



**SUNNY VALE**

Sunny Vale self-assessment against the  
Housing Ombudsman Code - 2024/25

# Contents

---

3. Introduction

4. Section 1: Definition of a complaint

6. Section 2: Exclusions

8. Section 3: Accessibility and awareness

10. Section 4: Complaint handling staff

11. Section 5: The complaint handling process

16. Section 6: Complaints Stage

16. Stage 1

19. Stage 2

22. Section 7: Putting things right

24. Section 8: Self-assessment, reporting and compliance

26. Section 9: Scrutiny and oversight – continuous learning and improvement

# Introduction

---

This document sets out our self-assessment against the Housing Ombudsman’s Complaint Handling Code for the 2024/25 financial year.

Alongside this, we maintain a Complaints Policy that has been developed to align closely with the principles and expectations of the Code. Our complaints handling service is designed to ensure that complaints are managed in a timely, fair and effective manner, enabling us to put things right where our service has not met expected standards.

Through our self-assessment, we are confident that we meet all requirements of the Code, including the definition of a complaint, accessibility of the process, the stages within our complaints procedure, and the arrangements in place for performance monitoring, scrutiny and governance.

In addition to this self-assessment, we publish our Annual Complaints Performance and Service Improvement Report. This provides an overview of our complaints handling performance during the 2024/25 financial year and outlines the actions we are taking to drive continuous improvement.

We also publish a Governing Body Response to both the self-assessment and the annual performance report. This demonstrates the Board’s active oversight of the complaints handling service and its commitment to ensuring compliance with the Code. This governance framework is supported by a designated Member Responsible for Complaints, who works with colleagues and residents to help strengthen and improve our approach to complaint handling.

# Section 1: Definition of a complaint

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
1.2	A complaint must be defined as: 'an expression of dissatisfaction, however made, about the standard of service, actions or lack of action by the landlord, its own staff, or those acting on its behalf, affecting a resident or group of residents.'	Yes	Sunny Vale Complaints Policy – “What is a complaint” section, which defines a complaint as an expression of dissatisfaction relating to the service, actions or lack of action by the organisation, its staff or those acting on its behalf.	Sunny Vale applies this Code-aligned definition consistently when dissatisfaction is raised about service standards, actions, delays or failures.
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	Sunny Vale Complaints Policy – “What is a complaint” section, confirming that individuals do not need to use the word 'complaint' and that staff must offer the option to raise a complaint where dissatisfaction is expressed.	Expressions of dissatisfaction are treated as potential complaints and progressed formally where requested, including those raised by third parties.
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	Sunny Vale Complaints Policy – “What is a complaint” section and Appendix 1 flow chart, which distinguish between service requests and complaints.	Service requests are logged separately, with dissatisfaction about the response escalated and handled as a complaint.

# Section 1: Definition of a complaint

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
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	Sunny Vale Complaints Policy – “What is a complaint” section and Appendix 1 flow chart, confirming dissatisfaction with a service request response is treated as a complaint.	Complaints are logged even where service actions remain ongoing, with both progressed in parallel.
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	Sunny Vale Complaints Policy – “Surveys” section, confirming survey feedback is not defined as a complaint and individuals are signposted to the complaints process.	Survey respondents are made aware of how to raise a complaint if they wish to pursue issues further.

# 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	Sunny Vale Complaints Policy – “Making a complaint” section, confirming that complaints are accepted unless there is a valid reason not to do so and each complaint is considered individually.	Sunny Vale considers all complaints on their own merits and only excludes matters where a clear and reasonable justification applies.
2.2	<p>A complaints policy must set out the circumstances in which a matter will not be considered as a complaint or escalated, and these circumstances must be fair and reasonable to residents. Acceptable exclusions include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The issue giving rise to the complaint occurred over twelve months ago.</li> <li>• 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.</li> <li>• Matters that have previously been considered under the complaints policy.</li> </ul>	Yes	Sunny Vale Complaints Policy – “Making a complaint” section, which sets out circumstances where complaints may not be accepted, including time limits, legal proceedings and matters previously considered.	The policy clearly outlines fair and reasonable exclusions in line with the Code.

