



Solihull
Community Housing
Shaping our neighbourhoods

Annual Complaints Performance & Service Improvement Report **September 2026**



Solihull
METROPOLITAN
BOROUGH COUNCIL



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1. Introduction

Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council (SMBC) is the landlord for Council homes in Solihull. SCH delivers landlord services and manages complaints on the Council's behalf.

This report explains how those complaints were handled during the year, what residents told us, what we have learned and what we will do next. Complaints are an important source of insight. They help us understand where services have fallen short, where residents have experienced avoidable frustration, and where changes are needed to improve both complaint handling and wider service delivery.

The report brings together complaints performance, complaint themes, learning from the Housing Ombudsman, the annual self-assessment against the Complaint Handling Code and the Service Improvement Plan. Taken together, these show where progress has been made and where further improvement is required.

1.1 Governing Body Response

As the Cabinet Member for Housing/Member Responsible for Complaints and as Solihull Community Housing's (SCH) Complaints Champion, we welcome this opportunity to reflect on complaints performance during 2025/26 and the learning being taken forward.

Performance improved during the year. Overall, 89% of complaints were completed within target timescales, compared with 77.5% last year. Stage 1 performance improved to 92.6%, exceeding the 85% target. This improvement follows the move to a centralised complaints team, which was introduced in response to customer feedback. Our new case management system should further support this by helping complaints to be recorded, monitored and managed more consistently.

However, the report also identifies areas where performance and customer experience need to improve. Stage 2 complaints did not meet the required timescale, complaint volumes continued to rise, and more work is needed to understand why some complaints escalate beyond Stage 1. The key themes from complaints remain communication, coordination, follow-through and the experience of residents with vulnerabilities. These themes run through the report and are reflected in the actions set out in the Service Improvement Plan.

The Housing Ombudsman's review of the Complaints Policy has also provided important feedback. In response, SMBC and SCH have reviewed and strengthened the policy so that the roles of both organisations are clearer and residents have better information about how complaints are managed.

Over the coming year, we will monitor delivery of the Service Improvement Plan and focus on the areas where residents have told us services need to be better. We welcome feedback on this report and our approach to complaint handling. You can share your views through the form on our website or by calling 0121 717 1515.

Councillor Mark Parker

Cabinet Member for Housing/Member Responsible for Complaints, SMBC

Susan Buckley

Tenant Board Member & Complaints Champion, SCH

2. Complaint handling performance

2.1 Managing complaints

Our performance

Overall, **89%** of all complaints investigated during 2025/26 were completed within the required timescale. This was an increase of 11.5% compared with the previous year.

Stage 1 overview

April 2025 - March 2026			
	Investigated 612		Completed on time 92.6%
	Increase in Stage 1 Complaints from last year 6.8%		Complaints Upheld 49%

Our target for Stage 1 complaints was to complete 85% on time. We achieved **92.6%** for the 2025/26 performance year, meaning we exceeded this target.

Stage 1	Volume Logged	Volume Refused	Volume Cancelled by Customer	Volume Investigated	On time	% On Time	Late	Upheld	Not Upheld
2025/26	812	189	11	612	567	92.6	45	300	312
2024/25	651	59	19	573	438	76.4	135	336	237
2023/24	485	6	22	457	314	68.7	143	254	203

Stage 1	Volume	Extension Granted	On time	Late	Upheld	Not Upheld
Tenant	526	98	491	35	264	262
Non-tenant*	86	10	76	10	36	50

*Includes leaseholders, homeless applicants, housing register applicants and other complainants who are not Council tenants.

The table shows that Stage 1 performance improved significantly compared with the previous two years. However, the number of complaints being refused also increased; this is considered further in section 2.6.

Stage 2 overview

April 2025 - March 2026			
	Investigated 162		Completed on time 75.3%
	Increase in Stage 2 Complaints from last year 110%		Complaints Upheld 29.6%

Our target was to respond to 94% of Stage 2 complaints within the required timescale. During 2025/26, we achieved **75.3%**, so we did not meet our target.

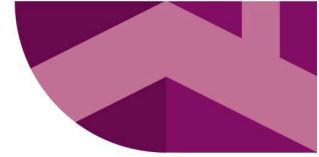
Of the 162 Stage 2 complaints investigated, 40 were recorded as late. We recognise this performance was not where we want it to be.

An external audit of our complaint timescale calculation methodology, carried out in April 2026, identified that 28 of these 40 complaints were classed as late because the acknowledgement letter was not sent within five working days. The investigation and final response for these complaints were not delayed. However, we recognise that acknowledgements are an important part of the complaints process and that we should give residents clear and timely confirmation that their complaint has been received.

On investigation, we found that many Stage 2 complaints were being received through individual staff email accounts. This created delays when staff were on annual leave, off sick, or working part-time.

To address this, we have introduced a centralised case management system, which means complaint correspondence is managed through one system rather than individual staff email accounts. The system is monitored by several officers, which should reduce the risk of Stage 2 complaints being missed or acknowledged late.

If these 28 complaints had not been affected by delayed acknowledgement letters, Stage 2 performance would have been 92% on time. This still falls short of the 94% target, but it helps distinguish between delays in acknowledgement and delays in completing the investigation and final response.



