

Appendix B – Self-Assessment Form

This self-assessment form should be completed by the complaints officer and discussed at the landlord’s governing body annually. Evidence should be included to support all statements with additional commentary as necessary. Explanations must also be provided where a mandatory ‘must’ requirement is not met to set out the rationale for the alternative approach adopted and why this delivers a better outcome.

Section 1 - Definition of a complaint

Mandatory ‘must’ requirements

Code Section	Code requirement	Comply Yes/No	Evidence, commentary, and any explanations
1.2	A complaint must be defined as: <i>‘an expression of dissatisfaction, however made, about the standard of service, actions or lack of action by the organisation, its own staff, or those acting on its behalf, affecting an individual resident or group of residents.</i>	Yes	Thrive defines a complaint on our website as: <i>‘an expression of dissatisfaction, however made, about the standard of service, actions or lack of action by the organisation, its own staff, or those acting on its behalf, affecting an individual resident or group of residents.</i> Complaints Process - Thrive Homes
1.3	The resident does not have to use the word ‘complaint’ for it to be treated as such. A complaint that is submitted via a third party or representative must still be handled in line with the landlord’s complaints policy.	Yes	Customers do not have to use the word complaint; they can be unhappy with the service they have received or not had an issue resolved satisfactorily Complaints Process - Thrive Homes
1.6	... if further enquiries are needed to resolve the matter, or if the resident requests it, the issue must be logged as a complaint.	Yes	
1.7	A landlord must accept a complaint unless there is a valid reason not to do so.	Yes	

1.8	A complaints policy must clearly set out the circumstances in which a matter will not be considered, and these circumstances should be fair and reasonable to residents.	Yes	Our process includes what isn't a complaint and where the Customer should go to get the matter resolved. Complaints Process - Thrive Homes
1.9	If a landlord decides not to accept a complaint, a detailed 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.	Yes	As set out above in 1.7, Thrive also provides a full response letter including the rights to take the decision to the Ombudsman and the contact details.

Best practice 'should' requirements

Code Section	Code requirement	Comply Yes/No	Evidence, commentary and any explanations
1.4	Landlords should recognise the difference between a service request, where a resident may be unhappy with a situation that they wish to have rectified, and a complaint about the service they have/have not received.	Yes	
1.5	Survey feedback may not necessarily need to be treated as a complaint, though, where possible, the person completing the survey should be made aware of how they can pursue their dissatisfaction as a complaint if they wish to.	Yes	IFF advise customers that how to pursue dissatisfaction as a complaint if they wish to when they are carrying out Customer surveys

Section 2 – Accessibility and awareness

Mandatory 'must' requirements

Code Section	Code requirement	Comply Yes/No	Evidence, commentary and any explanations
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2.1	Landlords must make it easy for residents to complain by providing different channels through which residents can make a complaint such as in person, over the telephone, in writing, by email and digitally. While the Ombudsman recognises that it may not be feasible for a landlord to use all of the potential channels, there must be more than one route of access into the complaints system.	Yes	Complaints Process - Thrive Homes Customers can make complaints in person, letter, email, via the customer portal and website. The following social media channels are also available; facebook and messenger, twitter, Linked in.
2.3	Landlords must make their complaint policy available in a clear and accessible format for all residents. This will detail the number of stages involved, what will happen at each stage and the timeframes for responding.	Yes	Complaints Process - Thrive Homes The complaint policy is available on our website. Customers are also able to request this is sent to them via email or post by contacting our Customer Service Team.
2.4	Landlord websites, if they exist, must include information on how to raise a complaint. The complaints policy and process must be easy to find on the website.	Yes	Complaints Process - Thrive Homes Thrive's website includes information on how to raise a complaint. This is easy to access on our website.
2.5	Landlords must comply with the Equality Act 2010 and may need to adapt normal policies, procedures, or processes to accommodate an individual's needs. Landlords must satisfy themselves that their policy sets out how they will respond to reasonable adjustments requests in line with the Equality Act and that complaints handlers have had appropriate training to deal with such requests.	Yes	EDI Statement of intent allows for reasonable adjustments in line with the Equality Act.
2.6	Landlords must publicise the complaints policy and process, the Complaint Handling Code and the Housing Ombudsman Scheme in leaflets, posters, newsletters, online and as part of regular correspondence with residents.	Yes	The complaints policy is included in the following: Acknowledgement letters/emails and formal responses, online, in the annual report and is included in newsletters and other mailouts throughout the year.

