

## Bristol City Council – Housing Ombudsman self-assessment form April 2024



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.

### Section 1: Definition of a complaint

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
1.2	A complaint must be defined as: <i>'an expression of dissatisfaction, however made, about the standard of service, actions or lack of action by the landlord, its own staff, or those acting on its behalf, affecting a resident or group of residents.'</i>	Yes	Complaints Policy 2024	
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	Yes	Our new policy explains what may be complained about: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>An unwelcome or disputed decision</li> </ul>	

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
	representative must be handled in line with the landlord's complaints policy.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Concern about the quality or appropriateness of a service</li> <li>• Delay in decision making or provision of services.</li> <li>• Delivery or non-delivery of services (action or lack of action)</li> <li>• Quantity, frequency or charge of a service</li> <li>• Attitude or behaviour of staff</li> <li>• Application of eligibility and assessment criteria</li> <li>• Assessment, care management and review</li> </ul> <p>This list is not exhaustive.</p> <p>See also section 6.1 of the complaints policy.</p>	
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	<p>Extract from BCC policy:</p> <p>A service Request is 'a report of an issue that may require action from the Council that has not previously been reported to the relevant service'.</p>	
1.5	A complaint must be raised when the resident expresses dissatisfaction with the	Yes	We are delivering awareness raising training to all Housing staff to cover	

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
	<p>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.</p>		<p>the importance of recognising and recording instances of service requests v complaints.</p> <p>We are developing an eLearning module to be rolled out to staff to embed this learning.</p>	
1.6	<p>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.</p>	Yes	<p>Our complaints system is accessible, we accept complaints via several channels including phone calls and face to face. Most residents are aware that they can raise a complaint at any time should they wish.</p>	<p>- Updated standard literature to include complaints information - Standardised website information</p>

## Section 2: Exclusions

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
2.1	Landlords must accept a complaint unless there is a valid reason not to do so. If landlords decide not to accept a complaint, they must be able to evidence their reasoning. Each complaint must be considered on its own merits	Yes	<p>We will accept all complaints and assess each case on its own merit using the ‘Who can complain’?</p> <p>Any Bristol citizen or anyone who receives a service from the Council (including students and tourists), those entitled to request a Council service or anyone they have chosen to act on their behalf. This may include a relative, Councillor or MP. There are some additional criteria for people complaining about statutory social care services for children or adults and for public health services. BCC Complaints Policy 2024</p>	
2.2	<p>A complaints policy must set out the circumstances in which a matter will not be considered as a complaint or escalated, and these circumstances must be fair and reasonable to residents. Acceptable exclusions include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The issue giving rise to the complaint occurred over twelve months ago.</li> <li>• Legal proceedings have started. This is defined as details of the claim, such as</li> </ul>	Yes	BCC Complaints Policy 2024	

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
	<p>the Claim Form and Particulars of Claim, having been filed at court.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Matters that have previously been considered under the complaints policy.</li> </ul>			
2.3	<p>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.</p>	Yes	<p>Extract from our new policy: -</p> <p>‘The Customer Relations Team, in consultation with senior managers and legal services where appropriate, will have discretion to decide exceptions to this rule. Where an exception is not agreed, the complainant will be informed about the reasons for refusal, any evidence that has been considered when making the decision to refuse their request, and of their right to approach the relevant Ombudsman.’</p>	
2.4	<p>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.</p>	Yes	<p>All complaints received will receive a response if the council decides not to process under its complaint’s procedure e.g., a parking appeals will be dealt with under a separate process and the citizen will be advised of that process.</p>	

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
			New training will cover the need to include in responses details of the Ombudsman and our complaints system templates will be updated to include this information too.	
2.5	Landlords must not take a blanket approach to excluding complaints; they must consider the individual circumstances of each complaint.	Yes	The council will continue to assess each complaint on its merit, we do not use a blanket approach	

### 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	<p>BCC Complaints Policy 2024</p> <p>We accept complaints in person, over the telephone, by post, by email, on behalf of other, via advocacy and through our website.</p> <p>Currently over 90% of complaints received are via our website and through emails.</p> <p>Updated standard literature and website to encourage complaints</p>	
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	<p>All staff are aware that if they are the first point of contact with someone complaining, they should either advise how and where to make their complaint or the citizen requests it make it on their behalf.</p> <p>Staff webinars completed and complaints training</p>	
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	Yes	Bristol City Council deals with some of the highest numbers of complaints in the country. The trend year on year is upward.	

