



Housing Ombudsman Self Assessment

DECEMBER 2020

Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code: Self-Assessment Form

Compliance with the Complaint Handling Code			
1	Definition of a complaint	Yes	No
	Does the complaints process use the following definition of a complaint? <i>An expression of dissatisfaction, however made, about the standard of service, actions or lack of action by the organisation, its own staff, or those acting on its behalf, affecting an individual resident or group of residents.</i>	Yes	
	Does the policy have exclusions where a complaint will not be considered?	Yes	
	Are these exclusions reasonable and fair to residents? Evidence relied upon: Below are circumstances where Abri may not accept a complaint or where we may decide to deal with it in a different way to the normal process. These circumstances have been discussed with our Scrutiny and Area Panels. Examples include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The issue giving rise to the complaint occurred over six months ago. However, where the problem is a recurring issue, Abri may consider any older reports as part of the background to the complaint if this will help to resolve the issue; Where matters have already been the subject of legal proceedings, or where legal proceedings have started or are threatened; Matters that have already been considered under the complaints policy. In this case we can refer the complainant directly to the Housing Ombudsman; Complaints relating to consumer credit regulated activity which may be able to be referred to the Financial Ombudsman Service; or If a complaint is being made unreasonably or the customer is demonstrating unacceptable behaviour when pursuing their complaint. We have a separate procedure giving guidance on dealing with vexatious contact. If Abri decides not to accept a complaint, or to deal with it differently, we will explain the reasons why the matter is not suitable for the complaints process or outline how we are dealing with it and why. 	Yes	
2	Accessibility		
	Are multiple accessibility routes available for residents to make a complaint?	Yes	
	Is the complaints policy and procedure available online?	Yes	
	Do we have a reasonable adjustments policy?	Yes	
	Do we regularly advise residents about our complaints process?	Yes	
3	Complaints team and process		
	Is there a complaint officer or equivalent in post?	Yes	
	Does the complaint officer have autonomy to resolve complaints?	Yes	
	Does the complaint officer have authority to compel engagement from other departments to resolve disputes?	Yes	
	If there is a third stage to the complaint's procedure are residents involved in the decision making?	NA	NA
	Is any third stage optional for residents?		No
	Does the final stage response set out residents' right to refer the matter to the Housing Ombudsman Service?	Yes	

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	Do we keep a record of complaint correspondence including correspondence from the resident?	Yes	
	At what stage are most complaints resolved?	1	
4	Communication		
	Are residents kept informed and updated during the complaints process?	Yes	
	Are residents informed of the landlord's position and given a chance to respond and challenge any area of dispute before the final decision?	Yes	
	Are all complaints acknowledged and logged within five days?	Yes	
	Are residents advised of how to escalate at the end of each stage?	Yes	
	What proportion of complaints are resolved at stage one? April 2020 to Date: 97.74% resolved at Stage 1 Current Quarter: 98.96% resolved at Stage 1		
	What proportion of complaints are resolved at stage two? April 2020 to Date: 2.26% resolved at Stage 2 Current Quarter: 1.04% resolved at Stage 2		
	What proportion of complaint responses are sent within Code timescales? April 2020 to Date: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stage one - 17.33% Stage one (with extension) - 30.68% Stage two - 61.11% Stage two (with extension) - 61.11% Current Quarter: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stage one - 22.37% Stage one (with extension) - 40% Stage two - 75% Stage two (with extension) - 75% 		
	Where timescales have been extended did we have good reason?	Yes	
	Where timescales have been extended did we keep the resident informed?	Yes	
	What proportion of complaints do we resolve to residents' satisfaction	78.78%	
5	Cooperation with Housing Ombudsman Service		
	Were all requests for evidence responded to within 15 days?	Yes	
	Where the timescale was extended did we keep the Ombudsman informed?	NA	NA
6	Fairness in complaint handling		
	Are residents able to complain via a representative throughout?	Yes	
	If advice was given, was this accurate and easy to understand?	Yes	
	How many cases did we refuse to escalate? What was the reason for the refusal? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The customer was requesting that we provide compensation for goods stolen from their shed, however we refused to escalate due to being unable to take responsibility for personal items that have been stolen. The customer was requesting compensation for health deterioration, however as they were unable to provide medical evidence to support their claim, we were unable to escalate their complaint. 	2	
	Did we explain our decision to the resident?	Yes	

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7	Outcomes and remedies		
	Where something has gone wrong, are we taking appropriate steps to put things right?	Yes	
8	Continuous learning and improvement		
	<p>What improvements have we made as a result of learning from complaints?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improvements have been made in colleague Complaints Training and Complaints Inductions for new starters. • Training has been provided to our customer facing staff regarding the information that we capture at first point of contact, focusing on the impact to the customer, how the customer wants us to resolve their complaint and any evidence that support their complaint. • Changes have been made to our Antisocial Behaviour Policy around the frequency of customer contact during an ASB claim. • We are continually improving our online portal, following feedback and suggestions that we receive from customers surrounding the accessibility, usability and support available online. We have increased the amount of repairs customers can report online, content is continually added reviewed and updated, customer feedback is used to shape our next development releases. • Our Repairs ‘Follow On’ process has been updated to allow operatives the ability to book a follow on appointment whilst in the customer’s home. This positively impacts all of our customer’s experiences, providing reassurance that any follow up work has been booked. This was due to complaints regarding follow on appointment not being booked. • Several changes have been made to our process to ensure that we are calling landline and mobile phone numbers if the customer does not answer their door and photographing the ‘missed appointment’ card in the customer’s letterbox. • Changes have been made to our policy around the removal of items in communal areas, following a complaint where a customer’s items were moved. This change has provided a clear process and greater clarity to all of our customer’s on their responsibility and the guidance regarding communal areas. • We have introduced a security patrol in a block of flats where we received complaints of antisocial behaviour. This increased security covers a block of 20 apartments and provides reassurance to our customers that their home is safe and free from antisocial behaviour. 		
	<p>How do we share these lessons with:</p> <p>a) Residents? We hold frequent Customer Consultation and Customer Scrutiny Panels to discuss any changes, themes and achievements that have come from complaints. We also have customer newsletters that highlight any changes from customer feedback and produce our Customer Annual Report with complaint statistics.</p> <p>b) The board/Governing Body? Lessons are shared in various forums within the Governance Framework. This includes the Operating Committees, Voice of the Customer Forum, and the Customer Service and Performance Committee. Key findings are shared directly with the Executive Board or escalated to Group Combined Board.</p>		

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	c) In the Annual Report? We report on performance data and include examples in Abri's Customer Annual Report.		
	Has the Code made a difference to how we respond to complaints?	Yes	
	What changes have we made? <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Changes have been made to our internal Complaints Training and Inductions to focus on our Complaints Culture and how we should learn from complaints.• We have written a new policy and procedure which includes the new timescales.• Our customer facing procedure documents have been updated to reflect any updates in our new process.		