2.7	Landlords must provide residents with contact information for the Ombudsman as part of its regular correspondence with residents.	Yes	Contact information for the HO is included in all complaints' correspondence with Customers.
2.8	Landlords must provide early advice to residents regarding their right to access the Housing Ombudsman Service throughout their complaint, not only when the landlord's complaints process is exhausted.	Yes	Thrive provide the right to access the HO service at the point of acknowledgment and throughout the life of the complaint.

Best practice 'should' requirements

Code Section	Code requirement	Comply Yes/No	Evidence, commentary and any explanations
2.2	Where the landlord has set up channels to communicate with its residents via social media, then it should be expected to receive complaints via those channels. Policies should contain details of the steps that will be taken when a complaint is received via social media and how confidentiality and privacy will be maintained.	Yes	Steps that will be taken when a complaint is received via social media and how confidentiality and privacy will be maintained are included in our complaints process and our privacy policy. Complaints Process - Thrive Homes

Section 3 – Complaint handling personnel

Mandatory 'must' requirements

Code Section	Code requirement	Comply Yes/No	Evidence, commentary and any explanations
3.1	Landlords must have a person or team assigned to take responsibility for complaint handling to ensure complaints receive the necessary attention, and that these are reported to the governing body. This Code	Yes	Thrive have a full time Engagement and Feedback Officer that reports into the Customer Experience Lead. Duties include complaint handling and reporting to the governing body.

	will refer to that person or team as the “complaints officer”.		
3.2	The complaint handler appointed must have appropriate complaint handling skills and no conflicts of interest.	Yes	

Best practice ‘should’ requirements

Code Section	Code requirement	Comply Yes/No	Evidence, commentary, and any explanations
3.3	Complaint handlers should: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • be able to act sensitively and fairly • be trained to handle complaints and deal with distressed and upset residents • have access to staff at all levels to facilitate quick resolution of complaints • have the authority and autonomy to act to resolve disputes quickly and fairly. 	Yes	All complaints handlers have received training.

Section 4 – Complaint handling principles

Mandatory ‘must’ requirements

Code Section	Code requirement	Comply Yes/No	Evidence, commentary and any explanations
4.1	Any decision to try and resolve a concern must be taken in agreement with the resident and a landlord’s audit trail/records should be able to demonstrate this. Landlords must ensure that efforts to resolve a resident’s concerns do not obstruct access to the complaints procedure or result in any	Yes	Customers have access to the complaints process via all communications channels including the website. Staff are trained to recognise the difference between feedback and complaints and to log and acknowledge as necessary. The complaints process sets out that

	unreasonable delay. It is not appropriate to have extra named stages (such as 'stage 0' or 'pre-complaint stage') as this causes unnecessary confusion for residents. When a complaint is made, it must be acknowledged and logged at stage one of the complaints procedure within five days of receipt.		we will acknowledge a complaint in line with the HO timescales.
4.2	Within the complaint acknowledgement, landlords must set out their understanding of the complaint and the outcomes the resident is seeking. If any aspect of the complaint is unclear, the resident must be asked for clarification and the full definition agreed between both parties.	Yes	The acknowledgment template sets out the understanding of the complaint and the outcomes the resident is seeking. Thrive also contacts the Customer to discuss the complaint and agree the actions, This is all set out in our process.
4.6	A complaint investigation must be conducted in an impartial manner.	Yes	Thrive has a list of case handlers to allocate complaints to. The appropriate case handler will be selected so that the investigation is conducted in an impartial manner. All complaints are Quality checked by the Engagement and Feedback Officer before they are sent to the Customer.
4.7	The complaint handler must: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • deal with 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. 	Yes	The complaint handlers have been trained ensure that they meet all these criteria. Training will be delivered throughout the year.
4.11	Landlords must adhere to any reasonable arrangements agreed with residents in terms of frequency and method of communication	Yes	Thrive use an action plan throughout the life of the complaint. The action plan is agreed with the customer, timescales and arrangements agreed

