

Appendix A: Self-assessment form

This self-assessment form should be completed by the complaints officer and it must be reviewed and approved by the landlord's governing body at least annually.

Once approved, landlords must publish the self-assessment as part of the annual complaints performance and service improvement report on their website. The governing body's response to the report must be published alongside this.

Landlords are required to complete the self-assessment in full and support all statements with evidence, with additional commentary as necessary.

We recognise that there may be a small number of circumstances where landlords are unable to meet the requirements, for example, if they do not have a website. In these circumstances, we expect landlords to deliver the intentions of the Code in an alternative way, for example by publishing information in a public area so that it is easily accessible.

Section 1: Definition of a complaint

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
1.2	A complaint must be defined as: <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	Abri’s Complaints Policy and Procedure includes this definition.	
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	Abri’s Customer Relations Procedure confirms this in the Complaint Definition Section at 4.1.	Update to Customer Relations Procedure to reflect that customer must be asked if they would like a complaint to be raised whenever they express dissatisfaction. Customer Contact team to update Knowledge Base articles to ensure all Customer Contact Advisors are aware of the change.
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	Abri’s Complaints Policy, Customer Relations Procedure and Service Request Procedure confirm this.	At tab 3.2, Abri’s Complaints Policy states, ‘A complaint is different to a service request requiring action to be taken to put something right. At tab 3.3 the policy states, ‘Abri recognises the difference between a service request and a complaint. A service request is a request from

				<p>Abri requiring action to be taken to put something right. Service requests are not complaints, but are recorded, monitored, and reviewed regularly. ‘</p> <p>Abri’s Customer Relations Procedure (section 5.4) details the ‘Local Resolution’ scheme in place for some areas of the business, allowing for the response to dissatisfaction with service requests raised by a customer, in advance of a formal complaint being raised.</p>
1.5	<p>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.</p>	Yes	<p>Abri’s Customer Relations Procedure and Service Request Procedure confirm this.</p>	<p>Abri’s Service Request Procedure has been updated to confirm Abri will raise a complaint should the customer express dissatisfaction with the response to their service request. However, this will not stop efforts to address the service request.</p>
1.6	<p>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.</p>	Yes	<p>Abri’s Customer Relations Procedure confirms this.</p>	<p>Abri’s surveying tool (Rant and Rave) offers customers information on how they can pursue a complaint via a hyperlink.</p>

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	Abri's Customer Relations Procedure confirms under what circumstances a complaint may not be accepted at section 5.7.	<p>Updated Procedure to make it clear that onus is on complaint officer/decision maker, who must evidence reasons for rejecting a complaint.</p> <p>Section 5.7 of the Customer Relations Procedure states, 'If Abri has valid reason not to accept a complaint, or to deal with it differently, we will be able to evidence the reasoning, and explain to the customer the reasons why the matter is not suitable for the complaints process or outline how we are dealing with it and why, and the right to escalate the complaint, including to the Ombudsman Service.'</p>
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:	Yes	Abri's Complaints Policy confirms this.	Updated Complaints Policy to mirror Exclusion criteria.

	<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 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. 			
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	Section 5.5 of the Customer Relations Procedure confirms this.	
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	A new rejected complaint template will be sent to the resident in the event of a complaint being rejected. The letter will contain the reasons for rejection along with the evidence behind the decision. The letter will contain contact information for the Ombudsman.	
2.5	Landlords must not take a blanket approach to excluding complaints; they must consider the individual circumstances of each complaint.	Yes	Abri's Customer Relations Procedure confirms this.	Section 5.7 states cases will be considered on an individual basis - 'If Abri has valid reason not to accept a