Stage 2	Volume Investigated	On time	% On time	Late	Upheld	Not Upheld
2025/26	162	122	75.3	40	48	114
2024/25	77	66	85.7	11	45	32
2023/24	28	27	96.4	1	24	4

Stage 2 2025/2026	Volume	Extension Granted	On time	% On time	Late	Upheld	Not Upheld
Tenant	136	51	101	74.2%	35	39	97
Non-tenant*	26	3	21	80.7%	5	9	17

*includes leaseholders, homeless or housing register applicants and other complaints that are not Council tenants.

Improving our complaints handling performance

Following the tenant SCHape Panel review reported in last year's Complaints Annual Report, complaint handling was centralised into a dedicated team. The team has now been in place for almost 12 months, and this has supported a clear improvement in Stage 1 complaint handling, with performance above target in 2025/26.

The focus for the year ahead is to maintain that improvement while strengthening Stage 2 performance. In particular, we need to reduce late acknowledgements at Stage 2 and continue to improve the timeliness and quality of complaint handling. These actions are reflected in the self-assessment and Service Improvement Plan.

Volume of complaints

Stage 1

Stage 1 complaint volumes have increased year-on-year. This reflects a wider sector trend, although the increase in 2025/26 was lower than in previous years.

Complaint volumes help us understand where residents are experiencing problems and where services need to improve. We also want residents to know how to complain and feel able to do so when something has gone wrong.

Stage 2

The number of Stage 2 complaints investigated increased significantly again this year, from 77 in 2024/25 to 162 in 2025/26. This is more than double the previous year's figure and continues the upward trend from 2023/24, when 28 Stage 2 complaints were investigated.

This may indicate that residents understand how to escalate a complaint where they remain dissatisfied. However, the increase also means we need to understand whether complaints are being resolved effectively at Stage 1 and whether Stage 2 is leading to different outcomes for residents.

We will ensure that further analysis is carried out into the reasons for escalation to Stage 2. This review will consider why customers remained dissatisfied after the Stage 1



response and whether Stage 2 led to a different outcome. This action is included in the Service Improvement Plan.

2.2 Comparing our performance

One way we monitor complaints performance is by comparing our results with other social housing providers.

Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs) support this because they are a regulatory requirement and are reported consistently across the sector. The Regulator of Social Housing publishes annual TSM results, which allow providers to benchmark their performance against peers.

The table below shows our performance against the complaint-related TSMs for 2025/26. As sector results for 2025/26 are not yet available, we have compared our results with the published 2024/25 sector data.

Key performance indicators	Bottom 25% performance (2024/2025)	National average (2024/2025)	Top 25% performers (2024/2025)	SCH 2024/2025	SCH 2025/2026
Stage 1 (TSM) complaints completed in target timescale	76.1%	89.3%	96.6%	76.4%	93.35%
Stage 2 (TSM) complaints completed in target timescale	69.6%	88.6	98.70%	85.7%	74.26%
Satisfaction with complaints handling	29.6%	35.0%	42.8%	37.8%	34.8%
Stage 1 complaints per 1,000 properties	72.1	55.2	37.7	43.0	54.2
Stage 2 complaints per 1,000 properties	13.9	8.8	5.3	5.4	14.0

Headlines:

- Stage 1 complaint handling has improved and is above the national average for complaints completed within timescale.
- Stage 2 complaint handling is below the national average and remains an area for improvement.
- Satisfaction is in line with the national average but remains low.
- Stage 2 complaint volumes are above the national average and significantly higher than in previous years.

To understand this better and address the issues, SCH is:

- carrying out in depth analysis to understand the key drivers of the increase in complaint volumes, with progress tracked through the Service Improvement Plan;
- using the new case management system to manage complaint correspondence and reduce late acknowledgements, particularly at Stage 2;
- using the new transactional survey of complaint satisfaction, which asks more detailed questions to understand dissatisfaction with complaint handling and support more targeted action.

2.3 Complaints by service area

To help us understand why customers complain, we consider complaints by their service area. Below is an overview of the service areas that complaints relate to:

Service Area	2025/2026	2024/2025	Percentage increase/decrease
Responsive Repairs & Voids – Repairs	209	193	8%
Neighbourhood Services – Antisocial Behaviour, Estate management	107	106	1%
Homeless Service / Allocations – Housing register	43	87	-51%
Compliance – Gas, Electrical and other compliance areas repairs and servicing	111	81	37%
Rent accounting and arrears / Right to Buy / Leasehold	26	24	8%
Customer Services	15	20	-25%
Occupational Therapy & Aids and Adaptations	21	20	5%
Out of Hours	3	1	200%
Solihull Independent Living Service (SILS) (formerly Wellbeing service)	6	1	500%

Understanding complaints by service area gives us the opportunity to focus our efforts on service improvement. Based on the above, the key areas are:

Compliance – gas and electrical

There has been a 37% increase in the volume of complaints regarding compliance related repairs and servicing.

The key driver is communication, particularly where residents are waiting for follow-on works, parts, or further appointments and are not kept updated on progress.

A review of repairs communication and coordination is planned for October 2026, in conjunction with our resident SCHape Panel. The aim of the review is to identify improvements that will positively impact the experience and outcomes for customers, which should decrease the number of complaints.

Responsive repairs

Although there is only a slight increase, repairs continue to be the highest area of complaints, which is expected given the number of repairs the team complete.

As with compliance, communication and co-ordination are key factors in these complaints, with customers left feeling unclear on what is happening and when.

