

Complaints Summary Report: Q4 and 2024-25 outturn

1. Executive Summary for Quarter 4

- 1.1 This report aims to highlight the performance of Quarter 4 and yearly outturn's complaint handling.
- 1.2 **Complaint volumes:** The table below displays the volume of complaints received during this financial year up to 31st March 2025, per quarter. It is followed by a table showing the number of complaints that have been upheld / Not upheld by service area.

Complaints received					
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Total
Stage 1 Complaints received	14	16	15	11	56
Stage 2 complaints received	5	5	2	1	13
All stages	19	21	17	12	69

Number of complaints upheld / Not upheld by service area		
Category	Property	Housing
Upheld (43)	32	11
Not Upheld (26)	15	11

- 1.3 We managed a total of 69 complaints between 1st April 2024 and 31st March 2025. 13 of those complaints were due within Q4 with 10 of them being raised by CDS residents. All were all acknowledged and responded to within the expected timeframe.
- 1.4 **Stage 2 Complaints:** We have seen a further reduction in the number of complaints being escalated to Stage 2. This can be attributed to an improvement in the quality of our investigation and communication with the residents but also the overall improvement of service being provided to residents.

- 1.5 The complaints closed between February and March were about our service as a landlord apart from two that related to contractors' conduct / performance. Of the 12 closed complaints, six were upheld. Three of those complaints were client complaints.
- 1.6 Of the closed complaints in Q4, we paid a total of £150 in compensation for service failure to three residents which is a significant reduction from Q3. The compensation related to dissatisfaction with our repairs service and a water outage in a block.
- 1.7 **Complaint volumes:** The table below displays the volume of complaints received during Q4 in 2024 vs Q4 in 2025

	Q4 2024	Q4 2025
Stage 1 complaints received	20	11
Stage 2 complaints received	6	1
All stages	26	12

2 Causes for complaints October 2024 to 1st April 2025 (Erin to submit number of cases for whole year – working on it now)

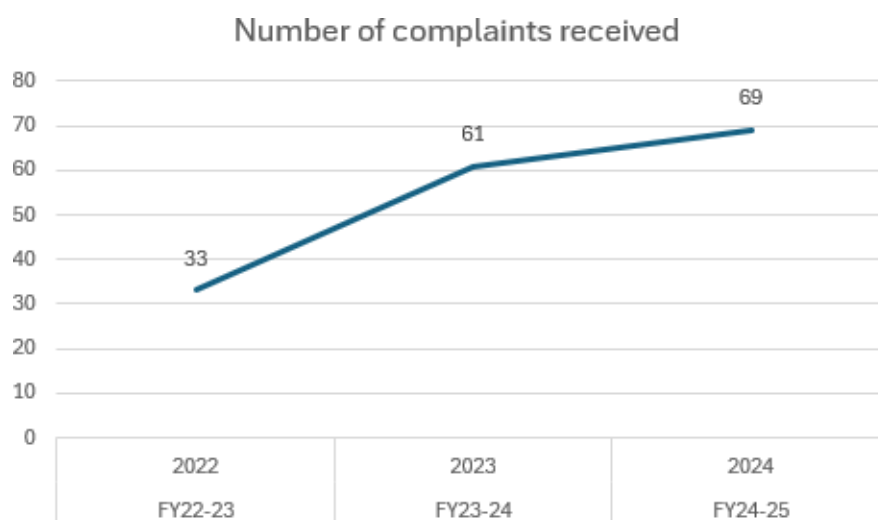
2.1 Dissatisfaction in five service areas:

	Reasons for complaints	Number of cases
Repairs	Lack or delay in communication and action was one of the most prevalent concerns, mainly relating to a lack of updates given to residents, and the rebooking or cancelling of appointments without residents being informed. Poor performance from contractor was also an area residents were dissatisfied about especially around contractors not arriving for appointments, and with poor workmanship. Request for additional works that did not necessarily sit within CDS responsibility	46
Leasehold Management	Communication: One leaseholder was contacted by phone when she made us aware of her preference is not to be contacted by telephone, and only by email. The others related to the lack of parking space monitoring and other estate services issues.	6
Income management	Communication and delay in action was found in one case. They felt that the tone of the arrears payment request letter was harsh and that there was a delay in receiving important	2

	information needed to make a payment. The other the resident felt the arrears officer was not caring and empathic enough.	
Housing management	Communication to joint tenants where letters were only sent to one tenant and not both. The resident was difficult providing access for an EICR and was unsatisfied with communication from their HO. Other issues around estate management; missed cleaning, grounds maintenance, tree pruning... Two complaints about ASB and our response.	12
B2B – Finance	We received a business-to-business complaint highlighting two main issues: the slow speed of payment and the difficulty in reaching someone from our finance team (communication).	3

Across many of the service areas highlighted, the primary concern is communication, ensuring that all parties are regularly updated, and managing expectations.

Three Years retrospective look back – Housemark indicated that In March 2023, formal complaint volumes increased by 78% compared to March 2022 across the sector. We have experienced a similar rise at CDS but as reported in this paper, the trend has started to change with less escalations to stage 2 received and a lower number of Stage 1. It is encouraging. We really value the complaints we receive and will continue to use the feedback to improve service delivery.



