

**Title: Annual Complaints and Service
Improvement Report – 2024-25**

Date: 1 April 2025

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1. Executive Summary

1.1 The Housing Ombudsman published a revised Complaint Handling Code in February 2024 following consultation with landlords nationally. This new Complaint Handling Code became effective from April 2024.

1.2 A key requirement of the new Complaint Handling Code is for all landlords to make an Annual Submission to the Housing Ombudsman by 30 June every year.

1.3 The Annual Submission must include four key elements:

1.3.1 The Council's self-assessment against the Complaint Handling Code.

1.3.2 The Council's Annual Complaint Performance and Service Improvement Report.

1.3.3 The response of the Council's Governing Body to the Service Improvement Report.

1.3.4 The Council's Complaints Policy.

1.4 Publication of the Annual Complaint Performance and Service Improvement Report is a requirement of the Complaint Handling Code as well as forming part of the Council's evidentiary submission to the Housing Ombudsman to demonstrate compliance with the Complaint Handling Code.

1.5 The Council's Complaint Performance and Service Improvement Report for 2022-23 can be found at:

[Annual complaints performance and service improvement report 2023-24 | Birmingham City Council](#)

1.6 This report for the year 2024-25 includes all the necessary information required by the Housing Ombudsman to fulfil requirement 1.3.2 above. The necessary information is confirmed at section 8.1 of the Complaint Handling Code:

1.6.1 The annual self-assessment against the Complaint Handling Code.

1.6.2 A qualitative and quantitative analysis of complaint handling performance, including a summary of complaints the Council has refused to accept.

1.6.3 Any findings of non-compliance with the Complaint Handling Code by the Housing Ombudsman.

- 1.6.4 The service improvements made as a result of learning from complaints.
 - 1.6.5 The Housing Ombudsman's Annual Landlord Performance Report.
 - 1.6.6 Any other relevant reports or publications from the Housing Ombudsman.
- 1.7 This report sets out the Council's performance in relation to complaints. The focus is primarily on those areas within the jurisdiction of the Housing Ombudsman (Housing Management and Asset Management).
- 1.8 This report also sets out the service improvements delivered as a result of learning from complaints and through engagement with the Housing Ombudsman.
- 1.9 This report has been shared with the Council's Cabinet; their response is confirmed at section 11.
- 1.10 In accordance with the requirements of the Complaint Handling Code, this report will be submitted to the Housing Ombudsman and shared via the Council's website.

2. Background

- 2.1 The Council always welcomes feedback, both positive and negative, from citizens as an essential opportunity to both review and improve the services we provide. As the largest “retained stock” landlord in the UK, managing in excess of 65,000 tenant and leaseholder properties and carrying out in excess of 250,000 repairs per year across our housing stock, we recognise that we do not always get things right and that some citizens do not receive the level of service that we aspire to.
- 2.2 We recognise that it is important that our tenants and leaseholders are able to properly hold us to account when things go wrong, that complaints are reviewed independently and impartially, and that we are transparent with our citizens regarding our performance, both good and bad.
- 2.3 The Council is a member of the Housing Ombudsman Scheme and welcomes the implementation of the Complaint Handling Code in its current form. We recognise that compliance with the Code is vital in both delivering effective services to our tenants and leaseholders and also in demonstrating to the Housing Ombudsman our commitment to being a good landlord and taking an opportunity to learn from our mistakes.
- 2.4 Between January 2023 and February 2024, the Council was subject to a period of formal engagement with the Housing Ombudsman following the publication of their Special Report into the Council’s handling of repairs and complaints in January 2023. Whilst this period of formal engagement ended in February 2024 with the Housing Ombudsman confirming that the actions taken by the Council up to that point had demonstrated an effective response to address the issues raised, we acknowledge that we are still in the process of embedding these improvements and that we need to continue to work to ensure that tenants and leaseholders feel the benefit.
- 2.5 The Housing Ombudsman’s approach to complaint handling is endorsed by the Regulator of Social Housing. The Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023 strengthened the powers of the Regulator of Social Housing and the Housing Ombudsman, including powers of referral from the Regulator of Social Housing to the Housing Ombudsman and a proactive inspection regime. The Regulator of Social Housing implemented four new Consumer Standards in April 2024, assessing landlords’ performance and engagement with tenants and leaseholders across a range of measures:

2.5.1 The Safety and Quality Standard

2.5.2 The Tenancy Standard

2.5.3 The Neighbourhood and Community Standard

2.5.4 The Transparency, Influence and Accountability Standard

2.6 The Council has been in a formal engagement process with the Regulator of Social Housing since September 2023 following a breach notice issued in May 2023 (see Appendices). Whilst the Council has not yet been inspected by the Regulator of Social Housing under the new inspection regime, work continues across the City Housing Directorate to ensure that the Council is compliant with the revised standards and that we are prepared for an inspection.

3. Summary of Complaints Received in 2023-24

3.1 All compliments, comments and complaints received by the Council are managed via the corporate complaints team, in line with the Council's Compliments, Comments and Complaints Policy (see section 12.1).

3.2 In line with the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code, the Council operates a two-stage complaint process. Following the completion of the complaint process (and at relevant stages during this process), tenants and leaseholders are advised of their rights to escalate any concerns to the relevant Ombudsman Service (either the Housing Ombudsman or the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman).

3.3 The below table provides a summary of the volume of complaints received across the two relevant service areas in 2024-25.

Service Area	Stage 1	Stage 2	Total
Housing Management	707	142	849
Asset Management	4671	724	5395
Total	5378	866	6244

3.4 As in recent years, the majority of complaints sit within the Asset Management service, given that this area is responsible for complaints relating to the delivery of the Council's Repairs and Maintenance services. The total number of complaints has risen by around 3% on 2023-24.

3.5 As confirmed at section 2.1, the Council carries out in excess of 250,000 repairs per year and around 3% of repairs carried out result in a complaint at either Stage 1 or at both Stage 1 and Stage 2.

3.6 The Council seeks to use Stage 1 complaints as an opportunity to resolve issues raised by tenants and leaseholders and to offer early and effective remedy in line with the Council's Complaint Handling Code.

3.7 The Council monitors the number of complaints escalated from Stage 1 to Stage 2 as an indicator of our success at resolving tenant and leaseholder concerns as soon as possible. The below table confirms the number of complaints escalated from Stage 1 to Stage 2 in 2024-25.

Service Area	Stage 2	Stage 2 as % of Stage 1
Asset Management	724	15.5%
Housing Management	142	20%

3.8 Whilst these figures provide reassurance in that the number of complaints escalated from Stage 1 to Stage 2 is relatively small, we would of course prefer to see no complaints escalated beyond Stage 1 to Stage 2, as confirmation that tenants and leaseholders are satisfied with the Council's first response.

3.9 The Council's work to improve service delivery through learning from complaints, and to minimise complaint escalation by adopting an early intervention approach, are detailed at section 6.

3.10 The Council always seeks to resolve a complaint at the point of receipt wherever possible. Where this is not possible, following the resolution of a complaint the Council categorises the complaint to determine whether the complaint handler considered the complaint to be justified, partly justified or not justified. The below table sets out the Council's categorisation of complaints in 2024-25:

Service Area	Justified	Partly Justified	Not Justified	Resolved on Receipt
Asset Management	21.45%	21.47%	32.41%	5.33%
Housing Management	46.82%	11.17%	8.77%	2.69%

3.11 The Council always seeks to respond to complaints within the timescales given by the Housing Ombudsman within the Complaint Handling Code, however it is not always possible to complete enquiries and notify the complainant of the outcome within these timescales.

3.12 In recent years, the Council has carried a significant backlog of complaints and has struggled to respond to complaints within the given timescales, however as a result of service improvements made in response to the Housing Ombudsman's Special Report there have been significant improvements throughout 2024-25. The below table sets out the Council's compliance against the Housing Ombudsman's timescales of 10 working days to respond to a Stage 1 complaint and 20 working days to respond to a Stage 2 complaint, and the corresponding backlog of complaints in excess of these timescales. Note that the Complaint Handling Code allows five

working days at both Stage 1 and Stage 2 for the Council to acknowledge a complaint.

Month	Stage 1	Stage 2	Backlog
April 2024	67%	68%	267
May 2024	67%	77%	190
June 2024	83%	66%	124
July 2024	86%	67%	72
August 2024	87%	75%	67
September 2024	88%	75%	69
October 2024	84%	73%	70
November 2024	93%	83%	53
December 2024	87%	64%	44
January 2025	85%	59%	50
February 2025	91%		55

- 3.13 The Council operates a triage process on receipt of a complaint to categorise complaints by service area and the type of issue reported by the complainant. The below table sets out the top complaint reasons across the relevant service areas in 2024-25.

