

Meeting Minutes - Complaints Panel

Date: 08 July 2026

Time: 2:00pm

Housing 21 Lead: Customer Insights Manager

Housing 21 Representatives:

- Complaints Lead
- Resident Engagement Lead
- Resident Engagement Coordinator

Resident Representatives:

ID, DD, TL, MR, RD, JY

Date of Next Meeting: 26 August 2026

Time: 2:00pm

1. Welcome and Introductions

The Chair welcomed attendees to the meeting and introductions were completed.

2. Review of Previous Meeting Minutes and Actions

An update was provided on actions from the previous meeting.

Completed actions included:

- Revised Compensation Policy materials and supporting documents were circulated to panel members.
- Panel members were contacted to gather preferences on future co-production activities. No feedback was received and therefore no preferences were available to share
- The planned themed complaints deep dive was included within this meeting.
- The 'You Said, We Listened' feedback summary had been shared and could be reissued to any member who had not received it.
- No further amendments were raised to the previous meeting notes.

3. Deep Dive – Repairs Complaints

The Complaints Lead introduced the first themed complaints deep dive. Two anonymised complaint case studies were shared with members in advance to support discussion and identify learning opportunities.

Case Study 1 – Loss of Heating and Hot Water

The panel reviewed a complaint concerning loss of heating and hot water. Although temporary measures were put in place and compensation was offered, the complaint was upheld as the resident felt they had not been fully heard or supported throughout the process.

Themes Identified by the Group

Members discussed several recurring themes:

- Residents' experiences are strongly influenced by the quality of communication they receive during repairs and complaint handling.
- Residents want to feel listened to and understood, particularly when they are experiencing distress or inconvenience.
- Knowing and understanding individual residents and their circumstances can significantly improve outcomes.
- Meeting response times does not necessarily mean that a satisfactory resolution has been achieved.
- There can be a difference between policy requirements and the practical realities of obtaining specialist parts or contractor attendance.
- Compassion, visibility and proactive communication from local managers can often prevent concerns escalating into complaints.
- The panel also discussed whether some heating systems are unnecessarily complex and how this can impact residents' experiences when faults occur.

Case Study 2 – Lock Failure and Access to Property

The panel reviewed a more complex case involving a resident being unable to access their property following a lock failure. The complaint highlighted concerns regarding escalation, communication and understanding the resident's individual needs.

Themes Identified

Members highlighted:

- The importance of recognising emergency situations and escalating them appropriately.
- Ensuring vulnerable residents receive suitable support while resolutions are being arranged.
- The need for clear ownership and accountability where multiple services or providers are involved.
- Concerns that service quality should not differ depending on scheme type or support arrangements.
- The importance of balancing policy compliance with practical action to support residents.
- Learning from complaints should be translated into staff training and service improvements.

Discussion also highlighted concerns regarding the difference between policy and practice, and the importance of ensuring staff are confident in recognising and responding to urgent situations.

Members generally agreed that the complaint investigation and compensation outcome were appropriate once escalated, but felt opportunities had existed to resolve matters sooner and avoid the situation escalating to complaint stage.

Learning from the Deep Dive

The panel identified several key learning themes:

- Better understanding of residents' individual circumstances.
- Clearer communication throughout repairs and complaints.
- More consistent escalation of emergency situations.
- Greater organisational consistency in complaint handling.
- Increased focus on compassion alongside process compliance.

- Ongoing quality assurance and staff training remain priorities. The Complaints Lead advised that work is underway with the Learning and Organisational Development Team to embed complaint handling training across the organisation.

4. Resident Complaints Survey

A demonstration of the new resident complaints survey was provided.

The survey has been designed for digital completion, including mobile devices, and includes information relating to privacy and complaint support. Members were invited to test the preview version and provide feedback.

Feedback from Members

Members welcomed the overall design and comprehensiveness of the survey but raised several points for consideration:

- Accessibility for residents who cannot engage online.
- Whether alternative formats should be available, including paper-based versions.
- How Housing 21 can maximise inclusion for residents who are digitally excluded.
- Whether residents should be asked their preferred contact or survey method earlier in the complaints journey.
- Consideration of a freepost return option should paper surveys be introduced.
- Whether neutral response options improve or limit the value of survey findings.
- Review of certain questions that some members felt may be leading.
- The possibility of incentives to encourage participation and improve response rates.
- The importance of capturing both positive and negative feedback.

Housing 21 agreed to review the feedback received and explore options to improve accessibility and inclusion.

5. Complaints Audit Report and Relaunch of the Service Improvement Plan

The Complaints Lead presented the findings from the Complaints Audit and provided an update on the Service Improvement Plan.

Key Points Discussed

- The audit reviewed complaint handling processes across the service.
- Quality assurance checks have now been introduced for Stage 1 and Stage 2 complaint responses to improve consistency, tone and quality.
- The audit identified opportunities to improve record keeping, evidence management and information storage.
- Improvement actions are underway, with many planned for completion during August and September.
- Work is continuing to improve staff training and complaint handling capability across the organisation.

Members discussed the limitations of current systems and expressed support for longer-term plans to implement a more suitable integrated housing management and complaints solution.

Some members also recognised and welcomed the improvements already made to reporting and monitoring arrangements.

6. Ensuring Fair and Impartial Complaint Reviews

The panel discussed how Housing 21 ensures complaints are investigated fairly, consistently and independently.

Discussion focused on:

- The balance between local investigation and central oversight.

- Whether more centralised monitoring could improve consistency.
- The importance of maintaining local knowledge whilst ensuring impartiality.
- Understanding where accountability sits throughout the complaints process.
- Inconsistencies that can occur between departments or services.
- Reasons behind complaint acknowledgement performance.

Members requested a clearer explanation of how complaints move through the organisation and welcomed the proposal for a process map and flowchart.

7. Compliments Reporting

Following a previous request from panel members, a summary of compliments received by Housing 21 was presented.

Members welcomed the inclusion of compliments data and felt it provided a balanced view of customer feedback. The panel agreed that compliments reporting should become a standing item at future meetings.

Actions Agreed

Action	Owner
Produce and circulate a complaints handling process guide/flowchart showing the end-to-end complaint journey, escalation routes and oversight arrangements.	Complaints Lead
Explain within the process guide the factors affecting complaint acknowledgement performance.	Complaints Lead

Invite panel members to provide feedback on the complaints process guide ahead of the next meeting.	Complaints Lead
Review survey accessibility options, including alternative formats for digitally excluded residents.	Customer Insights Manager
Review survey wording following resident feedback.	Customer Insights Manager
Continue reporting compliments data to future Complaints Panel meetings.	Complaints Lead

Key Messages from the Panel

- Communication and compassion remain central to positive complaint outcomes.
- Residents want staff to understand their individual circumstances and needs.
- Greater consistency and visibility of complaint processes is important.
- Accessibility and inclusion should be built into all resident engagement activity.
- Learning from complaints should continue to drive service improvement and staff development.