



**Annual Complaints
Performance and Service
Improvement Report
2025/26**



Introduction

Tenant and leaseholder feedback, whether through compliments and complaints or other feedback, provides us with valuable understanding about how our tenants and leaseholders experience our services. It helps us to understand what we are doing well, where improvements are needed, and how we can develop services to meet the needs and expectations of our tenants.

This report covers complaints received and managed between 1 April 2025 and 31 March 2026. It includes both qualitative (descriptive) and quantitative (numbers-based) analysis of our complaint-handling performance including complaint volumes, outcomes, timeliness and key themes. The report also highlights the learning identified, the actions taken to improve services, and the feedback received through compliments during the same period. We'll also talk about how we've followed good practice set out in the Complaint Handling Code from the Housing Ombudsman Service, our complaint policy and any changes we've made to our services based on what we've learned during the same period.

Number of complaints received

Over the reporting period we received 190 formal complaints, of which 54 were escalated to Stage 2 review. No complaints were refused during this period.

Stage 1

190

Stage 2

54

This means we received 25.17 stage 1 and 7.24 stage 2 complaints for every 1000 homes we manage.

This performance is only **slightly below** the sector benchmark and represents a significant improvement compared with last year when we received 62 complaints. This increase in complaint volumes is encouraging, as it suggests that tenants are more aware of their right to complain, feel confident that their concerns will be listened to and are able to access the complaints process more easily. This indicates that our efforts to promote an open and accessible complaint handling culture are having a positive impact, ensuring that tenant concerns are recognised, recorded and used to improve our services. We resolved 71.58% of complaints at stage one, which is a significant improvement on the 50% resolution rate of the previous year.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

We monitor information about tenants and leaseholders who make complaints to help us make sure our complaints process is fair, accessible and works well for everyone. By looking at information such as age, gender, ethnicity, language and disability, we can identify trends, understand the needs of different groups and make improvements where needed. This helps us provide fair and consistent services for all tenants.

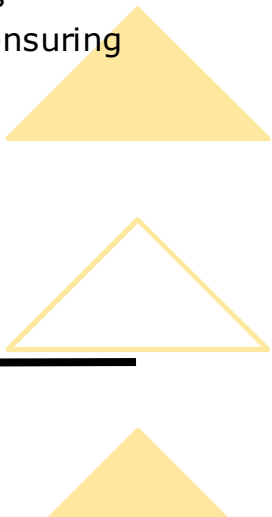
If we notice any unexpected trends, we will investigate further to ensure there is fairness in how we treat our tenants.

We currently record and look at the following characteristics in relation to tenants making a complaint: age, gender, ethnicity, primary language and disability.

23% of the tenant population have told us they have a disability, they account for 52.3% of complaints. Tenants without a disability make up 76.9% of the tenant population but account for 47.6% of complaints

Tenants with a disability are significantly over-represented within complaint volumes. This suggests that disabled tenants may be experiencing services differently to non-disabled tenants .

The improved awareness our demographic data means we now have a more accurate understanding of who is using the complaints process. While tenants aged 35–44 remain the largest group of complainants, their representation is now much closer to their proportion of the tenant population than in previous years, suggesting a more balanced use of the complaints process. However, older and younger tenants remain underrepresented, indicating that further work is needed to understand and address potential barriers to raising concerns. The proportion of disabled complainants reporting an impact on their mental health has increased, highlighting the importance of resolving issues promptly and ensuring tailored support is provided to vulnerable tenants.

