practice where appropriate. | Yes | On investigation of each element, the findings are clarified in the response with references and explanation where necessary. A conclusion is arrived at for each element of complaint. |
| 5.8 | Landlords must confirm the following in writing to the resident at the completion of stage one in clear, plain language: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the complaint stage • the decision on the complaint • the reasons for any decisions made • the details of any remedy offered to put things right • details of any outstanding actions • details of how to escalate the matter to stage two if the resident is not satisfied with the answer | Yes | This is incorporated in our template letter and followed by investigating managers in their response. Before the response is sent to the customer, the complaints team will check to ensure each point is clearly covered. |

Stage 2

| Code section | Code requirement | Comply: Yes/No | Evidence, commentary and any explanations |
|--------------|--|----------------|--|
| 5.9 | If all or part of the complaint is not resolved to the resident's satisfaction at stage one it must be progressed to stage two of the landlord's procedure, unless an exclusion ground now applies. In instances where a landlord declines to escalate a complaint it must clearly communicate in writing its reasons for not escalating as well as the resident's right to approach the Ombudsman about its decision. | Yes | This is incorporated into the complaints process within our customer relationship management system. |
| 5.10 | On receipt of the escalation request, landlords must set out their understanding of issues outstanding and the outcomes the resident is seeking. If any aspect of the complaint is unclear, the resident must be asked for clarification and the full definition agreed between both parties. | Yes | This is incorporated into the complaints process within our customer relationship management system. |
| 5.11 | Landlords must only escalate a complaint to stage two once it has completed stage one and at the request of the resident. | Yes | |
| 5.12 | The person considering the complaint at stage two, must not be the same person that considered the complaint at stage one. | Yes | Senior managers or directors will respond at stage two. |
| 5.13 | Landlords must respond to the stage two complaint <u>within 20 working days</u> of the complaint being escalated. Exceptionally, landlords may provide an explanation to the resident containing a clear timeframe for when the response will be received. This should not exceed a further 10 days without good reason. | Yes | In 2021/22, 88% of stage two complaint responses were sent within 15 working days of escalation and 92% within 20 working days. Holding letters were sent explaining the reason for the delay in response. |
| 5.16 | Landlords must confirm the following in writing to the resident at the completion of stage two in clear, plain language: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the complaint stage • the complaint definition • the decision on the complaint • the reasons for any decisions made • the details of any remedy offered to put things right • details of any outstanding actions and <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • if the landlord has a third stage, details of how to escalate the matter to stage three • if this was the final stage, details of how to escalate the | Yes | There is no third stage in Salix Homes' complaints process. |

| | | | |
|--|---|--|--|
| | matter to the Housing Ombudsman Service if the resident remains dissatisfied. | | |
|--|---|--|--|

Stage 3

| Code section | Code requirement | Comply: Yes/No | Evidence, commentary and any explanations |
|--------------|--|-------------------|---|
| 5.17 | Two stage landlord complaint procedures are ideal. This ensures that the complaint process is not unduly long. If landlords strongly believe a third stage is necessary, they must set out their reasons for this as part of their self-assessment. A process with more than three stages is not acceptable under any circumstances. | Yes | Salix Homes has two stages in their complaints process. |
| 5.20 | Landlords must confirm the following in writing to the resident at the completion of stage three in clear, plain language: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the complaint stage • the complaint definition • the decision on the complaint • the reasons for any decisions made • the details of any remedy offered to put things right • details of any outstanding actions details of how to escalate the matter to the Housing Ombudsman Service if the resident remains dissatisfied | N/A | There is no third stage in Salix Homes' complaints process. |

