



Annual complaints performance
and service improvement report

2024/25

Welcome to our annual Complaints Performance and Service Improvement report for 2024/25.



Thank you to everyone who has contacted the Complaints Team over the last 12 months. When you feel that something has gone wrong, we appreciate the opportunity to investigate, address and resolve the situation, and make sure we learn and improve.

This report aims to provide a comprehensive overview of complaints and compliments received, the outcome of any investigations, and the actions we have taken to resolve the complaints and improve our services to you.

This year we received 743 complaints, a similar number to last year but we have seen an increase in the numbers of complaint escalations to stage two. We will be using customer feedback to focus on how we can continue to improve the quality of our stage one responses during the coming year and to speed up the time it takes to fully resolve the complaints we receive.

90% of stage one complaints were responded to within the Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code timelines and 70% of stage two complaints. We have reviewed our processes to improve our stage two performance and will be closely monitoring our progress in the coming year.

We received ten complaint determinations from the Housing Ombudsman Service. Of these there was maladministration in four cases, service failure in two cases and no maladministration/service failure in three cases. We have reviewed all learnings from these determinations to help us improve our services and complaint handling.



We continue to learn from the complaints we receive and are committed to improving our services based on customer feedback. Details of the services we have changed as a result of your feedback are shown later in the report.

For more information about bpha's complaints process, including how to log a complaint or compliment, please visit www.bpha.org.uk/contact-us/compliments-and-complaints/

Thank you for your continued trust and support.

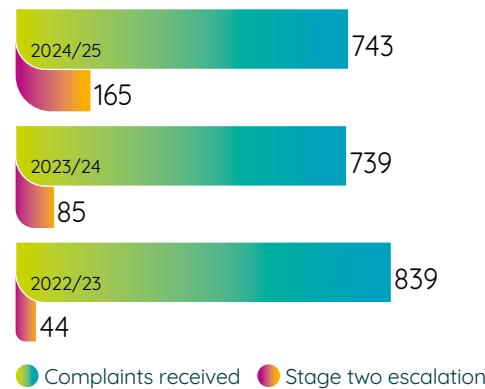
Richard Hill, CEO

Complaints

Complaint volumes

– overview

743 complaints were opened during 2024/25. The comparison for the last three years shows similar numbers in the overall number of complaints opened each year.



The largest change is the continued increase of stage two escalations. A stage two escalation is a request to review the stage one outcome; this might be requested because we haven't fully resolved your concerns or have not been clear enough about the next steps we are taking. There are several factors that have contributed to this which are detailed later in this report.



Complaints not accepted

72 customers raised complaints that were not accepted in 2024/25. The reasons for this include:

- The complaint being anti-social behaviour which is considered separately under our Anti-social Behaviour Policy
- The complaint already being raised
- The customer reporting something that was not a service failure
- The original issue occurred more than 12 months ago

Resolved complaints

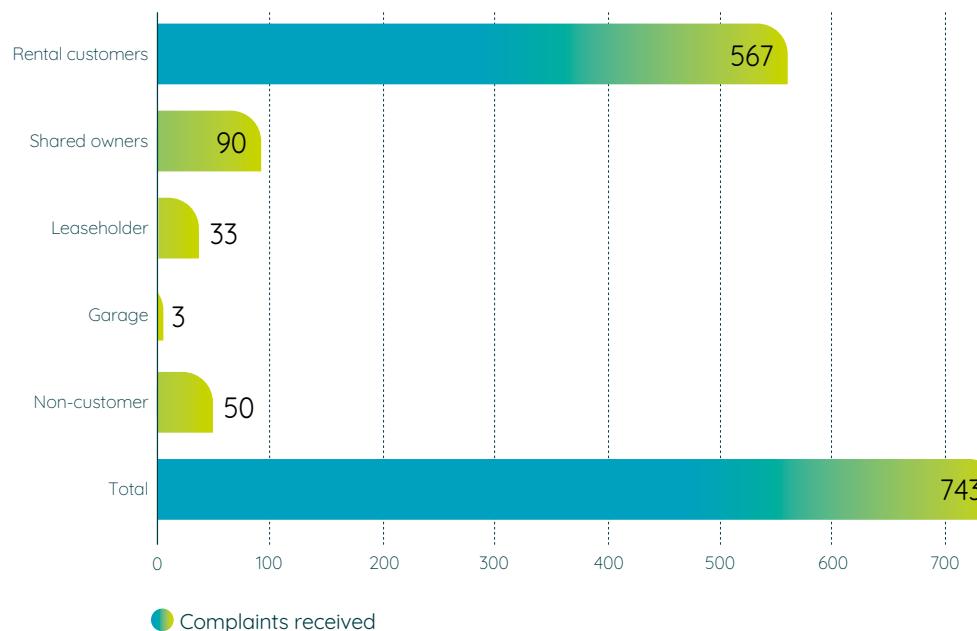
We closed a total of 763 complaints in 2024/25, up 10% compared to 2023/24:

