

APPENDIX A

Housing Annual Complaints Performance Report 2024/25

This report covers our complaints handling performance from April 2024 to March 2025, in compliance with the Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code

The Complaints Process

There are 3 stages to the complaints process:

Stage 1 – is the first step to make a complaint. At stage 1 a manager will review, investigate, and respond to the complaint. We aim to reply within 10 working days.

Stage 2 – Where the complainant is not happy with the outcome at stage 1, the complaint can be looked at again by the Head of Housing or other nominated person. We aim to reply within 20 working days.

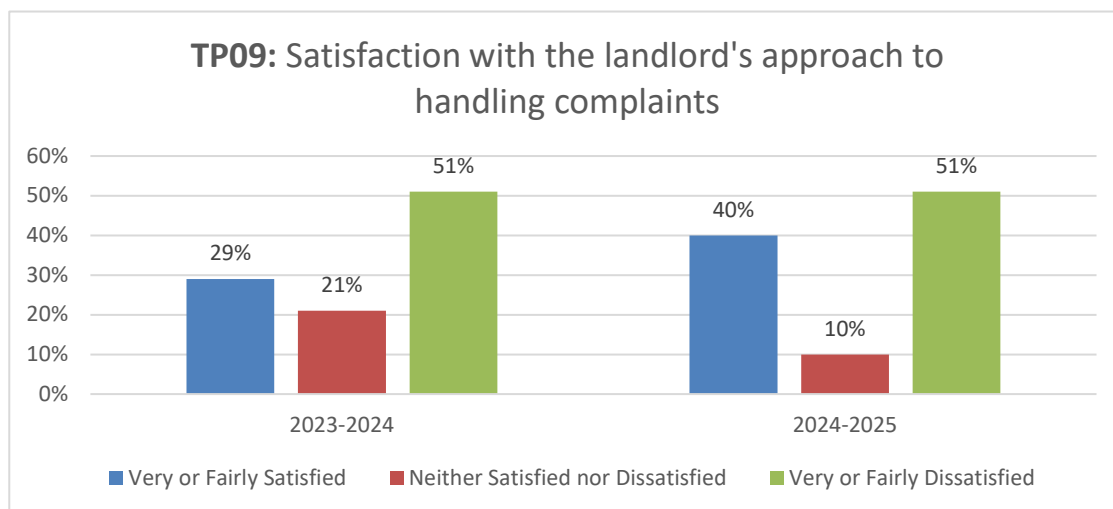
Stage 3 – Where the complainant is still not happy with the outcome, the complaint can be referred to the Housing Ombudsman

Complaint handling performance

The Regulator of Social Housing requires Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSM) to be published. Three of these measures relate to Landlord related complaints and complaint handling performance. The Housing Ombudsman's complaint handling code sets out that these three measures should be included within this annual report, as well as reported to the Regulator of Social Housing.

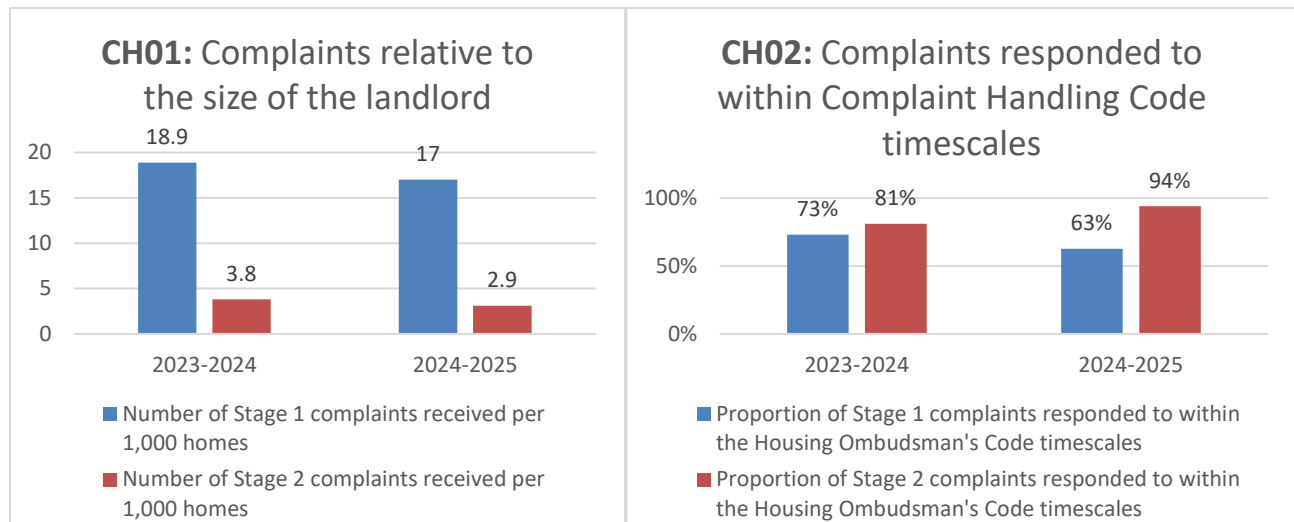
Our full published data can be found here – [Housing performance and tenant satisfaction measures South Cambs District Council](#)