Service Area	Reason 1	Reason 2	Reason 3
Asset Management	Service Quality 51%	Service Failure 16%	Appointments 6%
Housing Management	Service Quality 32%	Service Failure 30%	Staff Conduct 10%

- 3.14 To ensure that the Council is able to learn from complaints and that this learning is shared with the relevant service area, root cause analysis is carried out on a monthly basis and reported to the relevant service areas to ensure that themes arising from complaints and potential learning points are shared and escalated where necessary. This learning is shared directly with senior leadership teams and contractors to ensure that necessary learning is cascaded to the relevant operational teams.

- 3.15 Within the Compliments, Comments and Complaints Policy, the Council sets out those exceptions to the policy where a complaint would not be accepted. The below table confirms where those exceptions were applied in 2024-25.

Exception Reason	Asset Management	Housing Management	Total
Additional Information	14	2	16
Appeal not a complaint – Housing, Parking, School Admissions, Social Care etc.	1	0	1
Complaint regarding issue more than 12 months old.	9	1	10
Complaint about Council policy.	4	3	7
Complaint about HR matters.	0	3	3
Complaint not for the Council.	49	20	69
Complaint subject to legal proceedings.	37	1	38
Duplicate complaint.	515	137	652
Enquiry not a complaint.	13	40	53
Further information not received from complainant.	35	136	171
Insufficient Information Provided	0	13	13
Insurance Claim.	13	0	13
Name/address not provided.	34	370	414
Other	62	54	116
Refer to statutory process.	7	11	18
Representative not authorised to act on behalf of complainant.	76	13	89
Same complaint already dealt with.	35	37	72
Same complaint already investigated by Ombudsman.	3	3	6
Service request not a complaint.	412	1093	1505
Total	1319	1937	3266

4. Engagement with the Housing Ombudsman

- 4.1 In October 2024 the Housing Ombudsman published its national and landlord Annual Complaints Reviews for 2023-24. The national report confirmed that for the second year running the Housing Ombudsman received in excess of 5000 complaints nationally. The total number of remedies ordered of landlords, ranging from carrying out repairs to offering financial compensation, rose by 329% on the previous year.
- 4.2 The Housing Ombudsman's overall "maladministration" finding rate (those cases where the landlord was found to be at fault), rose to 73% for all landlords nationally from 55% in 2022-23 and 43% in 2021-22. The "maladministration" rate for local authorities alone rose by more than this figure, to a national total of 78%. The overall national "maladministration" trend has risen by 30% between 2022-23 and 2024-25.
- 4.3 The Housing Ombudsman recorded that in 2023-24 the most common reasons for complaint were property condition, handling of complaints and antisocial behaviour. Poor communication and poor record keeping were cited as exacerbating factors in many complaints. These trends continue those reported in recent years from the Housing Ombudsman and reflect the most common findings for the Council.
- 4.4 From a Birmingham perspective, the Housing Ombudsman completed a total of 81 determinations with a total of 176 findings in 2023-24, with the Council's overall "maladministration" finding rate rising from 85% in 2022-23 to 86% in 2023-24. The Housing Ombudsman considers "maladministration" to include all findings where the Council was at fault, and includes severe maladministration, maladministration and service failure.
- 4.5 The overall number of maladministration findings was disappointing for the Council, however we recognise that the majority of the determinations made in 2023-24 related to complaints made some time before this, and that the majority of determinations received in 2023-24 related to faults which took place some time before the Special Report of January 2023 and did not reflect the service improvements made in response to the special report.
- 4.6 The Council was however encouraged to see that whilst our overall "maladministration" rate rose by 1% in 2023-24, this was in contrast to the national trend where "maladministration" rose by 18% over the same period. Whilst the Council's increase in "maladministration" between 2021-2022 and

2023-24 was 32%, the majority of this increase took place in 2022-23 and the overall trend in this period (an increase of 32%) mirrored the national trend (an increase of 30%).

4.7 The Council acknowledges that whilst our overall “maladministration” rate remains high, we are not an outlier in this regard and that many landlords nationally have experienced significant increases in “maladministration” rates since 2021-22, as confirmed in the Housing Ombudsman’s Annual Complaints Review.

4.8 We have analysed the reasons for the levels of “maladministration” received in 2023-24 to identify and learn from historical failures to ensure that we understand these issues and have appropriate plans in place to respond. The contributing factors to this ongoing level of maladministration are set out below:

4.8.1 **Decent Homes Standard** - we are aware that we have historically failed to invest properly in our housing stock, resulting in a deterioration of our properties and a cycle of repeat repairs to address underlying issues rather than improving our homes to reflect modern standards and prevent issues from arising in the first place. We have embarked on a significant investment programme to bring our homes up to the Decent Homes Standard. We acknowledge that this programme is overdue and that whilst work continues to bring our properties up to standard we will continue to receive complaints relating to the condition of our properties, and we are committed to accelerating investment as quickly as possible to ensure that our tenants and leaseholders live in safe, warm and sustainable homes.

4.8.2 **Historic Backlogs** – as confirmed in section 3, the Council has carried a historical backlog of overdue complaints. Tenants and leaseholders faced long delays for a response to their complaint, which resulted in complaints being escalated to the Housing Ombudsman and increased the level of “maladministration” findings as a result of our failure to comply with the Housing Ombudsman’s given timescales for response. We are pleased to note the significant progress made in both our compliance with meeting the Housing Ombudsman’s timescales and in almost eliminating our complaint backlog and anticipate that going forward the improvements will reduce the number of complaints escalated to the Housing Ombudsman based on a failure to adhere to timescales.

4.8.3 **Our Procurement Approach** – the Council’s re-procurement of our repairs and maintenance service was due to commence in April 2024. The procurement process did not attract sufficient competition and impacted the ability for our services to deliver a model that was both value for money and delivered results for our tenants and leaseholders. The decision was taken to pause the procurement process and appoint contractors for an interim period, enabling a full re-procurement process for April 2026, taking into account the Housing Ombudsman’s recommendations within the Special Report.

4.8.4 **Publicity** – following the Grenfell tragedy, the Housing Ombudsman has reinvigorated their communications approach, raising awareness of their services and ensuring that tenants and leaseholders know how and when to approach them. This has been further amplified following the tragic death of Awaab Ishak and the widely publicised consultation on “Awaab’s Law”, which has understandably reduced confidence in social landlords across the country and triggered an increase in damp and mould related complaints to landlords.

4.9 The Council aims to maintain a relationship with the Housing Ombudsman that is transparent and collaborative, and this relationship has been instrumental in driving the improvements the Council has made in response to the Special Report and beyond.

5. Oversight of Complaints

- 5.1 The Council operates a corporate complaints function that sits outside of the City Housing Directorate, and all complaints are dealt with within this team to ensure that responses to complaints are objective and impartial. This ensures that the Council has robust and consistent oversight of complaints received, whilst themes and root causes are identified and escalated appropriately, and the quality and consistency of responses can be appropriately monitored in line with the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code.
- 5.2 Complaints performance within the City Housing Directorate is monitored and reported on a monthly basis to the Directorate Management Team (DMT) and to the Cabinet Members responsible for both Housing and Homelessness and Complaints.
- 5.3 Quarterly performance updates on complaints are also provided to the Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committee, to ensure that there is appropriate regulatory engagement and oversight.
- 5.4 Complaints performance is also reported to the Council's Corporate Leadership Team, ensuring that senior management have a current and comprehensive picture of complaints performance at both a service and Council-wide level, and are sighted on the measures being taken to improve performance.
- 5.5 Following the Council's decision to issue a s.114 notice in September 2023 and the subsequent intervention from Commissioners, complaints performance is reported monthly as part of the Commissioners' Sub-Board process, and this forms part of the Council's Improvement and Recovery Plan which is regularly monitored and published for transparency.
- 5.6 The Council remains in formal engagement with the Regulator of Social Housing, and complaints performance is reported as part of the monthly formal monitoring process.

6. Using Complaints Data to Improve Services

6.1 As confirmed at section 2.1, the Council welcomes complaints from tenants and leaseholders as valuable feedback on our performance, an opportunity to put things right where we have got them wrong and a trigger to revise our policies and procedures to ensure that other tenants and leaseholders are not affected by the same issues.

6.2 The Council seeks to use feedback from complaints as an opportunity to learn and improve. The table below includes some of the lessons learned from complaints throughout 2024-25 and the operational improvements that have been undertaken in response.

