Milton Keynes City Council

Self-assessment form 2025/26.

September 2026

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 complaint's 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: *'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	Complaints and Compliments | Milton Keynes City Council	Our policy defines a complaint as: "an expression of dissatisfaction, however made, about the standard of service, actions or lack of action by the organisation, its own staff, or those acting on its behalf, affecting an individual or group of individuals."
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	Complaints policy 2026 to 2028.pdf	Our policy says: "*An individual should not have to use the word 'complaint' for it to be treated as such. A complaint that is submitted via a third party or representative should still be handled in line with the organisation's complaints policy.* Our Complaints policy explains the use of the service request as the first opportunity to put right dissatisfaction for residents and customers, but they can escalate to the

				complaint process if requested.
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	Complaints policy 2026 to 2028.pdf [page 3]	Our policy says: A service request may be defined as: "a request that the organisation provides or improves a service, fixes a problem or reconsiders a decision." Colleagues have sight of our Handy Hints document to help them distinguish between service request and a complaint. Our practice continues to review customer content and redirect to the applicable service to find an appropriate resolution
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	Complaints policy 2026 to 2028.pdf [page 3]	Our Complaints Policy reflects the expectation for our service teams to continue collaborating with the resident to resolve the root cause issue whilst providing a formal complaints response.
1.6	An expression of dissatisfaction with services made through a survey is not	Yes	Housing consultations | Milton Keynes City Council	We review TSM, complaints and consultation feedback

	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.			alongside performance data to reflect on service standards, identify improvements and strengthen trust with residents. Residents who remain dissatisfied are signposted to the complaints process.

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	Complaints policy 2026 to 2028.pdf Pg4	Our policy says: *We will deal with all complaints under our complaints policy unless they are excluded - this is explained in Appendix A.* *We will deal with complaints on their merits.* and *We will be clear with you about what we can and cannot deliver.*
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.	Yes	Complaints policy 2026 to 2028.pdf Pg 10/11/12/13	The full list of exclusions are listed in our policy. Our Complaints policy is intended to inform those who represent resident groups or forums can raise a complaint: it is important to identify who is raising a complaint on behalf of larger resident groups.

	• 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	Complaints policy 2026 to 2028.pdf Pg 10/11/12/13	Our policy [Appendix A] says: Complaints that are more than one year old. You should let us know as soon as possible if there is a problem. If you have left it more than twelve months since knowing about the problem, we will use our discretion when deciding if we will consider your complaint.
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	Complaints policy 2026 to 2028.pdf (p4,5,7,8&9)	We acknowledge complaints within 5 working days. Our policy says: We will deal with all complaints under our complaints policy unless they are excluded - this is explained in Appendix A. This definition should be interpreted widely. If in doubt a matter should be recorded as a complaint. An explanation is provided to those who raise complaints which are not investigated, and they are directed to the

				Ombudsman for further escalation. A sentence has been added to the policy to evidence this.
2.5	Landlords must not take a blanket approach to excluding complaints; they must consider the individual circumstances of each complaint.	Yes	Complaints policy 2026 to 2028.pdf Pg 4	Our policy says: We will deal with all complaints under our complaints policy unless they are excluded - this is explained in Appendix A. We will deal with complaints on their merits & We will be clear with you about what we can and cannot deliver.

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	Complaints policy 2026 to 2028.pdf Pg3	Our policy says: It is important that all members of the community have equal access to our Complaints Policy and process there is no wrong route for customers to raise a complaint with us Our policy says: There is no wrong channel to receive a complaint from a customer – it is the responsibility of colleagues to identify the complaint at the earliest opportunity.
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	Complaints policy 2026 to 2028.pdf Tenant satisfaction measures | Milton Keynes City Council	Our policy explains the use of the service request as the first opportunity to put right dissatisfaction for residents and customers, but they can

				escalate to the complaint process if requested We are strengthening consistent engagement with residents through direct contact and by working with the Resident Oversight Committee as a critical friend to the landlord. This helps us understand tenants' views of our services, provide constructive challenge and identify opportunities for improvement.
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	ACR 2025-26	We use customer feedback to drive change in policy and practice for the betterment of Milton Keynes. Our self-assessment gives a formal opportunity to score our performance and identify opportunities to improve the outcomes for residents and people visiting our city. Housing complaints fell from 747 in 2024–2025 to 638 in 2025–2026, a 15% overall reduction following the significant increase noted in 2024-25 after the introduction