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
	are potentially a sign that residents are unable to complain.		<p>New training for staff will cover the importance of seeing complaints as a positive, and senior managers will engage with complaints more and promote a learning culture.</p> <p>New council KPI's around complaints introduced in 2024 along with new complaints objectives for complaint handlers handling complaints. These new measures will improve ownership and accountability and promote a more positive culture.</p>	
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	Our new policy has been published on our website and is also available via other media outlets for council residents.	

<b>Code provision</b>	<b>Code requirement</b>	<b>Comply: Yes / No</b>	<b>Evidence</b>	<b>Commentary / explanation</b>
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	BCC Complaints Policy 2024	
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	Any Bristol citizen or anyone who receives a service from the Council (including students and tourists), those entitled to request a Council service or anyone they have chosen to act on their behalf. This may include a relative, Councillor or MP. There are some additional criteria for people complaining about statutory social care services for children or adults and for public health services	
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	Included in the following places: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Complaints acknowledgements, Stage 1 and Stage 2 response letters</li> <li>- Leaseholder pack</li> <li>- Website</li> <li>- Annual report to tenants</li> </ul>	

## Section 4: Complaint Handling Staff

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
4.1	Landlords must have a person or team assigned to take responsibility for complaint handling, including liaison with the Ombudsman and ensuring complaints are reported to the governing body (or equivalent). This Code will refer to that person or team as the 'complaints officer'. This role may be in addition to other duties.	Yes	The council employs a Customer Relations Manager who fulfils the role of 'complaints officer.' In addition, the Customer Relations Manager has a team of 13 complaint handling complaint handlers to support the council dealing when with complaints. The housing services has funded two additional posts to support the administration of acknowledging complaints.	The housing service is funding two additional posts within the complaints team and a dedicated performance analyst to provide oversight and improved governance/reporting on housing complaints.
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	All complaints officers are managers within the service, which gives them the authority and autonomy to investigate complaints thoroughly and hold services to account. This ensures they can act independently and resolve disputes promptly and fairly.	
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	2x FTE Customer Relations Complaint handlers in post since Oct 2024  A complaints performance analyst has been recruited to oversee complaints compliance, reporting and learning from complaints.  The Customer Relations Manager will lead on the delivery of new Housing	

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
			<p>and Landlord services training for all staff dealing with complaints.</p> <p>The CRM will also work with Housing complaints staff on introducing new Landlord KPI's around complaints as well as new complaint objectives for staff dealing with complaints.</p>	

## 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	BCC Complaints policy 2024	
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	The council operates a two stage internal complaints procedure	
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	Our Complaints policy and procedure operates a two stage process only	
5.4	Where a landlord's complaint response is handled by a third party (e.g., a contractor or independent adjudicator) at any stage, it must form part of the two stage complaints process set out in this Code. Residents must not be expected to go through two complaints processes.	Yes	Updated procurement rules to include this.	
5.5	Landlords are responsible for ensuring that any third parties handle complaints in line with the Code.	Yes	As above	

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
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	Updated our Icasework system in October to incorporate these changes	
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	Templates updated in Icasework Complaints checklist introduced	
5.8	At each stage of the complaints process, complaint handlers must: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. deal with complaints on their merits, act independently, and have an open mind.</li> <li>b. give the resident a fair chance to set out their position.</li> <li>c. take measures to address any actual or perceived conflict of interest; and</li> <li>d. consider all relevant information and evidence carefully.</li> </ul>	Yes	Covered in training delivered to HLS complaint handlers Checklist guidance Complaints communications	
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	Yes	Complaints handlers already currently use the system to	

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
	suitable intervals for keeping them informed about their complaint.		communicate delays with residents with complaints.	
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	CX is checked by triage officers for vulnerability	
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	The council's Customer Relations Manager is solely responsible for reviewing all requests to escalate complaints. If any complaint is not escalated, the reason and information about next steps is communicated with the resident. The CRM will always comply with section 2 of the code when making these decisions.	
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	Our system currently keeps a full record of every complaint, which will 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 survey.	

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
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	Complaint handlers are trained to aim to resolve complaints, but also consider where a remedy might be applied alongside the complaint and at any time during the handling stage.	
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	Our current complaints policy includes a section called 'Unreasonable complainant behaviour'	
5.15	Any restrictions placed on contact due to unacceptable behaviour must be proportionate and demonstrate regard for the provisions of the Equality Act 2010.	Yes	Bristol City Council's "Arrangement for Responding to Violence, Aggression, Harassment and Hate Crime" has been written in line with the Equality Act 2010, undergone a EQIA and has procedures to support colleagues and residents engaged with the policy.	