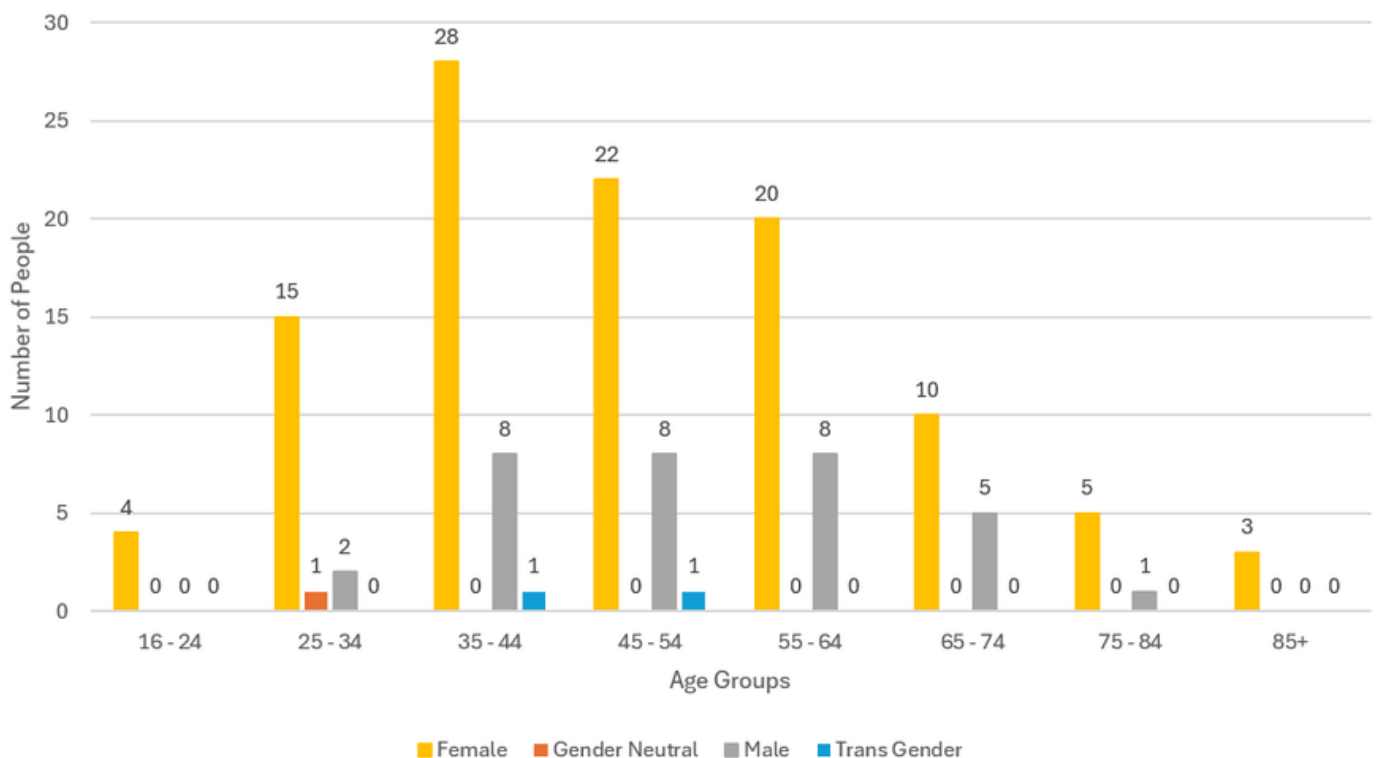


Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

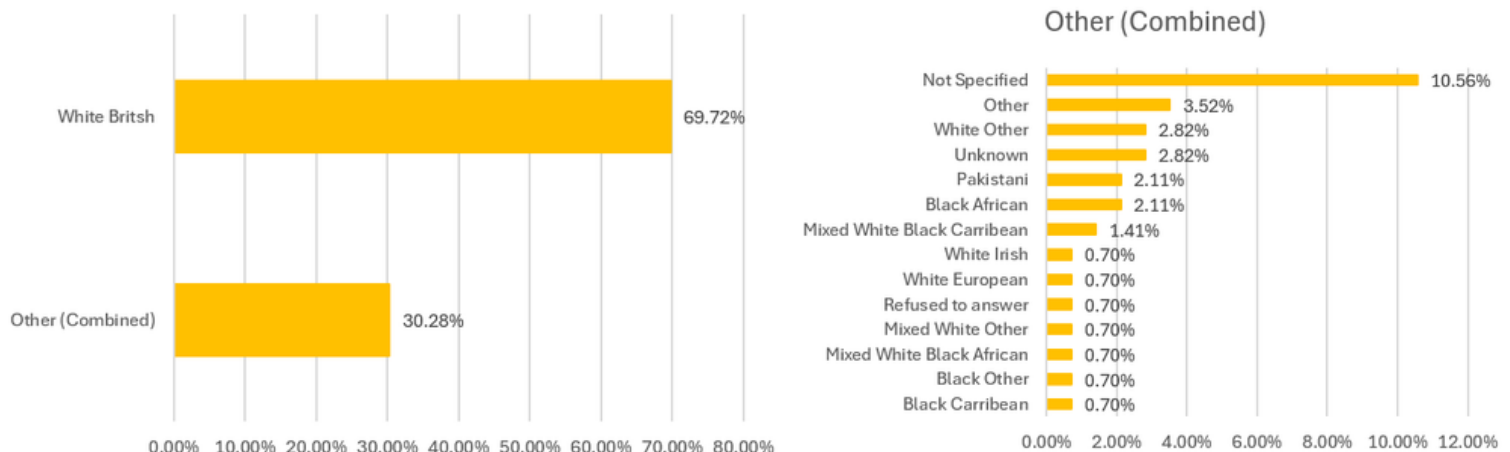
Our complaints data shows that the ethnicity profile of tenants using our complaints service is broadly representative of our overall tenant population. However, there are differences in age, gender and disability. Women, tenants aged 35–44 and tenants with disabilities are more likely to raise complaints, while older tenants and some ethnic minority groups, particularly Pakistani tenants, are less likely to use the complaints process.

This highlights the need for us to better understand the experiences of disabled tenants, increase engagement with older tenants and underrepresented groups, and ensure all tenants feel confident and supported when raising concerns. We will continue to monitor this data and use it to improve accessibility, communication and equality of access to our complaints service.

