

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.

RAG

Red	Not compliant
Amber	Partially compliant or compliant with further work required
Green	Compliant

Table 1 Section 1: Definition of a complaint	2
Table 2 Section 2: Exclusions	6
Table 3 Section 3: Accessibility and Awareness	9
Table 4 Section 4: Complaint Handling Staff	12
Table 5 Section 5: The Complaint Handling Process	14
Table 6 Section 6: Complaints stages	18
Table 7 Stage 2	21
Table 8 Section 7: Putting things right	24
Table 9 Section 8: Putting things right	26
Table 10 Section 9: Scrutiny & oversight: continuous learning and improvement	28

Table 1 Section 1: Definition of a complaintSection 1: Definition of a complaint

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
1.2	<p>A complaint must be defined as:</p> <p><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></p>	Yes	<p>Bristol’s new policy definition, which has slightly different wording to the HOS wording, but has to reflect non-Housing Complaints as well as Statutory Children’s Services and Adult Social Care complaints: -</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 or group of individuals.’</p>	<p>We have amended our current policy and it will be published on our website soon.</p>

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
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	<p>Our new policy explains what may be complained about:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An unwelcome or disputed decision • Concern about the quality or appropriateness of a service • Delay in decision making or provision of services. • Delivery or non-delivery of services (action or lack of action) • Quantity, frequency or charge of a service • Attitude or behaviour of staff • Application of eligibility and assessment criteria • Assessment, care management and review <p>This list is not exhaustive.</p> <p>See also section 6.1 of the complaints policy.</p>	

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
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 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	<p>We are delivering awareness raising training to all Housing staff to cover the importance of recognising and recording instances of service requests v complaints.</p> <p>Our complaints system will incorporate all the scenarios associated with service request handling, including submitted complaints converted to service requests, complaints about service request handling which are then escalated to complaints for example.</p>	<p>The following is from our current training slide deck presentation: ‘A service request is a request from a resident to the landlord requiring action to be taken to put something right.</p> <p>Service requests are not complaints, but must be recorded, monitored and reviewed regularly’</p>

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
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	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.	Within our resident survey programme we have requested our survey provider to advise and signpost residents who are dissatisfied how to make a complaint.

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.</p>	Full details of who can complain etc is contained in the new version of our complaints policy
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> <p>1.1 The issue giving rise to the complaint occurred over twelve months ago.</p> <p>1.2 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.</p>	Yes		Our new complaints policy will set out in detail all exclusions in line with the code and three main areas.

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
	1.3 Matters that have previously been considered under the complaints policy.			
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	<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	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	<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> <p>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.</p>	

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
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.	Partial	<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>	Work is required to make complaints webpages more accessible on the BCC website
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.	Partial	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.	Staff webinars underway and complaints training being updated.
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	<p>Bristol City Council deals with some of the highest numbers of complaints in the country. The trend year on year is upward.</p> <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 will be introduced in 2024 along with new complaints objectives</p>	

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
			for officers handling complaints. These new measures will improve ownership and accountability and promote a more positive culture.	
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.	Partially	Our new policy will be published on our website and will also be available via other media outlets for council residents.	
3.5	The policy must explain how the landlord will publicise details of the complaints policy, including information about the Ombudsman and this Code.	No	We will include details on our dedicated website complaints page making it easy for residents to see how and where we will publish our policy	
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	

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
			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	We include this information in our Stage Two complaint responses already, but will also include details in our acknowledgement letters, Stage One response templates and extension template.	

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 officers to support the council dealing when with 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		

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
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	<p>The council is currently looking to employ two new complaints officers who will work solely on triaging and assigning complaints to Housing and Landlord services, working alongside the teams of officers who deal with stage one complaints.</p> <p>A complaints performance analyst will be recruited to oversee complaints compliance, reporting and learning from complaints.</p> <p>The Customer Relations Manager will lead on the delivery of new Housing 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	Our new policy will be available soon and will be published on our website and advertised. It will be a single policy.	
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	NA	
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	There is one single complaints process for residents. See section 10.2	
5.5	Landlords are responsible for ensuring that any third parties handle complaints in line with the Code.	No		Further work required to scrutinise supplier/provider contracts against the HO code.

