

Annual Complaints Performance and Service Improvement Report 2024-2025

Introduction

Complaints handling and getting the right outcome for our tenants directly aligns to Our Plan strategic goal of providing Quality Tenant Experience.

This report covers our complaints handling performance from April 2024 to March 2025. It provides information in line with the annual performance reporting requirements of the Housing Ombudsman Complaints Handling Code. Included in this report is:

- The statement about complaints performance from the Board Member Responsible for Complaints
- Service improvements made because of the learning from complaints.
- Complaints performance, including the numbers of complaints received and resolved, and the response times

Our statement about performance from the Board Member Responsible for Complaints

We're committed to providing the best possible services to our tenants. Sometimes things go wrong and it's important we put things right as quickly as possible. We are committed to improve both how we handle complaints and services that matter to tenants such as repairs. We've made these a top priority in Our Plan in our Quality Tenant Experience goal and have made some positive changes over the last year and want to see these continue. We're listening to feedback and involving tenants, to help us improve and deliver better services.

Our self-assessment of compliance with the Housing Ombudsman Complaints Handling Code evidences our compliance with the Code and has been scrutinised by our Board and Tenants Working Together committee, which is made up of tenants and Board members, bringing a range of perspectives to influence improvements to complaints handling. Over the past year the committee has reviewed and challenged performance to help drive better tenant experiences. Further improvements have been identified, these are highlighted in the report, and we have plans in place to deliver these.

On behalf of the Board I confirm our approval of this report, and the improvement plans in place to learn from complaints and deliver improved outcomes for our tenants.

Anne Rowlands, Board Member 2025

Service improvements made from the learning outcomes from complaints.

From analysis of the root cause of the complaints received in the past year, there are some key learning points and actions identified. Those in bold are actions that have now been completed that we set out to achieve in April 2024.

Actions and Improvements that have been completed following complaints received:

- **Deliver CRM training to all colleagues covering tasking process, logging contacts and collecting tenant data – helping to improve internal communication.**
- **Complaint training has been delivered to all GLH colleagues, giving more detailed training to those who are complaints officers to handle a complaint.**
- **Drafted quality check process – currently in pilot stage with the Tenant Experience Team.**
- Defined a process to ensure all new starters receive complaints training in their induction period.
- Designed contractor communication guidelines in readiness for any new procurement contractors – aiming to improve communication and the overall experience with contractors for our tenants.
- Tenant Experience Team provided additional support to the finance team to assist with back logs, reducing the risk of finance complaints.
- Review properties to understand the position of estate management services – following a spike in these complaints.
- Managers received training to improve coaching skills, in readiness for embedding a performance management culture.
- Tenant Experience are making proactive calls to properties to understand satisfaction around estate management services. Housing Managers are proactively taking action to resolve any issues to reduce complaints.
- Reviewed Decant Policy to improve experience for colleagues and tenants.

In addition to the above, we have completed the work below to strengthen assurance against the criteria of the Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code which will support an improved complaints process:

- Designed an Unreasonable Behaviour Policy
- Updated the Complaint Policy
- Reviewed complaint letter templates
- Made changes to the website to make the “how to make a complaint” button more accessible for tenants.
- Delivered training on warning and vulnerability messages, meaning we are capturing data on protected characteristics that we can act on to enable our service to be tailored. This also reduces any risks for colleagues, tenants and support.
- Complaints performance is now reported using a planned approach to Board, Housing and Property Committee, Board and Tenants Working Together, Executive, Leaders and other colleagues.
- Complaints performance is now reported in an accessible format on our website for tenants.

- A robust continuous improvement process is now in place to capture complaints learnings and drive actions.

Further actions identified that Golden Lane Housing will deliver in 2025/26:

This year, The Head of Tenant Experience will track complaint actions using *Smartsheet*, a project and work management platform. This has been successful for Golden Lane Housing when managing other Regulatory action plans. This will enable other colleagues to have full visibility, understand accountability, deadline dates and progress.