Complaint theme/trend	Actions taken to improve Council services
<p>Record Keeping – we previously identified that complaint handlers were often unable to access relevant records of inspections and works carried out, which has led to delays in responding to complaints and confusing information being given in complaint responses.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We are in the final stages of implementing a new record keeping framework across City Housing which sets out record keeping standards, mechanisms for monitoring compliance and allows for challenge where these are not being complied with. • The Council has carried out a further self-assessment against the Housing Ombudsman’s Spotlight Report on Knowledge and Information Management (KIM) and will use this to inform future improvements around data quality and record keeping. • We are working on IT solutions to ensure that photographs and inspection reports are stored in a central, accessible system. • We have implemented a contact function within our Housing system, accessible to all officers, where interactions with tenants (such as emails, calls etc) are recorded for future reference. • We continue to quality check data provided by our contractors to ensure that this is accurate and matches the experience of our tenants. • The Council is procuring new repairs contractors from 2026 onwards. Our record keeping expectations are clearly set out in the contract documents and compliance will be monitored and challenged. • Complaint handling staff now have access to additional systems to ensure that they are in possession of the relevant information to respond to complaints.

<p>Compensation – until January 2023, we were not making offers of financial redress to resolve complaints at Stage 1 and Stage 2.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We implemented a new City Housing Compensation Policy in January 2024 in line with the Housing Ombudsman’s Code and Remedies Guidance. • Complaint handlers have been trained on the requirements of the Housing Ombudsman’s Code and are identifying where financial redress is appropriate. • Referrals for financial redress at Stage 1 and Stage 2 are forwarded to the Housing Ombudsman Case Management Team for consideration of an offer of appropriate financial redress. • We recognise that not all cases where financial redress is merited are being identified at an early stage; further training has been delivered to complaint handling staff and the referral process has been revised to ensure that all potential service failures where compensation is required are identified.
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<p>Repairs - we are aware that the majority of housing related complaints relate to repair issues. Of particular concern to our tenants are missed appointments, repeated repairs to address the same issue and failures to get the repair “right first time”.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council has implemented a data team and now has real-time intelligent reporting across a number of measures of concern to us and our tenants (repeat repairs, failed visits, repeat complaints, number of follow-on repairs raised, properties where no repairs have been raised etc.) These reports are shared with Heads of Service and Senior Service Managers on a daily basis to ensure that areas of concern are appropriately escalated. • The Council has implemented quarterly Service Improvement Groups, comprising members from across City Housing and contractors. Lessons learned from complaints and Housing Ombudsman cases are shared at this meeting to ensure service oversight and scrutiny and agree any necessary remedial actions. • We have implemented a new approach to damp and mould in response to Awaab’s Law and the Housing Ombudsman’s Spotlight Report on Damp and Mould. This is driving service improvements, in particular in the number of “right first time” jobs where issues are put right as soon as possible.
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<p>Housing Management – we have had several Housing Ombudsman determinations relating to our handling of antisocial behaviour and non-compliance with our policy.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We have implemented a new Antisocial Behaviour Policy in 2024 and are in the process of implementing a separate Hate Crime Policy to enhance our approach to supporting tenants experiencing these issues. • We now use intelligent reporting to monitor the progress of antisocial behaviour cases and to ensure that the relevant triggers are met and that we deliver a service in line with our new policy. We have seen continual improvement in our performance in our handling of antisocial behaviour since the implementation of these process changes. • We are currently implementing a CCTV pilot programme across the city to assess the effectiveness of re-introducing CCTV to our high-rise blocks as both a deterrent measure and to support our efforts to take action against the perpetrators.
<p>Housing Management – we have seen an increase in determinations where the cause of the complaint was leaks from above. In some cases, the issues experienced by the tenant has been exacerbated by issues in accessing properties above, particularly where the above property is a leasehold property.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We are in the process of implementing a “No-Access Policy”, setting out our approach to gaining access to tenant and leaseholder properties as quickly as possible, our expectations of both our tenants and leaseholders in granting access to properties and our approach to recharging tenants and leaseholders where a failure to provide reasonable access to resolve a leak from above has caused further damage and costs to the Council. • We have set up a specific group to look at issues around leaks from above and ensure that our approach to such leaks is robust and timely.

<p>Housing Management – our tenants tell us that they find it difficult to speak to their Housing Officer or know who to talk to about their concerns.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We are currently implementing our Housing Management Redesign. This will deliver a locality-based model, placing local teams within their communities, and giving all tenants a named Housing Officer. • We have implemented a revised Visiting Framework, ensuring that all tenants receive a visit from a local officer as a minimum on a bi-annual basis. For tenants with an identified support need, we will agree an enhanced visiting frequency. These visits provide an opportunity for our officers to get to know our tenants, to identify any potential tenancy issues, and for our tenants to raise any concerns with us directly. • We are in the process of implementing a new Neighbourhood Policy. This will set out how the Council manages its homes and neighbourhoods, and the expectations that tenants can have of us in relation to areas such as communal cleaning, caretaking etc. • We have implemented a new tenant liaison framework across the city, ensuring that our tenant groups are representative and that tenants from all property types and areas of the city have an opportunity to be involved in shaping our services and holding us to account where we get things wrong.
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7. The Housing Ombudsman’s New Complaint Handling Code – 12 Months On

7.1 Since the implementation of the new Complaint Handling Code in April 2024, the Council has carried out a self-assessment against the Code as required. This self-assessment was shared with the Housing Ombudsman in June 2024

as required, and we are pleased to note that we have received no negative feedback on this or our wider submission to the Housing Ombudsman.

7.2 Whilst at the time of our 2023-24 submission we were unable to confirm that we were fully compliant with the Code on implementation, we are pleased with the progress that we have made in the 12 months since then. In many of the areas where we were unable to confirm compliance, this was due in the main to the significant backlog of complaints and a reluctance on our part to state compliance in all cases where new processes had been implemented as we could not guarantee that cases within the backlog had been responded to in line with the new Code.

7.3 Given the significant progress against the complaints backlog in 2024-25, we are now confident in asserting that we are compliant with almost all of those elements where there was hesitation in 2023-24 and this improved performance position is reflected in our updated self-assessment for 2024-25, which is at pages 23-58.

7.4 This self-assessment acts as the Council's evidentiary base for compliance with the Code and the steps that the Council will take where we consider that we are non-compliant with any element(s) in order to achieve compliance.

7.5 The self-assessment for 2024-25 will be published both as part of this report and separately on the Council's website as required by the Code. Additionally, the Council will review the self-assessment at such time as required by the Housing Ombudsman (such as in response to significant changes in operating environment or as ordered by the Housing Ombudsman) and publish a revised version of the self-assessment, alongside re-submission to the Housing Ombudsman in line with the Code.

7.6 We do however acknowledge that evidencing compliance with the Code by way of self-assessment and getting things right in every case are not the same, and that the evidence of complaints received in 2024-25 and from Housing Ombudsman determinations during this period confirms that we still have work to do to ensure that all tenants and leaseholders receive the level of service that we aim to provide on every occasion. Whilst we strive to deliver longer term improvements to our services and embed the changes made as a result of previous Housing Ombudsman involvement and our learning from complaints in previous years, we continue to comply with findings made by the Housing Ombudsman and ensure that we implement

and evidence any ordered improvements and take both complaints and Housing Ombudsman determinations as valuable opportunities to learn.

7.7 A further self-assessment will be undertaken in early 2026.

8. Ensuring Compliance with the Complaint Handling Code

8.1 In order to evidence full compliance with the Code, the following action is required:

“The annual complaints performance and service improvement report must be reported to the landlord’s governing body (or equivalent) and published on the section of its website relating to complaints. The governing body’s response to the report must be published alongside this.”

8.2 This report will pass through the City Housing Directorate’s usual approval process via Directorate Management Team and Cabinet Member Briefing, before being presented to Cabinet for approval on 13 May 2025.

8.3 The Leader of the Council will then be requested to provide a formal response to this report, which will be published alongside the report and included at section 11.

9. Self-Assessment Against the Complaint Handling Code 2024-25

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	BCC Comments, Complaints and Compliments Policy 2023.	The Council’s policy confirms: “A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction. It can be about the standard of a service provided, or actions the council have or have not taken, which affect someone using council services or those services provided on behalf of the council.”
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 a complaint. A complaint that is submitted via a third party or representative must be handled in line with the landlord’s complaints policy.	Yes	BCC Comments, Complaints and Compliments Policy 2023.	The Council’s policy confirms: “A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction. It can be about the standard of a service provided, or actions the council have or have not taken, which affect someone using council services or those services provided on behalf of the council.”

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	BCC Comments, Complaints and Compliments Policy 2023.	The Council's policy confirms: "Upon receipt of a complaint from the citizen the Complaint teams will triage the complaint. This involves reviewing the correspondence to see if the actions required would be a service request, comment, complaint or something that requires progressing through an alternative method such as an appeals process. Complaints will be accepted unless there is a valid reason which will be explained. We will also investigate if there are any actions that can be taken to resolve the issue to the citizen's satisfaction within this five-day period."
1.5	A complaint must be raised when the resident expresses dissatisfaction with the response to their service request, even if the handling of the service request remains ongoing. Landlords must not stop their efforts to address the service request if the resident complains.	Yes		The Council treats expressions of dissatisfaction following a service request as a complaint and this is dealt with in accordance with the Code. Where actions have been raised in relation to a service request, these will be progressed whilst the complaint is investigated.

