



Homes and Neighbourhoods

**Annual Complaints Performance and Service Improvement
Report 2024/25**

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Introduction

At Kirklees Council we aim to deliver high quality services, but we know that sometimes things go wrong and that you might not always be satisfied with our services. If that happens, you can make a complaint.

We have a complaints policy that is designed to ensure that if you need to make a complaint, we handle the complaint well and ensure that we put things right for residents. Customer satisfaction is very important to us, and we use your feedback from complaints to shape and make improvements to our services and procedures.

When dealing with housing-related complaints from our tenants or leaseholders, we follow the Housing Ombudsman's Complaints Handling Code. This sets out how landlords are expected to deal with and learn from complaints, and it is a statutory requirement for all social housing landlords to abide by the code.

You can find out more information on the Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code here: [Housing Ombudsman- Landlords Info-Complaint Handling Code](#)

Each year we carry out a self-assessment against the Code to ensure we are compliant and are handling complaints in the right way. We publish this on our website for our tenants and leaseholders. You can see a copy of our latest assessment here: [link to be added](#)

We are dedicated to using your feedback to drive meaningful change and enhance the overall customer experience. The lessons learned from complaints can improve the quality and focus of services provided. More information on what improvements have been made already and what is being undertaken this year can be found later in this report.

This report accompanies the self-assessment and covers three main topics:

- How well we deal with complaints
- Any issues the Housing Ombudsman has found in how we deal with complaints
- What service improvements we have made by learning from complaints

If you have any questions about this report, or any comments on how we deal with complaints, please contact us at HN.Customer.Service@kirklees.gov.uk

Governance statements

Leader of Kirklees Council

A statement will be provided following the meeting of Cabinet.

Member Responsible for Complaints (MRC)

In my role as the council's Cabinet Member responsible for Complaints (MRC), I have scrutinised and challenged the report including a self-assessment completed by officers on behalf of the council, and how any risks identified as part of this process have been addressed.

Whilst I appreciate complaints in themselves are an opportunity to learn, that some good practice exists in the way the Council handles complaints and that complaints have reduced in some key service areas, I have specifically challenged the overall number of complaints received and the number of complaints dealt with within the timescales set out in the Council's policy. I am concerned by the number of complaints escalated and not resolved at stage one, and the number of complaints upheld at both stages of the process indicating an ongoing degree of service failure. I am further concerned by the perception from tenants, as reflected in the Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs), that service handling of complaints was not satisfactory.

I have sought assurances that necessary learning has been embedded into the way we work, not only with complaints handling but further 'upstream' in the way we deliver services. It is clear from the annual report that tenants would like better communication when, for example, a repair is requested but also throughout, and at every stage of that service interaction. The service has undergone improvements in its end-to-end repairs process over the last year with communication touchpoints now embedded within the process, reducing complaint volumes in this discrete area.

I have assured myself that the self-assessment against the Code is an accurate reflection of the Council's position, and I am satisfied that both short and long-term plans to rectify service deficits are in place and being progressed.

Along with the Homes and Neighbourhoods Improvement Board and the Tenant Led Panel, I will continue to receive regular performance reports at my portfolio briefings, to ensure learning is being embedded and that improvements are having the desired impact on tenant experience.

As required in Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code, this annual report has been published on the Kirklees Council website alongside policies and procedures, and our Complaints Handling Code Self-Assessment.

