



# Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code Annual Complaint Handling & Service Improvement Report 2023~2024 Camden Council

# Overview



The Council works hard to view the complaints we receive as a positive opportunity while of course remaining focussed on trying to resolve them to the satisfaction of our residents as quickly as we can. We recognise that complaints are an important source of insight in how our processes and policies are working – and we do reflect on them as service leaders on what they mean for how we are working and could work differently in the future.

This report contributes to the Council's aspirations by acknowledging that complaints and formal enquiries provide a regular and rich source of feedback from our citizens that inform us when things have gone wrong. Learning from these gives the Council the opportunity to improve services to support our citizens.

This slide deck contains the following:

- • Analysis of Housing complaints performance
- • Any findings of non-compliance
- • Service Improvements made



# Complaints Volumes & Performance Stage 1



Month (2023/2024)	Number of stage one complaints made by tenants during the reporting year for the relevant stock type that were responded to within the Ombudsman's timescale	Number of stage one complaints made by tenants in the relevant stock type during the reporting year
Apr	31	72
May	38	81
Jun	46	104
Jul	29	103
Aug	10	98
Sep	31	100
Oct	58	112
Nov	43	133
Dec	90	194
Jan	130	186
Feb	126	180
Mar	127	201
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>759</b>	<b>1564</b>

Data from the Tenant Satisfaction Measures Annual Data Return 2023/2024 for the Social Housing Regulator





# Complaints Volumes & Performance Stage 2



Month (2023/2024)	Number of stage two complaints made by tenants during the reporting year for the relevant stock type that were responded to within the Ombudsman's timescale	Number of stage two complaints made by tenants in the relevant stock type during the reporting year
Apr	9	27
May	7	29
Jun	5	13
Jul	13	24
Aug	15	15
Sep	11	11
Oct	29	29
Nov	42	44
Dec	26	30
Jan	48	55
Feb	26	57
Mar	20	48
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>251</b>	<b>382</b>

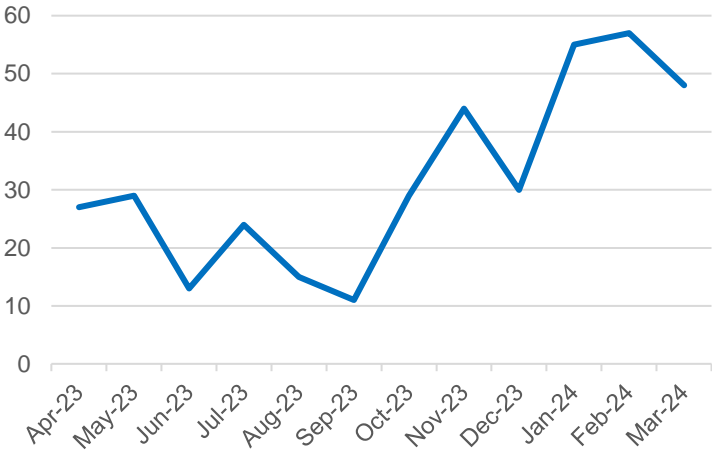
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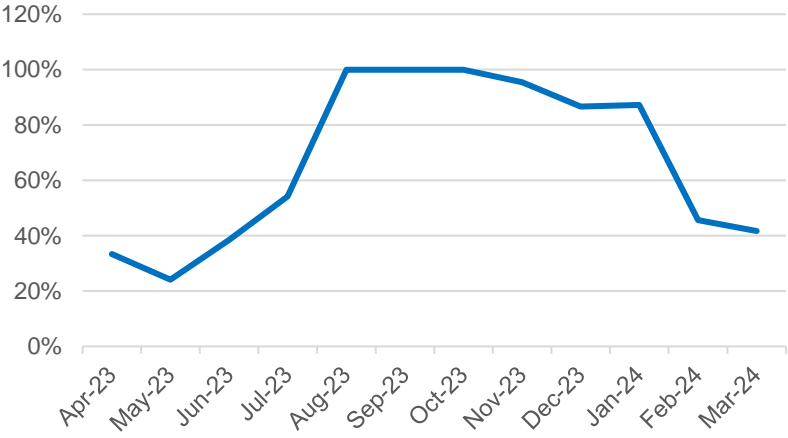
# Stage 2



### Volume of stage two complaints made by tenants



### Percentage of stage two complaints responded to within timescales



**Target – 95%**  
**Actual – 89%**

Additional resource was recruited to respond to the significant increase in Stage 2 Complaints received (early 2024)





# Reasons for Complaints – Themes and Trends

Property Management Top 5 types of complaint

- 1) Outstanding repairs
- 2) Repairs responsibilities
- 3) Repairs – poor communication
- 4) Repairs – Missed appointments
- 5) Damp and/or mould

The majority of Property Management complaints are caused by a failure or delay to complete follow-on works, such as completing the recommendations of an inspection or carrying out further repairs for an ongoing issue.