# Section 2: Exclusions

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
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	Sunny Vale Complaints Policy – “Making a complaint” section, confirming complaints should normally be raised within 12 months, with discretion applied where appropriate.	Sunny Vale applies flexibility where there are good reasons for accepting complaints outside the standard timeframe.
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	Sunny Vale Complaints Policy – “Making a complaint” section, which confirms that where a complaint is not accepted, reasons will be provided along with Ombudsman contact details.	Individuals are informed of the reasons for any exclusion and their right to refer the matter to the Housing Ombudsman.
2.5	Landlords must not take a blanket approach to excluding complaints; they must consider the individual circumstances of each complaint.	Yes	Sunny Vale Complaints Policy – “Making a complaint” section, confirming that exclusions are not applied automatically and each case is considered individually.	Sunny Vale avoids blanket exclusions and reviews the circumstances of each complaint on a case-by-case basis.

# 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	Sunny Vale Complaints Policy – “Making a complaint” section, which sets out multiple ways to raise a complaint, including verbally, in writing, by email, telephone and in person. The policy also recognises the need to support individuals who may require assistance.	Sunny Vale provides a range of complaint channels and considers individual needs to ensure the process is accessible to all.
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	Sunny Vale Complaints Policy – “Making a complaint” and “Verbal complaints” sections, confirming that complaints can be raised with any member of staff.	All staff members are able to receive complaints and escalate them to the complaints officer as required.
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	Sunny Vale Complaints Policy – “Complaints record keeping” and performance monitoring arrangements.	Complaints are logged and reviewed to identify trends and support service improvements.

# Section 3: Accessibility and Awareness

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
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	Sunny Vale Complaints Policy – “Complaints handling” and “Time frames” sections, which outline the two-stage process, response times and Ombudsman details. The policy is publicly available.	The complaints policy is clear, accessible and published, setting out each stage of the process and timescales.
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	Sunny Vale Complaints Policy – “Complaints handling” and “Ombudsman” sections, which explain how the policy is publicised and provide Ombudsman contact details.	Information about the complaints process and the Housing Ombudsman is regularly communicated and included within written responses.
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	Sunny Vale Complaints Policy – “Making a complaint” section, confirming that complaints can be raised by representatives on behalf of service users.	Sunny Vale allows individuals to be supported or represented throughout the complaints process.
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	Sunny Vale Complaints Policy – “Ombudsman” section, providing contact details and escalation rights.	Complainants are informed of their right to contact the Housing Ombudsman at any stage of the process.

# 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	Sunny Vale Complaints Policy – “Complaints Officer” section, which identifies a named complaints officer responsible for managing complaints, liaising with the Housing Ombudsman and reporting annually to the Governing Body.	Sunny Vale has a designated complaints officer with responsibility for complaint handling, Ombudsman liaison and governance reporting.
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	Sunny Vale Complaints Policy – “Complaints Officer” section, confirming the complaints officer’s role in overseeing investigations and escalating matters as required.	The complaints officer has appropriate authority and access to staff to support timely and fair complaint 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	Sunny Vale Complaints Policy – “Complaints handling” and “Complaints record keeping” sections, which emphasise learning from complaints and service improvement.	Sunny Vale promotes a positive complaint handling culture and uses feedback to inform improvements to services and procedures.

# 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	Sunny Vale Complaints Policy – “Introduction” and “Complaints handling” sections, which set out a single complaints policy applicable to all complaints.	Sunny Vale operates one consistent complaints process to ensure all complainants are treated fairly and equally.
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	Sunny Vale Complaints Policy – “What is a complaint” and “Stage 1” sections, which confirm a two-stage complaints process with service requests handled separately.	The policy avoids informal or additional stages and focuses on early resolution within the two-stage structure.
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	Sunny Vale Complaints Policy – “Stage 1” and “Stage 2” sections, which clearly outline a two-stage process only.	Sunny Vale’s complaints process consists solely of Stage 1 and Stage 2 in line with the Code.
5.4	Where a landlord’s complaint response is handled by a third party (e.g. a contractor or independent adjudicator) at any stage, it must form part of the two stage complaints process set out in this Code. Residents must not be expected to go through two complaints processes.	Yes	Sunny Vale Complaints Policy – “Complaints handling” section, confirming that complaints raised with staff or third parties are managed under the same two-stage process.	Complaints handled by or through third parties are incorporated into Sunny Vale’s complaints procedure.

