

Alpha’s performance against the Housing Ombudsman’s Complaints Handling Code 2025/26

This is Alpha’s annual self-assessment against its compliance with the Handling Code for the period 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026.

Executive Summary

Alpha’s 2025/26 self-assessment demonstrates broad compliance with the Housing Ombudsman’s Complaint Handling Code. The assessment confirms that Alpha has a single two-stage complaints process, has adopted the Ombudsman’s definition of a complaint, makes its complaints policy and associated information available to residents, and has established roles for complaint handling, Board oversight and Member Responsible for Complaints scrutiny.

The self-assessment also identifies several positive areas of practice, including the publication of complaint information on Alpha’s website, the use of complaint template letters, resident-facing complaint information, Board reporting, involvement of the scrutiny panel in developing complaint materials, and evidence that learning from complaints is considered as part of service improvement activity.

However, the assessment highlights that some areas require strengthening to ensure the policy, procedure and supporting evidence consistently reflect both the requirements of the Code and Alpha’s day-to-day practice. In particular, there are several provisions where practice appears to be in place but the supporting policy wording, procedure, evidence base or reporting route should be clarified.

Key actions and improvements required include:

- Review and update the complaints policy to make key definitions, exclusions, escalation rights, resident representation, timeframes, remedies and Ombudsman contact arrangements clearer and easier for residents to understand.
- Develop or strengthen supporting procedures to evidence day-to-day complaint handling practice, including complaint triage, vulnerability and risk considerations, reasonable adjustments, record keeping, response quality, extensions, outstanding actions and service recovery.
- Improve colleague awareness and consistency through additional complaints training, induction materials, clear scripts or model responses, Development Manager guidance and regular complaint discussions at operational meetings.
- Strengthen arrangements for service requests and resident feedback, including clearer distinction between service requests and complaints, improved recording and monitoring through CX, and clearer signposting to the complaints process when dissatisfaction is raised through surveys or feedback channels.
- Enhance accessibility and resident-facing information by keeping the website, complaint booklet, communal information and alternative-format arrangements under review so that the process remains visible, inclusive and easy to use.
- Formalise oversight, reporting and learning arrangements by clarifying senior accountability, strengthening reporting to the MRC, SLT, Board and Scrutiny Panel, and using complaints data to identify themes, trends, contractor issues and service improvements.
- Consider introducing clearer remedy guidance, including a decision-making matrix, to ensure remedies are proportionate, consistent, reflect the impact on residents and are followed through to completion.
- Review procurement and third-party arrangements to ensure contractors and commissioned providers understand Alpha’s complaint handling expectations and support compliance with relevant complaint handling requirements.

Section 1: Definition of a complaint

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
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 landlord, its own staff, or those acting on its behalf, affecting a resident or group of residents.’</i>	Yes	Alpha’s Complaints Policy Section 5 Complaint Definition on page 3 of the policy	Alpha has adopted the Housing Ombudsman’s definition of a complaint and explicitly references the Housing Ombudsman’s definition within its policy.



Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
1.3	A resident does not have to use the word ‘complaint’ for it to be treated as such. Whenever a resident expresses dissatisfaction landlords must give them the choice to make complaint. A complaint that is submitted via a third party or representative must be handled in line with the landlord’s complaints policy.	Yes	Alpha’s Complaints Policy Section 5 Complaint Definition on page 3 of the policy Section 6 Customer Definition on page 4 of the policy	Alpha’s policy states that “effective complaint handling enables residents to be heard and understood. The starting point for this is a shared understanding of what constitutes a complaint. It is not therefore necessary that the customer uses the word “complaint” in raising a dispute. Whenever a resident expresses dissatisfaction, landlords must give them the choice to make a complaint”. The definition of customer includes third parties who have permission to represent the interested of an individual.
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	Alpha’s Complaints Policy Section 5 Complaint Definition	The policy confirms that 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”. Service requests or enquiries are recorded within the housing management system.
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	Alpha’s Complaints Policy Section 5 Complaint Definition	The policy confirms that 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. Alpha Living will continue to attempt to address the service request regardless of whether a complaint is raised”. Officers will continue to monitor and progress service request whilst a complaint is being 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 also must provide details of how residents can complain.	Yes	Alpha’s Complaints Policy Section 8 Complaints Process	The policy states that “survey feedback (an expression of dissatisfaction with services made through a survey) is not defined 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”.

