

## The Housing Ombudsman Complaints Handling Code- Inquilab Compliance Self- Assessment

Ref from self-assessment form	self- assessment form required under the Code	Ass of compliance (Y/N)	Evidence of Compliance	Improvement required	Responsibility	Date Due
	<i>Definition of a complaint</i>					
1.1.	Does the complaints process use the following definition of a complaint?  <i>An expression of dissatisfaction, however made, about the standard of service, actions, or lack of action by the organisation, its own staff, or those acting on its behalf, affecting an individual resident or group of residents.</i>	Y	The Complaints and Compensation Policy and process express this across and number of points, not in one single definition	<b>Action:</b> Wording in Inquilab's Complaints and Compensation Policy to be amended to reflect the Ombudsman's wording	Head of Operations	March 2021
1.2	Does the policy have exclusions where a complaint will not be considered?	Y	Set out in the Complaints and Compensation Policy	<b>Action:</b> To review further as part of the review of the Complaints and Compensation Policy	Head of Operations	March 2021
	<i>Accessibility</i>					
2.1	Are multiple accessibility routes available for residents to make a complaint?	Y	Complaints lodged as a result of contact from customers in writing, by telephone, email, website forms and social media. This is recorded on CRM and dealt with by the officers	<b>Actions:</b> I. Assign complaints to dedicated staff members. II. Update website with revised wording	Admin staff  Comms Officer	March 2021
2.2	Is the Complaints Policy and	Y	Policy published online. Ombudsman			

	procedure online?		confirmed in training webinar that reference to 'procedure' was a terminology and they did not expect landlords to share internal procedures as long as our policy, which includes the within which the complaints process, was available to customers			
2.3	Do we have a reasonable adjustments policy?	N	.	<p><b>Action:</b> the code requires that a policy is in place, which sets out what reasonable adjustments an organisation will make to meet the Equality Act 2010</p> <p>The policy for Inquilab will be developed as a cross cutting policy to support a range of policies, including the Complaints and Compensation policy</p> <p><b>Action:</b> Complaints and Compensation policy to be revised to reference new Reasonable Adjustment policy and Equality Act 2010</p>		
2.4	Do we regularly advise residents about our complaints process?	Y	In complaints communication, information on website.	<p><b>Action:</b> review and refine frequency of communication with</p>		

				residents; Publish our performance on a quarterly basis around complaints resolution timescales and comment on this		
	<i>Complaints team and process</i>					
3.1	Is there a complaint officer or equivalent in post?	Y	The Customer and Communities manager is responsible for overseeing all complaints			
3.2	Does the complaint officer have autonomy to resolve complaints?	Y	The Complaints and Compensation policy sets out roles and responsibilities to resolve complaints. Internal procedures to include limited compensation level autonomy and decision-making ability for officers	<b>Action:</b> Review current levels		
3.5	Does the complaint officer have authority to compel engagement from other departments to resolve disputes?	Y	The Complaints and Compensation policy sets out roles and responsibilities to resolve effectively. This includes the ability to re-prioritise work outside the immediate complaint function to meet complaint demand.			
3.4	If there is a third stage to the complaint's procedure are residents involved in the decision making?	N/A	We do not have a third stage			
3.5	Is any third stage optional for residents?	N/A	N/A			
3.6	Does the final stage response set out residents' right to refer the matter to the Housing Ombudsman Service?	Y	A standard paragraph advising residents of their right to refer the matter to the Housing Ombudsman Services is included in Stage 2 (final)			

			responses sent to all complainants			
3.7	Do we keep a record of complaint correspondence including correspondence from the resident	Y	All contact and correspondence is recorded on CRM and retained in line with Inquilab's document retention policy. This also gives a trail of complaints by customer r issues relating to any individual customer			
3.8	At what stage are most complaints resolved?	Y	The majority of complaints received are resolved at Stage 1 of the complaints process.			
<b>4</b>	<i>Communication</i>					
4.1	Are residents kept informed and updated during the complaints process?	Y	the Customer & Communities Manager maintains contact with customers throughout the process by sending out acknowledgement, investigation and if required progress up-date letters.	<b>Action:</b> In line with the code develop consistent written responses for each stage	Head of Operations	March 2021
4.2	Are residents informed of the landlord's position and given a chance to respond and challenge any area of dispute before the final decision?	Y	All complainants receive a response to their complaints and are advised as to how they can escalate their complaints further in line with policy. We discuss our findings with residents before concluding and documenting our findings although this forms part of the process. Records are kept on CRM	<b>Action:</b> we will review Complaints and Compensation Policy to allow residents the opportunity to comment on any adverse finings before a final decision is made		
4.3	Are all complaints acknowledged and logged within five days?	Y	Inquilab's target is to log and acknowledge all complaints within 48 hours. In practice this is actioned at first point of contact and is therefore well within the target Where complaints are received online an additional acknowledgement is			