- Reviewing data on repeat repair visits to work proactively, aiming to take action to avoid a complaint.
- Design a process review to ensure work is owned and acted on when colleagues are away from work.
- Define the tenant communication process for all service areas, ensuring we deliver proactive, planned and tailored communication for our tenants.
- Evidence that CRM training has now been embedded across all service areas to improve tenant data, internal and external communication and case contact records.
- Define service request process in all teams, to log, manage and review – we have identified that 95% of complaints arise from service requests. Using data, focusing resource on service requests and aiming for a more proactive case management approach with service requests will reduce complaints.
- Embed quality checks across all teams to monitor quality of service we are delivering on service requests and complaints. Creating a performance management culture which includes coaching, colleague feedback, development and improves services.
- Complete a thorough audit of accounts in arrears, communicating payment next steps with tenants (or their deputy/appointee), liaising with HB.
- Select a sample of stage 1 complaints and all stage 2 complaints to review the end-to-end customer journey, identifying opportunities for improvement and learning.
- Review age of case for repairs service requests, this should result in proactive actions to avoid complaints and provide plans for issues that we are already aware of.

The Head of Tenant Experience has undertaken a review to also ensure:

- The Complaints Policy and approach is compliant with the Regulatory Consumer Standards
- Compliance with the Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code
- Complaints data and Key Performance Indicators are reported to Board, tenants and to Executive and colleagues.

Complaints Performance 2024/25

The data and reporting for complaints for the year ending 31st March 2025 is set out below. There have been no complaints referred to the Housing Ombudsman in 2024/2025.

We received 123 Stage 1 Complaints for 2024/2025

We received 63 Stage 1 Complaints in the same period last year, this is an increase of 60

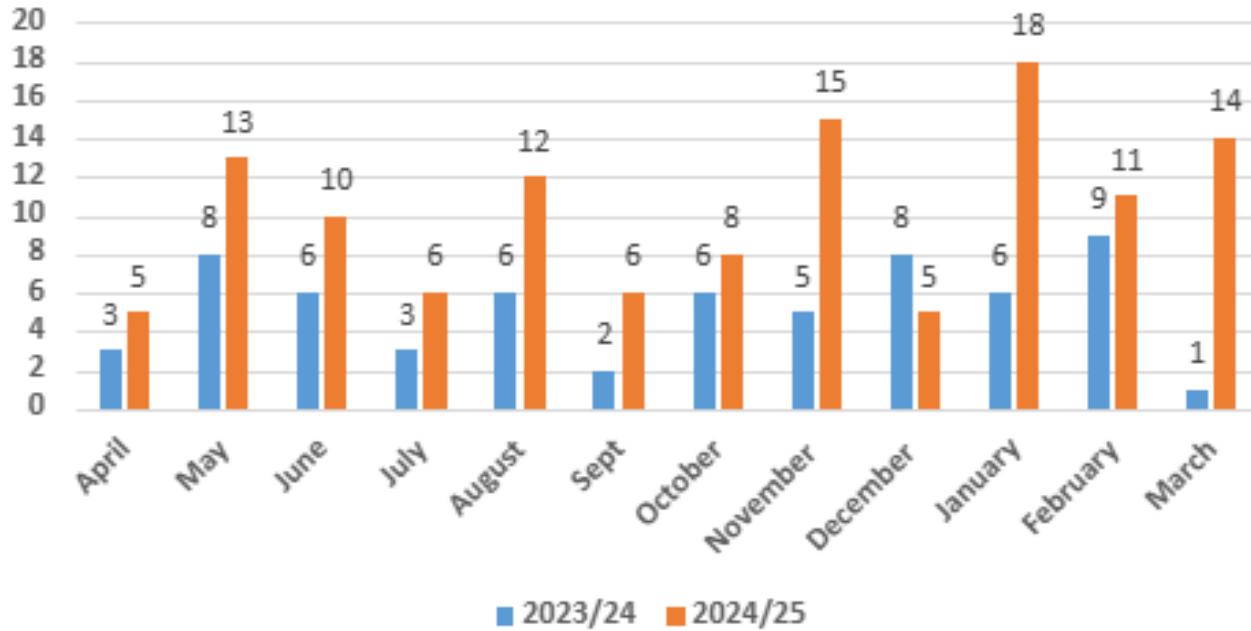
We received 7 Stage 2 Complaints for 2024/2025

We received 2 Stage 2 Complaints in the same period last year, this is an increase of 5

The increase supports evidence that we are compliant with the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code Self-Assessment, ensuring we are identifying a complaint accurately and are embedding a positive complaints culture across Golden Lane Housing.

On average we have received 10 complaints per month this year. Trends have not been apparent when looking at volume of complaints by month, we will continue to track this across 2025/2026.