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 must also provide details of how residents can complain.	Yes		The Council carries out transactional surveys following tenant interactions. Where a tenant expresses dissatisfaction with our services, they are provided with details of our complaint policy and process.
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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	BCC Comments, Complaints and Compliments Policy 2023.	The Council's policy confirms: "Complaints will be accepted unless there is a valid reason which will be explained. We will also investigate if there are any actions that can be taken to resolve the issue to the citizens satisfaction within this five-day period."

2.2	<p>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:</p> <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 claim, such as the Claim Form and Particulars of Claim, having being filed at court. • Matters that have previously been considered under the complaints policy. 	Yes	BCC Comments, Complaints and Compliments Policy 2023.	<p>The Council's policy sets out exceptions to the policy, such as where a statutory right of review/appeal exists, HR/Recruitment complaints, complaints against elected members.</p> <p>The Council will not consider a complaint where legal proceedings have started, or where the complaints process has previously been exhausted.</p> <p>Where the issue giving rise to the complaint occurred over twelve months ago, the Council will on each occasion consider the facts of the case before determining whether the complaint will be considered.</p>
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 is good reason to do so.	Yes	BCC Comments, Complaints and Compliments Policy 2023.	<p>The Council's policy confirms:</p> <p>"We are usually only able to investigate a complaint at both stages within 12 months of the time the citizen became aware of the issue. A complaint received outside of this timeframe will be assessed to see if we are able to provide an informed response."</p>

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	BCC Comments, Complaints and Compliments Policy 2023.	<p>Where a complaint is received for a matter outside of the Complaints Policy, this will wherever possible be forwarded to the relevant department. Where this is not possible, the Council will advise the resident of this and where the complaint should be directed to.</p> <p>The Council does not routinely refuse complaint requests except where the circumstances set out at 2.2 are met. In these cases, correspondence confirming our refusal to accept the complaint will confirm the resident's rights to escalate the complaint to the relevant Ombudsman or statutory body.</p>
2.5	Landlords must not take a blanket approach to excluding complaints; they must consider the individual circumstances of each applicant.	Yes	BCC Comments, Complaints and Compliments Policy 2023,	Each complaint received is assessed to determine whether it is within scope and if not, where the complaint should be directed within the Council (if relevant), or the complainant provided with details of the relevant body for the complaint to be submitted to.

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	<p>Residents can complain through various channels:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BRUM Account – myaccountpage • Online – yourviews • Phone – 0121 464 9995 • Post – BCC Complaints, PO Box 16616, Birmingham, B2 2HN <p>Complaints Easy-Read Version - Complaints procedure easy read leaflet Birmingham City Council</p>	<p>We accommodate individual needs by giving citizens various channels through which they can make a complaint. Complaint Handlers are appropriately trained, and residents are asked to confirm how they would like to receive a response (post, email, phone, face-to-face etc).</p> <p>The Complaints Procedure Easy Read document confirms the ways in which residents with accessibility issues can submit a complaint.</p>

3.2	Residents must be able to raise their complaints in any way and with any member of staff. All staff must be aware of the complaints process and be able to pass details of the complaint to the appropriate person within the landlord.	Yes		The Council provides all staff with an overview of the complaints policy and process as part of the induction process, with refresher training provided where necessary. Staff within the City Housing Directorate are aware of access channels for complaints and there is internal literature for staff confirming what constitutes a complaint, how to accept a complaint and how to forward it to the relevant team.
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		<p>The Council receives a high volume of complaints each year, evidencing that citizens are aware of, and can access, the complaints process.</p> <p>The Corporate Complaints Lead carries out benchmarking against peer local authorities to measure the volume of complaints received and the effectiveness of the complaints process.</p>
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	<p>BCC Comments, Complaints and Compliments Policy 2023.</p> <p>Complaints Easy-Read Version - Complaints procedure easy read leaflet Birmingham City Council</p>	<p>The Council's policy is publicised on the Council's website.</p> <p>The Complaints Policy Easy Read document provides information relating to the complaints process in an accessible format.</p>

3.5	The policy must explain how the landlord will publicise details of the complaints policy, including information about the Ombudsman and this Code.	Partial	BCC Comments, Complaints and Compliments Policy 2023.	The Council's Policy includes reference to the Housing Ombudsman and the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman; however the policy does not explain how the Council will publicise the policy. Future versions of the Policy will ensure that this is made clear in compliance with the Code.
3.6	Landlords must give residents the opportunity to have a representative deal with the complaint on their behalf, and to be represented or accompanied at any meeting with the landlord.	Yes	BCC Comments, Complaints and Compliments Policy 2023.	<p>The Council's policy confirms:</p> <p>“Citizens can ask someone to help make their complaint and represent them during the investigation. They will need to give written consent for the individual to act on their behalf and we will need to receive it before we can respond to them directly about the complaint. If we do not have this authorisation, then we will respond directly to the citizen.”</p> <p>Residents are able to nominate a representative to deal with their complaint. In line with the Council's GDPR guidelines, where a resident has identified a representative, a signed “Authority to Act” is required. The complaint will still be investigated without this authority and a response will be sent directly to the resident to share with their representative.</p>

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	BCC Comments, Complaints and Compliments Policy 2023.	Both Ombudsmen services are referenced with contact details in the current complaints policy; this information is also confirmed on the Council's website. Residents are provided with details of the relevant Ombudsman service and of their right to escalate their complaint in all complaint responses at the relevant stage.
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Section 4. Complaint Handling Staff

Code Provision	Code Requirement	Comply: Yes/No	Evidence	Commentary/Explanation
4.1	Landlords must have a person or team assigned to take responsibility for complaint handling, including liaison with the Ombudsman and ensuring complaints are reported to the governing body (or equivalent). This Code will refer to that person or team as the 'complaints officer'. This role may be in addition to other duties.	Yes		<p>The Council has a dedicated City Housing Complaints Team within the Corporate Complaints Service; this team operates independently of the service area.</p> <p>Additionally, the Council has a Housing Ombudsman Case Management Team which is responsible for liaison with the Ombudsman.</p>
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		<p>Complaint handlers are able to contact staff at all levels throughout the City Housing Directorate in order to investigate and resolve complaints. There is an established escalation process for complaints requiring senior management involvement.</p>

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		<p>The Corporate Complaints Team record the specific training that complaint handlers have received and attended; training matrices are held within the service area confirming the training needs of individual officers.</p> <p>Following the Housing Ombudsman's Special Report in January 2023, complaint handlers have received training on letter writing, complaint handling, soft skills and case management.</p> <p>Each service area within the City Housing Directorate receives root cause analysis of their complaints broken into themes for review and action. The corporate complaints service also provides "7-minute briefings" where quick service improvements and changes can be implemented where necessary. There are also storyboards in progress for complaints journeys to look for lessons learned as to where we could have resolved a complaint more quickly.</p>
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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	BCC Comments, Complaints and Compliments Policy 2023.	The Council's policy covers all complaints within the Code.
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 name stages (such as 'stage 0' or 'informal complaint') as this causes unnecessary confusion.	Yes	BCC Comments, Complaints and Compliments Policy 2023.	The Council's policy includes a five-day "triage" for complaints, in line with the Code. The Council operates a two-stage complaint process in line with the Code.
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	BCC Comments, Complaints and Compliments Policy 2023.	The Council's policy has two stages in line with the Code.

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.	NA		The Council deals with complaints internally via a two-stage process in line with the Code.
5.5	Landlords are responsible for ensuring that any third parties handle complaints in line with the Code.	NA		The Council deals with complaints internally via a two-stage process in line with the Code.

