



Winchester

City Council

Annual complaints performance & improvement report 2024/25

1. Introduction

This report provides information on our annual complaint's performance for housing services during 2024/25 (1 April 2024-31 March 2025).

34% of residents told us they were happy with our handling of complaints in the Tenant Satisfaction Measures survey; this was a drop in satisfaction compared to the previous year's survey. This satisfaction score is below the median score for the sector and remains a top priority for WCC to continue to implement changes and learn from our complaints using complaints data to inform service improvement work.

Our TACT (Tenant and Councils Together) Board receive quarterly complaints performance information to include number, type and themes from formal complaints received. The Board have recognised that we have a small number of formal complaints in comparison to the number of properties. For the reporting year this equates to 2.3% of all residents reported a formal complaint. The Board are helping us to develop more qualitative and insight driven analysis of complaints to effectively learn from complaints and inform service delivery to improve outcomes for tenants.

2. Complaint handling Code

The Housing Ombudsman (HO) Complaint Handling Code came into effect from 1 April 2024 under the Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023, providing a set of standards for Landlords to comply with.

In addition to the statutory code there was a non-statutory complaint handling code Issued by The Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGO).

3. Self-assessment

The Housing Ombudsman require Landlords to submit an annual self-assessment on how we are performing by 30 September 2025. This year's self-assessment can

be found on our website Housing Ombudsman self-assessment 2025.

<https://www.winchester.gov.uk/housing/complaints>

There is also a requirement set out in the Housing Ombudsman code to publish annually our complaints performance and Improvement plan alongside a response from our governing body (Cabinet Committee: Housing).

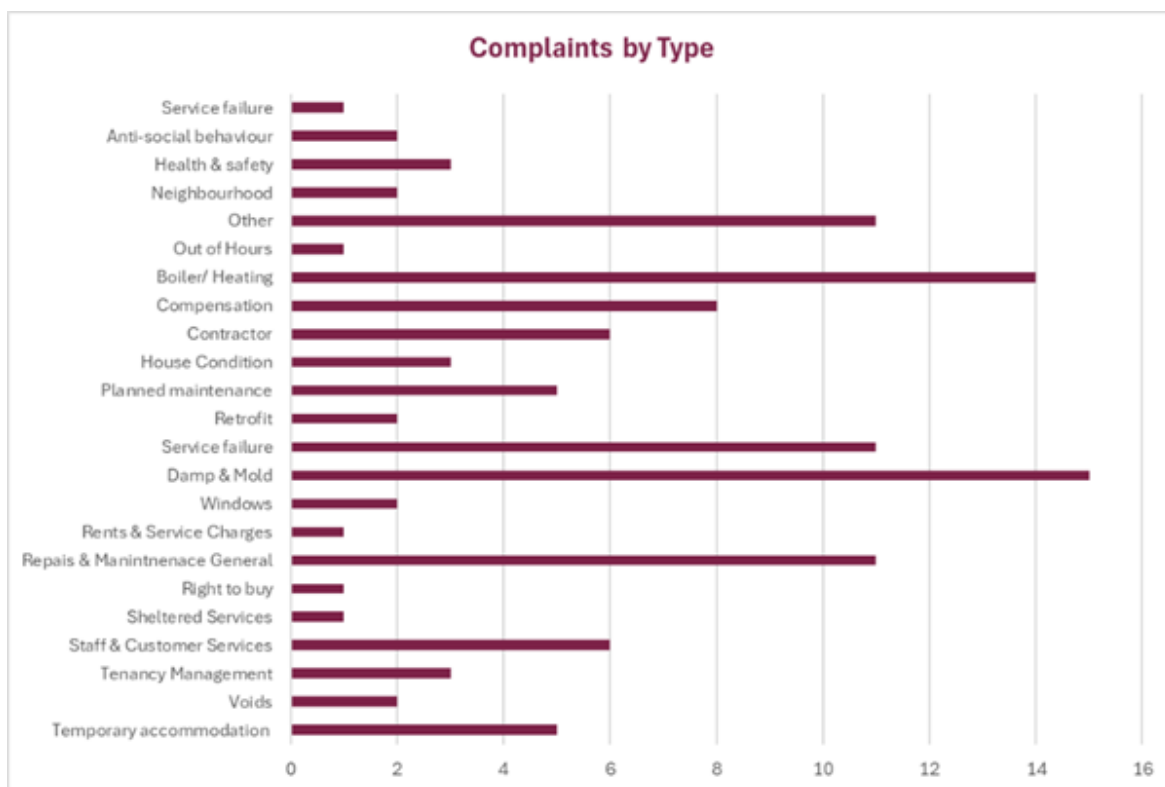
Our second self-assessment against the Complaints Handling Code demonstrates Winchester City Council's (WCC) adherence to the code with no areas of non-compliance. Our commitment to ongoing improvements around complaints handling are set out in our action plan. <https://www.winchester.gov.uk/housing/complaints>

4. Complaints performance

Number of complaints reported in year (TSM's) 2024/25 was 116 for Landlord services only. (excludes housing options, allocations, private sector, shared ownership and garages)

Total complaints received	116	Total number of complaints logged during the year.
Complaints accepted	116	Complaints that met your criteria and were investigated.
Stage 1 complaints	116	Complaints resolved at the first stage of your process.
Stage 1 complaints out of time	22	Complaints not responded to within 10 days
Stage 2 complaints	23	Complaints escalated to the second stage.
Stage 2 complaints out of time	0	Complaints not responded to within 20 days
Complaints upheld	78	Complaints where the resident's concerns were found to be valid.
Complaints not upheld	17	Complaints where no fault was found
Complaints withdrawn	14	Complaints were part valid and part no fault found
Complaints withdrawn	7	Change in Circumstances or administration error
Complaints resolved informally (local Resolution)	4	We have started to track and monitor local resolutions.

