

Complaints Self-assessment form 2025

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	<p>A complaint must be defined as:</p> <p><i>'An expression of dissatisfaction, however made, about the standard of service, actions or lack of action by the landlord, its own staff, or those acting on its behalf, affecting a resident or group of residents.'</i></p>	Y	<p>a) Complaints Policy V10 Approved by Board on 29 May 2025.</p>	<p>a) Our Complaints Policy recognises and defines a complaint as “an expression of dissatisfaction however made, about the standard of service, action, or lack of action by the organisation, its staff, or those acting on its behalf, affecting an individual tenant or group of tenants. (Section 3.1)</p> <p>b) In Feb 2024 frontline staff received “Nip it in the Bud” training from Empathy transformation.co.uk. Reference within Complaint Policy at section 3.6</p> <p>c) Staff received training on the EPIC's Complaint Policy (V9a) during Team Meetings in 2024 by the Customer Service and Tenant Engagement Team Leader.</p> <p>d) The changes reflected in V10 of the Complaints Policy will be delivered to staff as part of future Team Meetings by Dec 2025.</p>
1.3	<p>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.</p>	Y	<p>a) Complaints Policy V10</p>	<p>a) The word complaint does not have to be used for it to be treated as such. (Section 3.2)</p> <p>b) Third parties' complaints are accepted and handled within the landlord's complaints policy, including MP enquiries. (Section 3.2)</p>

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
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.	Y	a) Complaints Policy V10	a) EPIC recognises the difference between a service request and a complaint and will regularly monitor service request. (Section 3.4)
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.	Y	b) Complaints Policy V10	a) Regardless of the complaint process, the request to put something right will be ongoing throughout the service request or complaint. An example of this would be outstanding repairs b) A complaint is raised following an expression of dissatisfaction, even during the handling of a service request. (Section 3.6.
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.	Y	a) Complaints Policy V10 b) Surveys will provide tenants with information on how they can pursue dissatisfaction as part of the survey process if they wish. c) Annual Tenant Engagement Survey 2024/25.	a) EPIC uses its Annual Tenant Engagement Survey to seek the views of its tenants whilst capturing its Tenant Satisfaction Measures. (Section 3.7) b) Tenant Satisfaction Measures (perception measures) captured as part of the annual tenant survey, where dissatisfaction is expressed are followed up as part of an action plan.

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	Y	a) Complaints Policy V10	a) EPIC's Complaints Policy was approved by EPIC's Board on the 29 May 2025. (Section 7.1&7.2)
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"> • The issue giving rise to the complaint occurred over twelve months ago. • Legal proceedings have started. This is defined as details of the claim, such as the Claim Form and Particulars of Claim, having been filed at court. • Matters that have previously been considered under the complaints policy. 	Y	a) Complaints Policy V10	a) EPIC's Complaints Policy (section 7 and 8) sets out circumstances in which a matter will not be considered as a complaint.

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.	Y	a) Complaints Policy V10	a) EPIC accepts complaints referred to them with 12 months of the issue occurring and will only exclude complaints in accordance with Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code. (Section 7 Accepting and Escalating a Complaint and Section 8 Exclusions)
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.	Y	a) Complaints Policy V10	a) If EPIC decides not to accept a complaint, an explanation will be given to the complainant as outlined in (Section 7 Accepting and Escalating a Complaint and Section 8 Exclusions). The right to take that decision to the Ombudsman is stated in section 8.2
2.5	Landlords must not take a blanket approach to excluding complaints; they must consider the individual circumstances of each complaint.	Y	a) Complaints Policy V10	a) EPIC considers the needs of its tenants, residents, and stakeholders when implementing complaints policies and procedures (section 3.3, 4.1 & section 7) b) Tenants are advised that they have the right to challenge a decision by taking their complaint to the Housing Ombudsman throughout the complaint process

