



Complaints and service improvements : Annual report 2024

Better Lives for More People



Foreword by Dimensions Chair

Our strategic aim is “to provide better lives for more people,” and everything we do, including the decisions made by the Board, is focused on achieving that aim. Sometimes, though, we don’t get things right. When this happens, we need to know why, learn from our mistakes and put things right.

Our tenants have a critical role in helping us recognise when we haven’t got it right. We want all our tenants to feel confident contacting us about any concerns, complaints, or compliments they have about our services and actions. We also need our tenants to feel confident that we’ll appropriately investigate any complaint and work with them to put things right.

Confidence grows when people know they’re being listened to and when they see changes being made because of their actions.

We hold our core values very dearly – Ambition, Respect, Courage, Integrity, and Partnership – and expect all members of the Dimensions team to demonstrate these values, no more so than when we fail to provide the level of service we are committed to.

Our commitment to the Housing Ombudsman’s “complaints handling code” is helping us to “provide better lives for more people” by ensuring we keep our policies up-to-date and that tenants’ experiences of our housing service are understood across Dimensions, including the Board.

We have been working hard to ensure we have followed the Code since it was first introduced in 2020 and continually assess ourselves against it. This first “Complaints and service improvement: Annual Report” details our latest self-assessment and provides insight and analysis of our performance during 2023-24.

Dimensions also now has a Board Member – Huw John – with lead responsibility for complaints. Our performance in handling complaints, our learning from them, and the results of complaints investigations have been reported at our virtual Tenants’ Meetings and the Quality & Practice Committee.

“The Board wants all our tenants and the people we support to feel confident that when something goes wrong, they can tell us, they will be listened to, and that not only will the problem be fixed but that we will learn from mistakes and use that learning to improve services for all our tenants.”

Huw John, Board Member

We are pleased to report that all complaints in 2023/24 were investigated, and where they were upheld or partially upheld, resolutions were found, and corrective action was taken. We had no complaints that were escalated or referred to the Housing Ombudsman. No compensation was required to address any of this year’s complaints.

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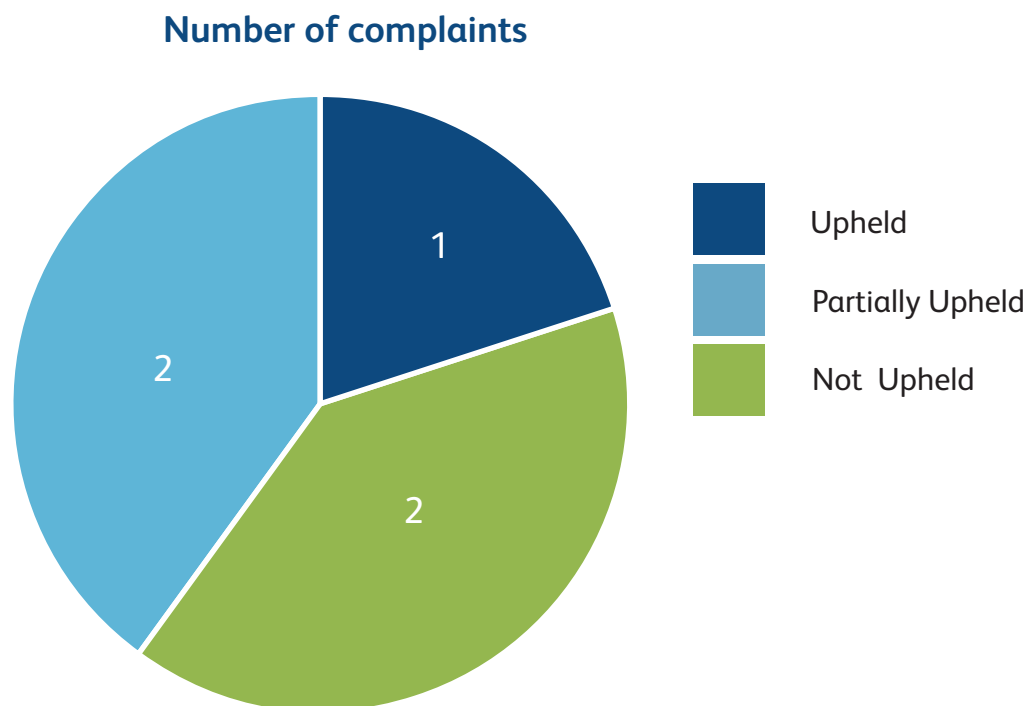
1. Introduction

This report sets out our complaints, concerns, and compliments performance for 2023/24.