			are set out in this document and shared with the customer.
4.12	The resident, and if applicable any staff member who is the subject of the complaint, must also be given a fair chance to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • set out their position • comment on any adverse findings before a final decision is made. 	Yes	As part of the Thrive process, customers are contacted within 1 working day of making the complaint to set out their position. It is also part of the process to contact the customer not later than 1 working day before the complaint is due to agree the final decision.
4.13	A landlord must include in its complaints policy its timescales for a resident to request escalation of a complaint	Yes	This is included within the complaints process. Complaints Process - Thrive Homes
4.14	A landlord must not unreasonably refuse to escalate a complaint through all stages of the complaints procedure and must have clear and valid reasons for taking that course of action. Reasons for declining to escalate a complaint must be clearly set out in a landlord's complaints policy and must be the same as the reasons for not accepting a complaint.	Yes	This is included within the complaints process. As well as this Thrive have a clear response template that is used specifically for explaining reasons why we would not escalate a complaint. Complaints Process - Thrive Homes
4.15	A full record must be kept of the complaint, any review 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 reports or surveys prepared.	Yes	All records of complaints are logged on our systems and original documents are files in our electronic document management system. Any reviews, outcomes or other relevant correspondence relating to the complaints are also logged and recorded against the cases.
4.18	Landlords must have policies and procedures in place for managing unacceptable behaviour from residents and/or their representatives when pursuing a complaint.	Yes	This sits within the complaints process and the staff protection policy. Complaints Process - Thrive Homes Staff protection Policy.pdf

Best practice 'should' requirements

Code Section	Code requirement	Comply Yes/No	Evidence, commentary and any explanations
4.3	Landlords should manage residents' expectations from the outset, being clear where a desired outcome is unreasonable or unrealistic	Yes	It is part of the process for Thrive to contact the resident within 1 working day of the complaint being logged to talk through the complaint and agree the desired outcome
4.4	A complaint should be resolved at the earliest possible opportunity, having assessed what evidence is needed to fully consider the issues, what outcome would resolve the matter for the resident and whether there are any urgent actions required.	Yes	
4.5	Landlords should give residents the opportunity to have a representative deal with their complaint on their behalf, and to be represented or accompanied at any meeting with the landlord where this is reasonable.	Yes	This sits within the complaints process and all correspondence to the customer throughout the life of the complaint. Complaints Process - Thrive Homes
4.8	Where a key issue of a complaint relates to the parties' legal obligations landlords should clearly set out their understanding of the obligations of both parties.	Yes	
4.9	Communication with the resident should not generally identify individual members of staff or contractors.	Yes	Staff have been trained to not identify staff and contractors, this also sits within the complaints process and all correspondence is quality checked by the Engagement and Insights Officer before it is sent to the resident to ensure that anonymity has been adhered to.
4.10	Landlords should keep residents regularly updated about the progress of the investigation.	Yes	The action plan agreed with the customer sets out timescales and deadlines for updates so that the customer is kept fully informed.

4.16	Landlords should seek feedback from residents in relation to the landlord's complaint handling as part of the drive to encourage a positive complaint and learning culture.	Yes	IFF research carry out a survey with customers in relation to complaint handling monthly.
4.19	Any restrictions placed on a resident's contact due to unacceptable behaviour should be appropriate to their needs and should demonstrate regard for the provisions of the Equality Act 2010.	Yes	

Section 5 – Complaint stages

Mandatory 'must' requirements

Stage 1

Code Section	Code requirement	Comply Yes/No	Evidence, commentary and any explanations
5.1	Landlords must respond to the complaint within 10 working days of the complaint being logged. Exceptionally, landlords may provide an explanation to the resident containing a clear timeframe for when the response will be received. This should not exceed a further 10 days without good reason.	Yes	Thrive is compliant with the HO timescales. Complaints Process - Thrive Homes
5.5	A complaint response must be sent 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 expeditiously with regular updates provided to the resident.	Yes	Thrive closes the complaint when the answer is known and any open follow up actions are tracked and monitored using the action plan agreed with the resident.