Complaints Handling Performance 2024/25

Summary Table

Table 1- Summary of Complaints Handling Performance

Activity	Position*	Variance	Next Steps
Stage 1 complaints responded to	772	 Reduction of 54 (6.5%) new complaints compared to 2023/24	Continue to actively promote and publicise our Complaints Policy
	82.71% in time	 An improvement of 8.38% responded to within 10 day timescale	Continue to improve the % responded to within 10 days
	64.34% upheld	 A 0.89% increase in upheld cases	Make the necessary improvements to reduce the % of upheld complaints
Stage 2 complaints responded to	250	 Increase of 45 (18%) complaint escalations to Stage 2	Continue to work with managers to ensure complaints are resolved at Stage 1
	68.18% in time	 A 7.08% reduction of complaints responded to in 20 days	Improve the % responded to within 20 days
	63.22% upheld	 A 2.17% increase in upheld cases	Make the necessary improvements to reduce to % of upheld complaints
Number of complaints not accepted	25	 6 last year	This is a positive trend and is an indicator of greater compliance against the Code
Housing Ombudsman determinations	49 (21 cases)	 8 determinations made last year	Continue to work with managers to ensure complaints are resolved and learning/service improvements delivered to stop complaints occurring in the first place
Number of compliments received	125	 38 more (30.4%) compliments received	Continue to find opportunities for residents to feedback on their positive experiences with us
Overall satisfaction with complaint handling	42.2%	No comparison due to survey improvements and amendments.	We have implemented a new and improved telephone satisfaction survey

Average amount of compensation paid

£418.72  £287.03

We have adopted the new Housing Ombudsman Financial Remedies Guidance to better calculate the amount of compensation paid. Which has seen a rise in the level of compensation paid. This figure includes all payments associated with resolving complaints.

*Red indicates a negative change, green indicates a positive change, amber indicates minimal change

Reasons why residents made complaints

We received 772 new Stage 1 complaints and 250 complaint escalations to Stage 2. This is a 6.5% (54) reduction in Stage 1 complaints, and an increase of 18% (45) in escalations to Stage 2.

It is encouraging to report that we reduced the overall volume of complaints relating to the repair and maintenance of homes by 105 (18.2%) in the last 12 months. This is a result of our Property Services Teams implementing a new real time feedback survey as soon as a repair has been completed. Any resident giving a low satisfaction score is contacted straight away in order to resolve any concerns as soon as they arise.

However, the repair and maintenance of residents' homes remains the most common reason for complaints and accounts for 60.8% (470) of all Stage 1 complaints.

Within this category, the below were the most common reasons for complaints:

- Damp, Mould and Condensation (DMC) (78) 10.1%
- General repair e.g. repair left incomplete, or quality of workmanship (74) 9.6%
- Attitude and behaviours of staff (42) 5.4%
- Timescales of repair (40) 5.1%
- Roof leaks (35) 4.5%

When we investigated these cases 75% were justified as we had failed to meet the required service standards.

We have reviewed our approaches to address the number of Damp, mould and condensation (DMC) cases and can report an increase in the number of treatments undertaken and as a result a reduction in the number of open cases of DMC. Vulnerability information is gathered when a new case is received, and cases are prioritised by vulnerability. To further improve performance a team of 6 Housing Management Officers (HMOs) have been assigned to the DMC Team who contact tenants and visit vulnerable tenants to establish any further support needs and to provide signposting.

We want to improve satisfaction with the repair, maintenance and condition of your homes. In response we have commenced a Repairs and Maintenance Redesign project which includes a review of the Repairs and Maintenance Policy ahead of implementing a new repairs IT system later this year. We will ensure we take into consideration everything we have learnt from complaints and Housing Ombudsman cases and improve customer satisfaction.

The redesign will see new improved operational ways of working to align with the introduction of Awwab's law in October 2025 and will ensure there is improvement in the communication with residents about the timescale and progress of their repairs.

We have also implemented a new process for when residents experience any type of leak to ensure jobs are not closed after not being able to access the property. This will help reduce any delays in the resolution of leaks.

This year we will be looking in more detail about how the attitude of operatives has impacted on our service delivery ensuring that all teams receive regular updates on how to deliver customer excellence.

Complaints about our Housing Management service accounted for 34.7% (268) of all Stage 1 complaints. Within this area the most common reason for complaints was:

- Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) (70) 9.1%

For us in Kirklees 'Housing Management' refers to activities carried out in association with rent collection, the allocation and letting of properties as well as tenancy and estate management. Tenancy and estate Management is defined as property and environmental management and services that are designed to give our tenants and residents quiet enjoyment of their homes in a safe, secure and decent environment. This goes beyond the physical care, repair and improvement of the built environment.

