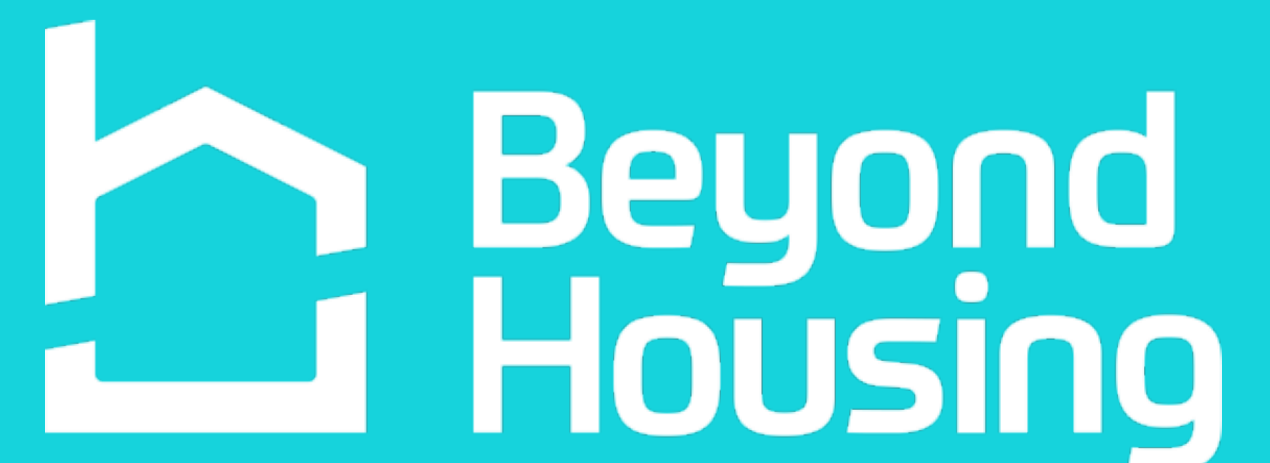


# Annual Complaints Performance and Service Improvement Report

2023 - 2024



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\* 2023/2024 report will be available from the HOS following its reporting calendar realignment.

# Board and member responsible for complaints response to the report



**REPORTING PERIOD**  
APRIL 2023 – MARCH 2024

The board and member responsible for complaints commend the team's proactive approach to customer complaints as reflected in the 2023/2024 annual complaints performance and service improvement report. We appreciate the detailed breakdown of the complaint data and the service improvements made throughout the year.

While the report reflects an increase in overall complaint volume, it's important to note this is partially attributable to the proactive introduction of the new complaint handling code on March 1st. This code eliminated the 'concerns' stage of the Beyond Housing process, leading to more complaints being formally logged. The Government's high-profile 'Make it Right' campaign, and the media coverage of the Housing Ombudsman spotlight and determination reports also encouraged more tenants to raise concern with their landlord.

Benchmarking across the sector shows an 18% annual increase in recorded dissatisfaction, with a UK-wide median of 51.3 stage 1 and 2 complaints per 1,000 properties (Beyond Housing median is 35.3).

At Beyond Housing, customer feedback is valued. We see the increase in complaints as an opportunity to learn, improve our services, and demonstrate our commitment to open communication, transparency, and accountability.

The report highlights strong compliance with response times and reduced Housing Ombudsman cases (from 9 in 2022/23 to 4 in 2023/24). This reduction reflects the positive impact made within the business to address complaints efficiently.

Beyond Housing is committed to learning from complaints to continuously improve service delivery and enhance the customer experience. Two key areas of service improvement focus to be taken forward in 2024/2025 are:

- Increasing customer engagement in complaints
- Strengthening areas where tenant satisfaction scores indicate a need for improvement.

We believe open communication and a commitment to timely resolution are key to fostering a positive and strengthened customer experience.

The board encourages the business to continue this level of attentiveness to customer needs.



James Hayward  
Chair of the board



Cath Owston  
Member responsible for complaints

Beyond Housing is committed to listening and learning from customers when things don't go as planned or meet expectations, to investigate what happened, accept where we are at fault, and how we could do better. We work with customers and aim to resolve concerns and complaints efficiently and fairly.

In 2023/24 Beyond Housing:

- Received **479** complaints
- An increase from the **337** complaints received in 2022/23
- Of the **479** complaints received, **314** were upheld.

