

Homes and Neighbourhoods Complaint Handling Performance

Quarter 3 25-26

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H&N Complaint Handling Performance Quarter 3

Introduction, Background, & Context

The information presented in this report has been extracted from Respond 8 which is the IT system used to record customer complaints and compliments, and to produce the performance dashboard.

Under the Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023, the Housing Ombudsman's, Complaint Handling Code places a legal duty on social housing landlords to comply with the Code, as well as a duty on the Ombudsman to monitor compliance with the Code

Performance

CH01- Numbers of Stage 1 Complaints

Tenant Satisfaction Measure CH01 Performance - Stage 1 complaints per 1,000 homes at Q3 is 28.01 against a benchmark of 46.90 (Housemark).

Assets and Building Safety complaints account for 12.16% of complaints this quarter, Housing Management 44.6%, Property Services 40.54% and the remainder being with non-Homes and Neighbourhoods teams.

Overall the escalation volumes are very similar to the same period in 24-25.

CH01- Number of escalations to Stage 2

Tenant Satisfaction Measure CH01 Performance – Stage 2 escalations per 1,000 homes at Q3 is 8.09 against a target of 9.0 (Housemark).

Assets and Building Safety complaints account for 7% of complaints this quarter, Housing Management 50.88%, Property Services 39.78% and the remainder being with non-Homes and Neighbourhoods teams.

CH02- Complaints responded to within timescales %

Stage	Q1 %	Q2 %	Q3 %	Target or benchmark %
Stage 1 complaints responded to within timescales (ytd)	85.31%	91.06%	82.88%	96%
Stage 2 complaints responded to within timescales (ytd)	92.16%	91.43%	84.24%	86%

Figure 1- Table showing % of complaints responded to in timescales

The Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code requires all Stage 1 complaints must be logged and acknowledged within 5 working days and responded to formally and in writing within 10 days. When a complaint requires escalating to Stage 2, must be logged and acknowledged within 5 working days, and responded to formally and in writing within 20 days.

In Q3, 82.88% of stage 1 complaints were responded to within the timescales, and 84.24% at stage 2. This was a deterioration at both stages.

Upheld (justified) complaints %

Stage	Q1 %	Q2 %	Q3 %
- % stage 1 upheld (full or partial, ytd)	57.63%	60.43%	61.13%
- % stage 2 upheld (full or partial, ytd)	50.98%	46.67%	49.70%

Figure 2- Table showing % of complaints upheld

At Stage 1 61.13% of complaints at were upheld. At Stage 2 49.70% of complaints were upheld. This is compared with 60.43 at Stage 1 in Q2 and 46.67% at Stage 2 in Q2.

High volumes of upheld complaints indicate there are still service improvements required to reduce the volume of complaints, reduce repeat complaints about the same issues, and to demonstrate we are learning from complaints.

