

| | Complaints Accreditation Commitment and Building Block | Level | Findings | Recommendations |
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| 1. | Demonstrates leadership and strategic commitment | | | |
| 1.1 | <p>The organisation's values, culture, aims, and objectives are reinforced by its approach to dispute resolution, and this approach is subject to continual review. The approach is based on being fair, striving to put things right, and learning from outcomes. There is a clear focus on customers and learning to improve services.</p> | <p>In place, but needs improvement.</p> | <p>Bury Council Housing Services (BCHS) priorities include 'Tenants at the Heart', with a stated focus on listening, valuing and acting on what residents tell them.</p> <p>BCHS promotes its Complaints Handling Policy on the Council's website, alongside performance and service improvement reports, supporting transparency and compliance. These reports set out learning themes, actions taken and plans in progress.</p> <p>BCHS also has a Tenant Voice Forum to enable resident scrutiny, including scrutiny of complaints handling, which supports the organisation's stated commitment to learning from customer feedback.</p> <p>Despite this, there is a clear tension between the stated values and the outcomes reflected in complaints data. Recorded complaint volumes are significantly lower than sector averages (8.21 complaints per 1,000 homes in 2024–25). BCHS has openly acknowledged concerns about how complaints are identified and recorded within its Annual Complaints Performance and Service Improvement Report.</p> <p>In addition, only 50% of complaints are resolved at Stage 1. BCHS identifies the main causes as actions agreed at Stage 1 not being completed within the timescales provided, and responses not fully addressing the complainant's concerns. This indicates weaknesses in follow-through and resolution quality, which undermines confidence in the effectiveness of early resolution.</p> <p>The current Complaints Handling Policy was approved on 8 January 2025 and states a next review date of August 2025. While the age of the policy is not, in itself, a concern, the missed review date does not instil confidence for customers reviewing the document. An internal review was submitted to the Housing Ombudsman Service in August 2025; however, the policy has not yet been reviewed with the Tenant Voice Forum or Readers' Panel. This is due to take place in early 2026, alongside the Compensation Policy.</p> <p>Overall, BCHS demonstrates a clear commitment to fairness, transparency and learning in principle. However, ongoing issues with complaint identification, resolution quality and policy review arrangements indicate that there is still a gap between stated values and day-to-day practice. Closing this gap will be key to demonstrating that the organisation's approach to dispute resolution genuinely reinforces its values, culture and strategic objectives.</p> <p>This gap between intent and experience is reflected in Tenant Satisfaction Measures, where satisfaction with complaint handling is just 38.6%. This suggests that values are understood at leadership level but not yet felt consistently by residents.</p> <p>Validation interviews with staff and residents reinforce this gap between stated intent and lived experience. Staff consistently described a strong leadership commitment to improving complaints handling and culture, with clear direction from senior leadership and visible support for strengthening the service. However, operational staff also described capacity pressures, inconsistent follow-through on agreed actions, and limitations in systems that made it difficult to consistently deliver high-quality outcomes.</p> <p>Resident interviews highlighted a lack of confidence that complaints would result in meaningful change, with residents describing experiences of not feeling listened to, not receiving clear explanations, and needing to chase responses or escalation. Case file reviews reflected a similar picture, with evidence of</p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Introduce routine dip-sampling of Stage 1 complaint responses to check whether the investigation was thorough, the explanation made sense, and the actions promised were actually delivered. 2. Make complaint outcomes and learning a regular part of team conversations, so staff can see where things went wrong and what needs to change. 3. Be clear with managers that resolving the complaint properly includes making sure agreed actions happen — not just sending the letter. |

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| | | | <p>care and intent in responses but inconsistent quality, incomplete follow-through on agreed actions, and variability in how learning was captured and applied.</p> <p>Taken together, this evidence confirms that BCHS has established the strategic intent and leadership commitment required, but that this intent is not yet consistently translating into reliable operational delivery or resident confidence.</p> | |
| 1.2 | Resources are identified through the budget setting process, and enough are committed to supporting systems to enable learning from complaints, comments and compliments and ensure continuous improvement across the business. | In place, but needs improvement. | <p>BCHS has recognised that resourcing to support effective learning from complaints, comments and compliments has been a weakness. Additional posts have been approved through the budget-setting process and recruitment is underway, with staff due to start in January/February 2026. While this demonstrates a commitment to addressing capacity gaps, the impact of this investment cannot yet be evidenced. Discussions with senior managers confirm that limited capacity to date has meant the focus has been on maintaining compliance and managing risk, rather than embedding learning consistently across the organisation.</p> <p>BCHS has also invested in improvements to its IT systems to support better data recording, reporting and analysis. These enhancements have the potential to strengthen thematic learning and management oversight, although their effectiveness will depend on sufficient capacity and capability to interpret and act on the data.</p> <p>In addition, BCHS has become a member of the Institute of Customer Service, providing access to sector benchmarking and best practice insight. This offers a positive opportunity to inform continuous improvement, provided learning is systematically embedded across the business and translated into service change.</p> <p>Taken together, these investments indicate an improving position; however, sustained assurance will depend on whether the additional resources and systems result in demonstrable improvements in learning, service standards and customer outcomes.</p> <p>Validation interviews with complaints staff and operational managers confirmed that limited capacity has historically constrained BCHS's ability to move beyond basic complaint handling compliance into systematic organisational learning. Staff described prioritising acknowledgement and response times to meet Housing Ombudsman requirements, with less capacity available to analyse trends, embed learning, or assure follow-through of agreed actions.</p> <p>Case reviews supported this assessment, identifying examples where appropriate responses had been issued but where agreed actions were not consistently tracked or evidenced as completed. This indicates that previous resource limitations have affected not only learning activity but also assurance over delivery of complaint resolutions.</p> <p>The recruitment of additional complaints staff represents a positive and necessary step toward strengthening both compliance and organisational learning.</p> | <p>4. Use the additional complaints capacity to actively track what's being learned and whether agreed actions are happening, rather than focusing only on response times.</p> <p>5. Introduce a simple way of tracking complaint-related actions so nothing gets lost once the response has been sent.</p> <p>6. Make sure learning from complaints is pulled together regularly and shared with the teams that need to act on it.</p> |
| 1.3 | The organisation aims to achieve positive outcomes with complaints. Service standards are clearly communicated to customers, and staff/contractors are required to reflect this in-service provision. | In place, but needs improvement. | <p>BCHS adhere to the Housing Ombudsman Services' Complaint Handling Code, detailing within its Complaints Handling Policy compliance with the response times for complaint handling. However, a formal set of service standards are not in place for the wider service. Whilst BCHS has specific policies that detail response times (such as for repairs and ASB), this does not apply for all day to day interactions. Beyond response times, there are not a set of benchmark standards that customers can expect from all interactions.</p> <p>Without clearly communicated service standards, it is difficult for customers to understand what outcomes they should reasonably expect, and for staff and contractors to be held consistently accountable when services fall short. The absence of clear, published service standards beyond</p> | <p>7. Set out clearly what residents should expect when they raise a complaint – how often they'll be updated, who owns it, and what happens next.</p> <p>8. Make sure contractors are held to the same standards, particularly around communication, follow-up and completing work.</p> |

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| | | | <p>timescales limits BCHS's ability to improve areas where tenant satisfaction is weakest, including feeling listened to and kept informed.</p> <p>There is limited evidence that contractors are consistently required to work to a common, published set of customer service standards beyond those embedded in individual service specifications.</p> <p>Validation interviews and case reviews highlighted inconsistency in how service expectations and responsibilities were understood and communicated in practice. Staff described situations where responsibilities for completing agreed actions were not always clear, and where systems did not provide sufficient oversight to ensure completion of works or follow-up communication with residents.</p> <p>Resident interviews reinforced this finding, with residents describing experiences of unclear communication, uncertainty about what would happen next, and lack of clarity on expected timescales or outcomes. Case reviews similarly identified variability in response quality, particularly in clearly explaining decisions, setting expectations, and confirming completion of agreed actions.</p> <p>This evidence reinforces the importance of developing and publishing clear service standards that define expectations for both customers and staff, and which can be used to assure consistency and accountability.</p> <p>As a minimum BCHS could draw all of the individual statements set out in their various published policies (from the Reasonable Adjustments Policy to the Customer Access Policy. This could be the foundation of a basic set of Service Standards that could be built upon (and clearly published and monitored).</p> <p>BCHS advise that they are working on a 'Staff Customer Charter' with development underway. While the development of a Staff Customer Charter is positive, this does not currently provide customers with a clear, externally published set of service standards against which performance can be measured and complaints outcomes assessed.</p> | <p>9. Use those standards internally so staff are clear on what good looks like, not just what the process says.</p> |
| 1.4 | <p>There is a focus on localism for dispute resolution, with an awareness of the role played by 'Designated Persons' and a realistic plan to engage with them.</p> | <p>In place, but needs improvement.</p> | <p>BCHS has a process and timescales in place for responding to both MP and Councillor enquiries which are monitored and tracked at a corporate level.</p> <p>BCHS's Complaints Handling Policy allows for complaints to be raised via MPs and local councillors however there are two conflicting statements. One indicates that the concern will only be logged as a complaint via an MP/Councillor if the customer has explicitly requested it be treated as a complaint (6.1), whilst in another section it states that a complaint that is submitted via third party or representative will be handled in line with this complaints policy. This inconsistency creates a risk that concerns that meet the definition of a complaint are resolved or responded to outside the formal complaints process, reducing transparency, consistency and learning.</p> <p>The Complaints Handling Policy could place a much greater emphasise on the positive role that Designated Persons play as both advocates for residents and as part of the Council's governance structure.</p> <p>There is no clear engagement plan in place with Designated Persons.</p> <p>Councillor and MP enquiry volumes are recorded and reported to the Governance & Assurance Board (e.g. 104 cases in October), with information about the number of cases responded to within targeted timescales. However it is not sufficiently clear how many of these enquiries are also recorded as complaints or treated separately.</p> | <p>10. Make sure anything raised via councillors or MPs is treated as a complaint where appropriate, recorded properly, and tracked like any other complaint.</p> <p>11. Be clearer internally and externally about how complaints raised through elected members are handled and escalated.</p> |