Complainants by Age Groups

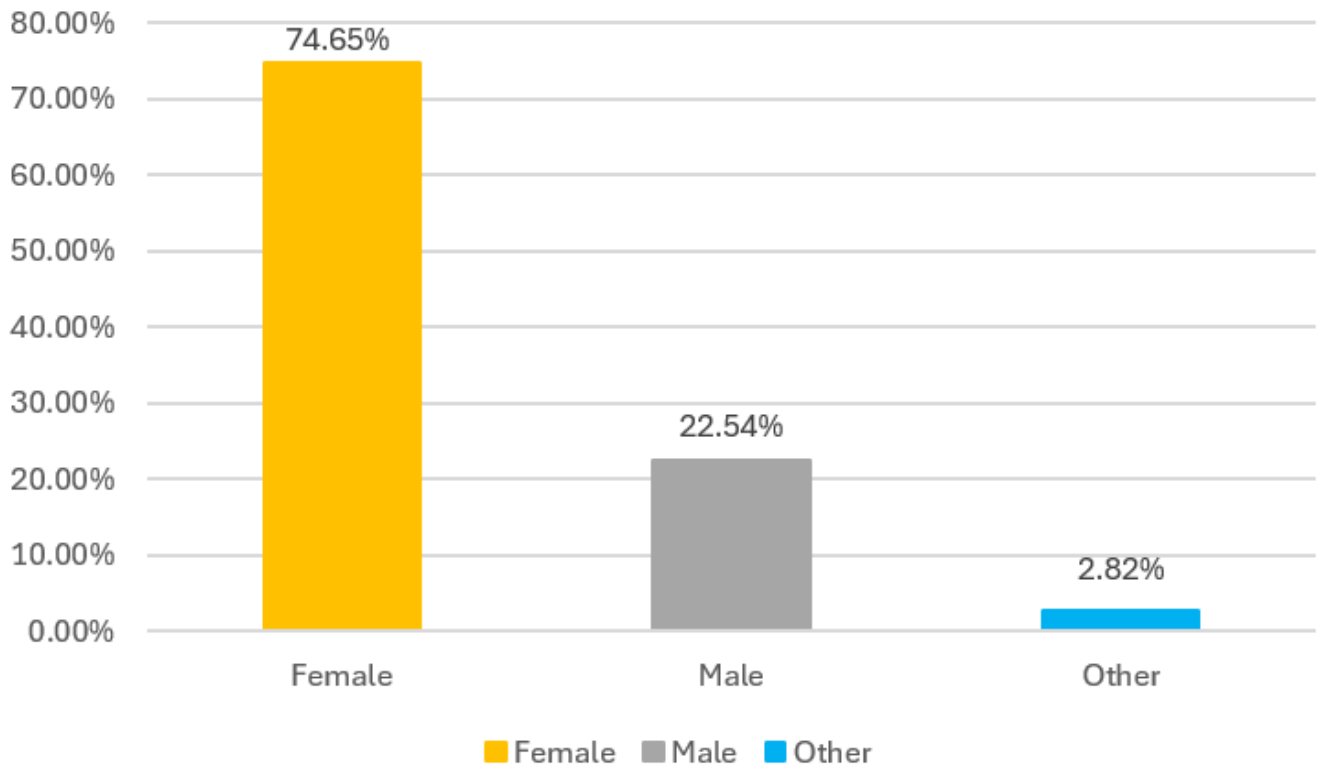


Complainants by Ethnicity

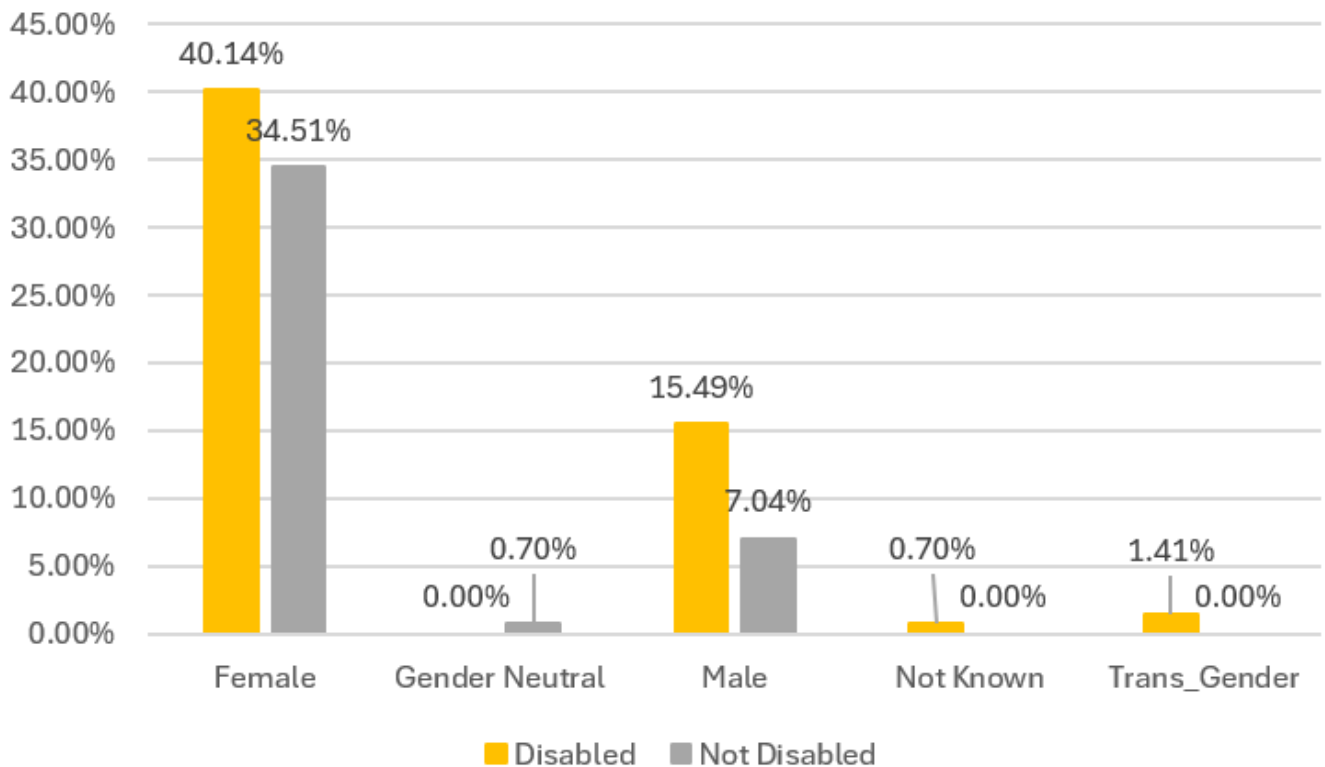


Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

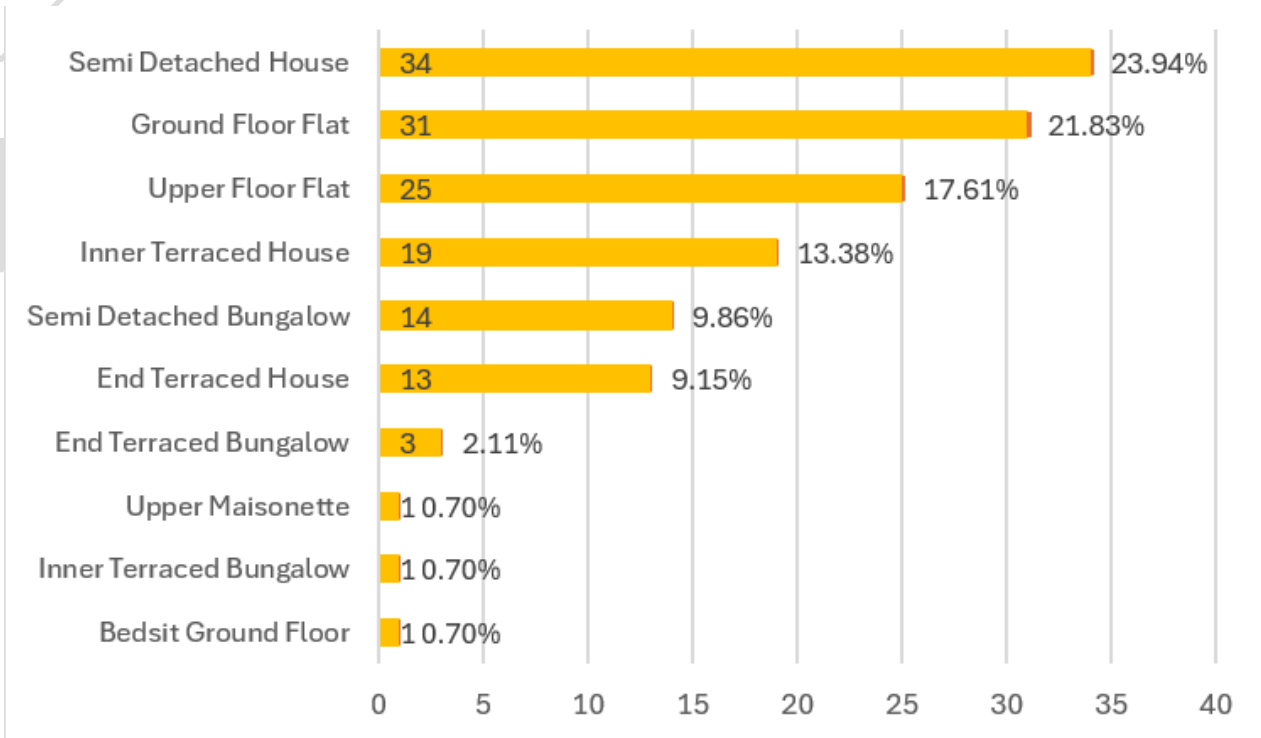
Complainants by Gender



Complainants by Disabilities



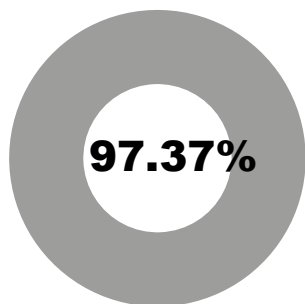
Complainants by Property Type



As seen in the above graph, the second highest number of complainants come from those living in a ground floor flat. These complainants are more likely to complaint about noise nuisance coming from the person living in the flat above them. As a result ASB feedback associated to noise nuisance, we are looking at installing noise insulating flooring in the above floor flats in attempt to reduce the problem.

