

Progress Against Housing Ombudsman Recommendations – December 2024 update

HO Recommendation 1: Amend its complaint policy and processes to comply with the new statutory joint Complaint Handling Code from the Housing Ombudsman and Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman. This includes its handling of Member's Enquiries alongside formal complaints.

April 2024 status				August 2024 status			
Actions Taken:	Outcome Achieved:	Delivery Date:	Status:	Action taken:	Delivery due:	Status:	Next steps / transferred to BAU:
The complaints policy has been revised to align with the statutory joint Complaint Handling Code. Included the handling of Member's Enquiries alongside complaints, ensuring a streamlined approach that treats expressions of dissatisfaction as complaints, irrespective of their origin.	Enhanced compliance with the Complaint Handling Code, leading to more coherent and efficient handling of complaints and Member's Enquiries, improving residents' experience.	April 2024	GREEN	Corporate complaints policy signed off and published . Website updated to reflect the updated policy.	Complete	GREEN	Continuous monitoring and updating of the complaint policy to reflect any changes in the Code and resident feedback. Check old web content about complaints has been removed.

HO Recommendation 2: Carry out forecasting modelling to determine optimum complaint staffing levels to respond within the timescales and quality set out in the Code

April 2024 status				August 2024 status			
Actions Taken:	Outcome Achieved:	Delivery Date:	Status:	Action taken:	Delivery due:	Status:	Next steps / transferred to BAU:
Forecasting modelling was undertaken to ascertain the optimal staffing levels required for managing complaints within the timescales and quality parameters set by the Code. Increases are being made to staffing based on the forecasting outcomes.	Granular understanding of staffing required to meet demand. The modelling has resulted in a recruitment campaign with new officers already onboarded and further additional appointments in progress. The increased staffing levels have already realised improvements to timescales and quality of responses.	May 2024	AMBER	Additional resource recruited to and in post. The increased staffing levels have continued to realise improvements to timescales and quality of responses.	Complete	GREEN	Regular review of forecasting and staffing levels to maintain efficiency and responsiveness in complaint handling.

HO Recommendation 3: Adapt its complaint closure processes to accurately reflect when a complaint is closed, and then track the subsequent remedy to completion.

April 2024 status				August 2024 status			
Actions Taken:	Outcome Achieved:	Delivery Date:	Status:	Action taken:	Delivery due:	Status:	Next steps / transferred to BAU:
The closure process has been updated to ensure remedies are tracked, including procedure to ensure resolution of remedies can be monitored enabling improved management and transparency	Greater clarity and accountability in the complaint resolution process, ensuring all complaints are followed through to residents' satisfaction.	Nov 2023	GREEN	Process for finalising and closing complaints reviewed, updated and communicated. Clear expectations set and continuously communicated for the input required from service officers to enable complete and timely responses.	Completed	GREEN	Ongoing review and improvement to complaint closure process and communications.

HO Recommendation 4: Formalise the role of the “high-risk” team within its complaints process.

April 2024 status				August 2024 status			
Actions Taken:	Outcome Achieved:	Delivery Date:	Status:	Action taken:	Delivery due:	Status:	Next steps / transferred to BAU:
Clearly defined and formalised the role and operational procedures of the "high risk" team within the complaint handling process, ensuring their integration into regular operations with a clear escalation process to the team.	Specialised handling of complex and high-risk cases has led to improved resolution outcomes and enhanced resident satisfaction.	Mar 2024	AMBER	High risk-team incorporated into central complaints team to ensure specialised handling of high-risk cases.	Complete	GREEN	N/A

HO Recommendation 5: Review its approach to root cause analysis of complaints to make this more robust and effective, ensuring it can identify the specific drivers behind complaints and has sufficient detail to take steps to address them.

April 2024 status				August 2024 status			
Actions Taken:	Outcome Achieved:	Delivery Date:	Status:	Action taken:	Delivery due:	Status:	Next steps / transferred to BAU:
Updates to management information has enabled improved visibility of data enabling improved identification of root cause issues.	With improved data we have put in place mechanisms to address themes that are the primary causes driving demand.	May 2024	AMBER	Root cause analysis included in regular reporting to service areas to ensure they are aware and can address drivers of demand. Root cause analysis used to prioritise and design service improvements and started to include in training for staff.	Complete	GREEN	Continue integration of root cause analysis findings into improvement activity, continuous training and development programmes for staff to prevent recurrence of identified issues.

HO Recommendation 6: Ensure this improved analysis is seen by the Housing Improvement Group and Board.

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Actions Taken:	Outcome Achieved:	Delivery Date:	Status:	Action taken:	Delivery due:	Status:	Next steps / transferred to BAU:
Updated management information has enabled more clarity on drivers for demand and through presentation of this improvement data at Housing Improvement Group and Board work has started to set up managed projects that will address and mitigate key drivers of demand. These projects are reporting progress to the Boards.	Strategic service improvements informed by comprehensive complaint analysis, leading to a more proactive approach to service quality and resident satisfaction.	Feb 2024	GREEN	Regular complaints activity and performance reporting to housing leadership team, Housing Improvement Group and Board.	Dec 2024	AMBER	Improvements to management reports to enable more proactive day-to-day service management and strategic decision making
December 2024 status							
Action taken:	Delivery due:	Status:	Next steps / transferred to BAU:				
Improved analysis reporting regularly thought to Housing Improvement Group and Board. Tracking the number of and performance to timelines of complaints activity.	Completed	Green	Automation of reporting to reduce officer input needed.				

HO Recommendation 7: Develop a mechanism to formally channel the learning from analysis and complaints into service improvements and be able to demonstrate the impact.

