



Annual complaints performance and Service improvement report

Measuring customer complaints

This report provides an annual summary on complaints performance for the period April 2024 - March 2025 in accordance with our obligations under the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code. Concept Housing Association (CHA) 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 increase resident satisfaction and reduce service failure.

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

Early Resolution - CHA will actively promote its Complaints Policy and processes from initial application and at all stages throughout the life of the relationship. CHA actively encourages residents to raise any issues and concerns in the first instance with the provider who is providing services on its behalf, as often they will be best placed to provide an immediate resolution to the issue.





Stage one

These complaints will be logged and allocated to a complaint handler. The complaint handler will take a person-centered approach, making direct contact with the complainant to understand the details of the complaint, impact that any service failure has had on them, and their preferred remedy.

The complaint handler will work with other teams and providers to understand how something has gone wrong, and work together to find the best method of rectifying it. CHA will acknowledge all complaints within five working days and a full response will be issued within 10 working days from when the complaint was acknowledged.

CHA wants to make sure that it provides a thorough, quality response which means that on occasions it may need further time to fully investigate a complaint. Where this is the case, the complainant will be informed and receive regular updates. Any extension will be no longer than 10 working days, without good reason, and the reason will be clearly explained to the resident. When an extension has been agreed the resident will be provided with the Housing Ombudsman Service contact details.

Stage two

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

Stage two complaints will be investigated by a senior manager, collaborating with any relevant staff to ensure a robust and thorough response. The senior manager will not have been involved in the stage one complaint. CHA will acknowledge the stage two complaint within five working days of receipt and will issue a formal response within 20 working days from the complaint acknowledgement date.

On occasions it may be necessary to take further time to fully investigate a complaint. Where this is the case, the customer will be informed and receive regular updates. Any extension will be no longer than 20 working days, without good reason, and the reason will be clearly explained to the resident. When an extension has been agreed the resident will be provided with the Housing Ombudsman Service contact details.

Annual complaints report 2024-2025

Complaints received	2024/25
Total Complaints	224

Complaints logged by stages	2024/25
Stage 1	215
Stage 2	9
Cases escalated to the Housing Ombudsman Service	3

Stage 1 complaint category	No.	%
Provider/support worker conduct	47	21%
Property condition/outstanding repairs	44	20%
Support related	38	17%
Response to residents raising ASB	37	17%
Reports of ASB from members of the community	26	12%
Pest control issues	15	7%
Licence termination process	6	3%
Housing benefit/council tax/utility/energy payment dispute	4	2%
Loss of belongings	3	1%
Miscellaneous	4	2%

Stage 2 complaint category	No.	%
Provider/support worker conduct	3	33%
Loss of belongings	3	33%
Energy payment dispute	2	22%
Licence termination process	1	11%

Complaint outcomes	Stage 1	Stage 2
Upheld or partially upheld	54%	67%
Not upheld	46%	33%
Total	215	9



Annual complaints report 2024-2025

continued

Complaints performance

Stage 1 responses	Response issued within 10 working days	Response issued outside 10 working days
215	80%	20%

Stage 2 responses	Response issued within 20 working days	Response issued outside 20 working days
9	67%	33%

Following the revision of our Complaints, Compensation and Compliments Policy in October 2024, we have strengthened our process and procedural documentation and made a series of system improvements to improve our complaint handling. A suite of training has been delivered to complaint handling staff and a clearly defined separation of duties established between complaints administration and complaint handling. These changes have driven a positive improvement in response times.

Compensation

Compensation of £4542.34 has been paid in five cases during 2024/25. CHA takes account of the guidance issued by the Housing Ombudsman when deciding on the appropriate remedy, including the level of compensation payment that should be made

Compliments

We have been recording compliments received from residents since February 2025. To date, five compliments have been received.



Housing Ombudsman Service

One of our residents engaged the Housing Ombudsman as CHA had initially declined to investigate their complaint due to the length of time between the cause of the complaint and the complaint being raised. Upon review, CHA did investigate and issue a stage 2 response. Subsequently the resident escalated their complaint to the Housing Ombudsman, which was accepted for investigation. Upon adjudication the Housing Ombudsman upheld CHA's decision.

Two further residents have engaged with the Housing Ombudsman Service having received stage 2 responses. Both cases are currently being assessed and awaiting allocation to an adjudicator.

Lessons learnt:

Some residents told us they found it difficult to communicate effectively in their first chosen language

So we...

Introduced a translation service to ensure CHA is inclusive and accessible to all residents whenever they need to contact us.

Some residents told us their complaint could have been resolved at stage 1, had an offer of compensation been included

So we...

Delivered training to all complaint handling staff, enabling the potential for compensation offers at all stages of the complaints process in line with Housing Ombudsman Service Complaint Handling code and remedy guidelines.

Some residents told us they needed to contact us outside of standard business hours

So we...

Implemented an out of hours service to ensure we are there to react and support our residents 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.



Lessons learnt continued :

Some residents told us that they were not clear about the type of accommodation they were moving into and what their rights and responsibilities are

So we...

Strengthened our approach to new resident settling in conversations, undertaken by the Resident Services team, who introduce CHA, and ensure residents are fully aware of the services we provide and their rights and responsibilities. These conversations now take place as part of in person property visits and via telephone.

Introduced a quarterly resident newsletter to improve the connection we have with our residents, promoting our contact information including how residents can make a complaint and providing information about local services and seasonal updates.

Some neighbours told us that they felt frustrated by instances of Anti-social behaviour

So we...

Updated our Anti-social behaviour policy, and improved our communication and built trust with neighbours and communities, by issuing ASB diary logs and maintaining ongoing communication beyond the initial point of resolution.

Feedback from complaints is used to inform our Provider Performance Management Framework and monthly provider review. CHA 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 CHA has taken steps to off-board providers who have not achieved required improvements with the provision and quality of support.

Complaint themes

The greatest volume of complaints relates to poor provider conduct. Where this is established through complaint handling, Action Improvement Plans (AIPs) are implemented to hold providers to account and ensure future compliance with the required standards of behaviour and conduct.

The second highest volume of complaints relates to repairs and property conditions. CHA has implemented a performance framework for providers to ensure compliance with timescales for repairs and is trialling a solution to enable CHA to undertake repairs and charge back the costs to providers where these are not completed within contractual timescales.



Complaint themes continued

Support related complaints represent the third highest volume of complaints. The provider performance framework also enables provider compliance with support provision. Where audits undertaken by CHA identify concerns related to the provision of support, these are addressed through the framework. Where support failures are identified through complaints, reactive support audits are conducted across a sample of provider residents by CHA. These audits range from all support files in the property where a complaint originated, to all files across a range of provider properties.

Complaint, Compensation and Compliments Policy

Following the introduction of the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code, which was published in April 2024, a review of our Complaints Compensation and Compliments Policy was undertaken in October 2024 to reflect items identified in the self-assessment. Following this review, the self-assessment was resubmitted and the revised policy was published.

A full list of changes made to the policy are listed below:

- **Clarity that the policy is aimed at resolving resident complaints and signposts Managing Agents and employees to alternative means for resolution of issues**
- **Includes a section on reasonable adjustments in the complaints process**
- **Clarification of roles and responsibilities including adoption of the Member Responsible for Complaints role**
- **Reference to the Ombudsman guidance on remedies**
- **Addition of the requirement that a full record of the complaint, and the outcomes at each stage must be maintained**
- **Confirmation that representatives of the complainant can deal with the complaint and be accompanied to all meetings**
- **Inclusion of the Annual Complaints Performance and Service Improvement Report and reporting requirements.**

