

Report by: Hannah Crosbie - HR & Governance Manager

Board Meeting: September 2026

Subject: Annual Complaints Report

Purpose of the report: To update board on complaints for the year ending 31 March 2026.

Decision Needed

The Board is asked to note this report.

Financial Implications

Failure to meet the standards set out in the housing ombudsman code of complaints could lead to legal action, possible compensation, fines, and damage to the reputation of the association.

Risk

Risks include damage to the association's reputation and potential negative impact on current or new partnerships and failure to meet the Consumer Standards

Introduction

This report is designed to inform the Board of the type of issues that have been raised and dealt with under CHA's Complaints, Compliments and Comments policy and procedure.

The report also demonstrates compliance with the Housing Ombudsman code of complaints and self-assessment.

We welcome feedback of all types and complaints; compliments and comments are used to help us shape our services to meet the needs of our tenants and other customers.

Complaints

The Housing Ombudsman defines a complaint as an expression of dissatisfaction, however, made about the standard of service, actions, or lack of action by the association, its staff, or those acting on its behalf, affecting an individual resident, group of residents or stakeholder.

During the reporting period, the Association received a total of 12 formal complaints.

The Regulator's prescribed complaint rate is calculated as:

$(\text{Number of complaints} \div \text{Number of homes owned}) \times 1,000$

Using this methodology: $(12 \div 444 \text{ homes}) \times 1,000 = \mathbf{27 \text{ complaints per 1,000 homes}}$

This represents a relatively low volume of complaints across the housing stock and provides useful insight into service areas where improvements can be made.

Complaint Themes

Repairs and Maintenance

Three complaints related to overdue repairs and missed appointments. All repairs have subsequently been completed and the cases closed.

Contractor Performance

Three complaints concerned contractors failing to attend scheduled appointments. One complaint related to a contractor attending a property without prior notification to the resident. These complaints highlight the need for continued monitoring of contractor performance, communication, and appointment management processes.

Decarbonisation Works

One complaint was received in relation to works carried out as part of the Association's decarbonisation programme. The complaint was ultimately considered at Stage 2 of the complaints process after it was identified that the Association's complaints procedure had not been correctly followed during the initial stages of the complaint.

Following completion of the internal complaints process, the resident referred the matter to the Housing Ombudsman. The Ombudsman's investigation took approximately eight months to conclude and recently resulted in a finding of maladministration, with compensation of £750 awarded to the resident.

The case has provided valuable learning for the Association, highlighting the importance of adhering to the complaints process, maintaining clear communication with residents throughout major works programmes, and ensuring robust oversight of complaint handling. The lessons learned have been incorporated into service improvement actions and will inform future staff training and monitoring arrangements.

Five complaints were received during the year relating to communal services, specifically:

- Window cleaning
- Grounds maintenance
- Gardening services

These complaints indicate that resident expectations and service standards in communal areas should continue to be monitored and reviewed with relevant contractors to ensure services meet required standards.

To better understand tenant satisfaction, a survey was carried out during the year with residents receiving these services. As a result of the feedback received, the Association reviewed its arrangements and appointed new communal service contractors to improve service quality and resident satisfaction.

Going forwards

During 2026/27, we will review our Complaints Policy and procedures to make sure they meet regulatory requirements, follow good practice and continue to work well for residents.

We will also make better use of our housing management and complaints systems to improve how complaints are recorded, monitored and reported. This will help us identify trends, spot recurring issues and take action more quickly to improve services.

These changes will help us to:

- Record complaints more accurately and consistently.
- Provide better reporting to senior managers and our Board.
- Identify common issues and potential risks sooner.
- Track actions taken in response to complaints and lessons learned.
- Strengthen service improvement and organisational learning.
- Increase residents' confidence in our complaints process.

By improving the way we manage complaints, we can take a more proactive approach to resolving issues and use resident feedback to drive positive changes across our services.