Outcome	2023/24	2024/25	Comparison
Upheld	548	79%	552
Partly upheld	85	12%	95
Not upheld	59	9%	113
Withdrawn by the customers	2		3

The main reasons for complaints being either upheld or partially upheld were due to:

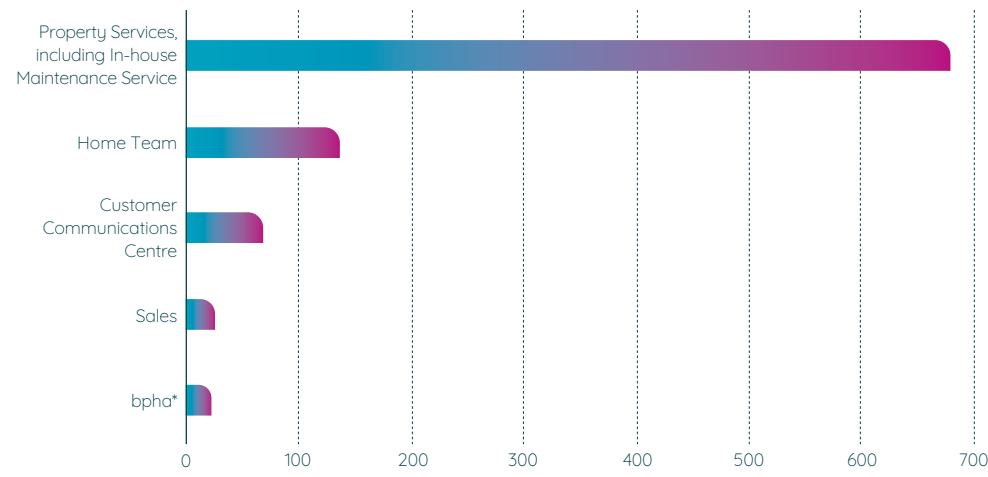
- Repairs taking too long to complete
- Quality of repair work
- Non-attendance of scheduled appointments – both bpha's In-house Maintenance Service and bpha contractors
- Insufficient time booked for repair works
- Cancellation and rebooking of appointments
- Grounds maintenance not being carried out.

Complaints by tenure type received in 2024/25



Complaints per department

Top five complaint categories* per department – 2024/25



● Complaints per department year

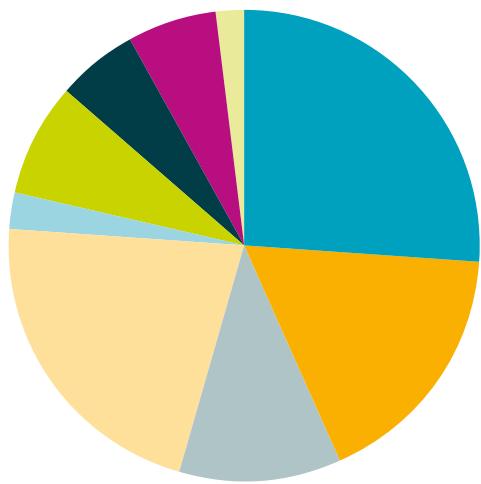
*The category 'bpho' refers to something that is not specifically linked to one area of the organisation



Each complaint is logged against one or more categories, depending on the reason for the complaint. For example, a complaint could be about an Adviser not listening but also about the standard of service – that's one complaint but two categories. From the 743 complaints, there were 979 categories noted – this means some complaints have had more than one service failure noted within them.

The highest number of categories were about property services-related issues with 679 logged (70%) compared with 633 for 2023/24. We have expanded our In-House Maintenance Service (IHMS), so the number of visits and customer interactions carried out by the team and our contractors is significantly higher than the other services we offer, with over 53,000 carried out last year. The Home Team (which includes the Housing Officers, and the Allocations and Lettings and Money Advice teams), were next with 136 (12%) compared with 108 for 2023/24.

