

## **ANNUAL COMPLAINTS PERFORMANCE & SERVICE IMPROVEMENT REPORT**

Reporting Year: 2023-2024

Prepared by Lead Officer for Complaints

Comments, Compliments, Complaints & Compensation Policy

[sholland.gov.uk/media/22320/Comments-Compliments-and-Compensation-Policy/pdf/comments\\_compliments\\_complaints\\_and\\_compensation\\_policy.pdf?m=1718039352543](https://sholland.gov.uk/media/22320/Comments-Compliments-and-Compensation-Policy/pdf/comments_compliments_complaints_and_compensation_policy.pdf?m=1718039352543)

Email Address [Housingcomplaints@sholland.gov.uk](mailto:Housingcomplaints@sholland.gov.uk)

### **STATS**

Number of Stage 1 Complaints 37

Number of Stage 2 Complaints 0

Number of Compliments 48.65

Themes: Damp, Condensation & Mould, Anti-social Behaviour, Property Condition

Next Reporting Year: 2024/2025

### **CHALLENGES & CONCERNS**

- Low number of complaints compared to other authorities. Concern if complaints are easily and accessible to residents to make. Our Tenant Satisfaction Measure score for number of complaints is 30.01 below the year end median.
- No stage 2 complaints - Tenant Satisfaction Landlord Measure score is 5.3 below the median average.
- Low number of compliments.
- Poor compliance with the Housing Ombudsman code response timescales. Poor performance against other authorities, reflecting poorly on our tenant satisfaction measures.

### **Service Improvements**

- Housing Complaints are now dealt with by the Housing Department - Significant improvement in compliance with the Housing Ombudsman code timescales for 2024/2025. Up to 30th June 2024 we are 100% compliant with the code timescales.
- Housing procedure introduced with bespoke email address for Housing Complaints to be sent to directly to improve accessibility to residents, making the process more efficient, resulting in complaints being responded to quicker.
- Website updated with new forms that enable tenants to directly complain to Housing, resulting in quicker responses as not being delayed by other departments.

- Corporate website updated to give further clarity on the complaints for the Housing Ombudsman and Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman. Making it clearer for residents what complaints go where.
- Increased awareness of the Complaint handling code to management and team leaders which has cascaded to wider housing team and increased numbers of complaints & compliments compared to 2023/2024. Endorsing a culture of accepting all complaints that encourages transparency with residents.
- Adoption of Housing Ombudsman template response letter ensuring that responses cover all aspects set out in the Housing Ombudsman code including but not limited to: The complaint stage, The complaint definition, The decision of the complaint, The reasons for decisions made, The details of any remedy offered to put things right. Details of any outstanding actions & details of how to escalate the matter further if dissatisfied
- Increase in stage 2 complaints for 2024/2025 following service improvements where contact is made to ensure tenants are happy with stage 1 complaints outcome.
- Complaints Clinic formed - meeting every 6 weeks with the objective to carry out continuous and learning improvement by assessing any themes or trends to identify potential systematic system issues, serious risks, or policies and procedures that require revision. Support compliance with the Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling code. Drive service improvement for tenants. Be an operational officer working group to feed into the Housing Landlord Board.
- Complaints Performance Data submitted to Compliance Clinic, Governance Clinic, Housing Landlord Board & Performance Monitoring Panel to provide oversight and scrutiny. Members include Member Responsible for Complaints, Assistant Director and Deputy Chief Executive
- Based on Service charge queries and complaints a full review of Service Charges for Sheltered Tenants was undertaken. Breaking down elements to make it clearer to residents what was included in the service charges.
- Streamline Repair Processes: Complaints about delays in repairs highlight potential inefficiencies in repair processes. Conducting a thorough review of repair workflows, identifying bottlenecks, and implementing measures to streamline processes can help expedite repairs and reduce client dissatisfaction. We will look at the repairs customer journey with the team as part of the ongoing corporate customer journey review, as part of this we are creating an online portal for tenants to report their repairs, we will include tenants in the build and design process. Work is beginning on this in Summer 2024.
- Feedback cards created to publicise ways to give feedback

- Staff training - completing modules on the e-learning portal of the Housing Ombudsman

### **2024-2025**

- New Comments, Compliments, Complaints and Compensation Policy written in line with the new 2024 Housing Ombudsman Code.
- Housing Ombudsman Self-Assessment Form completed and published on our website - Feedback for Housing Landlord Service - South Holland District Council (sholland.gov.uk)
- Reflection of 2023/2024 included in the Annual Report to tenants.

### **Housing Ombudsman Performance Report**

The Housing Ombudsman publishes individual landlord performance reports for landlords with 5 or more findings for a particular financial year. These reports are available on the Housing Ombudsman's website: [Housing Ombudsman - Landlords Archive](#) The Housing Ombudsman has not yet published its reports for 2023/24, so the information available on its website relates to 2022/23. As we had no determinations made by the Housing Ombudsman in the period 2022/23 there is no report relating to the Council currently published on the Housing Ombudsman's website.

### **Pending/Potentials Issues & Risks**

2024/25 has seen a remarked increase in complaints received during q1 24/25, with 48 complaints being received, compared to 37 during 23/24 in total. It is believed that this is in response to a communications campaign by the Council and Housing Ombudsman on complaint handling. Resources are currently being monitored in response to the increase in volume of complaints and the additional steps required to deliver the new Complaint Handling Code.

### **Member Responsible for Complaints Response**

After reading the Annual Complaints Performance and Service Improvements Report, I hope you can see that we very much acknowledge there is still more work to be done to improve this area for our tenants, but already we have made vast progress and have a plan in place to grow on those improvements further. It is important that each and every resident feels comfortable and able to raise a complaint, in a method that is easy for them, confident that they will be listened to fully knowing that their concerns are being taken seriously and addressed. I welcome and look forward to seeing the improvements and changes progress for our tenants and the learnings we take from complaints also put into practice.

### **Responsible Officers for Complaints**

Lead Officer for Complaints - Business Support Manager, Sam Dicker. Member Responsible for Complaints - Portfolio Holder for Strategic and Operational Housing, Councillor Tracey Carter.