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	Alpha Complaints Policy Section 8 Complaints Process Section 14 Exclusions from this policy	The policy states that at each stage of the complaints process, the complaint handler will “deal with complaints on their individual merits, act independently, and have an open mind”. Section 14 of the policy states that “Alpha will not take a “blanket approach” when considering excluding complaints, and will consider the individual circumstances of each case”.

2.2	A complaints policy must set out the circumstances in which a matter will not be considered as a complaint or escalated, and these circumstances must be fair and reasonable to residents. Acceptable exclusions include: • The issue giving rise to the complaint occurred over twelve months ago. • Legal proceedings have started. This is defined as details of the claim, such as the Claim Form and Particulars of Claim, having been filed at court. • Matters that have previously been considered under the complaints policy.	Yes	Alpha's Complaints Policy Section 14 "Exclusions from this policy"	Valid exclusions are detailed in the policy at section 14, and includes all exclusions mentioned in the Code.
2.3	Landlords must accept complaints referred to them within 12 months of the issue occurring or the resident becoming aware of the issue, unless they are excluded on other grounds. Landlords must consider whether to apply discretion to accept complaints made outside this time limit where there are good reasons to do so.	Yes	Alpha's Complaints Policy Section 14 "Exclusions from this policy" Compliments, Complaints and Feedback page on the website.	The policy does not appear to cover the scenario of the resident becoming aware of the issue although the policy does state that "unless there are exceptional or extenuating circumstances, the organisation will not investigate complaints that have already been dealt with under this policy or are over twelve months old" so can be implied from this wording. This is set out in the wording on our website which states "if we fail to meet your expectations, please tell us as soon as you can and within 12 months of the issue happening, or of you becoming aware of the issue". This will be made explicit in our policy.
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	Alpha's Complaints Policy Section 14 "Exclusions from this policy"	Section 14 of Alpha's policy confirms that "if we decide not to accept a complaint, a detailed explanation will 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 instruct Alpha Living to take on the complaint".
2.5	Landlords must not take a blanket approach to excluding complaints; they must consider the individual circumstances of each complaint.	Yes	Alpha's Complaints Policy Section 14 "Exclusions from this policy"	This is covered in section 14 of Alpha's policy.

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	- Alpha Complaints Policy - Section 8 Complaints Process - Section 4 Reasonable Adjustments Compliments, Complaints and Feedback page on the website	The policy confirms that complaints can be raised through a range of formats including email, phone, letter, face to face (in person), website or social media. Reasonable adjustments and reference to the Equality Act 2010 are referred to in section 4 of the policy.
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	- MS Complaints Form - Colleagues requested to read the policy with signing evidence via Staffology. - Colleague training.	As set out above, the policy sets out the different ways that a complaint can be raised, including with colleagues (in person).
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	- Complaint Booklet – How to make a complaint - Listening Sessions with residents at managed schemes during April-May 2026	The How to make a complaint booklet was co-developed with Alpha's scrutiny panel. Details on how to make a complaint were highlighted during the Listening Sessions undertaken by Alpha's Director of Operations with residents which took place during April-May 2026.
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	- Policy is published on Alpha's website. - Alpha's Complaints Policy – sections 2, 8 and introduction.	The policy is available on Alpha's website. It is also available in different formats on request. In addition, the policy confirms that a printed copy of the policy will be available within the communal area at each development for easy accessibility. The policy confirms that the process is in two stages, and sets out the complaint timeframes at section 8 of the policy. This is also confirmed on the compliments, complaints and feedback page on our website.
3.5	The policy must explain how the landlord will publicise details of the complaints policy, including information about the Ombudsman and this Code.	Yes	Alpha's website - Alpha's Complaints Policy - Template letters all reference how to escalate complaint to the Ombudsman	The policy sets out that Alpha's annual complaints performance and service improvement report will be published on our website, along with a copy of the Board's response to the report. The policy also states that Alpha will publicise the policy on its website.
3.6	Landlords must give residents the opportunity to have a representative deal with their complaint on their behalf, and to be represented or accompanied at any meeting with the landlord.	Yes	Alpha's Complaints Policy – section 6 Have practical examples .	The policy confirms that a customer is also defined as a third party who has permission to represent the interests of an individual. Reference to the complainant being represented or accompanied at any meeting is not referenced to in the policy, however this is something that is done in practice.