Whilst 34.7% of all complaints related to our Housing Management services, we found that 47.86% of these complaints were not upheld.

With regard to anti-social behaviour we want to improve your satisfaction with this area of our service, so in March 2025 and we implemented new Anti-Social Behaviour, Domestic Abuse and Vulnerable Tenant Policies to prioritise and act directly, in our capacity as landlord, to protect and support our tenants.

In addition to this we have also delivered training to all our Housing Management Officers in the handling of Anti-Social Behaviour cases and have implemented new ASB case handling audits to improve assurance in the handling of ASB cases. We will continue to do this over the next 12 months in addition to exploring the full range of tools and powers available to us to support us in resolving cases of ASB e.g. using closure orders etc.

We know we need to improve the number of complaints escalating to Stage 2 about Housing Management Services. As a result, we have implemented additional peer support for managers to ensure we are putting things right as soon as we can in the complaints process and reducing the need for you to escalate your complaint to achieve a resolution.

Reasons why residents escalated their complaints

We ask residents if they would like to advise on the reasons for escalating their complaint. These are the most common reasons:

- Unhappy with the response provided or decision made at stage 1 53%
- The outcomes agreed in the Stage 1 response were not completed 35%
- Stage 1 response was not provided within agreed timescales 6%
- Unhappy with compensation amount 5%

In response to the above we will undertake quality audits of stage 1 letters to ensure that the investigating manager engages with the resident's concerns and that their response answers all the points raised in the complaint, explains the reasons for any delays or failings and provides a clear rationale for any decision making, including providing a clear decision as to whether the complaint was upheld or not upheld. The learning and outcomes from these case audits will be shared with investigating managers and relevant staff involved in complaint handling.

How we did on our timescales of responding to complaints

We improved the number of Stage 1 complaints responded to within the 10 day timescale, with 82.71% responded to within the required timescale, this is an improvement of 8.38% compared with last year. Our performance deteriorated for complaints that were escalated to Stage 2, with 68.18% responded within the 20 day timescale, a reduction of 7.8%.

Ensuring we respond to your complaints within the timescales set out in our Complaints Policy and the Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code is something that is important to residents and to us.

In recognition that we need to further improve our performance around the number of complaints responded to within timescale we have made some changes to the way in which we organise and allocate our complaints, along with improved management oversight. These changes have resulted in improvements to response times and we are confident that performance will further improve in 2025-2026.

Reasons why we didn't accept complaints

This year we have not accepted 25 complaints, for the following reasons:

- The complaint had already been reviewed at Stage 1 and 2 of the Complaint Policy (12)
- The complaint related to an issue that arose more than 12 months ago (6)
- The issue or concern had not previously been raised and therefore treated as a service request (2)
- A separate appeal process is available (2)
- Legal proceedings had started (1)
- Complaint related to personal injury, and was therefore handled by Kirklees Risk and Insurance Team (1)
- The complaint did not relate to services provided by Kirklees Council (1)

When it is the first time a resident has expressed dissatisfaction about a service provided by Kirklees Council, it will be treated as a service request. In these cases, we will ensure you are notified in writing of our intention to do this. If you remain dissatisfied this can then be logged at Stage 1 of the Complaints Policy.

In cases where the complaint has already gone through Stage 1 and 2 of the complaints handling process, the Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code advises that residents should be directed to the Housing Ombudsman Service if they remain dissatisfied. All our response letters provide residents with contact details of the Housing Ombudsman Service.

Satisfaction with Complaints Handling

How did you find our complaint handling?

We implemented a new and improved satisfaction survey to improve our understanding of your experience with complaint handling. Below shows what your feedback tells us from the text survey:

- 62% were satisfied with the ease of complaint process
- 48% were satisfied with the information provided
- 44.2% satisfied with the speed of complaint handling
- 63.4% were satisfied and comfortable in making a complaint again
- 42.2% were satisfied with our complaint handling overall

The above figures are based on a response rate of 36.6%.

We do often find that the satisfaction levels when completing the text survey results are often indicative of whether a resident is happy with the outcome of their complaint, rather than their satisfaction with the actual complaints handling process.

Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSM's) and complaint handling?

Complaints handling forms part of the TSMs ('Tenant Perception' measures) which are based on tenants' views of how the council is performing. There is also a suite of 'Management Information' measures included in the TSMs which are based on information to be provided directly by the landlord. The TSMs includes two specific questions on the topic of complaints and the following shows the results from the TSM survey undertaken for 2023/24 where 2636 (or 13%) of households took part:

- Have you made a complaint to Kirklees Council Housing Services in the last 12 months? – 30% of tenants said they complained*
- How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with Kirklees Council Housing Services approach to complaints handling – 23.2% said they were satisfied.*

The regulatory complaints satisfaction question is considered very broad, it is important to understand these questions in the context of the wider experience of residents when discussing repairs and other issues, as opposed to the much narrower formal complaints procedure. Almost a third of tenants that responded to the survey claim to have made a complaint, which is a very large proportion. Experience with this question has shown that it will include relatively few who used the formal complaints process. Instead, this should be better understood as those who had some sort of issue or problem over the last 12 months that they believed the Council needed to solve. The results should therefore be viewed as comments on how the Council deals with issues or problems that arise, rather than a measure of how the formal complaint process performs.

Table 2- TSM Summary Table

TSM ID	Tenant Satisfaction Measure	Kirklees Council 2023/24	Median Score Similar Landlord Comparison 2023/2024	Median Score National Comparison 2023/2024
Management Information Data				
CH01	Number of Stage 1 complaints relative to the size of the landlord (number of complaints per 1,000 properties)	36.54	39.1	46.5
CH01	Number of Stage 2 complaints relative to the size of the landlord (number of complaints per 1,000 properties)	11.83	4.8	6.05
CH02	Stage 1 complaints responded to within Complaint Handling Code timescales	82.71%	82.40%	83.00%
CH02	Stage 2 complaints responded to within Complaint Handling Code timescales	68.81%	78.30%	80.75%
Tenant Perception Data				
TP09	Proportion of respondents who report making a complaint in the last 12 months who are satisfied with their landlord's approach to complaints handling.	23.2%	35.10%	34%

Housing Ombudsman Cases

Determinations Summary

49 determinations were received from the Housing Ombudsman following a review of 21 individual cases. We received:

- 2 Severe Maladministration determinations
 - 20 Maladministration determinations
 - 10 Service Failures
 - 14 No maladministration determinations
 - 3 cases the Housing Ombudsman felt we had offered appropriate redress that satisfactorily resolved the complaint.
-
- 27 of the negative determinations related to property condition and repairs
 - 11 of negative determinations related to complaint handling
 - 4 of the negative determinations related to ASB and Noise

The Housing Ombudsman also found 14 determinations of no maladministration where we showed good practice in the handling of cases to implement more service improvements. Please see the Learning section of this report for more information.

Outcomes and Orders from the Housing Ombudsman

Table 3- Table of Housing Ombudsman Determinations

Complaint	Date received and outcome received	Orders and recommendations
202217807	16 th April 2024	<u>Order(s)</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Response to reports of damp and mould in the property. b. Handling of the resident's decant from the property. c. Handling of the resident's compensation claim. d. Handling of the associated complaints. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Severe maladministration b. offered reasonable redress, which satisfactorily resolves the complaint c. Maladministration d. Maladministration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Pay the resident compensation 2. Reassess liability for the damage caused to the resident's possessions 3. Complete all identified repairs to the property if not already done so <p><u>Recommendations</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Pay the resident the compensation offered in relation to its handling of the decant, if it has not already done so 2. Undertake a detailed review of the case to identify lessons learnt, including its record keeping systems and processes
202322104	29 th April 2024	<u>Orders</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Handling of leaks and the damage caused by those leaks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Maladministration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Write to the resident to apologise for the failings identified in the report. 2. Pay the resident compensation
202226542	23 rd May 2024	<u>Orders</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Response to the resident's reports of 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. No maladministration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Offer an apology to the resident for the failings

