

# Annual Complaints Performance and Service Improvement Report

2023 - 2024



# About this Report

This report provides an update on Nehemiah housing's complaint handling performance over the last financial year and highlights the changes we have made because of the learnings from complaints.

Our purpose is to improve the lives of our customers by providing healthy, affordable homes and enhancing our communities. Complaints help us do this by providing a way of learning and giving us an opportunity to put things right in a fair and reasonable way for our customers.

This report will cover:

- Board and member responsible for complaint response to the report
- The executive summary
- Complaint handling performance summary
- Complaint handling performance details
- The main drivers of complaints received.
- Satisfaction with our approach to handling complaints
- The learnings we have embedded from complaints over the past year.
- The Service improvement plan for the coming financial year

# Board and member responsible for complaints response to the report.



**REPORTING PERIOD**  
APRIL 2023 – MARCH 2024

**One of Nehemiah’s objectives is to ‘provide excellent customer service with respect’. However, we recognise that we don’t always get it right.**

As a board, reviewing information about how we are performing in our regular meetings, helps us to understand better how we can improve our service.

We are committed to listening to our tenants through their complaints and learning any lessons which can impact on service improvements throughout the year. We have this opportunity of listening to our tenants via their complaints, but also through the Nehemiah tenants’ panel. Through listening to our tenants, they have impacted on our current corporate strategic plan.

We have reviewed the annual complaints performance report and self-assessment, and the complaints policy (against the Housing Ombudsman complaints handling code).

During the year to 31/03/2024 we received 58 complaints compared to 40 for the same period in 2023; broken down this represents 52 stages one and 6 stage two complaints. We are pleased that our tenants have the confidence to report their concerns to us, giving us an opportunity to review and put things right. With a view to improving our services

During this year, we have engaged with our tenants in several ways to ensure that we continuously improve services and to hear their voices. This has been achieved through:

- Regular tenants meeting, as part of our customer engagement strategy.
- consultation on changes to the Complaints, Compliment and Comments policy.
- the introduction of internal fortnightly complaints management reviews
- the appointment of a complaints champion
- regular toolbox talks regarding process and procedure changes within the complaint management process.
- central logging for tracking of complaints
- a change from national responsive repairs contractor to local contractors to improve repairs service delivery and satisfaction.
- transparent reporting in our tenant’s annual report on our performance – Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSM) results.
- learning from complaints embedded in operational service delivery.
- training for our staff on the complaints policy and changes introduced by the Housing Ombudsman Complaints Handling Code in April 2024.

Complaints remain a key performance indicator that is monitored to ensure that the voice of the tenant is listened to and acted on in terms of demonstrating lessons learnt for continuously improving our services.

**The Board of Nehemiah – June 2024**



Nehemiah Housing are committed to listen, investigate, learn and implement any required changes in order understand our tenant and service needed to deliver an exceptional level of customer service. We work with tenants and aim to resolve concerns and complaints efficiently and fairly.

In 2023/24 Nehemiah Housing Association

- received 58 complaints.
- An increase of 31% complaints as from 2022/23

The following was received from the Housing Ombudsman:

- **0** complaint handling failure orders
- **1** enquiry.
- **1** case.

We received **1** maladministration from the Housing Ombudsman Service relating to handling of the resident's reports of anti - social behaviour. Following the determinations, we made improvements to our procedures and further training had been administered to all ASB handlers to improve the customer experience for all our tenants and customers.

## Annual Assessment

All landlords are required to conduct an annual assessment against the Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code to understand their position against the expectations of the code.

Nehemiah Housing completed the assessment in June 2024 and pledge to continuously refer to the code in the design of any complaint service improvements.

# Complaint Handling Performance Summary

REPORTING PERIOD  
APRIL 2023 – MARCH 2024

We are members of the Housing Ombudsman Scheme, and we carry out regular self-assessments to ensure compliance with the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code and to learn from customer feedback to improve our services. [Learn more about the Housing Ombudsman Service on their website.](#) Below is a summary of how well we manage and learn from complaints and the learning outcomes identified as part of the process.

## Stage One Complaints

**In 2023/24 Nehemiah Housing received 52 stage one complaints.**

This was an increase of 31% in stage one complaints from 36 in 2022/23.

