



Democratic Services

Location: Phase II
DDI: 01895 250185
CMD No: 2026/1807

**To: COUNCILLOR NICK DENYS
CABINET MEMBER FOR PLANNING, HOUSING &
PROPERTY**

c.c. All Members of the Corporate Resources &
Infrastructure Select Committee
c.c. Dan Kennedy, Corporate Director of Residents
Services
c.c. Shaheen Mahtabuddin, Head of Service
Improvement

Date: 15 September 2026

Non-Key Decision request

Form D

Annual Self-Assessment and Annual Housing Complaints and Service Improvement Report (2025/26)

Dear Cabinet Members,

Attached is a report requesting that a decision be made by you as an individual Cabinet Member. Democratic Services confirm that this is not a key decision, as such, the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012 notice period does not apply.

You should take a decision **on or after Wednesday 23 September 2026** in order to meet Constitutional requirements about publication of decisions that are to be made. You may wish to discuss the report with the Corporate Director before it is made. Please indicate your decision on the duplicate memo supplied and return it to me when you have made your decision. I will then arrange for the formal notice of decision to be published.

Liz Penny
Democratic Services

Title of Report: Annual Self-Assessment and Annual Housing Complaints and Service Improvement Report (2025/26)

Decision made:

Reasons for your decision: (e.g. as stated in report)

Alternatives considered and rejected: (e.g. as stated in report)

Signed Date.....

Cabinet Member for Planning, Housing & Property

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Annual Self Assessment and Annual Housing Complaints and Service Improvement Report (2025/26)

Cabinet Member Lead	Cabinet Member for Planning, Housing & Property (Cllr Denys)
Chief Officer responsible	Corporate Director of Residents Services
Report author	Shaheen Mahtabuddin, Head of Service Improvement

Report classification and reason	Public For General Release
Relevant Committee	Corporate Resources & Infrastructure
Electoral Ward	All Wards

1. Executive Summary

The Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code requires landlords to demonstrate annually that their complaints policy and procedures remain compliant with the Code. Landlords must also produce an annual complaints performance and service improvement report, including a self-assessment, analysis of complaints performance, Ombudsman findings, and learning and service improvements arising from complaints.

The 2025/26 Annual Housing Complaints and Service Improvement Report and accompanying Self-Assessment have been prepared to meet these requirements. The Self-Assessment confirms that the Council remains compliant with all nine sections of the Complaint Handling Code, covering complaint definition and acceptance, accessibility, complaint handling, remedies, reporting, oversight, scrutiny and organisational learning.

During 2025/26, the Council continued to strengthen its approach to complaint management and service improvement. The Corporate Complaints Policy and Procedure were reviewed and updated, additional training was delivered to over 200 staff involved in complaint handling, and arrangements for recording learning, monitoring trends and reporting performance were enhanced through established governance processes.

The report highlights both progress and areas requiring continued focus. Complaints relating to Housing Repairs and Maintenance reduced at both Stage 1 and Stage 2, and the escalation rate for Planned Works fell significantly. However, complaints relating to Tenancy Management and Adaptations increased. Complaint response performance improved at

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Stage 1, reaching 92% in the final quarter, while Stage 2 performance reduced to 83% and will require continued attention.

The report also demonstrates how learning from complaints is driving service improvements, including strengthened repairs escalation processes, improved tracking of follow-on works, enhanced contractor monitoring and clearer communication with residents. The Council is continuing to embed complaints as a key source of insight into service performance and resident experience.

The Cabinet Member is therefore asked to approve the 2025/26 Annual Self-Assessment against the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code (Appendix A). Following approval, the Self-Assessment will be published alongside the Council's annual complaints performance and service improvement information.

There are no direct financial implications arising from approval of the Self-Assessment. The purpose of this report is to provide assurance that the Council has completed its annual assessment of compliance and has appropriate governance arrangements in place to oversee complaint handling and continuous improvement.

2. Recommendation(s)

That the Cabinet Member for Planning, Housing & Property:

- 1) Approves the Council's 2025/26 Annual Self-Assessment against the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code, attached at Appendix A to this report.**
- 2) Approves the Council's Annual Review of Complaint Handling Report, attached as Appendix B to this report.**
- 3) Approves the Member Responsible for Housing HRA Governing Body Response attached as Appendix C to this report.**
- 4) Notes the Corporate Complaints Procedure is to be submitted to the Ombudsman as part of the submission, attached as Appendix D to this report.**
- 5) Notes the Annual Housing Complaints and Service Improvement Report 2025/26, including the self-assessment, Governing Body Response and Corporate Complaints Procedure will be published on the Council's complaints webpage in accordance with the requirements of the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code.**

3. Reasons for decision

The Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code requires landlords to undertake an annual self-assessment to ensure that their complaints policy and procedures remain in line with the requirements of the Code.

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Approval of the self-assessment will provide formal Cabinet Member oversight of the Council's annual assessment and enable the Council to demonstrate compliance with the Code.

The self-assessment confirms compliance across all nine sections of the Code and reflects changes made to the Council's complaints arrangements during 2025/26 and into 2026, including revisions to the Corporate Complaints Procedure and further staff training.

Publication of the self-assessment alongside the annual complaints performance and service improvement report, the Governing Body Response and the Corporate Complaints Procedure will ensure that the Council meets the Code's transparency and reporting requirements.

4. Proposal

Annual self-assessment against the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code

Hillingdon Council, as a registered provider of social housing, is required to comply with the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code and demonstrate compliance on at least an annual basis.

The Council's 2025/26 self-assessment has been completed and is attached as Appendix A. The assessment considers each requirement of the Code and confirms compliance across all nine sections.

The annual complaints performance and service improvement report provides the wider context for the assessment and includes analysis of complaint handling performance, Housing Ombudsman findings, and learning and service improvements arising from complaints and is attached as Appendix B.

The Member Responsible for Housing HRA Governing Body Response provides oversight and accountability assurance of the governing body and is attached as Appendix C.

Corporate Complaints procedure

The Council's Corporate Complaints Procedure was reviewed during 2025/26 and revised in June 2026. The revised procedure was subsequently approved by Corporate Management Team, the Leader of the Council, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Planning, Housing & Property in July 2026.

The amendments were limited in nature and were primarily intended to improve wording, clarify requirements and reinforce key aspects of the Council's approach. The underlying complaints process was not changed.

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The self-assessment confirms that the Council continues to operate a two-stage formal complaints process, following an initial service request stage, in line with the Housing Ombudsman's requirements.

Accessibility and complaint handling

The Council continues to provide a range of routes through which residents can make a complaint, including in person, by telephone, in writing, by email and through the Council's website. Residents can request reasonable adjustments where required.

Staff involved in complaints have received additional training during the year. Online training sessions held on 29 April and 5 May 2026 were attended by more than 200 staff, with a recording also made available to staff.

The self-assessment confirms that staff involved in complaint handling are expected to work collaboratively to resolve resident issues, take shared responsibility for areas of development identified through complaints and act in accordance with relevant professional requirements.

Putting things right and learning from complaints

The Council's complaints arrangements provide for a range of remedies where a service failure or adverse impact has been identified. These can include an apology, provision of the service that should have been received, reconsideration of decisions, service improvements and, where appropriate, financial compensation.

The Council has also strengthened its arrangements for capturing learning from complaints. The JADU complaints system requires responding officers and managers to record whether a complaint is upheld, any compensation paid and any learning identified. This information is then used to identify service improvements and recurring themes.

Examples of improvements arising from complaints include weekly reviews of repairs that have exceeded timescales, tracking of follow-on works and ensuring that correspondence relating to repairs complaints includes a direct contact number.

Scrutiny, oversight and continuous improvement

The Council has established arrangements for regular oversight of complaints performance, including quarterly reporting through the Landlord Service governance arrangements and reporting to the Member Responsible for Housing HRA.

The annual complaints report is also considered through the Council's scrutiny arrangements and complaint data and learning are shared with tenants through the Compliments and Complaints Special Interest Group. During 2025/26, tenants identified the need for greater

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depth and breadth of complaints information to be shared with them, which will be an area for further development during 2026/27.

The Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code specifically requires landlords to look beyond individual complaints and consider whether wider service improvements are required. The Council's arrangements are designed to support this approach.

Complaint performance and service improvement

The Annual Housing Complaints and Service Improvement Report provides the detailed assessment of the Council's complaint performance during 2025/26.

Overall Housing complaints increased from 605 in 2024/25 to 696 in 2025/26. However, there were positive trends in Housing Repairs and Maintenance, where complaints reduced at both Stage 1 and Stage 2, and in Planned Works, where the proportion of complaints progressing to Stage 2 reduced significantly.

The report also identifies areas requiring further attention, particularly Tenancy Management and Adaptations, where complaint volumes and escalation increased. Complaint response performance also varied during the year. Stage 1 compliance recovered to 92% in the final quarter following targeted intervention, while Stage 2 compliance reduced to 83%.

These issues are being addressed through the Landlord Service's wider service improvement activity and will continue to be monitored through the Council's governance and scrutiny arrangements.

Ombudsman feedback and review of the self-assessment

The Council has considered feedback and decisions issued by the Housing Ombudsman during the year and has updated its self-assessment and Corporate Complaints Procedure where required.

The self-assessment confirms that senior managers are made aware of Ombudsman decisions and that actions arising from those decisions are monitored to completion. Where changes are made as a result of Ombudsman feedback, these are reflected in the self-assessment when it is next reviewed.

Approval of the annual self-assessment by the Cabinet Member will provide the formal governance approval required before publication.

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5. Corporate implications

Financial	Y	Equalities impact assessment	
Legal (mandatory)	Y	Workforce	
Alternative options (mandatory)	Y	Public Health	
Risk management (mandatory)	Y	External partners	
Heathrow Expansion		Communications	Y
Asset		Committee comments	
Procurement & contract social value		Digital	
Planning		Other	
Climate Change		Other	

a) Financial

There are no direct financial implications arising from the recommendations set out in this report.

Approval of the annual self-assessment does not create a new financial commitment. Any costs associated with delivering the Council's complaints arrangements, staff training and service improvement activity will be managed through existing approved budgets.

b) Legal

Legal Services confirm that the Housing Ombudsman Scheme, a scheme through which tenants and other individuals can submit complaints about Scheme members to be investigated by a Housing Ombudsman, is approved by the Secretary of State under section 51 of, and Schedule 2 to, the Housing Act 1996. Schedule 2 requires the Council, as a local authority in England which is a registered provider of social housing, to be a member of the Scheme.

The Council, as a member of the Scheme, must comply with the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code. The Code requires landlords to undertake an annual self-assessment and publish it as part of a wider annual complaints performance and service improvement report along with the governing body's response. Failure to comply with the Code may result in action by the Housing Ombudsman and the Regulator of Social Housing. Following the recommendations of this report will enable the Council to comply with the requirements of the Code and avoid any action for non-compliance.

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c) Alternative options

<i>Alternative Options</i>	<i>Rationale for rejecting option</i>
Option A – Approve the Annual Self-Assessment as recommended	This is the recommended option. It enables the Council to formally approve the annual self-assessment and meet the governance and reporting requirements of the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code.
Option B – Defer approval pending further review	This would delay formal approval and publication of the annual self-assessment. There is no identified reason within the current assessment requiring such a delay.
Do nothing	This would mean the Council does not formally approve the annual self-assessment, creating a risk of non-compliance with the Code's requirements for annual assessment, reporting and publication.
Cease activity	This is not a viable option. The Council has an ongoing regulatory obligation to maintain appropriate complaints arrangements and demonstrate compliance with the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code.

d) Risk management

<i>Risk</i>	<i>Mitigation</i>
Failure to formally approve and publish the annual self-assessment could result in non-compliance with the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code.	Cabinet Member approval followed by publication of the self-assessment and annual complaints information on the Council's complaints webpage.
Identified areas of weaker complaint performance are not addressed and result in continued dissatisfaction or escalation.	Complaint performance is monitored through quarterly reporting and the Landlord Service governance arrangements, with learning and service improvements tracked.
Learning from individual complaints is not consistently translated into wider service improvements.	The JADU system requires learning to be recorded and enables recurring themes and service improvements to be identified and monitored.

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Ombudsman findings or recommendations are not acted upon in a timely manner.	Senior managers are made aware of Ombudsman decisions and actions are monitored to completion. Changes arising from Ombudsman feedback are incorporated into the self-assessment where appropriate.
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e) Other implications

The annual self-assessment, Annual Housing Complaints and Service Improvement Report and Governing Body Response will be published on the Council's complaints webpage.

The Council also shares complaints performance and learning with tenants through its Compliments and Complaints Special Interest Group. During 2025/26, tenants identified a desire for greater depth and breadth of complaints data to be shared during 2026/27.

6. Consultation & engagement

The annual self-assessment has been developed alongside the Annual Housing Complaints and Service Improvement Report and has been considered through the Council's established Landlord Service governance arrangements.

The annual report is reviewed through the HRA Operational Group, Corporate Management Team and the Cabinet Member portfolio lead for the Landlord Service. It is also reported through the Council's resident scrutiny arrangements.

During 2025/26, complaints data and learning were shared with tenants on a rolling quarterly basis through the Compliments and Complaints Special Interest Group. This provides tenants with an opportunity to review complaints performance and consider how learning is being used to improve services.