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| | | | <p>Taken together, these issues create a risk that complaints raised via Designated Persons are not consistently recorded or used for organisational learning, and that opportunities to strengthen local democratic engagement in complaints handling are being missed.</p> <p>Resident interviews provided further evidence that escalation routes and the role of elected members were not always clear or consistently applied in practice. Residents described needing to seek support from councillors or senior leaders to progress their concerns, and uncertainty about how escalation decisions were made.</p> <p>Staff interviews similarly confirmed variability in how concerns raised through councillors or other representatives were classified and recorded, with some issues initially managed outside the formal complaints process before later escalation.</p> <p>This reinforces the importance of ensuring that concerns raised via Designated Persons are consistently recognised, recorded and progressed in line with the Complaints Handling Code.</p> | |
| 1.5 | The organisation has carried out a proper assessment of the value added by a 'Designated Tenant Panel' – this includes evidence of dialogue with tenants, an appraisal of the pros and cons of recognising a Panel, the outcomes sought and how it fits in with the general culture of the organisation. | Not in place. | <p>BCHS has not undertaken a formal assessment of the value that could be added by a Designated Tenant Panel, including an appraisal of the potential benefits, drawbacks and outcomes of recognising such a panel. As a result, this Housemark criterion is not currently met.</p> <p>However, BCCHS has developed alternative tenant involvement and scrutiny arrangements, including the Tenant Voice Forum (TVF) and tenant representation through the Housing Advisory Board (HAB). TVF has a standing agenda item at HAB meetings and provides regular updates on its activities, and the Housing Advisory Board receives quarterly oversight of complaints performance.</p> <p>In addition, BCCHS has supported tenant-led scrutiny activity, including a scrutiny exercise of complaints during the year, and has co-produced a refreshed Scrutiny Policy with tenants, including arrangements for remuneration. The engagement of TPAS to support the embedding of tenant scrutiny demonstrates a commitment to strengthening tenant influence and capability.</p> <p>While these arrangements provide evidence of meaningful tenant engagement and scrutiny, BCCHS has not yet explicitly assessed whether a Designated Tenant Panel would add value beyond existing structures, or articulated how its current approach achieves equivalent outcomes. Completing such an assessment would provide clearer assurance that tenant involvement in complaints handling is intentional, proportionate and aligned with the organisation's culture and governance framework.</p> | <p>12. Take a step back and decide whether existing tenant groups are achieving what a Designated Tenant Panel is meant to do, or whether something more formal is needed.</p> <p>13. Be clear how tenants contribute to reviewing complaints handling and shaping improvements.</p> |
| 1.6 | The organisation's Board/Council members provide a strategic lead on reviewing the lessons learnt from complaints and ensuring that learning and improvement flow from this. | In place and effective. | <p>There is clear evidence that elected members provide active oversight and scrutiny of complaints performance and learning within BCCHS.</p> <p>The Housing Advisory Board (HAB) receives quarterly complaints reports and provides scrutiny of performance, learning themes and improvement actions.</p> <p>In addition, the Member Responsible for Complaints (MRC) plays a visible and hands-on role, receiving regular performance updates and providing challenge through portfolio meetings and Housing Advisory Board discussions.</p> <p>The Governing Body Response to the Annual Complaints Performance Report and Self-Assessment demonstrates that Cabinet and HAB have reviewed complaints performance, Housing Ombudsman determinations and learning themes in detail.</p> <p>Members have provided constructive challenge on key areas including escalation rates, timeliness, Ombudsman findings (including maladministration and severe maladministration), tenant satisfaction with complaints handling, and the risk of under-reporting linked to low complaint volumes. This</p> | <p>14. Strengthen reporting so members can see not just complaint numbers and themes, but whether agreed actions were actually delivered.</p> <p>15. Use governance to hold services to account for fixing the issues complaints are highlighting.</p> |

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| | | <p>indicates a mature and transparent approach to scrutiny, with members seeking assurance on both performance and culture.</p> <p>There is evidence that complaints learning is reported thematically and linked to strategic priorities, with oversight of mitigation actions and improvement plans. Risks associated with complaint handling, accessibility and organisational culture are clearly articulated, and members have sought assurance that appropriate actions are in place, including additional staffing, revised processes and targeted training.</p> <p>Briefing information provided to the MRC shows regular, detailed engagement with complaints data, including trends, upheld rates, Ombudsman outcomes and learning actions, supporting the view that member oversight is informed and ongoing rather than reactive.</p> <p>Staff interviews confirmed strong confidence in senior leadership and elected member commitment to improving complaints handling. Staff consistently described visible leadership support, clear expectations, and a shared organisational understanding of the importance of strengthening complaints culture and learning.</p> <p>However, case reviews and resident interviews indicate that while governance arrangements and oversight structures are in place, the impact of this oversight is not yet consistently reflected in operational delivery or resident experience. Continued focus will therefore be required to ensure that strategic oversight translates into sustained improvement at operational level.</p> <p>Overall, BCHS is able to demonstrate that elected members provide a strategic lead in reviewing complaints performance and learning, and that complaints insight is used to inform service improvement and cultural change. As improvements to resourcing and systems embed, continued focus will be required to ensure that learning is consistently translated into measurable service improvements across all areas of Housing Services.</p> | |
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| | Complaints Accreditation Commitment and Building Blocks | Level | Findings | Recommendations |
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| 2. | Has a performance management culture that leads to continual improvement | | | |
| 2.1 | There is a performance management framework in place to monitor, report, and review performance in dispute resolution. Lessons learnt are reflected in service plans and at a team and individual level. | In place, but needs improvement. | <p>BCHS has a developing performance management framework in place to monitor, report and review complaints performance.</p> <p>Complaints performance is reported at multiple levels and frequencies, including monthly, quarterly and annually, with reports shared with the Leadership Team, Housing Advisory Board and Performance & Transformation Board. An Annual Complaints Report is published on the Council's website, supporting transparency and accountability.</p> <p>Performance data shows strong compliance at Stage 1, with 100% of complaints acknowledged within five working days and responded to within ten working days (2024-25). Stage 2 performance is weaker, with 83.78% of responses issued within the 20 working day target. This reduction in performance has been recognised internally and attributed in part to capacity pressures during the summer period, and has informed the decision to invest in additional complaints resources, due to be in place from February 2026.</p> | <p>16. Put in place a simple process to record what's been learned from complaints and check that the service actually fixes it.</p> <p>17. Make sure service managers regularly review complaint themes and act on them.</p> |

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| | | | <p>There is evidence that complaints performance and learning are actively discussed with managers and teams. The Complaints Team presents tailored performance updates to Service Management Teams, focusing on complaint volumes, themes, upheld rates and learning points. Bespoke training has been delivered to specific service areas, including Repairs and Assets, in response to identified complaint trends. This indicates that performance insight is being used to inform targeted intervention rather than remaining at a corporate or high-level reporting stage.</p> <p>Leadership briefings demonstrate a growing focus on organisational learning, accountability and culture, with Ombudsman determinations, learning themes and reflective questions used to prompt discussion and challenge across teams.</p> <p>Complaints learning is increasingly linked to wider service risks, including data quality, record keeping, accessibility and ownership, and there is evidence of senior leadership engagement in addressing these issues.</p> <p>However, while complaints learning is clearly identified and discussed, evidence that learning is consistently embedded into service plans, team objectives and individual performance management arrangements is still emerging. The effectiveness of the performance management framework is currently constrained by capacity and system limitations, with the anticipated complaints dashboard and additional staffing not yet in place. As a result, assurance that learning from complaints is systematically translated into measurable and sustained service improvement at team and individual level remains developing rather than fully embedded.</p> <p>Lower-than-average satisfaction with repairs, safety and ASB indicates that complaints learning is not yet consistently shaping operational performance in the services that matter most to tenants.</p> <p>Case file reviews provided further evidence that learning from complaints is not yet consistently embedded at an operational level. While responses often demonstrated appropriate investigation and intent to resolve concerns, there was limited evidence that learning was routinely captured, tracked, or used to drive wider service improvements beyond the individual case.</p> <p>Staff interviews reinforced this finding, with operational managers describing limited capacity and systems to systematically track actions arising from complaints or to ensure that learning was embedded across teams. Learning activity was often informal, reactive, or dependent on individual managers rather than supported by structured organisational processes.</p> <p>Resident interviews also reflected this gap, with residents describing repeated issues, inconsistent communication, and limited confidence that complaints would result in sustained improvement.</p> <p>This evidence confirms that BCHS has established the foundations of a performance management framework, but that further work is required to ensure that learning from complaints is systematically captured, embedded, and translated into measurable service improvements.</p> <p>Overall, BCHS can demonstrate a clear commitment to monitoring and reviewing complaints performance and to using insight to drive improvement. Continued progress will depend on the successful implementation of planned system improvements, the embedding of learning into service planning and performance frameworks, and the ability to demonstrate the impact of complaints learning on day-to-day service delivery.</p> | |
| 2.2 | SMART service standards are monitored, reported, reviewed, and used to drive service improvements because of learning from complaints. | Not in place. | The Annual Complaints Report published on Bury Council's website sets out a range of learning themes and associated actions arising from complaints and Housing Ombudsman determinations. These actions demonstrate that BCHS is identifying areas for improvement and seeking to respond to customer dissatisfaction. | 18. Set clear expectations for how services should perform, especially in the areas residents complain about most. |

