

## Appendix A: Self-assessment form

This self-assessment form has been completed by the complaints officer and reviewed and approved by CVCLT's governing body.

### Section 1: Definition of a complaint

| Code provision | Code requirement   | Comply: Yes / No | Evidence  | Commentary / explanation  |
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| 1.2            | A complaint must be defined as: <i>'an expression of dissatisfaction, however made, about the standard of service, actions or lack of action by the landlord, its own staff, or those acting on its behalf, affecting a resident or group of residents.'</i>   | Yes              | This is within the Complaints and Compliments Policy of Connect Housing, which has been adopted by CVCLT as our Complaints and Compliments Policy, and is given in the tenants' area on our website | Connect Housing Association, who manage our housing properties provide third party management of our complaints procedures.   |
| 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              | This is within the Complaints and Compliments Policy of Connect Housing, which has been adopted by CVCLT as our Complaints and Compliments Policy, and is given in the tenants' area on our website | Connect Housing in their self-assessment confirm that all staff are advised to identify complaints from all interaction with customers, regardless of the language used. Connect Housing report that refresher training on complaints in line with the new code has been provided and continues to be provided to all staff |
| 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   | Yes              | This is within the Complaints and Compliments Policy of Connect Housing, which has been adopted by CVCLT as our Complaints and Compliments Policy   | Connect Housing provide detailed quarterly information to CVCLT re all service requests, with dates of contact and completion of work plus charges. CVCLT review these  |

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|     | requiring action to be taken to put something right. Service requests are not complaints, but must be recorded, monitored and reviewed regularly.   |     |  | regularly at their Housing Management Sub Committee Meetings  |
| 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 | This is within the Complaints and Compliments Policy of Connect Housing, which has been adopted by CVCLT as our Complaints and Compliments Policy  | All service requests for CVCLT tenants are made through Connect Housing and are logged on their CRM system, any outstanding requests are monitored by service areas performance reviews. Connect Housing ensure they are proactive in identifying any service improvements, via the Complaints Officer reviewing service requests monthly, following up with service leads where necessary. Connect Housing state that they always continue to provide a service despite a complaint being submitted. No CVCLT tenant has made a complaint. |
| 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 | Yes | This is clearly stated within the Complaints and Compliments Policy of Connect Housing, which has been adopted by CVCLT as our Complaints and Compliments Policy. Connect Housing undertook, on behalf of CVCLT, the survey of | Clear advice has been added to surveys undertaken by Connect Housing advising the customer how to make a complaint via their complaints process rather than adding comments in the survey. Connect Housing review all customer feedback and contact   |

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|  | details of how residents can complain. |  | tenants for the collection of TSM measures which followed their survey guidance and process | customers who provide information about service failure including those from CVCLT. |
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## Section 2: Exclusions

| Code provision | Code requirement  | Comply: Yes / No | Evidence   | Commentary / explanation   |
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| 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              | <p>This is clearly stated within the Complaints and Compliments Policy of Connect Housing, which has been adopted by CVCLT as our Complaints and Compliments Policy.</p> <p>An acknowledgement letter template is available on Connect Housing's CRM</p> | <p>Connect Housing make the customer aware at the acknowledgement stage of their complaint and whether this has been accepted or excluded in line with the HOS code and their policy.</p> <p>Where multiple issues are raised, Connect Housing stipulate clearly within the acknowledgement letter what issues have been accepted and what they have excluded with their reasons for this.</p> <p>In 2023/24 Connect Housing had no excluded complaints. No complaints were made by CVCLT tenants.</p> |
| 2.2            | A complaints policy must set out the circumstances in which a matter will not be considered as a complaint or escalated, and  | Yes              | This is clearly stated within the Complaints and Compliments Policy of Connect Housing, which has been   | These circumstances are clear in both organisation's policies which are accessible to all  |

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|     | <p>these circumstances must be fair and reasonable to residents. Acceptable exclusions include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The issue giving rise to the complaint occurred over twelve months ago.</li> <li>• Legal proceedings have started. This is defined as details of the claim, such as the Claim Form and Particulars of Claim, having been filed at court.</li> <li>• Matters that have previously been considered under the complaints policy.</li> </ul> |            | <p>adopted by CVCLT as our Complaints and Compliments Policy.</p>   | <p>customers. Connect Housing also sends a leaflet to the customer at each stage of their complaints processes setting out the process and timescales</p>   |
| 2.3 | <p>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.</p>   | <p>Yes</p> | <p>This is clearly stated within the Complaints and Compliments Policy of Connect Housing, which has been adopted by CVCLT as our Complaints and Compliments Policy.</p>  | <p>Connect Housing consider each case on its own merits in line with the HOS code and their policy.<br/>In 2023/24 no complaints were received outside of the 12 months' timescale and no complaints were made by CVCLT tenants</p> |
| 2.4 | <p>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</p>  | <p>Yes</p> | <p>This is clearly stated within the Complaints and Compliments Policy of Connect Housing, which has been adopted by CVCLT as our Complaints and Compliments Policy CVCLT in their complaints leaflet for tenants, and on their website have clear signposting to the Housing</p> | <p>Connect Housing has a process in place to ensure that residents and CVCLT tenants are provided with a clear explanation and signposted to the Housing Ombudsman Service.<br/>In 23/24 there were no</p>                          |