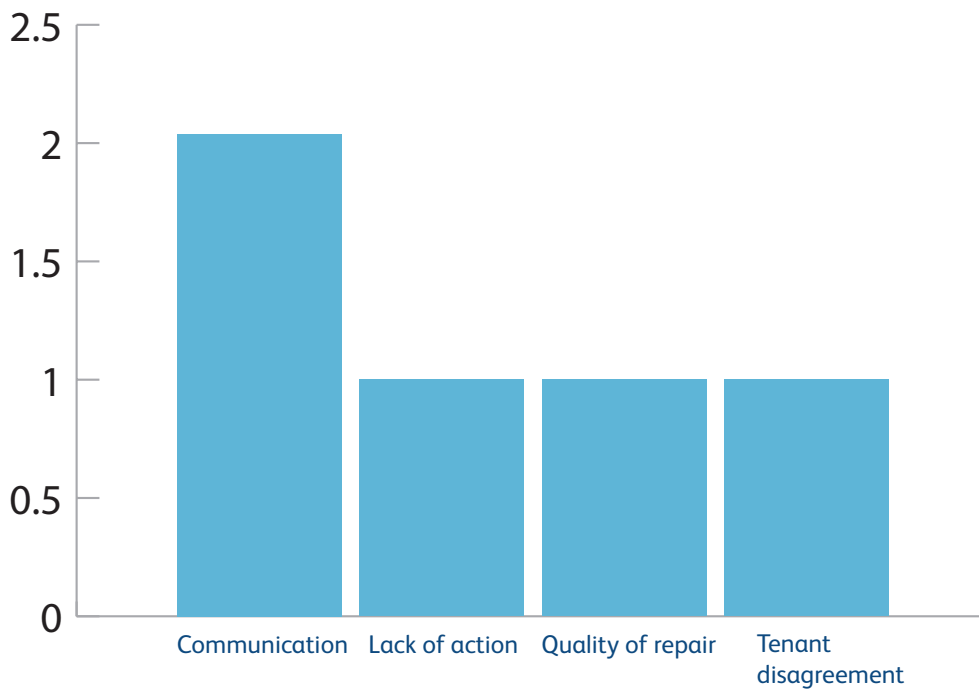
2. Complaints handling performance

Dimensions received five complaints about our Housing (landlord) Service in 2023/24, a reduction of nine complaints (a 64% reduction) compared to 2022/23.

These five complaints were all resolved at Stage One, with no complaints being escalated to Stage Two or to the Housing Ombudsman.



Reason for complaint



Four complaints were investigated and responded to within the “complaints handling code” set targets. The one complaint that took longer than the set target to complete was resolved in a timescale that was acceptable to the tenant who made the complaint.

	Q1 2023/24	Q2 2023/24	Q3 2023/24	Q4 2023/24
Number of formal complaints received	1	1	2	1
Percentage of formal complaints acknowledged within our target of five working days of receipt of complaint	100 %	100 %	100 %	0 % Due to the complications of this complaint, there was a need to speak with the external support provider before the acknowledgement could be sent, which was in nine working days.
Percentage of formal complaints responded to within our target of 10 working days from receipt of complaint	100 %	100 %	100 %	0 % Due to the complications of this complaint, the external support provider led the investigation, undertaking various 1-2-1 meetings with the individuals concerned. The final response was in thirty working days.
Number of formal complaints escalated to Stage 2	0	0	0	0

3. Housing Ombudsman determinations:

No complaints were referred to, or investigated by the Housing Ombudsman.

4. Compensation:

No compensation was paid because of a complaint investigation during 2023/24.

5. Policy exclusions and escalations:

No exclusions were applied to any complaints raised with the Housing Service, and there were no escalations.

6. Trend analysis:

There was a particularly low number of formal complaints in 2023/24, making any trend analysis problematic. During the year, Dimensions engaged with tenants and the people we support to build confidence in making complaints when we fail to deliver our services to the agreed standard, including a policy, process, and information review to ensure we respond positively to complaints and concerns. Dimensions has renewed its commitment to learn from concerns, complaints, and compliments.