During this year, SCH introduced a single point of contact for complex repairs, as this was identified as a particular area of dissatisfaction. The planned review with the resident SCHape Panel will also consider these wider repairs communication and coordination issues.



Solihull Independent Living Service (SILS)

Although small in volume, the increase is notable. These complaints relate to delays in service, which can significantly impact customers who rely on SILS.

SCH has updated processes during the year as a result of complaint learning and we will continue to monitor this.

2.4 Complaints by demographics

Appendix B in this report shows a breakdown of our customer data by different demographics. This information is important to help us review our service delivery.

Highlights:

- As per the previous Complaints Annual Report, the ethnicity of complainants is broadly in line with the general population.
- Again, a slightly higher proportion of women make a complaint compared to the general population, but statistically this is not significant.
- As we found last year, a higher proportion of younger customers make a complaint, which is mirrored across the sector.
- Last year, we identified a statistically significant difference in the proportion of customers with a vulnerability making a complaint, compared with customers who do not have a vulnerability. This pattern is repeated and has increased in this year's analysis.

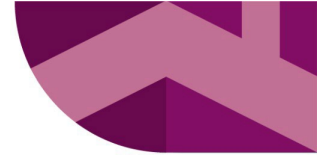
What we did with last year's findings:

In last year's Complaints Annual Report, we highlighted next steps relating to complaints by demographics. This included a commitment to carry out more detailed analysis to understand the key drivers.

This analysis included a review of a sample of complaints. It found that the 'not upheld' rate was higher for customers who had a vulnerability logged on our system. In many of these cases, the required technical actions had been completed and no service failure was identified, but communication and coordination of service delivery remained an issue. The review showed that poor communication and coordination can have a greater impact on customers with vulnerabilities.

SCH has since launched the "Needs on the day" approach, where every customer interaction includes a check of any needs the customer may have on that day. This allows the service to be tailored to the customer's circumstances. We will monitor the impact of this on complaint rates and outcomes during the year.

The Service Improvement Plan includes an action relating to vulnerable customers, including a commitment to continue monitoring and auditing complaints from customers with vulnerabilities.



2.5 Customer satisfaction

Future surveys

Satisfaction with complaint handling remains an area where improvement is needed, as reflected in the TSM results. SCH has introduced transactional satisfaction surveys for people who have made a complaint for the 2026/27 performance year.

The new survey will give us more detailed feedback from residents who have recently used the complaints process. This will help us better understand what is working, what is not, and where changes are needed.

Feedback from the surveys will be reviewed and used to improve service delivery. Learning will also be linked into the Service Improvement Plan and taken forward through the Service Improvement Manager role.

We will report the outcome of these surveys in the next Complaints Annual Report.

2.6 Refusals

There are occasions when we will refuse to accept a complaint for investigation. Our policy clearly sets out the reasons we may do this. During the 2025/26 performance year, we refused 189 complaints, which is an increase on the previous year.

The main reasons for refusals were:

- Service request
- Review or appeal route available
- Repeat request

As in the previous year, most refusals occurred where the online complaint form was used to submit a complaint. The online form was first fully available to customers from September 2024, so 2025/26 was the first full year in which customers were able to use it. This may partly explain the increase in refusals.

The Service Improvement Plan includes an action to review and improve the online form, so that customers are better supported to direct their enquiry to the right route. The improved form is due to go live in October.

3. Service improvements and learning

One of the most important parts of the complaints process is identifying and acting on learning. Complaints are a valuable tool for learning, and they are utilised to ensure all teams have the opportunity to improve their service delivery.

Below is a view of learning from the 2025/26 performance year:

Learning from Stage 1 and Stage 2 complaints		
What went wrong?	What did we learn?	What did we change?
Customers did not always receive timely or clear communication when repairs were being planned or scheduled.	Customers need clearer information about what will happen, when it will happen and who is responsible for keeping them updated.	Enhanced text messaging is now available to the repairs scheduling team. A Delivery Plan objective has also been included to review how the repairs team communicates with customers and between teams.
Customers were not always kept informed where repairs were complex or required multiple teams, trades or visits.	Complex repairs need clearer ownership and coordination so that customers do not experience avoidable delays or uncertainty.	A single point of contact has been introduced for complex cases, supported by the development of a Complex Case Management Toolkit.
Service improvements identified through complaints did not always progress quickly enough.	Where a complaint identifies the need for a process change, there needs to be a clear route for ensuring that improvement is owned and delivered.	A new Service Improvement Manager role has been introduced to oversee and drive improvements across all service areas
Customers told us they felt dismissed, not listened to or spoken down to.	The way we communicate with customers is as important as the outcome of the complaint.	Customer Experience training has been completed for all temporary and permanent staff. All staff will have a Customer Experience objective for the 2026/27 performance year, and the impact will be monitored through complaint themes and customer feedback.
Wellbeing services out of hours process failure.	A call to the Duty Manager was missed. The process needed an additional check to make sure out-of-hours activity was picked up and acted on.	The process has been changed to include a start of day review of out of hours activity to ensure all appropriate steps have been taken.

A Right to Buy email was sent to a customer but was not received	Relying solely on email can create a risk that important information is missed.	The process was enhanced to include phone calls to customers.
Delays occurred where repairs could not be appointed.	Pending repairs need to be reviewed regularly so that delays can be identified and addressed.	Pending repairs have been reviewed and additional resource allocated.