These complaints performance figures will be published by the Social Housing Regulator later in the year for all landlords.



Of those that stated that they were dissatisfied with the landlord's approach to handling

complaints, we asked a further question in the survey as to why they were dissatisfied. 57% of those dissatisfied indicated that they did not feel the complaint was resolved to their satisfaction which suggests they may be dissatisfied as they did not get the outcome they had hoped for. 36% said the complaint took too long to resolve and 31% said they weren't kept informed as to what was happening. With regards to the length of time and being kept informed, these are areas that the Council will continue to work towards improving.



Housing Ombudsman's new Complaint Handling Code Self-Assessment

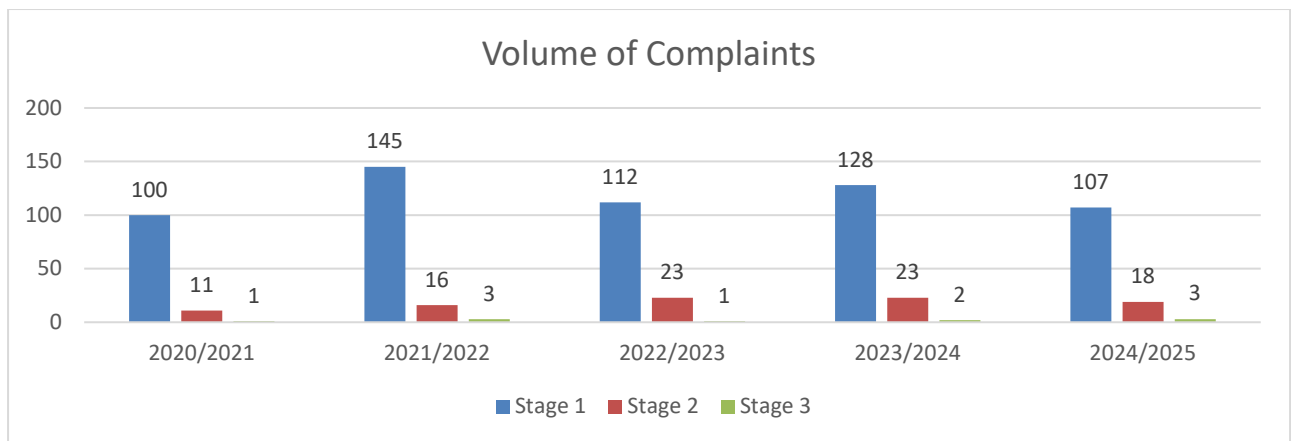
- Published link [Complaints - South Cambs District Council](#)
- Sign off link [Agenda for Cabinet on Tuesday, 24 June 2025, 10.00 a.m.](#)

Volume of Complaints

Below is our complaint handling performance for the whole Housing Department which includes both landlord and non-landlord related complaints. From 2024/25, the report has been separated into these two functions.

Volume Looking back at previous years

The Housing Ombudsman has stated that high volumes of complaints must not be seen as negative as they can be indicative of a well-publicised and accessible complaints process.