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Actions Taken:	Outcome Achieved:	Delivery Date:	Status:	Action taken:	Delivery due:	Status:	Next steps / transferred to BAU:
A review of data to enable improved reporting is in progress. This will enable greater visibility and identification of opportunities for improvement. A procedure has been drafted to capture service improvements and track remediation and benefits.	The measure detailed will create tangible improvements in service delivery and enable a culture of continual service improvement with tracked benefits.	May 2024	AMBER	Lessons learnt and themes from complaints captured and regularly shared with housing leadership team.	Dec 2024	AMBER	Review, sign off and roll out of continual service improvement procedure and tracking of remediation and benefits.
December 2024 status							
Action taken:	Delivery due:	Status:	Next steps / transferred to BAU:				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lessons learnt and themes from complaints captured and regularly shared with housing leadership team. Specific meetings with operational teams and contractors to review lessons learnt and agree actions. 	Complete	GREEN	Continuation and expansion of action already taken				

HO Recommendation 8: Review its complaint response quality assurance and develop metrics for the Housing Improvement Group and Board to be able to track complaint response quality.

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Actions Taken:	Outcome Achieved:	Delivery Date:	Status:	Action taken:	Delivery due:	Status:	Next steps / transferred to BAU:
A framework to enable robust quality assurance has been developed. The framework covers the life cycle of the complaint to ensure learnings are taken from the end-to-end process. Once fully implemented quality metrics will be shared with Housing Improvement Group and Board.	Higher quality and consistency in complaint responses, contributing to increased resident satisfaction and fewer escalations.	May 2024	AMBER	New quality assurance (QA) framework approved and ready to roll out in August 2024.	Aug 2024	GREEN	Undertake first round of new QA process and embed into BAU.

HO Recommendation 9: Review its process for recording completed repairs to ensure it has a clear repair record which the resident agrees with. The landlord should ensure the solution accommodates vulnerable residents.

April 2024 status				August 2024 status			
Actions Taken:	Outcome Achieved:	Delivery Date:	Status:	Action taken:	Delivery due:	Status:	Next steps / transferred to BAU:
Enhanced the process for recording completed repairs to ensure clarity and agreement with residents, with special consideration for the needs of vulnerable residents.	Improved transparency and trust in repair management, evidenced by reduced complaints related to repair disputes.	June 2024	AMBER	Fulfilment tracking in place for repairs complaints to enable tracking of remedies and communication with residents regarding the status of their complaint.	Nov 2024	AMBER	Text communication with residents to confirm completion of the remedy for repairs complaints. Embedding of fulfilment process and associated reporting into BAU.
December 2024 status							
Action taken:	Delivery due:	Status:	Next steps / transferred to BAU:				
Text communication with residents tested and handed over to BAU for implementation.	Complete	GREEN	Delivery of text message communication to be completed in BAU.				

Fulfilment process and reporting embedded into BAU.			
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HO Recommendation 10: Include complaint handling performance in its contractor management arrangements, including as KPIs as contract renewal cycles allow.

April 2024 status				August 2024 status			
Actions Taken:	Outcome Achieved:	Delivery Date:	Status:	Action taken:	Delivery due:	Status:	Next steps / transferred to BAU:
Integrated complaint handling performance metrics into contractor management arrangements, including as key performance indicators for contract renewals.	Improved contractor accountability and performance, leading to better service delivery and reduced complaints related to contractor services.	Sept 2024	AMBER	Amendments made to contract with main repairs contractor to include complaints performance metrics.	Nov 2024	AMBER	Workflows for managing complaints with contractors to be reviewed and embedded.
December 2024 status							
Action taken:	Delivery due:	Status:	Next steps / transferred to BAU:				
Weekly meetings in place with Wates and complaints reporting provided to contractor risk register meetings and Wates core group meetings. Actions related to complaints are identified and monitored.	Completed	GREEN	To continue to embed as BAU.				

HO Recommendation 11: Develop a plan for the transition of complaint handling to business as usual, ensuring there is continued scrutiny of complaint handling performance at the highest level.

April 2024 status				August 2024 status			
Actions Taken:	Outcome Achieved:	Delivery Date:	Status:	Action taken:	Delivery due:	Status:	Next steps / transferred to BAU:
Created a comprehensive plan for the transition of complaint handling to business as usual, ensuring sustained attention and strategic oversight at the highest level.	Established a robust framework for maintaining high standards in complaint handling, ensuring continuity in service quality and responsiveness.	Jun 2024	AMBER	Monitoring and review of the transition plan adapting to evolving needs and performance feedback to shape and prioritise delivery.	Dec 2024	AMBER	Ongoing monitoring and review the transition plan regularly to adapt to evolving needs and ensure ongoing effectiveness in complaint management.
December 2024 status							
Action taken:	Delivery due:	Status:	Next steps / transferred to BAU:				
Handed over to BAU for monitoring and review of the transition plan adapting to evolving needs and performance feedback to shape and prioritise delivery.	Completed	GREEN	N/A				

HO Recommendation 12: Implement a communication programme with residents to ensure residents know about their rights to complain and can escalate cases to the Ombudsman, to help make sure that service failures can be recovered where they occur and avoid residents experiencing prolonged detriment.

April 2024 status				August 2024 status			
Actions Taken:	Outcome Achieved:	Delivery Date:	Status:	Action taken:	Delivery due:	Status:	Next steps / transferred to BAU:
Launched a comprehensive communication programme to ensure residents are well-informed about their rights to complain and the escalation process, focusing on service recovery and prevention of detriment.	Increased resident awareness and engagement, leading to a more informed and empowered community with a reduction in service failures.	Dec 2023	GREEN	Ongoing updating and expanding of communication about rights to complain and the escalation process.	Complete	GREEN	Continuously update and expand the communication programme to reach a broader audience and adapt to changing resident needs and feedback.