# Complaint handling code action plan

This plan sets out how we will ensure that West Kent Housing Association is compliant with the Housing Ombudsman Service’s Complaint Handling Code by 31 March 2021. It should be read alongside the Complaint Handling Code Self Assessment Form.

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|  | **Self-assessment form question** | **Current position** | **Action** | **Lead** | **By when** |
| 1 | Does the complaints process use the following definition of a complaint? | Our current complaints policy does not use that definition. | Update our complaints policy to reflect the definition in the code. | Head of customer experience | January 2021 |
| 2 | Are these exclusions reasonable and fair to residents? | The exclusions in our current policy are based on previous guidelines. | Review our current exclusions and ensure they in line with new Ombudsman recommendations. | Head of customer experience | January 2021 |
| 3 | Do we have a reasonable adjustments policy? | Under our flagging policy we identify customers who have specific communication needs or require reasonable adjustments to engage with us.  Under our equality and diversity policy, we are committed to taking into account our customers’ diverse needs when designing and delivering services. This policy is currently being updated. | Include specific information around reasonable adjustments, including examples, within our updated equality and diversity policy. | Communities director  Head of customer experience | March 2021 |
| 4 | Is there a complaint officer or equivalent in post? | The head of customer experience is the designated point of contact for the Housing Ombudsman Service.  We do not have a dedicated team investigating and responding to complaints. Complaints are investigated by local service managers. | Review current resources and arrangements for investigating and responding to complaints and update as required. | Head of customer experience  Housing director | February 2021 |
| 5 | Are residents informed of the landlord’s position and given a chance to respond and challenge any area of dispute before the final decision? | This is best practice, but it is not specifically built into our current complaints process. | Update our complaints process to ensure that this stage is included within our process. | Head of customer experience | January 2021 |
| 6 | Where timescales have been extended did we have good reason? | Where we have extended timescales for responding to complaints we have recorded a valid reason for around 50 per cent of these. | Update our complaints process to include how we manage extending complaints. | Head of customer experience | March 2021 |
| 7 | Where timescales have been extended did we keep the resident informed? | We have kept residents informed for around 50 per cent of those complaints which were extended. | Update our complaints process to ensure that this is included within our process. | Head of customer experience | March 2021 |
| 8 | What proportion of complaints do we resolve to residents’ satisfaction? | We do not currently ask residents about their satisfaction with our complaints process. | Introduce satisfaction monitoring in 2021 to understand how customers’ feel about how we handle their complaints. | Head of customer experience  Head of service development | April 2021 |
| 9 | How do we share these lessons with:   1. residents? 2. the board/governing body? 3. In the Annual Report? | Complaint performance information and details of our Ombudsman cases is provided in our residents’ annual report.  Bi-annual complaint performance information is provided on our website within our service standards reporting.  Bi-annual reporting on complaint trends and outcomes is provided to our communities and housing committee as part of customer service trend reporting.  Monthly and quarterly reporting on complaint performance is provided to our senior leadership team. | Develop a KPI suite which reflects the recommendations within the Code and the Social Housing White Paper and agree reporting arrangements.  Work with residents to understand what they want to know about our complaints performance.  Identify other opportunities, besides the annual report, to regularly feedback to residents on our complaint performance. | Head of customer experience | March 2021 |