

An interactive guide to complaints handling in social housing following Grenfell.

BY DEWBIEN PLUMMER

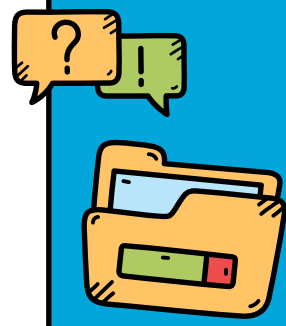
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CONTEXT



Under the provisions of the Social Housing Regulation Act 2023, the revised Complaint Handling Code will become statutory from 1 April 2024. The code is a response to the Grenfell Tower tragedy and subsequent concerns about tenant treatment and redress. It aims to rebalance the tenant-landlord relationship, ensuring landlords are transparent, accountable, and tenant-focused, with safety as a top priority.

THEMES



The focus on improved service delivery represents a culture change in the approach to complaints management. For the first time landlords will be graded how they are using complaints to improve services for residents.

Accountability & co-regulation are mandated through annual self-assessments, the need to produce complaints and service improvement reports, scrutiny and board oversight and the requirement for all results to be published.

REGULATORY BODIES



The Regulator for Social Housing oversees standards for social housing providers, focusing on organisational aspects like management and financial viability and ensuring homes are decent and safe.

The Housing Ombudsman Service (Ombudsman) deals with individual complaints and under the new regime, can also consider the wider systemic issues responsible for generating complaints and will refer landlords to the Regulator as appropriate.

They have a duty to monitor compliance and use a range of interventions but equally provide support to landlords with resources from the Centre for Learning and through published findings.

COMPLAINT HANDLING CODE 2024



1 DEFINITION

Sets out what is considered a complaint.

2 EXCLUSIONS

Outlines conditions under which complaints may not be accepted.

3 ACCESS

Ensures complaints process is accessible & meets the requirements under the Equality Act 2010.

4 STAFF

Mandates the presence of a designated staff member or team, 'complaints officer' for managing complaints.

5 PROCESS

Outlines the structured approach to addressing complaints, emphasizing a clear, two-stage process.

6 STAGES (1&2)

Describes the procedures for initial handling and escalation of complaints with timescales.

7 PUTTING THINGS RIGHT

Guidance on acknowledging errors and detailing corrective actions & various resolution options.