Feedback from tenants during the year included a request for greater depth and breadth of complaints data to be shared. This has been noted as an area for further development during 2026/27.

No separate public consultation is required in relation to the formal approval of the annual self-assessment.

7. Timetable for implementation

Subject to Cabinet Member approval, the 2025/26 Annual Self-Assessment against the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code will be published on the Council's

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complaints webpage alongside the relevant Annual Housing Complaints and Service Improvement Report and governing body's response.

The Council will continue to monitor complaint performance, Ombudsman findings and service improvement activity through its established quarterly governance and scrutiny arrangements during 2026/27.

List of appendices attached

- Appendix A – Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code: Annual Self-Assessment 2025/26
- Appendix B – Annual Housing Complaints and Service Improvement Report 2025/26
- Appendix C – Member Responsible for Housing HRA Governing Body response
- Appendix D – Corporate Complaints Procedure

List of Background Papers

- [Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code](#)

Appendix A: Self-assessment form

This self-assessment form should be completed by the complaints officer and it must be reviewed and approved by the landlord's governing body at least annually.

Once approved, landlords must publish the self-assessment as part of the annual complaints performance and service improvement report on their website. The governing body's response to the report must be published alongside this.

Landlords are required to complete the self-assessment in full and support all statements with evidence, with additional commentary as necessary.

We recognise that there may be a small number of circumstances where landlords are unable to meet the requirements, for example, if they do not have a website. In these circumstances, we expect landlords to deliver the intentions of the Code in an alternative way, for example by publishing information in a public area so that it is easily accessible.

Section 1: Definition of a complaint

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
1.2	A complaint must be defined as: <i>‘an expression of dissatisfaction, however made, about the standard of service, actions or lack of action by the landlord, its own staff, or those acting on its behalf, affecting a resident or group of residents.’</i>	Yes	This definition is included under Section 1 of the Corporate complaints Procedure which can be accessed www.hillingdon.gov.uk/complaints	This precise wording is used in Hillingdon Council's Corporate Complaints Policy and Procedure
1.3	A resident does not have to use the word 'complaint' for it to be treated as such. Whenever a resident expresses dissatisfaction landlords must give them the choice to make complaint. A complaint that is submitted via a third party or representative must be handled in line with the landlord's complaints policy.	Yes	Presentations were delivered virtually to all staff involved in the handling of complaints that the word "complaint" did not need to be used for us to progress by way of a complaint. Complaint handling Masterclasses are delivered four times a year for all staff that handle complaints and this message is re-iterated in each class. This is also stated under Section 2 of the Corporate complaints procedure under "The Corporate complaints procedure"	Every resident is given the option to make a complaint when they express dissatisfaction.
1.4	Landlords must recognise the difference between a service request and a complaint. This must be set out	Yes	The definition of a Service Request and complaint is included under Section 2 of the	The Council makes a distinction between a

	in their complaints policy. A service request is a request from a resident to the landlord requiring action to be taken to put something right. Service requests are not complaints, but must be recorded, monitored and reviewed regularly.		Corporate complaints procedure. Service requests are logged, monitored and processed in the same way as complaints and using the same system. Officers in the complaints team have oversight on whether a service request has been responded to or not and will chase Officers where necessary.	service request and a complaint.
1.5	A complaint must be raised when the resident expresses dissatisfaction with the response to their service request, even if the handling of the service request remains ongoing. Landlords must not stop their efforts to address the service request if the resident complains.	Yes	This is part of the Council's Corporate complaints procedure and is set out under Section 2 which can be accessed at www.hillingdon.gov.uk/complaints	
1.6	An expression of dissatisfaction with services made through a survey is not defined as a complaint, though wherever possible, the person completing the survey should be made aware of how they can pursue a complaint if they wish to. Where landlords ask for wider feedback about their services, they also must provide details of how residents can complain.	Yes	We will advise someone responding to a survey where and how they can submit a complaint.	The Council recognises that survey responses may contain a 'complaint'. We ensure that appropriate signposting to the complaints service takes place, and we raise awareness of how to complain while conducting surveys.

Section 2: Exclusions

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
2.1	Landlords must accept a complaint unless there is a valid reason not to do so. If landlords decide not to accept a complaint they must be able to evidence their reasoning. Each complaint must be considered on its own merits	Yes	This is included in the Council's Corporate complaints procedure under Section 1 – “Who can complain” and “What can people complain about”.	The Corporate complaints policy includes the following text <i>“If we do not intend to progress your complaint, we will inform you of this in writing, tell you why we will not progress your complaint and give you the contact details of the Ombudsman to whom you may escalate your complaint to for independent review.”</i>
2.2	A complaints policy must set out the circumstances in which a matter will not be considered as a complaint or escalated, and these circumstances must be fair and reasonable to residents. Acceptable exclusions include: • The issue giving rise to the complaint occurred over twelve months ago. • Legal proceedings have started. This is defined as details of the	Yes	This is included in the Corporate complaints procedure under Section 1 (What can people complain about and Who can complain) which can be located at: www.hillingdon.gov.uk/complaints	The Corporate complaints policy sets those complaints we will not progress and this is set out under Section 1 “Who can complain” and “What can people complain about”. This includes issues over 12 months old, legal proceedings, matters already considered.

	claim, such as the Claim Form and Particulars of Claim, having been filed at court. • Matters that have previously been considered under the complaints policy.			
2.3	Landlords must accept complaints referred to them within 12 months of the issue occurring or the resident becoming aware of the issue, unless they are excluded on other grounds. Landlords must consider whether to apply discretion to accept complaints made outside this time limit where there are good reasons to do so.	Yes	This is contained within the Corporate complaints procedure under Section 1 – “Who can complain” which can be found on the following web page: www.hillingdon.gov.uk/complaints	It states within our policy that “<i>The Council will accept complaints received within 12 months of the issue/incident complained of and within 12 months when you became aware of the issue. Complaints made after this time limit may still be accepted if there are good reasons for the delay in submitting.</i>” If we are unable to accept the complaint, we will notify the resident and explain clearly our reasoning for this, referring to the Complaints Procedure where necessary.
2.4	If a landlord decides not to accept a complaint, an explanation must be	Yes	This is included within the Corporate complaint's procedure	A written communication is always sent if a complaint is

	provided to the resident setting out the reasons why the matter is not suitable for the complaints process and the right to take that decision to the Ombudsman. If the Ombudsman does not agree that the exclusion has been fairly applied, the Ombudsman may tell the landlord to take on the complaint.		under Section 1- under “Who can complain” and “What people can complain about” which can be found on the following web page: www.hillingdon.gov.uk/complaints	not accepted setting out our reasons for not progressing the complaint and the contact details of the relevant Ombudsman for independent review.
2.5	Landlords must not take a blanket approach to excluding complaints; they must consider the individual circumstances of each complaint.		Each complaint is assessed on its own individual circumstances. Officers are required to consider the merits of each case before deciding whether a complaint can be accepted or excluded under the policy.	Officers ensure they speak to residents who want to complain, to fully understand the circumstances and agree what will be investigated.

Section 3: Accessibility and Awareness

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
3.1	Landlords must make it easy for residents to complain by providing different channels through which they can make a complaint. Landlords must consider their duties under the Equality Act 2010 and anticipate the needs and reasonable adjustments of residents who may need to access the complaints process.	Yes	This is set out within Section 1 of the Corporate complaints procedure (How can People complain) which can be found on the following web page: www.hillingdon.gov.uk/complaints	Complaints can be made in person, by telephone, in writing, or via our website. All requests for reasonable adjustment(s) are considered on their merit and we keep a log of all reasonable adjustments requested and our response to each request.

3.2	Residents must be able to raise their complaints in any way and with any member of staff. All staff must be aware of the complaints process and be able to pass details of the complaint to the appropriate person within the landlord.	Yes	The Corporate complaints procedure sets out the options open to residents to submit a complaint. For staff there is the staff portal (SharePoint) where information is available on the handling of complaints and it sets out what they need to do and who to contact when a communication is received that needs to be processed as a complaint.	Online training sessions have been delivered for staff dealing with complaints on 29 April and 5 May 2026 which were attended by over 200 staff. A recording was made of the session on 29 April and is available for staff to view at any time.
3.3	High volumes of complaints must not be seen as a negative, as they can be indicative of a well-publicised and accessible complaints process. Low complaint volumes are potentially a sign that residents are unable to complain.	Yes	Volumes of complaints has risen significantly, and this information is available in the Annual Complaint and Service Monitoring report which is published on the following web page: www.hillingdon.gov.uk/complaints	1,416 Stage 1 complaints and 337 Stage 2 complaints were recorded for 2024/25 and this rose to 2,335 Stage 1 complaints and 596 Stage 2 complaints for 2025/26. Data is benchmarked and shared with the Tenant Special Interest Group. We recognise that high volumes of complaints are positive and used to improve our services.
3.4	Landlords must make their complaint policy available in a clear and accessible format for all residents. This will detail the two stage process, what will happen at each stage, and the timeframes for responding. The policy	Yes	Published on our website and it sets out the 2 Stage Corporate complaints procedure – www.hillingdon.gov.uk/complaints We also publish information on how to complain in our e newsletter.	We have been meeting with residents in the Special Interests Groups to discuss how else to advertise. We are exploring other options such as including complaint details on Council Tax

	must also be published on the landlord's website.			demands and rent statements.
3.5	The policy must explain how the landlord will publicise details of the complaints policy, including information about the Ombudsman and this Code.	Yes	The Corporate complaints policy is published on our website and advertised in our E-newsletter. The policy contains information about how to submit a complaint; the contact details of the Ombudsmen and the Complaint Handling Codes are also published on our web page at www.hillingdon.gov.uk/complaints	
3.6	Landlords must give residents the opportunity to have a representative deal with their complaint on their behalf, and to be represented or accompanied at any meeting with the landlord.	Yes	The Corporate complaints procedure sets this out under Section 1, which can be found at: www.hillingdon.gov.uk/complaints	The policy states that " <i>The Council will also accept complaints by an advocate on behalf of a resident, with appropriate consent.</i> "
3.7	Landlords must provide residents with information on their right to access the Ombudsman service and how the individual can engage with the Ombudsman about their complaint.	Yes	When we write to a complainant and for example decline to progress their complaint, we will always provide them with the contact details of the relevant Ombudsman. This approach is part of the Corporate complaint's procedure which can be found at: www.hillingdon.gov.uk/complaints	The contact details of the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman and the Housing Ombudsman Service is included in the Corporate complaints procedure.

Section 4: Complaint Handling Staff

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
4.1	Landlords must have a person or team assigned to take responsibility for complaint handling, including liaison with the Ombudsman and ensuring complaints are reported to the governing body (or equivalent). This Code will refer to that person or team as the 'complaints officer'. This role may be in addition to other duties.	Yes	There is a dedicated centralised Complaint and Members Enquiry Team that is responsible for processing all complaints, service requests and enquiries from the Ombudsmen. The annual complaint and service monitoring report is put before the Corporate Resources and Infrastructure Select Committee for scrutiny and then published on the complaints page, which can be found at: www.hillingdon.gov.uk/complaints	We have a corporate complaint handling team and a complaint manager responsible for processing complaints and providing advice and guidance to staff/complainants. The annual complaint and service improvement report is provided for the Corporate Resources and Infrastructure Select Committee. The report contains information about complaints, compliments and Members Enquiries submitted.
4.2	The complaints officer must have access to staff at all levels to facilitate the prompt resolution of complaints. They must also have the authority and autonomy to act to resolve disputes promptly and fairly.	Yes	A centralised complaint team is responsible for engaging with staff at all levels and where there are issues, they have access to senior managers for support and resolution.	We have a centralised complaint handling team that is responsible for processing complaints, providing advice and guidance, delivering training sessions for officers across the Council and in attending management meetings to provide information and

				advice on the handling of complaints. Where there are disputes the Business Manager for Complaints and Enquiries will step in and take control of the situation.
4.3	Landlords are expected to prioritise complaint handling and a culture of learning from complaints. All relevant staff must be suitably trained in the importance of complaint handling. It is important that complaints are seen as a core service and must be resourced to handle complaints effectively	Yes	A centralised complaint team is in place, where staff have been trained to process complaints, with all staff having worked in the team for over 8+ years. The complaint portal has categories to capture learning, and this is reported on in the annual complaint and service improvement report, which can be accessed at www.hillingdon.gov.uk/complaints	The complaint team has received training from an Officer from the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman on handling complaints including offers of compensation. The Business Manager for Complaints and Enquiries run 4 masterclasses in handling complaints a year and also delivered online complaint handling training to over 200 staff across the Council. Training delivered during preparation of the 2025/26 assessment and ahead of 2026/27 implementation.