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|     | landlord to take on the complaint.   |  | Ombudsman Service  | excluded complaints.   |
| 2.5 | Landlords must not take a blanket approach to excluding complaints; they must consider the individual circumstances of each complaint. |  | This is clearly stated within the Complaints and Compliments Policy of Connect Housing, which has been adopted by CVCLT as our Complaints and Compliments Policy | Connect Housing treats each complaint on its own merit and where necessary apply reasonable adjustments. |

### Section 3: Accessibility and Awareness

| Code provision | Code requirement  | Comply: Yes / No | Evidence  | Commentary / explanation  |
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| 3.1            | Landlords must make it easy for residents to complain by providing different channels through which they can make a complaint. Landlords must consider their duties under the Equality Act 2010 and anticipate the needs and reasonable adjustments of residents who may need to access the complaints process. | Yes              | <p>This is clearly stated within the Complaints and Compliments Policy of Connect Housing, which has been adopted by CVCLT as our Complaints and Compliments Policy</p> <p>Complainants can access Connect Housing's to make a complaint via their: Website – online portal, Phone, Email and in writing.</p> <p>CVCLT provides information for contacting Connect Housing and (if they prefer) CVCLT using the same mechanisms.</p> <p>Connect Housing's Complaints and Compliments Policy stipulates reasonable adjustments</p> | <p>Both Connect Housing and CVCLT's complaints policies are published on their websites and both have dedicated complaints pages that sets out the policy in customer friendly language. This includes how complaints can be raised and a complaint form (see website).</p> <p>Complaints are accepted from multiple channels.</p> <p>Connect Housing have a dedicated Housing Liaison team who are competent in advising customers over the phone and helping provide an</p> |

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|     |  |     |  | easy route for their complaint.   |
| 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 | This is clearly stated within the Complaints and Compliments Policy of Connect Housing, which has been adopted by CVCLT as our Complaints and Compliments Policy Both Connect Housing and CVCLT ensure employees and Trustees are made aware of the Complaints processes at Induction and Refresher training | Connect Housing ensure that as part of all new staff inductions, the Complaints Officer provides training on Complaint handling relevant to their job role. Refresher training is provided regularly particularly after being identified as a service improvement issue.  |
| 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 | This is clearly stated within the Complaints and Compliments Policy of Connect Housing, which has been adopted by CVCLT as our Complaints and Compliments Policy.  | Connect Housing's website has been updated to implement this message to residents on the complaints' website. This message is also clearly given on CVCLT's website Training has been given to relevant staff in Connect Housing and to CVCLT Trustees and employee to ensure a customer is given the chance to make a formal complaint |
| 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 | Connect Housing and CVCLT have both made available their Complaints and Compliments Policies on their websites.  | The complaint policies for both organisations are published on their websites, and both organisations have a dedicated complaints page that sets out the policy in customer friendly language.  |

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|     |  |     |   | <p>This includes how complaints can be raised and a complaint form (see website)</p> <p>Connect Housing send an advice leaflet at each stage of their complaint process that details the customers right to contact the Housing Ombudsman.</p> |
| 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 clearly stated within the Complaints and Compliments Policy of Connect Housing, which has been adopted by CVCLT as our Complaints and Compliments Policy  | The complaints policies of both organisations are available on their websites, alongside information about the Housing Ombudsman and the Code.   |
| 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 | This is clearly stated within the Complaints and Compliments Policy of Connect Housing, which has been adopted by CVCLT as our Complaints and Compliments Policy  | All communication (website, policy, leaflets) from both organisations provides information regarding representatives. Residents are given the option to have a representative present within the process.                                      |
| 3.7 | Landlords must provide residents with information on their right to access the Ombudsman service and how the individual can engage with the Ombudsman about their complaint.             | Yes | This is clearly stated within the Complaints and Compliments Policy of Connect Housing, which has been adopted by CVCLT as our Complaints and Compliments Policy on both organisation's websites and on CVCLT's tenant information in | Information is provided with Connect Housing's advice leaflets and complaint formal letters.   |