8 SELF-ASSESSMENT

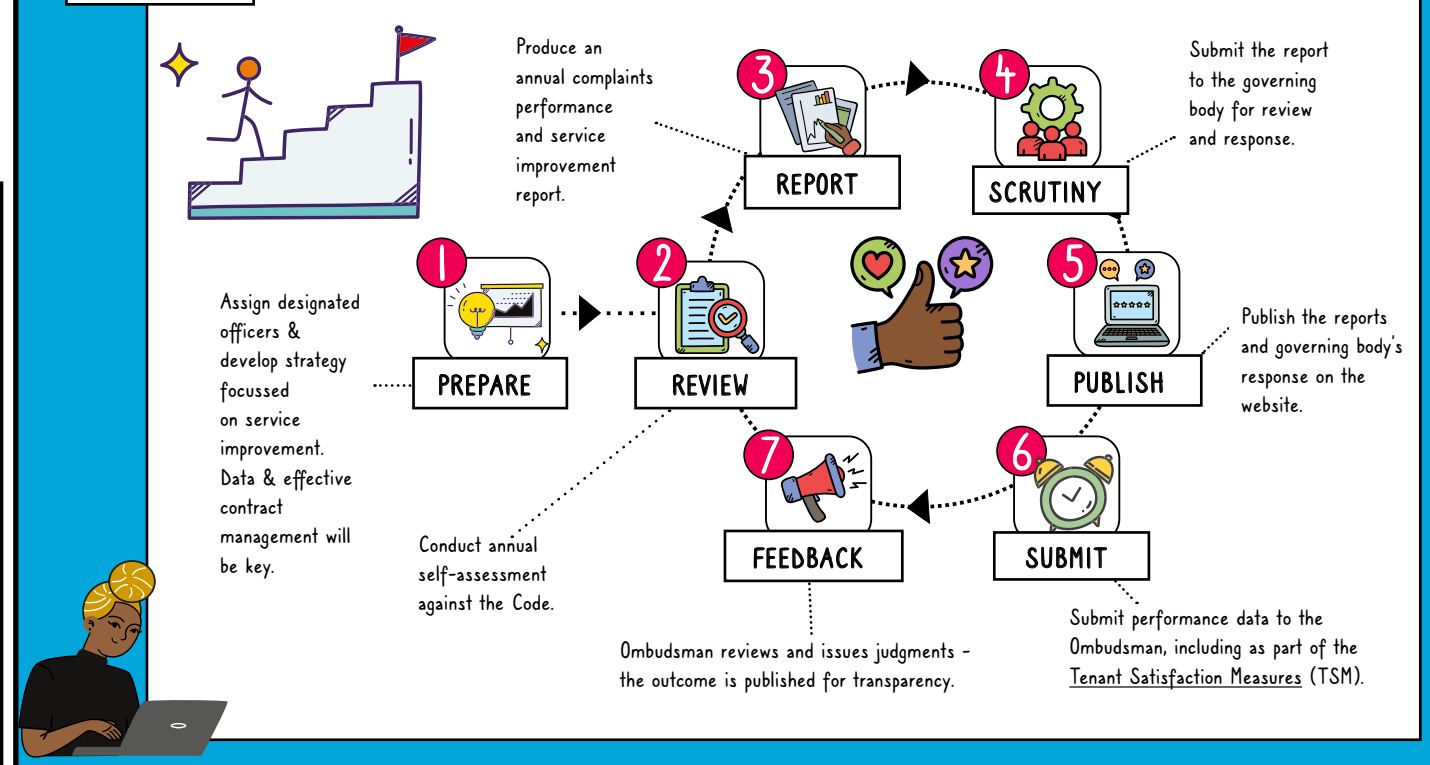
Mandates annual self-assessment on the Code and the production of complaint performance and service improvement reports.

9 SCRUTINY

Details the responsibility of the Member Responsible for Complaints (MRC). Highlights the importance of learning from complaints to enhance services and maintain transparency.

THE PROCESS

THE STEPS

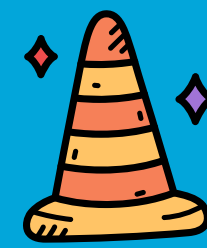


CODE COMPLIANCE FRAMEWORK



The framework sets out how the Ombudsman will monitor compliance to the Code. They assess three key areas: scrutiny and self-assessment by the landlord's governing body, and adherence to the Code in both policy and practice. Landlords will need to produce annual complaints performance and service improvement reports, carry out policy compliance checks, and publish their performance with the Tenant Satisfaction Measure CH02. Failure to comply may result in a Complaint Handling Failure Order (CHFO).

COMPLAINT HANDLING FAILURE ORDERS



- TYPE 1:** Issued when a resident's complaint is not being progressed by the landlord.
 - TYPE 2:** Issued when a landlord fails to provide necessary information to the Ombudsman as requested during an investigation or to confirm compliance with orders.
 - TYPE 3a:** Issued when a landlord fails to provide their submission forms within specified timelines.
 - TYPE 3b:** Issued for non-compliance with the Complaint Handling Code, either in policy or in practice.
- The Ombudsman publishes CHFO details quarterly, including the type, landlord names, and compliance status, and reports this to the Regulator for Social Housing. Non-compliance with a CHFO can lead to further actions.

READING LIST



- The Housing Ombudsman Scheme
- Code Compliance Framework pdf
- Complaint Handling Code 2024
- Self-assessment form
- Type 1 and 2 Complaint Handling Failure Order (CHFO) Guidance
- Type 3 Complaint Handling Failure Order (CHFO) Guidance
- Consultation on Business Plan 2024-25
- Spotlight Reports
- Attitudes, respect and rights
- Knowledge and Information Management
- Damp & Mould