Best practice 'should' requirements

Stage 1

| Code section | Code requirement | Comply: Yes/No | Evidence, commentary and any explanations |
|--------------|---|----------------|---|
| 5.2 | If an extension beyond 20 working days is required to enable the landlord to respond to the complaint fully, this should be agreed by both parties. | Yes | During 2021/22 there were 25 stage one responses exceeding 20 working days and this was discussed with the customer. |
| 5.3 | Where agreement over an extension period cannot be reached, landlords should provide the Housing Ombudsman's contact details so the resident can challenge the landlord's plan for responding and/or the proposed timeliness of a landlord's response. | Yes | This would be included in any discussion over an extension period. |
| 5.4 | Where the problem is a recurring issue, the landlord should consider any older reports as part of the background to the complaint if this will help to resolve the issue for the resident. | Yes | Historical complaints are available within the customer relationship management system and will be considered if relevant to the current complaint. |
| 5.7 | Where residents raise additional complaints during the investigation, these should be incorporated into the stage one response if they are relevant and the stage one response has not been issued. Where the stage one response has been issued, or it would unreasonably delay the response, the complaint should be logged as a new complaint. | Yes | Any additional complaints are incorporated into the original stage one response unless they require further investigation and the original investigation has been concluded. This allows the customer to receive an outcome as quickly as possible. |

Stage 2

| Code section | Code requirement | Comply: Yes/No | Evidence, commentary and any explanations |
|--------------|---|----------------|---|
| 5.14 | If an extension beyond 10 working days is required to enable the landlord to respond to the complaint fully, this should be agreed by both parties. | Yes | If this were to be required we would agree any extension beyond 10 working days with the customer. In 2021/22 there were three stage 2 responses which exceeded 25 working days and one exceeding 30 working days, all explained to the customer. |
| 5.15 | Where agreement over an extension period cannot be reached, landlords should provide the Housing Ombudsman's contact details so the resident can challenge the landlord's plan for responding and/or the proposed timeliness of a landlord's response | Yes | |

Stage 3

| Code section | Code requirement | Comply: Yes/No | Evidence, commentary and any explanations |
|--------------|--|----------------|---|
| 5.18 | Complaints should only go to a third stage if the resident has actively requested a third stage review of their complaint. Where a third stage is in place and has been requested, landlords must respond to the stage three complaint <u>within 20 working days</u> of the complaint being escalated. Additional time will only be justified if related to convening a panel. An explanation and a date for when the stage three response will be received should be provided to the resident. | N/A | There is no third stage in Salix Homes' complaints process. |
| 5.19 | Where agreement over an extension period cannot be reached, landlords should provide the Housing Ombudsman's contact details so the resident can challenge the landlord's plan for responding and/or the proposed timeliness of a landlord's response. | N/A | There is no third stage in Salix Homes' complaints process. |

Section 6 - Putting things right

Mandatory 'must' requirements

| Code section | Code requirement | Comply: Yes/No | Evidence, commentary and any explanations |
|--------------|--|----------------|---|
| 6.1 | Effective dispute resolution requires a process designed to resolve complaints. 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. | Yes | Colleagues are empowered across the business to resolve disputes where something has gone wrong. Salix Homes' compensation policy also provides guidance to ensure consistency. |
| 6.2 | Any remedy offered must reflect the extent of any service failures and the level of detriment caused to the resident as a result. A landlord must carefully manage the expectations of residents and not promise anything that cannot be delivered or would cause unfairness to other residents. | Yes | Salix Homes' compensation policy provides guidance to ensure consistency. |
| 6.5 | 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 | The complaints support team will monitor to ensure any proposed remedy is followed through. |
| 6.6 | In awarding compensation, a landlord must consider whether any statutory payments are due, if any quantifiable losses have been incurred, the time and trouble a resident has been put to as well as any distress and inconvenience caused. | Yes | Salix Homes' compensation policy provides guidance in this area. |

Best practice 'should' requirements

| Code section | Code requirement | Comply: Yes/No | Evidence, commentary and any explanations |
|--------------|--|----------------|--|
| 6.3 | Landlords should look beyond the circumstances of the individual complaint and consider whether anything needs to be 'put right' in terms of process or systems to the benefit of all residents. | Yes | This would be considered in line with our 'learning from complaints' process which is built into the complaints process. |
| 6.7 | In some cases, a resident may have a legal entitlement to redress. The landlord should still offer a resolution where possible, obtaining legal advice as to how any offer of resolution should be worded. | Yes | Legal advice is obtained where required. |