				of new compliance standards from Awaab's Law. Overall complaints decreased in ASB, Asset and Maintenance, and Neighbourhoods, while increases were recorded in Home Ownership, Income and Regeneration.
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	**Corporate Complaints webpage** **Housing Complaints webpage**	Our complaints policy can be found on our website: • On the main complaints page. • On the housing complaints page. • Within the tenants Handbook.
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	**Link to our policy (p5,7,8&9)** **MKCC Complaints webpage** **Housing Complaints webpage** **HO Complaints Handling Code** **Tenants and Leaseholders Annual Report | Milton Keynes City Council** Complaints policy 2026 to 2028.pdf	Contact information for the Housing Ombudsman is contained within our complaints policy as well as links to the website for more information about the code. Our complaint acknowledgements include a summary of the complaint matters as well as what we will not respond to alongside

				information on how to escalate their complaint to the Ombudsman
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	Complaints policy 2026 to 2028.pdf	Our policy says: MKCC will apply a broad view of the definition of a complaint when we receive feedback from a customer. MKCC will accept complaints submitted by a third party acting on a resident's behalf. Where a complaint is made via a representative, MKCC will verify authority and will share only the personal data necessary to investigate and respond, in line with UK GDPR. MKCC does not respond to self-appointed representatives, i.e. those purporting to represent others: they must be nominated to act as an advocate for the resident, and this will be verified.
3.7	Landlords must provide residents with information on their right to access the	Yes	Complaints policy 2026 to 2028.pdf	Our policy says:

	Ombudsman service and how the individual can engage with the Ombudsman about their complaint.			If you remain unhappy it is your right to contact either the Local Government and Social Care or If you are a tenant of MKCC you can contact the Housing Ombudsman. More information is available on the Ombudsman website regarding their codes of practice and best practice when it comes to complaints handling, we will sign post you to the appropriate Ombudsman at every stage of the complaints process. The Ombudsman's role is to investigate complaints of maladministration by Local Authorities

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	Complaints policy 2026 to 2028.pdf	Our policy says: Our Head of Customer Data and Insight has corporate responsibility for overseeing the process and reporting performance against our local completion times and Ombudsman targets. Our portfolio holder (Elected Councillor) has cabinet responsibility and oversight. Annually we will review our complaints performance and report this to Cabinet. MKCC continues to use customer feedback to drive change in policy and practice for improved outcomes for our residents and the people visiting our city. Residents have the right to escalate their complaint to the Ombudsman at any stage of the complaint process.

				Our Corporate Feedback Team is responsible for triaging the complaints and liaising with service managers when they are investigating and resolving their complaints. Our Strategic Complaints and Improvement Manager holds the relationship for the Housing Ombudsman, acting as MKCC's Link 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	Complaints policy 2026 to 2028.pdf	We have clear, documented procedures and processes to trigger a complaint case review which initiates a multi-disciplinary team to identify and own actions to resolve root causes identified by the complaint. Our Strategic Complaints and Improvement Manager has the responsibility for supporting collaborative responses across Housing Landlord services and regularly reviews practice and Ombudsman determinations with Senior managers and services to reflect and identify service improvements.

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	**Handy hints V5**	The Council prioritises complaint handling through clear governance, workforce development and strategic learning. The Customer Experience Board holds responsibility for governance of the complaints process, with the Housing Ombudsman Link Officer reporting quarterly on complaint volumes, key learning from Ombudsman decisions and resident insight. MetaCompliance training is being developed for all officers who respond to complaints, to strengthen awareness of the expected standards of investigation and response, share practical guidance and best practice for complex investigations, and align with the compliance requirements arising from the Regulator's visit to the Council in January 2026. Training has also been shared across the wider Housing Landlord Services cohort to improve the

				identification of complaints and embed learning from feedback. The Corporate Feedback Team has developed as a proactive, supportive resource for colleagues and services, helping to resolve complaints and lead joined-up, collaborative responses to complex cases. Quarterly reporting to the Housing Landlord Board provides analysis of complaint trends and their correlation with Tenant Satisfaction Measures, together with strategic insight and recommendations to inform operational change and service 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	Yes	Housing Complaints webpage	All residents who make a complaint will be treated in the same way as per our complaints

	by this Code. Residents must not be treated differently if they complain.			policy. We provide information about our complaints process on our website, although the information explains our process in the same as we do in the policy. Our website may be used to provide some additional information, but that will only concern things that are required by the Complaints Handling Code but are not covered by our Complaints Policy.
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	Complaints policy 2026 to 2028.pdf **(p3)**	We do not have stage 0. In relation to early resolution, our policy says: The starting point is a shared understanding of what constitutes a service request and what constitutes a complaint. We should be able to put things right through normal service request providing organisations with opportunities to resolve matters to an individual's satisfaction before they become a complaint.