From the Housing Ombudsman Service, Beyond Housing received:

- **0** complaint handling failure orders
- **12** enquires
- **4** cases.

We received **1** maladministration and **2** service failure determinations from the Housing Ombudsman Service relating to **complaint handling**. Following the determinations, we made improvements to our procedures to prevent future cases and improve the customer experience for all customers.

## Annual assessment

All landlords are required to conduct an annual assessment against the Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code to understand their position against the expectations of the code.

Beyond Housing completed the assessment in June 2024 and pledge to continuously refer to the code in the design of any complaint service improvements.

# Complaint handling Performance summary

REPORTING PERIOD  
APRIL 2023 – MARCH 2024

## Stage 1 complaints

In 2023/24 Beyond Housing received 479 stage 1 complaints.

This was an increase of 89% in stage 1 complaints from 254 in 2022/23.

We closed 461 stage 1 complaints in 2023/24.

### Of the closed cases:

- 99.8% were responded to within 10 working days or within the extended deadline agreed with the customer
- 25.6% of cases had the deadline extended in agreement with the customer.

### Of the 479 stage 1 complaints received:

- 69% were upheld
- 31% were not upheld.

## Stage 2 complaints

Of the 479 stage 1 complaints received, 131 (27%) were escalated to stage 2 complaints.

This was an increase of 70% in stage 2 complaints from 77 in 2022/23.

We closed 123 stage 2 complaints during 2023/24.

### Of the 123 closed cases:

- 100% were responded to within 20 working days or within the extended deadline agreed with the customer
- 29.24% of cases had the deadline extended in agreement with the customer.

### Of the 131 stage 2 complaints received:

- 56% were upheld
- 44% were not upheld.

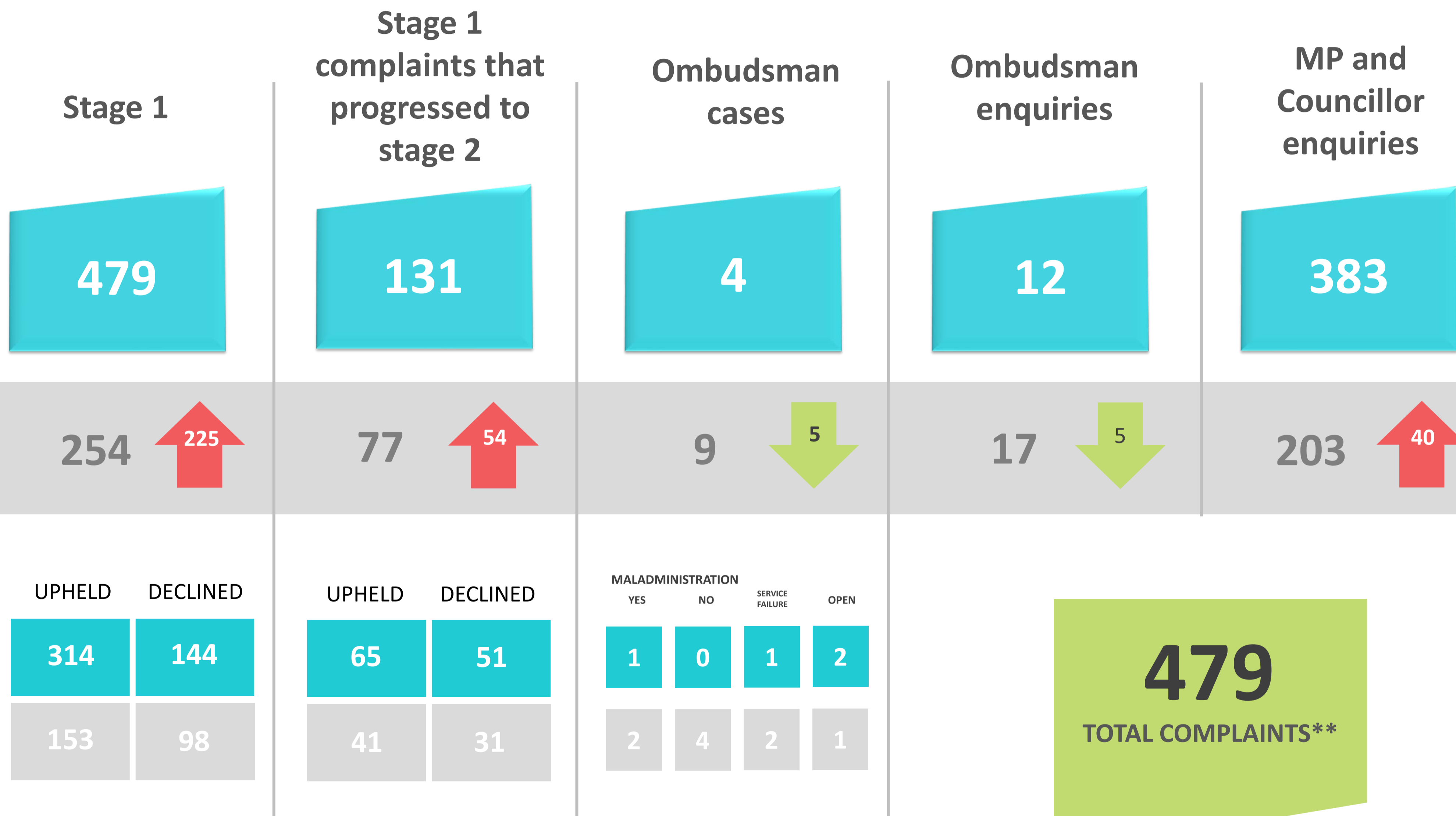
We did not refuse to accept any complaints at either stage.

