

Compliments and Complaints Update

Performance update: October-December 2023 - Quarter Three

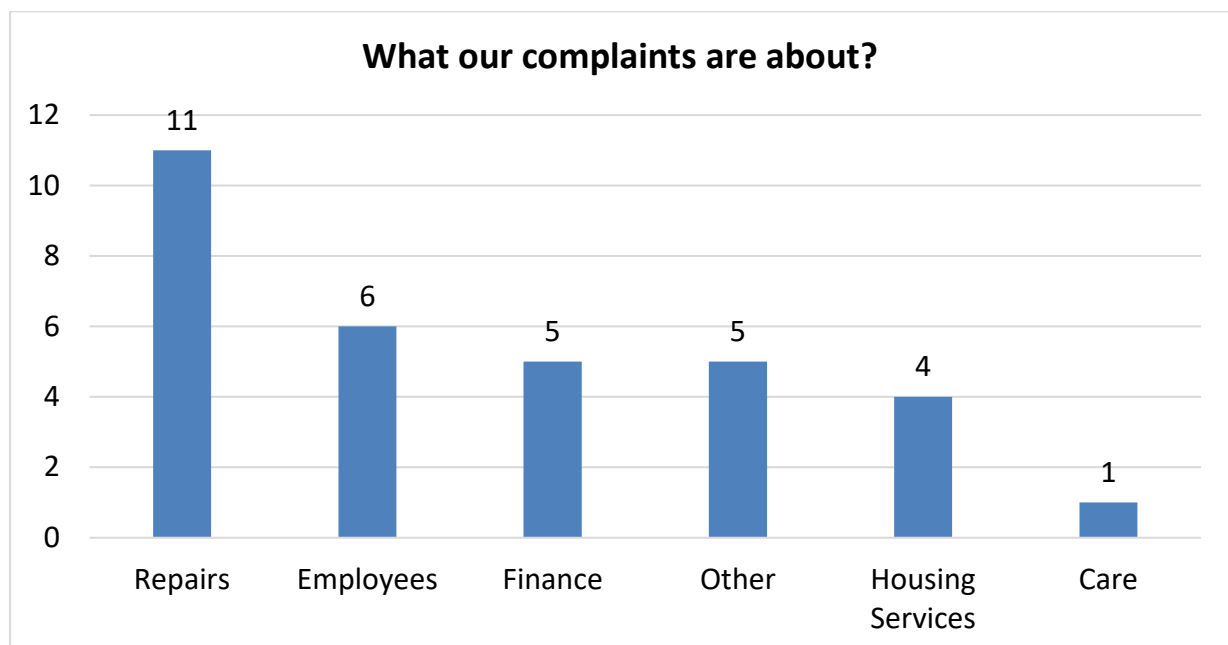
We received 32 formal complaints this period (Retirement Living 12 and Extra Care 20). This compared to 25 for the same period in the previous financial year. Our local managers are working hard to try to resolve as many complaints informally as possible meaning we resolve your issues as soon as we can. We received 154 informal complaints of which approximately 20% (32) progressed to stage one. Five complaints progressed to stage two during the quarter. In the year to date 25% of all formal stage one complaints received have been escalated to stage two by the complainant.

Our performance

Our performance this quarter 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 97%** (one outside timescale)
- Response to stage one formal complaints within 10 working days
 - **We achieved 84%** (five outside timescale)
- Response to stage two formal complaints within 20 working days
 - **We achieved 100%** (and one in progress)

Note: at time of this article one formal complaint was 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: failure of service (4) and legal issues (1).

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 is mainly 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 medication, which we are working to improve.

Some examples of local learning are:

- ensuring all outstanding repairs actioned and implementing an annual tree survey and maintenance schedule in consultation with residents.
- training on the handling of personal data
- Reviewing the contract for catering provision on quality standards and food choices
- Putting a new pest control contract in place
- Review with technical team to resolve ongoing heating issues
- Review of care plan and associated training on delivery of person-centred care delivery, time keeping and completion of documentation
- Improved signage and adjustments relating to the installation of a new automatic door
- Training for local team to ensure any issues relating to rent arrears are dealt with promptly, and ensuring frequent rent statements are produced and shared
- Meeting with residents and technical managers to develop a longer terms solution for on-going heating issues
- Improved contractor arrangements when responding to faults with boilers
- Change of contractor to deal with automatic doors following poor service level
- Adjustment to automatic doors timers and more robust checks on checking visitors to the scheme
- Additional checks to be carried out until the installation of the new digital call system
- Ensuring communications such as consultation on service charges are sent to the nominated advocate
- Local team to be retrained in leasehold resales information and guidance to improve customer experience.

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. By way of example, as reported in the Housing Ombudsman Update below, we are looking to develop a new Housing 21 unacceptable behaviour policy to be adopted across the business.

Informal complaints

We dealt with 153 informal complaints with 77% being responded to within 10 working days. The main areas of complaint are repairs (22%), housing issues (19%), care (18%), and employees (17%). 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 247 compliments this quarter. 72% were about employees/teams, 27% 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 one case request during this period and two determinations. 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, of the two determinations received one was found at fault (service failure). The issues related to ASB (Anti-Social Behaviour) handling (in particular the issue of an anti-social behaviour warning letter) and associated complaint handling. We apologised for the wrongful issue of the letter and conducted follow up training with the local team. A recommendation was made for Housing 21 to consider implementing a separate resident unreasonable behaviour policy, which is currently being developed alongside our antisocial behaviour policy review. Residents will be involved through our resident engagement groups.

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