

Compliments and Complaints Update

Performance update: July-September 2023 - Quarter Two

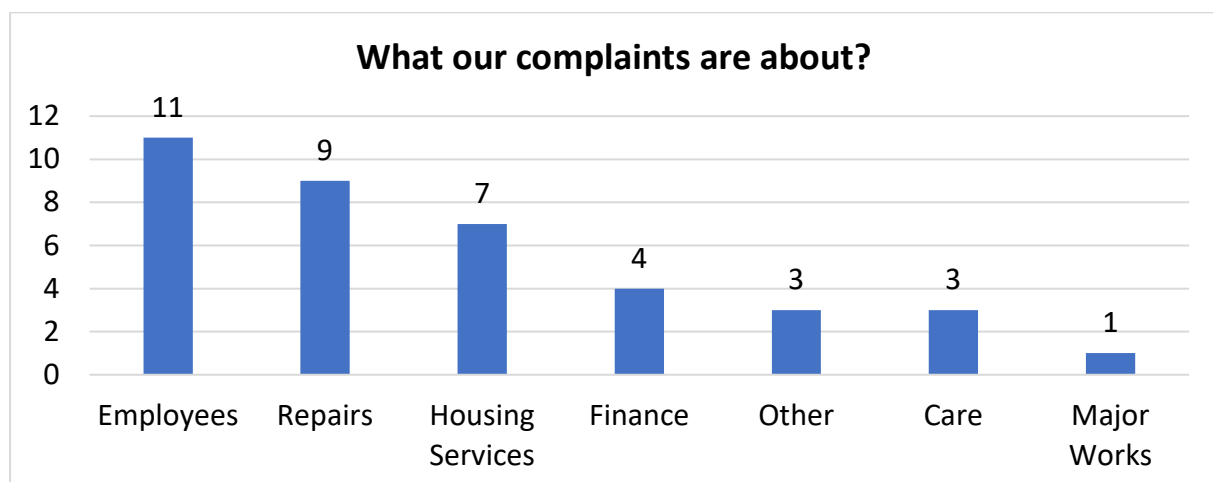
We received 38 formal complaints this period (Retirement Living 19 and Extra Care 19). This compared to 35 for the same period in the previous financial year. Our local managers are working hard to try to resolve as many complaints informally as possible meaning we resolve your issues as soon as we can. We received 203 informal complaints of which approximately 19% (38) progressed to stage one. Twelve complaints progressed to stage two during the quarter. However, some of those complaints were initially logged at stage one in the previous quarter. In the year to date 23% of all formal stage one complaints received have been escalated to stage two by the complainant.

Our performance

Our performance against the response targets which are set within the Housing Ombudsman Complaints Handling Code are as follows:

- Acknowledgement of stage one formal complaints within five working days
 - **We achieved 100%**
- Response to stage one formal complaints within 10 working days
 - **We achieved 91%** (three outside timescale)
- Response to stage two formal complaints within 20 working days
 - **We achieved 100%**

Note: at time of this article three formal complaints were still in progress and within target timescale for response. Performance is reported on those complaints responded to.



The types of complaints which are logged as 'Other' include: damage to property (1) and issues relating to fairness and/or respect (2).

Learning from formal complaints

Complaints are important to us, because if we get something wrong there may be changes we need to make to improve our services. We call these 'lessons learnt.'

Learning from complaints has mainly been related to local learning at schemes. A common theme no matter what the subject of the complaint is a failure to follow policy and procedure such as anti-social behaviour, lettings, or mediation, which we are working to improve.

Some examples of local learning are:

- ensure employees working at night display ID cards. Ensuring reports of ASB are dealt with promptly and provision of additional lighting on sensor to deter ASB
- ensure that sales and scheme literature have an explanation on cover arrangements for long term absence
- identifying poor performance of a contractor earlier. Obtained another quote and changed the contractor.
- ensuring that all new residents have received their pendant alarm on moving in
- employee training on communication with residents including professional boundaries and customer service
- reminder of the process for well-being checks with reference to personal preference
- reviewing new resident rent accounts at team meetings to ensure speedy and effective communication and support on any arrears issues
- ensuring discussion with resident if photographs need to be taken of repairs issues
- training on complaints handling and record keeping
- training on procedure for accessing resident property
- training on asbestos awareness
- ensuring Powers of Attorney are invited to service charge meetings

We continue to review how we learn from our formal complaints and make sure changes are actioned and recorded so we can see how services are improved. We are implementing changes through our internal complaints groups, and a resident led complaints group.

Informal complaints

We dealt with 203 informal complaints with 81% being responded to within 10 working days. The main areas of complaint are care (24%), repairs (20%), employees (13%) and housing issues (10%). The more complaints we can handle informally helps our residents get quick resolutions to their concerns.

Further details about our complaints policy and procedure can be found via our website at: <https://www.housing21.org.uk/about-us/contact-us/complaints/>

Compliments

We always welcome and value compliments about our employees and services. We have received a total of 254 compliments this quarter. 73% were about employees/teams, 26% about services, and 1% about our contractors.

Housing Ombudsman Update

The Housing Ombudsman looks at complaints from residents from different types of housing providers if residents remain unhappy with the response from their landlord. Its

work is funded by annual landlord subscription fees. Investigating these complaints is a free, independent, and impartial service for residents about their housing related complaints.

We received three case requests during this period (of which one was later withdrawn) and one determination which related to the previous financial year. Case requests can take many months for the Housing Ombudsman to process and so determinations can often relate to a previous financial year. Our target is zero at fault cases.

Regretfully, we received two at fault determinations during the quarter (one service failure and one maladministration) relating to cases submitted in 2021. In both cases the issues related to ASB handling and the associated complaint handling and record keeping. Both complaints were originally dealt with prior to the implementation of the new ASB and Complaints policies and associated training which was carried out across the operational teams which has meant we have already met any requirements set out by the Ombudsman.

The Housing Ombudsman Service can be contacted at any point during the complaints process for advice and guidance using the following contact details:

- Telephone: 0300 111 3000 between 9.15am and 5.15pm, Monday to Friday
- Email: info@housing-ombudsman.org.uk (recommended)
- Online complaint form: [Make a complaint - Housing Ombudsman \(housing-ombudsman.org.uk\)](https://www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk/make-a-complaint) (recommended)
- Post: Housing Ombudsman Service, PO Box 152, Liverpool, L33 7WQ