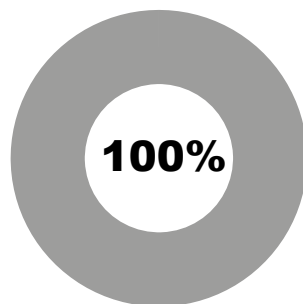
Complaints performance

We have assessed our performance based on the requirements of the Compliant Handling Code 2024. The table below shows how we perform again these requirements.



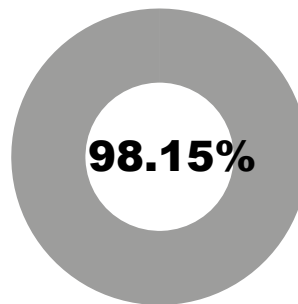
Stage 1:

Acknowledgements within 5 working days of receipt.



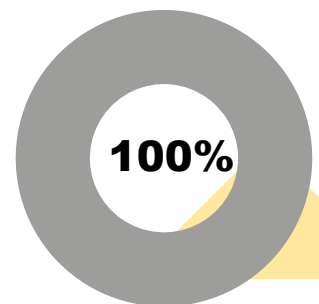
Stage 1:

Respond within 10 working days of acknowledgement.



Stage 2:

Respond within 20 working days of escalation.



Stage 2:

Acknowledgements within 5 working days of receipt.

Complaint outcomes

Stage 1

Where our investigation finds that we are at fault in some way, we will partially or fully uphold the complaint. We will also inform customers about what we've learned and any steps we'll take to avoid similar issues in the future.

