

Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code:

Self-assessment form

Paradigm Housing - Compliance with the Complaint Handling Code				
1	Definition of a complaint	Yes	No	Comments
	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, included in Complaints Policy effective 1 Jan 2021		Paradigm complaints policy also includes access for non-residents although states only residents have recourse to the Housing Ombudsman.
	Does the policy have exclusions where a complaint will not be considered?	Yes, included in Complaints Policy effective 1 Jan 2021		The exclusions have been considered in-line with the code and verified by the resident Complaints Review Group (CRG) as being fair and reasonable.
	Are these exclusions reasonable and fair to residents? Evidence relied upon	Yes		
2	Accessibility			
	Are multiple accessibility routes available for residents to make a complaint?	Yes		Currently via phone, email, face to face and letter. Policy and process has extended these to include via the website and the social media channels we hold effective 1 Jan 2021.
	Is the complaints policy and procedure available online?	Yes		'How to Make a Complaint' section will be included on Paradigm's website by 1 Jan 2021. The section will be easy to find and include the policy, procedure and customer advice leaflet (all downloadable).
	Do we have a reasonable adjustments policy?	Yes, included in Complaints Policy effective 1 Jan 2021		Paradigm's internal processes ensure the effective implementation of reasonable adjustments as required.

	Do we regularly advise residents about our complaints process?	Yes		We will include a standard feature within our quarterly resident newsletter as well as on-line and during our interactions with customers via phone, visits and email.
3	Complaints team and process			
	Is there a complaint officer or equivalent in post?	Yes		Paradigm have a dedicated Customer Insight and Experience Team who are responsible for overseeing and monitoring the delivery of the complaints process. Team Leaders, Managers, Heads of Service and Directors are responsible for the investigation and responding to complaints. Please refer to the Roles and Responsibilities' section of Paradigm's Complaints Policy effective 1 Jan 2021 for further detail.
	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?		No	Paradigm's complaints process has two stages in-line with the code, residents are not involved in decision making related to individual complaints. Paradigm's Resident Services Panel's monitor and scrutinise the performance of our customer facing services which includes complaints performance, trends, learnings and service improvements.
	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		Paradigm's internal process and template letters ensure that final stage responses set out the next steps available to the customer and recourse to the Housing Ombudsman,
	Do we keep a record of complaint correspondence including correspondence from the resident?	Yes		We have a complaints system which captures all correspondence related to complaints.
	At what stage are most complaints resolved?	Stage 1		Approx. 90% of complaints are resolved at Stage 1.

4 Communication			
Are residents kept informed and updated during the complaints process?	Yes		Paradigm's process includes customer touch points – two working day call back and an update on day six ahead of formal resolution at 10 working days.
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		Two Stage Complaints Process. Customer Insight and Experience Team act as an independent customer contact point at any stage of the process. Stage Two encourages Heads of Service/Directors to liaise with customers ahead of the final decision.
Are all complaints acknowledged and logged within five days?	Yes		All complaints are logged and acknowledged by the Customer Insight and Experience Team well within this timeframe.
Are residents advised of how to escalate at the end of each stage?	Yes		Paradigm's complaints process is monitored and overseen by the Customer Insight and Experience Team who ensure residents are advised on the next steps available to them should they remain unhappy at both stages. Our internal template letters also include this information.
What proportion of complaints are resolved at stage one?	93% (2019/20 results)		These results are from Paradigm's existing process.
What proportion of complaints are resolved at stage two?	7% (2019/20 results)		
What proportion of complaint responses are sent within Code timescales? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stage one Stage one (with extension) • Stage two Stage two (with extension) 		No current data available	Key Performance Indicators effective 1 Jan 2021: 90% of stage one complaints responded to within 10 working days 90% of stage two complaints responded to within 20 working days Paradigm will update this self-assessment with results following implementation.
Where timescales have been extended did we have good reason?	Yes		Paradigm's policy and process ensures that only justifiable extensions are considered e.g. a delay by a third party over which