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	- Alpha's Complaint Policy – sections 8 and 9 - Template complaint letters - Alpha's website	The policy confirms that stage 2 is the final response from Alpha and that if the complainant remains unsatisfied they can contact the Ombudsman and that Alpha will provide contact details. In addition, section 9 confirms that at both stages 1 and 2, contact details will be included in all correspondence to residents/representatives at every stage. Contact details for the Ombudsman are also available on our website.
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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	- Alpha's Complaint Policy – section 3 - Customer Experience Manager Role Profile / Case Manager Role Profile	Alpha's Customer Experience Manager acts as Alpha's Complaints Officer.
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	- Alpha's Complaint Policy – section 3, and section 19 - Customer Experience Manager Role Profile/ Case Manager Role Profile	Section 3 of the policy confirms that the Complaints Officer has both the autonomy and authority to facilitate early dispute resolution. Section 19 confirms that the Complaints Officer will have access to colleagues at all levels to facilitate a prompt resolution.
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	Customer Experience Manager Role Profile Agenda from Housing Quarterly Meetings Training Records Alpha's Complaint Policy – section 3 Case Manager signed up to Housing Ombudsman training and alerts. Complaints Training carried out with DMs quarterly meetings. DMs and Scrutiny involved in development of Complaints Handling booklet. Annual Board Report to Board thematic + review of complaints	The policy confirms that one of the focuses is on lessons learnt, and how service improvements can be made as a result of learning from complaints. The policy states that “as a ‘continuous learning organisation’, Alpha Living aims to achieve a customer centric culture that sees its customers as the key drivers of service excellence and performance improvement”.

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	Alpha's Complaint Policy	Alpha only has the one complaint policy and process. Look to address the "residents must not be treated differently if they complain requirement". Negative impact in terms of service delivery
5.2	The early and local resolution of issues between landlords and residents is key to effective complaint handling. It is not appropriate to have extra named stages (such as 'stage 0' or 'informal complaint') as this causes unnecessary confusion.	Yes	Alpha's Complaint Policy – sections 3, 5, and 8.	Alpha only has 2 stages in the complaints process. There is no "informal complaints" stage. The policy confirms that a "speedy resolution will always be the primary outcome that the organisation aims to achieve for its customers", and that the Complaints Officer will have be able to facilitate "early dispute resolution". The policy goes on to confirm where a complaint has been raised that "Alpha will continue to attempt to address the service request regardless of whether a complaint is raised".
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	Alpha's Complaint Policy – sections 2 and 8.	Alpha has a two-stage complaint process – Stage 1 and Stage 2.
5.4	Where a landlord's complaint response is handled by a third party (e.g. a contractor or independent adjudicator) at any stage, it must form part of the two stage complaints process set out in this Code. Residents must not be expected to go through two complaints processes.	Yes	Alpha's Complaint Policy – section 8	The policy confirms that all complaints involving third parties will be managed by Alpha in line with the Complaints Handling Code.
5.5	Landlords are responsible for ensuring that any third parties handle complaints in line with the Code.	Yes	Complaint examples in practice.	Care provider will have a different code – CQC and in the policy will need to make note of which Code Regulation 16 of Health and Social Care Act will be relevant. Any care provider externally commissioned who operating within extra care facilities that as part of procurement by local authority they would need to comply with the CQC Handling Code under regulation 16 of the Health and Social Care Act. We have dealt with complaints on behalf of third parties.
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	- Alpha's Complaint Policy – sections 8 and 9 - Letters to complainant	The policy confirms that Alpha will make reasonable efforts to understand why the resident remains unhappy after an escalation to Stage 2. In addition, the policy confirms that "if any aspect of the complaint is unclear, we will ask the resident for clarification". Section 9 of the policy confirms that at all stages Alpha will include the complaint definition when responses are sent out. This is set out in the response letters sent out to the person who has made a complaint.
5.7	When a complaint is acknowledged at either stage, landlords must be clear which aspects of the complaint	Yes		This is defined as part of the complaint definition at the time the complaint is acknowledged.