Section 5: The Complaint Handling Process

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
5.1	Landlords must have a single policy in place for dealing with complaints covered by this Code. Residents must not be treated differently if they complain.	Yes	The Corporate complaints procedure is the policy that we use, and it can be accessed at www.hillingdon.gov.uk/complaints	Under Section 1 of the Corporate complaints procedure, it states that: <i>"We will carry out enquiries fairly, deal with your complaint as quickly and effectively as we can while maintaining confidentiality and keeping you informed of progress. We want to reassure you that the service you get will not be affected if you raise concerns or make a complaint."</i>
5.2	The early and local resolution of issues between landlords and residents is key to effective complaint handling. It is not appropriate to have extra named stages (such as 'stage 0' or 'informal complaint') as this causes unnecessary confusion.	Yes	The Corporate complaint procedure sets out our two-stage complaint procedure which complies with the requirements set out in the Complaint Handling Codes. This policy is published on the following web page: www.hillingdon.gov.uk/complaints	The Council will always attempt to resolve issues early on in the process and give residents an opportunity to withdraw a complaint if they are satisfied with the outcome.
5.3	A process with more than two stages is not acceptable under any circumstances as this will make the complaint process unduly long and delay access to the Ombudsman.	Yes	The Corporate complaint procedure sets out our 2 Stage complaint process, which can be found at: www.hillingdon.gov.uk/complaints	

5.4	Where a landlord's complaint response is handled by a third party (e.g. a contractor or independent adjudicator) at any stage, it must form part of the two stage complaints process set out in this Code. Residents must not be expected to go through two complaints processes.	Yes	The Council will investigate and respond to complaints, even if it relates to a service provided by one of our contractors. As part of this commitment, we carry out monthly contractor review meetings. These cover KPIs, complaints received in the last month, any procedural and invoicing issues from either side, and other topics as required. Monthly reports are sent to senior management, which include complaint stats and a Lessons Learned summaries. Quarterly complaints reporting go to HRA Operational Group to be reviewed by Corporate Director.	
5.5	Landlords are responsible for ensuring that any third parties handle complaints in line with the Code.	Yes	The Council will investigate and respond to complaints, even if it relates to a service provided by one of our contractors. As part of our investigation, we will contact our contractor for their response to various aspects of the complaint. The Contracts Manager regularly reviews performance of each contractor in monthly meetings.	We will process complaints in accordance with the Corporate Complaints Procedure. www.hillingdon.gov.uk/complaints Where input is required from a third party, we will ensure we liaise with them directly for any evidence needed for the complaint investigation.
5.6	When a complaint is logged at Stage 1 or escalated to Stage 2,	Yes	Within the acknowledgment we send to a complainant it will	We will acknowledge receipt within 5 working days and inform

	landlords must set out their understanding of the complaint and the outcomes the resident is seeking. The Code will refer to this as “the complaint definition”. If any aspect of the complaint is unclear, the resident must be asked for clarification.		contain a summary of our understanding of the complaint and what they want by way of a resolution. This will also be summarised in the complaint responses that we issue at Stages 1 and 2 of the Corporate complaints procedure.	the complainant of the reference number, who will be investigating, when they can expect a response to be sent to them, set out details of their complaint, etc. If anything is unclear, we will always ask for clarification before beginning the investigation.
5.7	When a complaint is acknowledged at either stage, landlords must be clear which aspects of the complaint they are, and are not, responsible for and clarify any areas where this is not clear.	Yes	This is set out under Stages 1 and 2 of the Corporate complaints procedure which can be found at www.hillingdon.gov.uk/complaints	We will set out in our acknowledgment our understanding of the complaint and what we understand the complainant is seeking by way of a resolution. As part of the triaging of complaints, acknowledgement responses will confirm which aspects of the complaint will be considered and which we will not be progressing and the reason why.
5.8	At each stage of the complaints process, complaint handlers must: a. deal with complaints on their merits, act independently, and have an open mind; b. give the resident a fair chance to set out their position;	Yes	This is set out within the policy statement in the Corporate complaints procedure which can be accessed at www.hillingdon.gov.uk/complaints	

	c. take measures to address any actual or perceived conflict of interest; and d. consider all relevant information and evidence carefully.			
5.9	Where a response to a complaint will fall outside the timescales set out in this Code, the landlord must agree with the resident suitable intervals for keeping them informed about their complaint.	Yes	This is set out in the Corporate complaints procedure which can be found at: www.hillingdon.gov.uk/complaints	Within the Corporate complaints procedure under Stages 1 and 2 it states that: <i>"If this is not possible, we will write to you and let you know if more time is needed, the reason why more time is needed, the estimated time it will take to provide a full response and the contact details of the relevant ombudsman. Any extension will not be more than 10 working days without good reason. If this is the case, and we are unable to respond within the extended timeframe, we will agree with you how and when we will keep you updated on the progress of your complaint."</i>
5.10	Landlords must make reasonable adjustments for residents where appropriate under the Equality Act 2010. Landlords must keep a	Yes	A log is kept by the Complaint and Members Enquiries team of any reasonable adjustments	The log is reviewed at quarterly intervals by the Business Manager for Complaints and Enquiries.

	record of any reasonable adjustments agreed, as well as a record of any disabilities a resident has disclosed. Any agreed reasonable adjustments must be kept under active review.		requested and the outcome of that request.	
5.11	Landlords must not refuse to escalate a complaint through all stages of the complaints procedure unless it has valid reasons to do so. Landlords must clearly set out these reasons, and they must comply with the provisions set out in section 2 of this Code.	Yes	The Corporate complaints procedure sets out our two-stage complaint procedure which all complaints will go through.	
5.12	A full record must be kept of the complaint, and the outcomes at each stage. This must include the original complaint and the date received, all correspondence with the resident, correspondence with other parties, and any relevant supporting documentation such as reports or surveys.	Yes	All complaint data is stored on our complaint portal called Jadu including pictures, surveys, reports, emails, correspondence, etc	We also hold historic complaint data on systems we have used in the past called Onyx and GOSS.
5.13	Landlords must have processes in place to ensure a complaint can be remedied at any stage of its complaints process. Landlords	Yes	Our aim is to resolve a complaint, where we can, either by way of a Service Request or the complaint stages. This is set out in the	Under section 1 of the Corporate complaints procedure (Remedies for redress) it sets out the remedies we provide and this is

	must ensure appropriate remedies can be provided at any stage of the complaints process without the need for escalation.		Corporate complaint procedure which can be accessed at www.hillingdon.gov.uk/complaints	offered at any stage of the complaint procedure.
5.14	Landlords must have policies and procedures in place for managing unacceptable behaviour from residents and/or their representatives. Landlords must be able to evidence reasons for putting any restrictions in place and must keep restrictions under regular review.	Yes	The Council's "<i>Unreasonable or Unreasonably Persistent complainants</i>" policy is published at: Complaint procedures Hillingdon Council This policy is also referred to under Section 1 of the Corporate complaints procedure which can be found at www.hillingdon.gov.uk/complaints	
5.15	Any restrictions placed on contact due to unacceptable behaviour must be proportionate and demonstrate regard for the provisions of the Equality Act 2010.	Yes	We are required to follow the "Unreasonable or Unreasonably Persistent Complainants" Policy which is published at: Complaint procedures Hillingdon Council	The 'Unreasonable or Unreasonably Persistent Complainants Policy' is followed when someone is placed on the Restricted Persons Register (RPR). Where someone is placed on the RPR we will write to them and inform them why they have been placed on the RPR, for how long, the appeal procedure, etc.

Section 6: Complaints Stages

Stage 1

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
6.1	Landlords must have processes in place to consider which complaints can be responded to as early as possible, and which require further investigation. Landlords must consider factors such as the complexity of the complaint and whether the resident is vulnerable or at risk. Most stage 1 complaints can be resolved promptly, and an explanation, apology or resolution provided to the resident.	Yes	The Corporate complaints procedure sets this out and this policy can be accessed at: www.hillingdon.gov.uk/complaints	Cases involving vulnerability, safeguarding concerns, risk of homelessness, health impacts or serious detriment are prioritised. In such cases, an email will be sent to the Head of Service/Director/Corporate Director by the Complaint and Members Enquiry Team for the investigation to be expedited as a matter of priority.
6.2	Complaints must be acknowledged, defined and logged at stage 1 of the complaints procedure <u>within five working days of the complaint being received.</u>	Yes	The Corporate Complaints Team actively track all complaints received using our Complaints system (JADU), and ensure these are acknowledged within five working days.	
6.3	Landlords must issue a full response to stage 1 complaints <u>within 10 working days</u> of the complaint being acknowledged.	Yes	Each team tracks and monitors all their complaints. Weekly Complaint review meetings are carried out to ensure officers	Team performance against compliance is monitored on a quarterly basis. Where repeat issues of compliance

			remain on track. Reports are provided at the end of each Quarter to monitor compliance and performance.	are identified, further training is provided and escalated if necessary, using internal policies and procedures.
6.4	Landlords must decide whether an extension to this timescale is needed when considering the complexity of the complaint and then inform the resident of the expected timescale for response. Any extension must be no more than 10 working days without good reason, and the reason(s) must be clearly explained to the resident.	Yes	The Corporate complaints procedure sets this out and it can be accessed at: www.hillingdon.gov.uk/complaints	This is set out under Section 2 of the Corporate complaints procedure which states: <i>"Any extension will not be more than 10 working days without good reason. If this is the case, and we are unable to respond within the extended timeframe, we will agree with you how and when we will keep you updated on the progress of your complaint."</i>
6.5	When an organisation informs a resident about an extension to these timescales, they must be provided with the contact details of the Ombudsman.	Yes	This is stated in the Corporate complaints procedure under Stage 1 and 2 under Section 2. This policy can be accessed at www.hillingdon.gov.uk/complaints	Staff in the complaint handling team ensure that when an extension is granted, the communication to the complainant provides details of the relevant Ombudsman depending on the nature of the complaint
6.6	A complaint response must be provided to the resident when the answer to the complaint is known, not when the outstanding actions required to address the issue are completed. Outstanding actions must still be	Yes	This is stated in the Corporate complaints procedure under Stage 1 and 2 under Section 2. This policy can be accessed at www.hillingdon.gov.uk/complaints	Under Section 2 of the Corporate complaints procedure under Stages 1 and 2, it states: "We will respond to your complaint as soon as we have the

	tracked and actioned promptly with appropriate updates provided to the resident.			answers to your complaint, and we will not delay our response while outstanding actions are completed. Any outstanding actions will be tracked, actioned promptly and updates provided to you by the service area.”
6.7	Landlords must address all points raised in the complaint definition and provide clear reasons for any decisions, referencing the relevant policy, law and good practice where appropriate.	Yes	This is set out in the Corporate complaints procedure which can be accessed at www.hillingdon.gov.uk/complaints	The complaint response letter clearly lists out the reasons for the complaint and addresses each point fully during the investigation.
6.8	Where residents raise additional complaints during the investigation, these must be incorporated into the stage 1 response if they are related and the stage 1 response has not been issued. Where the stage 1 response has been issued, the new issues are unrelated to the issues already being investigated or it would unreasonably delay the response, the new issues must be logged as a new complaint.	Yes	This is set out under Section 2 of the Corporate complaints procedure under Stages 1 and 2, which can be accessed at: www.hillingdon.gov.uk/complaints	In the Corporate complaints procedure it states: <i>“If we receive related complaints before we send the Stage 1 response, they will be included in that response. However, if the new issues are unrelated to the complaint being investigated, or if it would unreasonably delay the stage 1 response to incorporate them, they will be treated as a new Stage 1 complaint.”</i>

6.9	Landlords must confirm the following in writing to the resident at the completion of stage 1 in clear, plain language: a. the complaint stage; b. the complaint definition; c. the decision on the complaint; d. the reasons for any decisions made; e. the details of any remedy offered to put things right; f. details of any outstanding actions; and g. details of how to escalate the matter to stage 2 if the individual is not satisfied with the response.	Yes	This is included in the response that we send.	The letters that we send at each stage of the process sets out our findings, the decision, the remedy (where appropriate) and to whom a complainant can request an escalation.