Section 7 - Continuous learning and improvement

Mandatory 'must' requirements

| Code section | Code requirement | Comply: Yes/No | Evidence, commentary and any explanations |
|--------------|--|----------------|--|
| 7.2 | Accountability and transparency are integral to a positive complaint handling culture. Landlords must report back on wider learning and improvements from complaints in their annual report and more frequently to their residents, staff and scrutiny panels. | Yes | A section on 'learning from complaints' is included in the annual report under the section 'Customer Voice' and published on the website. This information is also incorporated in internal communications for colleagues. |

Best practice 'should' requirements

| Code section | Code requirement | Comply: Yes/No | Evidence, commentary and any explanations |
|--------------|--|----------------|--|
| 7.3 | A member of the governing body should be appointed to have lead responsibility for complaints to support a positive complaint handling culture. This role will be responsible for ensuring the governing body receives regular information on complaints that provides insight to the governing body on the landlord's complaint handling performance. | Yes | The executive director of operations has lead responsibility for complaints and a positive complaint handling culture. This is supported by the Complaints Oversight Group (COG) which reports into the Salix Homes' Customer Committee (SHCC) and is a key part of our governance structure. Complaints handling performance is shared with the Board on an annual basis and the senior management team and SHCC on a quarterly basis. |

| | | | |
|-----|--|---------|---|
| 7.4 | <p>As a minimum, governing bodies should receive:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular updates on the volume, categories and outcome of complaints, alongside complaint handling performance including compliance with the Ombudsman's orders • Regular reviews of issues and trends arising from complaint handling, • The annual performance report produced by the Ombudsman, where applicable • Individual complaint outcomes where necessary, including where the Ombudsman made findings of severe maladministration or referrals to regulatory bodies. The implementation of management responses should be tracked to ensure they are delivered to agreed timescales. The annual self-assessment against the Complaint Handling Code for scrutiny and challenge. | Yes | <p>The customer feedback and complaints report is shared with senior management team, the COG and the SHCC on a quarterly basis. The report includes updates on volume, categories, trends, and complaint outcomes as well as performance, learning from complaints and Ombudsman outcomes and compliance with any orders.</p> <p>The self-assessment is reported annually for scrutiny and challenge (last reported to Board June 2022).</p> |
| 7.5 | <p>Any themes or trends should be assessed by senior management to identify potential systemic issues, serious risks or policies and procedures that require revision. They should also be used to inform staff and contractor training.</p> | Yes | <p>Any trends and issues are discussed with the Senior Management Team on a quarterly basis.</p> |
| 7.6 | <p>Landlords should have a standard objective in relation to complaint handling for all employees that reflects the need to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • have a collaborative and co-operative approach towards resolving complaints, working with colleagues across teams and departments • take collective responsibility for any shortfalls identified through complaints rather than blaming others <p>act within the Professional Standards for engaging with complaints as set by the Chartered Institute of Housing.</p> | Partial | <p>Managers are undergoing complaints training from the complaints support team to ensure complaint handling is consistent and a collaborative approach is taken towards resolving complaints across service areas. This is also included in our Customer Charter: 'Our Promise To You' under the promise 'Resolution'.</p> |

Section 8 - Self-assessment and compliance

Mandatory 'must' requirements

| Code section | Code requirement | Comply: Yes/No | Evidence, commentary and any explanations |
|--------------|---|----------------|--|
| 8.1 | Landlords must carry out an annual self-assessment against the Code to ensure their complaint handling remains in line with its requirements. | Yes | Self-assessments are completed after each financial year to ensure compliance with the Code. |
| 8.2 | Landlords must also carry out a self-assessment following a significant restructure and/or change in procedures. | Yes | Any future significant changes will include a review of the self-assessment. |
| 8.3 | Following each self-assessment, a landlord must: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• report the outcome of their self-assessment to their governing body. In the case of local authorities, self-assessment outcomes should be reported to elected members• publish the outcome of their assessment on their website if they have one, or otherwise make accessible to residents• include the self-assessment in their annual report section on complaints handling performance | Yes | The self-assessment is reported to the senior management team, Salix Homes' Customer Committee and the Board for sign off. Once approved, the self-assessment is published on Salix Homes' website and included in the annual report. |