Complaint subjects



Poor standard of work continues to be the main reason for complaints to be received, followed by failing to communicate and slow service.



Housing Ombudsman compliance

Over 90% of our stage one complaints have been handled in line with the Housing Ombudsman Code.

Over 70% of our stage two reviews have been handled in line with the Housing Ombudsman Code.



Escalation of complaints

137 stage one complaints were escalated to stage two. In addition to this, a further 28 complaints that were opened in 2023/24 but were not closed until 2024/25 were also escalated to stage two, giving a total of 165 escalations. This compared to 85 for the same period in 2023/24.

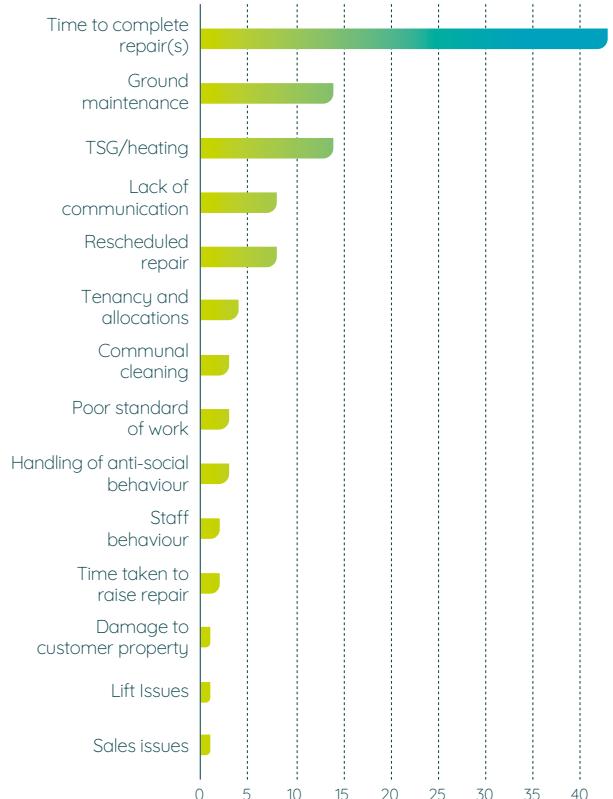
The main reasons for complaint escalations are:

- Works not actioned: several instances where promised work was not completed, including roofing, shower replacements, and general maintenance
- Communication issues: lack of communication and follow-up from contractors and service teams, leading to frustration and repeated complaints

Outcome	2023/24	2024/25	Comparison
Upheld	48	67%	107
Partly upheld	12	17%	28
Not upheld	11	15%	26
Withdrawn by customers	1	0	

Upheld stage two complaint themes

Stage two complaints – upheld themes



The notable areas where complaints were escalated included:

- Time taken to complete repairs: 43
- Grounds maintenance: 14
- TSG (heating contractor) / heating: 14
- Lack of communication: 8

Housing Ombudsman Performance



Compliments

We review compliments to learn from them too. Colleagues across bpha have received 261 compliments during the year, with 289 colleagues mentioned by name. As in the previous 12 months, the main compliments were about how helpful and professional colleagues are, and the good standard of work. How supportive colleagues are is also regularly mentioned.

The Home Team received the most compliments this year – this team includes Housing Officers, Money Advisers, Allocations and Lettings Officers and Community Engagement Officers. This was followed by the In-House Maintenance Service, which includes Operatives, Surveyors and Repairs Schedulers.

You can find our 2023/24 Housing Ombudsman performance report [here](#). This document compares our performance against the Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code to last year's and also to the social housing sector overall. Our updated report for 2024/25 will be available via the same link above once it is published by the Housing Ombudsman.

Housing Ombudsman cases

We have received 35 formal communications from the Housing Ombudsman Service (HOS) during 2024/25 requiring some sort of action, out of these:

5	General enquiries
5	Requests for action (four to raise a stage one complaint and one to raise a stage two complaint)
3	First notices for action (all to raise a stage one complaint)
1	Second notice for action (to raise a stage two complaint)
17	Information / evidence requests

Of the information/evidence requests submitted to the HOS, we are waiting for 14 determination outcomes as at the time of writing this report.