Stage 2

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
6.10	If all or part of the complaint is not resolved to the resident's satisfaction at stage 1, it must be progressed to stage 2 of the landlord's procedure. Stage 2 is the landlord's final response.	Yes	This is set out in the Corporate complaints procedure which can be accessed at www.hillingdon.gov.uk/complaints	The complaint responses at Stages 1 will inform a complainant how to progress their complaint to Stage 2.
6.11	Requests for stage 2 must be acknowledged, defined and logged at stage 2 of the complaints procedure within five working days of the escalation request being received.	Yes	This is set out in the Corporate complaints procedure which can be accessed at www.hillingdon.gov.uk/complaints	The Corporate complaints team maintain a live complaints log in JADU, and ensure all stage 2 responses are

				acknowledged within five working days
6.12	Residents must not be required to explain their reasons for requesting a stage 2 consideration. Landlords are expected to make reasonable efforts to understand why a resident remains unhappy as part of its stage 2 response.	Yes	This is set out in the Corporate complaints procedure which can be accessed at www.hillingdon.gov.uk/complaints	A resident does not have to give a reason(s) why they want their complaint escalated to Stage 2. The Senior Officer reviewing the complaint at stage 2 is responsible for contacting the resident to agree the resolution being sought and respond to the stage 2 complaint following a thorough review
6.13	The person considering the complaint at stage 2 must not be the same person that considered the complaint at stage 1.	Yes	This is set out in the Corporate complaints procedure which can be accessed at www.hillingdon.gov.uk/complaints	At Stage 1 a Team Leader, Manager or specialist complaint officer will investigate and respond and at Stage 2, this will be reviewed either by the Head of Service or Director or Corporate Director, depending on who has investigated and responded at Stage 1.
6.14	Landlords must issue a final response to the stage 2 <u>within 20 working days</u> of the complaint being acknowledged.	Yes	This is set out in the Corporate complaints procedure which can be accessed at www.hillingdon.gov.uk/complaints	
6.15	Landlords must decide whether an extension to this timescale is needed when considering the complexity of the	Yes	This is set out in the Corporate complaints procedure which can	This is set out under Section 2 of the Corporate complaints procedure which

	complaint and then inform the resident of the expected timescale for response. Any extension must be no more than 20 working days without good reason, and the reason(s) must be clearly explained to the resident.		be accessed at www.hillingdon.gov.uk/complaints	states: <i>"Any extension will not be more than 20 working days without good reason. If this is the case, and we are unable to respond within the extended timeframe, we will agree with you how and when we will keep you updated on the progress of your complaint."</i>
6.16	When an organisation informs a resident about an extension to these timescales, they must be provided with the contact details of the Ombudsman.	Yes	This is set out in the Corporate complaints procedure which can be accessed at www.hillingdon.gov.uk/complaints	Staff in the complaint handling team ensure that when an extension is granted, the communication to the complainant provides details of the relevant Ombudsman depending on the nature of the complaint
6.17	A complaint response must be provided to the resident when the answer to the complaint is known, not when the outstanding actions required to address the issue are completed. Outstanding actions must still be tracked and actioned promptly with appropriate updates provided to the resident.	Yes	This is set out in the Corporate complaints procedure which can be accessed at www.hillingdon.gov.uk/complaints	Under Section 2 of the Corporate complaints procedure under Stages 1 and 2, it states: "We will respond to your complaint as soon as we have the answers to your complaint, and we will not delay our response while outstanding actions are completed. Any outstanding actions will be tracked, actioned promptly

				and updates provided to you by the service area.”
6.18	Landlords must address all points raised in the complaint definition and provide clear reasons for any decisions, referencing the relevant policy, law and good practice where appropriate.	Yes	This is included in the response that we send.	
6.19	Landlords must confirm the following in writing to the resident at the completion of stage 2 in clear, plain language: a. the complaint stage; b. the complaint definition; c. the decision on the complaint; d. the reasons for any decisions made; e. the details of any remedy offered to put things right; f. details of any outstanding actions; and g. details of how to escalate the matter to the Ombudsman Service if the individual remains dissatisfied.	Yes	This is included in the response that we send.	The letters that we send at each stage of the process sets out our findings, the decision, the remedy (where appropriate) and to whom a complainant can request an escalation to.
6.20	Stage 2 is the landlord’s final response and must involve all suitable staff members needed to issue such a response.		The Reviewing officer will collate information from all relevant staff before issuing our final response	

Section 7: Putting things right

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
7.1	Where something has gone wrong a landlord must acknowledge this and set out the actions it has already taken, or intends to take, to put things right. These can include: • Apologising; • Acknowledging where things have gone wrong; • Providing an explanation, assistance or reasons; • Taking action if there has been delay; • Reconsidering or changing a decision; • Amending a record or adding a correction or addendum; • Providing a financial remedy; • Changing policies, procedures or practices.	Yes	This is set out in the Corporate complaints procedure which can be accessed at www.hillingdon.gov.uk/complaints	Under Section 1 of the Corporate complaints procedure it sets out the “Remedies for redress”, namely: <i>“Apologising; acknowledging where things have gone wrong; providing an explanation, assistance or reasons; taking action if there has been delay; reconsidering or changing a decision; amending a record or adding a correction or addendum; providing a financial remedy; changing policies, procedures or practices.”</i> Any response that we send includes what we will be doing to put things right where they have gone wrong.
7.2	Any remedy offered must reflect the impact on the resident as a result of any fault identified.	Yes	This is included in the response that we send	
7.3	The remedy offer must clearly set out what will happen and by when, in	Yes	This is included in the response that we send	

	agreement with the resident where appropriate. Any remedy proposed must be followed through to completion.			
7.4	Landlords must take account of the guidance issued by the Ombudsman when deciding on appropriate remedies.	Yes	The Complaint Handling Codes are available and key staff have received additional training from an officer in the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman in relation to appropriate remedies to offer.	Additional training was provided on 29 April and 5 May 2026 on handling complaints.

Section 8: Self-assessment, reporting and compliance

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
8.1	Landlords must produce an annual complaints performance and service improvement report for scrutiny and challenge, which must include: a. the annual self-assessment against this Code to ensure their complaint handling policy remains in line with its requirements. b. a qualitative and quantitative analysis of the landlord's complaint handling performance. This must also include a summary of the types of complaints the landlord has refused to accept; c. any findings of non-compliance with this Code by the Ombudsman; d. the service improvements made as a result of the learning from complaints; e. any annual report about the landlord's performance from the Ombudsman; and f. any other relevant reports or publications produced by the	Yes	An annual complaint and service monitoring report is provided for the Corporate Resources & Infrastructure Select Committee.	We produce an annual complaint and service monitoring report covering Code compliance, performance analysis (including refused complaints), any Ombudsman findings, and improvements made from complaint learning, alongside relevant Ombudsman decisions. The report includes all mandatory elements: 1) self-assessment; 2) non-compliance; 3) Ombudsman findings; 4) refused complaints; 5) learning.

	Ombudsman in relation to the work of the landlord.			
8.2	The annual complaints performance and service improvement report must be reported to the landlord's governing body (or equivalent) and published on the on the section of its website relating to complaints. The governing body's response to the report must be published alongside this.	Yes	This is reported to the Corporate Resources & Infrastructure Select Committee. The report is published on the following website: www.hillingdon.gov.uk/complaints	The response from the Governing Body is also published on the same web page: www.hillingdon.gov.uk/complaints
8.3	Landlords must also carry out a self-assessment following a significant restructure, merger and/or change in procedures.	Yes	A submission is required to Cabinet where any changes are made to the Corporate complaints procedure. We will undertake self-assessments when required.	
8.4	Landlords may be asked to review and update the self-assessment following an Ombudsman investigation.	Yes	As a result of feedback from the Housing Ombudsman Service, we made changes to our self-assessment and the Council's Corporate complaints procedure in June/July 2026.	As a result of decisions made by the Ombudsman, senior managers are made aware of the decision and actions are monitored to ensure that they are completed. Changes made are then noted and the self-assessment is then changed/added to when next reviewed.
8.5	If a landlord is unable to comply with the Code due to exceptional circumstances, such as a cyber	Yes	This has not happened, but it is noted and the Corporate complaints team have an internal	

	incident, they must inform the Ombudsman, provide information to residents who may be affected, and publish this on their website Landlords must provide a timescale for returning to compliance with the Code.		escalation process in place to monitor compliance and to quickly identify any arising issues.	
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Section 9: Scrutiny & oversight: continuous learning and improvement

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
9.1	Landlords must look beyond the circumstances of the individual complaint and consider whether service improvements can be made as a result of any learning from the complaint.	Yes	The new complaint system, Jadu, now requires that the responding Officer/manager must say whether a complaint is upheld, any amount paid in compensation and any learning from that complaint. The learning is then analysed and used to make changes to our processes by way of service improvement(s). Examples of this include: 1) Weekly reviews introduced where repairs have exceeded timescales 2) Tracking introduced for follow-on works 3) Ensuring all correspondence for repair complaints contain a direct contact number	Once a complaint has been responded to, any learning from each complaint is fed back to managers/directors and what we are doing as a result of any learning identified and changes to our services that will be made. The analysis for each complaint will include the identification of any underlining themes and changes that will be made.
9.2	A positive complaint handling culture is integral to the effectiveness with which landlords resolve disputes. Landlords must use complaints as a source of intelligence to identify issues and introduce positive changes in service delivery.	Yes	The Corporate complaint procedure sets out our procedure for handling of complaints (culture). The annual complaint and service monitoring report provides the analysis of complaints including volumes, lessons learnt and the changes to	Officers/managers also have access to Power BI via Teams which provides a suite of reports for staff with real time data on complaints received, lessons learnt, compensation paid, etc. This data is then used to

			service(s) we have made as a result. These two documents can be found on the following web page: www.hillingdon.gov.uk/complaints Weekly Complaints Management meetings are conducted to review findings and monitor performance.	make changes to operational practice, the review of services and to inform staff training and development.
9.3	Accountability and transparency are also integral to a positive complaint handling culture. Landlords must report back on wider learning and improvements from complaints to stakeholders, such as residents' panels, staff and relevant committees.	Yes	The annual complaint and service monitoring report is put before the Corporate Resources & Infrastructure Select Committee for scrutiny and challenge. There is also a Special Interest Group for complaints which includes external stakeholders and staff, which meets at least twice a year. Feedback from SIGs has led to: 1) The introduction of in-house Damp and Mould inspections, improving response times and accountability. 2) A project is in place to coordinate efforts with Planned Maintenance to replace metal-framed windows 3) Recruitment of over 10 Neighbourhood Officers with reduced patch sizes	Data, lessons learnt and service improvements is shared with residents at the Special Interest Group, where it is discussed and scrutinised. As part of our governance structure the annual complaint and service monitoring report is widely circulated to services, officers, managers, directors and the Chief Executive for feedback before it is presented to the select committee.
9.4	Landlords must appoint a suitably senior lead person as accountable for	Yes	There is a dedicated complaint manager at a senior level that	Quarterly and annual corporate reports show

	their complaint handling. This person must assess any themes or trends to identify potential systemic issues, serious risks, or policies and procedures that require revision.		produces the quarterly complaint and service monitoring report for the Select committee. This has been enhanced by introduction of the Member Responsible for Complaints which sits at Cabinet level.	themes and what action was taken to address them. Our new complaint handling system (Jadu) will provide officers/managers with more flexible and comprehensive reporting. This will increase the extent to which the council is able to learn from complaints, share the learning and institute improvements
9.5	In addition to this a member of the governing body (or equivalent) must be appointed to have lead responsibility for complaints to support a positive complaint handling culture. This person is referred to as the Member Responsible for Complaints ('the MRC').	Yes	The Member Responsible for Complaints sits at Cabinet level to emphasise the importance of complaints within this Council.	Cllr Nick Denys is our current MRC - The Cabinet Member designated as the Member Responsible for Complaints
9.6	The MRC will be responsible for ensuring the governing body receives regular information on complaints that provides insight on the landlord's complaint handling performance. This person must have access to suitable information and staff to perform this role and report on their findings.	Yes	A quarterly report is provided for the MRC. This is discussed and scrutinised in quarterly briefings and any feedback or actions requested, are then provided to the Complaints Business Manager.	A rolling quarterly report is produced for the MRC, which provides an analysis of complaints, trends, lessons learnt, changes made, compensation paid, etc.
9.7	As a minimum, the MRC and the governing body (or equivalent) must receive:	Yes	A rolling quarterly report is produced for the landlord board, Corporate Management Team leads and MRC.	This process was approved and embedded by Cabinet on 27 June 2024.

	a. regular updates on the volume, categories and outcomes of complaints, alongside complaint handling performance; b. regular reviews of issues and trends arising from complaint handling; c. regular updates on the outcomes of the Ombudsman's investigations and progress made in complying with orders related to severe maladministration findings; and d. annual complaints performance and service improvement report.			
9.8	Landlords must have a standard objective in relation to complaint handling for all relevant employees or third parties that reflects the need to: a. have a collaborative and co-operative approach towards resolving complaints, working with colleagues across teams and departments; b. take collective responsibility for any shortfalls identified through complaints, rather than blaming others; and c. act within the professional standards for engaging with complaints as set by any relevant professional body.	Yes	Under section 1 of the Corporate complaints procedure under "introduction" we set out our approach to complaint handling, which is stated below: <i>"The Council is committed to putting people at the centre of everything we do and aims to provide the best possible service to residents. However, sometimes things can go wrong and if you are not happy with the service you have received from the Council then please tell us so that we can, where possible, sort out the problem. We will carry out enquiries fairly, deal with your</i>	In addition, we have a standard objective incorporated in our procedures and explains that staff involved in the management and response to complaints are responsible for: • <i>working collaboratively to resolve resident issues</i> • <i>taking shared responsibility for addressing areas of development identified through complaints</i>

			<i>complaint as quickly and effectively as we can while maintaining confidentiality and keeping you informed of progress. We want to reassure you that the service you get will not be affected if you raise concerns or make a complaint.</i> <i>The policy and procedure:</i> • <i>allows managers to address issues of unsatisfactory service and seek improvements in service delivery;</i> • <i>ensures that people are treated fairly and consistently;</i> • <i>ensures that a proper and adequate investigation takes place before any action is taken;</i> • <i>requests for reasonable adjustments will be considered in line with the Equality Act 2010 and appropriate training is provided for staff; and</i> • <i>safeguards the integrity and good reputation of the Council.”</i>	• <i>Acting in accordance with any relevant professional registration that they hold.</i>
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Housing Complaints Performance and Service Improvement Report

July 2026



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1. Introduction

Hillingdon Council is required to comply with the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code and to demonstrate compliance on at least an annual basis. This document sets out our annual complaint's performance and service improvement report, which forms part of our annual submission to the Housing Ombudsman. The report includes:

- Our latest self-assessment of compliance against the requirements of the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code.
- An analysis of complaint handling performance in the year from April 2025 to March 2026.
- Findings of non-compliance with the Code by the Ombudsman between April 2025 and 2026.
- Learning from Complaints and Service Improvements.