<p>leaks from the upstairs flat.</p> <p>b. Response to the resident's reports of noise transfer from the upstairs flat.</p> <p>c. Handling of the resident's complaint.</p>	<p>b. Service failure</p> <p>c. Service Failure</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Pay the resident compensation. 3. Contact the resident and confirm there are no compartmentalisation issues between the 2 properties and provide the resident with a copy of the survey report 4. Review approach to noise nuisance. <p><u>Recommendations</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Pay the resident compensation it previously agreed to pay, if not already paid.
<p>202229077</p> <p>a. The condition of the property when it was let to the resident.</p> <p>b. Handling of subsequent various repairs at the property.</p> <p>c. Complaint handling</p>	<p>30th May 2024</p> <p>a. No maladministration</p> <p>b. Maladministration</p> <p>c. Service failure</p>	<p><u>Orders</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Pay compensation to the resident 2. Provide the resident and Housing Ombudsman with action plan including timescales for completing any outstanding associated work at the property 3. Review the handling of the repairs and provide the Housing Ombudsman with its action plan for improvement. <p><u>Recommendations</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Provide the resident and the Housing Ombudsman Service with an update on when the resident's new home will be ready to move into.
<p>202308305</p> <p>a. Handling of repairs to the property, specifically relating to broken guttering and repointing.</p> <p>b. Response to the resident's reports of</p>	<p>26th June 2024</p> <p>a. Maladministration</p> <p>b. Maladministration</p>	<p><u>Orders</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Pay the resident compensation 2. Arrange and carry out an appointment to post-inspect the pointing works and create an action plan, with

<p>damp, mould and water ingress.</p>		<p>dates, for any further outstanding repairs that are identified.</p> <p>3. Carry out a review of Redress Policy to ensure there is clarity regarding whether compensation will be paid when failings by third parties/contractors are identified.</p> <p><u>Recommendations</u></p> <p>1. Reviews recording and data handling processes to ensure measures are in place to track repairs appropriately</p>
<p>202307979</p> <p>a. Handling of a leak from a burst pipe.</p>	<p>27th June 2024</p> <p>a. Service failure</p>	<p><u>Orders</u></p> <p>1. Pay the resident compensation</p> <p><u>Recommendations</u></p> <p>1. Review records and identify, where required, provide evidence to show the dates and times it attended for repairs appointments.</p> <p>2. Provide staff training on repair categorisation in line with its repairs policy.</p>
<p>202234428</p> <p>a. Response to the resident's complaint about its handling of asbestos in her home</p>	<p>28th June 2024</p> <p>a. As redress was offered to the resident prior to investigation, in the Ombudsman's opinion, resolves the complaint satisfactorily.</p>	<p>No order or recommendations made.</p>
<p>202322546</p>	<p>19th July 2024</p> <p>a. Maladministration</p>	<p><u>Orders</u></p>

<p>a. Handling of report of threatening behaviour by a neighbour</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Pay the resident compensation 2. Apologise to the resident for the maladministration identified in this report. 3. Take steps to remind ASB case handlers of the importance of: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. Appropriately recording all reports of ASB on its relevant system. ii. Carrying out a risk/vulnerability assessment with complainants as early as possible and signposting to any appropriate support. iii. Agreeing a contact method and frequency with all complainants, as per its policy
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202218768	30 th July 2024	<u>Orders</u>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Handling of reports of leaks, damp and mould in her property. b. Handling of associated complaint. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Maladministration b. Maladministration 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Provide a written and detailed apology to the resident for the failings identified in this report. 2. Pay compensation directly to the resident 3. Contact the resident to discuss the damp and mould surveys, assess the outstanding repairs and agree a work schedule for the repairs. 4. Provide the resident with information on managing the levels of humidity in her home. 5. Provide the resident with the outcome of its review (which it said it would carry out in its final response to the resident's complaints in January 2023) of the

