

Complaints End of Year Report 2023-24

1. **RECOMMENDATION**
- 1.1. It is recommended that Board note the end of year performance outlined in this report.
2. **CONFIDENTIAL – YES / NO**
3. **IMPACT ASSESSMENT ON CROSS CUTTING THEMES**

THEME	IMPACT – Positive and / or Negative	Relevant to report?
Risk (strategic risks, risk appetite etc.)	If complaints are not dealt with within complaint handling code timescales, and all factors of the complaint are not answered, this could result in financial and reputational damage to the association.	Y
Health and Safety	No specific considerations	
Governance	No specific considerations	
RSH economic regulatory standards	No specific considerations	
RSH consumer regulatory standards	The effective management of complaints is a component of the consumer standard and has been brought back into the fold for a regulatory inspection in 2024.	Y
Other statutory/ regulatory compliance, legal etc.	No specific considerations	
Financial	Complaint affects our finances in 3 ways. The redoing of what should have been done right in the first place. Compensation payments Admin costs of dealing with complaints	Y
Value for money	Upheld complaints are a failure to do things right first time, and is poor value for money.	Y
Equality, diversity & Inclusion	We monitor take up of the service and satisfaction of complaint handling to ensure the service is meeting the needs of everyone.	Y
Human resources	No specific considerations	
Customer voice/impact	Complaints are valuable customer feedback	Y
Social Purpose	To achieve Unity’s social purpose, resources need to be adequately managed. This report refers to a number of areas related to the delivery of the organisations social purpose.	Y

4. Summary

4.1 Since November 2022 we have been operating a 2 stage complaints process in line with the expectations of the Housing Ombudsman's Complaints Handling Code.

4.2 There were 34 complaints logged at Stage 1 in 2023-24

- 22 complaints relating to the repairs service
- 8 complaints relating to housing services
- 3 complaints relating to the compliance service
- 1 complaint relating to customer services

4.3 Of the 34 complaints, 8 were escalated to stage 2 of our complaints process

- 3 repairs complaints
- 3 housing complaints
- 2 compliance complaints

4.4 94.1% of Stage 1 complaints were answered in the 10-working day timescale. In the final three quarters of the year this was 100% answered withing the target timescale.

4.5 The number of complaints upheld at Stage 1 in 2023-24 is 24 (70.6%) of all complaints.

- 19 out of 22 repairs complaints were upheld
- 3 out 8 housing complaints were upheld
- 1 out of 3 building safety compliance complaints upheld
- 1 out of 1 customer Services complaints upheld.

4.6 The number of complaints upheld at stage 2 in 2023-24 was 4, representing 50% of stage 2 complaints.

- 2 out of 3 repairs complaints were upheld
- 2 out of 3 housing complaints were upheld
- 0 out of 2 building safety compliance complaints were upheld

5. Background

While we try to make sure we do everything right first time, sometimes we get things wrong, and customers want to make a complaint. We welcome complaints as they give us an opportunity to improve our services. Customer feedback always helps us to do things better next time.

We all also continue to develop our complaints handling performance framework and ensure future reporting to Committee includes the following Tenant Satisfaction Measures:

- **CH01** - Complaints relative to the size of the organisation (number of complaints per 1,000 properties)
- **CH02** – Complaints responded to within Complaints Handling Code timescales
- **TP09** – Satisfaction with the landlord's approach to handling of complaints

6. Complaints performance

6.1 The table below outlines the complaints management performance for 2023/24. It includes complaints across all service areas:

Measure		Q1 23/24	Q2 23/24	Q3 23/24	Q4 23/24	Target 23/24	Year end 2023/24
1	Number of complaints logged at stage 1 (each quarter)	11	9	7	7		34
2.	Number of Stage 1 complaints closed.	10	7	3	6		26
3	CH01(1): Number of stage one complaints received per 1,000 homes	-	-	-	-	-	25.7
4.	CH02 (1) - % of Stage 1 complaints responded to within 10 days *	81.8%	100%	100%	100%	90% within 10 working days	94.1%
5.	% of complaints resolved at Stage 1	91%	77.7%	42.9%	85.7%		76.5%
6.	% of Stage 1 complaints upheld	91%	55.6%	42.9%	85.7%		70.6%
7.	Number of complaints escalated to Stage 2	1	2	4	1		8
8.	Number of Stage 2 complaints closed	0	1	3	4		8
9.	CH01 (2) Number of stage two complaints received per 1,000 homes	-	-	-	-	-	4
9.	CH02 (2) - % of Stage 2 complaints responded to within target times *	100%	100%	66.6%	100%	90% within 20 working days	87.5%
10.	% of Stage 2 complaints upheld or partially upheld	100%	50%	66%	33%		50%

* The performance outlined for TSM measure CH02 (1) and (2) differs to the % in the TSM submission. The data above includes LCHO (Low cost home ownership) complaints, and the TSM return reports only on LCRA (Low cost rental accommodation) only.

6.2 Customer satisfaction with complaint handling

From April 2023 Unity has conducted a customer feedback survey for all complaints service users when their complaint is closed. The survey is sent either by post or digitally depending in the complainant’s communication preference.

In addition, the Tenant Satisfaction Measures Standard will include the following measure collected from tenant perception surveys:

- **TP09** - Satisfaction with the landlord’s approach to handling complaints

Question - Have you made a complaint to your landlord in the last 12 months. If yes how satisfied or dissatisfied were you with your landlord’s approach to complaints handling?