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.	Y	a) Complaints Policy V10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Tenants can raise a complaint by any channel available (Section 10 & 11)) b) Following feedback from tenants, EPIC's office is now open 5 days a week should tenants wish to make a complaint face to face. c) EPIC's Complaints Policy (Section 15) considers its duties under the Equality Act 2010. d) Section 3.3 & 4.1 of the Complaints Policy refers to considering the needs of the tenants when making complaints. e) EPIC will record on the complaints log (section 3.3) any tenant vulnerability or individual needs and act on them accordingly.
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.	Y	a) Complaints Policy V10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Tenants can raise their complaints in any way 3.7 & 10.1 of the Complaints Policy. b) Staff when visiting/talking to tenants will take a complaint and pass to the appropriate person (section 11.2). c) Nip it in the Bud Training (referenced in section 3.6). d) Website allows for translation for non-English speaking tenants (included in policy summary section).

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
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.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Complaints Policy V10 b) There is an opportunity for tenants to make comments via the website using the Complaints contact form c) EPIC has also developed a change log which records tenant engagement activities, outcomes and changes that have arisen because of feedback. d) Quarterly KPI Board Reports & bi-annual complaints and compliments report. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) The Complaints Policy is found on our website (included and linked throughout Policy). b) Newsletters also provide a further opportunity to remind tenants on how to raise a complaint and links to the website for the Complaints Policy. c) EPIC is refreshing its website in 2025 where there will be fewer clicks to access how to raise a complaint. d) Results from 2024/25 Annual Tenant Engagement Survey, suggests that tenants are still not clear what is a service request and what is a complaint, EPIC will be addressing this in the coming year aiming to work alongside Tenant Ambassadors and via the Community Voice quarterly events to achieve a better understanding. e) Quarterly meetings are held with EPIC's Member Responsible for Complaints (MRC) to review and discuss complaints, responses, trends, and issues. f) A performance report is taken to the Senior Leadership Team on a monthly basis. g) KPIs are reported to Board on a quarterly basis with a six-monthly in-depth review, including learnings from complaints received, and an annual assessment against the Complaint Handling Code and any changes required to the Complaints Policy.

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.	Y	a) Complaints Policy V10 b) Complaints Policy V10a Accessible Version	a) EPIC provides a number of ways for tenants to raise complaints; it also provides an accessible version for tenants highlighting the key points from the Policy (included in policy summary). b) The policy and accessible version are published on the EPIC'S website (links provided throughout the Policy). c) EPIC has a two stage complaints process in accordance with the Complaint Handling Code (section 5 & 6 respectively). d) EPIC provides and publicises details of the Housing Ombudsman Service and the Complaint code (section 12.2). e) EPIC also publishes a copy of its completed complaints self-assessment on its website annually. f) Website allows for translation into different language. (referenced in policy summary)
3.5	The policy must explain how the landlord will publicise details of the complaints policy, including information about the Ombudsman and this Code.	Y	a) Complaints Policy V10	a) The Complaints Policy (Policy Summary) states how EPIC will publicise the policy and provides information about the Housing Ombudsman and the Code and an explanation as to who the Ombudsman are and what they do. (Policy Summary and throughout policy)
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.	Y	a) Complaints Policy V10	b) EPIC's Complaint Policy, (Section 3.2 and 11.3) confirms that tenants can ask a friend, relative, a trusted person or advocate to contact EPIC on their behalf. c) EPIC will request a copy of the tenant's consent before responding to a third party on a tenant's behalf (section 11.3).
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.	Y	a) Complaints Policy V10	a) EPIC's Complaint Policy makes several references on tenants' rights to access the Ombudsman Service throughout the policy document. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy Summary • Section 3.10, 3.11 • Stage One process Section 5.9 • Stage Two process Section 6.7 • Accepting and Escalating a Complaint 7.4 • Exclusions 8.2

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.	Y	a) Complaints Policy V10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) EPIC's Customer Service Team is assigned to take responsibility for complaint handling (section 10.3). b) The Director of Housing Management is known as the Complaint Officer and takes responsibility for liaison with the Ombudsman (section 10.3). c) Complaints reports are taken to EPIC's Senior Leadership Team on a monthly basis (section 10.4). d) Complaints are reviewed by the MRC at least once a quarter (section 10.4). e) Complaints are reported to Board on a Quarterly basis with a six-monthly in-depth review (section 10.4).