The annual complaints performance and service improvement report and the annual self-assessment is reported annually to a Senior Officer level HRA Operational Group , Corporate Management Team (CMT), the Cabinet Lead with responsibility for Housing, and Residents' Services Select Committee. The report is shared for feedback with our Tenant Complaints & Compliments Special Interest Group and is published on the council's website at [Complaints - Hillingdon Council](#). Information from the report is also shared more widely with tenants.

The Council's Landlord Service recognises that complaints should perform a strategic role providing an essential source of intelligence on evolving risks and performance. They have the potential to identify issues which are not being identified elsewhere and provide insight and learning to help improve services for tenants.

As part of its approach to scrutiny, from 2025/26, the Landlord Service adopted a standard template for reporting purposes to 'build-up' the annual report via a series of rolling quarterly updates. These updates include documented feedback on the preceding quarters complaints from the Tenant Complaints & Compliments Special Interest Group and are reviewed by Corporate Management Team and the Cabinet Member lead for the Landlord Service.

2. Summary of Self-Assessment against Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code

A completed self-assessment form is included at appendix A.

Section1: Definition of a complaint - Compliant

In general terms a complaint can be considered as: *"an expression of dissatisfaction, however made, about the standard of service, actions or lack of action by the council, its own staff, or those acting on its behalf, affecting an individual or group of individuals."*

Section 2: Exclusions - Compliant

- although a complaint can be submitted against Council **policy**, please be aware that Council policy cannot be overturned through the complaint process as this can only be done through the statutory decision-making procedure;
- we will not deal with issues through the complaint procedure where a claim has been made in a court such as a disrepair claim; and
- issues relating to employment or application for employment with the Council cannot be addressed through the complaint procedure.

Section 3: Accessibility and Awareness - Compliant

Complaints can be made in person, by telephone, in writing, email or via our website at www.hillingdon.gov.uk/complaints. If an adjustment is needed complainants are asked to call the complaint team.

Section 4: Complaint Handling Staff - Compliant

All staff within the team are experienced and fully trained to deal with complaints and any adjustments that are required. Online training sessions have been delivered for staff dealing with complaints on 29 April and 5 May 2026 which were attended by over 200 staff. A recording was made of the session on 29 April and is available for staff to view at any time.

Section 5: The Complaint Handling Process - Compliant

The Corporate Complaints Policy and Procedure was revised in June 2026, and approved by CMT, the Leader, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Housing in July 2026. The updates to the policy are minimal and do not alter the process itself. They are primarily intended to enhance the wording, clarify certain points, and reinforce the intent of key statements.

Our procedure:

- allows managers to address issues of unsatisfactory service and seek improvements in service delivery;
- ensures that customers are treated fairly, consistently and with respect;
- ensures that a proper and adequate investigation takes place before any action is taken;
- requests for reasonable adjustments will be considered in line with the Equality Act 2010 and appropriate training is provided for staff; and
- safeguards the integrity and good reputation of the Council.

Section 6: Complaint Stages - Compliant

In line with the Code, we have a Service Request step and 2 formal complaints stages, after which the complainant can apply to the Ombudsman.

Section 7: Putting things right - Compliant

Where we have identified adverse impact, service failure or hardship suffered, we will always try to put the complainant back to the position they would have enjoyed before the situation went wrong. Types of redress include:

- an apology;
- providing the service that should have been received at first;
- taking action or making a decision that should have been done before;
- reconsidering an incorrect decision;
- improving procedures so that similar problems do not occur again; and
- if after an investigation by Council staff or the Ombudsman, it is concluded that as a result of maladministration there is no practical action that would provide a full and appropriate remedy or if the complainant has sustained loss or suffering, financial compensation may be the most appropriate approach.

We now capture all extensions granted, at what complaint stage and the reason why the extension has been granted.

Section 8: Self-assessment reporting and compliance - Compliant

Our self-assessment will be published on the complaint page www.hillingdon.gov.uk

Section 9: Scrutiny & Oversight: continuous learning and improvement – Compliant

All staff involved in the management and response to complaints have received a management instruction that they are responsible for: working collaboratively to resolve resident issues, taking shared responsibility for addressing areas of development identified through complaints and acting in accordance with any relevant professional registration that they hold. These obligations are woven into relevant job descriptions when reviewed / updated or created.

The Member Responsible for Complaints (MRC) is a role performed by Cllr Nick Denys. This emphasises the importance of complaints within the Council.

3. Analysis of Complaint Handling Performance April 2025 to March 2026

The Council recognises that Complaints present its Landlord Service with valuable insight into tenants' experiences of interacting with their landlord. As a direct consequence the Landlord Service is committed to making good use of this learning to improve outcomes and services for tenants, bringing about change at both a service and organisational level where appropriate. As part of this learning commitment, the Landlord Service has introduced a permanent role into its structure to accelerate work on analysing trends and themes, learning from complaints and resolving underlying and recurring issues.

A corporate complaints report is provided to the Corporate Resources and Infrastructure Select Committee in September. This includes information on housing complaints associated with the Council's Landlord Service and the minutes from this meeting are available on the Council's website [London Borough of Hillingdon - Browse meetings - Corporate Resources & Infrastructure Select Committee](#)

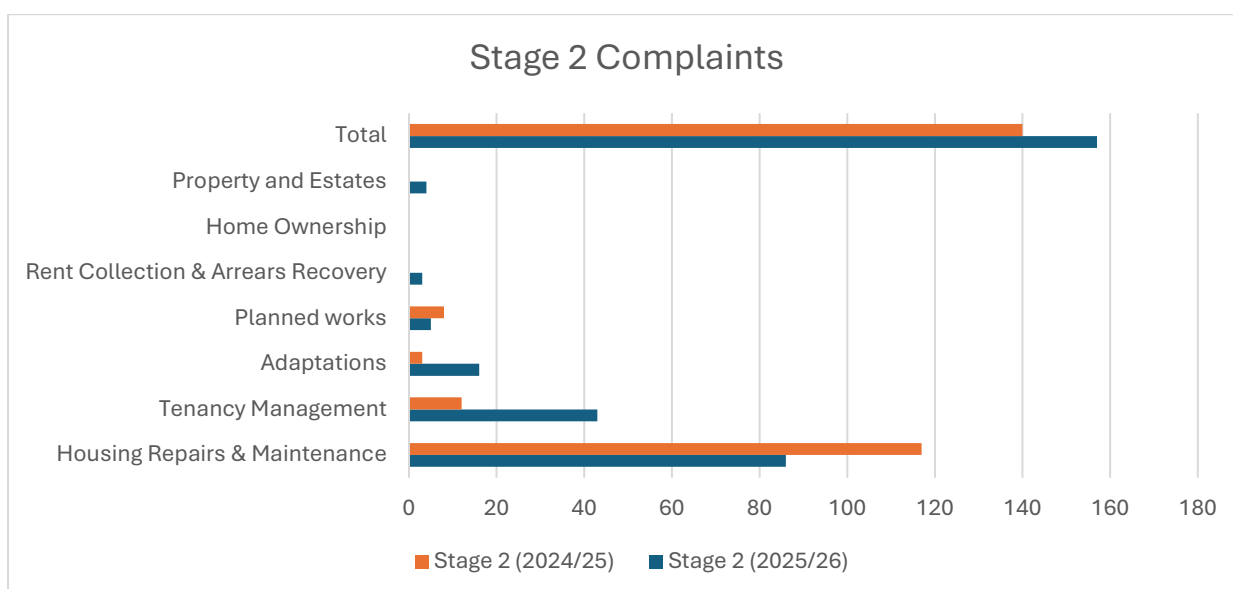
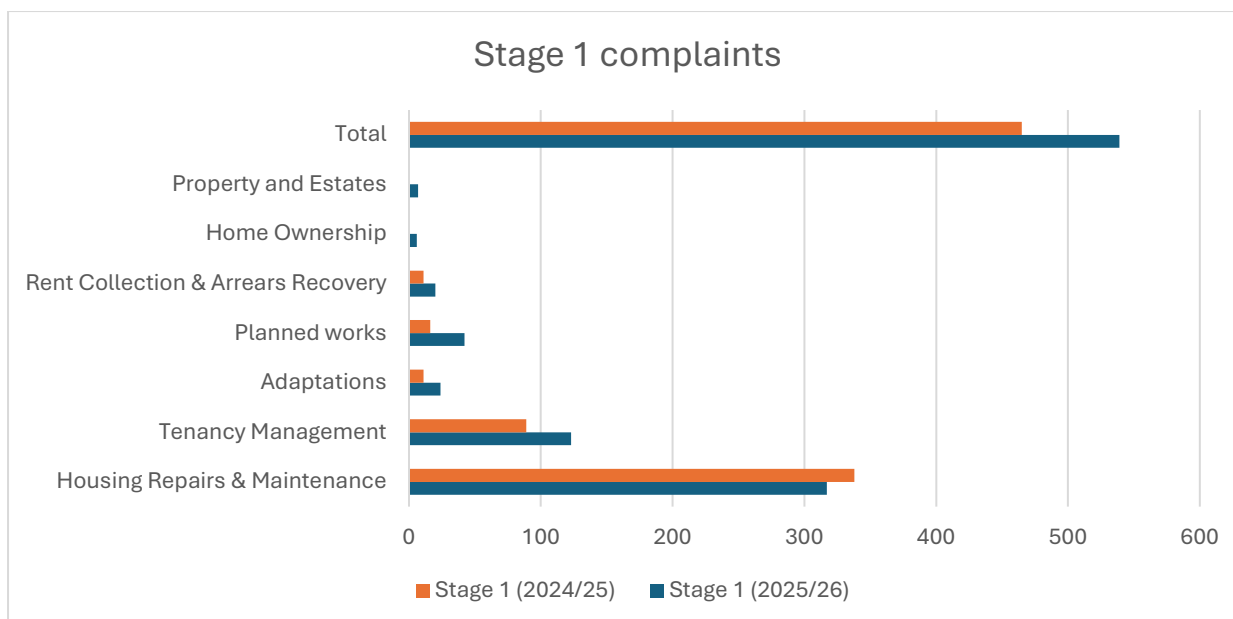
Aside from quarterly complaints data reporting into the Landlord governance structure, including HRA Operational Group and the Cabinet Member Lead, complaints data and learning outcomes are now shared with tenants on a rolling quarterly basis via our 'Complaints and Compliments Special Interest Group.' These meetings provide a direct and ongoing opportunity for tenants to review and scrutinise data and understand how it is being used to shape the delivery of services and provide better outcomes for tenants. An overriding theme from tenants in 2025/26 was that they wanted to see improvements in the depth and breadth of complaints data shared with them during 2026/27.

In line with other housing providers' complaints, a high proportion of complaints recorded in 2025/26 were focused on housing repairs. The table below shows that repairs accounted for 58.8% of all Stage 1 complaints and 54.7% of Stage 2 complaints. This was followed by Tenancy Management which accounted for 22.8% of all Stage 1 complaints and 27.4% of stage 2 complaints

Breakdown of complaints by service area 2025/26

Service Area	Stage 1	Stage 2
Housing Repairs & Maintenance	317	86
Tenancy Management	123	43
Adaptations	24	16
Planned works	42	5
Rent Collection & Arrears Recovery	20	3
Home Ownership	6	0
Property and Estates	7	4
Total	539	157

Between April 2024 and March 2025, a total of 605 complaints were received; 465 Stage 1 complaints and 140 Stage 2 complaints. Between April 2025 and March 2026, a total of 696 complaints were received. Of these 539 were Stage 1 complaints and 157 were Stage 2 complaints.



Overall complaints increased from 605 in 2024/25 to 696 in 2025/26, representing an increase of 91 complaints (+15.0%). While complaint volumes increased, the growth was driven primarily by Stage 1 complaints, which rose by 74 cases (+15.9%), while Stage 2 complaints increased by only 17 cases (+12.1%). The most notable trend is that although Housing Repairs & Maintenance continues to generate the highest number of complaints, both Stage 1 and Stage 2 complaints in this area have reduced. On the contrary, significant increases were seen in Tenancy Management, Planned Works, and Adaptations, suggesting emerging service pressures in those areas.

Overall Complaint Volumes

Complaint Stage	2024/25	2025/26	Change	% Change
Stage 1	465	539	74	15.90%
Stage 2	140	157	17	12.10%

Total	605	696	91	15.00%
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Complaint demand increased across the Housing Service. Stage 1 complaints account for approximately 77% of all complaints in both years. The lower rate of growth in Stage 2 complaints compared with Stage 1 suggests that, despite increasing demand, complaint resolution at Stage 1 is helping to prevent a larger escalation into Stage 2.

Stage 1 Complaint Analysis

Service Area	2024/25	2025/26	Change	% Change
Housing Repairs & Maintenance	338	317	-21	-6.20%
Tenancy Management	89	123	34	38.20%
Adaptations	11	24	13	118.20%
Planned Works	16	42	26	162.50%
Rent Collection & Arrears Recovery	11	20	9	81.80%
Home Ownership	0	6	6	New category
Property and Estates	0	7	7	New category

Housing Repairs & Maintenance

- Remains the largest complaint category.
- Complaints reduced by 21 cases (-6.2%).
- Share of Stage 1 complaints fell from 72.7% to 58.8%.
- This is a positive indication that repair-related service performance may be improving.