Complaints Per Month



Breakdown of All Complaints:

Out of 123 Stage 1 Complaints:

- 8 Complaints remained live at year end and were still within the time frame to respond (10 working days) – this includes 2 complaints that have been extended with the customer's agreements, these were extended to allow for works/further investigation.
- 115 Complaints have been **CLOSED**, of these:
 - 110 Complaints were responded to within the response timeframe (10 working days)
 - 2 complaints were **Acknowledged** late (378 & 457)
 - 31 Complaints were extended by agreement to allow for works/further investigation
 - 5 Complaints were responded to late without the extension:
 - 402 – Finance – 2 Working days Late (Complaint from Oct 24)
 - 435 – Property Services – 4 Working Days Late (Complaint from Jan 25)
 - 444 – Property Services – 5 Working Days Late (Complaint from Feb 25)

445 - Property Services – 6 Working Days Late (Complaint from Feb 25)
451 - Property Services – 2 Working Days Late (Complaint from Feb 25)

Out of 7 Stage 2 Complaints:

- All Stage 2 complaints were acknowledged within the time frame
- All Stage 2 complaints were responded to within the time frame

Breakdown of all Not Upheld Complaints:

- Out of 123 complaints 7 Complaints were **NOT UPHELD**. In 2024/2025 6 complaints were not upheld. The breakdown of not upheld complaints for 2024/2025 is:

- 05/04/2024 - 346 – Complaint from JW, Hampshire – Responded to by our Quality and Assurance Manager.**

Complaint regarding Door entry system/Gates not working, after investigation we identified that the responsibility does not lie with GLH, we signposted for support.

- 23/05/2024 - 360 - Complaint from Mrs M, – Responded to by our Regional Housing Manager.**

Daughter, E and son A had been experiencing problems with another tenant (R) at Slade Lane. This has stemmed from a relations hip breakdown between E and R since Autumn last year. Ongoing concerns within the property re the breakdown and delays ahead of a move have escalated.

- 17/07/2024 - 374 – Complaint from LW, Kent – Responded to by our Quality and Assurance Manager.**

Complaint linked to poor repair service and breach of tenancy. GLH could evidence that we met all of repairs standards and we're not in breach of tenancy.

- 02/08/2024 - 379 – LM-R, Kent – Responded to by our Quality and Assurance Manager.**

Complaint linked to faulty hoist, hoist maintenance is not the responsibility of GLH, we signposted for support.

- 09/09/2024 - 392 – YE, Shropshire – Responded to by our Quality and Assurance Manager.**

Complainant unhappy with the non urgent repair diagnosis. Issue with one light in the bathroom, other bathrooms were available to use and all other lights in the property were working. GLH correctly diagnosed as non urgent and met our repair timescales .

- **23/09/2024 - 395 - LF, Basingstoke - Responded to by our Regional Housing Manager.**

Tenant (LL) is at risk from harm due to verbal and physical abuse from another service user in the property, the risk is increasing daily. The request was dealt with using safeguarding procedure and resolved, not logged as a formal complaint.

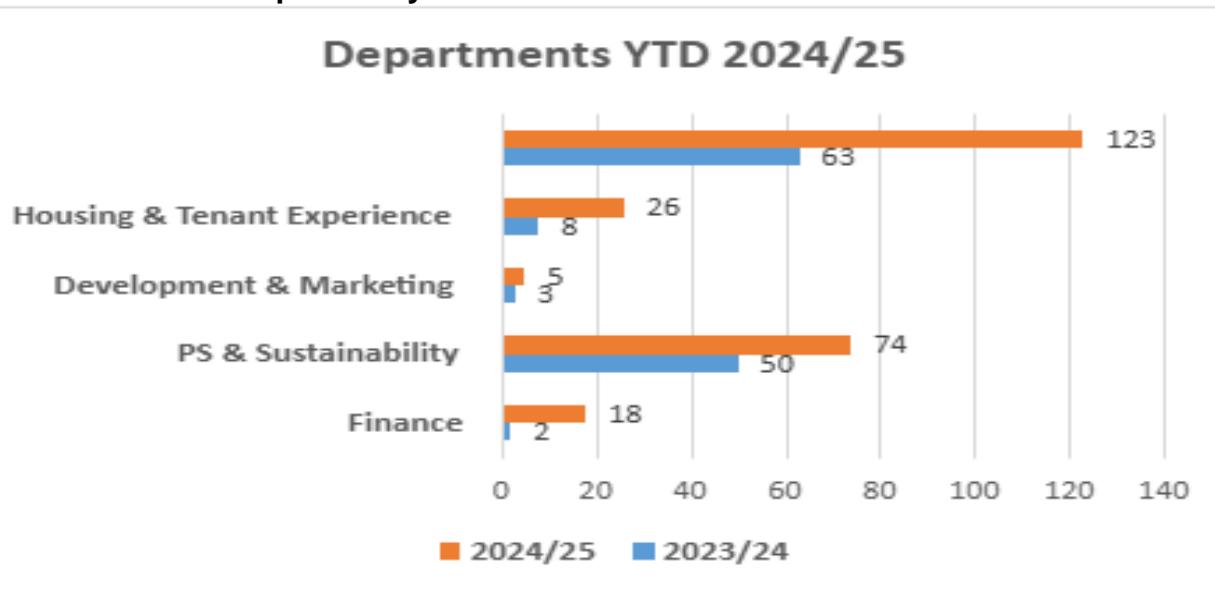
- **08/10/2024 - 397 - SB, Grimsby - Responded to by our Property Service Centre Manager.**