During 2024/25 we have received determination outcomes from the HOS on ten complaints, as follows (some complaints had more than one ruling):

Severe maladministration	0
Maladministration	8
Service failure	11
No maladministration	6

Complaint one (originally made in 2024)

Responsibility of repair	No maladministration
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Complaint two (originally made in 2022)

Handling of reports of damp & mould	Service failure
Handling of associated complaint	Service failure

Complaint three (originally made in 2022)

Handling of concerns regarding communal cleaning and repairs	Maladministration
Handling of associated complaint	Maladministration
Handling of concerns regarding sound insulation	Service failure

Complaint four (originally made in 2023)

Handling of concerns regarding condition of property when it was let and the landlord's management of subsequent repairs	Service failure
Handling of complaint about conduct of a staff member	Service failure

Complaint five and six (originally made in 2023)

One customer made two complaints, the HOS carried out one investigation.

Handling of the succession application	Service failure
Handling of the management transfer	No maladministration

Complaint seven (originally made in 2022)

Handling of request to purchase property under Right to Buy scheme	No maladministration
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Complaint eight (originally made in 2022)

Landlord's decision not to refund credit	No maladministration
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Complaint nine (originally made in 2023)

Landlord's response to application to succeed	Maladministration
Landlord's complaint handling	Maladministration
Request for increased compensation	Service failure

Complaint ten (originally made in 2023)

Handling of reports of damp and mould	Maladministration
Landlord's complaint handling	Maladministration
Landlord's record keeping	Maladministration
Landlord's consideration of vulnerabilities	Maladministration
Handling of reported repairs	Maladministration
Handling of reports of staff bias, discrimination, communication restrictions contacting landlord	Service failure
Handling of concerns regarding communal cleaning	Service failure
Handling of concerns regarding noise nuisance	No maladministration
Handling of resident's reports of missed appointments	No maladministration

Of the determinations, the following orders were received:

- A total of £4,288.50 in compensation was awarded across seven of the cases
- Five apology letters from Senior Management were written and sent to customers
- Four case reviews were required with outcomes sent to both the customer and Ombudsman. Each case review looked at the Ombudsman findings, considered changes that had already been put in place, and any further learnings and improvements that we will make as a result of the determination and the review
- All colleagues involved in complaints at all stages were required to attend HOS complaint handling training – this was completed
- One repairs action plan required.

All Ombudsman determinations are reviewed for learning by at least one Head of Service; The determinations are shared with the bpha Executive Team, and Board Committee who consider the actions that have been taken, and seek assurance that bpha has learnt from the determination and implemented improvements in services to avoid a recurrence in the future.

During 2024/25 we also received a reviewed determination update following a customer challenging the original outcome with the Ombudsman for a complaint raised in February 2022. We received the outcome of the Ombudsman's review in which it upheld their original determination:

Complaint handling	Maladministration
Handling of resident's reports of noise nuisance	Service failure

We were ordered to pay compensation, including reasonable legal costs on receipt of evidence, and recommended to assess our handling of noise complaints. This was carried out by a group of Heads of Service and other colleagues involved in the case. This has formed part of our wider ASB review.



Complaints satisfaction

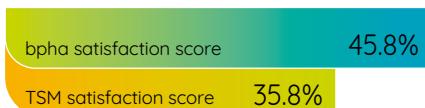
We collect customer satisfaction in two ways - a follow on survey after we close each complaint, called a transactional survey, and through the Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs) annual survey which is known as a perception survey.

Stage one complaints feedback

Shortly after a stage one complaint is closed the customer receives a satisfaction survey.

This graph shows the results of satisfaction surveys gathered during 2024/25.

Although we recognise there is room for improvement, we are pleased our complaint follow-up surveys show higher satisfaction than the TSMs, however, we would like to increase both of these further.



Most of the comments in our complaints follow-up survey refer back to the original reason for the complaint, rather than the complaint handling.

Our TSM scores are lower than we would want to see. We are working to ensure that customers know how to raise a complaint with us and the service they can expect when they do.



We have also added a question into the TSMs survey to find out more information from customers about their answers.

Resolve is a panel of customers who scrutinise complaints to make sure we're dealing with complaints fairly. In 2025/26 we will be working with Resolve to contact dissatisfied customers to understand more about why they are still not satisfied. They will be contacting customers who have completed the transactional survey, and those that have responded to the TSM survey.

Tenant Satisfaction Measures data for complaints

Customers who took part in TSM surveys were asked, 'How satisfied are you with bpha's approach to complaints handling?'



You can find out more information about what the TSMs are and how we scored [here](#).