		findings from its investigation
202323479	8 th August 2024	<u>Orders</u>
a. Handling of major works to the property and the resident's associated decant.	a. Maladministration	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Pay the resident compensation 2. Refund the resident any remaining credit on her rent account. 3. Apologise to the resident for the maladministration identified by this report
202345536	20 th August 2024	<u>Orders</u>
a. Handling of damp and mould concerns.	a. As redress was offered to the resident prior to investigation, in the Ombudsman's opinion, resolves the complaint satisfactorily	1. Pay the resident compensation
b. Handling of concerns about the adequacy of the heating system.	b. No maladministration	
c. Accuracy of information about the property including an oven and hob.	c. Service failure	
202327383	30 th September 2024	No order or recommendations made.
a. Handling of the resident's reports of anti-social behaviour (ASB) including harassment from his neighbour and the housing officer's conduct.	a. No maladministration	
b. Handling of the resident's complaint.	b. No maladministration	
202314578	29 th November 2024	<u>Orders</u>

<p>a. Response to the resident's concerns about a rent increase.</p> <p>b. Handling of the resident's reports of outstanding repairs, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Kitchen smoke damage. ii. Windows and doors. iii. A bathroom leak. iv. A faulty boiler. <p>c. Complaint handling</p>	<p>a. decision to increase the rent is outside of this Service's jurisdiction.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Maladministration ii. maladministration iii. service failure iv. no maladministration <p>c. Service failure</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A senior manager of the landlord should apologise to the resident for the failings identified in this report. 2. Pay the resident compensation
<p>202325823</p> <p>a. handling of repairs including damp and mould, removal of polystyrene ceiling tiles in the hallway, repairs to the kitchen ceiling, repairs to the windows and clearing the rear gutter at the resident's property.</p> <p>b. associated complaint handling</p>	<p>4th December 2024</p> <p>a. Maladministration</p> <p>b. Maladministration</p>	<p><u>Orders</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Inspect the bathroom window and replace the friction plate if necessary. 2. Inspect the vent in the small bedroom window to see if it can be repaired and if not, it should replace the vent. 3. Pay the resident compensation 4. Carry-out staff training in relation to responding to residents' complaints to ensure that it addresses all complaint points raised. <p><u>Recommendations</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Set out in writing to the resident, the reasons it cannot install a larger extractor fan in the kitchen. 2. Confirm to the resident what plastering it is due to carry-out to her kitchen and carry-out within timescales for completing routine repairs. 3. Inspects the beading securing the hallway floorboards and if

		necessary, remedies any mould.
202347538	9 th December 2024	
a. Condition of the void property.	a. No maladministration	No orders or recommendations made
b. Handling of reports about condensation, damp and mould at the property and requests for repairs to the plastering at the property.	b. No maladministration	
c. Handling of requests for repairs to the doors, the radiators, and small hole under the kitchen units.	c. No maladministration	
d. Handling of the formal complaint.	d. No maladministration	
202309150	6 th February 2025	
a. response to the resident's reports of antisocial behaviour (ASB) by way of fly tipping.	a. No Maladministration	No orders or recommendations made
202408595	12 th February 2025	<u>Orders</u>
Handling of:		
a. roof repairs.	a. Maladministration	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Write to the resident to apologise for the failures 2. Pay the resident compensation 3. Write to the resident to confirm whether the window and roof repairs have resolved his concerns 4. Arrange for relevant staff to undertake complaint handling training to strengthen its working practices 5. Review record keeping practices, focusing on the failures identified
b. window repairs.	b. Maladministration	
c. damp and mould.	c. Maladministration	
d. the complaint	d. Maladministration	
202306363	13 th February 2025	

