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.'*	Y	Complaint policy section 1.2	
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.	Y	Complaint policy section 1.3	
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	Y	Complaint policy sections 1.5 & 1.6	

	recorded, monitored and reviewed regularly.			
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.	Y	Complaint policy2026 section 1.7	
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.	Y	Complaint policy 2026 section 1.8	Tenant satisfaction measured survey at regular gathering for residents Letters and text messages

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	Y	Complaint policy 2026 section 2.1	
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, such as the Claim Form and Particulars of Claim, having been filed at court.	Y	Complaint policy 2026 section 2.2	

	• 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.	Y	Complaint Policy 2026 section 2.3	
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.	Y	Complaint Policy 2026 section 2.4	
2.5	Landlords must not take a blanket approach to excluding complaints; they must consider the individual circumstances of each complaint.	Y	Complaint Policy section 2.1	

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.	Y	Complaint policy sections 1.4, 4.1 & 4.2	TFA residents are women all over the age of 50 living independently. They are encouraged to speak with the Operations Manager or Trustees and they can support them to provide advice when making a complaint
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.	Y	Complaint policy sections 1.4 & 5	All staff are provided with the appropriate training and guidance to support and advice residents
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.	Y	Complaint policy section 4.3	Resident complaints are reported to staff or Trustees. Complaints are discussed at board meetings.
3.4	Landlords must make their complaint policy available in a clear and	Y/N	Complaint policy section 4.4	

	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.			
3.5	The policy must explain how the landlord will publicise details of the complaints policy, including information about the Ombudsman and this Code.	Y	Complaint policy section 4.4	
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.	y	Complaint policy 2026 section 3.5	
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.	Y	Complaint policy 2026 sections 7.2, 8.5, 8.7 & Section 13	

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.	Y	Complaint policy 2026 Sections 5 & 6	The Operations Manager takes the responsibility for complaint handling and ensures that it is passed to the trustees and will liaise 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.	Y	Complaints Policy 2026	The Chair is responsible for the overall policy and is responsible for its implementation and ensuring compliance
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	Y	Complaint Policy 2026 section 5.4	The Complaints Policy was given to all staff with appropriate guidance.

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.	Y	Complaint policy 2026	There is no other complaint policies used and adopted by the charity
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.	Y	Complaint policy section 7 & 8	Only two complaint stages
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.	Y	Complaint policy section 7 & 8	Only two complaint stages
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.	Y	Complaint policy section 7.4	Our policy makes no provision for our complaints responses to be handled by any third party

5.5	Landlords are responsible for ensuring that any third parties handle complaints in line with the Code.	Y	The complaint policy section 7.4	Our policy makes no provision for our complaints responses to be handled by any third party
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.	Y	Complaint policy sections 7.1 & 8.3 Standard letter templates and complaints record	
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.	Y	Complaint policy sections 7.1 & 8.3 Standard letter templates.	
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	Y	Complaint policy section 6 Staff training records and complaints records	

	d. consider all relevant information and evidence carefully.			
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.	Y	Complaint policy sections 7.2 & 8.5 Complaints record	
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.	Y	Complaint policy sections 4.1 & 4.2 Housing system records and Complaints records	TFA Almshouses is for women over the age of 50 who are able to live independently. Our residents disclose the support needs are recorded on our system.
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.	Y	Complaints policy section 2 Complaints record	
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	Y	Complaints policy 6.1	All complaints are kept on record and details are confidential.

	any relevant supporting documentation such as reports or surveys.			
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.	Y	Complaints Policy 2026 Compensation Policy section 9	
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.	Y	Complaint Policy section 3	
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.	Y	Complaint Policy section 3	

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.	Y	Complaints record	The complaints officer and compliant handlers are responsible for making these assessments
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**.	Y	Complaint policy Section 7.1	Complaints policy and complaints record
6.3	Landlords must issue a full response to stage 1 complaints **within 10 working days** of the complaint being acknowledged.	Y	Complaint policy Section 7.2	Complaints policy and complaints record
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	Y	Complaint policy Section 7.2	Complaints records