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| | | | <p>However, the actions set out in the report are largely descriptive and do not consistently include clear timescales, measurable outcomes, or defined success criteria. As a result, they cannot be described as SMART, and it is difficult to assess whether improvements have been delivered, sustained, or have resulted in improved customer outcomes.</p> <p>More broadly, BCHS does not currently operate a single, clearly articulated set of SMART service standards against which performance can be routinely monitored and reviewed.</p> <p>While response-time standards exist in some service-specific policies, these are not consistently drawn together or linked explicitly to complaint learning and improvement activity.</p> <p>BCHS recognises that further work is required in this area and has advised that an ICT dashboard is in development to improve the visibility, monitoring and reporting of complaints performance and learning. This has the potential to strengthen oversight and accountability; however, until this is implemented and linked to defined service standards and improvement measures, assurance that learning from complaints is driving measurable service improvement remains limited.</p> <p>Case reviews and staff interviews confirmed that while actions arising from complaints were often identified, they were not consistently supported by clear success measures, defined ownership, or structured follow-up to confirm completion and impact. This limited the organisation's ability to demonstrate that complaint-driven improvements had resulted in sustained service change.</p> <p>Resident interviews similarly indicated that residents did not always see evidence that complaints had resulted in meaningful or lasting improvements, reinforcing the importance of developing measurable service standards and tracking outcomes.</p> | <p>19. When complaints identify problems, be clear about what will change, who will fix it, and how you'll know it's improved.</p> |
| 2.3 | <p>Complaints are used to inform staff about learning and development, and this is captured in the annual training plan. Training is tailored to the needs of individual staff members; training outcomes and individuals' competencies are routinely assessed in regular supervisory meetings.</p> | <p>In place, but needs improvement.</p> | <p>BCHS uses complaints insight to inform operational learning and development. The Annual Complaints Report highlights key learning themes, including accessibility, vulnerability and service responsiveness, and openly acknowledges areas where services are not meeting the needs of some customer groups. This demonstrates a willingness to reflect on complaints data and identify learning priorities.</p> <p>There is evidence that learning from complaints is translated into targeted training and upskilling activity. Training is delivered at team and individual level, including bespoke sessions focused on specific service areas such as antisocial behaviour case management, alongside 1-to-1 coaching and short "how-to" training interventions. This indicates a responsive and flexible approach to addressing identified weaknesses.</p> <p>Discussions with managers confirm that this approach has largely been shaped by limited capacity, with learning activity prioritised in response to immediate risks rather than planned systematically across the organisation.</p> <p>However, learning and development arising from complaints is not currently captured within a formal annual training plan. As a result, there is limited assurance that complaints learning is systematically prioritised, resourced and embedded across the service, or that training needs arising from complaints are planned on a consistent and sustainable basis.</p> <p>While training activity is evident, there is limited evidence that training outcomes and individual competencies are routinely assessed beyond initial delivery. The reliance on one-off training sessions and presentations presents a risk that learning is not consistently reinforced, that new starters may not receive equivalent training, and that understanding and behavioural change are not systematically tested or assured through supervision and performance management.</p> | <p>20. Develop and implement a structured complaints training programme linked to identified learning needs and complaint themes.</p> <p>21. Ensure complaints handling competency is assessed and reinforced through supervision, coaching and quality assurance.</p> <p>22. Provide targeted training to staff in areas where complaint quality or resolution consistency is weakest.</p> |

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| | | | <p>Staff interviews confirmed that while targeted training had been delivered in response to complaint trends, learning was often delivered reactively and was not consistently embedded within structured training plans or competency frameworks. Staff described learning taking place through informal coaching, peer support and management guidance rather than through a planned and monitored organisational approach.</p> <p>Case reviews and resident interviews also identified variability in response quality and communication clarity, indicating that training and learning had not yet resulted in consistently improved complaint handling practice across all teams.</p> <p>Overall, BCHS can demonstrate that complaints are used to inform learning and development activity; however, the absence of a formal training plan and structured competency assessment framework limits assurance that learning from complaints is embedded, sustained and consistently applied across the organisation.</p> | |
| 2.4 | Dispute resolution performance is regularly benchmarked with comparable organisations. There is evidence of learning from other organisations. | In place, but needs improvement. | <p>BCHS is able to demonstrate that dispute resolution performance is benchmarked against external sources and comparable organisations.</p> <p>The Housing Ombudsman spotlight reports, plus their determinations and good practice examples are shared with teams, and learning is discussed through leadership briefings and service updates. Benchmarking and Tenant Satisfaction Measure (TSM) benchmarking through user groups are also referenced, with examples provided of changes to communication approaches and service delivery informed by peer learning.</p> <p>There is evidence that benchmarking has informed aspects of policy development and target setting. The recent refresh of the Complaints Handling Policy was benchmarked against the Housing Ombudsman Code and other providers, and complaint targets were developed with input from the Tenants' Voice Forum and scrutinised by the Housing Advisory Board. This demonstrates an awareness of sector standards and external expectations.</p> <p>BCHS has also taken steps to improve internal data quality by revising complaint logging arrangements to enable more detailed analysis by theme and service area. This has the potential to support more meaningful internal benchmarking and learning over time.</p> <p>However, while external benchmarking and learning are clearly referenced, there is limited evidence that all key messages from external sources are consistently translated into organisational action. In particular, Housing Ombudsman learning has repeatedly highlighted the risks associated with low complaint volumes and the under-recording or misclassification of complaints. Although this risk has been acknowledged elsewhere, BCHS has not yet demonstrated clear, measurable action arising from external benchmarking to address this issue.</p> <p>As a result, while BCHS can evidence engagement with external learning and benchmarking activity, assurance that this learning is systematically acted upon – particularly where it challenges established practices or culture – remains developing.</p> | <p>23. Introduce a structured process to review external Ombudsman findings and sector learning and translate these into internal actions.</p> <p>24. Regularly benchmark complaint performance and practices against comparable landlords and sector standards.</p> <p>25. Ensure learning from benchmarking is reflected in policy, training and service improvement activity.</p> |
| 2.5 | There are effective IT or manual systems to support frontline staff and to accurately monitor and reliably report dispute resolution activity and performance. | In place, but needs improvement. | <p>BCHS has an established CRM system in place to record and manage complaints, supported by defined complaints processes and regular management oversight. Recent management briefings have been used to reinforce understanding of complaints processes and expectations, indicating an awareness of the importance of system use and data quality.</p> <p>Operational controls have been strengthened through the introduction of a dedicated complaints inbox and the use of daily CRM reports distributed to relevant staff. These measures provide additional assurance that complaints are identified, captured and progressed, and demonstrate a pragmatic response to known pressures and risks.</p> | <p>26. Ensure the CRM system supports consistent recording, tracking and reporting of complaints and agreed actions.</p> <p>27. Strengthen system controls to ensure complaints are recorded accurately and consistently at first contact.</p> |

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| | | | <p>BCHS has also undertaken recent changes to complaint coding within the CRM system to reflect service changes, introduce additional themes and improve the quality of KPI reporting. This has the potential to support more detailed analysis of complaint trends and learning over time.</p> <p>However, evidence from complaints volumes, Ombudsman findings and wider self-assessment indicates that the effectiveness of current systems has historically been inconsistent. The reliance on inboxes, manual oversight and corrective controls suggests that systems are not yet sufficiently embedded or intuitive to ensure accurate and consistent complaint recording at the point of contact. As a result, assurance that dispute resolution activity is comprehensively captured and reliably reported remains developing.</p> <p>Planned system enhancements, including improved dashboard functionality, should strengthen performance monitoring and reporting once implemented. Until these improvements are fully embedded and demonstrably reduce the risk of under-recording or misclassification, the effectiveness of IT and manual systems in supporting frontline staff and providing reliable management information cannot yet be considered fully assured.</p> | <p>28. Introduce reporting tools that allow service managers to monitor complaint trends and outcomes.</p> |
| 2.6 | <p>Information on performance against targets is readily available and is used by frontline staff and managers. It is regularly reported to the executive team, the Board/Councillors, and customers. Targets are challenging</p> | <p>In place, but needs improvement.</p> | <p>BCHS is able to demonstrate that information on complaints performance is widely available and reported at multiple levels. Complaints performance and customer feedback are shared with managers on a monthly basis, reviewed by the Leadership Team, and reported quarterly to the Housing Advisory Board.</p> <p>Performance information is also published on the Council's website through the Annual Complaints Performance and Service Improvement Report, supporting transparency for customers.</p> <p>The Annual Complaints Report provides a clear and accessible overview of performance against key complaints-handling measures, including response times, outcomes, escalation rates and equality data. The report openly acknowledges areas of concern, including very low complaint volumes compared to sector averages and lower performance at Stage 2, demonstrating a willingness to be transparent with customers and stakeholders.</p> <p>There is evidence that performance information is used internally to inform discussion and challenge. Leadership briefings and management updates include complaints data, learning themes and exception reporting, and tailored performance information is shared with service teams to support operational improvement.</p> <p>However, while performance information is available and reported, there is limited evidence that complaints targets are consistently challenging or are used as a primary driver of improved outcomes. Targets relating to complaints handling focus predominantly on compliance with timescales set out in the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code, rather than stretching measures that test service quality, effectiveness of resolution, or cultural change.</p> <p>In particular, there is limited evidence of targets designed to address known areas of risk, such as low complaint volumes, high escalation rates to Stage 2, or the completion of agreed actions following Stage 1 complaints. As a result, while performance reporting is robust, the extent to which targets drive continuous improvement beyond procedural compliance remains limited.</p> <p>Current targets focus on procedural compliance rather than improving outcomes in areas where tenant satisfaction is weakest, including complaints handling, communication and ASB.</p> <p>BCHS has identified the need to strengthen the accessibility and usability of performance information for frontline teams, with plans in place to introduce dashboards and scorecards. Once implemented, these should improve visibility of performance at team level and provide greater opportunity to use targets and performance data to drive improvement.</p> | <p>29. Introduce performance measures focused on complaint resolution quality, action completion and resident experience.</p> <p>30. Ensure performance data is accessible and routinely used by frontline managers to drive service improvement.</p> <p>31. Strengthen use of complaint data to identify areas requiring operational improvement.</p> |