Volumes year-end comparison (split by landlord and non-landlord services)

Complaints received by stage	2024/25 Year-end totals Landlord-related complaints	2024/25 Year-end totals Non-landlord-related complaints
Stage 1 = Expression of dissatisfaction that is not able to be resolved at first contact so requires investigation and response from Service Manager *Number of complaints that had an extension of time	94 (*8)	13 -
Stage 2 = Unresolved at stage 1 so investigation required by Head of Service *Number of complaints that had an extension of time	16 (*2)	2 -
Stage 3 = Ombudsman Complaints	2 (Housing Ombudsman)	1 (Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman)
*Complaints logged but later withdrawn by the complainant or closed as unable to proceed	(*4)	-
Total	112	16

*Extensions of time for the following reasons:

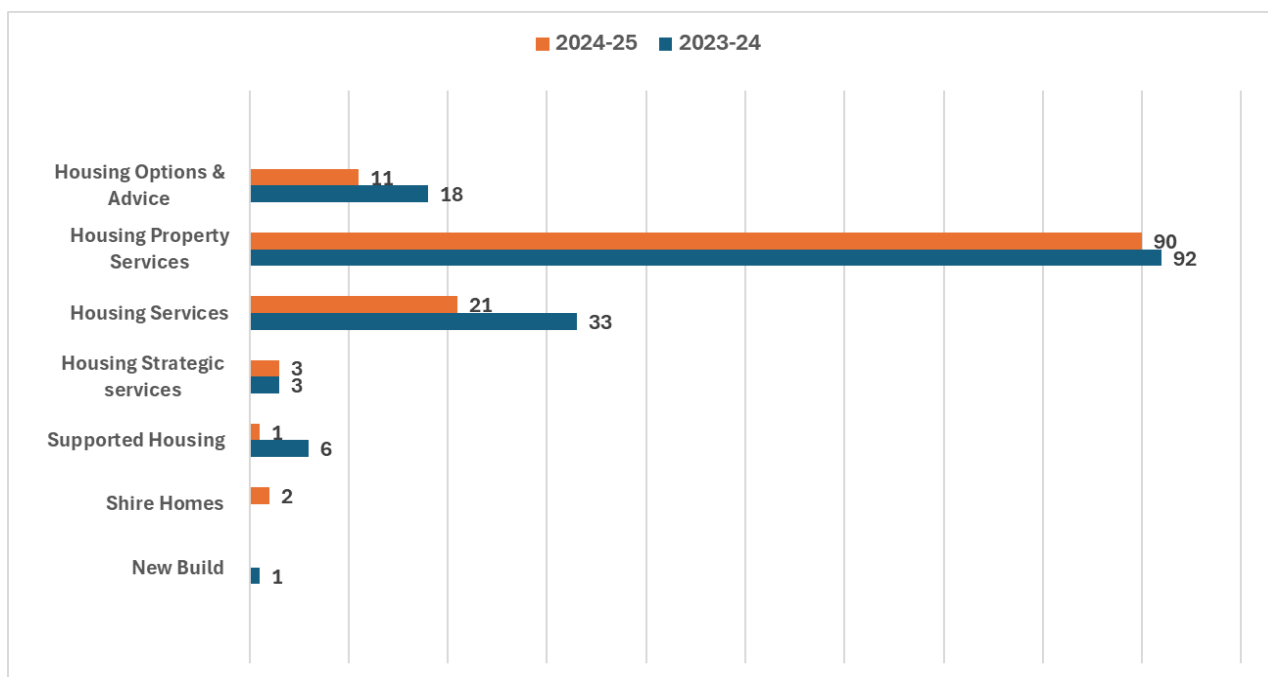
- Further investigation/survey required, or communication needed to fully respond
- Lack or no contact from complainant to be able to access property or discuss further etc.

For complaints relating to our landlord services, it should be noted that the number of complaints correlates to around 2% of our tenants overall.

No complaints were refused, but we do receive feedback via our complaints system which were recorded and followed through, but not treated as a complaint for the following reasons:

- Service Requests – feedback received that was not related to the Housing Service or its contractor's actions.
 - These also include any enquires that were received in error and required redirecting to another Landlord or Support Services
- Report of nuisance or ASB about another resident, where it was not related to the way we handled their case
- MP & Councillor enquires

Volume by service area



- ❖ Housing Property Services, which deals with repairs and maintenance, in 2024-25 received the most complaints with 81% based on Landlord-related complaints received, and 71% based on all complaints received
- ❖ The second highest was Housing Services, which deals with tenancy related issues with 20% based on Landlord-related complaints received, and 16% based on all complaints received

