

Complaints Performance and Service Improvement Report 2025-26

This publication contains our complaints performance and service improvement from 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026.

For any questions, please [contact us](#).



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Introduction

Local Space is a charitable housing association whose mission is to help solve the homelessness crisis for families by providing high-quality homes that build foundations for successful lives. Our values of putting people first, acting with integrity, encouraging creativity and working in partnership shape how we deliver services, listen to residents and use feedback, including complaints, to improve the customer experience.

Every complaint is an opportunity for Local Space to learn and implement improvements in our services. Continual learning is helping us to create a positive complaint handling culture which we are working to embed with residents and employees.

This publication contains our complaints performance in the 2025-26 financial year. It also shares which areas we have focused on to improve the complaints experience. This work is already having an impact, as reflected in the Tenant Satisfaction Measures on complaint handling which remain steady in 2025-26 at 47%, which is above the Housemark London Median of 30%.

Resident involvement

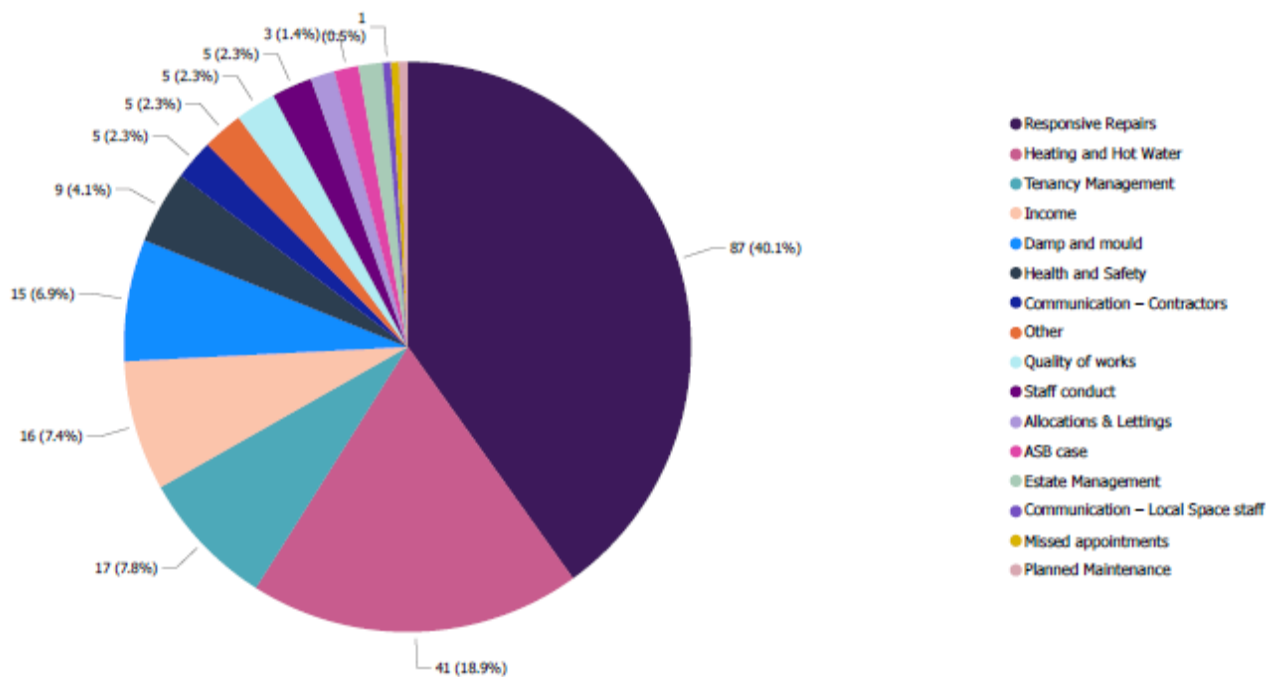
Our Resident Policy and Scrutiny Panel meets monthly with colleagues to scrutinise performance and review emerging themes and trends. Over the past year, the panel has reviewed and challenged performance to help improve residents' experiences, identifying a high volume of complaints relating to repairs. As a result, the panel is currently undertaking a dedicated scrutiny project focused on repairs.