7. Learning from outcomes:

It's very important that Dimensions learn from the experiences of tenants, both positive and negative, and that we use that learning to improve our services and the experience of all tenants. Listed below are three learning points from the five complaints we received and investigated during the year:

- We need to regularly check Housing Hub communication literature, e.g., letters, email signatures, and automated responses to ensure that the correct telephone numbers are displayed. This was undertaken and changes were made where incorrect numbers had been displayed.
- We need to ensure that where we receive dissatisfaction with a repair that we promptly arrange for the maintenance contractor to revisit, review, and correct the previous work undertaken where required. In response to a complaint, we arranged for the contractor to revisit and undertake further work on the guttering so there was a correct fall, allowing the water to flow into the downpipe properly. This is now standard practice.
- We recognise that support providers need to be aware of differences and minor grievances between tenants and look to resolve them so as not to escalate. This insight is shared with all the support providers working in our properties.

“It’s very important that Dimensions learn from the experiences of tenants...and that we use that learning to improve our services and the experience of all tenants.”

8. Response from Dimensions Board

The Dimensions (UK) Ltd Board regard the correct management of complaints as critical to achieving its strategic aims and recognise the value of learning from complaints in order “to provide better lives for more people”.

There are two sub-Committees of the Board that are delegated scrutiny as follows:

- The Finance and Resources Committee (FRC), which is responsible for the oversight and assessment of Housing, which includes receiving performance reports regarding concerns, complaints and compliments, from the Housing Service at each quarter (January, May, July, and November).
- The Quality & Practice Committee (QPC) which is responsible for the oversight of customer insight, scrutiny and satisfaction. The current Chair of this Committee is the Member Responsible for Complaints.

It's the members of the QPC and FRC that also review the annual Tenants' Report in advance of Board approval.

Dimensions also has two additional groups that pay particular attention to how we manage and learn from concerns, complaints and compliments. The first group is called the **Continuous Improvement Group (CIG)**, which includes company Executives and Heads of Service. The second group is called the **Insight for Improvement Group (I4I)**, which includes senior managers (including Executive representatives), representatives of the people with support and provide housing to (tenants), plus family group representatives. The Chair of QPC also attends these meetings. During July these two groups received and discussed our annual corporate Concerns, Complaints and Compliments report (this is a report that includes complaints from both the people we support and Dimensions' tenants).

Following presentation to CIG and I4I, the annual Concerns, Complaints & Compliments report was presented to the QPC on the 1st August 2024, as was the initial draft of the tenant focused “Complaints and service improvements: Annual report 2024”.

Here are the QPC minutes from these discussion about the corporate annual complaint report and the tenant focused report which took place on the 1st August:

Quality Report (QPC/28/24, QPC/29/24, QPC/30/24, QPC/30a&b/24)

The Committee noted the Compliments and Complaints headline annual report, the complaints case study and the infographics. The following points were discussed:

- There is a need to ensure concerns are managed in a timely manner with an appropriate approach alongside organisational triangulation of data to help reduce the likelihood of them developing into complaints.
- Accessibility and language of information around concerns, complaints and compliments for people we support and colleagues was noted as key to ensuring people feel confident to complain themselves or are confident in advocating for people to complain.
- The report was presented at Dimensions Leadership Group on 31st July and as an outcome of that discussion every member of the LG has pledged to do something different to support improvements in this area.

ACTION: RI will review the accessibility of information provided to support people to complain to ensure it is adequate and appropriate.

Housing Report (QPC/32/24 and QPC/32a-d/24)

The Committee noted the papers and the following points were discussed:

- The Housing Ombudsman Complaints Handling Code Self-Assessment 2023/24 was submitted on 13th June – feedback is yet to be received.
- The Annual housing related complaints report will be finalised and submitted in due course – feedback from the Committee is welcome.
- The Tenants report is not complete, there is work underway for it to be finalised prior to 30th September.
- Subsequent to this QPC meeting HJ will meet with GH, DT and SM to support the review of the Housing team’s management of complaints.
- There are a continuing low number of tenant complaints being reported which does not correlate to the environmental issues being reported by both CQC and Dimensions internal Quality Reviews. A number of actions were identified to encourage and advocate for people we support to complain, support colleague behaviour change and to better understand how Dimensions reporting systems can be improved to triangulate information recorded. The Committee would like to be kept updated on progress.

ACTION: GH to establish benchmarking information with other housing providers in relation to the number of complaints from tenants.

ACTION: SMH will explore the triangulation of reporting across systems and how this can better support the process and behaviour change of colleagues to improve the tenant engagement with a focus on complaints.

Full Board then met on the 22nd August 2024 and they received reports from both FRC and QPC.