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
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.	Y	a) Complaints Policy V10 b) Compensation Policy	a) The Director of Housing Management and the Customer Service Team has access to staff at all levels in order to facilitate a prompt resolution of complaints. b) Being a small housing provider with a relatively flat structure, access to staff at all levels and decision making is not delayed because of hierarchical structures or processes. c) Staff are encouraged to promote a prompt resolution of complaints and have access to a Compensation Budget which can be used to apologise to tenants for a service failure where appropriate.

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
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	Y	a) Complaints Policy V10	<p>a)) Frontline staff received “Nip it in the Bud” (section 3.6) training from Empathy transformation a specialist coaching and training organisation advisor to in the Housing Sector. The training focused on improving our customer journey by adapting mindsets to meet the needs of the tenant.</p> <p>b) Staff received training on the EPIC’s Complaint Policy (V9a) during Team Meetings in 2024 by the Customer Service and Resident Engagement Team Leader.</p> <p>c) Training (section 13) will continue into 2025/2026.</p> <p>d) Staff will receive training on version 10 of the Complaint Policy at future Team Meetings throughout 2025.</p>

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.	Y	a) Complaints Policy V10	a) EPIC has a single complaints policy which states that tenants who do complain will not be treated differently. This is contained within the policy Introduction (Section 2.1).
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.	Y	a) Compensation Policy b) Complaints Policy V10	a) EPIC operates a two stage complaints policy (section 5 & 6). b) EPIC's compensation policy provides front line staff with the autonomy and delegated authority to deal with service issues, working with tenants to resolve matters at an early stage where appropriate. This is supported by the 'nip in the bud' training.

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
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.	Y	a) Complaints Policy V10	a) EPIC operates a two stage complaints process which is set out in Section 5&6 of the policy.
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.	N/A	a) EPIC does not use a third party to handle complaints.	a) Policy includes statement to the effect that EPIC does not use a third party to handle complaints (section 7.2)
5.5	Landlords are responsible for ensuring that any third parties handle complaints in line with the Code.	N/A	a) EPIC does not use a third party to handle complaints	a) Policy includes statement to the effect that EPIC does not use a third party to handle complaints (section 7.2)

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
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.	Y	a) Copies of correspondence are held on internal files.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) EPIC has re-designed its template letters clearly setting out “the complaint definition”. Recognising that each response provided is individual to the complainant. Reference to this is made in section 5.4. b) It is common practice on receipt of a complaint that a conversation takes place with the complainant to ensure that their complaint is fully understood before responding. c) Quarterly meetings held with the MRC reviews the quality of the outgoing responses.

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
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.		a) Copies of all correspondence are held on internal files.	<p>a) An acknowledgement to complainants is sent within the code's specified timescales. The acknowledgement correspondence will confirm any areas EPIC is not responsible for</p> <p>b) Section 5.1 and 6.1 make reference to this point.</p>
5.8	<p>At each stage of the complaints process, complaint handlers must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. deal with complaints on their merits, act independently, and have an open mind; b. give the resident a fair chance to set out their position; c. take measures to address any actual or perceived conflict of interest; and d. consider all relevant information and evidence carefully. 	Y	a) Complaints Policy V10	<p>b) Each stage of complaints process deals with complaints adhering to the points made in a-d, considering all the relevant information and evidence carefully before responding. Section 3 of Policy refers.</p>