Our self-assessment against the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling code has been reviewed by our Board Member responsible for complaints. Quarterly performance reports are also shared with our Customer Services Committee throughout the year, with key findings and insights reported directly to the Board.

Reasons for complaints

The largest category of complaints is responsive repairs with 87 complaints (40.1% of all cases). Heating and hot water is the second largest category for complaints with 41. The top three complaint areas account for 66.8% of all recorded complaints.

Complaint themes



Complaint handling performance

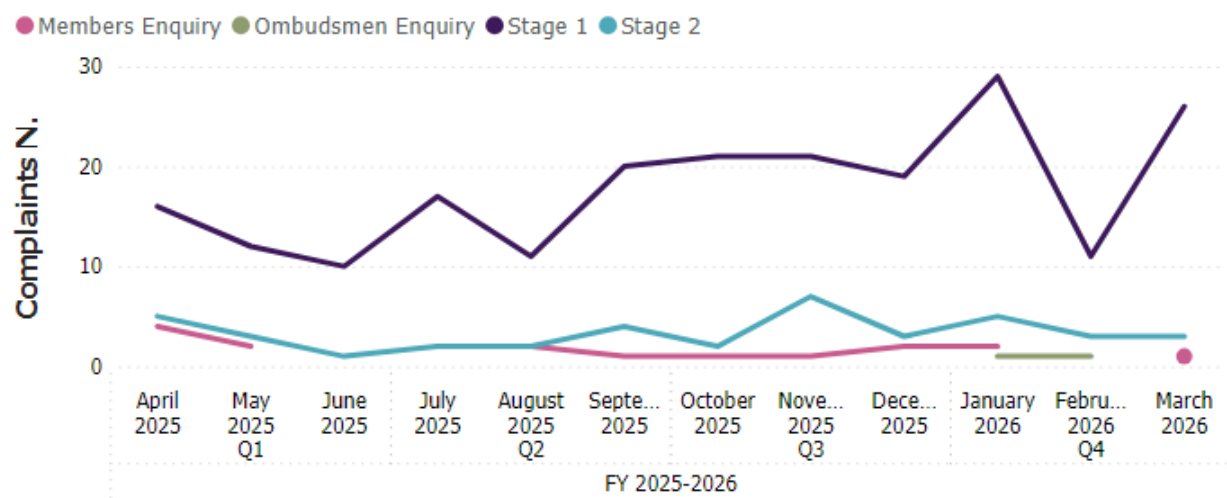
During 2025-26 we responded to 239 complaints, a 95.9% increase compared with 122 in 2024-2025. In 2025-26, we continued to improve complaint handling performance including:

- **Acknowledging more complaints on time:** we acknowledged 203 stage 1 complaints within five working days, representing 97.1% of stage 1 complaints received. We also acknowledged 36 stage 2 complaints, representing 92.3% of stage 2 complaints received.
- **Responding to more complaints on time:** we responded to 97% of stage 1 complaints on time compared to 94% in the previous year.

Performance by month

- Analysis of complaint trends during 2025-26 indicates that complaint volumes increased during quarter three and quarter four, suggesting increased service demand and operational pressure during the latter part of the year.
- Stage 1 complaints represented the highest volume category throughout the reporting period and reached a peak in January 2026, when 29 complaints were recorded. Elevated stage 1 volumes were also evident in September 2025 (20 complaints), October 2025 (21 complaints), November 2025 (21 complaints) and March 2026 (26 complaints), indicating sustained demand across several consecutive months.