Here is the Board meeting minute from the review relating to the complaints reports:

Insight and Involvement Report

- The Board noted the report, including the annual Concerns, Complaints & Compliments Reports and Tenants Survey results that QPC had reviewed at their meeting
- RI highlighted the new format of the report and that the new graphic pulls together how we are listening to people we support and tenants.
- RI highlighted that some of the feedback from Working Together for Change (WTFC) shows that we are very good at listening but not so good about showing what we do as a result of this. AGW, Head of Involvement and Engagement, has been speaking to the Group Executive Team and the Leadership Group about what more we can do to close the loop.
- A theme from the Tenants Survey and Concerns, Compliments and Complaints Reports concerns how we can ensure people feel comfortable to raise concerns and compliments, and how we need to do more, particularly given the low number of tenant complaints.
- The Board said the format of the reports provided a helpful way to pull together all the information and asked for their thanks to be passed to AGW for the insight summary.

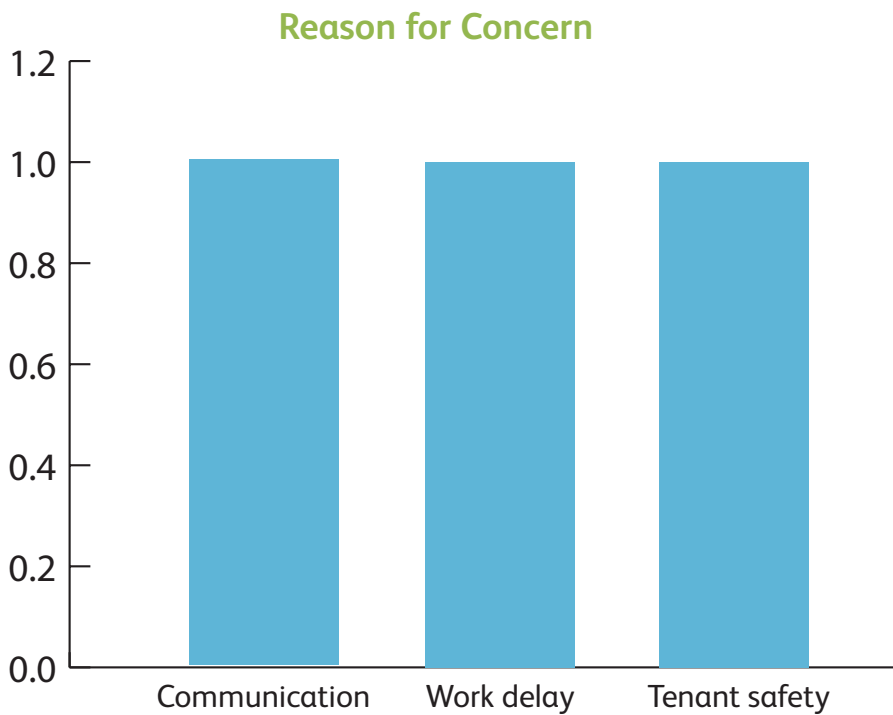
Continuing Review

The CIG, I4I, QPC, FRC and Board continue to monitor concerns, complaints and compliments throughout the year, which specific reports on Complaints being received every 6 months at QPC and Board so that actions arising from the themes and learnings above can be monitored.



Appendix 1 – reported concerns

Dimensions received three concerns related to the Housing (landlord) Service in 2023/24, an increase of one concern (a 50 % increase) compared to 2022/23.



Concerns are where individuals don't want to make a formal complaint but want to suggest an improvement; formal concerns are investigated the same way as a complaint, with feedback being given to the person raising the concern. If the same concern is raised more than once, it will be treated as a complaint. None of the concerns raised became a complaint.



Appendix 2 – reported compliments

Dimensions received 17 compliments related to the Housing (landlord) Service in 2023/24, a reduction of five compliments (a 22 % reduction) compared to 2022/23.





Appendix 3 – case study



Complaint

A third-party support provider complained about their experience when trying to report an emergency out-of-hours repair. They reported that they had tried calling 0300 303 9195 and 0845 057 7080 numerous times on Sunday, 23rd April 2023, between the hours of 12pm-7pm. When calling, they said a message played saying that “due to unprecedented times, call volumes were high, and lines were currently busy”.

They also reported that they had emailed Dimensions with the details of the repair request and the automated email reply included the Housing Hub contact number as 0300 303 9195.

The Housing Hub Team acted on the email with the details of the repair request first thing Monday morning, before the complaint was received, and the repair was responded to within our published target time.