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|  |  |  | their handbooks. |  |
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## 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 Service Manager for Customer insight at Connect Housing is the Complaints Officer. One of the CVCLT Trustees and acts as the Complaints Officer, and a second Trustee is the MRC taking overall responsibility for Complaints. | At Connect Housing, the Service Manager of Customer Insight is responsible for logging all complaints, sending acknowledgements, and overseeing the complaint process. They also provide information and liaise with the HOS. The role is supported by the Head of Business Assurance who ensures complaints are reported to the governing. One of the CVCLT Trustees is responsible for liaising with Connect Housing and HOS in respect of Complaints |
| 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              | This is clearly stated within the Complaints and Compliments Policy of Connect Housing, which has been adopted by CVCLT as our Complaints and Compliments Policy The   | The Service Manager Customer Insight at Connect Housing has access to all levels of staff. As part of their role has the appropriate complaints   |



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|     |   |     | designated Trustees at CVCLT have the requisite authority and autonomy.  | handling skills to act to resolve disputes promptly and fairly.   |
| 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 | This is clearly stated within the Complaints and Compliments Policy of Connect Housing, which has been adopted by CVCLT as our Complaints and Compliments Policy The Complaints Officer at Connect Housing attends relevant conferences, HOS training and other events specifically aimed at complaints handling.<br>The designated Trustees at CVCLT ensure that they attend the relevant training and events as necessary. | The Connect Housing Manager and complaints handlers have the appropriate complaints handling skills and attend regular refresher training on complaint handling.<br>The Service Manager Customer Insight is responsible for providing reports on lessons learnt, complaint themes and areas of improvement. |

## Section 5: The Complaint Handling Process

| Code provision | Code requirement   | Comply: Yes / No | Evidence   | Commentary / explanation   |
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| 5.1            | Landlords must have a single policy in place for dealing with complaints covered by this Code. Residents must not be treated differently if they complain. | Yes              | Both organisations have a single Complaints and Compliments Policy and a separate Redress and Compensation policy which are in line with the HOS Code. | Both policies are published on the organisations' websites. Neither organisation treats residents differently if they have complained. |
| 5.2            | The early and local resolution of issues between landlords and residents is key to   | Yes              | This is clearly stated within the Complaints and Compliments Policy  | Connect Housing has 2 stages in the complaint process.   |

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|     | effective complaint handling. It is not appropriate to have extra named stages (such as 'stage 0' or 'informal complaint') as this causes unnecessary confusion.  |     | of Connect Housing, which has been adopted by CVCLT as our Complaints and Compliments Policy   | Stage 1 and 2 are both in line with the HOS code.   |
| 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 | This is clearly stated within the Complaints and Compliments Policy of Connect Housing, which has been adopted by CVCLT as our Complaints and Compliments Policy   | Connect Housing has 2 stages in the complaint process. Stage 1 and 2 are both in line with the HOS code.                                  |
| 5.4 | Where a landlord's complaint response is handled by a third party (e.g. a contractor or independent adjudicator) at any stage, it must form part of the two stage complaints process set out in this Code. Residents must not be expected to go through two complaints processes. | Yes | CVCLT's complaints processes are handled by Connect Housing. The two-stage process is clearly stated within the Complaints and Compliments Policy of Connect Housing, which has been adopted by CVCLT as our Complaints and Compliments Policy | Connect Housing's policies set out responsibility for ensuring all complaints are handled in line with the Code                           |
| 5.5 | Landlords are responsible for ensuring that any third parties handle complaints in line with the Code.  | Yes | CVCLT's complaints processes are handled by Connect Housing. The two-stage process is clearly stated within the Complaints and Compliments Policy of Connect Housing, which has been adopted by CVCLT as our Complaints and Compliments Policy | Connect Housing's policies set out responsibility for ensuring all complaints are handled in line with the Code                           |
| 5.6 | When a complaint is logged at Stage 1 or escalated to Stage 2, landlords must set out their understanding of the complaint and the outcomes the resident is seeking. The Code will refer to this as "the  | Yes | This is clearly stated within the Complaints and Compliments Policy of Connect Housing, which has been adopted by CVCLT as our Complaints and Compliments Policy   | Refresher training has been provided to all relevant staff in Connect Housing and to Trustees and Employees at CVCLT to ensure compliance |

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|     | complaint definition". If any aspect of the complaint is unclear, the resident must be asked for clarification.  |     |   | with the Code. All complaint document templates have also been updated.   |
| 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 clearly stated within the Complaints and Compliments Policy of Connect Housing, which has been adopted by CVCLT as our Complaints and Compliments Policy and within any acknowledgement letter templates. | Connect Housing has standard acknowledgement letter templates which prompt the user to provide this information.  |
| 5.8 | At each stage of the complaints process, complaint handlers must: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. deal with complaints on their merits, act independently, and have an open mind;</li> <li>b. give the resident a fair chance to set out their position;</li> <li>c. take measures to address any actual or perceived conflict of interest; and</li> <li>d. consider all relevant information and evidence carefully.</li> </ul> | Yes | This is clearly stated within the Complaints and Compliments Policy of Connect Housing, which has been adopted by CVCLT as our Complaints and Compliments Policy,   | Refresher training and support and advice from the Complaints Officer at Connect Housing ensures this takes place.  |
| 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 | This is clearly stated within the Complaints and Compliments Policy of Connect Housing, which has been adopted by CVCLT as our Complaints and Compliments Policy,   | Complaint handlers at Connect Housing will aim to establish the frequency of updates and best method of communications with the resident. CVCLT will support Connect Housing as necessary. Decisions will be supported by |