Reasons for Complaints

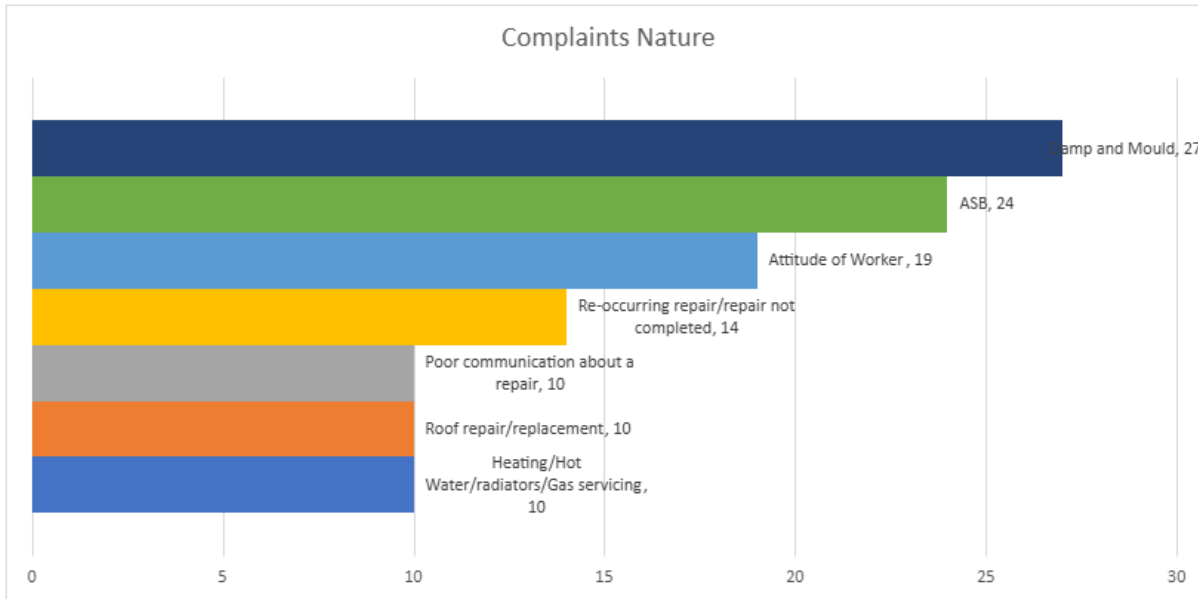


Figure 3- Table showing top 7 reasons for complaints

Learning

This year to date 46.2%ASB complaints have been upheld or partially upheld, including 11.5% (9) in Q3. We will continue to embed ASB Policy and use quality assurance tools such as ASB audits, and utilise complaints response templates to help identify where the policy has not been followed correctly and ensure any service failings are recognised and addressed within the complaint process, or prior to where possible.

We are also updating the Pet’s Policy as recommended by the Housing Ombudsman in one of their determinations.

We receive a number of complaints where call backs have exceeded the 5 days target. We have therefore implemented a new duty officer rota. This will ensure residents receive a timely response to enquiries and reduce the number of complaints

A new standard operating procedure and record form has been developed to support all complaint investigations about staff conduct or attitude and all complaints relating to the attitude of staff has been shared with Strategic Manager and Service Managers for their oversight.

Themes in Property Service case work suggested some dissatisfaction stems from resident not being aware of timescales set out in Repair and Maintenance Policy. We are therefore looking at the way in which these are publicised, so residents are aware of repairs of the timeframe and how priority repairs are identified and booked.

All service areas will be working hard to ensure that residents are receiving timely responses, but where the complexity of the complaint means extra time is needed we put a compliant extension in place with key communication dates with our residents.

The development and implementation of our new repairs system will deliver significant improvements in communication with residents throughout the repair process particularly when repairs are closed and added to planned schemes, or when they are passed to an alternative trade.

The Customer Experience Team have launched a sharepoint site that provides additional guidance and resources both from H& N and the Housing Ombudsman to support managers in complaint handling.

The Customer Experience Team have also worked with Corporate Customer Standard to develop a Reasonable Behaviour Policy. This is a Council wide policy and is a requirement of our compliance against the code.

The Customer Experience Team continues to carry out audits of 50% all complaint responses with recommendations and suggestions for improvement being shared with the respective service area.

Cabinet approved a £390m five-year Housing Capital Investment Plan in December, setting out how the council will continue to invest in and improve its housing stock. The plan provides long-term commitment to ensuring homes are safe, decent and fit for the future, while meeting regulatory requirements and supporting service improvements. This will support us in the reduction of complaints about property condition and repairs.

Compliments

H & N received 30 compliments this quarter. This included comments such as:

“Thank you to the joiner who visited my home today, he was very polite, listened to my issue, was very tidy, went above and beyond, his work was brilliant and aesthetically pleasing.”

“I'd like to thank you for this thorough investigation and his findings and being brutally honest and not taking any sides here. I really appreciate this and the way he has gone to extreme lengths to investigate everything for me”

“...who came to fit the radiator at my property today was absolutely fantastic—friendly, down-to-earth, and genuinely helpful. He explained everything clearly, did a tidy job, and made the whole process seamless....he was professional and approachable, and I really appreciated it. I would also like to thank you for actioning this so quickly and just before the festive period again it's really appreciated, will make my recovery that little bit more bearable.”

Satisfaction with Complaint Handling

Resident Satisfaction with complaints handling Q3 (Text survey):

- Survey response rate 22.5% compared 29.8%
- Customer Satisfaction with Complaint Handling was 31.3% in Q3, compared to 25% in Q2.
- 50.1% of respondents found the process of making a complaint easy compared with 77.3% in Q2.
- 56.3% of respondents reporting they would feel comfortable to make another complaint in the future compared with 72.7% in Q2.
- 37.6% of respondents were satisfied with time taken to respond to their complaint compared to 40.9% in Q2.
- 31.3% of respondents were satisfied with information provided throughout their complaint compared with 36.4% in Q2.

Housing Ombudsman Determinations

The Housing Ombudsman made 26 determinations in the 9 case we received outcomes for in Q3.

The Ombudsman found:

- 2 elements were outside of their jurisdiction
- 1 element had satisfactorily been resolved via complaint process and redress
- 9 elements they found no maladministration (no failings)
- 7 elements of service failure (minor failings)
- 6 elements of maladministration
- 1 element of severe maladministration

All orders made by the Housing Ombudsman in respect of these cases have been complied with, within the prescribed timescale set out by their service.

Tenant Led Panel Feedback

The Panel expressed disappointment at rising complaint numbers but acknowledged this may also reflect greater resident confidence in the complaints process. Increased transparency and responsiveness may be contributing to higher reporting.

For any questions regarding this report please contact HN.Customer.Service@kirklees.gov.uk