Here are the overall outcomes of our formal complaints.

Outcome	% of complaints
Fully upheld	39% (75)
Partially upheld	9% (17)
Not upheld	46% (88)
Withdrawn	5% (10)

Therefore, in **48%** of complaints, we accepted partial or full responsibility compared to 61% in previous year.

Stage 2

When a complaint is escalated to be reviewed by a more senior manager, they will assess whether the investigation was fair and thorough. They may agree or disagree with any outcome from Stage 1.

In 2025/26 **54** stage 2 complaints were received and reviewed. The outcomes at Stage 2 review can be found below:

Outcome	% of complaints
Fully upheld	31% (17)
Partially upheld	22 % (12)
Not upheld	44% (24)
Withdrawn	2% (1)

Therefore, **54%** of stage 2 complaints, we accepted partial or full responsibility, compared to 62% in previous year.

Complaints by service area

The Repairs service received the most complaints at **34.74%** This is followed by our Neighbourhoods Team with **27.37%** with most complaints about Anti-Social Behaviour.

Repairs had the highest number of upheld complaints; however, this equates to just **66** complaints from around 20,000 repairs completed during the year **(0.33%)**. Neighbourhood Services, primarily ASB and tenancy enforcement cases, generated the highest number of complaints escalated to Stage 2,

Repairs

66 complaints received
50 upheld **(75.8%)**
12 escalated to Stage 2 **(18.2%)**
8 upheld at Stage 2 **(66.7%)**

Neighbourhoods

52 complaints received
12 upheld **(23.1%)**
24 escalated to Stage 2 **(46.2%)**
7 upheld at Stage 2 **(29.2%)**

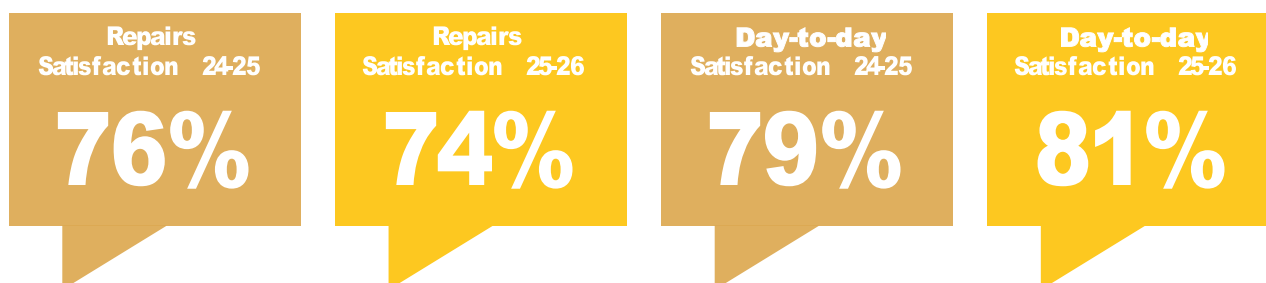
Complaints by service area

The graphs below illustrate the number of complaints received by each service area:



A strong example of tenant influence is the joint work between the Repairs Review Group and Neighbourhood Services on noise nuisance. Feedback from tenants and learning from ASB cases identified that some ground-floor flats were disproportionately affected by everyday household noise. As a result, we introduced a pilot programme to test enhanced flooring and soundproofing measures, demonstrating how tenant feedback is shaping service improvements and helping to prevent future complaints.

There has been a small but steady improvement for the transactional surveys for Repairs.