Tenancy Management

- Increased by 34 complaints (+38.2%).
- Contributed almost half of the overall increase in Stage 1 complaints.
- Indicates growing resident dissatisfaction with tenancy-related services.

Planned Works

- Increased dramatically from 16 to 42 complaints (+162.5%).
- One of the fastest growing complaint categories.
- May reflect major programmes, project delays, communication issues or contractor performance concerns.

Adaptations

- More than doubled from 11 to 24 complaints (+118.2%).
- Suggests increasing demand and/or delays in delivering adaptation works.

Stage 2 Complaint Analysis

Service Area	2024/25	2025/26	Change	% Change
Housing Repairs & Maintenance	117	86	-31	-26.50%

Tenancy Management	12	43	31	258.30%
Adaptations	3	16	13	433.30%
Planned Works	8	5	-3	-37.50%
Rent Collection & Arrears Recovery	0	3	3	New
Property and Estates	0	4	4	New

Housing Repairs & Maintenance

- Stage 2 complaints reduced significantly by 31 complaints (-26.5%).
- This is one of the strongest performance improvements in the data.
- Data suggests either better service delivery or more effective complaint resolution before escalation.

Tenancy Management

- Increased from 12 to 43 complaints.
- Growth of 258.3%.
- Represents the most significant emerging risk area.
- Escalations indicate residents may feel initial responses are not fully resolving issues.

Adaptations

- Increased from 3 to 16 complaints.
- Growth of 433.3%.
- Although volumes remain much lower than repairs and tenancy management, the rate of increase is substantial and warrants attention.

Planned Works

- Stage 1 complaints increased substantially while Stage 2 complaints decreased.
- This may indicate improved complaint handling and resolution despite increased resident concerns.

Escalation Rates (Stage 2 as a Percentage of Stage 1)

Service Area	2024/25	2025/26
Housing Repairs & Maintenance	34.60%	27.10%
Tenancy Management	13.50%	35.00%
Adaptations	27.30%	66.70%
Planned Works	50.00%	11.90%
Rent Collection & Arrears Recovery	0%	15.00%

Positive trends

- Housing Repairs escalation reduced significantly.
- Planned Works escalation reduced dramatically.
- These suggest better complaint resolution and service recovery once issues are identified.

Areas of concern

- Tenancy Management escalation rate more than doubled.
- Adaptations escalation rate increased sharply.
- These services appear to be generating more dissatisfaction and are less successful at resolving issues at first stage.

Strategic Conclusions

What's improving?

- Housing Repairs & Maintenance complaints reduced at both Stage 1 and Stage 2.
- Additional investment has been allocated to the Planned Works and Decarbonisation Programme. The investment has been incorporated into the planned works programme to improve the condition of housing stock and support compliance with required standards.
- Areas with the highest prevalence of damp and mould were prioritised for investment and intervention. Targeted works have been undertaken to address identified issues, improve living conditions for residents, and reduce the risk of future occurrences.
- Planned Works appears better at resolving complaints despite increased demand.
- Overall Stage 2 growth (+12.1%) is lower than Stage 1 growth (+15.9%), suggesting some success in preventing escalation.

What needs attention?

- Tenancy Management has become the second-largest source of complaints and shows substantial escalation to Stage 2.
- Adaptations show both high growth and high escalation rates, indicating a potential systemic issue.
- Rent Collection, Home Ownership and Property & Estates are now generating complaint volumes that should be monitored to identify whether these are emerging trends or one-off increases.

Complaint response times and compliance

Stage 1 Complaints - Compliance to Response Times

Month	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Month 1	97%	95%	74%	89%
Month 2	97%	85%	70%	92%
Month 3	96%	89%	45%	94%
Average	97%	89%	63%	92%

Stage 2 Complaints - Compliance to Response Times

Month	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Month 1	100%	80%	84%	87%
Month 2	94%	91%	85%	89%
Month 3	100%	100%	83%	71%

Average	98%	90%	84%	83%
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Complaint response time compliance was strong during the first quarter for both Stage 1 and Stage 2 complaints, achieving average compliance rates of 97% and 98% respectively. Performance declined during Q2 and Q3, with Stage 1 experiencing a significant reduction to 63% compliance in Q3. Following targeted interventions, Stage 1 performance recovered to 92% in Q4.

In contrast, Stage 2 compliance showed a gradual downward trend throughout the year, falling from 98% in Q1 to 83% in Q4. Further analysis is required to understand the factors contributing to the sustained decline in Stage 2 response times and to ensure performance remains within target levels. Moving forward, the Quarterly updates will provide a more detailed breakdown of performance by team. This information can then be used to improve complaint handling and compliance with the HOS guidelines.

Escalation of complaints from Stage 1 to Stage 2

The table below shows the ratio of complaints escalated from Stage 1 to Stage 2 across each quarter of the year. Stage 1 complaint volumes increased significantly during the year, particularly in Q4, and while Stage 2 escalations also increased, the proportion of complaints progressing to Stage 2 remained relatively low.

Ratio of Complaints Escalated from Stage 1 to Stage 2 by quarter

Stage	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Stage 1	89	107	86	257
Stage 2	31	35	19	72
Ratio	3	3	5	4

Across the year, the service handled 539 Stage 1 complaints, of which 157 progressed to Stage 2, equating to an overall ratio of approximately 3.4:1.

The data demonstrates that while complaint volumes fluctuated significantly throughout the year, particularly in Q4, most complaints were resolved at Stage 1 and did not require escalation. The strongest performance was achieved in Q3, when only one in five complaints progressed to Stage 2. Although escalation numbers increased in Q4, this appears broadly proportionate to the substantial increase in overall complaint volumes rather than indicating a deterioration in complaint handling outcomes.

4. Complaints considered by the Housing Ombudsman

Of the 11 cases reviewed:

- 9 cases resulted in findings of maladministration or service failure
- 1 case resulted in no maladministration findings
- 1 case found only minor complaint handling issues

The most common Ombudsman complaints during the period related to damp and mould management, repair delays, property condition and complaint handling, highlighting the

importance of robust repairs management, contractor oversight, communication with residents and accurate record keeping.

Complaints considered by the Housing Ombudsman 2025/26

Complaint Reference	Complaint Description
202329442	Resident disputed rechargeable repairs following a move due to damp and mould, arguing that damage charged to her account resulted from the property's poor condition and damp issues rather than tenant neglect. Complaint also concerned complaint handling.
202402273	Resident complained that contractors failed to remove protective floor coverings following bathroom adaptation works, which she said caused her to fall and injure herself.
202439557	Resident complained about delays and disruption during kitchen and bathroom replacement works, including lack of basic facilities, poor communication, a leak, and incomplete follow-on works.
202415289	Leaseholder raised concerns about a neighbouring property involving hoarding, fire safety risks, odours, pests and items stored in communal areas.

Case Reference	Complaint Description	Outcome	Upheld/not upheld
202329442	Resident disputed rechargeable repairs following a move due to damp and mould, arguing that damage charged to her account resulted from the property's poor condition and damp issues rather than tenant neglect. Complaint also concerned complaint handling.	Service failure in repairs recharge decision-making and complaint handling.	Upheld
202402273	Resident complained that contractors failed to remove protective floor coverings following bathroom adaptation works, which she said caused her to fall and injure herself.	No maladministration. Landlord's investigation and response were considered reasonable.	Not Upheld
202439557	Resident complained about delays and disruption during kitchen and bathroom replacement works, including lack of basic facilities, poor communication, a leak, and incomplete follow-on works.	Maladministration in handling the works and service failure in complaint handling.	Upheld
202415289	Leaseholder raised concerns about a neighbouring property involving hoarding, fire safety risks, odours, pests and items stored in communal areas.	Maladministration in handling safety concerns and complaint handling.	Upheld

202329872	Resident complained about property condition at letting, prolonged loss of gas supply, leaks, requests for a permanent move and concerns regarding the lettings process.	Maladministration regarding property condition, leaks and complaint handling; service failure regarding rehousing requests.	Upheld
202453498	Resident reported long-term damp and mould, water ingress, ineffective repairs and delays in identifying roof defects that were causing ongoing issues.	Maladministration in handling damp and mould reports.	Upheld
202427669	Resident complained that a newly let property was unsuitable, citing lack of fridge space, poor workmanship, decoration issues and inadequate support during the tenancy start.	No maladministration regarding property condition; service failure in complaint handling.	Upheld
202452711	Resident complained about recurring damp and mould, incomplete repairs, failure to resolve root causes and delays in carrying out remedial works.	Maladministration in damp and mould management and service failure in complaint handling.	Upheld
202423080	Resident raised concerns about staff conduct, missed contact arrangements, garden maintenance responsibilities and overhanging trees affecting her enjoyment of the property.	Maladministration regarding staff conduct investigation and handling of garden/tree concerns.	Upheld
202322717	Resident reported prolonged loss of hot water and concerns regarding heating, with repairs taking almost a year to fully resolve.	Service failure in handling reports of loss of heating and hot water.	Upheld
202323642	Resident sought compensation after a contractor failed to attend a scheduled gas safety appointment and subsequent appointments were poorly managed.	Service failure in handling missed gas safety appointments and compensation request.	Upheld

5. Learning from Complaints and Service improvements linked to complaints management

A review of the 11 Housing Ombudsman determinations indicates that most adverse findings were not caused by a single service area but by recurring issues around repair

delays, damp and mould management, communication, record keeping, vulnerability awareness, and complaint handling.

Compensation awards ranged from **£75 to £900**, with the highest awards linked to significant delays in resolving damp and mould issues and failures to identify underlying causes of defects.

Damp and Mould/Leaks

Four of the cases related directly to damp, mould, leaks or water ingress. Common findings included:

- Delays in identifying root causes.
- Repeated reactive repairs rather than permanent solutions.
- Poor oversight of contractors.
- Failure to complete works within policy timescales.
- Insufficient consideration of residents' health concerns.

The Ombudsman repeatedly highlighted the need to focus on diagnosing and resolving the underlying cause rather than treating symptoms alone.

Record Keeping and Case Management

Poor record keeping was a feature in several determinations. Issues included:

- Missing inspection notes.
- Incomplete repair histories.
- Lack of documented conversations.
- Inconsistent information between contractors and the Council.
- Lack of evidence to demonstrate decision making.

The Ombudsman specifically identified record keeping weaknesses as contributing to poor complaint investigations and delayed resolutions.

Complaint Handling

Although some complaints were handled within timescales, several investigations found that responses:

- Failed to address all complaint points.
- Did not fully investigate concerns.
- Overlooked escalation requests.
- Failed to signpost residents appropriately.
- Did not acknowledge service failures where these existed.

A recurring criticism was that responses focused on process rather than fully addressing resident concerns and outcomes.

Communication and Resident Engagement

Poor communication was identified across multiple cases, including:

- Residents having to repeatedly chase updates.
- Lack of explanation for delays.
- Insufficient management of expectations.
- Failure to keep vulnerable residents informed.

The Ombudsman consistently noted that timely updates and proactive communication could have significantly reduced resident frustration and escalation.

Consideration of Vulnerabilities

Several cases involved residents with physical or mental health needs, disabilities, or vulnerable household members.

The Ombudsman found instances where:

- Additional support was not adequately considered.
- Reasonable adjustments were not evidenced.
- Household vulnerabilities were not properly recorded or acted upon

This reflects an ongoing need to ensure vulnerability information is accurately recorded and actively informs service delivery.

Positive Findings

Not all determinations were critical. The Ombudsman found:

- No maladministration regarding protective floor coverings following a resident's fall, recognising a reasonable investigation and evidence-based decision making.
- No maladministration in the handling of a property let standard complaint, with the Council demonstrating appropriate inspections and support arrangements.

These decisions demonstrate that where evidence, records and investigations are robust, the Council can demonstrate that its approach was reasonable and proportionate.

Key themes and learning across all four Quarters

A review of Q1–Q4 complaints, learning outcomes and service improvements highlights several recurring themes across Housing Services. While individual service areas experienced different challenges, the same core issues appeared consistently throughout the year.

Communication and Customer Contact

A review of complaints, learning outcomes and service improvements across all four quarters identified communication and customer contact as the most consistent theme across Housing Services. Communication failures were the most common cause of

dissatisfaction and were evident across a range of service areas including Tenancy Management/Neighbourhood Management, Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB), Adaptations, Planned Works, Repairs and Income Maximisation.

Common issues included delays in responding to residents, difficulties contacting officers, a lack of updates on ongoing cases, insufficient explanations of policies, procedures and decisions, and situations where residents believed no action was being taken despite work progressing behind the scenes. In many cases, complaint investigations found that dissatisfaction stemmed from poor communication rather than an underlying service failure.

Key learning from these complaints demonstrated that residents are more likely to remain satisfied with a service when they receive regular updates, clear explanations and realistic expectations, even where delays or operational challenges exist. Effective communication was therefore identified as a critical factor in building trust and reducing complaint escalation.