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| 2.7 | Where relevant, there is evidence of a constructive partnership with Designated Persons, as well as of the implementation of determinations by the Ombudsman and of reviews of general Ombudsman cases to learn from them. | In place, but needs improvement. | <p>BCHS is able to demonstrate a constructive and increasingly mature approach to engagement with the Housing Ombudsman Service. Ombudsman determinations are implemented promptly, with compliance and learning reported through quarterly performance reporting and shared with senior leaders and members. Evidence shows that Ombudsman response letters and determinations are routinely reviewed and used to inform discussion, challenge and learning at management meetings.</p> <p>There is also evidence that BCHS considers wider, sector-level Ombudsman learning. Ombudsman spotlight reports and case outcomes are shared with managers, and learning from maladministration findings has informed service and policy changes, including updates to the Anti-Social Behaviour Policy following Ombudsman recommendations. This demonstrates that BCHS is not only responding to individual determinations, but is seeking to apply broader learning to improve practice.</p> <p>External assurance of progress is reflected in BCHS being identified by the Housing Ombudsman Service as one of the most improved landlords in 2024–25, which provides additional confidence that engagement with the Ombudsman is constructive and outcome-focused.</p> <p>However, evidence of a structured and purposeful partnership with Designated Persons is less clear. While councillors and MPs are involved in complaint casework through existing case management arrangements, and tenant representatives and councillors participate in scrutiny through the Tenant Voice Forum and Housing Advisory Board, there is limited evidence of a clearly articulated approach to engaging Designated Persons as partners in dispute resolution.</p> <p>In particular, roles, expectations and routes of engagement for Designated Persons are not consistently defined, and there is limited evidence that learning from Designated Person involvement is systematically captured or reviewed. As a result, while BCHS works constructively with councillors and MPs on individual cases, the partnership aspect of this relationship is more informal than strategic.</p> <p>Overall, BCHS demonstrates strong compliance and learning in relation to Ombudsman determinations and sector-wide Ombudsman insight. Further work is required to strengthen and formalise engagement with Designated Persons to provide clearer assurance that these relationships actively support early resolution, transparency and learning.</p> <p>Case reviews and staff interviews confirmed that Ombudsman determinations and recommendations are taken seriously and used to prompt internal reflection and service improvement. Staff demonstrated strong awareness of Ombudsman expectations and the importance of compliance with the Complaint Handling Code.</p> <p>However, resident interviews indicated that escalation routes and external advocacy were not always well understood or experienced consistently in practice. Some residents described needing to pursue escalation independently or seek support from senior leaders or elected members to progress their concerns, reinforcing the importance of strengthening clarity, accessibility and partnership working with Designated Persons.</p> <p>This evidence supports the conclusion that engagement with the Ombudsman is constructive and improving, but that further work is required to ensure that escalation pathways are consistently accessible, transparent and trusted by residents.</p> | <p>32. Introduce a structured process to capture and implement learning from Ombudsman determinations and sector casework.</p> <p>33. Ensure learning from Ombudsman cases is shared with relevant staff and used to inform service improvement.</p> |
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| | Complaints Accreditation Commitment and Building Block | Level | Findings | Recommendations |
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| 3. | A diverse range of residents can easily access the service | | | |
| 3.1 | The organisation's approach to complaints is widely promoted and advertised using a variety of different communication channels, to ensure fair access to all customers. | In place, but needs improvement. | <p>Persistently low satisfaction with complaints handling suggests that, despite multiple access routes, tenants may not feel confident that complaining leads to fair or meaningful outcomes.</p> <p>BCHS provides multiple routes through which residents can raise a complaint. The Complaints Handling Policy clearly sets out the available channels, and this information is reflected on the Bury Council website.</p> <p>Complaints can be submitted online, by email, in writing, in person, by telephone, via social media (private message), or through a representative, supporting accessibility across a range of communication preferences.</p> <p>There is evidence that the complaints process is promoted through different communication channels. Information on how to complain is displayed prominently within the Housing reception area, supported by posters and newsletter communications.</p> <p>Tenant involvement has also influenced accessibility improvements, with the Tenant Voice Forum reviewing the complaints process and recommending changes to the website, including clearer complaint definitions, improved online accessibility and the introduction of a dedicated digital complaints form. These recommendations have been implemented.</p> <p>However, while the availability of complaint routes is clear, the presentation and framing of complaints information places significant emphasis on distinguishing between service requests and complaints, and on what does not constitute a complaint. This risks creating a perception of gatekeeping rather than encouragement, and may discourage residents from raising concerns, particularly those who lack confidence, have additional needs, or are unsure how their issue will be classified.</p> <p>More broadly, there is limited evidence that complaints messaging actively promotes complaints as a positive and welcomed form of feedback, or that it explicitly reassures residents that raising a complaint will not result in disadvantage. Given the very low complaint volumes reported elsewhere, this suggests that while access routes are available, further work is required to ensure that promotional messaging actively supports fair and confident access for all customer groups.</p> <p>Overall, BCBS can demonstrate that complaints information is accessible through multiple channels and has been subject to tenant-led improvement. To fully meet this criterion, greater emphasis is needed on promoting complaints as a legitimate and encouraged route for resolving dissatisfaction, rather than primarily focusing on classification and process boundaries.</p> <p>Resident interviews provided important additional insight into how accessible and trusted the complaints process feels in practice. While residents were generally aware of how to raise complaints, many described limited confidence that doing so would lead to meaningful resolution. Some residents described needing to pursue complaints persistently or escalate concerns externally before receiving satisfactory responses.</p> <p>Staff interviews similarly confirmed that dissatisfaction is sometimes resolved informally at first contact or managed outside the formal complaints process, particularly where staff seek to resolve issues quickly or where the distinction between service requests and complaints is unclear. This reinforces the risk that complaint accessibility is influenced not only by formal channels, but by staff confidence, judgement and organisational culture.</p> | <p>34. Strengthen communication to actively encourage complaints and reassure residents that complaints are welcomed.</p> <p>35. Ensure complaint information is clear, accessible and focused on encouraging residents to raise concerns.</p> <p>36. Review how complaints are promoted to ensure all residents understand how and when to complain.</p> |

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| | | | <p>Case reviews and performance data also demonstrate a mismatch between low complaint volumes and relatively low satisfaction levels, suggesting that complaint accessibility is not yet fully translating into confident and consistent use of the complaints process by residents.</p> | |
| 3.2 | <p>Communication channels are accessible to all, with the use of translation services, minicom, large print, Braille, digital technology, etc.</p> | <p>In place, but needs improvement.</p> | <p>BCHS recognises the importance of ensuring that communication channels are accessible to all residents, including those with additional communication needs. The Complaints Handling Policy and wider service information reference reasonable adjustments and the availability of support for residents who may require alternative ways to access services.</p> <p>However, at present, there is limited evidence that accessible communication options are consistently and proactively available across BCHS communication channels. While the Council's website includes a general accessibility page, this is not easily located from complaints-related webpages, and does not currently provide clear, embedded options for translation or alternative formats. Residents are instead reliant on guidance to use browser-based tools such as Google Translate, read-aloud functions and zoom features, which places responsibility on the customer rather than the service.</p> <p>Given the diversity of BCHS's tenant population, including residents whose first language may not be English, the current reliance on customer-led translation tools and limited visibility of accessible formats is a particular concern. This may create additional barriers for some ethnic minority groups and risks reinforcing under-representation in complaint data. Improving the proactive availability of translated and accessible communication channels would support fairer access, more representative feedback, and stronger assurance that complaints insight reflects the experiences of all customer groups.</p> <p>BCHS has acknowledged these limitations and has identified short-term mitigations, including the development of instructions to support the use of translation and accessibility tools. Longer-term improvements to website accessibility, including enhanced translation and read-aloud functionality, are being captured within the Communications Strategy, with actions planned for review by June 2026.</p> <p>The Reasonable Adjustments Policy, which underpins accessibility across services, is currently out of date and due for review. While work is underway to refresh this policy, the absence of an up-to-date framework limits assurance that accessibility needs are being consistently identified, recorded and met across all complaint and communication channels.</p> <p>Lower satisfaction scores for safety and communal areas, alongside very low complaint volumes, raise concern that some groups may be experiencing issues without accessing the complaints process at all.</p> <p>Overall, while BCHS demonstrates awareness of accessibility requirements and has plans in place to improve provision, current arrangements rely heavily on interim solutions and future actions. As a result, assurance that communication channels are fully accessible to all residents, including those requiring translation or alternative formats, remains limited at this time.</p> <p>Validation interviews confirmed that staff routinely adapt communication methods to meet individual resident needs, including providing direct contact details, tailoring communication preferences and offering additional support where vulnerability is identified. Case reviews demonstrated examples where communication methods had been adjusted to support resident engagement and resolution.</p> | <p>37. Ensure complaints information is available in accessible formats and clearly signposted.</p> <p>38. Strengthen arrangements to identify and record communication needs and reasonable adjustments.</p> <p>39. Ensure staff consistently adapt communication methods to meet individual resident needs.</p> |

