



Annual Complaints Report 2022-23

Measuring customer complaints

This report provides the key statistics for complaints recorded by Concept from September 2022 to August 2023. Concept views complaints as an important way of capturing feedback from our residents about the services we provide.

An efficient and effective Complaints Policy and a positive culture towards complaints are critical to ensure we listen and hear the feedback of residents and ensure their views are taken account of in the design and improvement of services, which should in turn increase resident satisfaction and reduce service failure.

Lessons learned through the 2022/23 complaint analysis and monitoring have been taken seriously resulting in an updated Complaints policy, to be reported against in the next Annual Complaints Report to be published in April 2024 reflecting the September 2023 to March 2024 period (due to our one-off short budget year).

What is a complaint?

At Concept we define a complaint as:

“An expression of dissatisfaction, however made, about the standard of service, actions or lack of action by the organisation, its own staff, or those acting on its behalf, affecting an individual resident or group of residents.”

Complaint Handling Process (in place throughout 2022–23)

‘Own it sort it’

This applies to informal complaints that can be dealt with through little or no investigation, with the expectation that each service area is responsible to investigate and resolve this form of complaint. Examples of this may include missed appointments or missed call back requests.

It should be noted that during this reporting period except for the month of August 2023, for which the newly approved policy was implemented for the remainder of the year, residents were encouraged to report complaints to their managing agent in the first instance.

Stage One

These complaints require formal investigation. This can be an escalation from the ‘own it sort it’ stage, for example if a rescheduled repair was missed again.

Concept will acknowledge all complaints within two working days and the Resident and Community Engagement Officer will respond formally when the investigation is complete and within 10 working days.

Stage Two

Stage two complaints are an escalation from stage one where a customer has provided further information or is still dissatisfied with the initial response during the stage one investigation.

These Complaints are managed by a Resident and Community Engagement Officer but investigated by an appropriate senior manager working within the service area with the aim to respond within 20 working days.



Resident Complaints

Complaints received	2022/23
Total Complaints	272

Complaints logged by stages	2022/23
Stage 1	270
Stage 2	2
Cases escalated to the Housing Ombudsman Service	0
*Informal enquiries from the Housing Ombudsman Service	2

**We received two correspondences from the Housing Ombudsman Service (HOS) regarding residents who had approached them directly.*

***Own it, Sort It cases raised under the old policy were not recorded, this is changed under the new policy that went live from 1st August 2023.*

One resident engaged the Ombudsman at the point of raising their stage one complaint with Concept. Concept had issued a stage one response prior to receiving Ombudsman contact and therefore issued the Ombudsman with a copy of this response. No further contact has been made from the Housing Ombudsman Service in respect of this matter.

The second of our residents engaged the Ombudsman as Concept had initially declined to investigate due to the length of time between the cause of the complaint and the complaint being raised. Upon review Concept did investigate and issued a stage two response notifying the resident of their right to refer the matter back to the Housing Ombudsman Service if they remained dissatisfied with the outcome. No further contact has been received from the Housing Ombudsman Service in relation to this case.

Resident Complaints by Category

Complaint Category	No.	%
Property Condition /Outstanding repairs	118	44%
Support related	66	24%
Managing Agent/Support Worker conduct	24	9%
Pest control issues	23	9%
Damp & Mould	8	3%
Removal of personal belongings	5	2%
No internet	4	1.50%
Utility bill in residents' name	3	1%
CHA staff conduct	2	<1%
Unhappy with property suitability	2	<1%
Miscellaneous	15	6%

Resident Complaints by outcomes

Complaint outcomes	Stage One	Stage Two
Upheld	71%	0%
Not upheld	29%	100%
Total	270	2

Key lessons learnt:

Some residents told us they did not always feel comfortable to complain to their managing agent and found it confusing where there was a different complaint process for the provider.

So we...

- Reviewed our complaints policy removing the requirement to complain to a provider to ensure all complaints come direct to Concept with a simpler two stage process.

Some residents told us via complaints that they did not always feel comfortable giving feedback or completing satisfaction surveys during property inspections as often representatives of the provider are close by.

So we...

- Introduced a programme of reactive audits and inspections which providers are not advised about in advance.
- Commissioned an independent resident perception survey to ensure every resident can express their views and feedback.

Some residents told us that they were not clear about what type of accommodation they were moving in to and what their rights and responsibility are.

So we...

- Introduced a settling in call survey to introduce Concept and ensure residents are fully aware of the services we provide and their rights and responsibilities.
- Started working with a group of involved residents to help us review our resident sign-up and move in process.
- Updated the standard license agreement to ensure it that it is clear regarding resident rights and how to raise concerns with Concept or the Housing Ombudsman Service

Feedback from complaints is used to inform our PPMF and monthly provider review, Concept takes steps where required to identify improvement actions and tracks these via assurance improvement plans to ensure providers take the required actions, in the most serious of cases Concept has taken steps to off-board providers who have not achieved required improvements with support.

Comprehensive training for all complaint handlers on the effective complaint handling and the new policy and monthly lesson learnt reviews with the Resident and Community Engagement Team.

- The highest volume of complaints relates to repairs and property conditions, so Concept have implemented a new performance framework for providers to ensure compliance with timescales for repairs and is trialling innovative solutions to enable Concept to undertake repairs and charge back the costs to providers where this is not completed within contractual timescales.

Revised Complaints Policy

A review has been conducted on the Complaints Policy which takes account of satisfaction data on complaints and analysis of lessons learnt and priorities for improvement. The key issues identified have either been addressed in the revised policy or through the procedures, templates, training, and processes that have been rolled out as part of the implementation. The policy was approved at the July 2023 Board meeting and was effective from August 2023. A revised self-assessment against the Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code was also presented to the board at this time and is available on the Concept Housing website for review.

Key improvements from the new policy:

- Clarifies that the policy is aimed at resolving resident complaints and signposts providers and employees to alternative means for resolution of any issues.
- Defines a service request as separate from a complaint.
- Clarifies that residents do not need to use the word complaint for it to be treated as such.
- Separates resident reports about anti-social behaviour from resident complaints about how Concept or the provider has responded and dealt with reported anti-social behaviour.
- Supports 'early resolution' of issues directly via their provider in the first instance if preferred but requires all complaints to be logged, investigated, and responded to by Concept rather than the provider.

Priorities for 2023–24

- Embed the new complaints policy enabling more detailed root cause analysis and more effective performance reporting.
- Train and roll out resident advocates who wish to offer support and advocacy to their peers to help navigate their way through the complaints process where required.
- Continue to improve the quality of responses balancing the need to ensure they reflect all the aspects required in the Housing Ombudsman Service Complaint Handling Code whilst being in a format and in language that is deemed appropriate and accessible to our residents.
- Prepare for the implementation of the revised HOS Complaint Handling Code 2023 with the additional requirements and powers that the service has from April 2023