Total stock size at the time of TSM's **5139**



5. Learning and Service Improvements

Theme	Feedback	Action/learning
Communication Issues	<p>Delays in responses to complaints or service requests.</p> <p>Residents feeling “kept in the dark” during complaint investigations.</p>	Staff training has reinforced importance of prioritising complaints and keeping tenant informed
Repairs & maintenance	<p>Missed appointments or long delays in completing repairs.</p> <p>Poor workmanship or repeat visits for the same issue.</p> <p>Inconsistent communication between contractors and residents</p>	Complaints are discussed at contract meetings to ensure learning and improvements are made
Staff Attitude and Behaviour	Perceived lack of empathy or dismissiveness.	Staff training has reinforced importance of prioritising complaints and keeping tenants informed

	<p>Inconsistent handling of complaints across teams.</p> <p>Residents feeling unheard or invalidated.</p>	<p>Drive to listening with purpose to understand and recognise individual customer circumstances</p> <p>Complaints sample checks show an improvement in consistency of complaint responses</p> <p>Improved cross team collaborating in responding to complaints has improved</p> <p>Service Managers driving a positive complaints culture amongst teams</p>
Accessibility and Inclusion	Limited awareness of how to make a complaint.	<p>Resident workshops to promote awareness on how to make a complaint and understand barriers for residents</p> <p>Staff training reinforces how to make a complaint</p>

Emerging Trends

Increased Use of Digital Channels

- More complaints submitted via online portals or email.
- Residents expecting faster responses and real-time updates.

Greater Resident Involvement

- Tenants and leaseholders wanting a say in how complaints are handled.
- Rise in co-production initiatives
- Complaints scrutiny group to focus and hold the service to account

Focus on Learning and Accountability

- Residents asking, “what’s changed?” after complaints.
- Demand for transparency in how complaints lead to service improvements.

Complex Complaints

- More multi-issue complaints involving several departments.
- Need for better coordination and case management.

Seasonal trends & demands on complaint types

	Apr – June	July – Sept	Oct – Dec	Jan - March
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Damp & Mould	3	4	6	9
Voids	1	1	0	1
Boiler & heating	4	3	2	6
Service failure	8	4	3	3
Tenancy Management	0	2	3	3
Repairs general	4	2	4	2
Planned maintenance	2	1	2	1

Summary of improvements made

Communication Enhancements

- Created standardised response templates to ensure consistency and clarity in complaint replies.
- Introduced proactive updates to residents during complaint investigations to reduce frustration and uncertainty.
- Translated complaint communication documents into other languages to improve accessibility.

Resident Engagement

- Established complaints focus group to gather feedback and co-design improvements to ensure lived experience informs service delivery.
- Held focus group resident meetings to discuss complaint improvements, trends and service changes.
- Reviewed and simplified the complaints policy to make it more accessible and aligned with the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code.

Staff Training and Culture

- Delivered bespoke complaint handling training to all frontline staff, focusing on empathy and resolution.
- Introduced reflective learning sessions after complex complaints to identify what could be done differently.

Operational Changes

- Improved repairs scheduling system to reduce missed appointments and delays.

6. Housing Ombudsman Services (HOS) findings of non-compliance with this Code by the Ombudsman

Our performance against the HOS code between 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025:

- 11 enquires from the HOS during period 2024/25
- 3 cases still open with the HOS
- 2 responded to within our complaint's procedure
- 5 awarded compensation totalling £4,372.76
- 2 found with no Maladministration
- 1 not within the HOS jurisdiction
- 4 orders made from the HOS – 3 including for complaint handling

The above figures do not correlate with the annual Housing Ombudsman Landlord report as they go on determinations issued during the period of 24/25

Summary of any formal findings of non-compliance

Findings from Housing Ombudsman	Action taken
Management of asbestos	Review of tenant handbook Review voids standards
Handling of mutual exchanges	Review of procedure Review mutual exchange customer experience within a defined period)
Complaint handling	Staff training Regular reports on complaint performance shared with management team Improved communication with customers Tenant engagement activities focusing on complaints

7. Improvement plan

Our key priorities for complaints are set out in the table below.

Action	Date
Develop a more robust approach to learning from complaints. We will do this through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • regular tracking and monitoring of complaint themes and outcomes 	January 2026

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • sharing learning from complaints with our teams, TACT board and complaints focus groups to ensure learning is embedded 	
<p>To work with the complaint, focus group on resident led areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of Complaints Policy • Discussion of selected case studies • Review of response letters to case studies • End of complaints survey questions review • Accessibility session • Review of 2025/26 performance 	Nov - May 2025
To provide more analysis and themes from complaints to our TACT board on a quarterly basis	October 2025
To introduce a complaints communication tracker template for staff to use	March 2026

8. Governance and Oversight

Name of Responsible Member for Complaints: **Cllr Mark Reach**

Date report presented to governing body (MRC): **19th September 2025**

Draft self-assessment shared with TACT board **15th July 2025**

Summary of governing body's response:

Response from Cabinet Member for Housing Cllr Mark Reach (Member Responsible for Complaints)

*I am content with the report and have been briefed on the self-assessment.
The TACT board receive quarterly information on complaints and have been briefed on the self-assessment.*

9. Publication

This report and the governing body's response are published on our website at:

[Housing Complaints & Compliments - Winchester City Council](#)