Complaint regarding Gates not working, after investigation we identified that the responsibility does not lie with GLH, we signposted for support.

Complaint Themes and Accountability

The volume of complaints by directorate in 2024/2025 shown below:

Departments YTD 2024/25



Directorate	Stage 1	% of stage 1 total	Stage 2	% of complaints escalated to stage 2	Stage 1 % 2024/2025
Property & Sustainability	74	60%	3	4%	79%
Housing and Tenant Experience	26	21%	0	n/a	13%
Finance	18	15%	4	22%	3%
Development & Marketing	5	4%	0	n/a	4%
YTD 2024-2025	123		7		

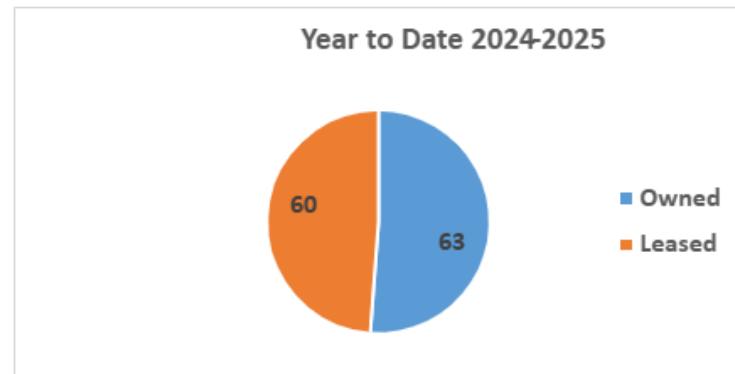
We should note the reduction in Property and Sustainability complaints as a % of the overall total, 60% compared to 79% last year. Indicating a focus on additional resources and changes in team structure, quality of work and planned repairs communication has made a difference. This focus should continue as themes of complaints we receive still follow a similar pattern (more information below)

A slight increase in Housing and Tenant Experience complaints, largely caused by resource challenges in the South where throughout the year the service has run with several vacancies with support from agency staff. This is supported below by data explaining the region split of complaints.

There has been a noticeable increase for Finance Directorate complaints overall this year, explained by resource and process challenges within this directorate. With a plan and resource now in place, we aim to see a focus on the complaint learnings we have captured to improve tenant satisfaction and reduce complaints in this area.

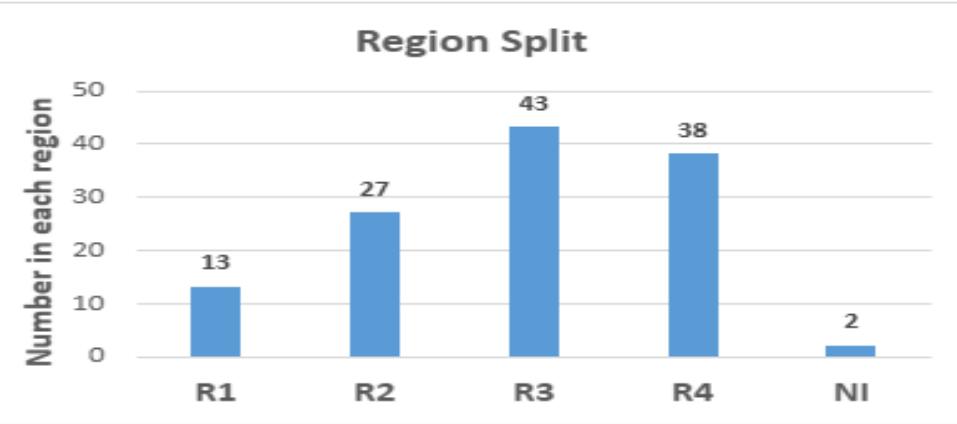
Volume of complaints remains the same in Development and we have introduced a new method of testing tenant satisfaction in this area to understanding our performance and any improvement areas at service request stage.