# Section 5: The complaint handling process

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
5.5	Landlords are responsible for ensuring that any third parties handle complaints in line with the Code.	Yes	Sunny Vale Complaints Policy – “Complaints handling” section, confirming Sunny Vale’s responsibility for complaints handled on its behalf.	Sunny Vale monitors complaints to ensure third parties comply 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	Sunny Vale Complaints Policy – “Complaints handling” section, confirming complaints are acknowledged and defined at each stage.	Complaints are clearly defined with complainants at Stage 1 and Stage 2, including the outcomes sought.
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	Sunny Vale Complaints Policy – “Complaints handling” section, confirming clarity around responsibilities and signposting where appropriate.	Sunny Vale explains which aspects of a complaint it is responsible for and provides support or signposting where needed.

# Section 5: The complaint handling process

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
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	Sunny Vale Complaints Policy – “Complaints handling” section, which sets out principles of fairness, transparency and thorough investigation.	Complaints are investigated objectively, fairly and with consideration of all relevant information.
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	Sunny Vale Complaints Policy – “Time frames” section, confirming that complainants are informed where extensions are required.	Where response times cannot be met, Sunny Vale provides updates and revised timescales.
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	Sunny Vale Complaints Policy – “Making a complaint” and “Complaints handling” sections, which recognise the need to support individuals who may require assistance.	Sunny Vale considers individual needs and provides appropriate support to ensure accessibility.

# Section 5: The complaint handling process

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
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	Sunny Vale Complaints Policy – “Stage 2” section, confirming the right to escalate complaints without providing a reason.	Requests to progress to Stage 2 are accepted in line with the policy unless a valid exclusion applies.
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	Sunny Vale Complaints Policy – “Complaints record keeping” section, confirming that complaint records are maintained in line with GDPR requirements.	Comprehensive complaint records are retained for monitoring, governance and learning purposes.
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	Sunny Vale Complaints Policy – “Complaints handling” section, confirming remedies can be applied at any stage.	Sunny Vale can resolve complaints and apply remedies without requiring escalation.

# Section 5: The complaint handling process

---

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	Sunny Vale Complaints Policy – “Complaints handling” section and internal procedures for managing unacceptable behaviour.	Processes are in place to manage unacceptable behaviour proportionately and fairly.
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	Sunny Vale Complaints Policy – “Complaints handling” section, confirming consideration of individual circumstances when applying any restrictions.	Any restrictions are applied proportionately with regard to equality and individual needs.

# Section 6: Complaints Stage – 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	Sunny Vale Complaints Policy – “Complaints handling” and “Stage 1” sections, which confirm that complaints are assessed to determine appropriate investigation and early resolution.	Sunny Vale considers the nature and complexity of complaints and seeks to resolve issues promptly where possible.
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	Sunny Vale Complaints Policy – “Complaints handling” and “Time frames” sections, confirming complaints are acknowledged and logged within five working days.	All Stage 1 complaints are formally acknowledged, defined and recorded within the required timescales.
6.3	Landlords must issue a full response to stage 1 complaints within 10 working days of the complaint being acknowledged.	Yes	Sunny Vale Complaints Policy – “Time frames” and “Stage 1” sections, confirming responses are issued within ten working days.	Sunny Vale aims to issue full Stage 1 responses within the Code timescale.
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	Sunny Vale Complaints Policy – “Time frames” section, confirming extensions may be applied with reasons provided.	Where additional time is required, complainants are informed of revised timescales and reasons.

# Section 6: Complaints Stage – Stage 1

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	Sunny Vale Complaints Policy – “Time frames” and “Ombudsman” sections, confirming Ombudsman details are provided where timescales are extended.	Complainants are signposted to the Housing Ombudsman when extensions are applied.
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	Sunny Vale Complaints Policy – “Complaints handling” section, confirming responses are issued when outcomes are known and actions tracked.	Sunny Vale issues responses promptly while continuing to monitor any outstanding actions.
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	Sunny Vale Complaints Policy – “Complaints handling” section, which confirms that all complaint points are addressed with clear reasons.	Responses explain decisions and reference relevant policies and good practice where appropriate.
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	Sunny Vale Complaints Policy – “Stage 1” section, confirming that related additional issues may be included or logged separately where required.	New related issues are incorporated into Stage 1 where appropriate, or logged as new complaints where necessary.

# Section 6: Complaints Stage – Stage 1

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
6.9	<p>Landlords must confirm the following in writing to the resident at the completion of stage 1 in clear, plain language:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. the complaint stage;</li> <li>b. the complaint definition;</li> <li>c. the decision on the complaint;</li> <li>d. the reasons for any decisions made;</li> <li>e. the details of any remedy offered to put things right;</li> <li>f. details of any outstanding actions;</li> </ul> <p>and</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>g. details of how to escalate the matter to stage 2 if the individual is not satisfied with the response.</li> </ul>	Yes	Sunny Vale Complaints Policy – “Complaints handling” section, confirming written responses include stage information, decisions, remedies and escalation rights.	Stage 1 responses are provided in writing and clearly set out outcomes and next steps.