Learning from complaints

Each complaint has at least one learning or root cause. Once established, these are discussed with the different areas of the organisation to make improvement plans. We link these with other feedback, such as through the TSM comments, complaint follow-up surveys, and general customer engagement, to help us deliver the changes to the service that you want to see.

Examples of learnings from complaints from 2024/25 and the actions taken include:

Asbestos

A customer raised a complaint about a leak that was caused by a delayed repair. While investigating the complaint, the Complaint Resolution Officer identified failings in the information shared with the customer, around possible asbestos in their home. Although information was shared with the customer the information could have been clearer and set out what to do if an area containing asbestos is damaged. As a result, we ran a feature in *Talk*, bpha's customer magazine, in June 2025. We have updated the website and colleague information and made information clearer for customers who move into a home that has asbestos identified. The information covers what asbestos is, what the risks are, how we inform customers if their home contains any asbestos, and how to get in touch with any concerns.

TSG

TSG is a bpha contractor that provides repairs to gas, solid fuel and oil heating and hot water systems, as well as renewable energy heating systems such as air and ground source heat pumps.

Last year we reported reductions in the number of TSG complaints – we are pleased to report a further reduction this year too. This year we raised 64 complaints compared to 89 last year.

TSG continued to focus on customers' gas and heating servicing over the summer to free up resource over the winter when more breakdowns are reported.

Empathy

Since we started to deliver empathy training for all bpha colleagues in 2023, we have seen a decrease of around 52% in complaints that relate to lack of empathy. To ensure we can deliver training to our growing number of colleagues, we have increased the number of colleague trainers from six to 12.



Anti-social behaviour (ASB)

A number of complaints have been around the handling of ASB and the final decisions that have been made. A review of these shows that the correct decision has been made in line with policy, however, we are making sure customers get as much information as early as possible by improving our triage and the information available through the website and my.account portal. The triage will help us understand what is happening and give other resources to customers as early as possible. We have also introduced regular articles in *Talk* magazine to give more information about different types of ASB and how to report them. We have some new tools to help customers who are experiencing ASB, such as a new mediation service.

New way to repair roofs

Our new roofing contractor, A2B Rapid Response Maintenance Ltd, uses a cherry picker where possible, rather than scaffolding. Customers were dissatisfied with the time taken to arrange scaffolding and the impact it had on them. Removing time needed to erect scaffolding has resulted in a reduction in waiting times for roof repairs. It also means customers are less affected by the impact of scaffolding against their homes.

Responsive repairs or larger jobs

Response time for repairs has been a common theme in complaints about repairs. Larger maintenance jobs were directly affecting the amount of time customers had to wait for a repair. A new team has been introduced to take on the larger maintenance jobs where there might be a need for multiple trades, or multiple visits. This has freed up time for the responsive operatives.

Repairs that require new parts

We were receiving complaints of repairs being moved at the last minute due to parts not being in stock. Our Scheduling Team now checks if a repair job has parts on order and ensures that the appointment is booked at least three days after the new part is due in stock. Three days before the scheduled appointment the team also checks that the part has arrived. If it hasn't arrived, the repair appointment is moved and we agree a new time with the customer, giving them as much notice as possible. In November 2023 we saw a total of 15 complaints about this, but when measured again, in March 2025, we only saw two complaints relating to visits being moved due to parts not being in stock.

Communal cleaning

Customers were raising complaints about the quality of the cleaning in some communal areas. This has now been addressed and all areas will now be covered by either a caretaker or our contractor, Town and Country. Other places may be cleaned by the management company on site. The cleaning contract is monitored by the Estate Services Team, and the Housing Officers when they visit. We have also resolved issues some cleaners experienced getting into blocks, that meant they were having to disturb residents for access or not completing the cleaning. We will also be re-establishing our Resident Inspectors in 2025/26, who will be able to complete extra checks for us and feedback their views on the standard of communal cleaning – they will also be checking grounds maintenance.

Grounds Maintenance

We know that standards were not always being met when Just Ask took over the grounds maintenance contract. We have been working closely with them to improve the services customers receive. New maps are being drawn up for Just Ask to follow, based on feedback from both customers and Just Ask that some areas requiring grounds maintenance were not clear, resulting in areas being missed, or other areas being managed that were not within the contract. The Estate Services Team has also appointed a fixed term Estate Contract Manager to work with Just Ask, based on complaints and other feedback, to resolve issues.