Complaints received falling within the SCDC Theme

Theme	2024-2025 Landlord related complaints	%	2024-2025 Non-landlord related complaints	%
Lack of communication	17	15%	4	25%
Failure to act	38	34%	-	-
Service Delivery	29	26%	2	13%
Not understanding processes	4	4%	-	-
Staff Conduct	4	4%	4	25%
Misinformation	3	3%	2	13%
Charges	3	3%	-	-
Other	14	12%	4	25%

- ❖ The top two themes are Failure to act and Service Delivery for Landlord related complaints
- ❖ Non-landlord related complaint's joint top themes are Lack of communication, Staff Conduct and Other

The above themes are consistent with the previous year's performance results

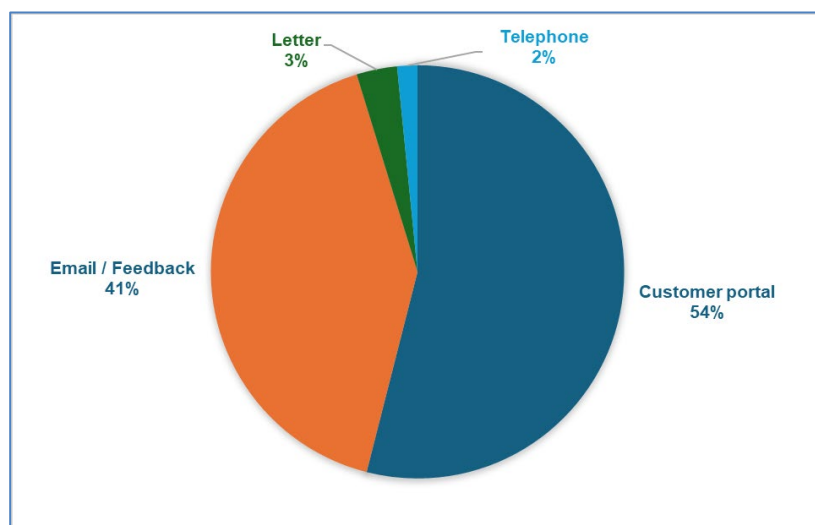
Breakdown of complaints based on HouseMark classifications

Theme	2024-2025 Landlord related complaints	%	2024-2025 Non-landlord related complaints	%
Allocations	-	-	6	38%
ASB	1	1%	-	-
Estate Services	3	3%	-	-
Rent & Services	1	1%	1	6%
Repair & Maintenance	89	80%	-	-
Staff & Customer Service	3	3%	7	44%
Tenancy Management	13	11%	1	6%
Other	2	2%	1	6%

- ❖ The top two themes for Landlord related complaints are Repair & Maintenance and Tenancy Management
- ❖ Non-landlord related complaint top theme is Staff Conduct and Allocations

The above themes are consistent with the previous year's performance results

Method for Complaints Received Combined all service areas



The above is consistent with previous years, with email and the customer portal as the method most used to submit a complaint

Complaints responded within timescale

Measure	2024-2025 Landlord related complaints	2023-2024 Landlord related complaints	2024-2025 Non-landlord related complaints	2023-2024 Non-landlord related complaints
The number of stage 1 complaints received during the reporting year	*94	104	13	24
The number of stage 2 complaints received during the reporting year	16	21	2	-
The percentage of stage 1 complaints responded to within the timescale (10 working days)	63%	73%	100%	100%
The percentage of stage 2 complaints responded within the timescale (20 working days)	94%	80.9%	100%	-
How many upheld = closed in favour of complainant	57	68	3	5
Not upheld = closed not in favour of complainant	30	30	10	19
Partly upheld = closed partly in favour of complainant	22	27	2	-

***Note of the 94 complaints received, one stage 1 complaint has not yet been closed as this is still being investigated**

- ❖ There was a decline in performance with regards to stage 1 Landlord related complaint response times. Complaints are monitored through the Housing Service Manager Performance meetings and as a result improvements were sought through regular team meetings with the Complaints Co-ordinator and training with an external provider HQN which follows the Complaint Handling Code
- ❖ Template stage 1 and stage 2 letters have been revised and reviewed by the Housing Quality Network to provide a structured and consistent approach to our responses following a complaint.

