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: '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.'	Yes	The Complaints Policy	The Complaints Policy applies this definition.
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	The Complaints Policy	The Complaints Policy applies this distinction.
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	The Complaints Policy	The Complaints Policy applies this distinction. It is then down to services to show they regularly review service.

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	The Complaints Policy	The Complaints Policy applies this definition.
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	The survey template and collated responses.	A feedback survey link is provided on all stage 1 responses, the information from which is shared with operational staff. Wherever possible, the person completing the survey is made aware of how they can pursue a complaint if they wish to.

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	The Complaints Policy	The Council's Complaints Policy references that complaints will be accepted unless there is a valid reason not to do so and makes clear the representations that cannot be accepted and the reasons for this, including for example complaints about legal claims. Full details can be found in the Council's Complaints policy.
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 twelve months ago. Legal proceedings have started. This is defined as details of the claim,	Yes	The Complaints Policy	Exclusions set out in the Council's Complaints policy.

	such as the Claim Form and Particulars of Claim, having been filed at court.			
	 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	The Complaints Policy	The Complaints Policy applies this definition.
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	The Complaints Policy	The Complaints Policy applies this definition.
2.5	Landlords must not take a blanket approach to excluding complaints; they must consider the individual circumstances of each complaint.	Yes	The Complaints Policy	The Complaints Policy applies this definition.

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	The Complaints Policy	Accessibility pages and statement on website Listed in the Complaints Policy, complaints accepted in any format and/or language.
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	The Complaint Policy and internal site (Islington Connect).	We expect all staff to have an awareness of the complaints process and assist/ accept complaints any way and pass on to the relevant person. Information on the complaint process is available on the council's internal site, Islington connect. We also ask complaints leads to remind staff if the complaints process.
3.3	High volumes of complaints must not be seen as a negative, as they can be	Yes	Management Information/ Reporting	Emphasis is placed on understanding volumes to

	indicative of a well-publicised and accessible complaints process. Low complaint volumes are potentially a sign that residents are unable to complain.			ensure the council has an accessible complaints service.
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	Accessibility pages and statement website Accessibility Complaints will be accepted in any format and/or language.	
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	The Complaints Policy	HO and LGSCO details are in the complaints policy and complaint process page on the council's website.
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	The Complaints Policy	Who can complain is detailed in the Complaints Policy.
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	The Complaints Policy	The council has a complaints page on its website. There are links to the Ombudsman Service on the complaint website and details of the Ombudsman is included in any relevant correspondence.

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 Complaints Policy Team structures	There is a designated team of complaint officers and a manager at stage 1 and stage 2 and liaison with the ombudsman.
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	Team structures	The complaint officer has the required access to staff and authority.
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	The Complaints Process	The organisation is focused on learning from complaints this is driven and shared in several ways across the council. It includes self-identified learning by service and corporately using decisions from complaint

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		outcomes and findings of
		maladministration/upheld
		cases and service failure. A
		revised learning from
		complaints report will form
		part of the quarterly
		complaint performance data
		and the cross-council
		complaint leads group
		provides another forum of
		sharing learning and good
		practice. Learning from
		complaints also informs
		policy changes and/or policy
		clarifications.
		Staff are mandated to take
		part in internal and external
		training.
	I L	uaning.

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	The Complaints Policy	
5.2	The early and local resolution of issues between landlords and residents is key to effective complaint handling. It is not	Yes	The Complaints Policy	The two-stages are clearly defined in the complaints policy.

	appropriate to have extra named stages (such as 'stage 0' or 'informal complaint') as this causes unnecessary confusion.			
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	The Complaints Policy	The two-stage process is clearly defined in the complaints policy.
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	The Complaints Policy	The complaint policy applies to organisations acting on behalf of the council.
5.5	Landlords are responsible for ensuring that any third parties handle complaints in line with the Code.	Yes	The Complaints Policy	The complaints policy outlines this requirement.
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	The Complaints Policy	The compliant policy outlines this requirement.

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	The Complaints Policy	This is the expectation when defining the complaint and when dealing with cross service complaints.
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	The Complaints Policy	This is outlined in the complaints policy and supported in complaint handling information and training.
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	The Complaints Process	All complaints are assigned to a complaint handler who will fulfil this responsibility.
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	Yes	The Complaints Policy and Process	The Council's Unreasonable Behaviour Complainant Policy complies with this aspect of the code. If provided information recorded in the complaints system.

	review.			
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 Complaints Policy	
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	The Complaints Process	This is enabled and managed through the complaints system.
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	The Complaints Process	This is enabled and managed through the complaints system.
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	Yes	Unreasonable Behaviour Policy	The Council's Unreasonable Behaviour Complainant Policy complies with this aspect of the code.

	must keep restrictions under regular review.			
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	Unreasonable Behaviour Policy	The Council's Unreasonable Behaviour Complainant Policy complies with this aspect of the code.

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	The Complaints Process	This is part of the process when assigning complaint cases to complaint handlers and part of the complaint handlers' role when defining the complaint.
6.2	Complaints must be acknowledged, defined and logged at stage 1 of the complaints procedure within five working days of the complaint being received.	Yes	The Complaints Policy and process	
6.3	Landlords must issue a full response to stage 1 complaints within 10 working days of the complaint being acknowledged.	Yes	The Complaints Policy and process	
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	Yes	The Complaints Policy and process	

	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.			
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 Complaints Policy	This will form part of the communication sent to the complainant when confirming the extension.
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 Complaints Process	This is outlined in the complaint handling information and training.
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	The Complaints Process	This is outlined in the response template and complaint information.
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	Yes	The Complaints Policy	The complaint policy defines this requirement.

	investigated or it would unreasonably delay the response, the new issues must be logged as a new complaint.			
6.9	Landlords must confirm the following in writing to the resident at the completion of stage 1 in clear, plain language: 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	The Complaints Policy	The complaint policy defines this requirement and each of these aspects are set out in stage 1 response template/response.