## Reasons for increases

- **Damp and mould in national headlines** – Heightened awareness increased damp and mould complaints
- **Grounds maintenance** - Issues with implementation of new grounds maintenance contract
- **Scheduling** - Customers frustrated by unannounced visits and lack of communication when cancelling or moving appointments. Lack of communication with customers on the next steps when renewing a major component in their home, including kitchens, bathrooms, doors and windows
- **Repeat contacts** - Customers frustrated when they need to contact Beyond Housing multiple times to resolve an issue.

# Complaint handling Performance detail

**REPORTING PERIOD**  
APRIL 2023 – MARCH 2024



**479**  
TOTAL COMPLAINTS\*\*

**£31,912**  
TOTAL  
DISCRETIONARY  
COMPENSATION

**CURRENT PERIOD**  
APRIL 23 – MARCH 24

**PREVIOUS PERIOD**  
APRIL 22 – MARCH 23

\*Open due to waiting response from Housing Ombudsman  
\*\* Total complaints exclude Ombudsman cases/enquiries

# Drivers of complaints received

REPORTING PERIOD  
APRIL 2023 – MARCH 2024

## TOP TEN DRIVERS OF COMPLAINTS

Stage 1	Total
Lack of resolution or action	120
Damp (lack of resolution or action)	62
Property condition (diagnosis/decision)	42
Timescales (property condition)	33
ASB (lack of resolution or action)	32
Staff attitude	28
Lack of communication	27
New build defects	27
	<b>479</b>

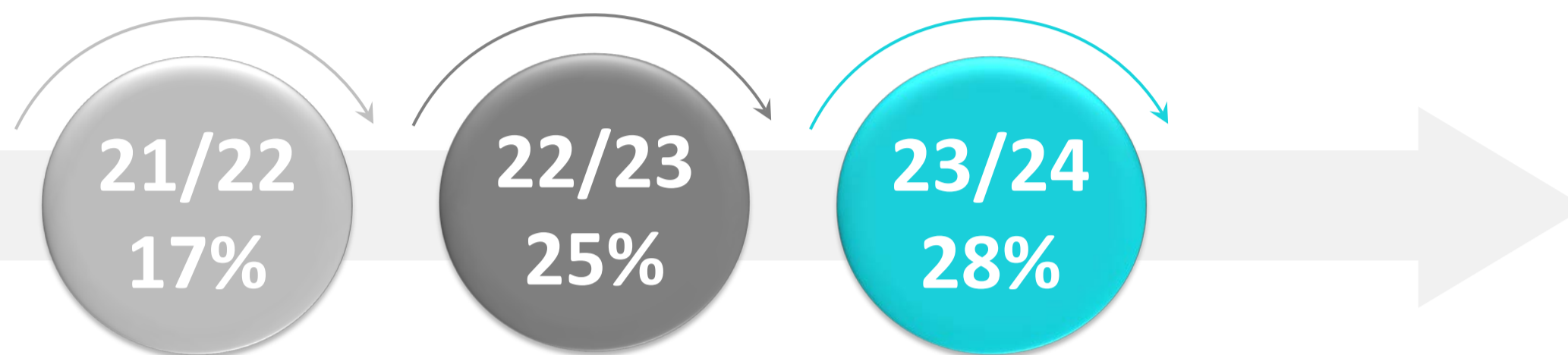
Stage 2	Total
Lack of resolution or action	27
ASB (lack of resolution or action)	18
Property condition (diagnosis/decision)	17
Damp (lack of resolution or action)	15
New build defects	9
Estate management (diagnosis/decision)	8
Dispute compensation (value offered)	7
	<b>131</b>