				complaint, or to deal with it differently, we will be able to evidence the reasoning, and explain to the customer the reasons why the matter is not suitable for the complaints process or outline how we are dealing with it and why, and the right to escalate the complaint, including to the Ombudsman Service.'
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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>Abri have multiple channels for residents to make a complaint.</p> <p>Abri's Reasonable Adjustments Policy and procedure provides advice on how to support anyone with a vulnerability that wishes to make a complaint.</p> <p>Section 8.1 of the Customer Relations Procedure confirms Abri make its complaint process accessible to all.</p>	<p>Equality Impact Assessment has been reviewed to ensure our channels reflect our resident's needs. New measures include having a conversation with the customer if their needs are not identified on their current files (on housing management system). We aim to use Language Line (LL) across Abri. Language Line provides services such as easy read, larger fonts, or braille for customers with specific needs. Language Line will also provide translation and interpretation services including sign language.</p> <p>Abri's website has been updated to clearly show the different channels where the customer can raise a complaint.</p> <p>Abri's offline complaint form and complaint process information will be offered to residents who are unable to access online services.</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	Abri's Customer Relations Procedure confirms this at section 3.1 and at section 3.7 of the Complaints Policy.	There is a dedicated Customer Complaints Information and page, accessible for all Abri staff on Abri's Internal Information page called The Arc. Further training for all new/existing staff members to ensure there is a positive complaints culture across the organisation. All modules we use for training are being redesigned and updated during 2024.
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	Abri are committed to providing a high quality, well-publicised and accessible complaints process.	Wording will be added to the footer of Governance reports to reflect this new code and that high volumes of complaints must not be seen as a negative.
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	Abri's Complaint Policy confirms this at tab 3.8 and is available on the Abri website. The Customer Relations Procedure confirms this at section 8.1.	Abri's Complaints Policy is hosted on it's website, and includes confirmation of the Stages of Abri's internal complaints process (ICP).
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	Abri's Complaint Policy confirms this and is available on the website.	Abri's Complaints Policy, the Complaint Handling Code and information on the Housing Ombudsman Scheme are regularly mentioned in

				<p>customer correspondence, including newsletters, the annual report, and online.</p> <p>Abri's Customer Relations Procedure states: "2.3 To evidence compliance with the Housing Ombudsman Code, Abri will complete a Self-Assessment annually, at the end of the financial year. Abri will also proactively complete an assessment outside of this schedule if significant changes are made to either the Code or our internal processes."</p>
3.6	<p>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.</p>		<p>Abri's Customer Relations Procedure and Complaints Policy confirm this.</p>	<p>In line with our Data Protection Guidelines, Abri will need the resident to complete an Authority to Discuss (ATD) form, giving permission for any personal information to be shared with a representative, unless they have Power of Attorney. Abri can talk to a representative if the resident is present at the time and gives verbal permission to discuss the complaint whilst they are together.</p> <p>The Complaints Policy states 'Should we receive a</p>

				complaint via a representative or advocate, permission will need to be provided by the customer, where possible.'
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	Abri's Customer Relations Procedure and Complaints Policy confirms this.	<p>Section 3.8 of Abri's Complaints Policy states, We will provide contact information for the Housing Ombudsman, or other relevant Ombudsman service, as part of the complaints process. We are bound by the terms of the Housing Ombudsman's scheme and will fully co-operate will all requests for information made by the Ombudsman, work with them in resolving complaints effectively, and adhere to recommendations made to put things right.</p> <p>This is also highlighted in section 24 of Abri's Customer Relations Procedure.</p>

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>Abri's Customer Relations Procedure cites the Customer Relations and Resolutions Teams as the responsible teams assigned to take responsibility for complaint handling, and the Executive Director for Operations as responsible for ensuring complaints are reported to the governing body.</p> <p>In addition to this, Abri have a dedicated HOS liaison team that deal with HOS Investigation requests from the HOS in a professional and timely manner.</p>	<p>There are ongoing discussions about where the functional ownership of this Ombudsman team will sit.</p> <p>When the two legacy complaints teams at Abri and Silva (South East) are fully integrated the team will be one with one team name.</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>As outlined in section 14.1 of the Customer Relations Procedure, the Complaints Officer will work with relevant teams or departments within Abri to investigate all aspects of the customer's complaint. Whilst teams, departments, and colleagues at all levels may be asked for input, it is the role of the Complaint Officers to come to an independent and fair outcome to the complaint, and to decide what action, if any, we</p>	<p>Redress authorisation limits for Abri have been reviewed on 4 March 2024 to ensure that complaints officers have the authority to resolve disputes promptly and fairly, without the need for higher level approval for a majority of cases.</p> <p>The South East Customer Resolution team have separate approval limits. When the two legacy</p>