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
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.	Y	a) Complaints Policy V10 b) KPI reporting and report to the Board c) KPI reporting to the Senior Leadership Team d) Meetings with MRC.	a) If the complaint is likely to fall outside of the complaint handling code, EPIC will discuss this with the tenant and keep the tenant informed at suitable intervals on progress which is highlighted within the Policy Section 5.5 & 6.6
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.	Y	a) Complaints Policy V10 b) Equality Impact Assessment	a) EPIC will make reasonable adjustment for tenants where appropriate as per Section 3.3 of the Compliant Policy/ b) EPIC carries an Equality Impact Assessment which has been completed to support the Complaints Policy c) Staff receive EDI training. d) Tenant data capture project to improve understanding on the needs of tenant.

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.	Y	a) Complaints Policy V10	a) EPIC will not refuse to escalate a complaint unless they comply with the provision of the Code and as set out in section 7 of the Complaints Policy.
5.12	A full record must be kept of the complaint, and the outcomes at each stage. This must include the original complaint, and the date received, all correspondence with the resident, correspondence with other parties, and any relevant supporting documentation such as reports or surveys.	Y	a) Records are kept on internal files. The complaints tracker can be found on Corporate\Management Team Formal	a) EPIC is reviewing the way it handles and records complaints. Complaints will be managed through the Housing Management System in Quarter 1 of 25/26 moving away from spreadsheets. Complaint information is currently stored securely in a complaints handling folder on a shared internal drive, which link back to a complaint handling log for tracking and monitoring purposes which ensures co-ordinated responses to be provided. b) A complaints handling log is maintained (section 10.4)

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
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.	Y	a) Complaints Policy V10 b) Compensation Policy	a) EPIC has processes in place to ensure a complaint can be remedied at any stage of the complaints process. b) EPIC has a Compensation Policy; the aim of the policy is to restore a tenant to the position they would have been in had the service failure not occurred, recognising that there are various options available to put things right but, in some instances, recognising that financial compensation may be the only and appropriate form of recompense.

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.	Y	a) Complaints Policy V10 b) Managing Unacceptable Behaviour Policy V2 c) Managing Unacceptable Behaviour Policy Accessible Version d) Violence and Aggression Policy e) ASB and Tenancy Enforcement Policy	a) EPIC has policies and procedures in place for managing unacceptable behaviour. Section 9 of the Complaints Policy addresses Unreasonable and Persistent complaints.”
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.	Y	a) Complaints Policy V10	a) Any restrictions imposed on a complainant will be reviewed every 6 months in accordance with the complaints policy section 9.4. b) Will be discussed with the MRC (section 9.3).

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.	Y	a) Complaints Policy V10 (Sections 3,3 & 4.1)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) On receipt of a complaint an assessment is made, and contact is made with the tenant. EPIC aims to identify if the tenant has any vulnerabilities during the initial contact. b) Complaints are dealt with as swiftly as possible and ahead of the prescribed timescales where possible. c) If cases are particularly complex and additional time is needed to carry out an investigation or find a resolution, tenants are kept informed and timescales agreed (section 5.5 & 6.6).

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
6.2	Complaints must be acknowledged, defined and logged at stage 1 of the complaints procedure <u>within five working days of the complaint being received.</u>	Y	a) Complaints Policy V10 b) KPI quarterly reports to Board c) KPI monthly reports to Senior Leadership Team.	d) The Complaints Policy Section 5 Stage One, sets out timescales for responding to complaints. Complaint response times are reported to SLT and the Board, via KPI reporting, to ensure compliance with the Code
6.3	Landlords must issue a full response to stage 1 complaints <u>within 10 working days</u> of the complaint being acknowledged.	Y	a) Complaints Policy V10 b) KPI quarterly reports to Board c) KPI monthly reports to Senior Leadership Team	a) The Complaints Policy Section 5 Stage One, sets out timescales for responding to complaints. Complaint response times are reported to SLT and the Board to ensure compliance with the Code

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
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.	Y	a) Complaints Policy V10	a) The Complaints Policy Section 5.5 Stage One, sets out timescales for responding to complaints. b) Complaint response times are reported to SLT and the Board to ensure compliance with the Code as part of KPI reporting
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.	Y	a) Complaints Policy V10	a) At each stage of the Complaint tenants are provided with the Ombudsman's details as per The Complaint Policy Section 5. Stage One.
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.	Y	a) Complaints Policy V10	a) A response is sent confirming any outstanding action before the event and not after the action is complete; these actions are tracked before a case can be closed. b) Section 3.11 of policy also refers.