			provided to the resident along with a case reference number			
4.4	Are residents advised of how to escalate at the end of each stage?		The Manager manages the responses to customers at each stage and records outcomes on CRM, Clear guidance on the next stage is provided to all residents at resolution of the current stage	<b>Action:</b> in line with the code develop consistent written response format for each stage	Head of Operations	January 2021
4.5	What proportion of complaints are resolved at stage one?		66% (2019/20)			
4.6	What proportion of complaints are resolved at stage two?		90% (2019/20) of the complaints that are escalated by the customer to stage 2 are resolved at that stage			
4.7	What proportion of complaint responses are sent within Code timescales? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stage one</li> <li>    Stage one (with extension)</li> <li>• Stage two</li> <li>    Stage two (with extension)</li> </ul>		2019/20 – approx. 50% is resolved within 10 days with approx. 15 days average of a life of a complaint	<b>Action:</b> I. Better and more accurate information to be captured II. changes reporting to be able to obtain accurate data in the format required of the code III. implement new case system to capture the data	Head of Operations	March 2021
4.8	Where timescales have been extended did, we have good reason?	Y	Where normal timeframes for obtaining information/reports from external contractors were extended due to delayed inspections.	<b>Action:</b> all discussions and agreements made with customers to be recorded against the individual cases in		

				CRM and any reasons for extending the case length are fully explained to the resident		
4.9	What proportion of complaints do we resolve to residents' satisfaction	Y	80% was reported in 2018/19- more current information was not collected relating to the handling of the complaints	<b>Action:</b> Regular surveys to be carried out to assess satisfaction with handling of their complaints	Head of Operations	March 2021
<b>5.</b>	<i>Co-operation with housing Ombudsman Services</i>					
5.1	Were all requests for evidence responded to within 15 days?	Y	We will normally prioritise requests from the ombudsman, however, there have been the rare occasions when this has been missed due to staff shortages or the need to retrieve achieved information and during lockdown where information was held in the office	<b>Action:</b> Liaise with the ombudsman to ensure correspondence is electronic to a designated officer	Head of Operations	January 2021
5.2	Where the timescale was extended did we keep the Ombudsman informed?	Y	Generally, we do keep to timescales and update the ombudsman by telephone call and email. However, there was a period during lockdown when the Ombudsman sent letters to the office which impacted our ability to keep to timescales.			
<b>6.</b>	<i>Fairness in complaints handling</i>					

6.1	Are residents able to complain via a representative throughout?	Y	Residents are advised that they can ask someone to act on their behalf or if they require support to make their complaint	<b>Action:</b> Ensure reporting clearly shows where a representative is supporting the customer	Head of Operations	January 2021
6.2	If advice was given, was this accurate and easy to understand?	Y	Complaints are responded to in plain and clear English. We avoid the use of any sector jargon and provide information in alternative formats if requested to do so.			
6.3	How many cases did we refuse to escalate? What was the reason for the refusal?	Y	None were refused			
6.4	Did we explain our decision to the resident?	N/A				
<b>7.</b>	<i>Outcomes and remedies</i>					
7.1	Where something has gone wrong are, we taking appropriate steps to put things right?	Y	Appropriate apologies are given and actions Inquilab will take are agreed with eh customer in each case when things have gone wrong. All contract and outcomes are recorded on CRM	<b>Action:</b> Operational service areas and 'lessons learnt' reporting to teams to be reviewed		
<b>8.</b>	<i>Continuous learning and improvement</i>					
8.1	What improvements have we made as a result of the learning from complaints?		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Development and subsequent approval of the Responsive repairs Policy</li> <li>- Changes of main repairs contractor</li> <li>- Reconsideration of operational policies and procedures to ensure that complaints do not arise</li> </ul>	<b>Action:</b> case management system to evidence better record keeping. Revise Complaints & Compensation Policy		

8.2	<p>How do we share these lessons with:</p> <p>a) residents?  b) the board/governing body?  c) In the Annual Report?</p>		<p>a) Complaints outcomes, quarterly service standards, customer newsletter, annual report  b) EMT reporting monthly, Board reporting quarterly  c) Shared on website</p>	<p><b>Action:</b> review and refine frequency of communication with resident</p>		
8.3	<p>Has the Code made a difference to how we respond to complaints?</p>	Y				
8.4	<p>What changes have we made?</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Reviewed template letters to meet new code</li> <li>Promotion of ombudsman services throughout any stage of the complaints process</li> <li>- Revised policy for compliance</li> <li>- We will be developing a Reasonable Adjustment Policy</li> <li>- Introduced a culture in the team where complaints are to be welcomed and resolved quickly</li> </ul>			