Complaint Volume Dynamics

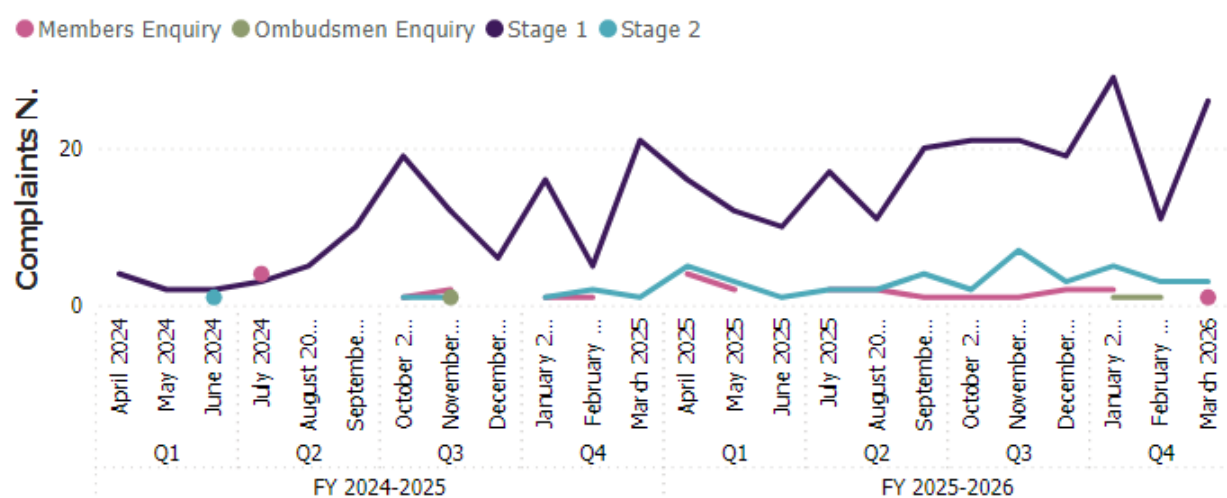


Annual performance comparison

Overall complaint volumes increased during 2025-26 compared with 2024-25, with the largest shift occurring in stage 1 complaints. Stage 1 volumes showed a steady upward trend across the year, peaking in January 2026 and again in March 2026, indicating increased customer dissatisfaction and greater engagement with the complaints process, in line with an increased volume in complaints about repairs. While complaint numbers fluctuated month to month, the general trajectory was notably higher than the previous financial year.

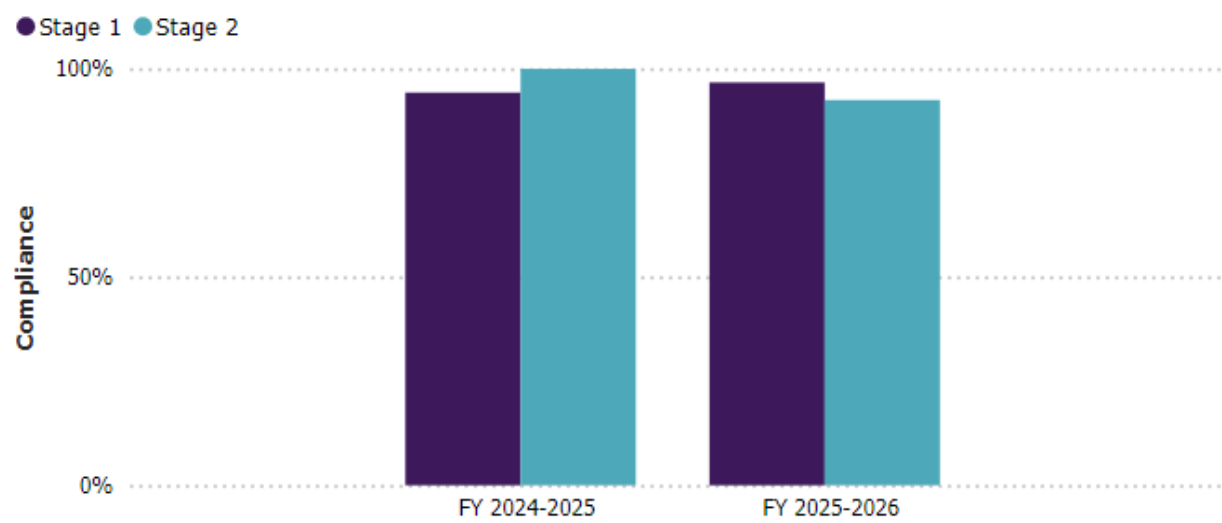
Stage 2 complaints also increased slightly during the year, although volumes remained comparatively low and stable throughout the period. Peaks were observed in April 2025, November 2025 and January 2026.