			should take to put things right for our customer.	complaints teams at Abri and Silva are fully integrated the approval limits will be aligned.
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	Abri have a robust recruitment plan to ensure our stage 1 and stage 2 complaint teams are resourced to meet the expected level of demand, with room for resilience to meet demand from seasonal peaks and troughs in complaints.	<p>In addition to this, Abri have launched its Housing Professional of the Future scheme. This supports everyone at Abri, regardless of their role, to connect to why we're here, what we do as a housing association and why it's important. The relaunch also supports the Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023. The Act offers greater protection to social housing tenants in their homes, ensuring a better service and quality of life. The Housing Management module of this scheme provides links to Complaint information, including the Ombudsman's own e-learning modules.</p> <p>Abri has put in place a Framework Agreement for the provision of services that can support the staffing requirements across the Abri Group. Abri seeks to work with suitably experienced</p>

				<p>Recruitment Agencies to consistently provide professional levels of performance and conduct whilst meeting the temporary, permanent and fixed term staffing requirements with top quality candidates.</p> <p>Through tender, suppliers evidence that they can deliver high quality control and effective monitoring providing services across the Abri Group and its operational areas, and meet all the requirements of legislation and employment law including that relating to equal opportunities and anti-discrimination practice.</p> <p>Abri has a dedicated complaint handling lot on its Framework Agreement, allowing for the provision of complaint handling services at peak operating periods or times where additional resource is required. This includes: Complaint Handler, Complaint Officer, Complaints Manager, Complaints Team Leader.</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	Abri's Complaint Policy confirms this.	
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	Abri have a clearly defined two-stage complaint process, which is confirmed within the Complaints Policy and Customer Relations Procedure. When the customer expresses dissatisfaction, they are offered the opportunity to pursue a service request via our Local Resolution route or raise a formal complaint, as outlined in Abri's Customer Relations Procedure.	
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	Abri have a clearly defined two-stage complaint process, which is confirmed within the Complaints Policy and Customer Relations Procedure. When the customer expresses dissatisfaction, they are offered the opportunity to pursue a service request via our Local Resolution route or raise a formal complaint, as outlined in Abri's Customer Relations Procedure.	Abri does not have a 3-stage complaint process.
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	Yes	Any complaint response handled by a third party will be part of Abri's two-stage complaint process, as	

	complaints process set out in this Code. Residents must not be expected to go through two complaints processes.		outlined in our Complaints Policy and Customer Relations Procedure. Any contractors will be provided with full training in Abri's Complaint Handling process and will be subject to the same quality controls and checking we have for all Complaint Officers & Customer Relations Partners.	
5.5	Landlords are responsible for ensuring that any third parties handle complaints in line with the Code.	Yes	Any third parties will be provided with full training in Abri's Complaint Handling process and will be subject to the same quality controls and checking we have for all Complaint Officers & Customer Relations Partners. Any complaint response handled by a third party on behalf of Abri, will be 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	The Customer Relations team documents including Quality Checking scorecard and Investigation Reports used have been updated to reflect the new terminology 'The Complaint Definition.' The above currently does not apply to our South East Customer Resolutions team but when the two legacy complaints teams at Abri and Silva are fully integrated the quality checking framework be aligned. Currently in the South East	The Quality Checking scorecard will also check that as part of the complaint acknowledgment, the Complaint Officer or Customer Relations Partner has attempted to clarify the complaint definition and understand the outcomes the resident is seeking.

			the stage one and stage two letter templates set out the complaints definition, explaining our understanding of the complaint and the outcome the customer is seeking.	
5.7	When a complaint is acknowledged at either stage, landlords must be clear which aspects of the complaint they are, and are not, responsible for and clarify any areas where this is not clear.	Yes	Abri's Customer Relations Procedure confirms this. Wording has been amended at tab 13.2.	
5.8	At each stage of the complaints process, complaint handlers must: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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	Abri's Customer Relations Procedure confirms this at tab 14.1.	
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	Abri's Customer Relations Procedure confirms this at tab 10.3 and 17.1. Quality Checking scorecard to check for appropriate contact (not yet in place for South East Customer Resolution team). Any extension beyond the original timescales for stage 1 and stage 2 complaint handling will be	

