Appendix A: Self-assessment form – Cedarmore Housing Association (CHA)

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

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

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

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

Section 1: Definition of a complaint

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
1.2	A complaint must be defined as: *'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 Tenant or group of Tenants.'*	Yes	Complaints Policy includes this definition	
1.3	A Tenant does not have to use the word 'complaint' for it to be treated as such. Whenever a Tenant 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	Included in complaints policy	
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 tenant 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	Included in complaints policy	

1.5	A complaint must be raised when the tenant 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 tenant complains.	Yes	Included in complaints policy	
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 tenant can complain.	Yes	Reminded when surveys shared.	Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSM) are objectively carried out with tenants by different employees each year.

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	Exclusions to complaints policy are stated within the policy	Complaints arising due to regulatory standards not being met, are identified/assessed separately from individual requests for personal support needs.
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 tenants. 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	This is included in the complaints policy	

	• 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 tenant 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	This is included within the complaints policy	
2.4	If a landlord decides not to accept a complaint, an explanation must be provided to the tenant 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	This is accepted by CHA as stated in the complaints policy	
2.5	Landlords must not take a blanket approach to excluding complaints; they must consider the individual circumstances of each complaint.	Yes	No blanket approach is made to exclusions	

Section 3: Accessibility and Awareness

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
3.1	Landlords must make it easy for tenants 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 tenants who may need to access the complaints process.	Yes	Tenants can make their complaint through various mediums of communication.	Email, letters, in person, via the website, over the telephone, through attendance at meetings, via any colleague or Board Member who frequently visit our locations.
3.2	Tenants 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	All staff are aware of how complaints can be made.	CHA is a small organisation, as well as the usual options to report dissatisfaction, all tenants can attend in person at the Support Office or another location.
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 tenants are unable to complain.	Yes	Facilitating tenant meetings, both formal and informal creates the opportunity for tenants to raise a concern.	Our open-door policy continues to encourage tenants to engage with all staff at various levels. Low number of complaints in our case indicates a positive relationship between tenants and the landlord.
3.4	Landlords must make their complaint policy available in a clear and accessible format for all tenants. This	No	Our complaints policy was reviewed for December 2024 and a link to it is on our website.	We continually assess the changing need of our tenant

	will detail the three stage process, what will happen at each stage, and the timeframes for responding. The policy must also be published on the landlord's website.			population and aim to adapt accordingly
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	This is included in the complaints policy	A summary of Complaints is reported to each Care, Community & Culture Committee
3.6	Landlords must give tenants 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	This is stated in the complaints policy	
3.7	Landlords must provide tenants with information on their right to access the Ombudsman service and how the individual can engage with the Ombudsman about their complaint.	Yes	This is included in the complaints policy	

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	The complaints officer role is covered by the Scheme Manager at stage one, then the Sheltered Housing Lead/CEO at stage two.	
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	The complaints officer is also the Sheltered Housing Lead	If the complaint is about the Complaints Officer, then it can be heard at stage one by the CEO
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		Complaints and concerns are a standing item on team meetings. We encourage colleagues to acknowledge dissatisfaction with tenants and encourage ongoing dialogue.

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. Tenants must not be treated differently if they complain.	Yes	There is only one complaints policy	
5.2	The early and local resolution of issues between landlords and Tenants 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	This is included in the complaints policy	
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	The complaint policy has only two stages	
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. Tenants must not be	Yes	No third party is involved in the complaints process	

	expected to go through two complaints processes.			
5.5	Landlords are responsible for ensuring that any third parties handle complaints in line with the Code.	Yes	No third party is responsible for handling of complaints	
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 Tenant is seeking. The Code will refer to this as “the complaint definition”. If any aspect of the complaint is unclear, the Tenant must be asked for clarification.	Yes	This is reflected in our practise	
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	This is reflected in our practise	
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;	Yes	This is reflected in our practise	

	b. Give the tenant a fair chance to set out their postition c. Take measures to address any actual or perceived conflict of interest; and d. consider all relevant 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 tenant suitable intervals eeping them informed about their complaint.	Yes	This is outlined within our complaints policy	
5.10	Landlords must make reasonable adjustments for tenants 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 tenant has disclosed. Any agreed reasonable adjustments must be kept under active review.	Yes	This is reflected within our practise	
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	Yes	This is reflected in our practise	

	comply with the provisions set out in section 2 of this Code.			
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 tenant, correspondence with other parties, and any relevant supporting documentation such as reports or surveys.	Yes	We maintain a log of complaints	
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	We aim to resolve complaints at all stages of the process	
5.14	Landlords must have policies and procedures in place for managing unacceptable behaviour from Tenants 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	Referred to in Tenant's Handbook	

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	This is accepted	

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 tenant is vulnerable or at risk. Most stage 1 complaints can be resolved promptly, and an explanation, apology or resolution provided to the Tenant.	Yes	This is accepted	Our open-door policy continues to encourage tenants to engage with all staff at various levels. Low number of complaints in our case indicates a positive relationship between tenants and the landlord.
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	All staff are aware of this, in particular the Scheme Manager who is likely to be first point of contact.	
6.3	Landlords must issue a full response to stage 1 complaints **within 10 working days** of the complaint being acknowledged.	Yes	This is the timescale within the policy unless the complaint is complex or requires information from a third party. If so, this will be communicated to complainant.	