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|      |  |     |  | Trustees at CVCLT and Complaints Officers at Connect Housing as necessary.  |
| 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 | This is clearly stated within the Complaints and Compliments Policy of Connect Housing, which has been adopted by CVCLT as our Complaints and Compliments Policy, will be recorded on Connect Housing's CRM system, and shared with CVCLT.                       | Records of disabilities and any other reasonable adjustments are recorded against the tenancy on Connect Housing's CRM system, and in CVCLT tenant data.                                |
| 5.11 | Landlords must not refuse to escalate a complaint through all stages of the complaints procedure unless it has valid reasons to do so. Landlords must clearly set out these reasons, and they must comply with the provisions set out in section 2 of this Code.   | Yes | This is clearly stated within the Complaints and Compliments Policy of Connect Housing, which has been adopted by CVCLT as our Complaints and Compliments Policy. Relevant information is contained within Connect Housing's Complaints Tracker and CRM systems. | Connect Housing is compliant with section 2 of the Code as evidenced in their policy. During 2023/24 no refusal has been made. No complaints were made by CVCLT tenants during 2023/24. |
| 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 | Records for all complaints made by CVCLT tenants or against CVCLT will be held in Connect Housing's Complaints Tracker and CRM case management systems.  | Connect Housing has a new complaint case management system that records all outcomes and stores all communications including original complaint and response letters.                   |

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| 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 | This is clearly stated within both the Complaints and Compliments Policy and the Redress and Compensation Policy of Connect Housing, which have been adopted by CVCLT as our Complaints and Compliments, and Redress and Compensation Policies,, | This is clearly stated within the Connect Housing Complaints and Compliments and Redress and Compensation Policies. Remedies and actions agreed with CVCLT tenants will be tracked and acted upon.  |
| 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 | This is clearly stated within the Complaints and Compliments Policy of Connect Housing, which has been adopted by CVCLT as our Complaints and Compliments Policy   | Examples of unacceptable behaviour and reasonable steps when they would apply are detailed in the Complaints and Compliments Policy of Connect Housing. Any restrictions put in place due to unacceptable behaviour are recorded in Connect Housing CRM system, and information given to CVCLT for recording in their tenant data system. |
| 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 clearly stated within the Complaints and Compliments Policy of Connect Housing, which has been adopted by CVCLT as our Complaints and Compliments Policy   | This is detailed in the Complaints and Compliments Policies of Connect Housing. In 2023/24 Connect Housing have reported that no restrictions have been required in respect of their tenants, and none for CVCLT tenants.   |

## 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              | This is clearly stated within the Complaints and Compliments Policy of Connect Housing, which has been adopted by CVCLT as our Complaints and Compliments Policy | All complaints, whether for Connect Housing's own tenants or those of CVCLT are triaged at the stage of receipt and assessed whether a concise and rapid stage 1 response can be offered. Stage 1 complaints are managed by Connect Housing's Service Managers and Heads of Service who possess the relevant skills and experience to aim to resolve the complaint at stage 1.<br><br>This is the approach of Connect Housing when dealing with any enquiry including complaints. |
| 6.2            | Complaints must be acknowledged, defined and logged at stage 1 of the complaints procedure <b><u>within five working days of the complaint being received.</u></b>  | Yes              | This is clearly stated within the Complaints and Compliments Policy of Connect Housing, which has been adopted by CVCLT as our Complaints and Compliments Policy | Connect Housing's Policy commits to an acknowledgement within 5 working days. Connect Housing ensure that all contact is recorded on their internal   |

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|     |  |     |  | systems for quality assurance and audit purposes. When acknowledging complaints, they will always summarise their understanding of the concerns raised., which would be conveyed to CVCLT.  |
| 6.3 | Landlords must issue a full response to stage 1 complaints <b><u>within 10 working days</u></b> of the complaint being acknowledged.   | Yes | This is clearly stated within the Complaints and Compliments Policy of Connect Housing, which has been adopted by CVCLT as our Complaints and Compliments Policy | <p>This is clearly stated within the Complaints Policy of Connect Housing and is tracked and reported on.</p> <p>Training has been provided in line with the new Code coming into force at Connect Housing, and awareness training has been put in place by CVCLT for their Trustees and Employee. Connect Housing's new CRM case management system allows responses to be monitored closely by the Complaints Officer providing assistance and support to Complaint Handlers</p> |
| 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 | Yes | This is clearly stated within the Complaints and Compliments Policy of Connect Housing, which has been adopted by CVCLT as our Complaints and Compliments Policy | <p>This is clearly stated within the Complaints Policy of Connect Housing.</p> <p>Connect Housing has implemented refresher training and a new system has been</p>  |

