

# Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code

Self-assessment 2020

## Appendix 1

### Self-assessment form

To complete the assessment, we have utilised performance information from the 2019/20 financial year. We have assessed using both the new Code timescales, which are shorter than those in Moat's current Complaints Policy, with performance against our own timescales shown in brackets where applicable.

Compliance with the Complaint Handling Code			
1	Definition of a complaint	Yes	No
	<p>Does the complaints process use the following definition of a complaint?</p> <p><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></p> <p><b>Moat</b>  <i>An expression of dissatisfaction about the quality of service, delivery of service, actions or lack of action by us, our employees or associated partners which requires a response. Complaints should be raised within three months of the issue occurring. Negative feedback which does not require a response will be considered outside of the complaints process.</i></p> <p><i>Will be adopting the Housing Ombudsman version in revised Complaints Policy</i></p>		✓
	Does the policy have exclusions where a complaint will not be considered?	✓	
	<p>Are these exclusions reasonable and fair to residents?</p> <p>Evidence relied upon?</p> <p><i>The policy was reviewed by Moat's Customer Advocates in December 2018 for fairness and transparency. There have been no further amendments to these exclusions since the Customer Advocate review.</i></p>	✓	
2	Accessibility		
	Are multiple accessibility routes available for residents to make a complaint?	✓	
	Is the complaints policy and procedure available online?	✓	
	<p>Do we have a reasonable adjustments policy?</p> <p><i>We do not have a specific policy but there is provision within the Complaints Policy. The HOS confirmed this is sufficient during recent webinars.</i></p>		✓
	<p>Do we regularly advise residents about our complaints process?</p> <p><i>Residents are asked if they would like to make a complaint when expressing dissatisfaction with the services they have received. Information is available on <a href="http://www.moat.co.uk">www.moat.co.uk</a> and has area accessible from the main landing page.</i></p>	✓	

<b>3</b>	<b>Complaints team and process</b>		
	Is there a complaints officer of equivalent in post?	✓	
	Does the complaint officer have the autonomy to resolve complaints?		✓
	Does the complaint officer have authority to compel engagement from other departments to resolve disputes?	✓	
	If there is a third stage to the complaints procedure are residents involved in the decision making?		✓
	Is any third stage optional for residents?		✓
	Does the final stage response set out residents' right to refer the matter to the Housing Ombudsman Service?	✓	
	Do we keep a record of complaint correspondence including correspondence from the resident?	✓	
	At what stage are most complaints resolved? <i>One</i>		
<b>4</b>	<b>Communication</b>		
	Are residents kept informed and updated during the complaints process?	✓	
	Are residents informed of the landlord's position and given a chance to respond and challenge any area of dispute before the final decision?	✓	
	Are all complaints acknowledged and logged within five days?	✓	
	Are residents advised of how to escalate at the end of each stage?	✓	
	What proportion of complaints are resolved at stage one?	55%	
	What proportion of complaints are resolved at stage two?	8%	
	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> <i>Assessment against HOS prescribed timescales rather than those set out in current Moat Complaints policy.</i>	39%(71%) 32% 69% (48%) 17%	
	Where timescales have been extended did we have good reason?	✓	
	Where timescales have been extended did we keep the resident informed?	✓	
	What proportion of complaints do we resolve to residents' satisfaction? <i>We do not currently collect this information.</i>		
<b>5</b>	<b>Cooperation with Housing Ombudsman Service</b>		
	Were all requests for evidence responded to within 15 days?	✓	
	Where the timescale was extended did we keep the Ombudsman informed?	✓	

<b>6</b>	<b>Fairness in complaint handling</b>		
	Are residents able to complain via a representative throughout?	✓	
	If advice was given, was this accurate and easy to understand?	N/A	
	How many cases did we refuse to escalate?  What was the reason for the refusal? <i>Issue occurred over three months ago which is outside of Moat's published timescale</i>	3	
	Did we explain our decision making to the resident?	✓	
<b>7</b>	<b>Outcomes and remedies</b>		
	Where something has gone wrong are we taking appropriate steps to put things right?	✓	
<b>8</b>	<b>Continuous learning and improvement</b>		
	What improvements have we made as a result of learning from complaints?  <i>Training needs identified and provided for Sales &amp; Marketing team.</i>  <i>Development and NHCC Team are focusing on improvement in quality of new builds through the introduction of new procedures and ensuring awareness of expected standards.</i>		
	How do we share these lessons with:  a) residents? <i>Via our website</i>  b) The board/governing body? <i>Regular reports to Customer &amp; Communities Committee</i>  c) In the Annual Report? <i>Yes</i>	✓  ✓  ✓	
	Has the Code made a difference to how we respond to complaints?	✓	
	What changes have we made? <i>We will adopt the timescales prescribed by the Housing Ombudsman Service.</i>  <i>We will amend the definition of a Complaint to that suggested by HOS.</i>  <i>We will collect additional data to assess whether complaints are resolved to resident satisfaction.</i>  <i>In order to report on the volume of complaints resolved to customer's satisfaction we have introduced an online survey.</i>		

## Notes

- Moat has an informal quick resolution stage which is not reported on within the self-assessment. In 2019/20 494 Quick Resolution complaints were raised with 253 resolved without converting into full complaints.

- During the Housing Ombudsman seminars, it was confirmed that the informal stage could be retained. However, the guidance notes state that complaints should be logged at stage one when received so we are seeking further clarification on this point from the Ombudsman.
- We are unable to report on the volume of complaints resolved to a customer's satisfaction for the last financial year as we ceased the collection of RTCF for complaints some time ago. We have recently recommenced and introduced an online survey which is currently achieving a response rate of 22% so will have this information available for future assessments.