## HOUSING OMBUDSMAN CASE AND ENQUIRY DRIVERS

Reason	Total
Damp (lack of resolution or action)	6
ASB (lack of resolution or action)	5
Fencing (lack of resolution or action)	1
Repairs (lack of resolution or action)	1
Staff attitude	1
Timescales (property condition)	2
	<b>16</b>

# Satisfaction with our approach to handling complaints

REPORTING PERIOD  
APRIL 2023 – MARCH 2024



## Highlights of improvements delivered in 23/24

- **Early implementation** - Prepared, trained and implemented the Ombudsman's new complaint handling code ahead of launch, ensuring a smooth transition for colleagues and minimal disruption to customer service. This allowed for efficient and fair resolution of customer dissatisfaction from day one
- **New customer relationship management system** – Introduced a new system to help monitor complaints to ensure we can track, report and assist customers with their complaints
- **Dedicated points of contact** - Championing the initiative to establish dedicated points of contact for each business area, empowering reception hosts to effectively guide customers requiring further complaint support.



# Simple Ombudsman complaint case flow



Each case is investigated by the Housing Ombudsman Service. The purpose of the investigation is to assess whether a landlord responded appropriately to a given situation and to decide whether its actions were fair and reasonable, when taking all the circumstances of the case into account.

## Findings are defined as:

- **No maladministration** - where the landlord acted in accordance with its obligations in the tenancy agreement and relevant policies and procedures. Minor failings may have been found but these have caused no detriment to the resident
- **Service failure** - where there is evidence of a minor failing, but action is still needed to put things right. Service failure is a form of maladministration
- **Maladministration** - where there was a failure which has adversely affected the resident
- **Severe maladministration** - the most serious failure, where there is evidence of serious detrimental impact to the resident
- **Mediation** - where the resident and landlord have agreed to enter into mediation and, with the Ombudsman's intervention, reached an agreed outcome which resolves the complaint satisfactorily
- **Redress** - there is evidence of maladministration but the landlord has identified and acknowledged this prior to the Ombudsman's investigation and has, on its own initiative, taken steps that puts things right
- **Outside jurisdiction** - the complaint will not or cannot be considered by the Ombudsman
- **Withdrawn** - the resident withdrew their complaint, and the Ombudsman is satisfied as to the circumstances.

## The Ombudsman can order or recommend the landlord to:

- Pay compensation
- Apologise
- Review its policies and procedures
- Complete any outstanding repairs.

# Non-compliance summary

REPORTING PERIOD  
APRIL 2023 – MARCH 2024

**4**  
new cases  
in 23/24

- 2 of the 4 cases have been closed and are included in the determination figures above
- The remaining 2 cases have since received determinations and will be included in the 24/25 annual report.



\*See next slide for details

# Non-compliance of compliant handling code

## Failure findings

## Learning and improvement

### Order 3

1 x service failure  
- Complaint handling

- Delayed recognition of customer's distress
- Ordered to pay compensation ordered.

### Order 4

1 x service failure  
- Complaint handling

- Failed to escalate customer's request promptly
- Ordered to pay compensation ordered.

### Order 6

4 x maladministration  
- Anti-social behaviour  
- Noise nuisance  
- Tenancy management  
- **Complaint handling**

- We failed to log a stage 1 complaint on two occasions
- We were ordered to provide a written apology to the customer
- Pay compensation to reflect stress and inconvenience caused to the customer.

### Learning and improvement

- **Comprehensive complaint review** - The Complaints Manager now conducts a thorough review and approval process for all complaint response letters. This includes assessing the need for compensation according to our established procedures, whenever service failures are identified
- **Enhanced training** - Complaints advisors have received refresher training to ensure they consistently log all customer complaints, whether initial reports or escalations, at the very first point of contact.