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|     | days without good reason, and the reason(s) must be clearly explained to the resident.  |     |  | implemented to improve this process for 2024/25  |
| 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 | This is clearly stated within the Complaints and Compliments Policy of Connect Housing, which has been adopted by CVCLT as our Complaints and Compliments Policy Connect Housing use extension letter templates. | Connect Housing provides information as standard on the extension template letter and it is included within all advice leaflets.<br>CVCLT gives contact details for the Ombudsman in tenant leaflets and on their website.   |
| 6.6 | A complaint response must be provided to the resident when the answer to the complaint is known, not when the outstanding actions required to address the issue are completed. Outstanding actions must still be tracked and actioned promptly with appropriate updates provided to the resident. | Yes | This is clearly stated within the Complaints and Compliments Policy of Connect Housing, which has been adopted by CVCLT as our Complaints and Compliments Policy   | From 1st April 2024 refresher training has been provided to all Connect Housing complaint handlers to ensure responses are sent at the point of the complaint being concluded and not when all the actions are completed.<br>Actions are recorded and tracked on their CRM system. |
| 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 | This is clearly stated within the Complaints and Compliments Policy of Connect Housing, which has been adopted by CVCLT as our Complaints and Compliments Policy   | Connect Housing has provided refresher training to complaints' handlers, in line with the new HoS code, to ensure response letters are in more detail. Template letters were reviewed, and more helpful information added to   |



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|     |   |     |  | assist the complaint handler in writing their response.   |
| 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 | This is clearly stated within the Complaints and Compliments Policy of Connect Housing, which has been adopted by CVCLT as our Complaints and Compliments Policy                                 | This is the approach of Connect Housing when dealing with any enquiry, including complaints.  |
| 6.9 | Landlords must confirm the following in writing to the resident at the completion of stage 1 in clear, plain language: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. the complaint stage;</li> <li>b. the complaint definition;</li> <li>c. the decision on the complaint;</li> <li>d. the reasons for any decisions made;</li> <li>e. the details of any remedy offered to put things right;</li> <li>f. details of any outstanding actions; and</li> <li>g. details of how to escalate the matter to stage 2 if the individual is not satisfied with the response.</li> </ul> | Yes | This is clearly stated within the Complaints and Compliments Policy of Connect Housing, which has been adopted by CVCLT as our Complaints and Compliments Policy Template letters are available. | All Connect Housing's complaint responders have been provided with training in line with the code on complaint handling and responses.<br>Connect Housing's Template letters have been updated to include more helpful guidance on what to include in responses to tenants. |

**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              | This is clearly stated within the Complaints and Compliments Policy of Connect Housing, which has been adopted by CVCLT as our Complaints and Compliments Policy Template letters are available. | This is clearly stated within the Complaints and Compliments Policy of Connect Housing, which has been adopted by CVCLT as our Complaints and Compliments Policy and tracked and on Connect Housing's CRM system.  |
| 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              | This is clearly stated within the Complaints and Compliments Policy of Connect Housing, which has been adopted by CVCLT as our Complaints and Compliments Policy                                 | Within Connect Housing's Complaints Policies, there is a commitment to an acknowledgement within 5 working days. Connect Housing ensure that all contact is recorded on their internal systems for quality assurance and audit purposes. When acknowledging complaints, Connect Housing always summarise their understanding of the concerns raised. |
| 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              | This is clearly stated within the Complaints and Compliments Policy of Connect Housing, which has been adopted by CVCLT as our Complaints and Compliments Policy                                 | Connect Housing adopt this approach when dealing with any Stage 2 complaints and refresher training on the Ombudsman's Code has been provided to emphasise this.   |

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| 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 clearly stated within the Complaints and Compliments Policy of Connect Housing, which has been adopted by CVCLT as our Complaints and Compliments Policy   | All stage 2 complaints are dealt with at Head of Service/ Director level by Connect Housing.  |
| 6.14 | Landlords must issue a final response to the stage 2 <b>within 20 working days</b> of the complaint being acknowledged.   | Yes | This is clearly stated within the Complaints and Compliments Policy of Connect Housing, which has been adopted by CVCLT as our Complaints and Compliments Policy   | This is tracked and reported on by Connect Housing  |
| 6.15 | Landlords must decide whether an extension to this timescale is needed when considering the complexity of the complaint and then inform the resident of the expected timescale for response. Any extension must be no more than 20 working days without good reason, and the reason(s) must be clearly explained to the resident. | Yes | This is clearly stated within the Complaints and Compliments Policy of Connect Housing, which has been adopted by CVCLT as our Complaints and Compliments Policy<br>Connect use extension letter templates to ensure all relevant information is included.   | This is clearly stated within the Complaints and Compliments Policy of Connect Housing.<br>Connect use extension letter templates to ensure all relevant information is included in these cases.<br>Any extension is tracked and reported on by Connect Housing |
| 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 | This is clearly stated within the Complaints and Compliments Policy of Connect Housing, which has been adopted by CVCLT as our Complaints and Compliments Policy<br>Connect Housing use extension letter templates to ensure all relevant information is included and information is provided in advice leaflets by both Connect | Connect provide this information within the standard response template letter and in the accompanying advice leaflet.<br>This information is also provided in the advice information given by CVCLT to their tenants.   |