On speaking to a member of the Housing Hub Team on the morning of 24th April, they were advised that tenants and their support need to use the 0845 057 7080 number, as this is connected to Astraline, our 24 hour a day, seven days a week, out-of-hours service provider.

Desired outcome of complaint

They wanted to make us aware that this had been an issue so we could investigate and ensure that it didn't happen again.

Investigation

After speaking with the complainant, it was identified that only the 0300 number was displayed on the automated response email signature, which meant that once they received the email response, the support provider only used that number when making follow-up calls.

Contact was made with Astraline on 25th April, to ask them to check their telephone system to identify calls from the complainant and explain why they were not answered. Their response was that they had one record of an abandoned call but no repeat call from that number during the day. They were asked if there had been any telephony issues that day, which they replied that there hadn't.



Actions resulting from Investigation

Although the 0845 057 7080 Housing Hub number (which connects with our out-of-hours service) had been circulated and in use for over 12 years, the support provider had reverted to using the 0300 (office hours only) number on receipt of the automated email.

Complaint Outcome

The complaint was partially upheld, as Dimensions' failure to display the correct number for out-of-hours calls on the automated response email signature meant the support provider switched to using the 0300 number. The complainant was advised of all our findings and was pleased that the correction would avoid future uncertainty about which number to call.

Learning from the complaint

The contact details on the automated email response signature were corrected immediately. As follow-up work, both the 0845 and 0300 numbers now automatically transfer to our out-of-hours service outside of office hours, so users of either number will now be transferred to the Astraline out-of-hours service. We've subsequently made the decision to only promote one number for reporting repairs at any time, that number being 0300 303 9195, as this is both clearer and cheaper for tenants and their support to use.



Appendix 4 – Housing Ombudsman’s complaints handling code self-assessment

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 must 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 in which 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	See Concerns, Complaints & Compliments policy v12 18th October 2023 (updated 28th March 2024).	Policy updated 28th March 2024 (see v12.1 dated 14th May 2024).
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	See Concerns, Complaints & Compliments policy v12 18th October 2023 (updated 28th March 2024). "expression to dissatisfaction" and commitment to meet the Code's requirements address this requirement	Policy updated 28th March 2024 (see v12.1 dated 14th May 2024). We will be learning from tenant feedback (casework) and supported by training.
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	See Concerns, Complaints & Compliments policy v12 18th October 2023 (updated 28th March 2024). Dimensions regards includes "concerns" within its definition of "service requests". "Concerns" are recorded on RADAR.	Policy updated 28th March 2024, including an updated Glossary (see v12.1 dated 14th May 2024).
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	See Concerns, Complaints & Compliments policy v12 18th October 2023.	The policy was updated on 28th March 2024, including an updated glossary (see v12.1 dated 14th May 2024).
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	See Tenants Involvement and Empowerment policy v2.1, 13th December 2023, S.6 Customer service, choice and complaints. See also the Annual Tenants' Survey.	Annual Tenants' Survey closing date 25th March 2024. Tenants are invited to submit verbatim comments with their annual survey; any concerns, complaints, or compliments are responded to directly.

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	See Concerns, Complaints & Compliments policy v12 18th October 2023 (updated 28th March 2024); S6.1 - S6.8.	Examples of refusal to accept a complaint include: Issue older than 12 months old; unreasonable complainant behaviour; or it would prejudice legal action. All reasons are set out in the policy and are subject to appeal. Provide a casework example when available.
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: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The issue giving rise to the complaint occurred over twelve 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. Matters that have previously been considered under the complaints policy. 	Yes	See Concerns, Complaints & Compliments policy v12 18th October 2023 (updated 28th March 2024); S6.1 - S6.8.	See 2.1. (see v12.1 dated 14th May 2024)
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	See Concerns, Complaints & Compliments policy v12 18th October 2023 (updated 28th March 2024); S6.2 / S6.3.	See 2.1. (see v12.1 dated 14th May 2024).
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	See Concerns, Complaints & Compliments policy v12 18th October 2023 (updated 28th March 2024); S6.2 - S6.8.	(see v12.1 dated 14th May 2024).
2.5	Landlords must not take a blanket approach to excluding complaints; they must consider the individual circumstances of each complaint.	Yes	See Concerns, Complaints & Compliments policy v12 18th October 2023 (updated 28th March 2024); S6.2 - S6.8.	(see v12.1 dated 14th May 2024).