Learning from HOS determinations (see section 4)		
What went wrong?	What did we learn?	What did we change?
Complaint handling failures.	When customers contact us following a Stage 1 outcome, we don't always identify that they may require an escalation to Stage 2.	Training and updates have been delivered to all teams.
Antisocial Behaviour (ASB) process not followed.	There was no evidence that an Action Plan had been completed in line with policy timescales.	A new ASB case management system has been introduced to support the process.
A refund was not processed.	Refund decisions need to be clearly considered, recorded and followed through.	The refund process was reviewed.

3.1 Themes

In addition to the above learning, we also consider the themes that are emerging from complaint investigations.

Below are some of the key themes that have been identified and how we are responding to them. These themes are also consistent with wider resident feedback, including the TSM survey, where communication, repairs, complaint handling and follow-through were recurring areas of dissatisfaction.

Key Themes	What are we doing in response
Communication & co-ordination – When service delivery is complex, our communication and co-ordination can be poor. This can leave customers unclear about what will happen and when.	• Introduced a single point of contact for complex complaints. • Full review of repairs communication and coordination in conjunction with the resident SCHape Panel. The review will commence in October 2026.



Reasonable adjustments – When customers tell us they need an adjustment to the service they are receiving, our response can be inconsistent. This can leave customers feeling unheard.	• Customer Experience training has been undertaken across the organisation to improve staff understanding of vulnerability and reasonable adjustments. • Introduced needs on the day approach to ensure we capture all additional needs.
Internal handovers – When repairs move from one team to another there can be gaps in the process and as a result works can be delayed. Customers tell us that this can feel like a lack of ownership.	• This will also be considered as part of the full review of repairs communication and coordination with the resident SCHape Panel, starting in October 2026.

4. Housing Ombudsman

4.1 Determinations

The Housing Ombudsman Service (HOS) investigates complaints when a tenant escalates their concerns to them after receiving a Stage 2 outcome. When investigating a complaint, HOS can consider seven possible findings:

Outcome	What we mean
Outside jurisdiction	Where we <i>cannot</i> or <i>may not</i> investigate a complaint point, we say it is 'outside our jurisdiction'.
No maladministration	We've found the landlord has acted reasonably or we have not found any failures.
Service failure	The landlord is responsible for minor failures, or more notable failures where the overall impact is minimal.
Maladministration	The landlord has failed in some material way that has had moderate to high impact.
Severe maladministration	We've found some significant or serious failings by the landlord. Or there was significant impact caused by what went wrong.
Reasonable redress	While there were failures, the landlord has identified these and has since done enough to put things right before the start of our investigation. We've found the resolution it has offered was reasonable to satisfactorily resolve the complaint. We're not likely to make a reasonable redress finding where the resolution offered was unreasonably delayed. At year end, this is called 'redress'.
Resolved with intervention	Following our involvement, the landlord has now taken steps (or will take steps) to put things right. We're satisfied that what it has done (or will do) will resolve the complaint satisfactorily. We'll set out in our decision what the landlord will do to resolve the issue. At year end we called this 'mediation'

We received two case outcomes from HOS throughout the 2025/26 performance year, compared to five in the previous year.

There were six findings across the two cases:

Category outcome	2025/26	2024/25
Maladministration	1	7
Service failure	3	1
No maladministration	2	5
Maladministration rate	66.7%	57%

This shows four findings of maladministration in 2025/2026 (Maladministration + Service Failure), compared to eight in 2024/2025.

While the maladministration rate has increased, the actual number of maladministration and service failure findings has decreased. This reflects the small number of Housing



Ombudsman cases received during the year. The findings remain important because they highlight issues where learning and service improvement are needed.

Maladministration and service failure were found in the following categories:

Category	Count
ASB / Abuse / Nuisance	2
Managing relations	2
Financial	1
Responsive repairs / activity	1
Total	6

All learning from these cases is shared with SMBC, SCH and staff responsible for complaints. The orders have been complied with and customers have been updated. We accept that services don't always get it right, but we will always consider the feedback received.

We also share learning with our customers in the quarterly Voice of the Customer Report, which can be found on our [Performance website page](#).

4.2 Ombudsman reports

HOS generates reports annually for landlords where there have been five or more findings of maladministration or service failure in the previous performance year. A report was issued for SMBC in October 2025, reflecting the performance of the 2024/25 performance year, which we reported on in our previous Complaints Annual Report.

You can search for the report on the [Landlords Archive page](#) on the HOS website.

Key notes from the report:

- 57% maladministration rate – this was a 10% reduction compared to the previous year, the national maladministration rate was 71% and the national maladministration rate for landlords of a similar size and type was 80%.
- By category, 'complaint handling' was the highest area where maladministration was found.
- Compensation was the highest type of 'order' received from HOS.

We review and share learning from reports and insights issued by both Ombudsman services, so that this can inform improvements to complaint handling and wider service delivery.

HOS contacted SMBC in January 2026 to confirm that it would be carrying out an audit of our Complaints Policy and self-assessment. The audit resulted in 27 recommendations. SMBC and SCH reviewed the Complaints Policy in response to those recommendations and used the opportunity to look more widely at the policy as a whole, strengthening it where needed. The revised Policy is published on both the SCH and SMBC websites.

The revised policy makes the roles of the Council and SCH clearer and helps residents understand how complaints are managed, what happens at each stage and what they can expect when they raise a complaint.