## 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	CRO in place to complete this task	
6.2	Complaints must be acknowledged, defined and logged at stage 1 of the complaint's procedure <b>within five working days of the complaint being received.</b>	Yes	Our i: Casework system was updated in October 2024	
6.3	Landlords must issue a full response to stage 1 complaints <b>within 10 working days</b> of the complaint being acknowledged.	Yes	Our i: Casework system was updated in October 2024 Colleagues and managers aware of KPI target associated with this Communications going out to complaint handlers to promote this	Last year was at 62% whilst this is below target this is in line with the core cities performance and action plan is being developed to improve.
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	Yes	Complaint handlers have been trained and understand the need to make these decisions. They will communicate clearly and in a timely	

<b>Code provision</b>	<b>Code requirement</b>	<b>Comply: Yes / No</b>	<b>Evidence</b>	<b>Commentary / explanation</b>
	than 10 working days without good reason, and the reason(s) must be clearly explained to the resident.		manner with residents through the council's system	
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	Our extension template was updated to acknowledge this. Training has taken place on this topic.	
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	The workflow in the complaints system does not prevent the response but does include functionality which allows for the recording of and tracking of actions.	
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	This is currently already done by complaints complaint handlers and training in place covers this subject.	
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	Yes	This scenario and process for dealing is already in place	

<b>Code provision</b>	<b>Code requirement</b>	<b>Comply: Yes / No</b>	<b>Evidence</b>	<b>Commentary / explanation</b>
	new issues must be logged as a new complaint.			
6.9	Landlords must confirm the following in writing to the resident at the completion of stage 1 in clear, plain language: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. the complaint stages.</li> <li>b. the complaint definition.</li> <li>c. the decision on the complaint.</li> <li>d. the reasons for any decisions made.</li> <li>e. the details of any remedy offered to put things right.</li> <li>f. details of any outstanding actions; and</li> <li>g. details of how to escalate the matter to stage 2 if the individual is not satisfied with the response.</li> </ul>	Yes	Stage 1 template changes are in effect. Quality assurance takes place to ensure these are being followed.	

Stage 2

<b>Code provision</b>	<b>Code requirement</b>	<b>Comply: Yes / No</b>	<b>Evidence</b>	<b>Commentary / explanation</b>
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	The service has processes in place to escalate complaints from Stage 1 to Stage 2.	
6.11	Requests for stage 2 must be acknowledged, defined and logged at stage 2 of the complaint's procedure within five working days of the escalation request being received.	Yes	There is a Stage 2 Escalation template available on the system.	

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
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	The council's Customer Relations Manager is solely responsible for reviewing all requests to escalate complaints. If any complaint is not escalated, the reason and information about next steps is communicated with the resident. The CRM will always comply with section 2 of the code when making these decisions.	
6.13	The person considering the complaint at stage 2 must not be the same person that considered the complaint at stage 1.	Yes	Within the central Customer Relations Team, four Case Managers are employed to deal with Stage Two complaints independently of Stage one complaint handlers.	
6.14	Landlords must issue a final response to the stage 2 <b>within 20 working days</b> of the complaint being acknowledged.	Yes	We measure our performance against the 20 day target, we are currently at 47% however we are addressing this with further resource to meet this target.	
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	Complaint handlers respond to these cases currently	

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
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	Included in extension template	
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	Our recent complaint handling training covers this point and is reinforced in our guidance to complaint handlers. Our IT system allows for actions to be tracked and monitored.	
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	Included in complaint template	
6.19	Landlords must confirm the following in writing to the resident at the completion of stage 2 in clear, plain language: a. the complaint stages. b. the complaint definition. c. the decision on the complaint. d. the reasons for any decisions made. e. the details of any remedy offered to put things right. f. details of any outstanding actions; and	Yes	Included in complaint template	

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
	g. details of how to escalate the matter to the Ombudsman Service if the individual remains dissatisfied.			
6.20	Stage 2 is the landlord's final response and must involve all suitable staff members needed to issue such a response.	Yes	Included in complaint template	