	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.	Y	Complaint policy Section 7.2	Standard letter and templates and complaints record
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.	Y	Complaint policy Section 7.3	Standard letter and templates and complaints record
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.	Y	Complaint policy Section 7.8	Standard letter and templates and complaints record
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	Y	Complaint policy Section 7.7	Complaints record

	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.	Y	Complaint policy Section 7.8	Standard letter and templates and complaints record

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.	Y	Complaint policy Section 8.1	Complaints policy 2026 and complaints records
6.11	Requests for stage 2 must be acknowledged, defined and logged at stage 2 of the complaints procedure	Y	Complaint policy Section 8.3	Standard letter and templates and complaints record

	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.	Y	Complaint policy Section 8.2	Complaints records
6.13	The person considering the complaint at stage 2 must not be the same person that considered the complaint at stage 1.	Y	Complaint policy section 8	Complaint officer stage 1 Appeals Officer stage 2 Refer to complaints policy 2026 and complaints record
6.14	Landlords must issue a final response to the stage 2 **within 20 working days** of the complaint being acknowledged.	Y	Complaint policy section 8.4	Refer to complaints policy 2026 and complaints record
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.	Y	Complaint policy section 8.5	Refer to complaints policy 2026 and complaints record
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.	Y	Complaint policy section 8.5	Standard letter Templates and Complaints record
6.17	A complaint response must be provided to the resident when the answer to the complaint is known, not when the	Y	Complaint policy section 8.6	Complaints record

	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.			
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.	Y	Complaint policy section 8.7	Standard letter Templates and Complaints record
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.	Y	Complaint policy section 8.7	Standard letter Templates and Complaints record
6.20	Stage 2 is the landlord's final response and must involve all suitable staff members needed to issue such a response.	Y	Complaint policy section 8.4	Complaints records

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.	Y	Complaints policy Section 9.1	Standard letter Templates and Complaints Records
7.2	Any remedy offered must reflect the impact on the resident as a result of any fault identified.	Y	Complaint policy section 9.2	Standard letter and templates and compensation policy
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.	Y	Complaint policy section 9.3	Complaints records

7.4	Landlords must take account of the guidance issued by the Ombudsman when deciding on appropriate remedies.	Y	Complaint policy section 9.4	Policy aligns with the Ombudsman remedy guidance

Section 8: Self-assessment, reporting and compliance

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.	Y	Annual submission of Complaints Performance and Service Improvement Report Board of Trustees meeting agenda and minutes providing all the information requested	The annual complaints performance and service improvement report is presented to the board of trustees

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.	Y/N	Annual submission of Complaints Performance and Service Improvement Report Board of Trustees meeting agenda and minutes providing all the information requested on the charity's/landlords website	The annual complaints performance and service improvement report is presented to the board of trustees
8.3	Landlords must also carry out a self-assessment following a significant restructure, merger and/or change in procedures.	N/A		Not been required but aware
8.4	Landlords may be asked to review and update the self-assessment following an Ombudsman investigation.	N/A		Not been required but aware
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.	NA		Not been required but aware

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.	Y	Learning summarised in Annual report/board reports	Complaints log includes lessons learned. Summarised in the annual report
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.	Y	Annual report/ board reports	Staff and trustees meeting agenda and minutes staff training and records and staff meeting minutes
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.	Y	Annual report	Board of Trustees meeting agenda and minutes. Resident committee meetings agenda annual report of website
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.	Y	Complaint Policy Section 10.1	The chair is responsible for ensuring that policy is adhered to, report to with the Ombudsman.

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').	Y	Complaint Policy section 10.2 Board of Trustee meetings agenda and minutes	As above
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.	Y	Compliant policy section 10.2 Board of Trustee meetings agenda and minutes	As above
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, 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	Y	Board of trustees meeting agendas and minutes	MRC and trustees are informed at board meetings and MRC is informed on a regular basis between meetinds as and when the complaints arise. If complaint moves to stage 2 MRC is supported by other trustees.

	d. annual complaints performance and service improvement report.			
9.8	Landlords must have a standard objective in relation to complaint handling for all relevant employees or third parties that reflects the need to: 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.	Y	Complaints policy 2026	Charity/landlord to explain how it will achieve this