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
	they are, and are not, responsible for and clarify any areas where this is not clear.			
5.8	At each stage of the complaints process, complaint handlers must: a. deal with complaints on their merits, act independently, and have an open mind; b. give the resident a fair chance to set out their position; c. take measures to address any actual or perceived conflict of interest; and d. consider all relevant information and evidence carefully.	Yes	Alpha's Complaints Policy – section 8	These requirements are all covered within section 8 of Alpha's Complaints policy. Alpha's Complaints Officer ensures that clear outcome responses are provided to the person complaining.
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 letters to residents	In practice, Alpha's Complaint Officer will liaise with residents where any timescale extensions are required and will keep them informed of progress, providing a clear reason for the extension.
5.10	Landlords must make reasonable adjustments for residents where appropriate under the Equality Act 2010. Landlords must keep a record of any reasonable adjustments agreed, as well as a record of any disabilities a resident has disclosed. Any agreed reasonable adjustments must be kept under active review.	Yes	Section 4 of the Complaints Policy	Policy confirms that any reasonable adjustments will be made when required. All of our buildings have level access and toilets at ground level and wider access doors.
5.11	Landlords must not refuse to escalate a complaint through all stages of the complaints procedure unless it has valid reasons to do so. Landlords must clearly set out these reasons, and they must comply with the provisions set out in section 2 of this Code.	Yes	Sections 8 and 14 of the Complaints Policy	The policy confirms that Alpha will “not unreasonably refuse to escalate a complaint through all stages of a complaint. Reasons for declining to escalate a complaint are detailed in Section 14 – Exclusions from this policy”.
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	Complaint Records	A copy of all the correspondence, along with any supporting documentation is kept.
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	Sections 5 and 10 of the Complaints Policy	Section 5 of the policy confirms that Alpha will continue to attempt to address the service request regardless of whether a complaint is raised. Section 10 sets out the different remedies available to Alpha.

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
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	Section 15 of the Complaints Policy	Section 15 of the policy confirms that appropriate action around the enforcement of the tenancy and how communication will be managed going forward in such circumstances.
5.15	Any restrictions placed on contact due to unacceptable behaviour must be proportionate and demonstrate regard for the provisions of the Equality Act 2010.	Yes	Section 15 of the Complaints Policy.	This is confirmed in section 15 of the policy. In addition, we will consider any reasonable adjustments for residents with protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010.

