

COMPLAINTS SUMMARY REPORT – Q4 and 25-26 out turn

1.0 Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report provides an overview of complaints received and managed during the last year, highlighting service areas where dissatisfaction has been raised and the actions taken to improve outcomes for residents.
- 1.2 Complaint volumes have been lower this year when compared to last year, we received 69 cases in total last year and 58 cases for 25-26, with 12 cases escalating to Stage 2 against 10 last year. We handled three leaseholders complaints.
- 1.3 The main areas of dissatisfaction continue to be about repairs, especially around contractor performance, communication and customer service (internal and external). Across all service areas, communication remains the most common theme, particularly around managing expectations, supporting and keeping residents informed.
- 1.4 The report also outlines how learning from complaints helps us drive service improvements, including the outcome from the surveys completed this year.
- 1.5 We have had one complaint escalated to the Housing Ombudsman this year relating to ongoing repair issues but have not received their outcome.
- 1.6 This paper is presented to the Committee to provide assurance that complaints are being managed effectively, lessons are being learned and improvements are being implemented to strengthen resident satisfaction and service quality.

2.0 Complaint volumes

- 2.1 The table below displays the volume of complaints received during this financial year up to 31st March 2026. Please note that the Stage 2 complaint supersedes the Stage 1 received.

Complaints received					
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Total
Stage 1 Complaints received	11	10	11	14	46
Stage 2 escalations	0	1	6	5	12
All stages	11	11	17	19	58

- 1.1 The table below presents the number of complaints upheld and not upheld, broken down by service area for period 01-04-25 to 31-03-26

Number of complaints upheld / Not upheld by service area		
Category	Property	Housing
Upheld	25	5
Not Upheld	21	7
All complaints	46	12

- 1.2 Of the 58 complaints we received this year, all were acknowledged and responded to within the expected timeframe apart from two complaints received in December and March, one was responded to one day late and the other by three days. Both were due to a member of staff being on leave. We have since put additional controls in place to ensure the manager checks all complaints for team members who are absent.
- 1.3 **Stage 2 Complaints:** We have seen a slight increase in the number of stage 2 complaints this year. Our review found that some staff members required further training to strengthen the quality and depth of their investigations and this is something we will look to incorporate on a more regular basis for staff. Other escalations were linked to the complexity of certain complaints, where additional steps to resolve the issues had not been fully explored or delayed throughout the complaint process due to the level of work involved. One Stage 2 complaint related to bathroom works which included several other contributing problems including pipework and flooring. The Stage 2 review enabled us to explore solutions not considered initially, leading to a full rectification of issues within their bathroom with which the resident was very pleased.
- 1.4 This year we have paid out in compensation, £1,310.00 with the highest total of compensation paid in one case at £300.

- 1.7 **Complaint volumes:** The table below displays the volume of complaints received during Q4 in 2023, Q4 in 2025 and Q4 in 2026.

	Q4 2023	Q4 2025	Q4 2026
Stage 1 complaints received	11	11	14
Stage 2 complaints received	1	1	5
All stages	12	12	19

- 2.0 **Dissatisfaction in five service areas** - Across many of the service areas highlighted, the primary concerns are communication and time taken to repair, ensuring that all parties are regularly updated.

	Reasons for complaints (Stage 1)	Number of cases
Repairs	Resident feedback continues to highlight ongoing frustrations with repairs. The main issues being raised relate to works not being completed as expected, communication falling short, and delays in progressing or resolving repairs. Recurring themes include contractors missing appointments, repairs taking longer than anticipated, and concerns about the quality of work delivered.	46
Leasehold Management	Communication/Process: Two freeholders were dissatisfied with the process required for leaseholders in claims and resolving repairs. One Freeholder was dissatisfied with the administration of service charges.	3
Income management	Communication and delay in action was found in two cases. One resident was unhappy as they had their arrears paid by another resident and the credit was not applied to their account leaving the account showing overdue for longer than necessary. Another case highlighted issues around the lack of care and empathy by a member of the arrears team.	2
Housing management	Communication, Discrimination & Antisocial behaviour issues A resident was unhappy with how we dealt with an anonymous report made about them that resulted in a police visit. Two complaints included concerns around communal parking and one complaint related to a lack of financial support particularly around decorating vouchers having lived in their property for 7 years. Areas identified: ASB, Tenancy management, communication, lack of support, issues with bed bugs, parking and litter	7