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| | | | <p>However, resident interviews also highlighted variability in communication quality and consistency, with some residents describing delays, lack of updates, or unclear explanations. This reinforces the importance of ensuring that accessible communication arrangements are applied consistently across all teams and cases.</p> | |
| 3.3 | The organisation can demonstrate that customers know the right person to speak to and can contact them easily using a variety of methods. | In place, but needs improvement. | <p>BCHS has taken steps to clarify points of contact for complaints, with the Complaints Team acting as a central signposting function for customers.</p> <p>A dedicated complaints and compliments inbox has recently been introduced, with internal rollout underway and plans in place to promote this channel to tenants and publish it on the website. This has the potential to improve clarity and consistency around how residents contact the service.</p> <p>There is evidence that BCHS seeks to respond to customers using their preferred method of contact, including online, telephone, face-to-face engagement or through an advocate. This supports flexibility and reflects an understanding of differing communication needs once contact has been established.</p> <p>However, evidence that customers currently know who the “right person” is to contact remains limited. While multiple routes exist, the complaints process continues to rely heavily on general access points and internal signposting, rather than providing customers with a clearly identifiable and well-promoted contact for complaints at the outset. The dedicated complaints inbox, while positive, is not yet fully embedded or visible to customers.</p> <p>Planned initiatives, including a ‘Meet the Team’ campaign scheduled for implementation once additional staff are in post, indicate an intention to strengthen visibility and familiarity with the Complaints Team. However, as these initiatives are not yet in place, they do not currently provide assurance that customers are consistently clear about who to contact or how to do so easily.</p> <p>Overall, BCHS can demonstrate improving arrangements for managing and responding to complaints once they are received. Further work is required to ensure that customers clearly understand who to contact and can readily access the appropriate point of contact without reliance on internal navigation or future communications activity.</p> | <p>40. Clearly communicate how residents can contact the complaints team and who is responsible for handling complaints.</p> <p>41. Ensure complaints contact routes are visible, accessible and consistently used.</p> |
| 3.4 | An Equality Impact Assessment of the complaints of policy and process has been carried out, and an outcome-focused SMART action plan has been developed. Progress against the action plan is regularly monitored as part of the overall performance management framework. | Not in place. | <p>BCHS has confirmed that an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) of the complaints policy and complaints handling process has not been undertaken. As a result, there is no outcome-focused, SMART action plan in place arising from an EIA, and no formal arrangements for monitoring progress against such actions as part of the wider performance management framework.</p> <p>While BCHS collects and analyses equality data relating to complainants and has demonstrated awareness of disparities in complaint volumes across different customer groups, this insight has not yet been translated into a formal equality impact assessment of the complaints policy or process.</p> <p>Without a completed EIA and associated action plan, BCHS cannot yet demonstrate assurance that its complaints arrangements are systematically assessed for potential disproportionate impact on different equality groups, or that identified risks are being addressed in a structured and measurable way.</p> | <p>42. Undertake a formal Equality Impact Assessment of the complaints policy and process.</p> <p>43. Develop and implement actions to address any barriers or disparities identified.</p> |
| 3.5 | Information is being collected to show an understanding of local demographics and the customer profile. This information is used in tailoring how customers can complain and how | In place, but needs improvement. | <p>BCHS collects and analyses a good range of demographic information about its tenants, including through the complaints process itself.</p> <p>Customer profiling questions are asked at the first point of contact, and complaint data is analysed by age, disability, gender and ethnicity.</p> | <p>44. Use demographic and complaint data to improve accessibility and responsiveness of complaint handling.</p> |

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| | <p>complaint responses are communicated to customers.</p> | | <p>The Annual Complaints Performance Report demonstrates a high degree of transparency in identifying differences in who does and does not complain. It clearly highlights under-representation of some groups, particularly older tenants, and over-representation of disabled tenants, and acknowledges that services are not always as responsive to the needs of all customers. This provides a strong evidence base for understanding access and experience.</p> <p>While BCHS demonstrates strong transparency in highlighting disparities, the consistently low satisfaction with complaints and communication suggests that insight is not yet translating into targeted changes that residents recognise.</p> <p>There is evidence that complaint handling is tailored at an individual level once a complaint has been raised, including courtesy calls to confirm household details, communication preferences and tailored service needs.</p> <p>However, there is less evidence that this demographic insight is being used proactively to shape how the complaints process is designed, promoted or adapted for under-represented groups. While differences in complaint patterns are well understood, the resulting changes to access routes or communication approaches are not yet clearly articulated.</p> <p>In the absence of a formal Equality Impact Assessment of the complaints policy and process, assurance that demographic insight is being translated into structured, outcome-focused action remains limited.</p> | <p>45. Ensure services adapt complaint handling approaches to meet the needs of different resident groups.</p> |
| 3.6 | <p>Analysis of complaints data against the customer profile and diversity strands is used to tailor the service complained about by targeting resources to ensure that it is improved as a result of complaints received and upheld.</p> | <p>In place, but needs improvement.</p> | <p>BCHS analyses complaints data against customer profile and diversity strands, and this is set out clearly in the Annual Complaints Performance and Service Improvement Report.</p> <p>The report identifies patterns and disparities in who is complaining, including differences by age, disability and ethnicity, and acknowledges where services are not working equally well for all customer groups.</p> <p>Satisfaction levels for ASB (50.7%) and communal areas (55.2%) suggest that, while learning is identified, resource targeting has not yet delivered visible improvements for tenants.</p> <p>There is evidence that complaint themes and upheld complaints have informed service improvement activity, particularly in areas such as repairs, damp and mould, ASB and complaint handling itself. These improvements appear primarily service-led and focused on addressing recurring issues highlighted through complaints.</p> <p>However, there is more limited evidence that demographic analysis is being used to proactively target resources or adapt services specifically for under-represented or disproportionately affected groups. While differences in complaint patterns are well understood, it is less clear how this insight has directly influenced decisions about where to focus additional capacity, support or tailored interventions.</p> <p>Overall, BCHS demonstrates good analysis and transparency, but clearer evidence is needed to show how demographic insight from complaints is systematically driving targeted service improvement.</p> <p>Case reviews and staff interviews confirmed that while complaint themes are well understood at a strategic level, there is less consistent evidence that demographic insight and complaint learning are systematically translated into targeted operational interventions. Staff described responding to issues at an individual case level, but with limited capacity or structured</p> | <p>46. Strengthen use of complaint data to identify recurring issues and target service improvement.</p> <p>47. Ensure complaint learning is used to inform operational and service improvement decisions.</p> |

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| | | | <p>mechanisms to proactively target resources or adjust service delivery based on demographic trends.</p> <p>Resident interviews reinforced this finding, with residents describing repeated issues relating to communication, repairs and complaint handling, and limited visibility of how complaints had resulted in broader service change. Strengthening the link between demographic insight, resource targeting and measurable service improvement will be key to demonstrating full compliance with this criterion.</p> | |
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| | Complaints Accreditation Commitment and Building Block | Level | Findings | Recommendations |
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| 4. | Customers are encouraged to influence | how the service is delivered | | |
| 4.1 | Customers are actively involved in reviewing and learning from complaints. This is done routinely and systematically, leading to service improvements. | In place, but needs improvement. | <p>BCHS involves tenants in reviewing complaints performance and learning, primarily through the Tenant Voice Forum (TVF). The Complaints Manager provides performance, trend and learning updates to TVF on a half-yearly basis, and tenants are invited to provide feedback on complaint handling through transactional and satisfaction surveys.</p> <p>There is evidence that tenant feedback is influencing aspects of service delivery, including a renewed focus on completing agreed actions within complaint timescales. This indicates that customer insight is being listened to and is beginning to inform improvement activity.</p> <p>However, customer involvement in complaints learning is not yet routine or systematic. Engagement currently relies on periodic updates and surveys, rather than an embedded process through which tenants regularly review complaints data, test learning, or track whether agreed improvements have been delivered.</p> <p>Low satisfaction with feeling listened to (58.6%) indicates that tenant influence is not yet consistently visible to the wider customer base beyond those directly involved in scrutiny.</p> <p>Plans to establish a dedicated complaint review group following the recent TVF complaints review are positive, but as these arrangements are not yet in place, they do not currently provide assurance that customer involvement in complaints learning is consistent or sustained.</p> <p>Resident interviews confirmed that while involvement structures such as the Tenant Voice Forum are valued, residents do not consistently see evidence that their feedback has resulted in meaningful or sustained service change. Some residents described frustration with consultation processes and uncertainty about how their input influenced decision-making.</p> <p>Staff interviews also confirmed that tenant involvement in complaints learning is still developing and not yet fully embedded as a routine part of service improvement processes. While there is clear commitment to strengthening resident involvement, further work is required to ensure that tenant scrutiny is consistently integrated into complaints learning and improvement arrangements.</p> | <p>48. Introduce structured opportunities for tenants to review complaints, learning and improvement actions.</p> <p>49. Ensure tenants are involved in reviewing whether complaint-driven improvements have been effective.</p> |