# Learning from complaints

## HOS recommendations

### Repair case

#### Repairs policy

In addition to the repairs information available on the landlord's website, it should consider implementing a repairs policy that would clearly define its obligations towards a resident in circumstances where planned repairs would be required in their accommodation. The landlord should review their internal system to ensure that the resident's vulnerabilities are accurately recorded, if they remain a resident of the landlord's.

#### What we did:

We published the repairs policy on the website.

### Tenancy management case

#### Management transfer applications

In accordance with paragraph 54 (f) of the Housing Ombudsman Scheme, the landlord is ordered to carry out a review of its approach to management transfer applications. The review must be carried out within 12 weeks of the date of this report, and be conducted by a team independent of the service area responsible for the failings identified by this investigation and should include as a minimum (but is not limited to):

- a. Consideration of whether it would be beneficial to implement a policy that covers the landlord's approach to all management transfer applications
- b. The landlord should include applications where residents would benefit from the move, for example where there are serious medical needs or threats to life (e.g. in serious ASB cases).

#### What we did:

We introduced an exceptional moves procedure which includes thresholds for approving exceptional moves and additional communications to customers.

The 'threat to life' process was shared and agreed with police and the local authority.



# Learning from complaints

## HOS recommendations

### ASB/noise case

#### Noise complaints

If it has not already done so, the landlord must self-assess against the Ombudsman's spotlight report on noise complaints and consider implementing a policy/procedure on how it handles reports of noise nuisance, distinct from the ASB policy.

#### What we did:

We completed the self-assessment and put it on the website.

#### Dealing with noise complaints

Training to ensure frontline teams are aware of:

- i. How to deal with noise complaints and are able to respond to these reports appropriately
- ii. The Equality Act 2010 duties so they understand how to respond to residents' individual needs and complete risk assessments.

#### What we did:

Following the completion of the noise complaint self-assessment, we have created an action plan to support this recommendation.

#### Knowledge and information management

The landlord should self-assess against the Ombudsman's spotlight report on knowledge and information management.

#### What we did:

We completed the self-assessment and put it on the website.



# Learning from complaints

## During 23/24, we listened and improved...

### Home defect reporting

#### Customers told us:

There was a lack of communication and action about defects reported when buying or renting a new build home from us.

#### What we did:

We improved the reporting process to ensure defects are picked up by the contractor in a timely manner, with additional transparency to enable us to hold contractors to account if they are not delivering the service we expect. Beyond Housing's quality manager and senior project manager now hold monthly meetings with the contractor's construction manager to review defects performance.



### Major works

#### Customers told us:

They needed more communication from us about the next steps when renewing a major component in their home, including kitchens, bathrooms, doors and windows.

#### What we did:

We collaborated with departments across the business to ensure customer communication is embedded in the relevant processes, together with performance measures to ensure customer requirements are met.



### Repeat repair reporting

#### Customers told us:

They needed to repeatedly report the same repair due to the repair not being actioned or actioned but without providing a lasting fix.

#### What we did:

We have implemented a procedure to flag multiple repair requests for the same thing. This triggers an investigation by our repair team leaders to identify the root cause and implement a lasting solution.



### Repairs policy review

#### Customers told us:

The policy covered everything that they expected but they wanted the policy to be more specific about how we support disabled and vulnerable customers. They also wanted to make sure that we treat all customers fairly and as individuals.

#### What we did:

We revised the policy to expand on how we support disabled and vulnerable customers during repairs. We have also committed to creating an easy-to-read version of the policy for customers to access.



# Learning from complaints

During 23/24,  
we listened and improved...

## Anti-social behaviour

### Customers told us:

Who they believe is responsible for different levels of anti-social behaviour and how they want to be communicated with and involved in the process to resolve it.

### What we did:

We used this feedback to create a new anti-social behaviour policy and updated procedure. We also refreshed the content on the ASB webpage. The policy and website clarify what customers can expect from Beyond Housing and what Beyond Housing can do to tackle ASB.



## Grass cuttings

### Customers told us:

The grass cuttings left on top of the grass after maintenance were a concern.

### What we did:

Mulching of grass cuttings is now included in the new offer with the contract.



## Snagging timeframes

### Customers told us:

They were unhappy with the timescales and lack of updates on snagging defects after moving in.

### What we did:

Scheduled regular meetings with contractors to discuss defects performance and ensure defects lists align.



## New home defects

### Customers told us:

They were concerned about the large numbers of defects reported when purchasing a home.