**We closed 50 stage one complaints in 2023/24. With 2 further cases open**

- 60% were responded to within 10 working days.

## Stage Two complaints

**Of the 52 stage one complaints received, (11%) were escalated to stage two complaints.** This was an increase of 33% in stage two complaints from 4 in 2022/23.

**We closed 6 stage two complaints during 2023/24. Of the 6 closed case 33% were responded to within 20 working days**

**We did not refuse to accept any complaints at either stage.**

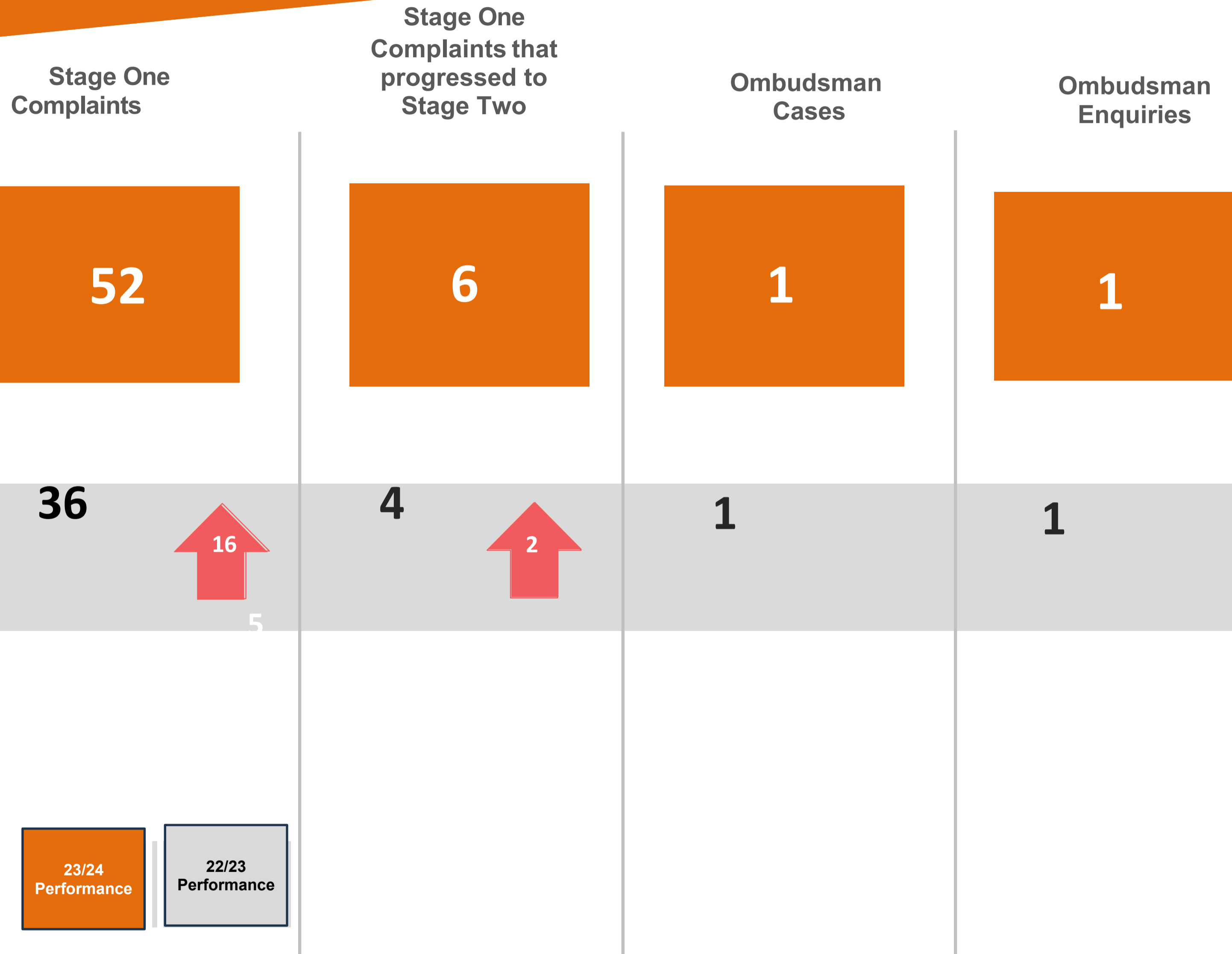
## Reasons for Increases

**Unresolved issues** – Tenants not happy with having to chase up follow up repairs or due to poor workmanship.

**Improved Complaint Culture** - The culture of logging complaint has shifted seeing complaint as a positive tool to drive improvement. As complaint is not one that defines a housing association, but it's how we respond.