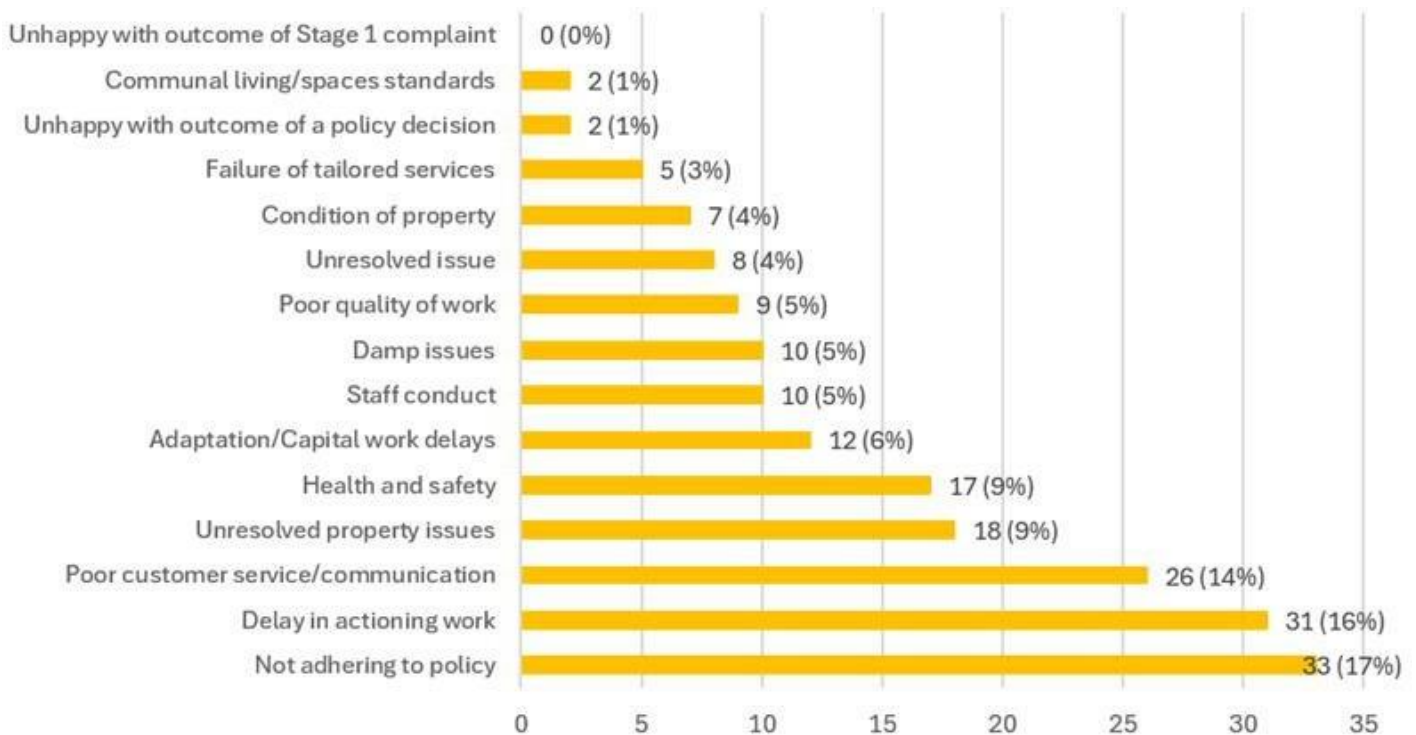


We are currently in the process of implementing a dashboard for the Heads of Services and are developing a day-to-day satisfaction for service areas. Expectedly, this has increased the complaints day-to-day satisfaction on the Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSM).

Complaints by theme

The top three complaints themes for 2025/26 were:

- Not adhering policy (17%)
- Delay in actioning work (16%)
- Poor customer service / communication (14%)



Whilst the issues above are the primary complaint issues, common to most all complaints was lack of communication and/or keeping tenants informed about delays and/or progress. Tenants felt they had to continually chase progress.

The most common reasons for complaints this year were due to not following policy decisions, such as tenancy enforcement or anti-social behaviour policies (**33** complaints) and delays in taking action, such as repairs or adaptations (**31** complaints). Tenants also raised concerns about customer service and communication (**26** complaints), highlighting how important it is that we keep residents informed and respond promptly when issues are reported.

Property-related concerns also featured prominently, with complaints about unresolved property issues (**18** complaints), damp issues (**10** complaints), poor quality work (**9** complaints) and the condition of properties (**7** complaints). These themes show that tenants want issues resolved quickly, effectively and with clear communication throughout.

Complaints by theme

We carefully review complaint themes to understand what matters most to tenants and where improvements are needed. The actions outlined earlier in this report, including improvements to repairs services, stronger oversight of contractors and performance, recruitment to key roles, the ASB improvement plan, and the creation of the Tenant Repairs and ASB Review Group, will all support our improvement journey.

Complaint Handling Satisfaction



After each complaint is closed, we ask tenants about their experience of our complaints service. We also measure satisfaction through the annual Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSM) survey.

Our complaint satisfaction TSM score is 50%, which is above the sector benchmark. HouseMark reports that satisfaction with complaint handling is typically around 35% across the sector. While this is a positive result, we recognise there is still more to do to improve the customer experience and continue learning from complaints.

Learning from complaints

Throughout 2025/26, we remained committed to learning from complaints and feedback to better understand tenant experiences and improve our services. We recognise that we do not always get things right, but we are committed to taking ownership, learning from mistakes, and making improvements as a result. Learning from complaints is regularly shared across the organisation and with the Tenant Voice Forum, helping to drive service improvements, promote good practice, and ensure the tenant voice is at the heart of our decision-making.

Any complaints due to staff training needs are addressed immediately through training, supervision and quality checks. We have acknowledged the emerging themes from our complaints and as a result we have delivered several improvements across the service including ongoing improvements to the complaint service delivery itself.

Learning from complaints

What we learned	What we have done
We needed to improve how we respond to Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB).	We have introduced regular case reviews, quality checks and stronger management oversight to make sure ASB cases are handled consistently and progressed promptly. We have also created new ASB Manager and Enforcement Officer roles, that once recruited to will provide additional support and improve outcomes for tenants. Tenant Feedback resulted in us improving our ASB & Hate crime Policy
We needed to improve how we handle complaints and use feedback to make changes.	We updated our Complaints Policy and complaint handling processes to meet the Housing expectations. The findings from our HouseMark review helped shape a Complaints Improvement Plan, and we worked closely with our Tenant Review Group throughout the year to help drive these improvements.
We needed better record keeping and clearer decision-making.	We have improved the way we record information, evidence and decisions, making it easier to track actions and provide clear explanations to tenants. We have also improved how complaints are logged and monitored through our housing management system.
We needed to provide better support for vulnerable tenants, older & younger tenants' and any ethnicity groups that may not be confident using the complaint process.	We strengthened the way we identify and record reasonable adjustments and support needs, helping us tailor our services and communication methods to individual circumstances and communications preferences. We upskilled a particular contractor to observe tailored services and apply them better as a result the complaints have stopped.
We needed to ensure services are delivered consistently.	We provided additional training for staff on complaint handling, ASB case management, reasonable adjustments, customer service and the use of housing systems to help improve consistency across services.
We needed to improve the management of repairs, damp and mould cases.	We strengthened inspection, monitoring and escalation processes to help identify issues earlier, improve oversight of ongoing repairs and ensure problems are resolved more quickly.
We needed contractors to provide a better customer experience.	We worked with contractors to improve communication, appointment management and customer service standards, helping to deliver a more reliable and responsive service.
We needed stronger oversight of performance and service improvements.	We introduced enhanced performance reporting, complaint trend analysis and service reviews to help identify recurring issues, monitor progress and drive continuous improvement across housing services.