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	See Concerns, Complaints & Compliments policy v12 18th October 2023 (updated 28th March 2024); S4.1 – S4.12. See Tenants Involvement and Empowerment policy v2.1, 13th December 2023, S6.3 – 6.8.	(see v12.1 dated 14th May 2024).
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	See Concerns, Complaints & Compliments policy v12 18th October 2023 (updated 28th March 2024) – this is a “must read policy”. See Tenants Involvement and Empowerment policy v2.1, 13th December 2023, S6.4	(see v12.1 dated 14th May 2024).
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 complaint volumes are potentially a sign that residents are unable to complain.	Yes	See Concerns, Complaints & Compliments policy v12 18th October 2023 (updated 28th March 2024).	This is a “must-read policy”. (see v12.1 dated 14th May 2024).
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	See Concerns, Complaints & Compliments policy v12 18th October 2023 (updated 28th March 2024); S4.1 - 4.6 and S5.1 – 5.13. See Tenants Involvement and Empowerment policy v2.1, 13th December 2023; S6.4 – 6.8.	This policy is available on both the Dimensions & Discovery websites and the internal Intranet. (see v12.1 dated 14th May 2024).
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	See Concerns, Complaints & Compliments policy v12 18th October 2023 (updated 28th March 2024); S4.6.	(see v12.1 dated 14th May 2024).

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	See Concerns, Complaints & Compliments policy v12 18th October 2023 (updated 28th March 2024); S4.8 - 4.10. See Tenants Involvement and Empowerment policy v2.1, 13th December 2023; S6.5.	Policy updated 28th March 2024 (see v12.1 dated 14th May 2024).
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	See Concerns, Complaints & Compliments policy v12 18th October 2023 (updated 28th March 2024); S2.4, S4.5, S5.1 and S5.13.	(see v12.1 dated 14th May 2024).

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. 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	See Concerns, Complaints & Compliments policy v12 18th October 2023 (updated 28th March 2024); S4.12.	Our corporate lead is Huw John, a Board member and Chair of the Quality Practice Committee (QPC). Our internal corporate responsible person is Sarah McEvansoneya, Quality Officer. Deborah Tempest is the Housing Service lead.
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	See Concerns, Complaints & Compliments policy v12 18th October 2023 (updated 28th March 2024); S4.12.	(see v12.1 dated 14th May 2024).
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	Learning: See Concerns, Complaints & Compliments policy v12 18th October 2023 (updated 28th March 2024); S2.2, S2.6, S7.1 and complaint process flowchart. See Tenants Involvement and Empowerment policy v2.1, 13th December 2023; S6.2, S6.7 & S6.8.	Learning Outcomes are recorded in RADAR and shared across the organisation via the QPC and Insight for Improvement Group. Training is not mentioned in either policy, but we do have specific CC&Cs training in the Learning Centre, which is mandatory for all colleagues (a "must-read policy"). Additional training to be arranged for the Housing Team to be delivered during 2024/25.

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	See Concerns, Complaints & Compliments policy v12 18th October 2023 (updated 28th March 2024).	Policy updated 28th March 2024 (see v12.1 dated 14th May 2024).
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	See Concerns, Complaints & Compliments policy v12 18th October 2023 (updated 28th March 2024); S5.1 – 5.12.	Tenants can raise “concerns”. The policy and process include stage one, stage two, and then a referral to the HO (see v12.1, dated 14th May 2024).
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	See Concerns, Complaints & Compliments policy v12 18th October 2023 (updated 28th March 2024); S5.1.	(see v12.1 dated 14th May 2024).
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	See Concerns, Complaints & Compliments policy v12 18th October 2023 (updated 28th March 2024); S5.5.	(see v12.1 dated 14th May 2024).
5.5	Landlords are responsible for ensuring that any third parties handle complaints in line with the Code.	Yes	See Concerns, Complaints & Compliments policy v12 18th October 2023 (updated 28th March 2024); S5.5.	See contractor management meeting minutes.
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	See Concerns, Complaints & Compliments policy v12, 18th October 2023 (updated 28th March 2024), and the complaint process flowchart. See also the complaints acknowledgment template letter.	See template letters, complaint acknowledgement, complaints extension letter, and complaints resolution letter.
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	See template complaints letters.	Complaint letters updated 28th March 2024.
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;	Yes	See Concerns, Complaints & Compliments policy v12 18th October 2023 (updated 28th March 2024).	Policy updated 28th March 2024 (see v12.1 dated 14th May 2024).