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	BCC Comments, Complaints and Compliments Policy 2023.	<p>The Council’s policy confirms:</p> <p>“We will contact the citizen to acknowledge the receipt of the complaint and set out what will be investigated, and the understanding of the resolution sought. This is an opportunity to clarify any elements of the complaint.”</p> <p>Where a Stage 2 complaint is received, the citizen will be asked to confirm the elements of the Stage 1 complaint that they wish the Council to review. Where a citizen does not give an indication, all elements of the Stage 1 complaint will be reviewed. The elements of the Stage 1 complaint to be reviewed at Stage 2 are confirmed in the Stage 2 acknowledgement letter.</p> <p>Audits are undertaken and used by the Corporate Complaints Leads as a quality assurance measure. The lessons learned from complaints is provided as feedback to the Directorate Management Team in the form of root cause analysis which informs service improvement</p>
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				<p>plans and is tracked through the Housing Sub Board.</p> <p>Complaint acknowledgements are quality checked by Complaints Leads/Managers to monitor compliance. A dip sample of 3-8% of the total acknowledgements sent each month is scored against a set of clearly defined criteria and additional training and leaning is provided on an individual and wider basis where necessary.</p>
5.7	When a complaint is acknowledged at either stage, landlords must be clear which aspects of the complaint they are, or are not, responsible for and clarify any areas where this is not clear.	Yes	BCC Comments, Complaints and Compliments Policy 2023.	<p>Acknowledgement letters at both Stage 1 and Stage 2 clearly set out the aspects of the complaint that the Council is responsible for and provide clarification for areas that will not be considered.</p> <p>Complaint acknowledgements are quality checked by Complaints Leads/Managers to monitor compliance. A dip sample of 3-8% of the total acknowledgements sent each month is scored against a set of clearly defined criteria and additional training and learning is provided on an individual and wider basis where necessary.</p>

5.8	<p>At each stage of the complaints process, complaint handlers must:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Deal with complaints on their merits, act independently, and have an open mind. Give the resident a fair chance to set out their position. Take measures to address any actual or perceived conflict of interest.; and Consider all relevant information and evidence carefully. 	Yes	BCC Comments, Complaints and Compliments Policy 2023.	<p>The Council's policy confirms:</p> <p>"When investigating the complaint, the independent Complaints Champion will.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deal with all complaints on their merits. Act independently and have an open mind. Take measures to address any actual or perceived conflict of interest. Consider all information and evidence carefully. Keep the complaint confidential as far as possible, with information only disclosed if necessary to properly investigate the matter." <p>Training is delivered to all complaint handling staff on good practice and refresher training provided as and when necessary.</p> <p>Complaint responses are quality checked by Complaints Leads/Managers to monitor</p>
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				compliance. A dip sample is reviewed and scored each month against set criteria and to ensure compliance with the Code. Where issues are identified, training is provided either individually or more widely depending on need.
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		Complaint handlers contact citizens where a complaint response will fall outside of the Code to agree an extension in time and confirm the citizen's contact preferences and frequency until the response has been issued. The frequency and nature of contact will be determined by the facts of the case, the preferences of the citizen and the anticipated duration of any delay to the complaint response.
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 review.	Yes		Where citizens notify the Council of relevant protected characteristics, or where the Council is aware of existing protected characteristics, any requested reasonable adjustments and contact preferences will be noted and adhered to by the complaint handler. Where a safeguarding issue is identified, this will also be recorded and reported to the appropriate service.

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 provisions set out in section 2 of this Code.	Yes		Citizens are advised of their right to escalate their complaint to Stage 2 within the Council's Stage 1 response.
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		All correspondence between the Council and the resident relating to the complaint is stored on the icasework system, including any information or supporting evidence received or obtained during the investigation of the complaint.

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		<p>As part of the complaint handling process, complaint handlers will progress actions to resolve the complaint (raising repairs, requesting financial redress etc).</p> <p>The completion of repairs or the offering of financial redress whilst the complaint is being investigated does not preclude the complaint from being resolved or prevent the citizen from escalating their complaint if they remain dissatisfied with the outcome.</p> <p>Where there are outstanding actions, the complaints service will add “to do” actions within the case with the agreement of the citizen and provide further responses to them as and when these actions are completed.</p>
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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	Unreasonable/Unreasonably Persistent Complainer Policy 2021 - Unreasonable-unreasonably persistent complainer Birmingham City Council	<p>The Unreasonable/Unreasonably Persistent Complainer Policy sets out the ways in which the Council identifies and manages unreasonable or persistent complainers.</p> <p>This policy also sets out the ways in which any restrictions will be reviewed:</p> <p>“The Central Complaints Team in collaboration with the Directorate teams will review any initial restrictions imposed upon the complainant after three months and at the end of every subsequent three months during which time the policy is to apply.</p> <p>Should there be a need to extend a period of restriction the complainant will be advised in writing by the Council with the reason for the extension of the restriction and the period of extension.</p> <p>If at the end of the restriction period, it is considered that the complainant’s behaviour is no longer deemed to be unreasonable</p>
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				<p>the Council will confirm this in writing advising the complainant.</p> <p>At each of the above stages, the complainant will be advised of their right to refer the matter to the relevant Ombudsman.”</p>
5.15	Any restrictions placed on conduct due to unacceptable behaviour must be proportionate and demonstrate regard for the provisions of the Equality Act 2010.	Yes	Unreasonable/Unreasonably Persistent Complainer Policy 2021 - Unreasonable-unreasonably persistent complainer Birmingham City Council	<p>The Unreasonable/Unreasonably Persistent Complainer Policy confirms:</p> <p>“Before implementing these restrictions in relation to someone who is considered vulnerable (people who may be in need of care and support or with a disability) the Council will consider whether or not, adjustments to this policy could be made or whether there are other appropriate means of support and contact outside of this policy which can be used to assist them. In order to do this full consent from the complainant must be sought in relation to their relevant circumstances with the consent not being unreasonably refused.”</p>

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	BCC Comments, Complaints and Compliments Policy 2023.	The Council's policy confirms: "Upon receipt of a complaint from the citizen the Complaint teams will triage the complaint. This involves reviewing the correspondence to see if the actions required would be a service request, comment, complaint, or something that requires progressing through an alternative method such as an appeals process. Complaints will be accepted unless there is a valid reason which will be explained. WE will also investigate if there are any actions that can be taken to resolve the issue to the citizen's satisfaction within this five-day period."

6.2	Complaints must be acknowledged, defined and logged at Stage 1 of the complaints procedure <u>within five working days of the complaint being received.</u>	Yes	BCC Comments, Complaints and Compliments Policy 2023.	<p>The Council's policy confirms:</p> <p>“Upon receipt of a complaint from the citizen the Complaint teams will triage the complaint. This involves reviewing the correspondence to see if the actions required would be a service request, comment, complaint, or something that requires progressing through an alternative method such as an appeals process. Complaints will be accepted unless there is a valid reason which will be explained. WE will also investigate if there are any actions that can be taken to resolve the issue to the citizen's satisfaction within this five-day period.”</p> <p>Where it is not possible to resolve a complaint upon receipt within the first five days of review and triage will be assigned to the relevant complaints team to investigate. We will contact the citizen to acknowledge the receipt of the complaint and set out what will be investigated, and the understanding of the resolution sought. This is an opportunity to clarify any elements of the complaint.”</p>
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6.3	Landlords must issue a full response to Stage 1 complaints <u>within 10 working days</u> of the complaint being acknowledged.	Yes	BCC Comments, Complaints and Compliments Policy 2023.	The Council's policy confirms: "The Council will investigate the complaint with the relevant service and respond within 10 working days."
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		Where an extension is required in order to fully respond to the complaint, residents are notified of the duration of the requested extension and the reasons for it; this information is issued to the resident in writing.
6.5	When an organisation informs a resident about an extension to these timescales, they must be provided with the contact details for the Ombudsman.	Yes		Where an extension is requested in order to fully respond to the complaint, citizens are notified of the anticipated duration of the extension and the reasons for it; this is then confirmed to the citizen in writing. In response to the Code, where an extension is requested, the details of the relevant Ombudsman are provided in the written confirmation. Compliance with this process is monitored via the established audit process.

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		Complaint responses are issued to citizens for the elements of the complaint where the Council is able to respond, with “to do” actions added to track the progress of outstanding elements where further actions remain in progress. Citizens are updated on the progress of “to do” actions as and when the Council has completed them or where there is a relevant update.
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		Each element of the complaint is listed in the complaint acknowledgement and complaint response with an outcome for each element; this is monitored via the existing audit process and quality assurance checks.
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 unreasonable delay the response, the new issues must be logged as a new complaint.	Yes		All issues raised as part of the complaint are investigated. Where further issues are raised whilst a Stage 1 complaint is being investigated, these are incorporated into the Stage 1 response if appropriate. Where this is not possible due to the complaint being unrelated, the Stage 1 response having been issued or the investigation of the new issues would delay the initial Stage 1 response, we will treat the issues raised as a new Stage 1 complaint.