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
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.	Y	a) Complaints Policy V10	a) Each of the points raised in the complaint is confirmed and responded to, making reference to relevant policy, law and good practice as set out in Section 5 of the policy.
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.	Y	a) Complaints Policy V10	a) Where additional points are raised during an investigation, these will be included in the original complaint so not to unreasonably delay a response. Where a complaint response has been issued and the new issues would delay a response, these are logged as a new complaint. Section 5.6 of the policy.

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"> 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. 	Y	a) Complaints Policy V10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Included in section 5.4 of Policy. b) Templates are provided as a guide for responding to complaints. c) Training and development of staff d) Quality assurance with MRC.

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.	Y	a) Complaints Policy V10	b) Complaints are escalated when requested. If we were to refuse an escalation, we would clearly communicate in writing why this was the case as well as giving the contact details of the Ombudsman. (Section 6)
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.	Y	a) Complaints Policy V10	a) An Acknowledgement is sent within 5 days (section 6.1) of receipt of a request to escalate. Stage 2 Section 6 of the policy.

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
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.	Y	a) Complaints Policy V10	a) Tenants will not be required to explain their reasons for requesting stage 2 consideration; EPIC will make reasonable efforts to identify why they remain unhappy and if necessary, contact the tenant for clarification. Stage Two, Section 6.2 of the Complaints Policy.
6.13	The person considering the complaint at stage 2 must not be the same person that considered the complaint at stage 1.	Y	a) Complaints Policy V10	a) The person considering the Stage 2 Complaint will not be the same person who considered Stage 1. Section 6.4 of the Complaints Policy, Stage Two.
6.14	Landlords must issue a final response to the stage 2 <u>within 20 working days</u> of the complaint being acknowledged.	Y	a) Complaints Policy V10 b) KPI quarterly reported to Board c) KPI monthly reported to Senior Leadership Team	a) EPIC will respond to the Stage Two complaint within 20 days as per Section 6.5 of the Complaints Policy.

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
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.	Y	a) Complaints Policy V10	a) EPIC will decide if an extension of time is needed when considering the complexity of the complaint and will inform the tenants of the expected response time as per Section 6.6 of the Complaints Policy.
6.16	When an organisation informs a resident about an extension to these timescales, they must be provided with the contact details of the Ombudsman.	Y	a) Complaints Policy V10	a) The Ombudsman details will be provided to the tenant if there is a need for an extension, Section 6.6 and 6.7 of the Complaints Policy.
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.	Y	a) Complaints Policy V10	a) EPIC will respond to the complaint as soon as the answer to a complaint is known and not when any outstanding actions in relation to the complaint have been addressed. Section 3.11 of the Complaints Policy.

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.	Y	a) Complaints Policy V10	a) EPIC will address all points raised in the complaint and provide clear reasons for any decisions, referencing the relevant policy, law and good practice where appropriate. Section 5.3 of the Complaints Policy. b) Quality assurance via meetings with MRC
6.19	Landlords must confirm the following in writing to the resident at the completion of stage 2 in clear, plain language: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. the complaint stage; b. the complaint definition; c. the decision on the complaint; d. the reasons for any decisions made; e. the details of any remedy offered to put things right; f. details of any outstanding actions; and g. details of how to escalate the matter to the Ombudsman Service if the individual remains dissatisfied. 	Y	a) Complaints Policy V10	a) EPIC will confirm all the points raised in 6.19 to the tenants as per the Complaints Policy Section 5.4 & 6.3

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
6.20	Stage 2 is the landlord's final response and must involve all suitable staff members needed to issue such a response.	Y	a) Complaints Policy V10	Stage Two is EPIC's final response to a Complaint. All suitable staff will be involved. Tenants have a right to challenge the final decision through the Housing Ombudsman Section 6.7 of the policy. All Stage 2 responses are signed off by someone at Director level.