	<p>c. take measures to address any actual or perceived conflict of interest; and</p> <p>d. consider all relevant information and evidence carefully.</p>			
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	See Concerns, Complaints & Compliments policy v12 18th October 2023 (updated 28th March 2024); complaint process flowchart.	(see v12.1 dated 14th May 2024).
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	See Concerns, Complaints & Compliments policy v12 18th October 2023 (updated 28th March 2024); S2.3, S2.5, S4.3, S4.4, S4.10 & S4.11.	The learning section on RADAR asks about reasonable adjustments.
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	See Concerns, Complaints & Compliments policy v12 18th October 2023 (updated 28th March 2024); S6.1 – S6.8.	(see v12.1 dated 14th May 2024).
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	See Concerns, Complaints & Compliments policy v12 18th October 2023 (updated 28th March 2024); S1.4, S7.1 & S8.2. See Tenants Involvement and Empowerment policy v2.1, 13th December 2023; S6.1, S6.2 & S6.7.	All concerns, complaints & compliments are recorded in our RADAR 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	See Concerns, Complaints & Compliments policy v12 18th October 2023 (updated 28th March 2024); complaint process flowchart.	(see v12.1 dated 14th May 2024).
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	See Concerns, Complaints & Compliments policy v12 18th October 2023 (updated 28th March 2024); S6.4 - S6.6.	(see v12.1 dated 14th May 2024).
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	ASB policy covers this but not specifically in C,C&C's policy, or Tenant involvement and empowerment policy.	See 5.10 of the Anti-social behaviour policy.

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	See Concerns, Complaints & Compliments policy v12 18th October 2023 (updated 28th March 2024); S5.2 and complaint process flowchart.	(see v12.1 dated 14th May 2024).
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	See Concerns, Complaints & Compliments policy v12 18th October 2023 (updated 28th March 2024); complaint process flowchart.	(see v12.1 dated 14th May 2024).
6.3	Landlords must issue a full response to stage 1 complaints within 10 working days of the complaint being acknowledged.	Yes	See Concerns, Complaints & Compliments policy v12 18th October 2023 (updated 28th March 2024); S4.8 and complaint process flowchart.	The corporate timescale is twenty working days, but S4.8 now includes an exception for Housing to align with the code of practice of ten working days. Policy updated 28th March 2024 (see v12.1 dated 14th May 2024).
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	See Concerns, Complaints & Compliments policy v12 18th October 2023 (updated 28th March 2024); S6.3 and complaint process flowchart.	Policy updated 28th March 2024 (see v12.1 dated 14th May 2024).
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	See template complaints letters.	Complaint letters updated 28th March 2024.

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	See Concerns, Complaints & Compliments policy v12, 18th October 2023 (updated 28th March 2024), and the complaint process flowchart.	Action plans are included within the RADAR workflow. (see v12.1 dated 14th May 2024).
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	See the complaint resolution letter template.	Complaint letters updated 28th March 2024.
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 investigated or it would unreasonably delay the response, the new issues must be logged as a new complaint.	Yes	See Concerns, Complaints & Compliments policy v12 18th October 2023 (updated 28th March 2024)	Confirmed within the policy that we abide by all elements of the Complaints Handling Code (see v12.1 dated 14th May 2024).
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	Complaint resolution letter includes a, b, c, d, e, f, and g.	Complaint resolution letters updated 28th March 2024.

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	See Concerns, Complaints & Compliments policy v12 18th October 2023 (updated 28th March 2024); S5.7 – S5.13 and complaint process flowchart.	(see v12.1 dated 14th May 2024).
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.	Yes	See Concerns, Complaints & Compliments policy v12, 18th October 2023 (updated 28th March 2024), and the complaint process flowchart.	(see v12.1 dated 14th May 2024).
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	See Concerns, Complaints & Compliments policy v12 18th October 2023 (updated 28th March 2024); S5.7 states that if a complainant is not happy with the outcome of their complaint they have the right to appeal.	Covered by our stated commitment to comply with the Code.
6.13	The person considering the complaint at stage 2 must not be the same person that considered the complaint at stage 1.	Yes	See Concerns, Complaints & Compliments policy v12 18th October 2023 (updated 28th March 2024); S5.8.	(see v12.1 dated 14th May 2024).
6.14	Landlords must issue a final response to the stage 2 within 20 working days of the complaint being acknowledged.	Yes	See Concerns, Complaints & Compliments policy v12, 18th October 2023 (updated 28th March 2024), and the complaint process flowchart.	(see v12.1 dated 14th May 2024).
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	See Concerns, Complaints & Compliments policy v12, 18th October 2023 (updated 28th March 2024), and the complaint process flowchart.	(see v12.1 dated 14th May 2024).
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	See template complaints letters.	Complaint letters updated 28th March 2024.