			communicated with the resident by writing.	
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	Abri's Reasonable Adjustments Policy confirms this.	<p>Abri's Reasonable Adjustments Policy and Procedure provides advice on how to support anyone with a vulnerability that wishes to make a complaint.</p> <p>Vulnerability Markers will be clearly marked for conditions like dyslexia for ensuring we don't write to customers if they want to be communicated by other means. Using a non-chemical type of mould wash for an asthmatic etc. Any disability raised by the customer will need to be taken into consideration but any longer-term flags will need to be sent to Housing to be evaluated in line with the Customer Indicators Procedure.</p> <p>Abri will be working to ensure the Language Line service is used across Abri. Language Line will provide services such as easy read, larger fonts, or braille for customers with specific needs. Language Line will also provide translation</p>

				and interpretation services including sign language.
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	Abri's Customer Relations Procedure confirms Abri's process. The exceptional reasons why a stage 2 escalation may be refused are listed at tab 22.2. This would need the consent of the Executive Director for Operations and the Head of Complaints & Assurance or Lead Customer Relations Partner (South East).	
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	Abri's Customer Relations Procedure confirms this at tab 14.3.	Abri use a single system to record all correspondence and documentation for each complaint, including the outcomes at each stage and the original 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	Abri's Complaints Process confirms this.	
5.14	Landlords must have policies and procedures in place for managing unacceptable behaviour from residents and/or their representatives. Landlords	Yes	Abri's Unacceptable Behaviour Policy confirms this.	

	must be able to evidence reasons for putting any restrictions in place and must keep restrictions under regular review.			
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	Abri's Unacceptable Behaviour Policy confirms this.	

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	Abri's Customer Relations Administration team have a robust triaging process in place, to identify which cases involve a certain amount of complexity and which don't, taking into consideration a resident's vulnerability and high-risk factors such as any building under the Buildings Safety Act. The triaging process is optimised to pick out complaints that can and should be responded to quickly.	
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	Abri's Customer Relations Procedure confirms this.	Abri aim to acknowledge all complaints within two working days.
6.3	Landlords must issue a full response to stage 1 complaints <u>within 10 working days</u> of the complaint being acknowledged.	Yes	Abri's Customer Relations Procedure confirms this.	
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	Yes	Abri's Customer Relations Procedure confirms this.	

	the expected timescale for response. Any extension must be no more than 10 working days without good reason, and the reason(s) must be clearly explained to the resident.			
6.5	When an organisation informs a resident about an extension to these timescales, they must be provided with the contact details of the Ombudsman.	Yes	Ombudsman details are provided on the holding/extension letter sent to the customer in such circumstances.	
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	Abri's Customer Relations & Resolutions team work closely with the wider business and relevant departments to ensure outstanding actions are tracked through to completion and residents are appropriately updated.	We will soon have the capability to use the OH system to log and track follow on actions from complaints. We currently use our Sharepoint page/spreadsheets to track follow on actions to ensure visibility and awareness and enable prompts to be given to ensure actions are followed through.
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	Investigation Reports contain the complaint definition and reasons for the decisions made.	Referencing policy, law and good practice be added to the Quality Checking scorecard (currently not in place for South East Customer Resolutions team until full team integration).
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	Yes	Abri's Customer Relations Procedure confirms this. Wording updated at tab 8.6.	

	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.			
6.9	Landlords must confirm the following in writing to the resident at the completion of stage 1 in clear, plain language: <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	Abri's Customer Relations Procedure confirms this.	Abri have standard templates for all stage 1 complaint responses that contain this information. The stage 1 complaint responses are also subject to a detailed quality checking process (quality checking process to be adopted by South East Customer Resolution team once teams fully integrated).