3 Learning from complaints

- 3.1 Our aim is to address and resolve complaints promptly at stage 1. All of our complaints that were responded to in Q4 were successfully resolved at Stage 1 apart from one complaint that followed in from Q3. This has now also been closed.
- 3.2 The themes that emerged from complaints received in Q4 included time taken to resolve repairs or dissatisfied with outcome of a request relating to repair and contractor performance. We analyse our complaint data

monthly to understand the root cause of the issues and ensure that the emerging themes are addressed.

- 3.3 The reasons for the escalation to stage two on one complaint was due to a water outage in one of our apartment blocks that took 72 hours to resolve despite our best efforts. This has now been closed.
- 3.4 We know that tenants are concerned about contractors' reliability and the quality of their work. We have now launched the online repairs platform which will give tenants more autonomy in reporting repairs and serve as a prompt for more specific and detailed information. Tenants have more visibility and control of their repairs, enabling quick real-time action. Our goal is to prioritise tenants' concerns and resolve issues faster.

Below are the most recent examples of what we shared with our residents of how we have put things right that haven't gone as well as we had hoped. The learnings for this Quarter relate to service improvement within Repairs as our Housing team did not uphold any complaints received in Q4.

Learning	Service Improvement
You advised that the time to resolve a repair is too long	We are always looking to find ways to ensure when repairs are reported we can gather as much detail as possible to ensure this information is passed to our contractors to try to avoid multiple call outs with inadequate supporting information of the problem. Our repairs team will look to gather more detail upon reporting of a repair. We will also continue to work very closely with our contractors and review the communications to seek quicker resolution on repairs. We note a significant improvement on the satisfaction with the time to repair in our Q4 TSM surveys, up to 64% from 50% in Q3. An indication that it is moving in the right direction.
You are not always satisfied with contractors used for repairs in your home or the level of standard completed on repairs	The contractors appointed to complete repairs in our properties are an extension of CDS and when they are in our residents' homes, they represent us. It is therefore vital that we ensure we are only using contractors that meet the level of professionalism we expect. With the help of a third party, we vigorously vet contractors before appointing them and we are continuously reviewing our contractors' panel. We will not sign off works that have been completed without a full completion report that is quality checked by our team. If a resident is dissatisfied and we can identify any areas that are not to standard, we will ensure the contractor returns to rectify any problem areas. We will not continue to work with contractors that have not met the reasonable desired standard or displayed unacceptable behaviour. This year we have stopped working with four contractors following our residents' feedback.
We received some complaints relating to the monitoring of residents parking	Although we didn't uphold the complaints, we used the opportunity to review the contract, and the service

	provided by the existing company. We will change the contract by moving to another company offering a more flexible service.
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4 Housing Ombudsman update

- 4.1 We have received the Housing Ombudsman's determination in relation to the last active case they investigated. It is important to note that the complaint was lodged by the resident over 1 year ago.
- 4.2 They found a service failure and we support their finding; it is fair. It is around our lack of communication records in our system, with the resident, which would have had a bearing establishing whether timelines were met.
- 4.3 We sent our response to the HOS within one week of receiving the determination. Our MRC was informed of our response at the same time. Actions and our response on the Order and the three recommendations:
 - 4.3.1 **ORDER:** *"We order the landlord, within 4 weeks of the date of this report, to apologise in writing to the resident for the inconvenience and frustration caused to her by the failings identified in this report."* I can confirm that we have emailed the resident with an apology. You will find our email to Ms. X attached."
 - 4.3.2 **RECOMMENDATION 1:** *"The landlord to review its communication in this case prior to dealing with the issue through its complaints process, to see if there is any learning it can apply to future cases."* We reviewed the complaint following our stage 2 investigation. It is part of our process to consider areas of improvement and lessons learnt following a complaint. We identified that a more personal approach needs to be taken for situations where a resident is required to support us with access to carry out a repair, especially when the requirement necessitates moving heavy items or inconvenience. We are also transforming the way we engage with our residents to jointly find solutions. We also recognise that we need to be more robust with recording all communications with residents and our staff have been reminded of this.
 - 4.3.3 **RECOMMENDATION 2:** *"The landlord to review its complaints policy against the Code and make any necessary amendments to ensure its compliance."* Our policy was reviewed and assessed against the code and updated accordingly. It was approved by our board. A copy can be made available on request. It confirms our two stages complaints' process.
 - 4.3.4 **RECOMMENDATION 3:** *"The landlord considers our 2023 Spotlight report on Knowledge and Information Management (KIM), taking note of the recommendations set out within, that refer to good practice around record keeping."* The information has been reviewed and noted. It will also be added to our annual staff training on complaint management.

4.4 MRC (Ben Anim-Antwi) response:

I remember this case as it was one of the cases I reviewed for quality of responses for the complaints report.

I thought then and still think it is the case that the complaint responses were of a good quality balancing the need to give a robust response defending our position for the removal with the need to also show empathy and try to support a vulnerable resident

However, having read the Ombudsman investigation report I agree that the determination of service failure was a fair one given that we could not account for telephone records with the resident which would have had a bearing establishing whether timelines were met. Would like to know how we are aiming to ensure we are recording all communications ?

I am satisfied that we have followed the recommendations

Regards

Ben

4.5 A response to the MRC's question on improvement was issued on 09 May:

- Complaints' training for all staff in June (by an external partner) - we have added improving communication recording to the training brief.
- Temi and Erin will work with their managers to ensure there is improvement and that it is a standing point in the monthly team meetings agenda going forward.
- Each team will receive training from their manager in May-June on the importance of recording all communication in our CRM and the benefits of doing so.
- Staff will be reminded of the standardised guide on how to record communication to ensure consistency of approach.