Complaint Volume Dynamics



MP enquiries remained relatively low and stable throughout the reporting period, with 18 cases recorded in total, while Housing Ombudsman enquiries were minimal, with only two cases recorded across the year. This indicates that although frontline complaint volumes are increasing, relatively few cases progressed to external escalation or formal enquiry channels.

Compliance with HOS Timescale



Despite the rise in complaint activity, compliance with the Housing Ombudsman timescales remained consistently high over both years. Stage 1 compliance improved from 94% to 97%. Stage 2 compliance reduced slightly from full compliance in 2025-26 to 93% in 2025-26, though performance remained strong overall and above operational standards.

Equality, diversity and inclusion analysis

We are continuing to improve how we collect information about additional needs and reasonable adjustments to help ensure our services are accessible and fair for all residents. During 2025-26, we reviewed complaint trends alongside our equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) data to better understand resident experiences.

Our review identified some groups who appear more likely to raise complaints, including female tenants, households with children and residents with disabilities or long-term health conditions. Residents with mental health or mobility-related disabilities were more likely to escalate their complaints.

We also found that households headed by single female tenants with young children were more highly represented within our complaints data. This may reflect the additional pressures and impact that service disruption can have on families with dependent children.

No significant differences were identified across ethnicity, nationality or sexual orientation, with complaint levels broadly reflecting our wider resident population.

These findings will help us continue to improve our services, better understand residents' needs, and ensure support is targeted where it may be needed most.

Lessons learnt and service improvements

We are committed to listening to residents, learning from complaints and using feedback to improve our services. Over the past year, we have taken a number of steps to strengthen how we identify issues, support residents and improve service delivery.

Knowledge and information management

- We developed a new complaints dashboard to give employees better access to complaints data and help identify themes, trends and areas for improvement. Training has also been introduced to help staff use this information confidently and effectively.
- Following our EDI analysis, we are embedding greater awareness of household vulnerability into day-to-day service delivery, particularly within repairs services, which continue to be the most common cause of complaints.
- Repairs raised by households that may be more vulnerable to service disruption, including single parent households, families with young children and residents with identified support needs, are now flagged within our systems. This helps staff and contractors respond more quickly, provide additional support where needed and better understand the impact repairs may have on the household.
- We are also improving communication with residents who may require additional support, including those with mental health conditions, long-term illnesses or other vulnerabilities. Our aim is to ensure communication is clear, accessible, empathetic and tailored to residents' needs, with reasonable adjustments offered where appropriate. By improving the quality and accessibility of communication, we hope to reduce misunderstandings, improve resident experience and prevent unnecessary escalation of complaints.

Improving our repairs service

- We are strengthening contractor guidance and oversight to ensure complaints are identified early, reported accurately and managed consistently through our Complaints team.
- Resident feedback shows that repairs communication needs to improve. In response, we are holding regular contractor review meetings to identify issues sooner and work collaboratively to improve customer communication. This includes communication around complaint evidence, appointment changes and repairs not completed at the first visit.
- We are also increasing our work with small and medium-sized contractors and expect this to support improved satisfaction with repairs communication over time.

Improving damp and mould services

We recognise that living in a home affected by damp and mould can have a significant impact on residents' health and wellbeing. Residents have told us that having a safe and well-maintained home is important to their overall satisfaction, with 78% of residents saying they were satisfied that their home is well maintained. To support this, we have developed a Damp and Mould Policy in preparation for compliance with Awaab's Law. We have also introduced training for frontline staff to help them identify damp, mould and condensation, assess the severity of issues, and ensure the right action is taken as quickly as possible.

Antisocial behaviour (ASB)

Listening to resident feedback, we have taken steps to strengthen our ASB service. Frontline colleagues have received training on our updated ASB process and risk assessments to help improve responses to ASB and strengthen communication with residents. We have also introduced a new system module to improve consistency, accuracy and case management.