5. Self-assessment

As part of its legal duty to monitor landlord compliance with the Complaint Handling Code, HOS has instructed landlords to submit a self-assessment every year.

The self-assessment is an opportunity for SCH and SMBC to reflect on the current approach, ensure we comply with the Code and take forward any opportunities to improve service delivery. As mentioned previously, HOS conducted an audit of our self-assessment, which we have reviewed and complied with as required.

Appendix A is the 2025/26 self-assessment that we have completed against the Complaint Handling Code.

In summary, the self-assessment is split into seven sections and there are 73 points with which SMBC as landlord, must comply, supported by SCH as the organisation delivering landlord services on the Council's behalf.

Last year, we recognised that there was one point of non-compliance, due to the timeliness of complaints. The self-assessment highlights significant improvements have been made with Stage 1 complaints. However, Stage 2 timescales were not achieved, so this has been recorded as an area of non-compliance with the Code.

As this report has shown, there are opportunities to improve, and these are reflected in the Service Improvement Plan on the following page.



6. Service Improvement Plan

The Service Improvement Plan brings together the key areas for improvement identified through complaints performance, complaint themes, resident feedback, Ombudsman learning and the annual self-assessment. While the Housing Ombudsman Service requires landlords to publish this plan as part of the Complaint Handling Code, its main purpose is to show the actions we are taking to improve complaint handling and wider service delivery.

The plan focuses on the areas where residents should expect to see clearer communication, more consistent complaint handling, better coordination between teams and stronger follow-through when things go wrong.

The plan will be maintained and delivered by SCH, with the Head of Customer Experience responsible for coordinating delivery across relevant service areas. Progress will be reported to SMBC so that actions are monitored and we can check whether they are making a difference for residents.

Code / SA ref	Action Title	Action Detail	Resolution	Target Date	Owner
6.3	Complaint Timescales	Customers should receive a response to their complaint within the timelines of the Complaint Handling Code.	Ensure compliance with the timeliness of complaints, with a focus on improving the timeliness of acknowledging a complaint at Stage 2.	March 2027	Customer Contact Manager
Annual Report	Online complaint form	A high proportion of refusals are linked to complaints submitted through the online form.	Review and improve the online form to help support customers to ensure their enquiries are directed to the correct service teams.	October 2026	Customer Contact Manager
HOS Determinations	Recognition of Stage 2 complaint	Ensure all staff can recognise when to give the customer the choice of a Stage 2 complaint.	Staff training, refreshers and communication regarding escalation to Stage 2.	March 2027	Customer Contact Manager and Organisational Development Lead
Annual Report	Stage 2 increase	Stage 2 complaint volumes have significantly increased.	In depth review of the reasons for escalation to Stage 2.	December 2026	Business Intelligence team
Annual Report	Refusals	Increase in refusals.	In-depth analysis of refusals as per section 2.6.	December 2026	Business Intelligence team
Annual Report	Improving Service	When learning is identified, there isn't always a clear route to ensure changes are made to service delivery.	Create a clear link to the Service Improvement Manager role so that learning is considered and acted upon.	September 2026	Customer Contact Manager Service Improvement Manager



Annual Report	Recurring theme of communication issues	Understand where improvements are needed and implement	Full review of repairs communication and coordination.	March 2027	Head of Customer Experience
Annual Report	Vulnerability Data	Monitor complaints from vulnerable residents.	Regular audits of complaints from customers with vulnerabilities.	March 2027	Service Improvement Manager
Annual Report – from CX Committee	Learning	Further develop understanding and embedding of learning.	Enhance reporting of learning. The proposed format will be co-designed with the Committee. Presented in November, with full implementation from Quarter 3 reporting onwards.	Presented in November, with full implementation from Quarter 3 reporting onwards.	Head of Customer Experience
Annual Report – from CX Committee	Learning	Further develop understanding and embedding of learning.	Develop a learning framework that clearly sets out how learning from complaints is identified, shared and embedded with staff and customers.	Brought to the Customer Experience Committee for approval in November.	Head of Customer Experience



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.



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	Housing Complaints Policy.pdf Section 4 of the policy sets out the definition of a complaint.	Our Policy definition: '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 an individual resident or group of residents'.
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	Housing Complaints Policy.pdf Section 4 of the policy confirms this.	Our Policy wording: Customers do not have to use the word "complaint" for us to treat it as one. If a customer tells us they are unhappy, we will give them the option to make a complaint.
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	Yes	Housing Complaints Policy.pdf Section 6.1 of the policy confirms this.	Our Policy wording: A service request is a request from a resident to the landlord requiring action to be taken to put something



	something right. Service requests are not complaints, but must be recorded, monitored and reviewed regularly.			right. Service requests are not complaints. SCH will record all service requests and action as appropriate. If a customer expresses dissatisfaction regarding the service they have received or if we have not done what we promised to deliver, the customer will be given the option to make a complaint. Should a complaint be made, this won't prevent SCH from delivering the requested service request.
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	Housing Complaints Policy.pdf Section 6.1 of the policy confirms this.	Our Policy wording: Should a complaint be made, this won't prevent us from delivering the requested service request.
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	Yes	An independent company undertakes customer satisfaction surveys, they advise how the customer can complain should they wish. Any reports of dissatisfaction are shared with us and appropriate action taken.	Acuity, which is the independent company has confirmed that they follow this practice.



	their services, they also must provide details of how residents can complain.			
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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	Housing Complaints Policy.pdf Section 7 of the policy confirms this.	Our Policy wording: We will review each request for a complaint based on its individual merit and at times may deviate from the above guidance.
2.2	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: - The issue giving rise to the complaint occurred over 12 months ago. - 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.	Yes	Housing Complaints Policy.pdf Section 7 of the policy confirms this.	Our policy lists examples of complaints that do not fall in scope.