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	Case Manager Role Profile	Alpha's Complaints Officer aims to resolve complaints promptly within the Code's timelines. There is a single point of triage as all complaints come through to the Complaints Manager who assesses all complaints that are received. This will be strengthened and included in our revised complaints procedure.
6.2	Complaints must be acknowledged, defined and logged at stage 1 of the complaints procedure within five working days of the complaint being received .	Yes	- Section 8 of the Complaints Policy - Complaint acknowledgment letters to residents.	The policy confirms that complaints will be acknowledged "by the CExT within five working days and recorded as stage one of the process".
6.3	Landlords must issue a full response to stage 1 complaints within 10 working days of the complaint being acknowledged .	Yes	- Section 8 of the Complaints Policy - Complaint letters to residents. - Complaint target reported to Board quarterly in the quarterly KPI report. - Annual Complaints and Service Improvement Report to Board (available on website).	The policy confirms as follows: "Stage 1 complaints will be resolved as early as possible at this stage with a response provided within 10 working days from the date the complaint has been acknowledged". Timeframes are reported to Board on a quarterly basis, and annually with the annual complaints and service improvement report.
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	Section 8 of the Complaints Policy	This is confirmed at section 8 of the policy. To note that the provision could be strengthened to state that the resident will be informed of the expected timescale for response.

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
6.5	When an organisation informs a resident about an extension to these timescales, they must be provided with the contact details of the Ombudsman.	Yes	- Complaints Policy - Complaints Template Letters	The Complaint's Officer will set out the reason(s) for an extension and will provide contact details for the Ombudsman.
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	- Complaints Template Letters - Complaints Policy (Section 9) - Evidence in practice where this has occurred.	Any outstanding actions are set out in the complaint response letter and are tracked by the Complaints Officer.
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	- Complaints Template Letters - Complaints Policy - Evidence in practice where this has occurred.	This is the role of the Complaints Officer
6.8	Where residents raise additional complaints during the investigation, these must be incorporated into the stage 1 response if they are related and the stage 1 response has not been issued. Where the stage 1 response has been issued, the new issues are unrelated to the issues already being investigated or it would unreasonably delay the response, the new issues must be logged as a new complaint.	Yes	Complaint Policy (Section 8)	This is the role of the Complaints Officer. Any new issues raised during the investigation and related to the ongoing complaint will be included within the stage 1 complaint response. Where the stage 1 complaint response letter has been issued and the new issues are unrelated to the original complaints or where it would cause an unreasonable delay to the stage 1 complaint response the new issues will be logged as a new complaint.
6.9	Landlords must confirm the following in writing to the resident at the completion of stage 1 in clear, plain language: a. the complaint stage; b. the complaint definition; c. the decision on the complaint; d. the reasons for any decisions made; e. the details of any remedy offered to put things right; f. details of any outstanding actions; and g. details of how to escalate the matter to stage 2 if the individual is not satisfied with the response.	Yes	Complaint template letters	The Complaints Officer is responsible for sending outcome letters, which are written in plain language and cover all the required points.

Stage 2

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
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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	- Complaints policy - Complaint template letters	This is detailed in the complaints policy and is clearly set out in the complaint response letters.
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	- Complaints policy - Stage 2 complaint acknowledgment letters	Stage 2 complaints are acknowledged and assigned within 5 working days of the escalation being received.
6.12	Residents must not be required to explain their reasons for requesting a stage 2 consideration. Landlords are expected to make reasonable efforts to understand why a resident remains unhappy as part of its stage 2 response.	Yes	Complaints policy	Residents are not required to explain the reason for escalating a complaint to stage 2. The Complaints Officer will make reasonable efforts to understand why the resident remains unhappy following the stage 1 complaint.
6.13	The person considering the complaint at stage 2 must not be the same person that considered the complaint at stage 1.	Yes	Complaints policy	The policy confirms that a stage 2 complaint will be considered by an independent director of service within Alpha who has had no prior involvement in the complaint. It is part of the role of the Complaints Officer to ensure there are no conflicts of interest and that the stage 2 is considered by a different person.
6.14	Landlords must issue a final response to the stage 2 within 20 working days of the complaint being acknowledged.	Yes	- Complaints policy - Compliments, Complaints and Feedback page on the website	The timeframes are set out in Alpha's policy and are available to view on our website.
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	- Complaints policy - Stage 2 complaints template letters	This is confirmed in the complaints policy.
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	- Complaints policy - Complaint template letters - Link to the Ombudsman's contact details on Alpha's website.	The Ombudsman's contact details are made available upon every written contact with residents. In addition, there is a link on Alpha's website with the contact details for the Ombudsman.
6.17	A complaint response must be provided to the resident when the answer to the complaint is known, not when the outstanding actions required to address the issue are completed. Outstanding actions must still be tracked and actioned promptly with appropriate updates provided to the resident.	Yes	Complaints policy	This is confirmed in the complaints policy. Any outstanding actions will be tracked by the Complaints Officer, with appropriate updates being provided to the resident.
6.18	Landlords must address all points raised in the complaint definition and provide clear reasons for any decisions, referencing the relevant policy, law and good practice where appropriate.	Yes	- Complaints policy - Stage 2 complaint response letters	This is set out in the complaints policy and is the responsibility of the Complaints Officer to provide a full response to the complaint