Section 7: Putting things right

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
7.1	<p>Where something has gone wrong a landlord must acknowledge this and set out the actions it has already taken, or intends to take, to put things right. These can include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apologising; • Acknowledging where things have gone wrong; • Providing an explanation, assistance or reasons; • Taking action if there has been delay; • Reconsidering or changing a decision; • Amending a record or adding a correction or addendum; • Providing a financial remedy; • Changing policies, procedures or practices. 	Y	<p>a) Complaints Policy V10 b) Compensation Policy</p>	<p>a) EPIC will acknowledge when things have gone wrong and will put things right. Complaint Policy Section 4.</p>
7.2	Any remedy offered must reflect the impact on the resident as a result of any fault identified.	Y	<p>a) Complaints Policy V10 b) Compensation Policy</p>	<p>a) Any remedy will reflect the impact on the resident. Section 4 of the Complaint Policy and as per EPIC's compensation policy.</p>

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.	Y	a) Complaints Policy V10 b) Compensation Policy	a) Remedies are confirmed as part of the complaints process, in agreement with the tenant and followed through to completion (section 4.4). Complaints will remain open until remedies are complete.
7.4	Landlords must take account of the guidance issued by the Ombudsman when deciding on appropriate remedies.	Y	a) Complaints Policy V10	a) EPIC'S Complaint Policy has been developed in line with the dispute resolution principles recommended by the Housing Ombudsman as noted in the Complaints Policy Summary.

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> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> the annual self-assessment against this Code to ensure their complaint handling policy remains in line with its requirements. a qualitative and quantitative analysis of the landlord's complaint handling performance. This must also include a summary of the types of complaints the landlord has refused to accept; any findings of non-compliance with this Code by the Ombudsman; the service improvements made as a result of the learning from complaints; any annual report about the landlord's performance from the Ombudsman; and any other relevant reports or publications produced by the Ombudsman in relation to the work of the landlord. 	Y	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Complaints Policy V10 Board bi-annual reports and quarterly KPI reports to Board Senior Leadership monthly Reports Notes of meetings with MRC 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> A monthly report is provided to the Senior Leadership, and on a quarterly basis to Board with a six-monthly in-depth review of complaints. Quarterly meeting are held with the MRC, to discuss and review complaints and complaint handling. EPIC produces an annual complaints and performance report for scrutiny and challenge, including its self-assessment against the code a-f. The annual self-assessment is published on EPIC's website. The Annual Tenant Report also provides for an update in respect of complaints.

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 section of its website relating to complaints. The governing body's response to the report must be published alongside this.	Y	a) Board Reports b) Annual Complaints Report	a) Quarterly KPI report and Annual complaints performance are reported to the Board and published on EPIC'S website along with publication in the Annual Tenant Report. b) A new website will be on-line in Q1 2025/26 with easier access to the area of complaints.
8.3	Landlords must also carry out a self-assessment following a significant restructure, merger and/or change in procedures.	Y		a) A new self-assessment will be carried out following a significant restructure or merger and/or changes in procedure. b) No significant restructures or mergers are planned for 2025/26.
8.4	Landlords may be asked to review and update the self-assessment following an Ombudsman investigation.	Y		a) EPIC understands that it may be asked to review and update the self-assessment following an Ombudsman Investigation. As of April 2025, one investigation remains with the Housing Ombudsman.