	• 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	Housing Complaints Policy.pdf Section 7.3 of the policy confirms this.	Our policy wording: 1. vi. Issues /incidents referred to us whereby the customer was aware of the issue over 12 months ago, unless there are exceptional circumstances.
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	Housing Complaints Policy.pdf Section 7.2 and 10.9 of the policy confirms this.	Our policy wording: Where a complaint is not accepted, SCH will write to the resident on the Council's behalf explaining the reasons for the decision and advising them of their right to contact the appropriate Ombudsman.
2.5	Landlords must not take a blanket approach to excluding complaints; they must consider the individual circumstances of each complaint.	Yes	Housing Complaints Policy.pdf Section 7.4 of the policy confirms this.	Our Policy wording: We will review each request for a complaint based on its individual merit and at times may deviate from the above guidance.

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	Housing Complaints Policy.pdf Sections 5.2 and 9 of the policy confirms this. Reasonable-Adjustments-Policy-for-Customer-Complaints.pdf Section 4 of the policy confirms this. Section 3 includes information about making complaints accessible.	Our Policy outlines methods available to complain and confirms that complaints will be made accessible.
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	Housing Complaints Policy.pdf Section 9 of the policy confirms this. Communications and guidance for staff is issued relating to complaints. Complaints information is included in a monthly Core Brief that is delivered to all staff.	All Staff are made aware of how to pass details of complaints to the Customer Feedback Team.
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	Yes	We monitor the volume of complaints received, however there is no associated target,	



	complaint volumes are potentially a sign that residents are unable to complain.		results are not rated Red, Amber or Green.	
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	Housing Complaints Policy.pdf Section 2.1 confirms this. Our policy is published on the SMBC and SCH websites.	
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	Housing Complaints Policy.pdf Section 2.1 of the policy confirms this.	The Complaints Policy is published on the SMBC and SCH websites and can be obtained in accessible formats, such as audio, large print, or different languages by request. The Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code is publicised to customers on our website, within our Newsletters and on Noticeboards.
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	Housing Complaints Policy.pdf Sections 4.5 and 9.2 of the policy confirms this.	



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	Housing Complaints Policy.pdf Section 10 and 12 of the policy confirms this.	All responses to Stage 2 complaints advise residents that if they are unhappy with the Stage 2 response, they can refer their complaint to the Ombudsman and contact details for the Ombudsman are included in the response.
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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	SCH has a centralised Customer Feedback Team who review, investigate and respond to complaints. This team liaise with the Housing Ombudsman and ensure management information is available for reporting.	The Head of Customer Experience is responsible for complaint handling within SCH, while SMBC, as the landlord, is responsible for oversight and scrutiny of complaint handling.
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	Processes are in place to ensure the Customer Feedback Team have access to information, staff and resources to resolve disputes. An SLA for responses in 48 hours is in place.	



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	Increased resourcing of complaints through centralised team centralisation of complaints. All staff have a complaints related objective. Complaint module mandatory for all staff. Learning case conferences in place. Monthly complaints updates in Core Brief.	
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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	Housing Complaints Policy.pdf We operate under one complaint policy, applicable to all customers.	
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	Housing Complaints Policy.pdf Section 10 of the policy confirms that we operate a 2 Stage complaint process only.	



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	Housing Complaints Policy.pdf Section 10 of the policy confirms that we operate a 2 Stage complaint 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	Housing Complaints Policy.pdf Section 10 of the policy confirms that SCH deliver landlord services on behalf of SMBC which includes complaints.	Policy wording: As a Registered Social Landlord, Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council (SMBC) is responsible for how complaints about landlord services are handled. SMBC is also legally responsible for ensuring compliance with the Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code. Solihull Community Housing (SCH) delivers landlord services on behalf of SMBC to Council tenants and leaseholders and is responsible for managing complaints on the Council's behalf and for implementing this policy.
5.5	Landlords are responsible for ensuring that any third parties handle complaints in line with the Code.	Yes	Housing Complaints Policy.pdf Section 1 of the policy confirms that SCH deliver landlord	Policy wording: As a Registered Social Landlord, Solihull



			services on behalf of SMBC which includes complaints.	Metropolitan Borough Council (SMBC) is responsible for how complaints about landlord services are handled. SMBC is also legally responsible for ensuring compliance with the Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code. Solihull Community Housing (SCH) delivers landlord services on behalf of SMBC to Council tenants and leaseholders and is responsible for managing complaints on the Council's behalf and for implementing this policy.
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	Housing Complaints Policy.pdf Section 5.1 and 5.2 confirm this part of the process.	
5.7	When a complaint is acknowledged at either stage, landlords must be clear which aspects of the complaint they are,	Yes	Housing Complaints Policy.pdf	If elements of a complaint do not fall within our remit, we clearly communicate this to



	and are not, responsible for and clarify any areas where this is not clear.		Section 10.1 and 10.11 confirm this part of the process.	the resident and re-iterate what is being investigated.
5.8	At each stage of the complaints process, complaint handlers must: 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	Complaint Handling training is in place for the centralised complaints team to ensure this is achieved. Audits of complaints take place which considers this criteria.	The Complaints Team is independent from any operational functions of the Housing Landlord Service allowing them to act independently and consider all information carefully.
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	Housing Complaints Policy.pdf Section 10 details the process for extensions.	
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	We capture these needs when the complaint is logged, the case management system allows for adjustments to be noted and updated as needed.	
5.11	Landlords must not refuse to escalate a complaint through all stages of the complaints procedure unless it has valid	Yes	Housing Complaints Policy.pdf	