6.19	Landlords must confirm the following in writing to the resident at the completion of stage 2 in clear, plain language: a. the complaint stage; b. the complaint definition; c. the decision on the complaint; d. the reasons for any decisions made; e. the details of any remedy offered to put things right; f. details of any outstanding actions; and g. details of how to escalate the matter to the Ombudsman Service if the individual remains dissatisfied.	Yes	- Complaints policy - Stage 2 complaint response letters	All stage 2 complaint response letters are responding to in clear and plain language. The stage 2 complaint response letters cover all the required points.
6.20	Stage 2 is the landlord's final response and must involve all suitable staff members needed to issue such a response.	Yes	Complaints policy	The stage 2 complaint response is drafted by the director who was involved in hearing/dealing with the stage 2 complaint. This is then sense checked by the Complaints Officer to ensure that all points have been answered. Any relevant colleagues will be involved to ensure that all matters have been considered. The policy confirms that the stage 2 response is Alpha's final response.

Section 7: Putting things right

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
7.1	Where something has gone wrong a landlord must acknowledge this and set out the actions it has already taken, or intends to take, to put things right. These can include: - Apologising; - Acknowledging where things have gone wrong; - Providing an explanation, assistance or reasons; - Taking action if there has been delay; - Reconsidering or changing a decision; - Amending a record or adding a correction or addendum; - Providing a financial remedy; - Changing policies, procedures or practices.	Yes	Complaints policy	This is set out in the complaints policy. The complaint response letter will set out the action(s) taken by Alpha, including anything it intends to do to put things right. Any trends/lessons learned are recorded and considered for each complaint to ascertain whether there are any improvements required or any root causes. The outcomes/trends of complaints are being considered when Alpha is reviewing its policies and procedures.
7.2	Any remedy offered must reflect the impact on the resident as a result of any fault identified.	Yes	Complaints policy	This is confirmed in the complaints policy. The Complaints Officer should consider all elements of the complaint and offer remedies where appropriate.

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
7.3	The remedy offer must clearly set out what will happen and by when, in agreement with the resident where appropriate. Any remedy proposed must be followed through to completion.	Yes	Complaints policy	This is set out in the complaints policy. Where a remedy has been offered and accepted these will be followed up on to ensure the necessary action has been taken.
7.4	Landlords must take account of the guidance issued by the Ombudsman when deciding on appropriate remedies.	Yes	Complaints Policy (section 10)	This is confirmed in the policy.