<p>a. Handling of repairs to the stairs in the resident's property.</p> <p>b. Response to reports of damaged asbestos.</p> <p>c. Response to the resident's request for reimbursement for damaged belongings.</p>	<p>a. No Maladministration</p> <p>b. No Maladministration</p> <p>c. No Maladministration</p>	<p>No orders or recommendations made</p>
<p>202317062</p> <p>a. Handling of subsidence reports.</p>	<p>24th February 2025</p> <p>a. Severe Maladministration</p>	<p><u>Orders</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Write to the resident with a full apology for the failings identified in this report. In this it is to confirm whether it has completed the drainage patch repairs. 2. Pay the resident compensation 3. Produce a report for the resident and Ombudsman detailing timeline for the temporary move including the investigation and resolution work. 4. Organise for a suitably qualified person to assess the front door lintel. 5. Carry out a senior management review as to what happened in this case, so it can identify the blockages and resolve these for the future.
<p>202313374</p> <p>a. handling of request for permission to install an electric vehicle charging point and driveway.</p> <p>b. Complaint handling</p>	<p>17th March 2025</p> <p>a. Service failure</p> <p>b. Service failure</p>	<p><u>Orders</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Write to the resident to apologise. 2. Pay the resident compensation <p><u>Recommendations</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Consider if a policy or procedure would be helpful in making residents aware of how it deals with

requests for permission to make alterations.

2. Consider how it can avoid referring to irrelevant matters in future when responding to complaints.

202336416

24th March 2025

Orders

- a. response to reports of a leak from the resident's bath and bathroom sink, and damage to his belongings.
- b. response to reports of damp and mould in the resident's property.
- c. handling of the resident's complaint.

- a. Service failure
- b. Maladministration
- c. Maladministration

1. Provide an apology letter to the resident acknowledging the failures identified in this report.
2. Pay the resident compensation
3. Appoint a single point of contact for the resident to discuss the repair issues.
4. Arrange for an inspection of the property to confirm what works remain outstanding to the bathroom and assess the issue of damp and mould throughout the property.
5. Write to the resident to provide the outcome of its inspection and include identified work required and timescales for completion.

Recommendations

Review staff training needs to ensure all relevant officers:

- a. Respond to requests for repairs appropriately and progresses works orders in accordance with its relevant policies and procedures.
- b. Are keeping relevant records up to date and making sure information is accessible to all relevant departments.
- c. Respond to formal complaints appropriately. Responses must address all issues raised by the

resident. It should ensure all relevant officers do so in an efficient and timely manner, and in accordance with its relevant policies and procedures and the Code.

We have complied with all Orders made by the Housing Ombudsman Service and received no Complaint Handling Failure Orders.

You can view our determinations on the Housing Ombudsman website [here](#) and you can find the annual report for 23-24 produced by the Housing Ombudsman [here](#)

Learning from Complaints

Summary

Complaints need to be used as a source of intelligence to identify issues and introduce positive changes in service delivery. Effective and positive complaint handling also offers a valuable insight into the services provided by the council as a landlord and how we are perceived and received by tenants. Complaints or lessons learned from a complaint can improve the quality and focus of services provided to all customers.

The following provides a summary of learning identified and improvements already made as a result of complaints, and new actions identified for the coming year.

Table 4- Summary of Learning

Themes	Completed Actions	Next Steps
Repairs and Maintenance	<p>We implemented a new Repair Survey in June 2024 for residents to give live feedback on their repair. Any resident giving a negative score is contacted immediately as part of our commitment to resolve dissatisfaction as early as possible. This has reduced the volumes of new complaints to Property Services by 27%.</p> <p>New process implemented for when residents experience any type of leak to ensure jobs are not closed after not being able to access the property.</p> <p>In response to the number of references the Housing Ombudsman have made in</p>	<p>Reviewing what happens if a customer is not home when we come to carry out repairs. The council aims to reduce the time it takes for these repairs to be rescheduled and completed</p> <p>We will continue our Repairs and Maintenance Redesign to align with the implementation of our new repairs system.</p> <p>We will be looking in more detail about how the attitude of operatives has impacted on our service delivery ensuring that all teams receive regular</p>