				<p>Paradigm has no control or needing longer to acquire all the information required to enable a thorough investigation.</p> <p>These reasons are captured via our internal complaints system.</p>
	Where timescales have been extended did we keep the resident informed?	Yes		<p>Paradigm's process ensures that residents are kept informed where timescales are extended and are provided the reason for this and the expected timescale to receive a response (this will not exceed a further 10 working days at each stage without good reason).</p>
	What proportion of complaints do we resolve to residents' satisfaction	<p>93% of complaints were resolved at stage one for 2019/20 (360 complaints)</p> <p>7% of residents were dissatisfied with their stage one response and escalated to stage two (25 complaints)</p> <p>Of all complaints resolved in 2019/20 99.7% were resolved within our internal complaints process (385 complaints)</p> <p>0.3% of cases were escalated to the Housing Ombudsman in 20/19/20 (1 complaint)</p>		<p>Paradigm sought clarity on this question from the Housing Ombudsman who explained customer satisfaction can be reflected in the percentage of complaints resolved at each stage.</p> <p>In-line with good practice Paradigm will consider customer satisfaction surveying against the handling of complaints in-line with our wider customer insight initiatives within the next financial year 21/22.</p>
5	Cooperation with Housing Ombudsman Service			
	Were all requests for evidence responded to within 15 days?	Yes		100% compliance 2019/2020 as detailed on Housing Ombudsman report
	Where the timescale was extended did we keep the Ombudsman informed?	N/A		
6	Fairness in complaint handling			
	Are residents able to complain via a representative throughout?	Yes		<p>Paradigm's complaints policy confirms that residents can complain via a representative. Paradigm will request relevant authority to disclose permission where this has not been previously obtained.</p>

	If advice was given, was this accurate and easy to understand?	Yes		User testing was carried out by residents against this self-assessment who contacted members of staff. They confirmed advice offered in relation to complaining via a representative was easy to understand.
	How many cases did we refuse to escalate? What was the reason for the refusal?	0		Paradigm's policy states the reasons where an escalation may be refused. Any refusal to escalate a complaint will be communicated to the resident via the Customer Insight and Experience Team. Residents have the right to challenge any refusal to escalate via the Housing Ombudsman.
	Did we explain our decision to the resident?	N/A		
7	Outcomes and remedies			
	Where something has gone wrong are we taking appropriate steps to put things right?	Yes		Paradigm will acknowledge through our correspondence with residents when we get things wrong and we will set out what action we will take to put things right.
8	Continuous learning and improvement			
	What improvements have we made as a result of learning from complaints?	Yes		<p>Changes to our repairs service, including appointing lead technicians to help make sure we can fix more repairs on the first visit.</p> <p>In response to feedback around Estate Management we appointed a new cleaning contractor who have continued to deliver a high level of service.</p> <p>We have also appointed a new bulk waste contractor for the management of rubbish on our estates. As part of this contract, we have included bin store cleaning twice per year.</p> <p>Feedback from resident's is also highly influencing a major programme of change across Paradigm called New Paradigm which will include new Customer Care Commitments to be launched in 2021.</p>

	<p>How do we share these lessons with:</p> <p>a) residents?</p> <p>b) the board/governing body?</p> <p>c) In the Annual Report?</p>	<p>Yes</p>		<p>Annual report to residents</p> <p>Updates will now be included in the resident newsletter and on-line</p> <p>Quarterly report to Management Team</p> <p>Annual report to Board</p>
	<p>Has the Code made a difference to how we respond to complaints?</p>	<p><i>tbc</i></p>		<p>We have made a number of changes to ensure that we are compliant with the Complaints Handling Code. The changes will take effective from 1 Jan 2021 and we will update this section in March 2021 following implementation.</p>
	<p>What changes have we made?</p>	<p>Definition of a complaint and exclusions</p> <p>Stages and timescales</p> <p>Improved accessibility and awareness</p> <p>Improved publication of performance and service improvement actions based on learnings from complaints</p>		<p>Paradigm completed a full review of their complaints policy and process to ensure their complaints policy effective 1 Jan 2021 is compliant against the Complaint Handling Code.</p>