5.6	Landlords must address all points raised in the complaint and provide clear reasons for any decisions, referencing the relevant policy, law and good practice where appropriate.	Yes	All points are agreed and summarised verbally and in writing with the resident.
5.8	Landlords must confirm the following in writing to the resident at the completion of stage one in clear, plain language: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the complaint stage • the decision on the complaint • the reasons for any decisions made • the details of any remedy offered to put things right • details of any outstanding actions • details of how to escalate the matter to stage two if the resident is not satisfied with the answer 	Yes	Thrive are compliant, our letters clearly set out and address all these points.

Stage 2

Code section	Code requirement	Comply: Yes/No	Evidence, commentary and any explanations
5.9	If all or part of the complaint is not resolved to the resident's satisfaction at stage one it must be progressed to stage two of the landlord's procedure, unless an exclusion ground now applies. In instances where a landlord declines to escalate a complaint it must clearly communicate in writing its reasons for not escalating as well as the resident's right to approach the Ombudsman about its decision.	Yes	Reasons for not escalating a complaint and the right to approach the HO, are set out clearly to the resident in writing using the following template.

5.10	On receipt of the escalation request, landlords must set out their understanding of issues outstanding and the outcomes the resident is seeking. If any aspect of the complaint is unclear, the resident must be asked for clarification and the full definition agreed between both parties.	Yes	An escalation request is acknowledged in line with the HO timescales and all issues outstanding, and outcomes requires are agreed with the resident and put into writing along with a new action plan.
5.11	Landlords must only escalate a complaint to stage two once it has completed stage one and at the request of the resident.	Yes	This sits in our complaints process Complaints Process - Thrive Homes
5.12	The person considering the complaint at stage two, must not be the same person that considered the complaint at stage one.	Yes	
5.13	Landlords must respond to the stage two complaint within 20 working days of the complaint being escalated. Exceptionally, landlords may provide an explanation to the resident containing a clear timeframe for when the response will be received. This should not exceed a further 10 days without good reason.	Yes	Thrive are compliant with the HO timescales Complaints Process - Thrive Homes
5.16	Landlords must confirm the following in writing to the resident at the completion of stage two in clear, plain language: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the complaint stage • the complaint definition • the decision on the complaint • the reasons for any decisions made • the details of any remedy offered to put things right • details of any outstanding actions and <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • if the landlord has a third stage, details of how to escalate the matter to stage three 	Yes	Thrive are compliant, our letters clearly address all of these points.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • if this was the final stage, details of how to escalate the matter to the Housing Ombudsman Service if the resident remains dissatisfied. 		
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Stage 3

Code Section	Code requirement	Comply Yes/No	Evidence, commentary and any explanations
5.17	Two stage landlord complaint procedures are ideal. This ensures that the complaint process is not unduly long. If landlords strongly believe a third stage is necessary, they must set out their reasons for this as part of their self-assessment. A process with more than three stages is not acceptable under any circumstances.	N/A	Thrive has a 2 stage complaints process
5.20	Landlords must confirm the following in writing to the resident at the completion of stage three in clear, plain language: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the complaint stage • the complaint definition • the decision on the complaint • the reasons for any decisions made • the details of any remedy offered to put things right • details of any outstanding actions • details of how to escalate the matter to the Housing Ombudsman Service if the resident remains dissatisfied 	N/A	