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| | | | Overall, BCHS can demonstrate emerging customer involvement in complaints learning, but further work is required to embed this in a structured and ongoing way that clearly links tenant scrutiny to measurable service improvement. | |
| 4.2 | As a result of complaints, actions are taken by the organisation and lessons are learned, both of which are publicised. | In place and effective. | <p>BCHS demonstrates that learning from complaints is identified and acted upon.</p> <p>The Annual Complaints Performance and Service Improvement Report includes a clear section on learning themes and actions, setting out where services have fallen short and what has been done in response.</p> <p>There is evidence that this learning is shared beyond internal audiences. Complaints performance, themes and improvements are published on the Council's website, and learning is also communicated through tenant-facing channels such as newsletters. This supports transparency and helps customers see that complaints can lead to change.</p> <p>However, while learning and actions are publicised, it is not always clear how consistently customers are informed about the impact of specific complaints or whether actions have been fully delivered and embedded. Public reporting focuses more on activity and intention than on demonstrating completed outcomes and sustained improvement.</p> <p>Overall, BCHS meets the expectation of publicising learning and actions arising from complaints, though there is scope to strengthen how the impact of those actions is communicated back to tenants.</p> <p>Case reviews and resident interviews indicate that while learning and improvement activity is reported publicly, residents do not always experience or recognise the impact of this learning in practice. Residents described ongoing issues with communication, follow-through and resolution quality, reinforcing the importance of ensuring that published learning translates into visible operational improvement.</p> <p>Strengthening feedback loops between complaints learning, operational delivery and resident communication will help reinforce confidence that complaints lead to meaningful and sustained service improvement.</p> | <p>50. Improve communication to residents on how complaints have led to service improvements.</p> <p>51. Ensure residents are informed when actions arising from complaints have been completed.</p> |
| 4.3 | The policy and procedure are consulted on and agreed with customers; it is also subject to continual review in order to capture comments from customers, staff, good practice and changes to regulation and legislation. | In place, but needs improvement. | <p>There is evidence that customers are involved in reviewing the Complaints Handling Policy. The policy is currently under review with tenant involvement, which demonstrates an intention to consult customers and reflect their feedback.</p> <p>However, the policy review is overdue when measured against the stated review cycle. While tenant engagement is taking place, the lapse in review timescales weakens assurance that the policy is being kept up to date in a timely way in response to regulatory change, good practice and customer feedback.</p> <p>In addition, there is limited evidence that the Procedure (where distinct from the Policy) is subject to customer consultation or routine review. While operational changes and improvements are evident, it is not clear that these are captured within a formally reviewed and customer-agreed procedure document.</p> <p>Overall, BCHS can demonstrate customer involvement in policy review, but greater clarity and consistency are needed to ensure both policy and procedure are reviewed regularly, on time, and with clear customer input.</p> <p>Resident interviews confirmed mixed confidence in how resident feedback influences complaints policy and service design. While involved residents recognised opportunities to provide feedback</p> | <p>52. Ensure complaints policies and procedures are reviewed regularly with tenant involvement.</p> <p>53. Clearly communicate how tenant feedback has influenced complaints handling.</p> |

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| | | | <p>through scrutiny structures, some described limited visibility of how their input influenced policy decisions or operational change.</p> <p>This reinforces the importance of ensuring that policy consultation is not only undertaken, but that outcomes are clearly communicated and demonstrably reflected in service improvement.</p> | |
| 4.4 | <p>Feedback and satisfaction are effectively measured in the complaints process and handling; follow-up work is done to understand results, and this contributes to service improvements. Feedback results are widely publicised to Board/Members/Scrutiny panel/forums/customers.</p> | <p>In place and effective.</p> | <p>BCHS demonstrates a strong and transparent approach to measuring feedback and satisfaction in relation to complaints.</p> <p>Customer satisfaction is captured through Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs), a complaints handling survey and wider tenant insight activity. However, sustained low satisfaction with complaints handling indicates that feedback loops are not yet closing quickly or clearly enough for tenants to feel the benefit.</p> <p>Results are routinely reported to senior leaders, members and scrutiny forums, and are published through the Council's website and formal complaints reporting.</p> <p>There is clear evidence that feedback is reviewed and followed up. Satisfaction results and qualitative feedback are triaged to relevant teams and managers, and learning from complaints and tenant insight is reflected in service improvement activity.</p> <p>The Knowing Our Tenants work, in particular, provides a clear and honest assessment of where customers are satisfied and where improvements are needed, and this has been shared with governance bodies alongside agreed actions.</p> <p>BCHS is open about areas of weaker performance, including lower satisfaction with complaints handling through TSMs, and has used this insight to inform discussion, challenge and improvement planning. This demonstrates a mature and self-aware approach to performance transparency.</p> <p>While multiple sources of feedback are in place, further work is underway to better align and reconcile actions arising from complaints data, TSMs and wider tenant insight. Completing this workstream will strengthen assurance that feedback is consistently translated into coordinated service improvement and clearly communicated back to customers.</p> <p>Overall, BCHS meets the expectations of this criterion, with strong transparency and evidence that feedback informs service improvement. The next stage of maturity lies in bringing different feedback sources together more clearly and strengthening how outcomes are communicated to tenants.</p> | |
| 4.5 | <p>The organisation has a system for recording compliments and learning from them.</p> | <p>In place, but needs improvement.</p> | <p>BCHS has clear arrangements in place for recording and sharing compliments. Compliments are reported monthly, quarterly and annually, and are shared with service managers, who are expected to acknowledge them. Compliments are also actively promoted internally through initiatives such as 'wall of fame' spotlights at director briefings and within service teams, including operatives' toolbox talks. This supports positive reinforcement and staff morale.</p> <p>There is evidence that compliments data is increasing year on year and that compliments are visible across the organisation, which helps promote good practice and pride in service delivery.</p> <p>However, while compliments are recorded and shared, there is more limited evidence that they are consistently analysed or used to inform service learning in the same way as complaints.</p> | <p>54. Introduce structured analysis of compliments to identify good practice.</p> <p>55. Use compliments data to reinforce positive behaviours and service standards.</p> |

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| | | | <p>BCHS has acknowledged that transactional feedback is not yet being routinely reviewed to identify compliments, and that manager capability in this area needs strengthening.</p> <p>Planned training for managers in 2026 should help improve consistency in identifying and learning from compliments. Until this is embedded, assurance that compliments are systematically used as a learning tool, rather than primarily as recognition, remains developing.</p> <p>Staff interviews confirmed that compliments are valued and shared internally to reinforce positive behaviours and service standards. However, staff also described limited structured analysis of compliments data to identify transferable learning or best practice across teams.</p> <p>Strengthening analysis and use of compliments alongside complaints learning will help support a more balanced and proactive approach to service improvement.</p> | |
| 4.6 | There is evidence that the organisation acts within the regulatory expectations in the HCA's Tenant Involvement & Empowerment Standard, supporting resident scrutiny of and involvement with complaints. | In place and effective. | <p>BCHS have a Tenant Voice Forum whose purpose is structured tenant feedback, including on complaints. The Forum has undertaken a scrutiny project reviewing the complaints handling process, with recommendations provided in September 2025 and implementation of those recommendations underway.</p> <p>Tenant representation is also in place through the Housing Advisory Board, providing an additional route for residents to influence oversight of complaints performance and learning.</p> <p>The engagement of TPAS to support the development of tenant scrutiny further strengthens these arrangements.</p> <p>While these structures are relatively new and still developing, they demonstrate that BCBS is supporting resident scrutiny of complaints and involving tenants in reviewing and shaping how complaints are handled. This aligns with the principles of the Tenant Involvement & Empowerment Standard.</p> <p>As these arrangements mature, further work will be needed to embed tenant scrutiny as a routine part of governance and assurance and to evidence the ongoing impact of tenant involvement on service improvement.</p> | |

| | Complaints Accreditation Commitment and Building Block | Level | Findings | Recommendations |
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| 5. | Ensures timely and effective dispute resolution | | | |
| 5.1 | In applying policies, procedures, and guidelines for dispute resolution, staff can use discretion, and these discretionary solutions are well recorded and transparent. | In place, but needs improvement. | <p>Low satisfaction with complaints handling suggests that early resolution, while well-intended, may not always leave tenants feeling heard or assured.</p> <p>BCBS encourages staff to resolve issues early and to use discretion when things have gone wrong. The Complaints Handling Policy allows for a range of remedies, including apologies, goodwill gestures and compensation, and there is evidence that practical, non-financial solutions are used to meet individual needs.</p> <p>These discretionary actions are recorded within the complaints process, supporting transparency of outcomes.</p> | <p>56. The Complaint Handling Policy would benefit from strengthening in the following areas:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Mandatory recording of dissatisfaction, even if resolved immediately 2. Clear instruction that staff must not discourage complaints 3. Longer and more flexible Stage 2 escalation window 4. Explicit independence at Stage 2 |