6.9	<p>Landlords must confirm the following in writing to the resident at the completion of Stage 1 in clear, plain language:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The complaint stage; b. The complaint definition; c. The decision on the complaint; d. The reasons for any decisions made; e. The details of any remedy offered to put things right; f. Details of any outstanding actions; and g. Details of how to escalate the matter to Stage 2 if the individual is not satisfied with the response. 	Yes		The quality of responses and compliance with the relevant requirements has been added to the quality assurance procedures within the complaint handling service since May 2023. Where issues are identified, officers are provided with appropriate training and support to ensure that responses are of the required quality and are compliant.
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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	BCC Comments, Complaints and Compliments Policy	<p>The Council's policy confirms:</p> <p>"If a citizen is unhappy with our decision at Stage 1, they can ask us to review it. This is called a Stage 2 complaint."</p>

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	BCC Comments, Complaints and Compliments Policy.	Stage 2 complaints are logged, defined and acknowledged within five working days of receipt, in line with the Code.
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	BCC Comments, Complaints and Compliments Policy.	<p>The Council's policy states:</p> <p>"The citizen will need to explain why they feel our decision is incorrect."</p> <p>Where citizens escalate a complaint to Stage 2 without providing any reasons, complaint handlers will contact the citizen to obtain more specific information regarding the elements of the original decision that they are unhappy with. If the citizen does not provide reasons or specify any element(s) of the Stage 1 response that they are dissatisfied with, the complaint handler will review the whole Stage 1 response at Stage 2.</p>
6.13	The person considering a complaint at Stage 2 must not be the same person that considered the complaint at Stage 1.	Yes	BCC Comments, Complaints and Compliments Policy.	<p>The Council's policy states:</p> <p>"The complaint will then be reviewed by a complaint champion who has not been involved in the original Stage 1 response to ensure independence from the service area."</p>

6.14	Landlords must issue a final response to the Stage 2 within 20 working days of the complaint being acknowledged.	Yes	BCC Comments, Complaints and Compliments Policy.	The Council's policy states: "We will respond within 20 working days of the Council receiving the Stage 2 complaint with their decision."
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		Where an extension is required in order to fully respond to the complaint, residents are notified of the duration of the requested extension and the reasons for it; this confirmation is issued to the resident in writing.
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		Where an extension is requested in order to fully respond to the complaint, citizens are notified of the anticipated duration of the extension and the reasons for it; this is then confirmed to the citizen in writing. In response to the Code, where an extension is requested, the details of the relevant Ombudsman are provided in the written confirmation. Compliance with this process is monitored via the established audit process.

6.17	A complaint response must be provided to the resident when the answer to the complaint is known, not when the outstanding issues required to address the issue are completed. Outstanding actions must still be tracked and actioned promptly with appropriate updates provided to the resident.	Yes		Complaint responses are issued to citizens for the elements of the complaint where the Council is able to respond, with “to do” actions added to track the progress of outstanding elements where further actions remain in progress. Citizens are updated on the progress of “to do” actions as and when the Council has completed them or where there is a relevant update.
6.18	Landlords must address all points raised in the complaint definition and provide clear reasons for any decisions, referencing the relevant policy, law and good practice where appropriate.	Yes		The quality of responses and compliance with the relevant requirements has been added to the quality assurance procedures within the complaint handling service since May 2023. Where issues are identified, officers are provided with appropriate training and support to ensure that responses are to the required standard and compliant with the Code.

6.19	<p>Landlords must confirm the following in writing to the resident at the completion of Stage 2 in clear, plain language:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The complaint stage; b. The complaint definition; c. The decision on the complaint; d. The reasons for any decision made; e. The details of any remedy offered to put things right; f. Details of any outstanding actions; and g. Details of how to escalate the matter to the Ombudsman Service if the individual remains dissatisfied. 	Yes		The quality of responses and compliance with the relevant requirements has been added to the quality assurance procedures within the complaint handling service since May 2023. Where issues are identified, officers are provided with appropriate training and support to ensure that responses are of the required quality and compliant with the Code.
6.20	Stage 2 is the landlord's final response and must involve all suitable staff members needed to issue with a response.	Yes	BCC Comments, Complaints and Compliments Policy 2023.	Complaint handlers make enquiries of all service areas and officers necessary to ensure that the Stage 2 response is accurate, informed and compliant.

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, to put things right.</p> <p>This 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 a 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	<p>BCC Comments, Complaints and Compliments Policy 2023,</p> <p>City Housing Compensation Policy</p> <p>Housing repairs compensation policy Birmingham City Council</p>	<p>Complaint responses are quality checked by Complaints Leads/Managers to monitor compliance. A dip sample is reviewed ad scored against set criteria each month and additional training is provided where necessary.</p> <p>Where financial redress is appropriate, this is offered as part of the complaint resolution process in line with the City Housing Compensation Policy.</p> <p>Where possible service improvements are identified as part of the complaint handling process, these are escalated to the relevant service area and Senior Manager.</p>

7.2	Any remedy offered must reflect the impact on the resident as a result of any fault identified.	Yes	City Housing Compensation Policy Housing repairs compensation policy Birmingham City Council	The City Housing Compensation Policy ensures that consideration is given to non-quantifiable loss, distress and inconvenience, time and trouble in addition to quantifiable loss, in line with the Code. When assessing offers of financial redress as part of the complaint resolution process, officers consider the Ombudsman's guidance on remedies to ensure that offers of financial redress made are reasonable and in line with the relevant guidance.
7.3	The remedy 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	BCC Comments, Complaints and Compliments Policy 2023.	Stage 1 and Stage 2 decision letters confirm the actions that the Council will take in order to remedy any failure. Complaint handlers continue to progress remedial works and contact citizens to update them on the progress of their complaint until any agreed remedy is delivered.

7.4	Landlords must take account of the guidance issued by the Ombudsman when deciding on appropriate remedies.	Yes	<p>City Housing Compensation Policy Housing repairs compensation policy Birmingham City Council</p> <p>BCC Comments, Complaints and Compliments Policy 2023.</p>	<p>Complaint handlers receive training on the Code and on the relevant factors to take into account when determining any remedies in resolution of a complaint.</p> <p>The City Housing Compensation Policy confirms that the Council will consider the Ombudsman's guidance on remedies when determining financial redress, and offers of financial redress are made in line with this guidance.</p>
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Code Provision	Code Requirement	Comply Yes/No	Evidence	Commentary/Explanation
8.1	<p>Landlords must produce an annual complaints performance and service improvement report for scrutiny and challenge, which must include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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 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. f. Any other relevant reports or publications produces by the Ombudsman in relation to the work of the landlord. 	Yes	<p>Annual Report 2023-24</p> <p>Annual Report 2024-25</p>	<p>The Council's Annual Complaints Performance and Service Improvement Report is produced, shared for scrutiny and published. This report contains the required information set out at section 8.1 (a) to (f) of the Code.</p>

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 section of its website relating to complaints. The governing body's response to this report must be published alongside this.	Yes	Annual complaints performance and service improvement report 2023-24 Birmingham City Council	The annual complaint report is reported to the Council's Cabinet, and a response from the Leader of the Council is published alongside the report.
8.3	Landlords must also carry out a self-assessment following a significant restructure, merger and/or change in procedures.	Yes		This is not applicable at the present time however the Council will be compliant with this requirement in the event of any future restructure, merger or change in procedures.
8.4	Landlords may be asked to review and update the self-assessment following an Ombudsman investigation.	Yes		The Council is committed to reviewing and updating the current self-assessment following any order/recommendation to do so from the Ombudsman.
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 timetable for retuning to compliance with the Code.	Yes		The Council is committed to complying with this requirement in the event of any exceptional circumstances and will publish the required information at this time.

Section 9: Scrutiny and 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		The Corporate Complaint Service triages all complaints to ensure that each is dealt with on its merit. The service provides feedback via root cause analysis and delivers staff briefings to provide that learning from individual complaints is addressed outside of overall trend analysis.
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		The Corporate Complaint Service carries out comprehensive and detailed analysis of trends arising from complaints, themes and issues and feeds these back via the governance structure to the relevant Directors/Heads of Service. Root cause and trend analysis informs service improvement across the directorate.
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		Lessons learned from complaints and determinations are shared with the relevant services and staff. Where appropriate, findings and actions taken by the Directorate in response to complaints are shared with tenant engagement groups and more widely as appropriate.

9.4	Landlords must appoint a suitably senior lead person as accountable for their complaint handling. This person must assess any themes or trends to identify potential systemic issues, serious risks, or policies and procedures that require revision.	Yes		The Council has a member of the Corporate Leadership Team who has oversight and responsibility for the complaints service. Performance across the Council in terms of complaint handling is shared with this member, who works in conjunction with the relevant service leads to identify potential systemic issues or risks, and revise policies and procedures across the Council as required based on learning from complaints or feedback from relevant statutory regulatory bodies.
9.5	In addition to this a member of the governing body (or equivalent) must be appointed to have lead responsibility for complaints to support a positive complaint handling culture. This person is referred to as the Member Responsible for Complaints ('the MRC').	Yes		The Council has a member of the Corporate Leadership Team and a Cabinet Member who have oversight and responsibility for the complaints service.
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		Annual reports, monthly and quarterly updates relating to volumes, processes and performance inclusive of root cause are all provided to the relevant senior leadership board on a monthly basis. Senior officers within the complaints service provide detailed analysis to the MRC to enable this information to be communicated at an appropriate level.