Raising defects for new build properties

Our Aftercare and Defects Team were receiving complaints about how defects were being managed, so they ran a survey to get more information from customers who moved into new build homes. They have recruited more staff to help with work demand to avoid slow responses and correspondence being missed. We have made improvements to the home user guide that customers receive to make it clearer and easier to follow. We are also working closely with developers to make sure defects are addressed in a more efficient manner.



Failing to communicate

Communication can go wrong in many ways, we might not communicate, communicate late, communicate with incorrect or not enough information. This continues to be an area of focus as we want to get better.

Some of the things this year we have done to try to improve communication are;

- Our new website went live in August 2024 meaning customers can see call wait times and email response timescales.
- Implemented a communication calendar, this means we can see what communication is going out to more than one person at any point in time and make sure we don't overload you.
- We are making a change to the repairs SMS messages you receive to try to include more details making it clearer for you.
- We complete quality assurance checks to make sure we are communicating better around case work.
- If you are a shared owner, you will have been invited to some listening sessions to tell us how you feel about the services we provide
- We are breaking down the category of 'failing to communicate' to help us really understand what is going wrong.

More strategic service improvements

We have recently published our new Customer Strategy; this targets key areas you have told us we need to improve. We are focusing on improving the 'my.account' customer portal to make it easier to use, to include more information and to be able to complete more transactions, and continuing to develop the self-appointing repairs function. We want to give you a choice in how you communicate with us and by increasing activity on the portal we should also see a reduction in calls into the Customer Communications Centre meaning we can spend more time focusing on those customers that really need to speak with us. The strategy also includes service improvement plans around the Customer Communications Centre and repairs service to reduce call waiting times, and repairs times.



What the bpha Board says about this

The Board discussed the 2024/25 annual complaints report focusing on performance throughout the year, trends when compared to previous years and compliance with the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code.

The Board pledged its ongoing commitment to ensuring a clear focus on performance against the Complaint Handling Code, the importance of learning from any Housing Ombudsman determinations received and ensuring that service improvements implemented in response to complaints are properly embedded and improve services to customers.

Rachel Barber was welcomed as a new Board Member in early 2025 and took on the role of Member Responsible for Complaints in April 2025.

The Complaints Policy was reviewed by the Board and some small amendments were approved to reflect current good practice. The Policy is available on the bpha website Policy page and on a dedicated page: www.bpha.org.uk/contact-us/complaints/

The Board considered the following key points:

- The Board was pleased to note that complaint numbers were broadly similar to last year at a time when complaints generally in housing associations have increased

- The Board were concerned that complaint escalations to Stage two had increased indicating that some complaints were not adequately resolved at the first stage. This will be a clear focus for the coming year with deep dives to better understand how we can resolve more issues at the first point of contact

- Although it was positive that over 90% of Stage one complaints were handled in line with the Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code, clear improvements are required for Stage two complaints, where only 70% were handled on time. The Board will be monitoring this closely over the coming year

- The highest number of complaints are about repairs, including the time that repairs take. The Board was pleased to note that a new Repairs Policy is now in place, an updated service improvement plan has been agreed for 2025/26 and additional operative posts for our In-House Maintenance Service are being recruited. We will continue to monitor the progress of these improvements

- The Board remains committed to ongoing service improvement supported by the recently agreed Customer Strategy 2025/29

- All determinations from the Housing Ombudsman will be considered by the Board to ensure learnings are taken account of and that any changes we make to services see improved outcomes for customers

- Although tenant satisfaction with complaint handling at 40.7% is line with others in the housing sector, it is lower than we would like to see and will be a focus for the coming year
- The Board would like to thank the Customer led Service Improvement Panel for their work on various service reviews, which has helped us improve what we do, and the commitment they have made in developing their work plan for the coming year.

Chairs statement

Having joined the Board as Chair in September 2024, I am keen to ensure that our work on complaints remains a priority for the Board in the coming year, with an ongoing emphasis on delivering better services, improving our approach to complaint handling to meet the Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code timescales at Stage two and implementing improvements when things go wrong. I would like to thank the team for their effort, commitment and ongoing work to deliver the requirements of the Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code.

Jeff Halliwell

Jeff Halliwell, Board Chair.



Find out more



If you would like any further information about bphd's complaints process, learnings and actions or the Housing Ombudsman, please visit www.bphd.org.uk/contact-us/complaints.

If you need this information in another language or an easy read format, please contact us.



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