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	The Complaints Policy	This is defined in the complaints process and enabled through the complaints system.
6.11	Requests for stage 2 must be acknowledged, defined and logged at stage 2 of the complaints procedure	Yes	The Complaints Policy	The complaints policy defines this requirement.

	within five working days of the escalation request being received.			
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 Complaints Policy	This requirement is defined in the complaints policy.
6.13	The person considering the complaint at stage 2 must not be the same person that considered the complaint at stage 1.	Yes	The Complaints Policy	The Corporate Central Complaints Team (CCCT) undertakes stage 2 complaints across all directorates and for impartiality, does not have prior involvement in the matter.
6.14	Landlords must issue a final response to the stage 2 within 20 working days of the complaint being acknowledged.	Yes	The Complaint Policy	The complaints policy defines this requirement.
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	The Complaints Policy	The complaints policy defines this requirement.
6.16	When an organisation informs a resident about an extension to these timescales, they must be provided with the contact	Yes	The Complaints Policy	The complaints policy defines this requirement and details of the ombudsman

	details of the Ombudsman.			given in the correspondence.
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	The Complaints Process	Any outstanding actions to address the issues are tracked to completion.
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	The Complaints Policy	The complaints policy defines this requirement.
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	The Complaint Policy.	The complaint policy defines this requirement and each of these aspects are set out in stage 2 response template/response.

6.20	Stage 2 is the landlord's final response and must involve all suitable staff members needed to issue such a response.	Yes	The Complaints Policy	The stage 2 response is investigated by Principal Complaints Officers, and peer reviewed and/or signed off by a senior manager. This action is recorded in the complaints system.
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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; 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	The Complaints Policy	Both stage 1 and stage 2 responses state the action state action to remedy the complaint where we identify something has gone wrong. This includes the actions set out in the code requirement ensuring service failure is rectified.

7.2	Any remedy offered must reflect the impact on the resident as a result of any fault identified.	Yes	The Complaints Policy and Compensation Guidelines.	
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	The Complaints Policy	Both stage 1 and stage 2 responses state the action taken to remedy the complaint the detail and where possible dates will be made available.
7.4	Landlords must take account of the guidance issued by the Ombudsman when deciding on appropriate remedies.	Yes	The Complaints Process	The Ombudsman guidance is be provided to complaint handlers thorough directorate action plan, complaint leads and the corporate complaints team.

Section 8: Putting things right

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	The annual complaints performance and service improvement report	The annual complaints report incorporates the ombudsman annual report and information from the Council's Corporate Scorecard data. The complaints report is presented to the Corporate Management Team and the Policy and Performance Scrutiny Committee to consider complaint handling through this item. The annual report will include Points a -f as defined in the code requirement.

8.2	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.	Yes	The annual complaints performance and service improvement report	The 2024/25 report will be reported and published as defined in the code requirement.
8.3	Landlords must also carry out a self- assessment following a significant restructure, merger and/or change in procedures.	Yes	Self-assessment	The council will conduct a review of the self-assessment as defined in the code requirement.
8.4	Landlords may be asked to review and update the self-assessment following an Ombudsman investigation.	Yes	The Complaint Process and Self- assessment	This will be conducted by the Complaints Officer supported by the relevant complaint handlers.
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	The Complaints Process	This will be actioned by the Complaint Officer supported by the relevant complaint handlers and council staff.

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 In progress	The Complaints Process	At present lessons learnt come from ombudsman determinations and services holding local improvement plans to learn from stage 1 and stage 2 cases. The corporate complaints team monitor the orders and recommendations from determinations from the ombudsman to ensure 100% compliance with lessons learnt. The new case management system will enable the council to track and evidence learning beyond each case by complaint or theme. This will enable the council to demonstrably evidence improvements actions as a result of complaints.
9.2	A positive complaint handling culture is integral to the effectiveness with which landlords resolve disputes. Landlords	Yes		Learning from individual cases is shared with the relevant service manager to

	must use complaints as a source of intelligence to identify issues and introduce positive changes in service delivery.	enable them to reflect on and implement any improvements required. Complaints are analysed on a monthly basis to identify wider trends and themes, and corresponding recommendations for service improvements which are shared at regular 'Learning from complaints' meetings with head of service. Associated actions are allocated to managers with clear deadlines. Summaries of this learning and service improvements are reporting quarterly to HMT, with any broader recommendations that
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.	recommendations that require consideration or approval at this level. Learning from complaints is shared internally with managers and directors, and at Political Leadership meetings, as well as externally at Housing Scrutiny. However, this is an area of growth and development for us. Complaints will be analysed

				by residents' panels once these are operational (recruitment is currently in progress).
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	The Complaints Policy	Complaints Officer contact details are provided in the council's complaints policy.
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 Complaints Policy	MRC details are provided in the council's complaints policy.
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 Complaints Process	Regular meetings are held with the MRC to review all elements of complaints handling
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,	Yes	The Complaints Process	Reports and information are provided as defined.

	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. Landlords must have a standard			We're dedicated to creating
9.8	objective in relation to complaint handling for all relevant employees or third parties that reflects the need to: a. have a collaborative and cooperative 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	Islington Council HR policies and procedures	a high-performing culture and Check Ins create a space for our staff and managers to talk regularly about their performance, achievements and where improvements can be made. For staff managing and investigating complaints a-c are included in the Check in conversation. Everyone is required to have a Check In every four weeks and a Check Ins Review every four months.