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		<p>Complaints performance is a standard agenda item at Directorate Management Team, Cabinet Member Briefings and Corporate Leadership Team. Senior management receive updates on volumes, trends and performance against Service Level Agreements. Root cause analysis is fed back to the service areas on a monthly basis to highlight areas of high complaints and dissatisfaction.</p> <p>The Housing Ombudsman Case Management Team provide feedback to service areas on determinations. This data is used to highlight areas of non-compliance with policies and identify wider service improvements. Quarterly lessons learned meetings take place with senior managers from Asset Management to discuss recent cases and to escalate learning to staff and contractors.</p> <p>The Annual Complaints Report and Service Improvement Plan is shared with the Directorate Management Team, Cabinet Members and the Corporate Leadership Team.</p>
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9.8	<p>Landlords must have a standard objective in relation to complaint handling for all relevant employees that reflect 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		
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10. Findings of Non-Compliance with the Code by the Housing Ombudsman 2024-25

10.1 This section details the Housing Ombudsman's findings of non-compliance with the Code, expressed via determinations issued in 2024-25. The Housing Ombudsman's case reference is also included – full reports can be accessed via [Housing Ombudsman](#). In some cases, determinations are not published via the Housing Ombudsman website due to Data Protection concerns, and reports are not published until six weeks after they have been issued to the Council.

10.2 It is perhaps worth noting that whilst these determinations were received in 2024-25, due to the historical complaints backlog, the length of time tenants have to escalate complaints to the Housing Ombudsman (12 months from receipt of a Stage 2 response) and historical case backlogs with the Housing Ombudsman, the majority of these determinations relate to complaints submitted before the implementation of the new Code.

Complaint Summary	Determination(s)	Date	Findings	Case Reference
The tenant complained about disrepair to a garden shed.	Maladministration Service Failure	April 2024	The HO found that the Council had not applied its repairs policy properly and had failed to address this in the complaint response.	202301194
The tenant complained about delays in fixing a window during refurbishment works.	Maladministration	April 2024	The HO found that there were unnecessary delays and that these were not properly communicated to the tenant.	202228647
The tenant complained about the quality of plastering works.	Maladministration Maladministration	April 2024	The HO found that the repairs were not addressed within policy timescales and the complaint handling was delayed.	202312120

The tenant complained about a leak from a neighbouring property.	Service Failure Maladministration	April 2024	The HO found delays in addressing the cause of a leak and failure to apply the complaint handling process effectively.	202227133
The tenant complained about antisocial behaviour from a neighbour.	Maladministration Maladministration	April 2024	The HO found that the Council did not apply its ASB Policy correctly, and that there were delays in complaint responses.	202305425
The tenant complained about missed repair appointments.	Service Failure Service Failure	April 2024	The HO found that we had not communicated appointments effectively and there were delays with complaint responses.	202318391
The tenant complained about repairs to a fence.	Service Failure	April 2024	The HO found that we did not consider whether damage to the fence was caused by ASB and failed to open a case	202312394
The tenant complained about delays in repairing a boiler.	Maladministration Maladministration	May 2024	The HO found that whilst delays in obtaining a replacement boiler part were unavoidable, our communication with the tenant was minimal and we failed to offer alternative heating provision in a timely manner.	202222354
The tenant complaint about replacement front and back doors.	Service Failure Service Failure	May 2024	The HO found that whilst the Council did not need to replace the doors under our Repairs Policy, this was not communicated effectively to the tenant causing confusion.	202224553
The tenant complained about a request for a replacement kitchen.	Service Failure Maladministration	May 2024	The HO found that there was confusion over liability for replacing the tenant's kitchen and poor record keeping which hampered the progress of the complaint.	202310402
The tenant complained about the condition of their new property following a mutual exchange.	Maladministration Maladministration Maladministration	May 2024	The HO found that the Mutual Exchange process was not followed (during Covid lockdowns) and that repairs once the exchange had taken place were not carried out quickly enough.	202309639

The tenant complained about being left without a working gas supply for two months.	Service Failure Maladministration	May 2024	The HO found that we had offered appropriate alternative heating and cooking provision, but that there were avoidable delays to the repairs to reinstate the gas supply.	202233022
The tenant complained about leaks from a flat roof and resultant damp and mould.	Maladministration Maladministration	May 2024	The HO found that we did not hold accurate records of the repairs due to a change in contractor, we carried out repeat visits but could not resolve the issue, and there were delays in replacing the flat roof.	202218559
The tenant complained about various disrepair issues.	Service Failure Service Failure	May 2024	The HO found that we had not responded appropriately to issues of a contaminated water supply.	202216110
The tenant complained about a leaking roof.	Maladministration Maladministration	May 2024	The HO found that we had attended on repeat occasions without resolving the issue, and that there had been unjustified delays in resolving the leak.	202308899
The tenant complained about a leak in their porch and damage to a laminate floor.	Maladministration Maladministration Maladministration	May 2024	The HO found that we had failed to identify issues despite numerous visits to the property, and had not considered the tenant's vulnerabilities when arranging works to the laminate floor.	202224840
The tenant complained about a mice infestation at her property.	Service Failure	May 2024	The HO found that we had not properly considered the complaint and had not offered compensation for delays in responding.	202320507
The tenant complained about repeated flooding of his garden.	Maladministration Maladministration	May 2024	The HO found that there was poor communication with the tenant, and that we had failed to escalate the issue with the company responsible for drainage at the property. Our complaint handling was also late and of poor quality.	202304916

The tenant complained about issues with a shared boundary fence.	Maladministration	June 2024	The HO found that our S1 complaint response letter was non-compliant and our S2 complaint response was late.	202226003
The tenant complained about antisocial behaviour from a neighbour.	Maladministration Maladministration	June 2024	The HO found that we had failed to properly follow our ASB Policy, our S1 complaint handling was delayed, and we failed to identify a S2 complaint when submitted.	202314631
The tenant complained about a leak from above.	Maladministration Maladministration	June 2024	The HO found that we had delayed accessing the property above to identify the source of the leak, and that the overall resolution of the leak took too long as a result.	202327338
The tenant complained about leaks from their boiler and resultant issues with damp and mould.	Service Failure Maladministration Maladministration	June 2024	The HO found that we had carried out repeat visits but had not identified the source of the leak, and when the leak was resolved we took too long to carry out remedial repairs to address the issues caused by the leak.	202341494
The tenant complained about persistent leaks from the flat above.	Severe Maladministration Severe Maladministration	June 2024	The HO found that we had failed to proactively seek access to the flat above, we had failed to address the cause of the leak as antisocial behaviour and our complaint handling throughout was not of the expected standard.	202233239
The tenant complained about ongoing issues with damp and mould.	Severe Maladministration Severe Maladministration	July 2024	The HO found that we had failed to address a leak causing damp and mould over a period of several years, we had failed to recognise the effect of this on the household and had failed to carry out a risk assessment.	202331204
The tenant complained about repairs to their boiler and front door.	Severe Maladministration Maladministration Service Failure	July 2024	The HO found that our records of contact with the tenant and repairs carried out were poor, there were unjustified delays in fitting a new front door and boiler and we had failed to carry out a risk assessment.	202222814

The tenant complained about our handling of antisocial behaviour.	Service Failure Maladministration	July 2024	The HO found that we had applied the ASB Policy but there had been delays in doing this, and our complaint handling at both stages was delayed.	202203547
The tenant complained about various repairs issues.	Maladministration	July 2024	The HO found that there was a lack of adequate records to evidence the repairs carried out and the reasons for these repairs.	202313168
The tenant complained about damp and mould in her property.	Severe Maladministration Severe Maladministration	July 2024	The HO found that we had failed to respond to repeat reports of damp and mould, failed to carry out an inspection into issues with damp and mould and did not hold accurate records of our actions or the reasons for them.	202219556
The tenant complained about our handling of antisocial behaviour.	Maladministration Maladministration	August 2024	The HO found that we had not followed our ASB Policy, we had failed to carry out an assessment or draw up an action plan and had failed to properly respond to further complaints.	202308422
The tenant complained about various repairs issues.	Maladministration Maladministration Maladministration Service Failure	August 2024	The HO found that we had failed to recognise the tenant's vulnerabilities and the potential impact of disrepair on them, we had delayed carrying out repairs to identified issues and did not address some repairs until legal proceedings were commenced.	202102608
The tenant complained about damage caused by contractors working on a neighbouring property.	Maladministration Maladministration	August 2024	The HO found that we had delayed in responding to the tenant's report of damage and had not thoroughly investigated the complaint made.	202221487
The tenant complained about our handling of antisocial behaviour.	Service Failure	September 2024	The HO found that we had not followed our ASB Policy, we had failed to complete an Action Plan and had not communicated properly with the tenant.	202330394