3.0 Learning from complaints

- 3.1 We aim to resolve complaints thoroughly at Stage 1 to minimise the need for escalation. We are taking active steps to strengthen our approach. This includes providing additional training to staff to improve the quality of investigations and ensuring that complaints are discussed directly with residents before a written response is issued. Many concerns can be resolved more effectively through conversation, helping residents feel heard and reducing the likelihood of further escalation. We remain committed to delivering clear, accurate responses and following through on agreed actions, which supports trust and improves resolution outcomes, something residents were dissatisfied with last year.
- 3.2 We recognise residents' concerns about contractor reliability and work quality. To address this, we continue to review our contractor panel and take firm action where performance falls short, including removing contractors from use. At our request, Plentific has issued a newsletter to all contractors clearly setting out the expected standards of behaviour and attitude, enabling us to hold them to account. We also follow up with residents after repairs to gather feedback. Where work is substandard, we will withhold payment until issues are resolved and we will replace a contractor mid-job if their behaviour is unacceptable to minimise the impact on residents.
- 3.3 We started surveying all residents four weeks after the complaint response is issued to determine satisfaction with the way we handled the complaint. This is done by an external partner using a set of key service questions (ease of contact, speed, clarity, updates, politeness and overall satisfaction) and resident commentary. Satisfaction is recorded in our CRM and outcome analysed for improvement planning. Each resident surveyed is asked if they would like to be part of the Resident's Panel or engage in a different way to help with service improvements. We successfully surveyed seven residents. It is a small number but their feedback has been helpful with improvements required around communication at the early stage of the complaint. We have recruited two residents from the resident's panel directly from the survey conversations. This will continue through 26-27.
- 3.3.1 We successfully completed a resident engagement survey across Quarter 2 & 3 which included a panel of five residents. We met with the residents on three separate occasions to discuss the service provided by CDS, particularly around the repairs service. Whilst the turnout was small, it was very positive. All the panel acknowledged the significant positive change to the service. They highlighted improvement around turnaround time and communication. One resident suggested more use of local contractors which is something we are now trying to work on with Plentific where possible.
- 3.4 Below are examples of what we shared with our residents and how we have put things right that have not gone as well as we had hoped.

Learning	Service Improvement
We need to be more empathetic in addressing your rent queries.	Our staff have had a refresher course in customer service training
There are delays in issuing decoration vouchers to new tenants	We now issue E-vouchers to new tenants immediately after sign-up, and verify that they have received the email during our six-weekly visit.
We need to ensure that our communication between residents and contractors regarding repairs or appointments is more efficient	We have upgraded our repairs portal to be able to provide updates on the status of repairs raised including booking confirmations via email or SMS.

Residents want more frequent and proactive updates about their complaints. They expect more than just meeting minimum response times—they want to feel listened to and informed.	Introduce an “introduction” communication from the member of staff managing the complaint three days from the date the complaint is acknowledged. An informal update letting them know that their concerns are being reviewed and to get in touch if they have any questions.
Contractor behaviour and quality of work are inconsistent.	Refresh contractor code of conduct and embed in Plentific process. Require all contractors to follow the requirements and manage performance through post completion satisfaction surveys.
	Newsletter sent to all Plentific contractors with code of conduct and expectations.
	Insert messages in Plentific when a contractor bids for a job that includes requesting proof of bookings and attempts with residents
Residents want named contacts and accountability, not generic inboxes or anonymous replies.	All correspondence from our generic mailboxes will include the name and contact details of the officer handling the case.
Staff are polite, but sometimes lack empathy or understanding in sensitive situations.	Deliver refresher training for all front-line staff on empathy, vulnerability, and clear communication

5.0 Housing Ombudsman Enquiries –

5.1 We received one Housing Ombudsman’s enquiry in September

- 5.1.1 It relates to a complaint (COM241111056) regarding the contractor’s conduct following work to the bathroom, guttering and flooring.
- 5.1.2 The resident reported satisfaction and is pleased with the way the issues were handled and resolved.
- 5.1.3 All information requested was sent within the required timeframe and a call was made to the HOS to discuss the case in more details.
- 5.1.4 It is important to note that the resident is very satisfied with the way we handled the complaint at Stage 2 and reported that her neighbour told her to send a request to the HOS but that now that the issues are resolved she does not want anything further to be done. We discussed this with the HOS and they took note of it.
- 5.1.5 We do not foresee any risks relating to the way we manage the resident’s complaint. We are waiting for the full review.

6.0 Financial implications – None

- 7.0 **Policy Implications** – We continue to be committed to handling complaints in line with the Board-approved Complaints Policy and the newly published Housing Ombudsman Service’s Complaints Handling Code. This is to ensure that complaints are dealt with transparently and consistently, regardless of any identities or

characteristics of the complainant or the subject of the complaint.

8.0 Resident Impact

8.1 We are now surveying all residents who have made a complaint following our formal response. The survey is carried out by an external person and the findings are recorded and used to drive service improvement.

8.2 We are actively recruiting residents to join the Residents' Panel to review service improvements.

9.0 Equality implications – None

10.0 Charitable issues – None

11.0 Key risks

11.1 Complaints can be a reputational risk, particularly if they are not handled in line with policy or managed with integrity.

11.2 Our aim in managing complaints is to reduce the reputational risk of complaints by always acknowledging and apologising when appropriate. We aim to build trust with customers in this way that even if we get something wrong, we can be relied upon to make it right.

11.3 We also aim to reduce the reputational risk of complaints by learning from residents' feedback and creating actions to reduce complaints over time.

11.4 We have one pending HOS enquiries,

12.0 Recommendation – Members are asked to consider and comment on the findings in this report.

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