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
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.	Y	a) Business Continuity Plan	a) In the event of EPIC invoking Business Continuity, if unable to comply with the code, the Ombudsman would be provided with the tenants' details who may be affected. This is provided for in EPIC's Business Continuity Plan.

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.	Y	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) A copy of all correspondence can be found on internal drive. b) Board Reports c) Senior Leadership Team Reports 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Monthly reports on complaint performance and any lesson learnt are reported to the Senior Leadership Team. b) An in-depth and six-monthly report which includes lessons learnt are reported to the Board. c) Quarterly meetings with MRC
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.	Y	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Board Reports b) Senior Leadership Team reports c) Change Log d) Quarterly staff meetings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) An in-depth performance report is taken to Board on a sixth-monthly basis; this report will identify common themes and issues which would be used to introduce positive changes in service delivery. b) Quarterly meetings with MRC c) Ongoing training with staff

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
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.	Y	a) Annual Tenant Report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Learning from complaints will be fed back through the Tenant Annual Report work we have planned with Tenant Ambassadors. b) Annual Complaints Report (online) c) Staff newsletter from April 2025, ensuring greater transparency to staff. d) Shared with Tenant Ambassadors and as party of Community Voice events.
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.	Y	a) Complaints Policy V10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) The Director of Housing Management is the senior lead person accountable for complaint handling known as the Complaints Officer.

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').	Y	a) MRC role appointed Board Report May 2024 MRC-Role-Profile.pdf .	a) EPIC's MRC was appointed at its Board Meeting in May 2024. b) MRC information is published on EPIC's website along with the role profile.
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.	Y	a) Minutes of complaint meetings with the MRC. b) Board Reports.	a) The MRC meets on a quarterly basis with the Director of Housing Management and the Customer Services Team leader to review complaints, and responses. b) Board Report on complaints performance are agreed with the MRC before being published to the Board. c) The MRC is notified of any Ombudsman complaints and their responses. d) Quality assurance at MRC quarterly meetings

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
9.7	<p>As a minimum, the MRC and the governing body (or equivalent) must receive:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. regular updates on the volume, categories and outcomes of complaints, alongside complaint handling performance; b. regular reviews of issues and trends arising from complaint handling; c. regular updates on the outcomes of the Ombudsman's investigations and progress made in complying with orders related to severe maladministration findings; and d. annual complaints performance and service improvement report. 	Y	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Minutes of Meetings with the MRC. b) Board Reports c) Internal correspondence confirming an Ombudsman investigation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) The MRC meets on a quarterly basis with the Director of Housing Management and the Customer Services Team leader to review complaints, and responses. b) The MRC is notified of any enquiries from the Ombudsman. c) The MRC and the Board is kept informed of the outcome of any Ombudsman Investigations. d) Board Report on complaints performance are agreed with the MRC before being published to the Board. e) The MRC and the Board receives an annual in-depth complaints review, which includes lessons learnt, performance and a service improvement report.

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
9.8	<p>Landlords must have a standard objective in relation to complaint handling for all relevant employees or third parties that reflects the need to:</p> <p>a. have a collaborative and co-operative approach towards resolving complaints, working with colleagues across teams and departments;</p> <p>b. take collective responsibility for any shortfalls identified through complaints, rather than blaming others; and</p> <p>c. act within the professional standards for engaging with complaints as set by any relevant professional body.</p>	Y	<p>a) Corporate Plan</p> <p>b) Complaints Policy V10</p>	<p>a) EPIC's Corporate Plan is focused on our tenants.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People – Develop our culture to enable a great employee experience and opportunities to fulfil everyone's potential, for the benefit of the individual and our tenants: No complaint received by EPIC are as a result of poor attitude or behaviour by an employee. <p>b) The aim of the policy is to ensure that EPIC has an approach to complaints that is clear, simple, and accessible. By listening to tenants and dealing with complaints about our services, we can make improvements based on the feedback from tenants. This allows us to manage, respond and learn from complaints.</p>