In response to this learning, several service improvements were implemented throughout the year. These included the introduction of a Tenancy Management Duty Line to improve accessibility, the establishment of mandatory update expectations for ASB cases, enhanced communication protocols between services and contractors, and more detailed complaint responses. Greater emphasis has also been placed on maintaining regular contact with residents, particularly in complex or long-running cases, and on providing clearer written explanations of service responsibilities, processes and limitations. Collectively, these improvements are intended to increase transparency, improve resident confidence in council services and reduce complaints arising from misunderstandings or lack of communication.

Repairs, Disrepair, Damp & Mould

Repairs-related complaints remained the largest category of complaints throughout the year and continued to be a significant area of focus across all four quarters. The most common issues raised by residents related to disrepair, damp, mould and condensation (DMC), leaks, delays in completing repairs, follow-on works not being raised or completed, repeated visits without resolution, and concerns regarding contractor performance.

A review of quarterly trends shows that disrepair was the most common complaint theme in Q1, with damp and mould also featuring prominently. Complaints relating to compensation frequently arose where repair delays had caused inconvenience to residents. During Q2, the volume of disrepair complaints increased further, while damp and mould remained a significant concern. The service also saw a rise in complaints relating to the quality of completed repairs and contractor workmanship.

In Q3, disrepair, damp and mould, and leaks emerged as the three most frequently reported complaint themes. Seasonal factors contributed to an increase in damp and mould reports during the colder months, while higher volumes of leak-related complaints were also recorded. By Q4, the focus of complaint investigations increasingly shifted towards procedural and process-related failures. This included missed escalations, follow-on works

not being raised or completed appropriately, and inconsistent adherence to established repairs procedures and communication protocols.

The key learning identified throughout the year was that many complaints did not arise solely from the original repair issue itself, but from how the issue was managed. Common contributory factors included failures to escalate unresolved problems, incomplete repairs, poor coordination between operational teams and contractors, and inadequate communication with residents regarding progress and next steps. These issues often led to frustration, repeat contact, and complaint escalation.

In response to this learning, a range of service improvements were implemented across the Repairs Service. These included the introduction of enhanced escalation procedures, mandatory site-to-office escalation processes, strengthened contractor monitoring arrangements, and improved recording practices through more detailed OneServe case notes. Monthly lessons learned reviews were also established to identify recurring issues and ensure corrective actions were implemented. Additional investment was made in staff training, including Damp, Mould and Condensation specialist accreditation and comprehensive Awaab's Law training to ensure compliance with emerging regulatory requirements.

Collectively, these improvements aim to strengthen procedural compliance, improve repair resolution rates, enhance communication with residents, and reduce the likelihood of similar complaints recurring in future reporting periods.

Contractor Management and Quality Assurance

Contractor performance emerged as a recurring theme across Repairs, Planned Works and Adaptations throughout the year. Complaints frequently related to poor workmanship, missed appointments, unauthorised access to properties, delays in completing works, poor communication from contractors and a perceived lack of accountability when issues arose.

Reviewing complaint outcomes highlighted the significant influence contractor performance has on both resident satisfaction and complaint volumes. In many cases, dissatisfaction was not solely related to the works undertaken, but to the overall customer experience, including the quality of communication, reliability of appointments and how effectively issues were resolved when problems occurred.

The learning identified through complaint investigations reinforced the need for stronger oversight of contractor activity and greater consistency in service delivery.

In response, a range of improvements were introduced throughout the year. These included regular contractor performance meetings to review service standards and complaint trends, increased quality assurance inspections, and more frequent spot checks of completed works. Clearer expectations and responsibilities were established for contractors, supported by strengthened documentation requirements to improve accountability and auditability.

In addition, greater emphasis has been placed on pre-start communication with residents to ensure expectations are clear before work begins. These measures are intended to improve the quality of works, strengthen contractor accountability, reduce service failures and ultimately enhance the experience of residents receiving repairs, planned works and adaptation services.

Planned Works Delays and Resident Expectations

Delays to planned works and the management of resident expectations emerged as a growing theme throughout the year, particularly in relation to kitchen and bathroom renewal programmes, window replacement schemes and roofing projects. As major investment and maintenance programmes continued across the housing stock, complaint volumes reflected increasing resident concerns about both the delivery and communication of planned works.

The most common issues raised by residents related to delays in the commencement or completion of works, uncertainty around replacement schedules, limited communication about revised timescales and concerns about the impact of waiting for works to be completed. In some cases, residents reported that property conditions, including damp, draughts or ageing fixtures and fittings, were affecting their comfort, health and wellbeing while they awaited inclusion in planned maintenance programmes.

A key learning identified through complaint investigations was that residents were generally more understanding of delays when expectations were managed effectively and clear information was provided about timescales, programme priorities and progress updates. Complaints were more likely to escalate where residents felt uninformed, where schedules changed without explanation, or where there was uncertainty about when works would take place.

In response to this learning, the service introduced several improvements aimed at strengthening programme delivery and resident communication. These included a review of the window replacement programme to identify opportunities to accelerate delivery, the development of new procurement frameworks to increase capacity and flexibility, and enhanced communication arrangements between contractors and residents.

Greater management oversight of planned works complaints has also been introduced, alongside improved complaint tracking and investigation processes to ensure recurring issues are identified and addressed more effectively. These improvements are intended to provide residents with greater clarity and confidence regarding planned maintenance programmes, while also improving accountability, communication and overall customer satisfaction.

Tenancy Management Responsiveness

Responsiveness within the Tenancy Management service remained a persistent theme throughout the year and was a recurring factor in both Stage 1 and Stage 2 complaints. Residents frequently reported difficulties contacting officers, delays in receiving responses

to enquiries, and concerns that cases were not progressing within reasonable timescales. This was particularly evident in relation to mutual exchange applications, where delays in case allocation or officer absence sometimes resulted in applications not being progressed promptly. Complaints were also received regarding tenancy breach investigations and enforcement actions, where residents felt that issues were taking too long to resolve.

The consistent learning from these complaints was that residents expect a service that is accessible, responsive and proactive in keeping them informed. Even where cases are complex or require time to investigate, timely communication and regular updates play a crucial role in maintaining resident confidence and preventing dissatisfaction from escalating into formal complaints.

In response to this learning, several service improvements were introduced. These included a more collaborative approach to case allocation across teams to ensure workloads could be managed effectively and service continuity maintained during periods of absence. A dedicated Duty Line was also established to provide residents with a more accessible route to contact the service and obtain support. Additional measures were implemented to improve officer cover arrangements and minimise delays when staff were unavailable. Furthermore, the Housing Management restructure has enabled the recruitment of additional officers, increased overall service capacity and supported improvements in responsiveness and tenant engagement.

These actions are intended to improve resident access to the service, reduce delays, strengthen communication and ensure that tenancy-related matters are progressed more efficiently and consistently.

Vulnerability and Person-Centred Services

Supporting vulnerable residents became an increasingly important theme throughout the year, with several complaints highlighting the challenges faced by residents with serious health conditions, disabilities, mental health concerns, domestic abuse risks and other complex vulnerabilities. These cases often involved residents whose personal circumstances heightened the impact of service delays, communication failures or unresolved housing issues.

Complaint investigations demonstrated that a standardised service approach does not always meet the needs of residents experiencing vulnerability. In many cases, residents required more tailored communication, enhanced support, greater sensitivity to their circumstances and closer coordination between service areas. The learning identified through these complaints reinforced the importance of adopting a person-centred approach, recognising that the same service issue can have a significantly greater impact on vulnerable residents.

In response to this learning, several improvements were implemented across services. Vulnerable cases are now more routinely identified and prioritised to ensure appropriate support and intervention. Within the ASB service, trauma-informed approaches have been

embedded to help officers better support residents experiencing distress, domestic abuse or mental health challenges. Services have also increased the use of welfare updates during prolonged repairs or complex cases to ensure residents remain informed and supported throughout the resolution process.

Additional improvements include strengthened support for residents experiencing financial hardship or rent arrears, with greater emphasis on early intervention, advice and signposting to appropriate assistance. Closer partnership working between services has also been encouraged to ensure vulnerable residents receive a more coordinated and holistic response to their needs.

These changes aim to improve outcomes for vulnerable residents, ensure services are delivered more compassionately and effectively, and reduce the likelihood of complaints arising where residents require additional support or understanding.

Adaptations Service Learning

The Adaptations Service identified several recurring themes through complaints received during the year. The most common concerns related to delays in assessments and the delivery of adaptations, poor communication with residents, misunderstandings regarding Occupational Therapist (OT) recommendations, confusion surrounding Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) processes and eligibility, and instances where important documentation had been misplaced or delayed. These issues often led to frustration for residents who were seeking timely support to meet health, mobility or accessibility needs.

A key learning from complaint investigations was the need to provide residents with clearer and more consistent information throughout the adaptations process. Residents required a better understanding of what adaptations can and cannot be provided, how decisions are made and by whom, and the eligibility, warranty and funding arrangements associated with different types of adaptations. Complaints also highlighted the importance of ensuring that residents understand the distinction between recommendations made by Occupational Therapists and the final decisions that can be implemented by the Adaptations Service.

In response to these findings, several service improvements were introduced. Resident correspondence was reviewed and updated to provide clearer information and reduce the risk of misunderstanding. Improvements were also made to document management and tracking processes to help prevent the loss of important paperwork and provide better audit trails. Communication standards were strengthened across the service, with greater emphasis placed on early engagement and regular updates for residents. In addition, work was undertaken to clarify roles and responsibilities between Adaptations and other service areas to ensure residents receive accurate advice and are directed to the appropriate team at the earliest opportunity.

These improvements are intended to increase transparency, improve resident understanding of the adaptations process and provide a more consistent and customer-

focused service for residents requiring support through adaptations and accessibility-related works.

Complaint Handling Maturity

A significant area of development throughout the year has been the growing maturity of complaint handling across Housing Services. Complaint investigations have increasingly been used as a mechanism for identifying service improvements, with many service areas demonstrating a stronger focus on learning from resident feedback and implementing changes in response to identified issues.

Throughout the year, services introduced a range of improvements designed to strengthen complaint management and improve outcomes for residents. These included refresher training for staff on effective complaint handling, greater use of complaints management systems to improve monitoring and accountability, and increased management oversight of complaint performance. Services also invested in analysing complaint trends to identify recurring themes and underlying causes, allowing targeted interventions to be implemented where needed.

Improvements were also made to record-keeping practices to ensure investigations were supported by accurate and comprehensive information. Alongside this, there was a clear focus on improving the quality, consistency and timeliness of complaint responses, helping to ensure residents received clearer explanations and more satisfactory resolutions.

The key learning from this work is that complaints are increasingly being viewed as a valuable source of organisational learning rather than solely as a performance measure. By using complaint outcomes to identify root causes, address service weaknesses and inform staff development, the Council has strengthened its approach to continuous improvement. This shift will continue to help embed a culture where resident feedback is actively used to shape service delivery, improve customer experience and reduce the likelihood of recurring complaints in the future.

Staffing, Capacity and Service Demand

Staffing, capacity and service demand were significant underlying factors influencing complaint volumes and service performance throughout the year. Across several service areas, complaints were linked to operational pressures arising from vacant posts, high workloads, ongoing service restructures, recruitment challenges and the implementation of new systems and processes. In addition, seasonal fluctuations in demand, particularly within repairs and housing management services, placed further pressure on available resources and response times.

These factors often contributed to delays in responding to residents, reduced opportunities for proactive communication and, in some areas, an increase in complaint volumes. The combination of high demand and limited capacity meant that services occasionally

struggled to maintain expected response standards, particularly during periods of organisational change or when key posts remained unfilled for extended periods. Complaint investigations and service reviews identified the need for greater resilience within teams, improved workforce planning and stronger operational support to manage periods of increased demand. In response, a range of measures were introduced across services to strengthen capacity and improve service delivery. These included targeted recruitment campaigns to fill vacant positions, service restructures designed to improve organisational effectiveness and the introduction of new software and case management systems to enhance efficiency and oversight.

Alongside these changes, enhanced training programmes were delivered to support both new and existing staff, ensuring officers had the knowledge, confidence and skills required to respond effectively to resident enquiries and complaints. Services also placed greater emphasis on workforce planning and performance monitoring to ensure resources could be deployed more effectively and emerging pressures identified at an earlier stage.

The learning from complaints throughout the year demonstrates that staffing capacity and service demand have a direct impact on residents' experience of council services. By investing in recruitment, technology, training and organisational development, services aim to improve responsiveness, maintain service standards during periods of pressure and provide a more consistent experience for residents.

Overall Corporate Learning

The review of complaints, learning outcomes and service improvements across all four quarters highlights several consistent themes that have shaped the Council's approach to service improvement throughout the year.

The most significant finding is that communication remains the primary driver of complaints across Housing Services. While many complaints originated from genuine service issues, investigations repeatedly demonstrated that resident dissatisfaction was often amplified by delays in communication, limited updates, difficulty contacting officers or a lack of clarity about decisions, responsibilities and next steps. As a result, improving communication standards has become a key priority across all service areas.

Repairs-related services continue to represent the highest area of risk for complaints, particularly in relation to disrepair, damp and mould, leaks and planned maintenance programmes. These services generate the greatest resident contact and are often linked to issues that directly affect residents' homes and wellbeing. Complaint investigations highlighted that delays, repeat visits, incomplete works and poor coordination between teams and contractors can significantly impact resident satisfaction and increase the likelihood of escalation.