# Complaint Handling Performance Details

**REPORTING PERIOD**  
APRIL 2023 – MARCH 2024



# Drivers of Complaints Received

**REPORTING PERIOD**  
APRIL 2023 – MARCH 2024

## TOP DRIVERS OF COMPLAINTS

Stage 1	Total
Repair & Maintenance	33
Staff & Customer Service	15
Tenant Rent & Services	2
Other Issues	2
	<b>52</b>

Stage 2	Total
Repairs & Maintenance	1
Staff & Customer Service	4
Tenant Rents & Services	1
	<b>6</b>

## HOUSING OMBUDSMAN CASE AND ENQUIRY DRIVERS

Reason	Total
ASB (Handling of ASB or action)	1
Following process & procedure	1

# Satisfaction with our Approach to Handling Complaints

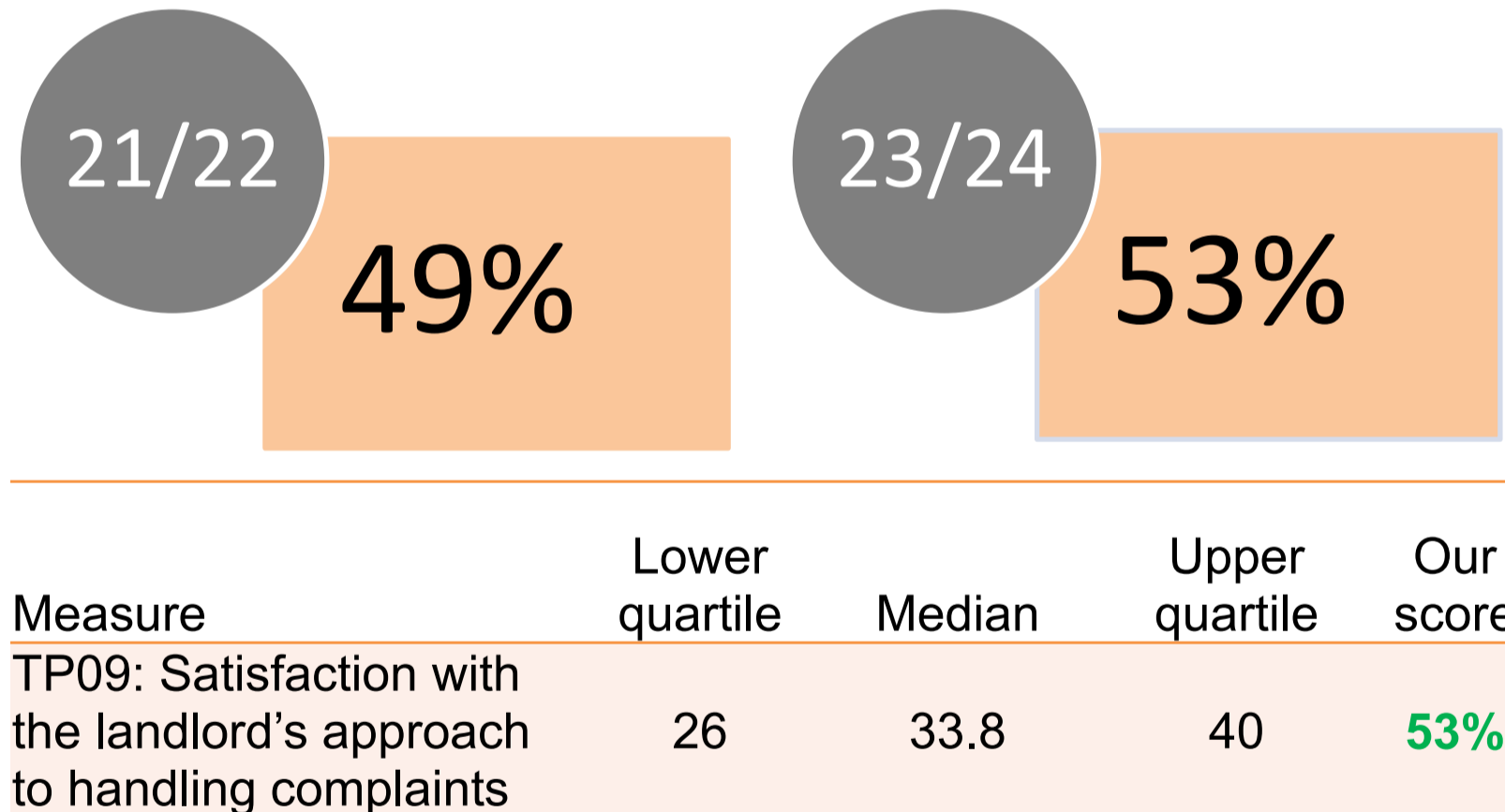
**REPORTING PERIOD**  
APRIL 2023 – MARCH 2024

## Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSM) Survey – Spotlight on Complaint Handling

M·E·L Research were commissioned to carry out a tenant satisfaction survey to gather feedback from tenants. The aim was to gain a better understanding of the levels of satisfaction tenants have with their homes and the associated services provided.

This was the fourth year of M·E·L undertook a tracker survey for Nehemiah. The survey had been following the HouseMark STAR survey guidance but new changes to the questionnaire were introduced from November 2022 to include the new Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSM) released by the Regulator of Social Housing. The fieldwork was split over three periods: July 2023, November 2023 and March 2024.

All surveys were conducted by telephone. Where questions are compatible between STAR and TSM, data from all three periods have been combined for the analysis. Overall, 104 tenants responded to the complaint management question. We received 53% levels of satisfaction in relation to how they felt their complaints were handled. This performance falls within House marks upper quartile (benchmark group made up of 118 Housing Associations and 103 Local Authorities).



## Highlights of improvements delivered in 23/24.

**Implementation of** - Prepared, trained and implemented the Ombudsman's new complaint handling code ahead of launch, ensuring a smooth transition for colleagues and minimal disruption to customer service. This allowed for efficient and fair resolution of customer dissatisfaction from day one.

**Complaint meetings** – This helped to monitor complaints to ensure we can track, report and assist tenants with their complaints.

**Complaint points of contact** – We have a dedicated role, that champions the important surrounding complaint handling for each business area.



# Learning from Complaints & Ombudsman Cases

**REPORTING PERIOD**  
APRIL 2023 – MARCH 2024

**Complaints are an opportunity for us to put something right. They're also a chance to learn. We regularly audit complaints to identify where we can learn lessons to improve. Here are some recent examples.**

<b>Lessons learnt.</b> Well-equipped staff give better support to tenants with poor mental health or high vulnerability.	<b>What we did</b> Further training for staff on responding to challenging situations and mental health triggers
-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

<b>Lessons learnt.</b> There are misunderstandings about rent refunds and the need for at least one week's credit to be on the account.	<b>What we did.</b> Staff to explain and provide written information about rent refunds to tenants.
--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

<b>Lessons learnt.</b> Regular updates to tenants reduce the need for complaints about antisocial behaviour (ASB).	<b>What we did</b> Ensure staff handling ASB cases routinely use the policy and procedure in place to keep tenants informed of progress of their cases.
-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

<b>Lessons learnt.</b> Anyone dealing with ASB cases to have a full understanding of the policy and procedures.	<b>What we did.</b> Staff involved with dealing with reports of ASB received refresher training to ensure they followed the policy, with particular attention given to risk assessments and mediation.
--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

<b>Lessons learnt.</b> Staff working alone in an unpredictable situation are at risk.	<b>What we did</b> Have two members of staff present to increase safety and reduce risk in operational situations deemed as a higher risk.
------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

<b>Lessons learnt.</b> Clarity needed within the ASB policy to outline what steps it will take at each stage of the process.	<b>What we did.</b> ASB policy was reviewed to clarify what steps it will take at each stage of its policy. For example, defining how many warnings it will be providing to perpetrators of ASB before it escalates the complaint to its next stage of action and refresher training provided to all ASB case handlers.
---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

We have a service improvement plan that will give us insights relating to complaints management and performance and give us the ability to identify ways to improve - and to keep us on track.