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	Complaints policy 2026 to 2028.pdf	Our complaints process is a two-stage 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 complaints process set out in this Code. Residents must not be expected to go through two complaints processes.	Yes	Complaints policy 2026 to 2028.pdf Contractor Customer Feedback Process	If one of our contractors is responsible for the Stage One response, this will count as being the first stage of MKCC's complaint process and residents will not be expected to raise a separate case with us directly.
5.5	Landlords are responsible for ensuring that any third parties handle complaints in line with the Code.	Yes	Complaints policy 2026 to 2028.pdf Housing Maintenance and Inve	We work closely with our contractors to ensure that they apply our corporate complaints policy and undertake Customer Service training delivered by ourselves.
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	Complaints policy 2026 to 2028.pdf	Our policy says: Once you have submitted your complaint, we will acknowledge your complaint within 5 working days sharing with you a CU reference number. This is a unique reference number that you can

				use when corresponding with us regarding your complaint. When we write to you to acknowledge your complaint, we will clarify what parts of the complaint are the responsibility of the Council alongside those which are not. We may also write to you to gain clarification about this complaint if anything is unclear.
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	Complaints policy 2026 to 2028.pdf	As per above (5.6). Our policy says: Once you have submitted your complaint, we will acknowledge your complaint within 5 working days sharing with you a CU reference number. This is a unique reference number that you can use when corresponding with us regarding your complaint. When we write to you to acknowledge your complaint, we will clarify what parts of the complaint are the responsibility of the Council alongside those which are not.

				We may also write to you to gain clarification about this complaint if anything is unclear. As a part of our acknowledgement, we will confirm clearly which aspects of the complaint we are and are not responsible for.
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	Complaints policy 2026 to 2028.pdf	We will: • deal with complaints on their merits. • act independently and have an open mind. • take measures to address any actual or perceived conflict of interest. • Consider all information and evidence carefully.
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	Complaints policy 2026 to 2028.pdf Pg6	Our complaints policy says: Stage 1 – Complaints will be completed within 10 working days from the date of acknowledgement unless we consider your complaint to be complex. ”

				Complex complaints are characterised as cutting across different Services. Stage 2 – Complaints will be completed within a maximum of 20 working days from the date of acknowledgement. Depending on the complexity of the investigation we may need to extend the timescales by an additional 10 working days, but this will be agreed in good time. We will keep you up to date on progress at agreed intervals. We will also share the details of the applicable Ombudsman service with you.
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	Complaints policy 2026 to 2028.pdf **pg3**	Our Corporate complaints policy reflects the need to consider the use of reasonable adjustment and its associated record keeping requirements on landlord back-office systems – our practice will be implemented in the current financial year 2026 - 2027
5.11	Landlords must not refuse to escalate a complaint through all stages of the	Yes	Complaints policy 2026 to 2028.pdf	Our complaints policy says:

	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.			Stage 1 – If you are not happy with the response you receive at stage one, you can contact us within a month and ask for your complaint to be investigated at stage two. Stage 2 – We would expect you to send us a stage two request within a month of the date of our stage one response. We will use our discretion when considering stage two requests received after this. We would not normally consider any stage two request once 12 months have elapsed after the stage one response unless there is a compelling reason to do so.
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	Complaints policy 2026 to 2028.pdf	This is recorded in our customer relationship management system.

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	Complaints policy 2026 to 2028.pdf	Our complaints policy says: Providing a remedy is about putting right what has gone wrong and learning from it. We will aim to remedy any personal injustice to you where an investigation into a complaint has identified fault on the part of the Council. There must be a clear link between the fault and the personal injustice to you. The Council has an internal compensation policy, based on the Ombudsman's standards, which is used by colleagues when deciding on an appropriate financial award.
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	**Link to our Unreasonable Behaviour policy**	Our unreasonable behaviour policy is published on our website and applicable to all Council contact. We will also use the tenancy agreement agreed between the resident and ourselves as the main management tool for relationship standards between both parties.

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		See 5.14 commentary.