Housing (Neighbourhoods) Top 5 types of complaint

- 1) Access/Communal areas issues on Estates
- 2) Neighbour disputes and Anti-social Behaviour
- 3) Access to estate parking
- 4) Caretaker issues
- 5) A delay in providing a service

The majority of Housing (Neighbourhoods) complaints are due to a lack of response to residents' emails/phone calls on issues concerning the cleaning of communal areas or neighbour disputes.



# Not A Complaint



In 2023/2024, there were 821 enquiries categorised as “Not a Complaint” and dealt with by the relevant services outside of the formal complaints process.

The main reasons for these categorised as ‘Not A Complaint’ are:

- First request for a service
- Request for Information
- Duplicate of an ongoing complaint
- Resident fails to provide sufficient information for the complaint to be responded to.





# Service Improvements 1



- Reviewed complaint handling to ensure learning from our cases
- A new case management system introduced which allows a webform directly into the system and allows all complaints to be better managed
- Increased our staff resources to reduce delays in handling complaints at all process stages.
- Plain English training and refreshers have been carried out for all complaints and case management team members.
- New starters have 100% cases proofed by management with spot checks also carried out regularly for existing staff.
- All compensation offered is reviewed by the case management team leader or head of service before submission to the resident.



## Service Improvements 2



- Expanding the Housing case management team role to include both repairs and neighbourhood complaints case management in one place, to ensure cohesive responses.
- Creation of a new post – Lessons Learned Lead – that will lead a service improvement hub to review service performance measures, customer satisfaction feedback, complex cases and feedback changes to the resident panel.
- Creation of the Housing Customer Oversight panel that reviews current trends and concerns, seeking explanations from accountable officers and discussing improvements needed going forward
- Following a successful pilot in 2022, changes were made to the repairs service from January 2023 to introduce a new repairs Neighbourhood Liaison Team that works in a customer-focused, joined-up way to resolve complex case work across the repairs service and neighbourhood housing services.



# Findings of Non-Compliance with the Code



## Complaint Handling Failure Orders (CHFOs) 2022/2023

The purpose of complaint handling failure determinations and orders (CHFOs) is to ensure that a landlord's complaint handling process is accessible, consistent and enables the timely progression of complaints for residents, in line with the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code

For the period 2023/3024 there were 4 CHFOs issued for Camden Council. The type of CHFO is summarised below:

### **Type 1 – where a complaint is not being progressed.**

1 x the response to a Stage 1 complaint was late

### **Type 2 – failure to provide information as requested**

3 x failure to provide evidence of compliance with orders following a decision

### **Housing Ombudsman: Maladministration in complaint handling**

Data here is for 2022/2023. Data for 2023/2024 will be available in Autumn 2024 alongside the HOS annual report 23/24

**Maladministration x 2**  
**Service Failure x 7**



# Response from Governing Bodies 1



## Resources & Corporate Performance Scrutiny Committee – 15<sup>th</sup> July 2024

The Committee welcomed the report and had some specific questions

**Committee Question:** What is the process of the self-assessment and what form does it take?

**Response:** The Housing Ombudsman self-assessment highlighted areas where the Council needed to be compliant. The Council then needed to provide evidence of compliance and reasons for non-compliance.

**Committee Question:** What are the lessons learnt from the process?

**Response:** The process had identified where blockages were happening in the system which has led to identifying training needs and system improvements.

In addition the lessons learnt have led to service improvements (Slides 9 & 10)



## Response from Governing Bodies 2



### Resources & Corporate Performance Scrutiny Committee – 15<sup>th</sup> July 2024

(continued)

**Committee question:** What assurance could be given that trends in complaints were being investigated and learnt from, to tackle issues before they reach a complaint stage?

**Response:** There is now a 'lessons learned' lead officer who looks at complaints, trends and improvements. There is a new Customer Oversight Panel, a resident led panel that has been created to hold officers to account and get feedback directly from residents on complaint handling.

### **Committee question** in relation to the **Housing Ombudsman Landlord Report 2022/2023:**

Committee commented that maladministration rate was 66% for the Council which was significantly higher than the national average of 55% in 2022/23. Why was this?

**Response:** The actual numbers are relatively small so any small variation would make the percentage higher.

Request from Committee Member to look into publishing all cases of maladministration on the Council's website rather than waiting for the annual report.