	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.		Section 7 outlines the reasons for exclusions.	
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	SCH case management system captures the date the complaint was received and logged. Correspondence is held in the case along with any evidence relating to the investigation.	Monthly and quarterly reports are produced.
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	SCH centralised complaints team have access to all possible remedies; an escalation is not required to enhance a remedy.	Examples include apologies, compensation, and additional repair works.
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	SCH have an Unreasonable Communication Policy , which was updated in September 2026.	
5.15	Any restrictions placed on contact due to unacceptable behaviour must be proportionate and demonstrate regard	Yes	We capture and record such reasons and have a process in	Any decisions to impose restrictions are made on a case-by-case basis and with



	for the provisions of the Equality Act 2010.		place to ensure action taken is appropriate.	due regard to Equality & Diversity.
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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	Housing Complaints Policy.pdf Section 10 of the policy confirms that we triage complaints as they are received and identifies complexity as early as possible.	
6.2	Complaints must be acknowledged, defined and logged at Stage 1 of the complaints procedure <u>within five working days of the complaint being received.</u>	Yes	Housing Complaints Policy.pdf Section 10 of the policy confirms this.	
6.3	Landlords must issue a full response to stage 1 complaints <u>within 10 working days</u> of the complaint being acknowledged.	Yes	Housing Complaints Policy.pdf Section 10 of the policy confirms this.	



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	Housing Complaints Policy.pdf Section 10 of the policy confirms this.	We state why we require an extension. All extensions and the reason for extensions are recorded on the case management 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	Housing Complaints Policy.pdf Section 10 of the policy confirms this.	The extension letter contains details for the Ombudsman.
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	Housing Complaints Policy.pdf Section 10 of the policy confirms this.	We respond to complaints with 10 working days and explain any outstanding work due to be completed. This is monitored by the complaints team.
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	Housing Complaints Policy.pdf Section 10 of the policy confirms this.	
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	Yes	Housing Complaints Policy.pdf Section 10 of the policy confirms this.	Additional complaints during an investigation are considered if they are related otherwise a



	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.			separate Stage 1 complaint is raised.
6.9	Landlords must confirm the following in writing to the resident at the completion of Stage 1 in clear, plain language: a. the complaint stage; 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	Housing Complaints Policy.pdf Section 10 of the policy confirms this.	The letter template contains all points set out a-g.

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	Yes	Housing Complaints Policy.pdf	



	Stage 1, it must be progressed to Stage 2 of the landlord's procedure. Stage 2 is the landlord's final response.		Section 5 of the policy confirms this.	
6.11	Requests for Stage 2 must be acknowledged, defined and logged at Stage 2 of the complaints procedure within five working days of the escalation request being received.	No	Housing Complaints Policy.pdf Section 10 of the policy confirms this.	The policy confirms that acknowledgements will be issued within five working days. However, throughout the 2025/26 performance year 28 of the 162 Stage 2 complaints were acknowledged late. We took steps to ensure the outcome was still issued in line with the original acknowledgement date that was missed however these complaints are reported as late due to the acknowledgement being late. The move to a centralised case management system has now mitigated the risk of late acknowledgments happening.
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	Housing Complaints Policy.pdf Section 10 of the policy confirms this.	
6.13	The person considering the complaint at Stage 2 must not be the same person	Yes	Housing Complaints Policy.pdf	



	that considered the complaint at Stage 1.		Section 10 of the policy confirms this.	
6.14	Landlords must issue a final response to the Stage 2 <u>within 20 working days</u> of the complaint being acknowledged.	Yes	Housing Complaints Policy.pdf Section 10 of the policy confirms this.	92% of complaints were issued a final response within 20 working days of the acknowledgement being issued.
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	Housing Complaints Policy.pdf Section 10 of the policy confirms this.	
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	Housing Complaints Policy.pdf Section 10 of the policy confirms this.	Included in letter 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	Housing Complaints Policy.pdf Section 10 of the policy confirms this.	
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	Housing Complaints Policy.pdf Section 10 of the policy confirms this.	Included in letter 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 stage; 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	Housing Complaints Policy.pdf Section 10 of the policy confirms this.	
6.20	Stage 2 is the landlord's final response and must involve all suitable staff members needed to issue such a response.	Yes	Housing Complaints Policy.pdf Section 10 of the policy confirms this.	Staff involved include: Stage 2 complaints handler Customer Contact Manager.

Section 7: Putting things right

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
7.1	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: • Apologising;	Yes	We have a Remedies Policy in place to support investigations and the steps needed to put things right.	