Third party superior landlords

Some of our homes are located in blocks or estates where services such as communal cleaning, grounds maintenance, lift repairs and shared area maintenance are managed by a third-party freeholder or managing agent rather than directly by us. We recognise the impact this can have on residents' experiences and satisfaction. To help improve engagement and oversight in these areas, we have introduced an estate champions pilot focused on areas with lower satisfaction levels, particularly where there are ongoing concerns around ASB and vandalism. We have also delivered training for colleagues and contractors to help improve complaint handling, strengthen communication with residents, and ensure concerns are responded to consistently and effectively.

Compensation

During the year, compensation was offered totaling £57,691.65 across 102 cases, with an average cost of £565 per complaint. We align our compensation with similar cases investigated by the Housing Ombudsman and use our customer loyalty principles of empathy and generosity.

Our focus for 2026-27

Delivery of our target operating model for repairs

Our new target operating model for assets and new business has been developed, including a revised repairs delivery model. It is designed to strengthen our control of end-to-end repairs and improve communication with customers. The model responds directly to the increase in repairs and communication-related complaints. Once implemented, we expect to see a reduction in overall repairs-related complaints.

Recording and monitoring customer vulnerabilities

As a social housing provider, we recognise that many residents may have vulnerabilities or individual circumstances that need to be considered when we respond to complaints. We record and monitor relevant information in our systems, including disability alerts, language needs, communication preferences and household information, so that employees can identify where additional support or adjustments may be required. We are improving the completeness and quality of this information by asking staff to review profile gaps at every customer contact, supported by planned surveys.

This information will be used operationally to tailor our contact with residents. This may include using Language Line, making reasonable adjustments, adapting communications, carrying out welfare checks or providing targeted support. In complaints handling, we will analyse complaint themes alongside customer characteristics such as household type, disability and language need to help identify whether vulnerable customers are experiencing barriers or unequal outcomes.

Complaints insight will be used to evidence learning and inform service redesign, in line with the Complaint Handling Code. We will also check equitable outcomes by overlaying protected characteristics with satisfaction, repairs and arrears enforcement data. This means we do not treat vulnerability as separate from complaint handling; instead, we will use recorded customer needs to shape how we

communicate, whether adjustments are needed, and whether a complaint points to a wider service barrier for customers with similar needs.

Housing Ombudsman

The Housing Ombudsman is a free, independent and impartial service for residents. The Housing Ombudsman investigates complaints and resolves disputes involving the tenants and leaseholders of social landlords. Residents can take a complaint to the Housing Ombudsman for investigation after going through the Local Space complaint process, if the issues have not been resolved to the residents' satisfaction. The service also helps where the landlord is not responding to residents' complaints. Members of the Housing Ombudsman scheme must comply with the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code. The Housing Ombudsman has the power to make orders to landlords, this might mean ordering the landlord to apologise, carry out works or pay compensation.

The Housing Ombudsman will make recommendations and a determination when they review a complaint. There are several types of determination including:

- **Maladministration:** where the landlord, for example, has failed to comply with its legal obligations, its policies and procedures or has unreasonably delayed dealing with the matter. This could be a finding of service failure, maladministration or severe maladministration, depending on the seriousness of the failure and the impact on the residents. Service failure is the lowest level of maladministration and is reserved for minor failings where action is still needed to put things right.
- **No maladministration:** where the landlord is found to have acted appropriately.
- **Redress:** where the landlord resolved the complaint satisfactorily.
- **Resolved with intervention:** where the complaint was resolved with the Housing Ombudsman's help.
- **Outside jurisdiction (OSJ):** where the Housing Ombudsman didn't have the authority to investigate. This could be for a variety of reasons including: the complaint had not been made within a reasonable timescale, the complaint did not meet the conditions of the scheme or the matter was more appropriately dealt with by the courts, a tribunal, another complaint handling body or regulator.

Determinations

In 2025-26, we received one Housing Ombudsman determination and no maladministration was found. The latest published Housing Ombudsman sector maladministration rate was 71% in 2024-25.