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	Complaints policy 2026 to 2028.pdf	Our policy says: Time for stage 1 complaints is 10 working days post acknowledgement. We have incorporated the Ombudsman's standard for handling complaints within our policy and will endeavour to achieve this. it is equally important that the customer can clearly express the desired outcome from the complaints that they have raised, and that they are able to comprehend and participate in the consecutive stages of the complaints process as stipulated by the policies and practices of the landlord – and we will work with them to achieve this.
6.2	Complaints must be acknowledged, defined and logged at stage 1 of the	Yes	Complaints policy 2026 to 2028.pdf	Our policy says:

	complaints procedure **within five working days of the complaint being received**.			Once you have submitted your complaint, we will acknowledge your complaint within 5 working days.
6.3	Landlords must issue a full response to stage 1 complaints **within 10 working days** of the complaint being acknowledged.	Yes	Complaints policy 2026 to 2028.pdf	Our policy says: Complaints will be completed within 10 working days from the date of acknowledgement unless we consider your complaint to be complex. ” Complex complaints are characterised as cutting across different Services.
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	Complaints policy 2026 to 2028.pdf	Aligned with 6.1 and 6.3, we will work with residents to understand their complaint and their expected outcome so that the response shared will successfully manage expectations. In some cases, which relate to several issues or multiple services, this may take more time to complete and we will keep the resident informed of progress. Our policy says:

				Complex complaints are characterised as cutting across different Services. Analysis of these complaints shows that in many cases, the resident is facing various difficulties co-ordinating resolution across different council departments that might span a significant timescale: we will extend that time scale by a further 10 working days but this will be communicated with you as early as possible.
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 2026 to 2028.pdf	Our policy says: Complaints will be completed within 10 working days from the date of acknowledgement unless we consider your complaint to be complex. Complex complaints are characterised as cutting across different Services. Analysis of these complaints shows that in many cases, the resident is facing various difficulties co-ordinating resolution across different council departments that

				might span a significant timescale: we will extend that time scale by a further 10 working days but this will be communicated with you as early as possible. Our complaint response will be shared with you when the answer is known, not when all actions are completed. Outstanding actions will be tracked and actioned promptly with appropriate updates provided at reasonable intervals. The above will happen unless we have explained to you why we cannot complete the complaint investigation within that time frame and agreed a date with you for completion of the complaint investigation. We will also share the details of the applicable Ombudsman with you.
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	Yes	Complaints policy 2026 to 2028.pdf	Our policy says: Our complaint response will be shared with you when the answer is known, not when all actions are completed.

	actions must still be tracked and actioned promptly with appropriate updates provided to the resident.			Outstanding actions will be tracked and actioned promptly with appropriate updates provided at reasonable intervals. In some cases, the resolution to the complaint may take longer and we will keep the customer informed of progress. Actions committed to within a complaint response to resolve the root cause of the complaint, are managed separately by the responsible service area with fidelity checked by our Customer Experience Board, which owns the oversight responsibility of the Council's complaints.
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 policy 2026 to 2028.pdf	Our policy says: In your stage one complaint response we will clearly provide information on: • the complaint stage, • the complaint definition, • the decision on the complaint, • the reasons for any decisions made,

				• the details of any remedy offered to put things right, • details of any outstanding actions, • details of how to escalate the matter to stage two if the resident is not satisfied with the answer.
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	Complaints policy 2026 to 2028.pdf	Our policy says: During the complaint investigation if you identify any new related issue you should let us know and these can be investigated as part of the original complaint. If you need to raise something new and unrelated or once the response to the original complaint has been issued, this will be dealt with as a new stage one complaint. Any additional complaints raised by the customer which relate to the core matter, will be attached to the open complaint record for investigation and response at Stage One. If there are new matters which are unrelated to the core issue a new Stage One

				complaint will be raised to investigate.
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	Complaints policy 2026 to 2028.pdf	As per 6.7.

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	Complaints policy 2026 to 2028.pdf	Our policy says: We work closely with our contractors to ensure that they administer complaint investigations appropriately, applying the MKCC corporate policy and undertake customer service training over seen by

				MKCC. You will not be expected to raise a separate case with us directly. If you are not happy with the response you receive at stage one, you can contact us within twenty working days (for all cases) and ask for your complaint to be investigated at stage two Aligned with our policy, in our response to stage 1 complaint we will advise the resident how to escalate the complaint to stage 2 if they were not satisfied with the resolution.
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 2026 to 2028.pdf	Our policy says: Once you have submitted your complaint, we will acknowledge your complaint within 5 working days.
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 2026 to 2028.pdf	Our policy says: If your complaint is not resolved at stage one, customers and residents should contact us, within twenty working days to escalate their complaint. Customers and residents are not required to provide reasons for escalation.