The following table indicates complaint handling satisfaction from transactional surveys (actual tenants who logged a complaint) and perception surveys (tenants surveyed in telephone survey)

	Q1 23/24	Q2 23/24	Q3 23/24	Q4 23/24
Transactional surveys				
Survey Replies received	3	3	1	4
Satisfaction with the way a complaint was handled	100%	33.3%	100%	25%
Satisfaction with the way a complaint was handled (ytd)	100%	66.7%	71.4%	54.5%
Perception surveys				
TP09 – Satisfaction with the landlord’s approach to handling of complaints	-	-	-	44.1%

6.3 We sent out 34 satisfaction surveys to complainants and received 11 returned, of which 6 (54.5%) were satisfied in how their complaint was handled.

6.4 The TP09 satisfaction measure on complaints has lower satisfaction with complaint handling, however as this is not transactional it may not relate to specific complaints that have been formally acknowledged.

6.5 The tables below identify the Stage 1 complaints received by service area.

Housing Services

	Q1 2023/24	Q2 2023/24	Q3 2023/24	Q4 2023/24	Year End
Received	1	4	1	2	8
% Upheld	100%	25%	0%	50%	37.5%

The themes identified from the complaint(s) are:

- Issues raised about housing services management of asb

Repairs

	Q1 2023/24	Q2 2023/24	Q3 2023/24	Q4 2023/24	Year End
Received	10	4	4	4	22
% Upheld	90%	75%	75%	100%	86.4%

Themes identified from complaints were:

- Not completing repairs within agreed timescales.
- Work not being completed to a satisfactory standard by GTD
- Tenant unclear of repair responsibilities
- Timescales to deal with mould and damp complaints

Customer Services

	Q1 2023/24	Q2 2023/24	Q3 2023/24	Q4 2023/24	Year End
Received	0	1	0	0	1
% Upheld		100%			100%

Themes identified from complaints were:

- Response times to customer concerns

Compliance

	Q1 2023/24	Q2 2023/24	Q3 2023/24	Q4 2023/24	Year End
Received	0	0	2	1	3
% Upheld			0%	100%	33.3%

Themes identified from complaints were:

- Unity's response times when there are faults with lifts.
- No target times for lift repairs in lift contract

6.6 The table below identify the Stage 2 complaints received by service area.

Repairs

	Q1 2023/24	Q2 2023/24	Q3 2023/24	Q4 2023/24	Year End
Received	1	0	2	0	3
% Upheld	100%		50%		66.6%

Housing

	Q1 2023/24	Q2 2023/24	Q3 2023/24	Q4 2023/24	Year End
Received	0	1	1	1	3
% Upheld		0%	100%	100%	66%

Compliance

	Q1 2023/24	Q2 2023/24	Q3 2023/24	Q4 2023/24	Year End
Received	0	0	2	0	2
% Upheld			0%		0%

Themes identified from complaints were:

- Not completing repairs within agreed timescales.
- Work not being completed to a satisfactory standard.
- Tenant unclear of repair responsibilities
- Understanding whether services charges are correct.
- Understanding the requirements of the lift contractor in relation to customer safety

7. Housing Ombudsman cases

The table below provide information about Housing Ombudsman determinations/decisions in 2023-24

7.1 HOS determinations/decisions in 2023/24

Q1	Date	Summary of complaint	Determination/ Decision	Unity response/action
	20.04.23	Mr VC complained he was given flat with defective white goods	Unity was found not to be at fault for the condition of white goods recommended that £50 previous goodwill payment offered is re offered to tenant.	Letter sent to Mr VC offering £50 goodwill payment.
	25.05.23	Ms M complained about the inability to purchase her home under the Right to Acquire. The property is not eligible.	Unity was found to have been correct in its decision not to allow the tenant the right to acquire their home	Letter sent to tenant informing them of £275 payment for fees paid for right to acquire application.
Q2	None			
Q3				
	27.11.23	Ms G complained about Unity's handling of asb reports	Unity was found to have failed in its actions of managing the asb reports and recording of information	Letter sent to tenant apologising for failures and £600 compensation paid.
	20.12.23	Mr M had complained about Unity's failure to deliver repairs to his property.	Unity was found to have failed in its actions of completing repairs in an adequate timescale and communication with the tenant	Letter sent to tenant apologising for failures and £1633.00 compensation paid.

7.2 Current ongoing HOS investigations

	Complaint	HOS intervention	Current status
1.	Ms A customer alleges Unity has not carried out solar panel installations as agreed	HOS indicated in an email on 12-03-23 that they will investigate the complaint	12-03-2024 Information sent to the Ho to investigate

8. Financial implications

- **Compensation** – In 2023-24 we have offered financial compensation resulting from service failures to 19 complainants amounting to £2812.08
- **Compensation per quarter 2023-24**

Quarter	No of payments	Total Payments
1	6	£650.00
2	3	£450.00
3	4	£450.00
4	6	£1262.08

9. Lessons learnt

We have seen more complaints being escalated to stage 2 of our complaints process due to the actions agreed at stage 1 not being implemented, or the level of compensation not deemed satisfactory. We are reviewing our approach to compensation using guidelines from the Housing Ombudsman and ensuring that we track and complete follow up actions to a complaint response. These are now being captured and monitored to ensure that this is done routinely. Lessons learnt to try and prevent a reoccurrence of the issue causing the complaint is also being captured and monitored.

10. Housing Ombudsman Complaints Handling Code – Self-Assessment

As part of the recent changes to the powers of the Housing Ombudsman, they are now required to demonstrate that social housing providers are compliant with the code. This is to be done through submitting your self-assessment against the complaints handling code, which is via the same method and timescales as the Tenant Satisfaction measure return.

An update presentation on this will be given at the board meeting.

Associated background papers: None

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