Ombudsman Complaints

We received one Housing Ombudsman and one Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman determination in 2024/25:

Complaint 1 (Housing Ombudsman) – Relating to the Council's handling of a resident's request to install an electrical vehicle (EV) charging point to their property

Key findings:

- The Housing Ombudsman found that there was no maladministration in the Council's handling of the resident's request.

Complaint 2 (Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman) – Relating to the Council’s decision-making in relation to a disabled facilities grant

Key findings:

- The Ombudsman would not investigate the complaint because there was insufficient evidence of fault to justify their involvement.

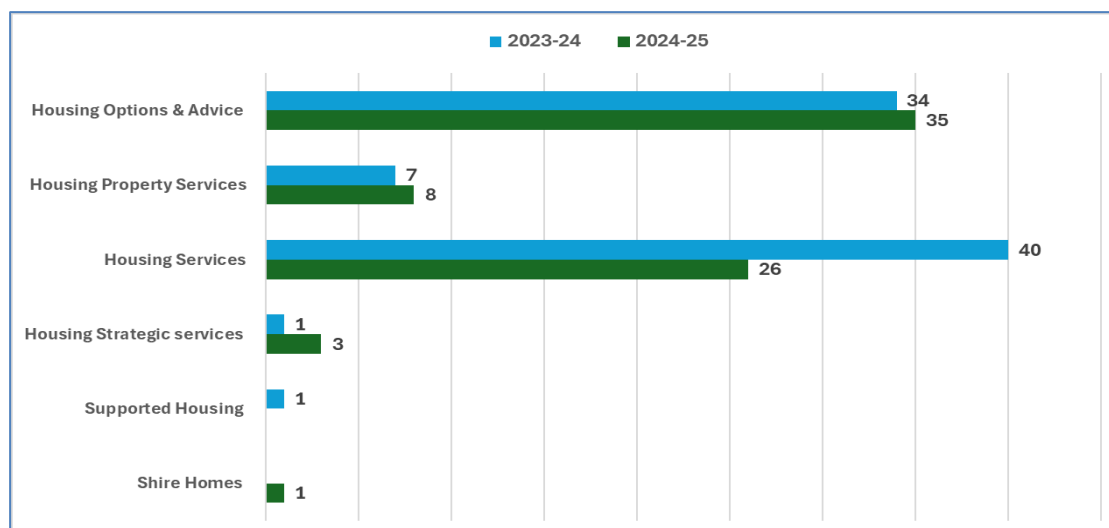
Continuous improvement and learning from complaints

Complaints – many of the complaints we receive continue to relate to poor communication. Generally, this appears to be where we have not provided the customer with appropriate updates, not responding in a timely manner or making use of ‘out of office’ notifications to keep customers informed. To improve how the Housing Service communicates, during 2024 we published the [Communications Charter](#) and held all-staff sessions relating to the importance of communication. Following this, a set of guidelines for staff has been developed to ensure we have a consistent approach as to how we communicate. As part of 1-2-1s and team meetings, we will continue to embed the Charter into our day-to-day communications.

Damp and mould – During 2024 we have been pro-actively raising awareness for tenants to report any issues of damp & mould in their homes. This has included articles in our tenants’ magazine, on our website and recruiting a specialist Damp & Mould Surveyor. Whilst these steps are positive, it has meant that the levels of contact we have received has created a backlog of cases which at this time are falling short of the service delivery we aim to achieve. We are currently working through this backlog and prioritising the most severe cases.

Planned Works – We have received a number of complaints about delays to work being carried out on the planned works side. We are currently working on improved communication and service standards so that customers have better access to information as to what will happen, when and for how long.

Compliments



* 2024-25 total = 73; 2023-24 total = 83

Below are some of the compliments received during 2024-25: -

- *"You helped my mental health and made me feel like at that point I was being heard for the first time with regards to my living situation"*
- *"I am ever so grateful for your support after this hasn't been easy for anybody and still isn't."*
- *"I don't quite understand why people have a negative impression about the council when there are such wonderful people/teams in place who understand, display empathy and support an individual as you have done."*
- *"Thank you very much for the support you have given us in these months, I wanted to tell you that you have never made me feel inadequate, or inappropriate, I appreciate this very much, you are a beautiful person, keep it up."*
- *"I expect everyone says thank you, but you have saved my life."*
- *"I felt really uplifted after their visit this afternoon, because they have walked in my shoes and we have a lot in common.so thank you, I really do appreciate all that you are doing for me'.*