Best practice 'should' requirements

Stage 1

Code Section	Code requirement	Comply Yes/No	Evidence, commentary and any explanations
5.2	If an extension beyond 20 working days is required to enable the landlord to respond to the complaint fully, this should be agreed by both parties.	Yes	All extensions are agreed with customers verbally and followed up by confirming the agreement in writing. It is also part of the internal process for case handlers to seek approval for extensions from the Engagement and Insights Officer.
5.3	Where agreement over an extension period cannot be reached, landlords should provide the Housing Ombudsman's contact details so the resident can challenge the landlord's plan for responding and/or the proposed timeliness of a landlord's response.	Yes	Ombudsman's contact details are provided in all correspondence about complaints.
5.4	Where the problem is a recurring issue, the landlord should consider any older reports as part of the background to the complaint if this will help to resolve the issue for the resident.	Yes	Engagement and Insights Officer will always look to see what historical and relevant information is on the system to identify if it is a repeat problem and include this in the case file if it will help to resolve the case.
5.7	Where residents raise additional complaints during the investigation, these should be incorporated into the stage one response if they are relevant and the stage one response has not been issued. Where the stage one response has been issued, or it would unreasonably delay the response, the complaint should be logged as a new complaint.	Yes	

Stage 2

Code Section	Code requirement	Comply Yes/No	Evidence, commentary and any explanations
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5.14	If an extension beyond 10 working days is required to enable the landlord to respond to the complaint fully, this should be agreed by both parties.	Yes	All extensions are agreed with customers verbally and in writing. It is also part of the internal process for case handlers to seek approval for extensions from the Engagement and Insights Officer.
5.15	Where agreement over an extension period cannot be reached, landlords should provide the Housing Ombudsman's contact details so the resident can challenge the landlord's plan for responding and/or the proposed timeliness of a landlord's response	Yes	Housing Ombudsman contact details are provided in all letters about complaints.

Stage 3

Code Section	Code requirement	Comply Yes/No	Evidence, commentary and any explanations
5.18	Complaints should only go to a third stage if the resident has actively requested a third stage review of their complaint. Where a third stage is in place and has been requested, landlords must respond to the stage three complaint within 20 working days of the complaint being escalated. Additional time will only be justified if related to convening a panel. An explanation and a date for when the stage three response will be received should be provided to the resident.	N/A	
5.19	Where agreement over an extension period cannot be reached, landlords should provide the Housing Ombudsman's contact details so the resident can challenge the landlord's plan for responding and/or the proposed timeliness of a landlord's response.	N/A	

Section – Putting things right

Mandatory ‘must’ requirements

Code Section	Code requirement	Comply Yes/No	Evidence, commentary and any explanations
6.1	Effective dispute resolution requires a process designed to resolve complaints. Where something has gone wrong a landlord must acknowledge this and set out the actions it has already taken, or intends to take, to put things right.	Yes	Letter templates guide the case handler to acknowledge what has gone wrong, set out actions taken and what they will do to put things right.
6.2	Any remedy offered must reflect the extent of any service failures and the level of detriment caused to the resident as a result. A landlord must carefully manage the expectations of residents and not promise anything that cannot be delivered or would cause unfairness to other residents.	Yes	Guidance on compensation can be found on Thrive’s website.
6.5	The remedy offer must clearly set out what will happen and by when, in agreement with the resident where appropriate. Any remedy proposed must be followed through to completion.	Yes	Letter templates set out next steps. An action tracker is in place and checked weekly to ensure that all actions have been followed up within relevant timescales.
6.6	In awarding compensation, a landlord must consider whether any statutory payments are due, if any quantifiable losses have been incurred, the time and trouble a resident has been put to as well as any distress and inconvenience caused.	Yes	Thrive have a compensation policy that is shared with customers online. Statement of Charges and Compensation - Thrive Homes

Best practice ‘should’ requirements

Code Section	Code requirement	Comply Yes/No	Evidence, commentary and any explanations
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6.3	Landlords should look beyond the circumstances of the individual complaint and consider whether anything needs to be 'put right' in terms of process or systems to the benefit of all residents.	Yes	On completion lessons learned are recorded and service improvements are identified, tracked and monitored by business areas.
6.7	In some cases, a resident may have a legal entitlement to redress. The landlord should still offer a resolution where possible, obtaining legal advice as to how any offer of resolution should be worded.	Yes	