Tenant priorities

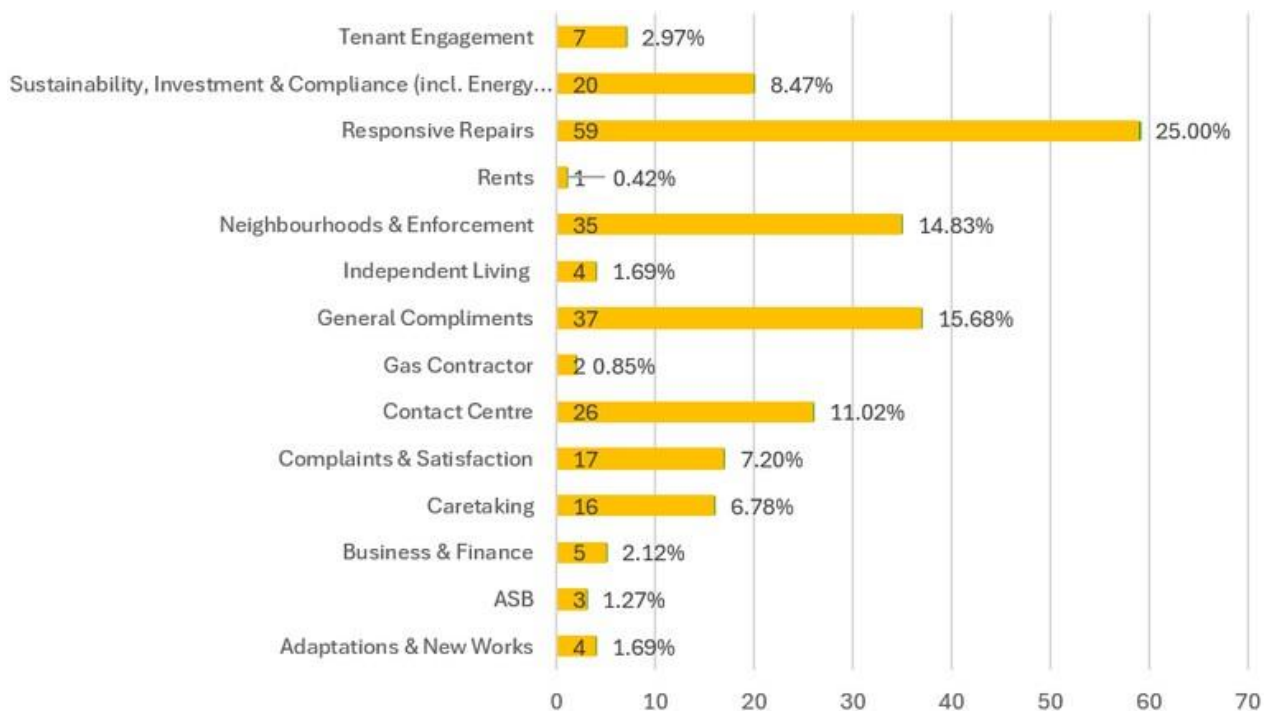


Compliments

Every compliment is shared with teams and staff to recognise good work and help us continue delivering consistent, excellent services. **236** compliments received across Housing Services during the year.

Top 3 Areas Praised:

- Repairs: **59** compliments (**25%**). **900+** repairs transactional survey comments were received, **600+** included positive comments
- General Housing Services: **37** compliments (**16%**)
- Neighbourhoods & Enforcement: **35** compliments (**15%**)



What tenants told us they were happy with:

- Quality repairs
 - Helpful and professional staff
 - Quick responses
 - Positive customer service
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Housing Ombudsman Service

During 2025/26, the Housing Ombudsman Service made **21** findings on complaints relating to Bury Council Housing Services,

- ♦ **8** cases
- ♦ **21** findings
- ♦ **14** findings categorised as Severe Maladministration, Maladministration or Service Failure
- ♦ **7** findings categorised as No Maladministration or Reasonable Redress
- ♦ **66.7%** Maladministration outcomes (The national maladministration rates are around 74%).
- ♦ **33.3%** Non-maladministration outcomes

Year of Case	Service Area / Issue	Decision Outcome	Reporting Year
2024/25	Gas repairs	Maladministration	2025/26
2023/24	ASB	Maladministration	2025/26
2023/24	Damp – Hazard	2 Severe Maladministrations (handling of reports and complaint)	2025/26
2025/26	ASB – not following policy/complaint handling	Maladministration (2 findings)	2025/26
2025/26	Sure Repairs	Non-Maladministration	2025/26
2025/26	Property safety	Reasonable Redress	2025/26
2025/26	ASB – not following policy	Maladministration	2025/26
2025/26	ASB – not following policy	Maladministration	2025/26

Find out more:

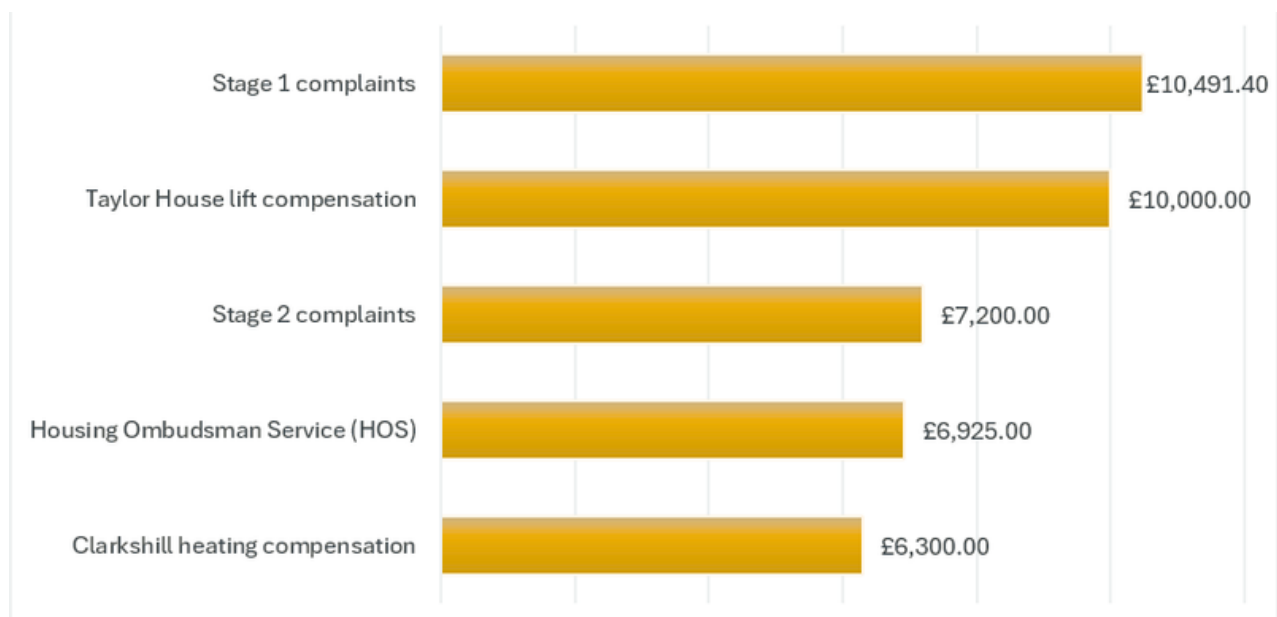
<https://www.bury.gov.uk/housing/housing-services/about-us/making-a-complaint/housing-ombudsman-cases>

Housing Ombudsman Service

A review of ASB complaints and Housing Ombudsman decisions identified opportunities to improve consistency, communication and case management. In response, we have strengthened oversight, improved performance monitoring, introduced regular case reviews, and created new specialist ASB roles. These changes will help ensure tenants concerns are dealt with more effectively, learning is acted upon more quickly, and tenants receive a more consistent service.

We used the additional Housing Ombudsman review of our complaint policy to make improvements to wording and ensure compliance. This exercise has been completed with the tenant complaint review group. We have used the information and research from the Ombudsman Spotlight publications to evaluate and improve our services.

Complaints Compensation



The Housing Ombudsman awarded compensation totaling £6,925 which was paid to tenants in full.

Future Actions

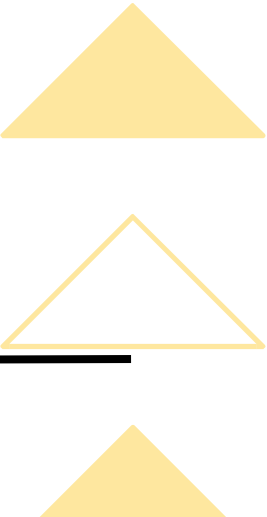
While we have made good progress, we know that lasting improvement comes from consistently applying these changes and delivering better outcomes for tenants. During 2026/27, we will continue to embed these improvements across our services, deliver the recommendations from the HouseMark ASB and complaint review, and monitor their impact through performance reporting.

We also recognise the need to acknowledge complaint trends more quickly so we can take appropriate actions sooner. Improvements to our housing management systems will strengthen reporting, reduce manual process and help us make better use of performance information. We are also committed to ensure that all upheld complaints with outstanding actions, such as repairs and learning, are completed and showcased quickly to offer greater tenant and leaseholder satisfaction.

We have identified further work needs to be done understanding tenants needs, and tailoring our approach accordingly. We have planned training for Autumn 2026 to upskill our staff and contractors around the Vulnerable tenant and Reasonable adjustment Policy.

We are committed to improving the experience of all tenants who use our complaints service, particularly those who may need additional support. By better understanding individual needs and making reasonable adjustments at the earliest opportunity, we can provide a more personalised service and improve communication throughout the complaints process.

We will continue to:

- Share complaints performance, learning and improvement actions on our website, so tenants can see how their feedback is helping to improve services.
 - Be open and honest when things go wrong, learning from mistakes and making changes to prevent issues from happening again.
 - Share learning and good practice with tenants and staff through regular updates, internal communications and staff newsletters.
 - Promote the different ways tenants can raise a complaint through our website, posters, QR codes, newsletters and social media.
 - Work with Tenant Voice and the Tenant Complaint Review Group to review feedback, shape improvements and keep the tenant voice at the heart of decision-making.
 - Strengthen transparency through our Listening to you, improving together reporting, showing how tenant feedback has influenced change.
 - Use complaints, compliments, surveys and tenant feedback to identify trends, improve services and achieve better outcomes for tenants.
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