Section 8: Self-assessment, reporting and compliance

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
8.1	Landlords must produce an annual complaints performance and service improvement report for scrutiny and challenge, which must include: - the annual self-assessment against this Code to ensure their complaint handling policy remains in line with its requirements. - a qualitative and quantitative analysis of the landlord's complaint handling performance. This must also include a summary of the types of complaints the landlord has refused to accept; - any findings of non-compliance with this Code by the Ombudsman; - the service improvements made as a result of the learning from complaints; - any annual report about the landlord's performance from the Ombudsman; and - any other relevant reports or publications produced by the Ombudsman in relation to the work of the landlord.	Yes	- Complaints Policy - Alpha's website - Annual Complaints and Service Improvement Report - Annual self-assessment of Alpha's compliance with the Ombudsman's Complaints Handling Code	To date the Ombudsman has not made any annual reports on Alpha's performance, or in relation to Alpha's work and as such none are available on Alpha's website. A copy of Alpha's annual complaints and service improvement report, annual self-assessment, and the Governing Body's response are available on Alpha's website. The annual complaints and service improvement report sets out a summary of the types of complaints received, including any service improvements made or actions that are due to be taken. In addition, the report sets out the number of complaints (stage 1 and stage 2) received during the year, as well as acknowledgment and response timeframes.
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 the report must be published alongside this.	Yes	Alpha's website	The annual complaints and service improvement report was considered by Alpha's Board at its meeting in May 2025. The report for 2025/26 is scheduled to go to the Board meeting scheduled in September 2026. Both the annual report and the Governing Body's response are publicly available on Alpha's website.
8.3	Landlords must also carry out a self-assessment following a significant restructure, merger and/or change in procedures.	N/A	N/A	None of these circumstances arose in 2025/26.

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
8.4	Landlords may be asked to review and update the self-assessment following an Ombudsman investigation.	N/A	N/A	There was no request during 2025/26.
8.5	If a landlord is unable to comply with the Code due to exceptional circumstances, such as a cyber incident, they must inform the Ombudsman, provide information to residents who may be affected, and publish this on their website Landlords must provide a timescale for returning to compliance with the Code.	N/A	N/A	None of these circumstances arose in 2025/26.

Section 9: Scrutiny & oversight: continuous learning and improvement

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
9.1	Landlords must look beyond the circumstances of the individual complaint and consider whether service improvements can be made as a result of any learning from the complaint.	Yes	Annual Complaints and service improvement report.	As part of every complaint, the Complaint's Officer reviews the complaint to identify any lessons learned and if any changes in service are needed as a result of the complaint highlighting this. Look to review any lessons learned as part of quarterly meetings with Development Managers.
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	- Alpha's website - Annual complaints and service improvement report	Resident feedback is valued and encouraged. Part of the policy review process includes reviewing any complaint trends and any outcomes requiring a change in service/process.
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	Annual complaints and service improvement report	This is done via the annual complaints and service improvement report.
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	Website	This is Alpha's Director of Operations. This will be included in the policy and on Alpha's website.
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	Yes	- Alpha website - Board Members Bios confirming the name of the MRC	A member Responsible for Complaints (MRC) takes an active role in complaints and any Ombudsman activity.

	culture. This person is referred to as the Member Responsible for Complaints ('the MRC').			
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	- Quarterly performance reports to Board which sets out complaints information. - MRC role profile	The Complaints Officer regularly meets with the MRC to discuss complaints and associated performance.
9.7	As a minimum, the MRC and the governing body (or equivalent) must receive: - regular updates on the volume, categories and outcomes of complaints, alongside complaint handling performance; - regular reviews of issues and trends arising from complaint handling; - regular updates on the outcomes of the Ombudsman's investigations and progress made in complying with orders related to severe maladministration findings; and - annual complaints performance and service improvement report.	Yes	- Quarterly performance reports to Board which sets out complaints information. - Annual complaints and service improvement report to Board. - Updates to Board contained within the CEO report where appropriate. - MRC role profile	The board receives quarterly KPI reports which includes complaints performance information. In addition, Board receives annually the annual complaint and service improvement report looking back at the complaints and associated trends etc over the last year. This will include where required information around the outcome of any Ombudsman complaints etc.
9.8	Landlords must have a standard objective in relation to complaint handling for all relevant employees or third parties that reflects the need to: - 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; and - act within the professional standards for engaging with complaints as set by any relevant professional body.	Yes	Complaints Policy	There is a collaborative and co-operative approach towards resolving complaints, managed by the Complaints Officer.