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	We are currently making changes to our complaints system with our supplier (i: Casework) so that the definition of the complaint at Stages One and Two is fully explained in the acknowledgement letters.	
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	We are currently making changes to our complaints system with our supplier (i: Casework) so that the definition of the complaint at Stages One and Two is fully explained in the acknowledgement letters.	
5.8	At each stage of the complaints process, complaint handlers must: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. deal with complaints on their merits, act independently, and have an open mind. b. give the resident a fair chance to set out their position. c. take measures to address any actual or perceived conflict of interest; and d. consider all relevant information and evidence carefully. 	Yes	This approach to handling complaints is in place, but through new training we will emphasise and strengthen the points	
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	Complaints handlers already currently use the system to communicate delays with residents with complaints.	

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
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.	Partial		Improvements to case handling and checking Civica Cx to be included in updated complaint handling training.
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	Officers 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. New training in 2024 will cover this area more comprehensively.	
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'	Complaints policy section 18. Page 44 file (bristol.gov.uk)
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		

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	New dedicated complaints officers responsible for triaging Housing complaints will be able to make pragmatic, quick decisions on each case and decide how best to progress. These officers will be recruited by the council's CRM and sit in his team and will work closely with the CRM and current corporate team to become expert in making the right and best decisions for residents.	
6.2	Complaints must be acknowledged, defined and logged at stage 1 of the complaint's procedure <u>within five working days of the complaint being received.</u>	Yes	Our i: Casework system is being modified in line with the requirements in the new code.	
6.3	Landlords must issue a full response to stage 1 complaints <u>within 10 working days</u> of the complaint being acknowledged.	Partial	Our iCasework system is being modified in line with the requirements in the new code.	

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
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	Officers will be trained and understand the need to make these decisions. They will communicate clearly and in a timely 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	The system will be updated to include details of the Ombudsman as standard in extension letters.	
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 officers, but new training will cover this topic	

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
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	This scenario and process for dealing is already in place	
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"> 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 g. details of how to escalate the matter to stage 2 if the individual is not satisfied with the response. 	Yes	These points will be included in all Stage one responses	

Table 7 Stage 2

Stage 2

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		
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	Already in place	

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 officers.	
6.14	Landlords must issue a final response to the stage 2 <u>within 20 working days</u> of the complaint being acknowledged.	Yes	We currently send Stage Two responses within 20 working days in 80% of cases dealt with.	
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	Case Managers handle these cases currently	
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		

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

Table 8 Section 7: Putting things right.

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"> • 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	<p>These decisions and actions are already in place, with service-based officers making decisions based on each case and the merits of each case. And it is currently the responsibility of complaint handling officers to take forward any actions as a result of findings and investigations.</p> <p>New complaint objectives should help officers to focus on continuing with actions beyond responding to complaints.</p>	
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.	
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		

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
7.4	Landlords must take account of the guidance issued by the Ombudsman when deciding on appropriate remedies.	Yes	Officers always reference the Ombudsman's guidelines regards remedies, often sign-posting to the Customer Relations Team for additional guidance.	

Table 9 Section 8: Putting things right.

Section 8: Putting things right.

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
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"> a. the annual self-assessment against this Code to ensure their complaint handling policy remains in line with its requirements. 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. c. any findings of non-compliance with this Code by the Ombudsman. d. the service improvements made as a result of the learning from complaints. e. any annual report about the landlord's performance from the Ombudsman; and f. any other relevant reports or publications produced by the Ombudsman in relation to the work of the landlord. 	Yes	<p>A new annual report will be produced in due course. It will include all the points recommended with a self-assessment section. It will be advertised and published on the council's website.</p>	
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		

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		

Section 9: Scrutiny & oversight: continuous learning and improvement

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.	Partial	Sharing learning with wider stakeholders beyond services complained about is something we will endeavour to work on going forward.	
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 council complaints KPI's and objectives as well as new training and investment in our system and employing staff will hopefully signal Bristol's commitment to making improvements to the culture.	
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.	Partial	A raft of measures outlined in a new 'Complaints Improvement Plan' is in place and will be available soon to share with residents, staff, panels and committees.	
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).	

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
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	A new MRC responsible for complaints will be appointed once elections in May are over.	
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		The MRC role is established within the council's scheme of delegations
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.	Partial		Following local elections and changes within Bristol City Council from a Mayoral to a committee system, Establishing the role of MRC withing the new Committee is underway.

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
9.8	<p>Landlords must have a standard objective in relation to complaint handling for all relevant employees or third parties that reflects the need to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. have a collaborative and co-operative approach towards resolving complaints, working with colleagues across teams and departments. b. take collective responsibility for any shortfalls identified through complaints, rather than blaming others; and c. act within the professional standards for engaging with complaints as set by any relevant professional body. 	Yes	New complaints objectives are being introduced in Bristol in 2024 to cover these areas.	