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| | | | <p>However, the strong emphasis on early resolution is not clearly balanced with an explicit requirement to record all expressions of dissatisfaction as complaints, even where issues are resolved quickly. This creates a risk that discretionary resolution takes place outside the formal complaints process.</p> <p>This risk is reflected in complaint volumes that are significantly lower than sector averages, suggesting that some discretionary resolutions may not be consistently logged or reported.</p> <p>Overall, discretion is used positively, but clearer guidance is needed to ensure it supports transparency and learning rather than acting as a barrier to complaint recording.</p> <p>Validation interviews confirmed that staff are committed to resolving complaints quickly and pragmatically, and demonstrated a clear focus on achieving positive outcomes for residents. However, staff also described situations where issues were resolved informally without being formally recorded, particularly where staff sought to resolve concerns quickly or avoid escalation.</p> <p>Case reviews and resident interviews reinforce this finding, with evidence that early resolution is not always supported by consistent recording, follow-through or organisational learning. This creates a risk that opportunities for improvement are missed and that complaint data does not fully reflect resident experience.</p> <p>Strengthening guidance and assurance around the recording of all expressions of dissatisfaction will help ensure that discretionary resolution supports learning and transparency.</p> | <p>5. Recording and monitoring of excluded complaints</p> <p>6. Statement that complaints are welcomed and do not disadvantage residents</p> <p>7. Governance language acknowledging that low complaint volumes require scrutiny</p> <p>57. The policy would benefit from an explicit statement such as "Where a resident expresses dissatisfaction, this will be recorded as a complaint, even if the issue is resolved on first contact".</p> <p>58. Ensure all expressions of dissatisfaction are recorded, even where resolved immediately.</p> <p>59. Provide clear guidance to staff on recording complaints and dissatisfaction.</p> |
| 5.2 | Good record keeping is standard practice and demonstrates proper investigation of complaints. | In place, but needs improvement. | <p>BCHS has systems in place to support complaint record keeping once a complaint has been logged. Complaints are recorded and tracked through the CRM system, with supporting folders used to capture investigation notes, evidence, responses, learning and actions, providing a clear audit trail.</p> <p>However, there is less assurance about record keeping at the earliest point of customer contact. The Stage 1 process map focuses on activity after a complaint has been logged, rather than on how expressions of dissatisfaction are identified, recorded and classified at first contact.</p> <p>This creates a risk that staff judgement at the point a customer calls or makes contact is not consistently recorded, and that some complaints may be resolved or redirected without being formally logged. This risk is reflected in complaint volumes that are significantly lower than sector averages.</p> <p>Staff interviews confirmed that complaint recording and investigation processes are robust once a complaint has been formally logged. However, they also confirmed variability in how dissatisfaction is identified, classified and recorded at first contact, particularly where issues are resolved informally or managed outside the formal complaints process.</p> <p>Case reviews similarly identified variability in the recording and tracking of agreed actions following complaint responses, limiting assurance that resolutions were consistently delivered and evidenced.</p> <p>Strengthening recording and tracking arrangements across the full complaint lifecycle will be important to ensure transparency, accountability and organisational learning.</p> | <p>60. Ensure consistent recording of dissatisfaction at first contact.</p> <p>61. Strengthen tracking of agreed complaint actions through to completion.</p> |

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| | | | <p>The combination of very low complaint volumes and low satisfaction scores increases the risk that dissatisfaction is being resolved quietly rather than learned from.</p> <p>Overall, record keeping is strong once complaints enter the formal process, but greater clarity and consistency are needed at the initial contact stage to ensure all expressions of dissatisfaction are properly captured.</p> | |
| 5.3 | There is a proactive approach to gathering evidence across the organisation, with departments/teams being supportive of each other in complaints investigation and resolution. | In place, but needs improvement. | <p>There is evidence of proactive joint working between the Complaints Team and service managers when investigating complaints. This includes sharing evidence, carrying out inspections, moderating responses and agreeing resolutions.</p> <p>The use of Stage 1 and Stage 2 process checklists for managers and heads of service supports a more consistent and collaborative approach to complaint investigation.</p> <p>However, this proactive approach is stronger in some service areas than others, and practice is not yet fully consistent across the organisation.</p> | <p>62. Introduce a simple investigation structure for Stage 1 complaints that requires officers to clearly set out: what happened, what should have happened, what went wrong, and what will now change.</p> <p>63. Require investigating officers to evidence that they have reviewed the case history, spoken to relevant staff, and checked whether previous agreed actions were completed.</p> <p>64. Introduce routine managerial dip-sampling of Stage 1 responses to test investigation depth, clarity of explanation, and whether actions promised are realistic and deliverable.</p> |
| 5.4 | The procedure has as few stages as possible, and complaints are escalated through the procedure promptly. | In place, but needs improvement. | <p>Complaints procedures and guidance are currently under review and have been discussed with managers to improve clarity and usability. This reflects an awareness of the need for procedures to be practical and easy to follow.</p> <p>The Complaints Handling Policy states that residents have 10 working days from receipt of a Stage 1 response to request a review, with discretion to extend this where appropriate. While the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code does not prescribe a minimum escalation window, a 10-day timeframe is tighter than sector norms and may be perceived as an unnecessary barrier to access.</p> <p>Aligning the escalation window more closely with the 20 working day timeframe used by many landlords would be more defensible and would strengthen confidence that escalation routes are fair, accessible and clearly understood.</p> <p>As the procedure review is ongoing, the extent to which revised guidance will address these issues is not yet clear.</p> | <p>65. Make escalation rights explicit in every Stage 1 response, including how and when a resident can request Stage 2.</p> <p>66. Remove any ambiguity about who decides whether a complaint progresses to Stage 2 – ensure the process is clear, consistent and not perceived as gatekept.</p> <p>67. Monitor Stage 2 themes specifically to identify whether escalation is being driven by poor Stage 1 investigation or failure to follow through on actions.</p> |
| 5.5 | Staff are aware of the purpose of each of the stages and how and when a complaint may be escalated to external bodies. | In place, but needs improvement. | <p>There is evidence that staff are made aware of the complaints stages and escalation routes through training, internal communications and targeted briefings. This includes focused input for Contact Centre staff and housing officers who are often the first point of contact for tenants.</p> <p>Complaints processes for Stage 1 and Stage 2 have recently been shared with managers for review and refinement, which should support clearer understanding and more consistent application.</p> <p>However, the strong emphasis on resolving complaints at Stage 1 as a measure of success risks overshadowing clarity about escalation rights, including referral to external bodies. Continued</p> | <p>68. Reinforce through briefing and supervision the difference between a service request and a complaint, particularly where dissatisfaction is expressed.</p> <p>69. Provide short, practical refresher sessions for frontline staff focused on identifying complaints and supporting residents through the process.</p> |

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| | | | reinforcement is needed to ensure staff understanding balances early resolution with residents' right to escalate where dissatisfaction remains. | 70. Ensure managers routinely check that staff are applying the complaints process correctly in day-to-day work. |
| 5.6 | Complaints are responded appropriately and, in the timeframes set out in the organisation's policy, but individual circumstances are recognised, and different agreements may be made as appropriate. | In place and effective. | <p>BCHS generally responds to complaints within published timescales, and there is evidence that extensions are agreed and recorded where complaints are complex or require additional investigation.</p> <p>Individual circumstances are recognised, with complaints risk assessed and, where necessary, fast-tracked. Examples provided show appropriate flexibility in response to vulnerability and property-related risks, including urgent action to protect tenant health and safety.</p> <p>Overall, there is evidence of a proportionate and pragmatic approach to timescales, balancing compliance with responsiveness to individual need.</p> | |
| 5.7 | When possible, alternative dispute resolution processes and techniques (e.g., mediation, conciliation) are available to staff and used where appropriate. | In place, but needs improvement. | <p>BCHS does not routinely use formal alternative dispute resolution techniques such as mediation or conciliation as part of its complaints process. Instead, resolution tends to focus on apology, explanation and practical action, which is often effective and appropriate.</p> <p>There is no regulatory requirement to offer mediation, and its absence does not in itself represent a failure. However, there is limited evidence that staff are actively encouraged to consider alternative dispute resolution where cases would benefit from a facilitated or restorative approach.</p> <p>Clearer acknowledgement of when mediation or similar approaches might be appropriate, even if used selectively, would strengthen assurance that all reasonable resolution options are considered.</p> | <p>71. Provide clear guidance to officers on when mediation or alternative resolution may be appropriate, particularly in neighbour disputes.</p> <p>72. Ensure mediation is considered early enough to prevent escalation, rather than as a last resort.</p> <p>73. Track outcomes of mediation to understand whether it is resolving issues sustainably.</p> |

| Complaints Accreditation Commitment and Building Block | | Level | Findings | Recommendations |
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| 6. Tackles the causes of complaints and puts things right | | | | |
| 6.1 | The organisation sets out a clear definition of what constitutes a complaint, in keeping with best practice. This is set out in the variety of publicity available to customers. | In place, but needs improvement. | <p>BCHS sets out a clear definition of a complaint within its Complaints Handling Policy, which aligns with the Housing Ombudsman Code and is published on the Council's website. The definition is accessible and easy to understand.</p> <p>However, despite the clarity of the definition, recorded complaint volumes are significantly lower than sector averages. This suggests that, in practice, the definition is not always being applied consistently, particularly at first contact.</p> <p>As a result, while the definition itself is clear and publicly available, there is limited assurance that it is consistently used to determine what is logged as a complaint.</p> <p>Low satisfaction with complaints handling suggests that tenants' experience does not consistently align with the organisation's stated definition and intent.</p> <p>Staff interviews confirmed that while the definition of a complaint is clear in policy, there is variability in how it is applied in practice. Staff described relying on judgement to determine whether dissatisfaction should be recorded as a complaint or resolved informally, particularly at first contact or within operational teams.</p> | <p>74. Re-brief all housing and contact centre staff on the complaint definition, using real examples to clarify what must be logged as a complaint.</p> <p>75. Remove reliance on individual judgement by introducing clearer prompts within systems to capture dissatisfaction.</p> <p>76. Reinforce the expectation that "fixing it quickly" does not remove the need to record it.</p> |