	<p>relation to non-adherence to the timescales for repair outlined in the current Repairs and Maintenance Policy a repair redesign project is underway. This will change operational practices and communication with residents. It will improve customer satisfaction by ensuring residents are better informed on the progress of their repair.</p>	<p>updates on how to deliver customer excellence.</p>
Damp & Mould (DMC)	<p>We set up a new DMC Team in April 2024 so that customers can contact directly, ensuring reports of damp and mould are recorded and responded to quickly by identifying the root causes, and customers are kept updated</p> <p>We have reviewed our approaches to address the number of Damp, mould and condensation (DMC) cases and can report an increase in the number of treatments undertaken and as a result a reduction in the number of open cases of DMC. Vulnerability information is gathered when a new case is received, and cases are prioritised by vulnerability. To further improve performance a team of 6 Housing Management Officers (HMOs) have been assigned to the DMC Team who contact tenants and visit vulnerable tenants to establish any further support needs and to provide signposting.</p>	<p>Continue to work with the regulator to reduce overall number of DMC cases.</p> <p>Align repairs timescales and procedures with the implementation of Awwab's law in October 2025.</p>
Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB)	<p>Housing Officers and Housing Managers have completed newly developed ASB training</p> <p>Developed and implemented ASB case audits</p>	<p>Explore full range of tools and powers available to landlords</p> <p>Continuation of ASB Audits</p>
Policies	<p>Fencing addendum to Repairs and Maintenance Policy. Full policy to be updated 2025/26.</p>	<p>Tenancy Agreement review to provide further clarity for residents on expectations</p>

	<p>New ASB Policy approved March 2025.</p> <p>New Domestic Abuse Policy approved March 2025.</p> <p>New Vulnerable Tenant Policy approved March 2025</p> <p>DMC Policy approved July 2024</p>	<p>New 'Required Access' Policy being developed to detail what happens if a customer is not home when we come to carry out repairs.</p> <p>Repairs and Maintenance Policy in development to align with Awwab's Law Oct 2025 and provide clarity on repairs and maintenance expectations.</p>
Systems	<p>We have been preparing to implement a New Housing Management System that will enable improved case management, record keeping and enable us to store resident information and reasonable adjustments.</p> <p>Upgraded our Asset Management database this year to improve records of our assets.</p>	<p>We will finalise the implementation of our new Housing Management System.</p> <p>We will procure a new Repairs and Maintenance system following our Repairs design.</p>
Complaint Handling	<p>In April 24 we improved the data gathered when we take complaints. This is helping us identify underlying thematic causes and trends and develop solutions at the earliest opportunity.</p> <p>We amended information on how to make a complaint online to make it more user friendly.</p> <p>We improved the information available to customers about the complaints process on the council's website</p> <p>We delivered bespoke Complaints Handling Training to circa. 400 members of staff to reflect the updated code and learning from the severe maladministration determination.</p>	<p>We will continue to run regular complaints handling training across the organisation which will include learning from both complaints and HO determinations.</p> <p>We will undertake quality audits of stage 1 letters to ensure the response answers all the points raised in the complaint, that the investigating manager engages with the resident's concerns, explain the reasons for any delays or failings and provides a clear rationale for any decision making, including providing a clear decision as to whether the</p>

We changed how we allocate complaints, this improved our performance for responding to complaints within timescale

We have updated the Complaints Policy to improve accessibility for residents and reflect the level of investigating manager responding to complaints at each stage.

The Redress Policy. It includes improvements to accessibility and aligns with the new Housing Ombudsman Service Remedies and Insurance Guidance e.g. our policy now aligns with levels of redress recommended by the Housing Ombudsman Service

complaint was upheld or not upheld.

Complaints Handling Governance

A quarterly programme of performance reporting is in place which is reported to the Homes and Neighbourhoods' Senior Management Team (SMT), the Council's Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Housing, Homes and Neighbourhoods Improvement Board (HNIB) which is independently chaired and the Tenant Led Panel. The Cabinet also receives periodic updates as well as the Council's Scrutiny Function. These reports include updates on complaint volumes, performance, learning, Housing Ombudsman casework including compliance with maladministration orders and updates on self-assessments. Ultimate responsibility for compliance against the Housing Ombudsman's Complaints Handling Code and the Regulator for Social Housing's Consumer Standards (which includes complaints handling) lies with the Council's Cabinet as the overall governing body.

Making a Complaint

For more information on making a complaint please visit the council's [website](#) or contact the Homes and Neighbourhoods' Customer Support and Information Team on 01484 414886 where a member of the team can discuss and log your complaint.