Section 7 – Continuous learning and improvement

Mandatory 'must' requirements

Code Section	Code requirement	Comply Yes/No	Evidence, commentary and any explanations
7.2	Accountability and transparency are integral to a positive complaint handling culture. Landlords must report back on wider learning and improvements from complaints in their annual report and more frequently to their residents, staff and scrutiny panels.	Yes	Thrive reports to the business on wider learning and improvements monthly and board quarterly. "Listening, learning and improving" is shared with Customers on the website and updated monthly it is also included in our annual report.

Best practice 'should' requirements

Code Section	Code requirement	Comply Yes/No	Evidence, commentary and any explanations
7.3	A member of the governing body should be appointed to have lead responsibility for complaints to support a positive complaint handling culture. This	Yes	The AD Customer reports on complaints to the Customer, Colleague and Governance Committee to ensure that the governing body

	role will be responsible for ensuring the governing body receives regular information on complaints that provides insight to the governing body on the landlord's complaint handling performance.		receives regular information on complaints performance. Complaints' performance is also reported on the balanced scorecard which board and committees have oversight of.
7.4	<p>As a minimum, governing bodies should receive:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular updates on the volume, categories and outcome of complaints, alongside complaint handling performance including compliance with the Ombudsman's orders • Regular reviews of issues and trends arising from complaint handling, • The annual performance report produced by the Ombudsman, where applicable • Individual complaint outcomes where necessary, including where the Ombudsman made findings of severe maladministration or referrals to regulatory bodies. The implementation of management responses should be tracked to ensure they are delivered to agreed timescales. The annual self-assessment against the Complaint Handling Code for scrutiny and challenge. 	Yes	<p>Quarterly complaints summaries are provided to CCG, Board and the Exec team, these include;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • volume, categories and outcome of complaints, alongside complaint handling performance including compliance with the Ombudsman's orders • issues and trends arising from complaint handling • The annual performance report produced by the Ombudsman, where applicable • Individual complaint outcomes where necessary, including where the Ombudsman made findings of severe maladministration or referrals to regulatory bodies. The implementation of management responses should be tracked to ensure they are delivered to agreed timescales. The annual self-assessment against the Complaint Handling Code for scrutiny and challenge.
7.5	Any themes or trends should be assessed by senior management to identify potential systemic issues, serious risks or policies and procedures that require revision. They should also be used to inform staff and contractor training.	Yes	All themes and trends are reviewed monthly by Assistant Directors, and changes or additions to policies, procedures are implemented. Risks are assessed and used to inform staff and contractor training.
7.6	Landlords should have a standard objective in relation to complaint handling for all employees that reflects the need to:		The balanced scorecard monitors complaints handling. All colleagues have an objective to

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • have a collaborative and co-operative approach towards resolving complaints, working with colleagues across teams and departments • take collective responsibility for any shortfalls identified through complaints rather than blaming others • act within the Professional Standards for engaging with complaints as set by the Chartered Institute of Housing. 		improve our customers experience with specific attention on management of complaints
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Section 8 – Self-assessment and compliance

Mandatory ‘must’ requirements

Code Section	Code requirement	Comply Yes/No	Evidence, commentary, and any explanations
8.1	Landlords must carry out an annual self-assessment against the Code to ensure their complaint handling remains in line with its requirements.	Yes	Thrive carry out the annual self-assessment and have shared with the wider business and residents online.
8.2	Landlords must also carry out a self-assessment following a significant restructure and/or change in procedures	Yes	
8.3	Following each self-assessment, a landlord must: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • report the outcome of their self-assessment to their governing body. In the case of local authorities, self-assessment outcomes should be reported to elected members • publish the outcome of their assessment on their website if they have one, or otherwise make accessible to residents • include the self-assessment in their annual report section on complaints handling performance 	Yes	Thrive have met the criteria for sharing and publishing the annual self-assessment