# Section 6: Complaints Stage – 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	Sunny Vale Complaints Policy – “Stage 2” section, confirming that unresolved complaints are progressed to Stage 2 as the final response.	Where complaints are not resolved at Stage 1, they are progressed to Stage 2 in line with the policy.
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	Sunny Vale Complaints Policy – “Stage 2” and “Time frames” sections, confirming Stage 2 complaints are acknowledged and logged within five working days.	Stage 2 escalations are formally recorded and acknowledged within required timescales.
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	Sunny Vale Complaints Policy – “Stage 2” section, confirming individuals are not required to give reasons for escalation.	Complainants can request Stage 2 consideration without providing justification.
6.13	The person considering the complaint at stage 2 must not be the same person that considered the complaint at stage 1.	Yes	Sunny Vale Complaints Policy – “Stage 2” section, confirming a different handler reviews Stage 2 complaints.	Stage 2 complaints are reviewed independently from the Stage 1 investigation.

# Section 6: Complaints Stage – Stage 2

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
6.14	Landlords must issue a final response to the stage 2 within 20 working days of the complaint being acknowledged.	Yes	Sunny Vale Complaints Policy – “Time frames” and “Stage 2” sections, confirming responses are issued within 20 working days.	Sunny Vale aims to issue Stage 2 responses within the Code timescale.
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	Sunny Vale Complaints Policy – “Time frames” section, confirming extensions may be applied with reasons provided.	Where extensions are required, complainants are informed of revised timescales and reasons.
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	Sunny Vale Complaints Policy – “Time frames” and “Ombudsman” sections, confirming Ombudsman details are provided when timescales are extended.	Complainants are signposted to the Housing Ombudsman when extensions occur.
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	Sunny Vale Complaints Policy – “Complaints handling” section, confirming responses are issued when outcomes are known and actions tracked.	Stage 2 responses are provided promptly while outstanding actions continue to be monitored.

# Section 6: Complaints Stage – Stage 2

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
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	Sunny Vale Complaints Policy – “Complaints handling” section, confirming all points are addressed with clear reasons.	Responses explain decisions and reference relevant policies and good practice.
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	Sunny Vale Complaints Policy – “Complaints handling” section, confirming written Stage 2 responses include outcomes, remedies and Ombudsman escalation rights.	Final responses clearly set out decisions, remedies and next steps.
6.20	Stage 2 is the landlord’s final response and must involve all suitable staff members needed to issue such a response.	Yes	Sunny Vale Complaints Policy – “Stage 2” section, confirming involvement of appropriate staff in issuing final responses.	Relevant staff members contribute to Stage 2 responses where required.

# 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"> <li>• Apologising;</li> <li>• Acknowledging where things have gone wrong;</li> <li>• Providing an explanation, assistance or reasons;</li> <li>• Taking action if there has been delay;</li> <li>• Reconsidering or changing a decision;</li> <li>• Amending a record or adding a correction or addendum;</li> <li>• Providing a financial remedy;</li> <li>• Changing policies, procedures or practices.</li> </ul>	Yes	Sunny Vale Complaints Policy – “Complaints handling” section, which confirms that where fault is identified Sunny Vale will acknowledge this, apologise, take corrective action and implement remedies within set timescales.	Sunny Vale acknowledges where things have gone wrong and sets out actions to resolve issues and improve services.
7.2	Any remedy offered must reflect the impact on the resident as a result of any fault identified.	Yes	Sunny Vale Complaints Policy – “Complaints handling” section, confirming that remedies are applied based on the nature of the complaint and actions required to put things right.	Remedies are proportionate to the impact of the issue on the service user.

# Section 7: Putting things right

---

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	Sunny Vale Complaints Policy – “Complaints handling” section, confirming remedies include clear actions and timescales which are followed through to completion.	Sunny Vale ensures agreed actions are completed and monitored.
7.4	Landlords must take account of the guidance issued by the Ombudsman when deciding on appropriate remedies.	Yes	Sunny Vale Complaints Policy – “Complaints handling” section, which references learning from complaints and improvements to policies and procedures where necessary.	Sunny Vale considers Ombudsman guidance and learning when deciding appropriate remedies and improvements.