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| 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 | This is clearly stated within the Complaints and Compliments Policy of Connect Housing, which has been adopted by CVCLT as our Complaints and Compliments Policy Connect Housing use response letter templates   | This is clearly stated within the Complaints and Compliments Policy of Connect Housing, which has been adopted by CVCLT as our Complaints and Compliments Policy Connect Housing track actions in their CRM system.    |
| 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 | This is clearly stated within the Complaints and Compliments Policy of Connect Housing, which has been adopted by CVCLT as our Complaints and Compliments Policy Connect Housing use response letter templates   | All Connect Housing Complaint Handlers have been informed of this process and given the relevant training. Refresher training has been provided to reiterate the need to include specific details in response letters. |
| 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"> <li>a. the complaint stage;</li> <li>b. the complaint definition;</li> <li>c. the decision on the complaint;</li> <li>d. the reasons for any decisions made;</li> <li>e. the details of any remedy offered to put things right;</li> <li>f. details of any outstanding actions; and</li> <li>g. details of how to escalate the</li> </ul> | Yes | This is clearly stated within the Complaints and Compliments Policy of Connect Housing, which has been adopted by CVCLT as our Complaints and Compliments Policy Information about how to escalate complaints to the Housing Ombudsman is provided in advice provided by both Connect Housing and CVCLT. | All Connect Housing's Complaint Handlers have been informed of this process. An advice leaflet confirming the right to escalate to the ombudsman is provided to the complainants with their Stage 2 response.          |

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|      | matter to the Ombudsman Service if the individual remains dissatisfied.  |     |  |   |
| 6.20 | 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 and must involve all suitable staff members needed to issue such a response. | Yes | This is clearly stated within the Complaints and Compliments Policy of Connect Housing, which has been adopted by CVCLT as our Complaints and Compliments Policy Connect Housing use response letter templates | This is clearly stated within the Complaints and Compliments Policy of Connect Housing, which has been adopted by CVCLT as our Complaints and Compliments Policy Connect Housing track responses on their CRM system. |

### 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: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Apologising;</li> <li>• Acknowledging where things have gone wrong;</li> <li>• Providing an explanation, assistance or reasons;</li> <li>• Taking action if there has been delay;</li> <li>• Reconsidering or changing a</li> </ul> | Yes              | This is clearly stated within the Complaints and Compliments, and in their Redress and Compensations Policies of Connect Housing, which have been adopted by CVCLT as our Complaints and Compliments and Redress and Compensations Policies. | A new management system has been created by Connect Housing to allow them to monitor outstanding actions, with complaint handlers taking responsibility in line with the implementation of the new code. |

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|     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• decision;</li> <li>• Amending a record or adding a correction or addendum;</li> <li>• Providing a financial remedy;</li> <li>• Changing policies, procedures or practices.</li> </ul> |     |   |   |
| 7.2 | Any remedy offered must reflect the impact on the resident as a result of any fault identified.  | Yes | This is clearly stated within the Complaints and Compliments, and in their Redress and Compensations Policies of Connect Housing, which have been adopted by CVCLT as our Complaints and Compliments and Redress and Compensations Policies | This is clearly stated within the Complaints and Compliments, and in their Redress and Compensations Policies of Connect Housing, which have been adopted by CVCLT as our Complaints and Compliments Policy |
| 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 | This is clearly stated within the Complaints and Compliments, and in their Redress and Compensations Policies of Connect Housing, which have been adopted by CVCLT as our Complaints and Compliments and Redress and Compensations Policies | Connect Housing's new case management system will allow them to monitor any remedy through to completion.   |
| 7.4 | Landlords must take account of the guidance issued by the Ombudsman when deciding on appropriate remedies.   | Yes | This is clearly stated within the Complaints and Compliments, and in their Redress and Compensations Policies of Connect Housing, which have been adopted by CVCLT as our Complaints and Compliments and Redress and Compensations Policies | All policies have been updated in line with the guidance provided   |