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	Abri's Customer Relations Procedure confirms this.	
6.11	Requests for stage 2 must be acknowledged, defined and logged at stage 2 of the complaints procedure	Yes	Abri's Customer Relations Procedure confirms this.	Abri aim to acknowledge all complaints within two working days.

	within five working days of the escalation request being received.			
6.12	Residents must not be required to explain their reasons for requesting a stage 2 consideration. Landlords are expected to make reasonable efforts to understand why a resident remains unhappy as part of its stage 2 response.	Yes	Abri's Customer Relations Procedure confirms this. Wording has been amended at tab 22.1.	
6.13	The person considering the complaint at stage 2 must not be the same person that considered the complaint at stage 1.	Yes	Abri's Customer Relations Procedure confirms this.	
6.14	Landlords must issue a final response to the stage 2 <u>within 20 working days</u> of the complaint being acknowledged.	Yes	Abri's Customer Relations Procedure confirms this. Wording has been amended to reflect the new timescales at tab 22.4.	
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	Abri's Customer Relations Procedure confirms this. Wording has been amended to reflect the new extension limit from 10 to 20 days at tab 22.4	
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	Ombudsman details are provided on the holding/extension letter sent to the customer in such circumstances	
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	Yes	Abri's Customer Relations & Resolutions team work closely with the wider business and relevant departments to ensure outstanding actions are tracked through to completion and residents are appropriately updated.	We will soon have the capability to use the Open Housing system to log and track follow on actions from complaints. We currently use our Sharepoint page/spreadsheets

	promptly with appropriate updates provided to the resident.			to track follow on actions to ensure visibility and awareness and enable prompts to be given to ensure actions are followed through.
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	Abri's Customer Relations Procedure confirms this.	
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	Abri's Customer Relations Procedure confirms this.	Abri have standard templates for all stage 2 complaint responses that contain this information. The stage 2 complaint responses are also subject to a detailed quality checking process (quality checking process to be adopted by South East Customer Resolution team once teams fully integrated).
6.20	Stage 2 is the landlord's final response and must involve all suitable staff members needed to issue such a response.	Yes	Abri's Customer Relations Procedure confirms this.	

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, or intends to take, to put things right. These 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 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	Abri's Putting Things Right Guidelines detail Abri's approach to redress and remedies.	
7.2	Any remedy offered must reflect the impact on the resident as a result of any fault identified.	Yes	Abri's Putting Things Right Guidelines detail Abri's approach to redress and remedies.	
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	Abri's Putting Things Right Guidelines detail Abri's approach to redress and remedies.	
7.4	Landlords must take account of the guidance issued by the Ombudsman when deciding on appropriate remedies.	Yes	Abri's Putting Things Right Guidelines detail Abri's approach to redress and remedies.	

8. Self-assessment, reporting and compliance

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 complaint handling performance. This must also include a summary of the types of complaints the landlord has refused to accept; c. any findings of non-compliance with this Code by the Ombudsman; d. the service improvements made as a result of the learning from complaints; e. any annual report about the landlord's performance from the Ombudsman; and f. any other relevant reports or publications produced by the Ombudsman in relation to the work of the landlord. 	Yes	<p>We complete an annual self-assessment against the Housing Ombudsman's complaint code and publish a copy of this on our website.</p> <p>We are compliant with the Housing Ombudsman code and therefore we have not been required to report non-compliance.</p> <p>Included in our annual report we include a section on our complaints handling and performance. This report is published on our website.</p>	<p>An annual complaints performance and service improvement report to be created.</p>
8.2	<p>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</p>	Yes	<p>This is reflected in the Customer Relations Procedure.</p> <p>Included in our annual report we include a section on our complaint's performance, this</p>	

	response to the report must be published alongside this.		includes lessons learnt from our complaints and service improvements as a result. This report is published on our website.	
8.3	Landlords must also carry out a self-assessment following a significant restructure, merger and/or change in procedures.	Yes	This is reflected in the Customer Relations Procedure.	Self-assessment has been amended following Silva becoming part of Abri in Oct 2024 and again as systems were aligned in Nov 24.
8.4	Landlords may be asked to review and update the self-assessment following an Ombudsman investigation.	Yes	<p>This is reflected in the Customer Relations Procedure.</p> <p>We have not received a request to review and update the self-assessment following an Ombudsman investigation.</p> <p>If such a request is made, we will promptly undertake the review and update within specified timeframes.</p>	
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.	Yes	This is reflected in the Customer Relations Procedure, and the functional Business Continuity plan confirms this.	