6.4	Landlords must decide whether an extension to this timescale is needed when considering the complexity of the complaint and then inform the Tenant 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 tenant.	Yes	As above.	
6.5	When an organisation informs a Tenant about an extension to these timescales, they must be provided with the contact details of the Ombudsman.	Yes	This is included in the complaints policy	
6.6	A complaint response must be provided to the tenant 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 Tenant.	Yes	Particularly pertinent to complaints about repairs	
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	We follow the complaints handling code set by the Ombudsman	

6.8	Where tenants 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	As above	
6.9	Landlords must confirm the following in writing to the tenant 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	This is included in the complaints policy	We would respond to the tenant in writing

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 tenant'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	Only a two-stage process.	
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	There is a complaints Log	This undergoes a continuous review process making use of relevant digitalisation
6.12	Tenants 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 Tenant remains unhappy as part of its stage 2 response.	Yes	We do ask what outcome the complainant is expecting to help us understand the complaint.	
6.13	The person considering the complaint at stage 2 must not be the same person that considered the complaint at stage 1.	Yes	This is included in the complaints policy	
6.14	Landlords must issue a final response to the stage 2 **within 20 working days** of the complaint being acknowledged.	Yes	This is included in the complaints policy	
6.15	Landlords must decide whether an extension to this timescale is needed when considering the complexity of the complaint and then inform the Tenant of	Yes	If complex and need more time, then this will be communicated to the complainant.	

	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 Tenant.			
6.16	When an organisation informs a tenant about an extension to these timescales, they must be provided with the contact details of the Ombudsman.	Yes	This is included in the complaints policy	
6.17	A complaint response must be provided to the tenant 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 Tenant.	Yes	This is accepted as above – particularly in relation to complaints about repairs.	
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	TP01 (2025 TSM) indicate 96% were very/fairly satisfied with CHA; and TP04 indicated 94% of tenants being listened to and supported accordingly.	We listen to tenants individually through our daily interactions and in our various forums and within our legal duties as a landlord. For instance we follow through neighbourly disputes with investigations and offer mediation towards resolution; and a tenant's complaint regarding facilities will be resolved in consultation with them, and a solution provided within

				the relevant policy in order to resolve the issue.
6.19	Landlords must confirm the following in writing to the tenant 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	This is noted	
6.20	Stage 2 is the landlord's final response and must involve all suitable staff members needed to issue such a response.	Yes	Stage 2 is with the CEO and a Notetaker. Complainant is invited to attend to present their case.	

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:	Yes	This is accepted.	

	• 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.			
7.2	Any remedy offered must reflect the impact on the tenant as a result of any fault identified.	Yes		Although this has not occurred due to the low level of concerns raised, the remedy offered would reflect the impact on the tenant with a parallel identification of any faults.
7.3	The remedy offer must clearly set out what will happen and by when, in agreement with the tenant where appropriate. Any remedy proposed must be followed through to completion.	Yes		The agreed remedy would be offered with the relevant names of people responsible and dates of completion and review of effectiveness.
7.4	Landlords must take account of the guidance issued by the Ombudsman when deciding on appropriate remedies.	Yes	Ombudsman guidance is referred to.	

Section 8: Putting things right

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	Yes – complaints are reported on at each Committee Meeting and at the Board Meeting.	
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.	Yes	As above.	

	The governing body's response to the report must be published alongside this.			
8.3	Landlords must also carry out a self-assessment following a significant restructure, merger and/or change in procedures.	Yes	This is accepted	
8.4	Landlords may be asked to review and update the self-assessment following an Ombudsman investigation.	Yes	Ombudsman recommendations are followed.	
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 Tenants who may be affected, and publish this on their website Landlords must provide a timescale for returning to compliance with the Code.	Yes	This is accepted	

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	Positive culture of learning from complaints.	
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	As above	
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 tenants' panels, staff and relevant committees.	Yes	Staff and Board Members are aware of complaints	Learning from complaints investigated may be shared at Tenant Community Meetings, where not personal.
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	Lead complaints officer is a senior staff member	

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	As above	
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	As above.	
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	Yes	Reported to every Committee and Board Meeting and included in Tenant Satisfaction Measures reported to all tenants at the Annual General Meeting.	

	severe maladministration findings; and d. annual complaints performance and service improvement report.			
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	This is accepted	