Owned and Leased Properties



Owned: 63 - 51% of complaints. (compared to 60% last year)
Leased: 60 - 49% of complaints (compared to 40% last year)

A recommendation following this report is to review a sample of owned and leased stage 1 complaints, understanding if there are any opportunities to prevent more complaints for owned properties.

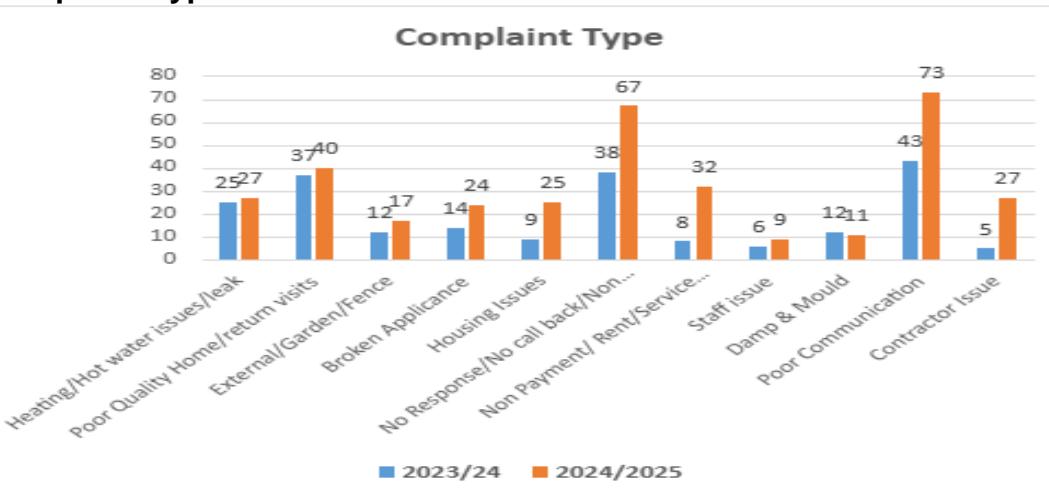


% of complaints in each area:

R1 North England, Northwest	11%
R2 Yorkshire and Midlands	22%
R3 London and South East	35%
R4 South West	31%
Northern Ireland	1%

Our operational teams work in patches, this data will be used and reviewed in more detail to understand the improvement areas required by region. Team communications will be completed to give awareness and set individual objectives to deliver an improved level of service.

Complaint Type Information 2024/2025



Complaint Type	YTD 2023/24	YTD 2024/2025
Heating/Hot water issues/leak	25	27
Poor Quality Home, Return Visit for repair	37	40
External/Garden/Fence	12	17
Broken Appliance/Item in home	14	24
Housing related Issues	9	25
No call back/Non-attendance	38	67
Payment Issues/ Service Charge issues/Rent Issue	8	32
Staff issue	6	9
Damp & Mould	12	11
Poor/Incorrect Communication	42	73
Contractor issue	5	27

Our Top 3 complaint types for 2024/2025 are:

1. Poor Incorrect Communication x 73
2. No Call Back x 67
3. Poor Quality Home x 40

Our priority area that we need to focus on improving, following themes and learnings captured is “communication” This covers a range of areas both internally and externally. For example:

- Proactive communication to tenants across all services.
- Keeping communication promises.
- Communicating using our tenant’s preference
- Using data we hold to communicate with the correct person
- Explaining ahead of our commitment if we are unable to keep our promise
- Keeping accurate records when contact is made on our Active H system
- Having a robust process in place for communication with contractors.

Poor Quality is one of our top three themes, although volumes are similar to last year (40 compared to 37 last year)

We have made restructure changes and have increased colleague and financial resource to support improvements in this area. Tenant involvement work across the whole of the Property Services directorate will also support increased satisfaction.

Not in the top three, but we should note considerable increases to complaints regarding service/payment issues, and contractor issues. Both areas have a plan in place to support positive change.

A colleague communication linked to all complaint themes will be provided for awareness, knowledge and to support team meeting conversations and goal setting for 2025/2026.