The review also demonstrated growing resident expectations for timely resolutions, clear accountability and high-quality service delivery. Residents increasingly expect officers and contractors to take ownership of issues, provide accurate information and resolve concerns

without unnecessary delays or repeated intervention from the resident. Where accountability was unclear, complaints were more likely to escalate and confidence in the service was often reduced.

A further key learning point relates to vulnerability and the need for more personalised service delivery. Complaints involving residents with health conditions, disabilities, mental health concerns, domestic abuse risks or other complex circumstances highlighted that a standard approach is not always sufficient. Services have increasingly recognised the importance of tailoring communication, prioritising vulnerable cases and working collaboratively across teams to deliver a more person-centred response.

Finally, the year has demonstrated the value of effective complaint management as a driver for organisational learning and improvement. Increased investment in staff training, stronger management oversight, enhanced complaint analysis and a greater focus on identifying root causes have contributed to meaningful service improvements across several areas. The evidence from all four quarters shows that early intervention, effective complaint resolution and a commitment to learning from customer feedback can reduce escalation, improve service outcomes and strengthen resident confidence.

Overall, the organisation has demonstrated a positive transition from a largely reactive approach to complaint handling towards a more proactive, learning-led culture. Complaint feedback is increasingly being used to inform operational improvements, staff development, policy reviews and service redesign. This approach has enabled services to identify recurring issues, implement targeted improvements and strengthen the quality and consistency of service delivery for residents. Further work is required to improve consistency with complaint handling across teams and ensure timely responses to complaints. Accurately recording learning from complaints on JADU requires further improvement which will be the focus in the new financial year, 2026/27.

Governance			
Effective from:	April 2025	Review Date:	July 2026
Report Owner:	Dan Kennedy, Corporate Director – Resident Services		
Report Author:	Razvana Hussain, Resident Resolution Officer – Resident Services		
Approved by:	HRA Operational Group and Lead Member (Member Responsible for Complaints) Cllr Denys – Resident Services		
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Appendix C - Governing Body Response to the Annual Housing Complaints and Service Improvement Report 2025/26

Since May 2026, Councillor Nick Denys has been the Member Responsible for Complaints, following his appointment as Cabinet Member for Planning, Housing and Property.

I have reviewed the Annual Housing Complaints and Service Improvement Report for 2025/26 and the accompanying self-assessment against the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code. I am pleased to see the continued development of the Council's approach to complaints and the increasing focus on using complaints to identify where services need to improve.

There are some encouraging signs in this year's performance. Complaints about Housing Repairs and Maintenance have reduced at both Stage 1 and Stage 2, with Stage 2 complaints falling by 26.5%. This is a positive indication that the work being undertaken in repairs, including stronger escalation arrangements, contractor monitoring and learning from complaints, is beginning to have an impact.

However, the overall increase in complaints and the significant rise in complaints relating to Tenancy Management and Adaptations are areas that cannot be overlooked. I am particularly concerned about the increase in complaints progressing to Stage 2 in these services and the evidence that residents are not always receiving the response or resolution they should expect at the first stage. This area will be a matter of focus for officers over the next year.

The report also reinforces something we continue to hear from residents: good communication matters. Several complaints could have been avoided, or prevented from escalating, if residents had received clearer information, regular updates and a better explanation of what was happening. I welcome the steps already taken to improve communication and accessibility, including the Tenancy Management Duty Line and greater emphasis on keeping residents informed.

There is also important learning from the Housing Ombudsman's findings during the year, particularly around repairs, damp and mould, record keeping, communication and the way

vulnerability is considered. These findings need to translate into practical improvements and not simply be recorded as individual cases. The progress made in developing quarterly reporting and sharing complaints learning with tenants is welcome, and I will continue to use my role as Member Responsible for Complaints (MRC) to ensure that this learning is followed through.

Looking ahead to 2026/27, my focus will be on consistency, responsiveness and learning. We need to maintain the improvements made in repairs, address the emerging pressures in Tenancy Management and Adaptations, improve the timeliness of complaint responses and ensure that learning from complaints is properly recorded and acted upon. The report identifies improving the recording of learning on the internal complaints system JADU as a particular area for development, and I will expect to see progress in this during the coming year.

Complaints are an important source of information about our tenants' experience of the Council's landlord service. My role as MRC is to make sure that we listen to that feedback, challenge where performance is not good enough and, most importantly, see evidence that complaints are leading to better services for residents.

Cllr Nick Denys

Member Responsible for Complaints

Cabinet Member for Planning, Housing & Property



Corporate Complaints Policy and Procedure

Revised June 2026

1. Our complaint policy

Scope of our policy

This policy and procedure applies to all Council employees and to employees and organisations who deliver services on behalf of this Local Authority.

Introduction

The Council is committed to putting people at the centre of everything we do and aims to provide the best possible service to residents. However, sometimes things can go wrong and if you are not happy with the service you have received from the Council then please tell us so that we can, where possible, sort out the problem.

We will carry out enquiries fairly, deal with your complaint as quickly and effectively as we can while maintaining confidentiality and keeping you informed of progress. We want to reassure you that the service you get will not be affected if you raise concerns or make a complaint.

The policy and procedure:

- allows managers to address issues of unsatisfactory service and seek improvements in service delivery;
- ensures that people are treated fairly and consistently;
- ensures that a proper and adequate investigation takes place before any action is taken;
- requests for reasonable adjustments will be considered in line with the Equality Act 2010 and appropriate training is provided for staff; and
- safeguards the integrity and good reputation of the Council.

Whenever you contact us, we will:

- be polite and treat you with respect;
- give you honest and clear advice;
- make it clear what we can and cannot do;
- listen to your views; and
- admit when things go wrong and do our best to put them right.

What we ask you to do:

- treat us politely and with respect; and
- tell us when things go wrong so that we can put them right.

What is a complaint?

In general terms a complaint can be considered as: *“an expression of dissatisfaction, however made, about the standard of service, actions or lack of action by the council, its own staff, or those acting on its behalf, affecting an individual or group of individuals.”*

How can people complain?

Complaints can be made quickly and easily 24 hours a day, seven days a week via our website at www.hillingdon.gov.uk/complaints

You can also make a complaint:

- by **post** to the Complaint and Members Enquiry Team, London Borough of Hillingdon Council, Civic Centre, High Street, Uxbridge, Middlesex, UB8 1UW
- by **telephone** by calling us on [01895 277800](tel:01895277800)
- **in person** by pre-agreed appointment only at: Hillingdon Council, Civic Centre, High Street, Uxbridge, Middlesex, UB8 1UW

If you need help in using our online complaint form or need general advice on the complaint process, please call us on 01895 277800.

If you want more information about our complaint policy and general information relating to complaints, including the annual complaint report, this is published on our website at www.hillingdon.gov.uk/complaints. We also publish information about the complaint policy in our E-newsletter.

Who can complain?

Anyone who uses our services and is dissatisfied with the standard of service we have provided or our lack of action. The Council will also accept complaints by an advocate on behalf of a resident, with appropriate consent.

The Council will accept complaints received within 12 months of the issue/incident complained of or within 12 months when you became aware of the issue. Complaints made after this time limit may still be accepted if there are good reasons for the delay in submitting.

If we do not intend to progress your complaint, we will inform you of this in writing, tell you why we will not progress your complaint and give you the contact details of the Ombudsman to whom you may escalate your complaint for independent review.

What can people complain about?

People can complain about any **services** that the Council provides or contracts out. However, please note that:

- complaints relating to legal matters, including insurance claims, will still be considered but where formal legal proceedings have commenced, where the Claim Form and Particulars of Claim having been filed with the court, we will not progress such complaints through the complaint process; and.
- issues relating to employment or an application for employment with the Council, this cannot be addressed through the complaint procedure.

If we do not intend to progress your complaint, we will inform you of this in writing, tell you why we will not progress your complaint and give you the contact details of the Ombudsman to whom you may escalate your complaint for independent review.

Remedies for redress

The purpose of redress is to remedy the injustice or hardship suffered and where possible to return a complainant to the position they would have been before the situation went wrong. Types of redress include:

- Apologising;
- Acknowledging where things have gone wrong;
- Providing an explanation, assistance or reasons;
- Taking action if there has been delay;
- Reconsidering or changing a decision;
- Amending a record or adding a correction or addendum;
- Providing a financial remedy;
- Changing policies, procedures or practices.

Unreasonable or Unreasonably Persistent complaints

If we consider that a complainant is unreasonable or unreasonably persistent, we will refer the matter to a senior manager, who will consider whether restrictions should be placed on their contact with the Council.

2. The Corporate Complaints Procedure

Our complaints procedure is designed to support the effective management of complaints and is set out below. This means that whenever someone expresses dissatisfaction (it is not necessary to use the word “complaint”) we will give them the choice to submit a complaint including if it is submitted via a

third party or their representative, and any such complaint received will be handled in line with our published complaint policy. Please note that we will not stop our efforts to address the service request even if you decide to complain. If you are dissatisfied with our response to your service request, we will raise a complaint, even if the service request is ongoing.

SERVICE REQUESTS

Service requests are not complaints, but they will still be recorded, monitored, and regularly reviewed. However, for services that fall within the jurisdiction of the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman, we may choose to treat your complaint by way of a service request, as they do give organisations the opportunity to deal with a service request before a complaint is made.

We will acknowledge receipt of your service request within five working days, give you a timescale when we will respond to you and detailing the action we have or will be taking to put things right.

COMPLAINT STAGES

STAGE 1 (Investigation)

A complaint will be registered under Stage 1 of our complaint's procedure when:

- you tell us that you are dissatisfied with the service you have received
- we believe it is necessary to use the complaint procedure
- If we receive related complaints before we send the Stage 1 response, they will be included in that response. However, if the new issues are unrelated to the complaint being investigated, or if it would unreasonably delay the stage 1 response to incorporate them, they will be treated as a new Stage 1 complaint.

Complaints at Stage 1 will be investigated by a manager or Team Leader or specialist complaint officer, from the service you have complained about, who was not directly involved in the reason for your complaint. We will respond to your complaint as soon as we have the answers to your complaint, and we will not delay our response while outstanding actions are completed. Any outstanding actions will be tracked, actioned promptly and updates provided to you by the service area.

If you are not happy with the response you receive, the full response will tell you how to escalate your complaint to Stage 2.

Prior to that, we will acknowledge receipt of the complaint within five working days of receipt, set out our understanding of the complaint, the outcome(s)

you are seeking and what (if any) aspects of your complaint we will not be investigating. We will provide you with a full response to your complaint at Stage 1 within 10 working days of our acknowledgment. If this is not possible, due to the complexity of the case, we will write to you and let you know if more time is needed, the reason why more time is needed, the estimated time it will take to provide a full response and the contact details of the relevant ombudsman. Any extension will not be more than 10 working days without good reason. If this is the case, and we are unable to respond within the extended timeframe, we will agree with you how and when we will provide updates on the progress of your complaint.

STAGE 2 (Review)

You can ask us to review your complaint at Stage 2 if:

- you are unhappy with how your complaint was handled at Stage 1
- you are unhappy with the response you have received

In your appeal it would be helpful if you say why you are dissatisfied with the response and what further action you expect but you are not required to explain your reasons for requesting a stage 2 review.

Complaints at Stage 2 will be investigated by a Head of Service or Director, who will review how your complaint was dealt with originally to decide if:

- the complaint was investigated thoroughly and objectively
- the conclusions reached are based on evidence
- the response was reasonable, appropriate and tried to achieve a resolution

Please be assured that we will respond to your request for review as soon as we have the answers to the issues raised, and we will not delay our response while outstanding actions are completed. Any outstanding actions will be tracked, actioned promptly and updates provided to you by the service area.

If you are unhappy with the response you receive, the full response will tell you how to escalate your complaint to the Housing Ombudsman Service or the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman for independent review.

Prior to that, we will acknowledge your request for a review at Stage 2 of the Corporate complaints procedure within five working days of the escalation request being received, set out our understanding of your review request, the outcome(s) you are seeking and what (if any) aspects of your review request we will not be investigating. We will provide you with a full response to your complaint at Stage 2 within 20 working days of the complaint being

acknowledged and if we cannot finish our review in time, we will tell you when you can expect our response, the reason why an extension is needed and the contact details of the relevant Ombudsman. Any extension will not be more than 20 working days without good reason. If this is the case, and we are unable to respond within the extended timeframe due to the complexity of the case, we will agree with you how and when we will provide updates on the progress of your complaint.

TAKING YOUR COMPLAINT FURTHER

If your complaint is about the Landlord Service (housing management matters), (but not Lettings/Housing allocations) your complaint will be considered by the Housing Ombudsman Service.

A. Housing Ombudsman Service

The Housing Ombudsman Service is set up by law to look at complaints about registered providers of social housing and their service is free, independent and impartial. The contact details of the Housing Ombudsman are:

Housing Ombudsman Service
PO Box 1484
Unit D
Preston
PR2 0ET

Telephone 0300 111 3000

Website: www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk

B. Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO)

If your complaint is about any other Council service including Lettings and Housing allocations, your complaint will be considered by the LGSCO. The contact details of the LGSCO are:

Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman
PO Box 4771
Coventry
CV4 0EH

Telephone: 0300 061 0614

Website contact: www.lgo.org.uk/contact-us