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| | | | <p>Resident interviews reinforced this finding, with residents describing situations where dissatisfaction was not initially recognised or progressed as a complaint, requiring further escalation or persistence.</p> <p>This evidence reinforces the importance of strengthening consistency in how the complaint definition is applied in practice.</p> | |
| 6.2 | The organisation is committed to the earliest resolution of disputes, and appropriate information is given to customers of local agencies where they may seek independent advice or advocacy services. | In place, but needs improvement. | <p>BCHS places strong emphasis on early resolution, with evidence that tenants are contacted promptly to acknowledge complaints, understand desired outcomes and manage expectations.</p> <p>There is also evidence that complaint responses include signposting to other relevant agencies, such as the police, insurance services or disability-related support, where appropriate.</p> <p>However, the focus on early resolution is not always clearly balanced with reassurance that residents can still pursue a formal complaint if dissatisfaction remains. This creates a risk that early resolution activity unintentionally discourages complaints from being formally recorded.</p> | <p>77. Make clear in guidance that early resolution must still be recorded where dissatisfaction has been expressed.</p> <p>78. Ensure residents are explicitly told when an issue has been treated as a service request rather than a formal complaint – and how they can escalate if they disagree.</p> <p>79. Review a sample of early resolutions to test whether complaints are being appropriately recognised.</p> |
| 6.3 | Expressions of dissatisfaction that are resolved at the first point of contact are recorded and used for learning, as well as complaints that are made formally. | Not in place. | <p>BCHS has introduced changes to its process to support early escalation and timely resolution, including a requirement for early review of complaints within 24 hours.</p> <p>However, there is limited evidence that expressions of dissatisfaction resolved at first contact are consistently recorded and used for learning. While BCBS states that all complaints are logged formally, the very low volume of recorded complaints indicates this is not happening consistently in practice.</p> <p>Discussions with senior managers and the Complaints Manager confirm that, historically, a focus on resolving issues quickly has sometimes resulted in dissatisfaction being managed informally rather than logged for organisational learning.</p> <p>Without clear recording of dissatisfaction resolved at first contact, opportunities for learning and service improvement may be missed, and complaint data may not fully reflect customer experience.</p> <p>This risk is reinforced by low satisfaction across multiple service areas alongside unusually low complaint volumes, suggesting under-recording rather than low dissatisfaction.</p> <p>Validation interviews with staff across housing management, repairs and contact centre functions confirmed that dissatisfaction is not always consistently recorded as a complaint at first contact. Staff described situations where issues were resolved informally, managed as service requests, or handled outside the formal complaints process.</p> <p>Case reviews and performance data reinforce this finding, with unusually low complaint volumes relative to satisfaction levels indicating that dissatisfaction is not always captured formally.</p> <p>Resident interviews similarly described situations where concerns were not initially recognised or progressed as complaints, reinforcing the importance of strengthening recording arrangements at first contact.</p> | <p>80. Introduce a clear rule that any expression of dissatisfaction must be logged, even if resolved within 24 hours.</p> <p>81. Strengthen contact centre and frontline scripts to prompt staff to recognise and record complaints consistently.</p> <p>82. Monitor complaint volumes against satisfaction trends to test whether recording practices are improving.</p> |

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| | | | This evidence confirms that recording of dissatisfaction at first contact is not yet consistently embedded in practice. | |
| 6.4 | Systems are in place to identify and analyse recurring complaints about issues, and the information is used to target resources. | In place, but needs improvement. | <p>Persistent dissatisfaction with repairs, safety, ASB and communal areas indicates that recurring issues are not yet being systematically reduced through complaints learning.</p> <p>The Complaints Handling Policy, whilst not wrong, is less explicit than higher-performing organisations about how performance is assured, how learning is reported, and how residents will see learning and complaint themes published (though the policy does commit to an annual complaints performance report).</p> <p>BCHS recognises the importance of identifying recurring complaint themes, but systems to support this are not yet fully developed. Tracking of themes is currently manual and time-consuming, with revised coding structures and automated reporting still awaiting IT changes.</p> <p>While complaint themes are produced and shared, the absence of embedded, automated systems limits assurance that recurring issues are consistently identified and used to target resources. Planned system changes should strengthen this over time, but at present this remains a developing area.</p> | <p>83. Produce a quarterly "recurring issues" report highlighting repeat service failures and what is being done to address them.</p> <p>84. Require service areas with repeat themes (e.g. repairs, ASB, communication) to produce short improvement plans responding directly to complaint trends.</p> <p>85. Track whether recurring complaint themes reduce over time.</p> |
| 6.5 | The organisation follows up and keeps promises and undertakings, is committed to putting the right service failures and learning from outcomes. | In place, but needs improvement. | <p>There is evidence that BCCHS follows through on actions arising from Housing Ombudsman determinations, with actions tracked and completed within required timescales.</p> <p>However, follow-up of actions arising from Stage 1 complaints is less consistent and relies on individual service teams to complete agreed actions, with the Complaints Team chasing progress.</p> <p>This creates a risk that learning and service improvements are not consistently embedded where complaints are resolved early, particularly given low complaint volumes and reliance on informal resolution.</p> | <p>86. Introduce a simple action-tracking process to ensure commitments made in complaint responses are recorded and followed through.</p> <p>87. Require investigating officers to confirm when agreed actions have been completed, not just promised.</p> <p>88. Include completion of agreed actions as part of complaint quality assurance.</p> |
| 6.6 | The organisation has an appropriate and robust approach to managing unreasonably persistent complainants and unacceptable behaviour by customers, while ensuring that it addresses the issues raised by the customer. | In place, but needs improvement. | <p>BCCHS has policies in place to manage unacceptable behaviour, including a Zero Tolerance and DNVA policy, which provide a framework for protecting staff.</p> <p>However, current arrangements focus more on enforcement than balance. The development of a Vulnerable Tenant Policy presents an opportunity to better align behaviour management with proportionality, support and continued consideration of the underlying complaint.</p> <p>Until revised arrangements are in place and embedded, assurance that unacceptable behaviour is managed consistently while still addressing the substance of complaints remains developing.</p> | <p>89. Review use of behaviour policies to ensure they are proportionate and do not restrict access to the complaints process.</p> <p>90. Ensure complaints are fully investigated regardless of resident behaviour, separating conduct issues from service failings.</p> <p>91. Monitor cases where behaviour policies are applied to ensure fairness and consistency.</p> |

| Complaints Accreditation Commitment and Building Block | Level | Findings | Recommendations |
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| 7. Provides value for money and financial aspects are clear | | | |
| 7.1 | The organisation can demonstrate it has considered having an adequate financial redress policy for complaints. | In place, but needs improvement. | BCCHS has a Compensation Policy in place and has recently reviewed it. However, the updated policy has not yet been published, and the version currently available on the website is out of date. |

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| | | | Until the revised policy is published and clearly communicated, assurance that financial redress arrangements are current, accessible and fully understood by customers remains limited. | 93. Ensure staff understand when financial redress is appropriate and how to explain decisions clearly. |
| 7.2 | Where compensation is offered, it is benchmarked against comparative organisations, demonstrates value for money, is proportionate and is offered consistently. | Not in place. | <p>There is limited evidence that compensation levels are benchmarked against comparable organisations or assessed explicitly in terms of value for money.</p> <p>While compensation decisions appear to be made on a case-by-case basis, the absence of benchmarking increases the risk of inconsistency and makes it difficult to demonstrate proportionality or external alignment.</p> | <p>94. Introduce periodic review of compensation awards to test for consistency and proportionality.</p> <p>95. Benchmark compensation levels against recent Ombudsman decisions to ensure they remain appropriate.</p> |
| 7.3 | There is an evidence-based approach to budget settings to manage complaints. | In place, but needs improvement. | <p>Poor satisfaction with complaints handling represents a reputational and regulatory risk, which in itself undermines value for money if not addressed.</p> <p>There is evidence that complaints-related costs, including compensation, are considered as part of wider financial oversight, with input from senior managers and finance partners.</p> <p>Compensation decisions are informed by Housing Ombudsman guidance on remedies and focus on impact, duration and severity rather than fixed tariffs.</p> <p>However, there is limited evidence that complaints data is routinely used to inform forward budget planning or to model future demand or risk.</p> <p>Staff interviews confirmed that compensation decisions are generally made thoughtfully and in line with Housing Ombudsman guidance, with consideration given to impact, duration and severity. Case reviews demonstrated examples of appropriate financial and non-financial remedies.</p> <p>However, resident interviews indicated variability in how compensation decisions were communicated and understood, with some residents expressing dissatisfaction with how remedies were explained or applied. Strengthening transparency, benchmarking and consistency arrangements will help improve confidence in financial redress decisions.</p> | <p>96. Analyse compensation payments alongside complaint themes to identify where service failures are driving avoidable cost.</p> <p>97. Use complaint and compensation trends to inform preventative service improvement priorities.</p> |
| 7.4 | Costs of the service are regularly benchmarked to demonstrate value for money, and improvements occur as a result of benchmarking outcomes. | Not in place. | <p>BCHS tracks compensation payments by service area and complaint stage, which provides basic oversight of costs.</p> <p>However, there is no evidence of regular benchmarking of complaints-related costs against other organisations, or of using this information to drive efficiency or service improvement.</p> <p>As a result, assurance that complaints handling costs represent value for money remains limited.</p> | <p>98. Compare complaint handling performance and cost with similar landlords to understand relative efficiency.</p> <p>99. Use benchmarking insight to identify where processes could be streamlined without reducing quality.</p> |
| 7.5 | The organisation knows whether it is getting value for money from procured services (e.g., training, mediation). | Not in place. | <p>There is limited evidence that BCBS routinely assesses value for money from procured complaints-related services such as training or alternative dispute resolution.</p> <p>Training is largely delivered internally, with external provision used selectively, but there is no clear evaluation of impact or return on investment.</p> <p>As a result, assurance that procured services are delivering value for money is still developing.</p> | <p>100. Review the impact of any externally commissioned complaints training or consultancy to ensure it has delivered measurable improvement.</p> <p>101. Ensure future external support is clearly linked to identified weaknesses and expected outcomes.</p> |