	• 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.			
7.2	Any remedy offered must reflect the impact on the resident as a result of any fault identified.	Yes	The Remedies Policy confirms this.	
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	Remedies and follow on actions are logged against the complaint case, these are tracked and monitored to completion.	
7.4	Landlords must take account of the guidance issued by the Ombudsman when deciding on appropriate remedies.	Yes	The Ombudsman guidance has been utilised to update the Remedies Policy which was updated in September 2026.	

Section 8: Self-assessment, reporting and compliance

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
8.1	Landlords must produce an annual complaints performance and service improvement report for scrutiny and challenge, which must include: 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	<u>Annual Report 2025/26 - Solihull Community Housing</u> The Annual Report has been published and publicised to customers. The report considers all of these requirements.	
8.2	The annual complaints performance and service improvement report must be reported to the landlord's governing	Yes	SCH and SMBC governance processes have been followed	



	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.		with the Board approval being sought prior to publication.	
8.3	Landlords must also carry out a self-assessment following a significant restructure, merger and/or change in procedures.	Yes	Should such activity occur we are aware of this requirement.	This has not happened so far, but if it were to arise, we would complete a new self-assessment setting out timescales for completion.
8.4	Landlords may be asked to review and update the self-assessment following an Ombudsman investigation.	Yes	We will work with the Housing Ombudsman should any such action be required. A review of our Complaints Policy took place in July 2026 after an audit from the compliance team at the Housing Ombudsman.	
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	SCH have this step built into Business Continuity Planning.	

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.	Yes	We have changed the approach to complaint handling and steps have been taken to address issues identified such as 'poor communication', this is detailed in the Annual Report. As the landlord, SMBC receive updates on performance and findings, which includes learning from complaints and the progress of the Service Improvement Plan.	Complaints quarterly report, Voice of the Customer (VOC) report and the complaints annual report refer.
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	Complaints are a regular feature in staff communications and customer communications alike. Complaints are viewed by the wider leadership team as a source of information for improvement and feedback is provided on a regular basis. The Complaints dashboard offers insight into performance and the Voice of the Customer Framework also surfaces the learning from 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	Yes	SCH share learning from complaints on our website and within our customer communications. Reports regarding complaints are issued to committees and board	



	stakeholders, such as residents' panels, staff and relevant committees.		throughout the SCH and SMBC Governance structure. In 2026 the Customer Experience Committee has been created which is chaired by a tenant board member who is also the member responsible for complaints – information is shared and reviewed.	
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	As the landlord, SMBC have assigned the Assistant Director of Housing. SCH has assigned the Head of Customer Experience.	
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	The Member Responsible for Complaints is the Cabinet Member for Housing. SCH has a Tenant Board Member as a Complaints Champion.	
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	Both the MRC and SCH Complaints Champion have access to complaint data and performance. Case reviews are completed as required and reports issued to demonstrate learning.	



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	The MRC and SCH Complaints Champion receive this information via the governance structures in place. Reports from determinations are shared for review and consideration. The MRC and SCH Complaints Champion are involved in development of the Annual Report and Service Improvement Report.	
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: 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	SCH staff all have a mandatory objective in place that considers this requirement. Staff are required to demonstrate how they have achieved this requirement within their role as part of their annual review.	Our Policy is designed to ensure that we are accountable, apologise when we get things wrong & work towards learning to improve our processes, which includes mandatory training for staff etc.



Appendix B: Complaints by demographics

Stage 1 complaints

Gender	SCH Population	Count	Percentage
Female	62.95%	430	70.61%
Male	37.03%	179	29.39%
Other	0.01%	-	0.00%
Total	100.00%	609	100.00%

Vulnerability/vulnerabilities	SCH Population	Count	Percentage
No	60.39%	263	42.97%
Yes	39.61%	349	57.03%

Ethnicity	SCH Population	Count	Percentage
White	80.88%	420	68.63%
Black, Black British, Caribbean or African	4.07%	33	5.39%
Mixed or multiple ethnic groups	3.01%	23	3.76%
Asian or Asian British	2.21%	16	2.61%
Other ethnic group	0.63%	3	0.49%
Chose not to specify	1.17%	9	1.47%
Unknown	8.04%	108	17.65%
Total	100.00%	612	100.00%

Age Bracket	SCH Population	Count	Percentage
0-20	0.77%	2	0.33%
21-30	9.66%	58	9.48%
31-40	18.86%	149	24.35%
41-50	16.24%	106	17.32%
51-60	19.11%	80	13.07%
61-70	16.86%	55	8.99%
71-80	12.39%	36	5.88%
81+	6.00%	7	1.14%
Unknown	0.13%	119	19.44%
Total	100.00%	612	100.00%

Stage 2 complaints

Gender	SCH Population	Count	Percentage
Female	62.95%	99	65.13%
Male	37.03%	53	34.87%
Other	0.01%	0	0.00%
Total	100.00%	152	100.00%

Vulnerability/vulnerabilities	SCH Population	Count	Percentage
No	60.39%	84	51.85%
Yes	39.61%	78	48.15%

Ethnicity	SCH Population	Count	Percentage
White	80.88%	94	58.02%
Black, Black British, Caribbean or African	4.07%	14	8.64%
Mixed or multiple ethnic groups	3.01%	2	1.23%
Asian or Asian British	2.21%	3	1.85%
Other ethnic group	0.63%	0	0.00%
Chose not to specify	1.17%	4	2.47%
Unknown	8.04%	45	27.78%
Total	100.00%	162	100.00%

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