The tenant complained about our handling of antisocial behaviour.	Maladministration Maladministration	September 2024	The HO found that we had not followed our ASB Policy, we had failed to complete an Action Plan and had delayed in reviewing information provided. Additionally, our complaint handling was confusion and our records were incomplete.	202230532
The tenant complained about issues with their boiler and heating system.	Maladministration Maladministration	October 2024	The HO found that we had failed to respond in line with our Repairs Policy, had failed to act on repeat repairs, did not offer alternative heating/hot water provision and failed to properly respond to the complaint.	202300045
The tenant complained about delays with their kitchen refurbishment.	Maladministration Service Failure	October 2024	The HO found that we had failed to consider our responsibilities under the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS), had failed to consider the vulnerabilities within the household and had failed to act quickly enough to address the issues.	202231252
The tenant complained about issues of damp and mould, a boundary fence and aids and adaptations within his property.	Maladministration Maladministration Service Failure Maladministration Maladministration	October 2024	The HO found that we took too long to resolve issues relating to damp and mould, provided conflicting information regarding liability for fence repairs and had not provided the appropriate aids and adaptations in the property when the tenant moved in. Additionally, no compensation was offered for the delays in resolving these issues.	202347195
The tenant complained about repairs to his windows and doors, and issues with drainage.	Service Failure Service Failure Maladministration	October 2024	The HO found that we took too long to carry out repairs to the tenant's windows and doors, failed to appropriately investigate and resolve drainage issues, and our complaint handling was not in line with the requirements of the Code.	202304660

The tenant complained about our handling of a pest infestation and repairs to windows.	Maladministration Maladministration Maladministration	October 2024	The HO found that we failed to respond appropriately to the tenant's pest issues in time, failed to keep accurate records of repairs to a window, delayed responding to the tenant's complaints and that our records of our interactions with the tenant and the repairs completed were incomplete.	202211176
The tenant complained about our handling of complaints relating to damp and mould.	Maladministration	November 2024	The HO found that we missed opportunities to resolve damp and mould issues at the earliest opportunity, and that we failed to appropriately compensate the tenant for these failures.	202303187
The tenant complained about leaks from above.	Maladministration Service Failure	November 2024	The HO found that we had failed to carry out repairs in line with our Repairs Policy, and that our complaint response was unreasonably delayed.	202211353
The tenant complained about our handling of leaks from above.	Severe Maladministration Severe Maladministration	December 2024	The HO found that we had failed to take appropriate action to access the property causing the leak, had failed to use our enforcement powers and that our handling of the tenant's complaint was not in line with the Code.	202313362
The tenant complained about our handling of repairs to their kitchen.	Service Failure Service Failure	December 2024	The HO found that we should have clarified our position in relation to the tenant's request for a new kitchen and that our complaint handling was late.	202226339
The tenant complained about noise nuisance from a neighbour.	Maladministration Maladministration	December 2024	The HO found that we failed to deal appropriately with the tenant's complaints of noise transference, and that our complaint handling was not in line with the Code.	202303440

The tenant complained about persistent roof leaks.	Severe Maladministration Maladministration	December 2024	The HO found that whilst we had visited on numerous occasions to repair the tenant's roof, we had failed to address the underlying causes of the ongoing leak which was caused by the age of the roof. Additionally, our complaint handling was not in line with the Code.	202230326
The tenant complaint about the standard of remedial works to his kitchen ceiling following a boiler leak.	Service Failure	December 2024	The HO found that we had failed to recognise the time, trouble, distress and inconvenience caused to the tenant by failures to resolve the issue in a timelier manner.	202316773
The tenant complained about repair to communal areas, windows and pipework.	Maladministration Maladministration Maladministration Maladministration	December 2024	The HO found that we had failed to respond to repairs requests in line with our Repairs Policy, and that our handling of the tenant's complaints was not in line with the Code. Additionally, it was found that our record keeping meant that we were unable to properly evidence the decisions we had taken around repairs and the reasons for these decisions.	202309653
The tenant complained about our handling of a leak.	Service Failure Service Failure	December 2024	The HO noted that our efforts to resolve the leak had not been effective, and that our complaint responses failed to adequately recognise the effect of this on the tenant.	202230701
The tenant complained about our handling of reported issues with damp and mould.	Service Failure Service Failure	December 2024	The HO noted that whilst we took appropriate action to respond to issues raised, there were avoidable delays, and our complaint handling was not in line with the Code.	202344413

The tenant complained about our handling of a leak.	Service Failure Service Failure	December 2024	The HO found that we had delayed in responding to some of the tenant's reports of leaks, and our complaint responses lacked clarity.	202346615
The tenant complained about our handling of a leak from above.	Maladministration Maladministration	January 2025	The HO found that we had identified the source of the leak but that there were avoidable delays with our repair works in response. Additionally, it was found that our complaint handling was not in line with the Code.	202405899
The tenant complained about our handling of repairs to their boiler and heating system.	Service Failure Service Failure	January 2025	The HO found that we failed to offer the tenant alternative sources of heating and hot water, and that our complaint handling was not in line with the Code.	202229158
The tenant complained about our handling of damp and mould, and concerns around our handling of reports of asbestos.	Maladministration Maladministration Maladministration	January 2025	The HO found that we did not resolve the issues with damp and mould quickly enough, that we did not update the tenant appropriately regarding his concerns around asbestos and that our complaint handling was not in line with the Code.	202348410
The tenant complained about our handling of damp and mould.	Maladministration Maladministration	January 2025	The HO found that there were avoidable delays in our handling of the tenant's reports of damp and mould, and that our response to the complaint was not in line with the Code, mainly due to record keeping issues.	202346604
The tenant complained about our handling of a leak and resultant damp and mould issues.	Maladministration Maladministration Maladministration	January 2025	The HO found that we did not respond appropriately to the tenant's reports of a leak, that we failed to investigate reports of damp and mould in a timely manner and that our complaint handling was not in line with the Code.	202408574

The tenant complained about our handling of antisocial behaviour.	Maladministration	February 2025	The HO found that we did not follow our ASB policy correctly in investigating the complaint.	202207893
The tenant complained about a pest issue.	Service Failure	February 2025	The HO found that our complaint handling was not in line with the Code.	202304897
The tenant complained about our handling of antisocial behaviour.	Maladministration Maladministration	February 2025	The HO found that we had not applied our ASB Policy correctly and that our complaint handling was not in line with the Code.	202313822
The tenant complained about an overgrown embankment.	Service Failure	February 2025	The HO found that we had failed to follow through on commitments made in our complaint response.	202318668
The tenant complained about various disrepair issues.	Maladministration Service Failure Service Failure Maladministration	February 2025	The HO found that our response to the tenant's repairs issues was delayed and not in line with our Repairs Policy, and our complaint handling was not in line with the Code.	202231444
The tenant complained about repairs to their kitchen floor.	Maladministration	March 2025	The HO found that we cancelled appointments without communication and did not resolve the repairs in a timely manner.	202315683

11. Governing Body's Response to this Report

11.1 This report was reviewed by the Council's full Cabinet on 13 May 2025; this can be accessed via [Cabinet - 13/05/2025 - Tuesday 13 May 2025, 10:00am - Birmingham City Council Webcasting](#).

11.2 The Leader of the Council, Councillor John Cotton, provided the following response to the report on behalf of the Cabinet.

"The Council's annual self-assessment against the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code, and the annual complaints performance and service improvement report were reviewed at Cabinet on 13 May 2025.

Cabinet was pleased to note that the Council's performance in responding to housing related complaints has continued to improve, and that the overall backlog has significantly reduced as a result of improved compliance with responding to complaints on time. We do however acknowledge that these improvements need to be sustained to ensure that our residents receive the level of service that they deserve.

In particular, the Council's aspiration and focus over the next 12 months is to reduce the rate of maladministration, particularly severe maladministration over a consistent period to a figure more in line with the national average. For a Council managing almost 60,000 properties and carrying out in excess of 250,000 repairs per year there will inevitably be occasions where we do not get things right. However, we must and will use these instances as an opportunity to learn and improve.

Having reviewed and discussed the annual self-assessment and complaints reports, Cabinet approved the contents and we look forward to receiving a further update on progress in May 2026."

12. Related Documents

12.1 As confirmed at section 1.6, the Council is required to include several relevant publications within this report. These reports and policies are referenced within the body of this report where necessary, however links to the full documents are provided below:

The Council's Compliments, Comments and Complaints Policy:

[BCC Compliments, Comments and Complaints Policy | Birmingham City Council](#)

The Housing Ombudsman's Special Report of January 2023:

[Birmingham-Special-Report-FINAL-January-2023-1.pdf \(housing-ombudsman.org.uk\)](#)

The Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code:

[The Complaint Handling Code | Housing Ombudsman Service \(housing-ombudsman.org.uk\)](#)

The Housing Ombudsman's Landlord Report for Birmingham 2023-24:

[Landlords Archive - Housing Ombudsman \(housing-ombudsman.org.uk\)](#)

The Housing Ombudsman's Annual Complaint Review 2023-24:

[Annual Complaints Review 2023 to 24 | Housing Ombudsman](#)