### Section 7: Putting things right.

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
7.1	<p>Where something has gone wrong a landlord must acknowledge this and set out the actions it has already taken, or intends to take, to put things right. These can include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Apologising.</li> <li>• Acknowledging where things have gone wrong.</li> <li>• Providing an explanation, assistance or reasons.</li> <li>• Taking action if there has been delay.</li> <li>• Reconsidering or changing a decision.</li> <li>• Amending a record or adding a correction or addendum.</li> <li>• Providing a financial remedy.</li> <li>• Changing policies, procedures or practices.</li> </ul>	Yes	<p>These decisions and actions are already in place, with service-based complaint handlers making decisions based on each case and the merits of each case. And it is currently the responsibility of complaint handling complaint handlers to take forward any actions as a result of findings and investigations.</p> <p>New complaint objectives should help complaint handlers to focus on continuing with actions beyond responding to complaints.</p> <p>More training is required to undertake this.</p>	

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
7.2	Any remedy offered must reflect the impact on the resident as a result of any fault identified.	Yes	A culture exists of resolving cases with appropriate remedies at Stage one. Introduced compensation policy and procedure in January 2025	
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	Included in complaint template	
7.4	Landlords must take account of the guidance issued by the Ombudsman when deciding on appropriate remedies.	Yes	Complaint handlers always reference the Ombudsman's guidelines regards remedies, often sign-posting to the Customer Relations Team for additional guidance.	

**Section 8: Putting things right.**

<b>Code provision</b>	<b>Code requirement</b>	<b>Comply: Yes / No</b>	<b>Evidence</b>	<b>Commentary / explanation</b>
8.1	<p>Landlords must produce an annual complaints performance and service improvement report for scrutiny and challenge, which must include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. the annual self-assessment against this Code to ensure their complaint handling policy remains in line with its requirements.</li> <li>b. a qualitative and quantitative analysis of the landlord’s complaint handling performance. This must also include a summary of the types of complaints the landlord has refused to accept.</li> <li>c. any findings of non-compliance with this Code by the Ombudsman.</li> <li>d. the service improvements made as a result of the learning from complaints.</li> <li>e. any annual report about the landlord’s performance from the Ombudsman; and</li> <li>f. any other relevant reports or publications produced by the Ombudsman in relation to the work of the landlord.</li> </ul>	Yes	A new annual report has been produced. It will include all the points recommended with a self-assessment section. It will be advertised and published on the council’s website.	
8.2	<p>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.</p>	Yes	Previous years is available online	

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
8.3	Landlords must also carry out a self-assessment following a significant restructure, merger and/or change in procedures.	Yes	The council will often go through changes to structures, so further guidance on this would be helpful in order to understand when an interim self-assessment is required.	
8.4	Landlords may be asked to review and update the self-assessment following an Ombudsman investigation.	Yes	We would comply with any request by the Ombudsman to update the current self-assessment.	
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	Bristol City Council has business continuity plans in place if a emergency or exceptional incident takes place.	

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

<b>Code provision</b>	<b>Code requirement</b>	<b>Comply: Yes / No</b>	<b>Evidence</b>	<b>Commentary / explanation</b>
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	Sharing learning with service areas is in place	
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	New Kpi's are in place, regular reporting to services and promotion of complaints	
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	In place	
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	This would fall jointly to the Customer Relations Manager, a newly appointed performance analyst with responsibility for complaints performance, plus the director of housing and landlord services and Legal/Democratic Services (where Customer Relations sits).	
9.5	In addition to this a member of the governing body (or equivalent) must be appointed to	Yes	Councillor Barry Parsons	

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
	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').			
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	Councillors receive reports on a quarterly basis and Housing Ombudsman determinations ad hoc	
9.7	As a minimum, the MRC and the governing body (or equivalent) must receive: a. regular updates on the volume, categories and outcomes of complaints, alongside complaint handling performance. b. regular reviews of issues and trends arising from complaint handling. c. regular updates on the outcomes of the Ombudsman's investigations and progress made in complying with orders related to severe maladministration findings; and d. annual complaints performance and service improvement report.	Yes	As above	
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:	Yes	New complaints objectives are being introduced in Bristol in 2024 to cover these areas.	

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
	<p>a. have a collaborative and co-operative approach towards resolving complaints, working with colleagues across teams and departments.</p> <p>b. take collective responsibility for any shortfalls identified through complaints, rather than blaming others; and</p> <p>c. act within the professional standards for engaging with complaints as set by any relevant professional body.</p>			