				If a customer or resident asks for their complaint to be reviewed at stage two, we will consider the request carefully and fairly. We will provide an outcome at Stage 2 and explain our reasons clearly and tell them how they can escalate their complaint if they remain dissatisfied with our response. These complaint investigations will be carried out by a new investigating officer. Complaint responses will be completed within a total of twenty working days from the acknowledgement date. Our acknowledgement will clarify what parts of the complaint that are the responsibility of the Council and which are not and will signpost to the appropriate Ombudsman Service. Depending on the complexity of the investigation we may need to extend the timescales for stage two investigations by an additional 10 working days,

				but this will be agreed with you in good time. We will keep you up to date on progress at agreed intervals. We will also share the details of the applicable Ombudsman Service with you.
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 2026 to 2028.pdf	Our policy says: **These [Stage two] complaint investigations will be carried out by a new investigating officer.** This is a standard practice for complaints investigation at MKCC
6.14	Landlords must issue a final response to the stage 2 **within 20 working days** of the complaint being acknowledged.	Yes		Our policy says: Complaint responses will be completed within a total of twenty working days from the acknowledgement date. Our acknowledgement will clarify what parts of the complaint that are the responsibility of the Council and which are not
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	Yes	Complaints policy 2026 to 2028.pdf	Our policy says: Depending on the complexity of the investigation we may need to extend the timescales

	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.			for stage two investigations by an additional 10 working days, but this will be agreed with you in good time. We will keep you up to date on progress at agreed intervals.
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 2026 to 2028.pdf	Our policy says: We will also share the details of the applicable Ombudsman Service with you.
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 2026 to 2028.pdf	Our policy says: Our complaint response will be shared with you when the answer is known, not when all actions are completed. Outstanding actions will be tracked and actioned promptly with appropriate updates provided at reasonable intervals.
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 2026 to 2028.pdf	Our policy says: In your stage two complaint response we will clearly provide information on: • the complaint stage, • the complaint definition, • the decision on the complaint, • the reasons for any decisions made,

				• the details of any remedy offered to put things right, • details of any outstanding actions, and • details of how to escalate the matter to the Housing Ombudsman Service if you remain dissatisfied.
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 2026 to 2028.pdf	As per 6.18.
6.20	Stage 2 is the landlord's final response and must involve all suitable staff members needed to issue such a response.	Yes		Our complaints process is a 2-stage process, and it will involve all colleagues that are needed to provide our full 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 2026 to 2028.pdf	Our complaints policy says: Providing a remedy is about putting right what has gone wrong and learning from it. We will aim to remedy any personal injustice to you where an investigation into a complaint has identified fault on the part of the Council. There must be a clear link between the fault and the personal injustice to you. The remedies we may offer are not necessarily about money. We would look to put you back into the position you would have been in if nothing had gone wrong. We would also look at the root cause of the complaint and aim to make sure that the fault does not happen again. We may issue a financial payment to

				reimburse you if you have suffered a quantifiable financial loss, or it might be more of a symbolic payment which serves as an acknowledgement of the distress or difficulties you have been put through. We do not offer compensation in the way a court would. In some cases, an appropriate remedy may be for us to apologise to you for the fault that caused the injustice. We may look at making a change to a practice, policy, or procedure if we think it is likely that further mistakes may affect other people in the future. When considering an appropriate remedy to a complaint, we will use our compensation policy, which is closely aligned to the Local Government Guidance on Remedies. You can find this document on the Ombudsman's website at www.lgo.org.uk

7.2	Any remedy offered must reflect the impact on the resident as a result of any fault identified.	Yes	Complaints policy 2026 to 2028.pdf Compensation policy V2 [internal only]	
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	Compensation policy V2 [internal only]	
7.4	Landlords must take account of the guidance issued by the Ombudsman when deciding on appropriate remedies.	Yes		Our internal compensation policy is based on the guidance issued by the Ombudsman – complaint responses are considered against our policy and reviewed independently before issuance to the resident to implement practice fidelity.

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: 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	HO Complaints Handling Code Tenants and Leaseholders Annual Report | Milton Keynes City Council TPS MKCC Annual Complaints Report	Current scrutiny reporting for landlord complaint performance is being reviewed in line with the new HO requirements. Our submissions are published on the website and submitted to Landlord for review. We also include complaints as part of our Tenant and Leaseholder annual report.