Our service improvement plan is monitored, and we report on it every quarter to the Operation Committee, tenants Complaint lead

This is what we are focusing on in 2024.

## A Positive Complaint Culture

### What we are going to do

Make sure colleagues welcome tenants feedback as a positive opportunity to listen, learn, and improve services.

### How we are going to do it

- Fortnightly meeting with the assigned complaint leads to help track complaint management and to outline lesson learnt and sharing of best practice.
- Make sure we log all complaints and learn from feedback at the first point of contact.
- Ensuring all colleagues are refreshed in relation to handling our complaints process and providing them with regular toolbox talks to update them in relation to any changes to policy or reported ombudsman cases

## Tenant Friendly and up to date Policies

### What are we going to do?

Make sure colleagues welcome tenants feedback as a positive opportunity to listen, learn, and improve services.

### How are we going to do it?

- Make our processes simple and clear.
- Make sure our policies use tenant-friendly language.
- Tenant Scrutiny Panel to review our policies and procedures to ensure they are tenant friendly.
- Review policies against the Equality Act 2010

## Improving Communication on Complaints

### What are we going to do?

- Make sure all our communications relating to complaints are consistent.

### How we are going to do it?

- Have a designated officer to oversee the complaint process carrying out regular audit and prompts to ensure that the process is followed, and the complainant is contacted in a timely manner.
- Develop a flowchart of the process for all colleagues to follow when managing communications about complaints.
- To report back to tenants on how we have used feedback in order to improve our service (via newsletter)
- To introduce telephone recording to help toward monitoring and training of colleagues.

## Better Reporting

### What are we going to do?

- Improve how we report on complaints, so we get a better understanding of what we need to do to improve.

### How we are going to do it?

- Improve the way we categorise complaints to help understand trends and theme more efficiently.
- Improve how we report to our Operational Committee and Board.
- Build a more accessible way of reporting to our Tenant Scrutiny Panel.
- We will be introducing a new housing management system (HMS) to improve record-keeping where all customer interactions, including appointment rescheduling requests are logged.

## Up to Date and Accessible Information on Complaints

### What are we going to do?

- Make sure all information on our websites and in our leaflets relating to complaints are up to date.

### How we are going to do it?

- Review the information we have about complaints on our website and leaflets.
- Ombudsman updates to be distributed amongst colleagues that manage complaints for learning and best practice.

## Resolving Complaints Earlier

### What are we going to do?

- Resolve more complaints at the first point of contact

### How we are going to do it?

- Make sure that our colleagues fully understand the difference between a service request, when you are unhappy about something, and when we need to take it further.
- Fortnightly complaint meeting with colleagues to discuss open cases for quick resolutions.
- Toolbox talks relating to lessons learnt and complaints procedural updates

## Improving the Handling of ASB Cases

### What are we going to do?

- Resolve more complaints at the first point of contact

### How we are going to do it?

- Make sure that our colleagues fully understand the difference between a service request, when you are unhappy about something, and when we need to take it further.
- Fortnightly ASB meeting with colleagues to discuss open cases for quick resolutions.
- Toolbox talks relating to lesson learnt and complaints procedural updates.

## Improving Cleaning Scheduling

### What are we going to do?

- To have the ability to recognise when a service is not being delivered as expected and to be able to solve the issues in a speedily manner.

### How we are going to do it?

- Cleaners to work from a schedule, where items will be ticked once completed and countersigned by a member of staff. Cleaning Company to make unannounced spot checks, to ensure that the quality of cleaning is of a good standard.

## Improving Handling of Damp & Mould Case

### What are we going to do?

- To constantly review our procedures and processes to ensure we are doing everything we can to prevent and resolve damp and mould issues,

### How we are going to do it?

- **Immediate action** – The team will treat damp and mould case with urgency. Taking the required action swiftly
- **Identifying anyone with a level of vulnerability** – Cases with vulnerable tenants and children or any health condition will be prioritised.
- **To go beyond treating the symptom** and strive to identify the root of the issue to prevent any future cases.
- **Regularly review** the process to ensure it is fit for purpose.

◦