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	<p>Abri have a dedicated Change and Service Improvement Department, who review complaints, provide feedback and ensure positive Service Improvements are made when required.</p> <p>Lessons learnt reviews are held with business areas to review complaints and agree service improvements to be implemented. RCA and Service Improvement information is taken to the South East Regional Board and Customer Panel and will be taken to the panels Boards and Panels in our other regions once these are in place.</p>	<p>We note learnings in the letters and provide feedback to relevant teams. Have a dedicated change and service improvement department.</p>
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	<p>The themes and trends in complaints received to Abri are shared with key customer facing directorates in Abri on a monthly basis, highlighting systematic issues, risks, and P+Ps requiring revision.</p>	<p>Abri have two Root Cause Analysts, who have received the LEAN accreditation in yellow and green belt. They use complaints data to identify and drive positive change in service delivery.</p> <p>Regional themes and trends for complaints are reported monthly to the Regional Managing Directors and other operational departments.</p>

				These highlight reoccurring themes, risks and areas that require policy or procedural revision.
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	<p>Complaints themes and learnings are reported in Abri's Annual Report, and more frequently to involved customer groups (quarterly), customer facing directorates (monthly), and Abri's Scrutiny Group (quarterly).</p> <p>There is a Power BI dashboard which is available to relevant departments, enabling them to view and track complaints within their areas.</p> <p>RCA and Service Improvement information is taken to the South East Regional Board and Customer Panel and will be taken to Regional Boards and panels in other regions once these are in place.</p>	<p>Abri hold a quarterly Resident's Scrutiny Meetings.</p> <p>Abri have a Power Bi dashboard is available to relevant departments, enabling them to view and track complaints within their areas.</p> <p>Customer journey mapping and case studies are completed by our Root Cause Analysts to ensure business wide accountability.</p> <p>When the two legacy complaints team at Abri and the South East (legacy Silva) are fully integrated reporting to the Resident Scrutiny Group will cover all complaints across the business, Power BI reporting will be fully integrated and RCA will be used across all complaints.</p>
9.4	Landlords must appoint a suitably senior lead person as accountable for their	Yes	The accountability of this department falls under the Head of	Abri have a dedicated Customer Relation and

	complaint handling. This person must assess any themes or trends to identify potential systemic issues, serious risks, or policies and procedures that require revision.		Complaints and Assurance & the Lead Customer Relations Partner for the South East team.	Resolutions teams consisting of Complaint Officers, Senior Complaint Officers and Customer Relations Partners.
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	Executive Director for Operations is Abri's Member Responsible for Complaints.	
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	The MRC provides comprehensive information and reports to our governing body (group board), offering detailed insights into complaints handling performance.	
9.7	As a minimum, the MRC and the governing body (or equivalent) must receive: <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 	Yes		

	d. annual complaints performance and service improvement report.			
9.8	<p>Landlords must have a standard objective in relation to complaint handling for all relevant employees or third parties that reflects 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	Section 3.2 of the Customer Relations Procedure confirms this	<p>Abri has standard objectives as part of an 'objective library' to be selected for all relevant colleagues. These focus on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 'contributing to effective complaint handling at Abri' and 'to prioritise questions/requests from the complaints team, reducing the amount of time for the complaint officer to resolve the customer issue, to ensure compliance with the HOS code'. Each objective then has specific tasks within it that colleagues are expected to achieve. <p>Abri's Housing Professional of the Future Programme (HPoF) supports everyone at Abri, regardless of their role, to connect to why we're here, what we do as a housing association and why it's important. The Housing Management module of this scheme provides links to complaint information, including the Ombudsman's own e-learning modules.</p>

				<p>Abri's 'Service Style' outlines a set of five expectations and clear guidelines for how we will give our customers exemplary service. One of these expectations is 'Resolve Issues' which focuses on being honest, open, understanding, acknowledging impact and explaining what will be done next and by when. Also being empowered to challenge procedures and systems as well as using knowledge and discretion to guide decision making and overcome barriers towards a fair outcome for customers. This 'Service Style' is rolled out to all colleagues as part of our 'Everyone in Service' training programme.</p>
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