# Section 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"> <li>a. the annual self-assessment against this Code to ensure their complaint handling policy remains in line with its requirements.</li> <li>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;</li> <li>c. any findings of non-compliance with this Code by the Ombudsman;</li> <li>d. the service improvements made as a result of the learning from complaints;</li> <li>e. any annual report about the landlord's performance from the Ombudsman; and</li> <li>f. any other relevant reports or publications produced by the Ombudsman in relation to the work of the landlord.</li> </ul>	Yes	Sunny Vale Complaints Policy – “Complaints Officer” section, confirming the requirement for an annual self-assessment, complaints performance and service improvement reporting to the Governing Body and publication on the website.	Sunny Vale produces an annual complaints performance and self-assessment report which is reviewed by the Governing Body and published in line with the Code.

# Section 8: Self-assessment, reporting and compliance

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
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 on the section of its website relating to complaints. The governing body's response to the report must be published alongside this.	Yes	Sunny Vale Complaints Policy – “Complaints Officer” and “Complaints record keeping” sections, confirming monitoring of complaint outcomes and trends.	Complaint data is reviewed regularly to identify learning and service improvements.
8.3	Landlords must also carry out a self-assessment following a significant restructure, merger and/or change in procedures.	Yes	Sunny Vale Complaints Policy – “Complaints handling” section, confirming actions and learning are tracked following complaints.	Sunny Vale uses complaint outcomes to improve policies, processes and service delivery.
8.4	Landlords may be asked to review and update the self-assessment following an Ombudsman investigation.	Yes	Sunny Vale Complaints Policy – “Complaints Officer” section, confirming reporting arrangements to the Governing Body.	The Governing Body provides oversight and scrutiny of complaints handling performance.
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	Sunny Vale Complaints Policy – Complaints Policy publication arrangements and governance reporting processes.	Sunny Vale ensures transparency through publication of required documents and governance review.

# Section 9: Scrutiny and oversight – continuous learning and improvement

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
9.1	Landlords must look beyond the circumstances of the individual complaint and consider whether service improvements can be made as a result of any learning from the complaint.	Yes	Sunny Vale Complaints Policy – “Complaints Officer” and “Complaints record keeping” sections, confirming that complaint performance and trends are reviewed by the Governing Body annually.	Complaints performance is reported to the Governing Body to support oversight and challenge.
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	Sunny Vale Complaints Policy – “Complaints handling” section, confirming that learning from complaints is used to inform service improvements and policy updates.	Sunny Vale uses feedback and complaint outcomes to drive continuous improvement.
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	Sunny Vale Complaints Policy – “Complaints handling” and governance reporting arrangements, confirming that actions arising from complaints are monitored.	Improvement actions are tracked to ensure they are implemented effectively.
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	Sunny Vale Complaints Policy – Complaints Officer role and governance processes, confirming accountability for improvement and compliance.	Clear responsibility is in place for overseeing learning and compliance with the Code.

# Section 9: Scrutiny and oversight – continuous learning and improvement

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
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	Sunny Vale Complaints Policy – complaints monitoring arrangements and governance reporting.	Complaint data is reviewed to understand performance and support improvement.
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	Sunny Vale Complaints Policy – learning and improvement processes following complaint investigations.	Sunny Vale uses complaint feedback to inform service development.

# Section 9: Scrutiny and oversight – continuous learning and improvement

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
9.7	As a minimum, the MRC and the governing body (or equivalent) must receive: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. regular updates on the volume, categories and outcomes of complaints, alongside complaint handling performance;</li> <li>b. regular reviews of issues and trends arising from complaint handling;</li> <li>c. regular updates on the outcomes of the Ombudsman’s investigations and progress made in complying with orders related to severe maladministration findings; and</li> <li>d. annual complaints performance and service improvement report.</li> </ul>	Yes	Sunny Vale Complaints Policy – governance review of complaints performance and outcomes.	The Governing Body provides challenge and oversight of complaint handling.

# Section 9: Scrutiny and oversight – continuous learning and improvement

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
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: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. have a collaborative and co-operative approach towards resolving complaints, working with colleagues across teams and departments;</li> <li>b. take collective responsibility for any shortfalls identified through complaints, rather than blaming others; and</li> <li>c. act within the professional standards for engaging with complaints as set by any relevant professional body.</li> </ul>	Yes	Sunny Vale Complaints Policy – annual reporting and self-assessment arrangements.	Sunny Vale ensures transparency and compliance through annual reporting and publication.