## Section 8: Putting things right

| Code provision | Code requirement   | Comply: Yes / No | Evidence   | Commentary / explanation  |
|----------------|--|------------------|--|---|
| 8.1            | <p>Landlords must produce an annual complaints performance and service improvement report for scrutiny and challenge, which must include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. the annual self-assessment against this Code to ensure their complaint handling policy remains in line with its requirements.</li> <li>b. a qualitative and quantitative analysis of the landlord's complaint handling performance. This must also include a summary of the types of complaints the landlord has refused to accept;</li> <li>c. any findings of non-compliance with this Code by the Ombudsman;</li> <li>d. the service improvements made as a result of the learning from complaints;</li> <li>e. any annual report about the landlord's performance from the Ombudsman; and</li> <li>f. any other relevant reports or publications produced by the Ombudsman in relation to the work of the landlord.</li> </ul> | Yes              | <p>This is clearly stated within the Complaints and Compliments, and in their Redress and Compensations Policies of Connect Housing, which have been adopted by CVCLT as our Complaints and Compliments and Redress and Compensations Policies. Both organisations have produced an Annual Complaints Performance and Service Improvement Report for 2023/24. CVCLT did not have any complaints from their tenants for 2023/24</p> | <p>All policies have been updated in line with the guidance provided.</p> |
| 8.2            | <p>The annual complaints performance and service improvement report must be</p>  | Yes              | <p>This is clearly stated within the Complaints and Compliments Policy</p>   | <p>Both Connect Housing and CVCLT have submitted to, and</p>              |

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|     | 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. |     | of Connect Housing, which has been adopted by CVCLT as our Complaints and Compliments Policy. Both organisations have produced an Annual Complaints Performance and Service Improvement Report for 2023/24, which has been reported to the Board of Trustees. CVCLT did not have any complaints from their tenants for 2023/24 | discussed their Annual Complaints and Service Improvement Report at their respective Boards and have published them on their websites.   |
| 8.3 | Landlords must also carry out a self-assessment following a significant restructure, merger and/or change in procedures.   | Yes | This is clearly stated within the Complaints and Compliments Policy of Connect Housing, which has been adopted by CVCLT as our Complaints and Compliments Policy   | Connect Housing report that there has not been any significant restructure, merger and/or change in procedures in their last reporting period, but policies have been updated.<br>CVCLT has carried out a self assessment following updates to procedures for managing complaints during 2024. |
| 8.4 | Landlords may be asked to review and update the self-assessment following an Ombudsman investigation.  | Yes | This is clearly stated within the Complaints and Compliments Policy of Connect Housing, which has been adopted by CVCLT as our Complaints and Compliments Policy   | Connect Housing report that these have not occurred in their last reporting period, but policies have been updated.<br>CVCLT has carried out a self assessment following updates to procedures for managing complaints during 2024.  |
| 8.5 | If a landlord is unable to comply with the   | Yes | This is clearly stated within the  | Neither organisation has   |



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|  | <p>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.</p> |  | <p>Complaints and Compliments Policy of Connect Housing, which has been adopted by CVCLT as our Complaints and Compliments Policy</p> | <p>suffered exceptional circumstances in their last reporting period, but policies have been updated. CVCLT has carried out a self assessment following updates to procedures for managing complaints during 2024.</p> |
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## Section 9: Scrutiny & oversight: continuous learning and improvement

| Code provision | Code requirement   | Comply: Yes / No | Evidence  | Commentary / explanation  |
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| 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              | This is clearly stated within the Complaints and Compliments, and in the Redress and Compensations Policies of Connect Housing, which have been adopted by CVCLT as our Complaints and Compliments and Redress and Compensations Policies   | Connect Housing share lessons learned on an ongoing basis. They identify lessons learnt and these are monitored on their complaints management system. Whilst CVCLT had no complaints in 2023/24, improvements have been made following the updating of procedures.         |
| 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              | This is clearly stated within the Complaints and Compliments, and in their Redress and Compensations Policies of Connect Housing, which have been adopted by CVCLT as our Complaints and Compliments and Redress and Compensations Policies. and in information and advice provided to tenants and customers.<br><br>CVCLT received no complaints in 2023/24, although improvements have been made following the TSM data collection process. | The values and corporate strategy of both organisations support this approach. Complaints reporting for Connect Housing now go to a Customer Experience Working Group to identify learning and introduce positive change to service delivery prior to reports to the Board. |
| 9.3            | Accountability and transparency are also integral to a positive complaint handling culture. Landlords must report back on  | Yes              | This is clearly stated within the Complaints and Compliments, and in their Redress and Compensations  | Learning and improvements from complaints to Connect Housing, are reported  |