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	See Concerns, Complaints & Compliments policy v12 18th October 2023 (updated 28th March 2024); complaint process flowchart.	Action plans are included within the RADAR workflow. (see v12.1 dated 14th May 2024).
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	See complaint resolution letter template.	Complaint resolution letters updated 28th March 2024.
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	Complaint resolution letter includes a, b, c, d, e, f and g.	Complaint resolution letters updated 28th March 2024.
6.20	Stage 2 is the landlord's final response and must involve all suitable staff members needed to issue such a response.	Yes	See Concerns, Complaints & Compliments policy v12 18th October 2023 (updated 28th March 2024); complaint process flowchart.	(see v12.1 dated 14th May 2024).

Section 7: Putting things right

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply Yes/No	Evidence	Commentary/ explanation
7.1	<p>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:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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	Complaint resolution letter includes a, b, c, d, e, f and g.	Complaint resolution letters updated 28th March 2024.
7.2	Any remedy offered must reflect the impact on the resident as a result of any fault identified	Yes	The Resolution letter sets out what remedial action we propose to take. While remedial action doesn't always include financial recourse please also see the Compensation policy.	Complaint resolution letters updated 28th March 2024.
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	See the complaint resolution template letter.	Complaint resolution letters updated 28th March 2024.
7.4	Landlords must take account of the guidance issued by the Ombudsman when deciding on appropriate remedies.	Yes	Follow guidance from the Complaints handling code.	Noted.

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: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> the annual self-assessment against this Code to ensure their complaint handling policy remains in line with its requirements. 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; any findings of non-compliance with this Code by the Ombudsman; the service improvements made as a result of the learning from complaints; any annual report about the landlord's performance from the Ombudsman; and any other relevant reports or publications produced by the Ombudsman in relation to the work of the landlord. 	Yes	Quality & Practice Committee (QPC) & Board reports from July reporting cycle.	For the 2022/23 year an internal performance report was completed and a section on complaints performance and learning was included in the 2022/23 Board Assurance paper. For 2023/24 the previously internal performance report will be published on our Dimensions website, a full review report will be submitted to the Quality & Performance Committee, as well as the specific complaints performance and learning section within the annual assurance report.
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	See 2023/24 Board Assurance report (July 2024). Complaints performance is also reported to the Continuous Improvement Group and the Quality & Practice Committee (QPC). The Board's response will be published on the Dimensions web site.	A 2024/25 action.
8.3	Landlords must also carry out a self-assessment following a significant restructure, merger and/or change in procedures.	n/a		Noted.
8.4	Landlords may be asked to review and update the self-assessment following an Ombudsman investigation.	n/a		Noted.
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.	n/a		Noted.

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	See Concerns, Complaints & Compliments policy v12 18th October 2023 (updated 28th March 2024); S2.2, S2.6 & S7.1 and the complaints process flowchart. See Tenants Involvement and Empowerment policy v2.1, 13th December 2023; S6.2, S6.7 & S6.8.	(see v12.1 dated 14th May 2024) The RADAR process (workflow) includes recording learning, and a summary is then reported to QPC/Insight & Improve Group (IIG).
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	See Concerns, Complaints & Compliments policy v12 18th October 2023 (updated 28th March 2024). See RADAR complaints management data (including learning).	RADAR & learning shared with QPC & IIG. (see v12.1 dated 14th May 2024).
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.	Yes	See Concerns, Complaints & Compliments policy v12 18th October 2023 (updated 28th March 2024); S4.6.	RADAR & learning shared with QPC & IIG. (see v12.1 dated 14th May 2024).
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	Corporate: Sarah McEvansoneya, Quality Officer. Housing: Deborah Tempest, Housing Hub Manager.	
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	Board: Huw Johns, Quality & Performance Committee Chair.	
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	Board: Huw Johns, Quality & Practice Committee Chair.	

9.7	<p>As a minimum, the MRC and the governing body (or equivalent) must receive:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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	Board: Huw Johns, Quality & Practice Committee Chair.	
9.8	<p>Landlords must have a standard objective in relation to complaint handling for all relevant employees or third parties that reflects the need to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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	See Concerns, Complaints & Compliments policy v12 18th October 2023 (updated 28th March 2024).	(see v12.1 dated 14th May 2024).

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