



Housing & Landlord Services

Quarterly complaints and service improvement report

Q2 2024-2025

Author: Jordan Crawford



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Introduction

In order to comply with the Housing Ombudsman’s Complaint Handling Code, the Governing Body (councillors) must be provided with regular information about housing complaints.

Quarterly reports will be provided at the end of Q1, Q2 and Q3 with an annual report being provided after the end of the financial year.

The Housing Ombudsman’s Complaint Handling Code can be accessed here and there is also some specific guidance for governing bodies, which can be accessed here: [The Complaint Handling Code | Housing Ombudsman Service \(housing-ombudsman.org.uk\)](#)

Complaint cases received

Within Landlord Services, a total of 500 complaints, 14 comments and 3 compliments were received. Breakdown by service area is shown in the table below.

Service	Complaint
Estates & Housing Management	118
Repairs & Maintenance	297
Private Housing and Accessible Homes	18
Housing Options	67
Total	500

NB: The table above includes complaint cases for the Housing Options Service and may contain cases where the complainant is not a council tenant or leaseholder.

There was a 5% increase in complaints compared to the previous quarter when the Housing and Landlord service received 474 complaints.

Top 3 classifications for complaints

Out of the 415 complaints received within the Landlord service the following is the classification of those complaints:

1. Delivery or non-delivery of a service 69 (16%)
2. Time waiting for works repair 55 (13%)
3. Application of a council policy 49 (11%)

Responses in target

During quarter 2 2024-25, the Council's SLA for responding to non-statutory complaints was 10 working days, with a compliance target of 100%. The table below shows a summary of the performance by service area.

Service	Within 10 day SLA Quarter 2 2024-2025	Quarter 1 2024-2025
Estates & Housing Management	38%	37%
Repairs and Maintenance	33%	53%
Housing Options	55%	52%
Housing Delivery	100%	100%
Private Housing and Accessible Homes	44%	27%
Total for landlord service	37%	

The Housing Ombudsman requires all landlords to respond to housing complaints within 10 working days. Overall, the Landlord Service answered 37% of all Stage 1s within 10 working days, this decline in response has been attributed to capacity issues within the service where there has been long standing vacancies and absence combined with an overall increase of demand. The service has taken steps to address the vacancies and have processes in place to minimise disruption to residents.

Complaint resolution stages

92.4% of cases were resolved at stage 1. 7.2% of complaints were resolved at stage 2 and less than 1% progressed to Ombudsman stage.

Outcomes

24% of complaints were not upheld, with 30% being upheld 21% partly upheld. 30% of complaints showed as other or no outcome due to the cases being open.

Customer satisfaction

Transactional Satisfaction Survey

9 complainants went on to complete a satisfaction survey following their complaint. The overall satisfaction rating for complaint handling is 31%. 69% of complainants were dissatisfied.

Tenant Satisfaction Measure (perception survey)

During 2024-25, 155 residents (council tenants) responded to the annual resident satisfaction survey (TSM's). 30% of residents were satisfied with the how BCC (as a landlord) handled complaints. The sector benchmark is 33.8%.

It was noted from the TSM survey that 45% or 255 respondents had made a complaint within the past 12 months.

Housing Ombudsman Determinations

During the Quarter 2 period Bristol City Council received 4 Housing Ombudsman determinations and 1 Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman determination. The Housing Ombudsman determined:

- 1 determination of Service Failure within Repairs and Maintenance
- 1 determination of Maladministration within Repairs and Maintenance
- 2 complaints Not Upheld within Tenancy and Estates

A total of 7 orders and 1 recommendation were made by the Housing Ombudsman including a total of £1240.00 in compensation to the residents, all orders have been completed by the service. A case review was undertaken of each case to learn from these cases and the findings shared with operational teams.

Lessons learned

Below is a summary of the root cause analysis of all completed Stage 1 responses as identified by complaint handlers.

A root cause summary for the Repairs and Maintenance team:

	Total
No Fault Identified	42
Third Party Fault	28
Work Volumes	25
Process Issues	21
Staff Error	16
Staff Behaviour	6
Record Keeping	3
Staff Absence	3
Telephony Issues	1
IT Issues	1

A root cause summary for the Tenancy and Estates team:

	Total
No Fault Identified	50
Staff Error	14
Staff Absence	7
Third Party Fault	6
Work volumes	4
Process Issues	3
Staff Behaviour	2

A sampling of upheld complaints was undertaken to obtain further clarity on the issues that residents made. Across both services there was evidence of the following:

Communication

- Follow up around results of investigations being shared with residents
- There were issues with how the service and their contractors communicate changes to appointments with a general lack of communication evident, residents are not being kept informed of rearranged appointments or potential delays resulting in them chasing the service.
- Issues around low capacity and sickness and the continuation of the service.

Service Quality

- A repair was not done to the correct standard and the resident re reported it but was faced a twelve week wait
- Damage to property and a lack of care being shown in residents property when undertaking repairs
- A lack of follow up to requests for assistance within the community despite timescales set out by the services

The themes captured within the complaints feedback have been shared with the service and actions have been taken to address themes identified such as:

- Customer service training for staff.
- Procedure briefings within the cleaning teams to remind staff of responsibilities.
- Reviewed and implemented further training for operatives to be able to resolve multiple jobs and improve knowledge of escalation processes.
- Changed procedures for evidence gathering in disrepair claim cases.
- Follow up with individual staff to address performance issues identified.

This is a brief summary of the actions being undertaken, we have introduced monthly resident feedback reviews to analyse the root cause themes and identify appropriate actions to address these themes and improve service delivery.

Service Improvement Activity

Bristol City Council recognises the need to improve our approach to complaint handling and establishing a positive complaint handling culture where we learn from complaints. We have taken steps to address these themes and improve our compliance against our complaint handling code, these are the key milestones of the Complaints Improvement Group:

- Dedicated resource to coordinate the complaints responses at triage and allocation.
- Incorporated Housing Ombudsman and complaints feedback into a review of the anti social behaviour policy and procedures
- A review of the complaints processes and supporting documents.
- Increase in resource to ensure that we define, acknowledge and allocate complaints within the 5 day timescale set by the Housing Ombudsman.
- 45% of complaint handlers have been on complaint handling training, the remaining staff have been booked on for training in November, December, January and February.
- Increase in oversight of Stage 1 complaints at a senior level.

Date: October 2024