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	**Housing Annual Complaints Report**	Annual complaints report is shared with Customer Experience Board, Landlord Board, and our Corporate Leadership Team.
8.3	Landlords must also carry out a self-assessment following a significant restructure, merger and/or change in procedures.	N/A	N/A	In the last year we have not had any significant restructure or process change.
8.4	Landlords may be asked to review and update the self-assessment following an Ombudsman investigation.	N/A	N/A	In the last year we have not had any significant restructure or process change.
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	In the last year we have not had any incident that would affect our compliance with the code.

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	Complaints policy 2026 to 2028.pdf **Tenant and Leaseholders Annual Report**	Our complaints policy says: (as a part of remedy) we may look at making a change to a practice, policy, or procedure if we think it is likely that further mistakes may affect other people in the future. The Tenant and Leaseholders Annual report demonstrates how we used feedback and consultation to shape our future services. Team meeting learning from recent Ombudsman decisions
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	**Link to our policy** **MKCC Complaints webpage** **Housing Complaints webpage** **Complaints Handling Code webpage** **Tenants and Leaseholders Annual Report | Milton Keynes City Council**	We have various webpages that promote a positive complaint handling culture. We assure residents to not worry that if you make a complaint, we will treat you unfavourably because of it, this will not happen. You have

				the right to tell us if something is wrong and we need to know. In 2025 - 2026, MKCC records lower than average Stage 1 complaint volumes at 40.3 complaints per 1,000 homes compared with the Local Authority median of 55.9, suggesting complaint demand is not unusually high relative to peers. Similarly, Stage 2 complaints at 10.2 per 1,000 homes perform better than the Local Authority median of 11.55. However, response timeliness remains a key area for improvement. While Stage 2 response performance at 92% is close to the sector median of 94%, Stage 1 performance at 78% falls below both the median (94%) and upper quartile performance (99%). Our escalation rate – complaints raised at Stage 2 as a proportion of Stage 1 complaints – continues to rise.

				We have seen a 25% increase in Housing Landlord complaints that are not upheld compared to 2023/24, which is likely contributing to a higher rate of escalation. Housing Landlord continues to strengthen its resident network and accountability arrangements through the Resident Oversight Committee. Committee members are being introduced to and briefed on landlord services to build their knowledge and support the development of their role as a critical friend. This will enable residents to provide informed challenge, scrutinise performance and learning from complaints, and help shape positive improvements in service delivery.
9.3	Accountability and transparency are also integral to a positive complaint handling culture. Landlords must report back on wider learning and improvements from	Yes		See 9.2

	complaints to stakeholders, such as residents' panels, staff and relevant committees.			
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		The Senior Director for Customer and Community Services is accountable for complaint handling across the authority and leads an improvement board focussed on evaluating themes, identifying potential systemic issues, and mitigating against serious risk. The Council's Housing Landlord Board owns the strategic responsibility of its Housing portfolio and is populated by the Council's Director of Environment & Property, Director of Adult Services and Director of Finance & Resources. The Board takes strategic direction from the Council's Corporate Leadership Team, which is lead by the Chief Executive.

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		The elected member who is the Council's Portfolio Holder for Housing holds the position of 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 attends monthly complaints briefings as part of developing insight into the Council's
9.7	As a minimum, the MRC and the governing body (or equivalent) must receive: 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 d. annual complaints performance and service improvement report.	Yes		The MRC and the Council's Housing Ombudsman Link Officer meet monthly to review complaint volumes and categories, complaint handling performance and escalations, and recurring issues and emerging trends. These meetings also provide regular updates on Ombudsman investigations, determinations and progress against any associated orders or actions. The MRC and the governing body receive the annual

				complaints performance and service improvement report, providing a consolidated overview of performance, learning and improvements arising from complaints.
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: 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		The Council's values of being dedicated, collaborative and respectful underpin its approach to complaint handling. Relevant colleagues and third parties work collectively through regular kick-off and follow-up meetings to coordinate Ombudsman case submissions, ensure evidence is complete and support clear, collaborative complaint responses. Lessons-learned reviews and reflective discussions are held regularly with the housing contractor and Housing Landlord Services following case determinations, enabling shared learning, collective ownership of identified shortfalls and improvements to practice. This approach recognises that all

				contributions are made on behalf of the Council and that responsibility for the quality and outcome of complaint handling is shared.

Milton Keynes
City Council