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|            | <p>wider learning and improvements from complaints to stakeholders, such as residents' panels, staff and relevant committees.</p>   |            | <p>Policies of Connect Housing, which have been adopted by CVCLT as our Complaints and Compliments and Redress and Compensations Policies, in the Annual Complaints and Service Improvement Reports published on their websites. CVCLT received no complaints in 2023/24, although lessons were learned through the TSM data collection process. The results of the TSM process and lessons learned were published on the CVCLT website.</p> | <p>quarterly to Connect Housing's Customer Experience Working Group (which includes residents) and their Board along with any HOS findings. The Annual Complaint Review goes to their Board and is published on their website. The Self-Assessment Reports are approved by the Boards of both organisations prior to publication. Connect Housing has identified an area for improvement and is looking to provide quarterly updates on their website showing performance updates.</p> |
| <p>9.4</p> | <p>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.</p> | <p>Yes</p> | <p>This is clearly stated within the Complaints and Compliments, and in their Redress and Compensations Policies of Connect Housing, which have been adopted by CVCLT as our Complaints and Compliments and Redress and Compensations Policies, and in the Annual Complaints and Service Improvement Reports published on both websites. CVCLT received no complaints in</p>   | <p>The designated Complaints Officer at Connect Housing reports to their Head of Business Assurance who has overall responsibility for the implementation of the complaints policy including assessing any themes or trends to identify potential systemic issues, serious risks, or policies and procedures that require revision.</p>  |

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|     |   |     | <p>2023/24, although improvements were made following the TSM data collection process. The results of the TSM process and lessons learned were published on the CVCLT website.</p> <p>One Trustee at CVCLT will be taking responsibility for complaint handling as the MRC, and a second Trustee will receive reports from Connect Housing in respect of any complaints made.</p>   |  |
| 9.5 | <p>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').</p> | Yes | <p>This is clearly stated within the Complaints and Compliments Policy of Connect Housing, which has been adopted by CVCLT as our Complaints and Compliments Policy One Trustee at CVCLT will be taking responsibility for complaint handling as the MRC, and a second Trustee will receive reports from Connect Housing in respect of any complaints made. One Trustee at CVCLT will be taking responsibility for complaint handling as the MRC, and a second Trustee will receive reports from Connect Housing in respect of any complaints made.</p> | <p>A member of the Board of Connect Housing was appointed MRC in November 2023. Their responsibilities are set out in the complaints policy and their role is detailed in their Standing Orders. CVCLT has a simpler process given the small number of tenants and one employee, and no complaints received.</p> |
| 9.6 | <p>The MRC will be responsible for ensuring the governing body receives regular</p>   | Yes | <p>This is clearly stated within the Complaints and Compliments Policy</p>  | <p>At Connect Housing, the MRC is also a member of their</p>   |

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|     | <p>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.</p>  |     | <p>of Connect Housing, which has been adopted by CVCLT as our Complaints and Compliments Policy One Trustee at CVCLT will be taking responsibility for complaint handling as the MRC, and a second Trustee will receive reports from Connect Housing in respect of any complaints made.</p>   | <p>CEWG which meets quarterly throughout the year to discuss trends and themes from complaints arising.</p>   |
| 9.7 | <p>As a minimum, the MRC and the governing body (or equivalent) must receive:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. regular updates on the volume, categories and outcomes of complaints, alongside complaint handling performance;</li> <li>b. regular reviews of issues and trends arising from complaint handling;</li> <li>c. regular updates on the outcomes of the Ombudsman's investigations and progress made in complying with orders related to severe maladministration findings; and</li> <li>d. annual complaints performance and service improvement report.</li> </ul> | Yes | <p>This is clearly stated within the Complaints and Compliments Policy of Connect Housing, which has been adopted by CVCLT as our Complaints and Compliments Policy One Trustee at CVCLT will be taking responsibility for complaint handling as the MRC, and a second Trustee will receive reports from Connect Housing in respect of any complaints made.</p> <p>TSM information was submitted to the Board for discussion.</p> <p>No complaints were made by CVCLT tenants in 2023/24.</p> | <p>A quarterly Customer Insight Report is reported to Connect Housing's Board and the MRC which includes details of complaints volumes and response rates, themes and trends from complaint handling and service improvements made. The Board also receives a regular update from the Leadership Team which includes any findings from the Ombudsman.</p> |
| 9.8 | <p>Landlords must have a standard objective in relation to complaint handling for all relevant employees or third parties that reflects the need to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. have a collaborative and co-operative approach towards resolving</li> </ul>  | Yes | <p>This is clearly stated within the Complaints and Compliments Policy of Connect Housing, which has been adopted by CVCLT as our Complaints and Compliments Policy CVCLT is confident, by reference to</p>   | <p>All colleagues at Connect Housing must go through their Code of Conduct training where it is made clear that they should have a collaborative approach to</p>  |

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|  | <p>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> |  | <p>Connect Housing's self assessment, that they are complying with the Housing Ombudsman Code. CVCLT will adopt a collaborative approach, and take responsibility where necessary.</p> | <p>resolving complaints, take collective responsibility and not to blame others, and act within the professional standards for engaging with complaints.</p> |
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