### What we did:

Carried out trend analysis of defects and reviewed this with the clerk of works to improve workmanship and reduce the number of defects.



## Component renewal

### Customers told us:

They were unhappy with the timescales and lack of updates regarding component renewal request.

### What we did:

Reviewed the component renewal process to ensure timely decisions are made and customers are kept informed.



# Service improvement

## Focus – mould and damp

### Mould and damp

We are constantly reviewing our procedures and processes to ensure that we are doing everything we can to prevent and resolve damp and mould issues, these include:

### Swift action



We put a rapid response team in place to deal with mould and damp faster for customers.

### Vulnerability



We consider individual needs when categorising damp and mould cases. Clear escalation procedures prioritise cases involving vulnerable customers, children, or those with health conditions.

### Root cause



We go beyond treating symptoms by investigating the underlying causes of damp and mould to prevent future recurrence.

### Triage system



We regularly review our processes for handling damp and mould enquiries and repairs. A clear triage system categorises cases by severity, with the most serious receiving a 24-hour response target.

### Expert solutions



We use a combination of in-house trained colleagues and specialist contractors to ensure problems are addressed swiftly and effectively with access to the right expertise and resources.

### Data driven decisions



We report Housing Health and Safety Rating System data to internal compliance and health and safety forums, allowing us to track performance and identify areas for improvement.

### Asset management



We started distributing hygrometers and condensation leaflets to empower customers with tools and knowledge to help prevent damp and mould in their homes.

### Stock survey



Every five years, all properties undergo a thorough stock condition survey and Housing Health and Safety Rating System assessment, enabling us to proactively identify and track potential problems.



# Service improvement

## Focus – grounds maintenance

### Grounds maintenance

After addressing shortfalls in service last year, we've implemented improvements to ensure customers receive the experience they deserve. These include:

### Contractor management



We streamlined the contract management process and revised the specification. We then shared this with customers on the website so they know what they can expect from the service.

### Responsibilities



We worked with the contractor to review maps and planning to clarify and ensure all responsibilities and processes were clear.

### Added value



We introduced additional grass cuts for customers throughout the season.

### Inspections



We increased the number of post-inspections completed.

### Other solutions



As a precaution, we added a clause to the contract that would allow us to bring in additional contractors if the current contractor is unable to achieve their target cut.

### Direct line



We introduced a direct 'call us and cut it' process, so if the contractor is asked about a cut by a customer, they can call back to the office and get an answer immediately about whether to cut it there and then.

### Informing customers



We added the cutting schedule to the website and emailed customers so they are informed of when their grass will be cut.

### Monitoring



We set up a process to monitor the completion of all cuts so we can proactively identify any hot spots and put plans in place to improve.

# Service improvement

## Focus – scheduling

### Scheduling

In response to customer feedback about job cancellations without notice, scheduling errors, and communication gaps, we've implemented several improvements to enhance the overall experience. These include:

### Centralised contact



We improved efficiency by migrating the scheduling team to the central phone system to minimise the number of transfers and simplifying the enquiry process for the customer.

### Call quality



We introduced call quality monitoring to ensure procedures are followed and improve customer experience. All calls are now recorded, providing a valuable audit trail for quality assurance.

### Caller ID



We made changes to the telephone system, so when a scheduler calls a customer the Beyond Housing number is displayed on their handset.

### Collaboration



We initiated a joint effort between the service centre and property teams to enhance repair diagnostics for improved customer service.

### Customer relationship management (CRM)



We introduced a CRM to improve record-keeping where all customer interactions, including appointment rescheduling requests, are required to be logged in the CRM system.

### Got a text!



Customers expecting service visits receive reminder texts within the same week.

### Operative on way



We implemented technology that texts customers in real-time when the operative is on the way to complete their repair.

# Ombudsman annual report

REPORTING PERIOD  
APRIL 2022 – MARCH 2023

# Other Ombudsman reports

## HOS landlord performance report

An Ombudsman's landlord report is produced when landlords have five or more findings determined between 1 April 2022 and 31 March 2023.

The report shows the categories of complaints received, decision outcomes, the types of order issued and timeliness in complying with the orders. It also includes comparisons with the average performance of similar landlords by type and size.

[You can read the Ombudsman landlord report for Beyond Housing 2022-23 here.\\*](#)

\* 2023/2024 report will be available from the HOS following its reporting calendar realignment.

## Positive recognition

In the [Housing Ombudsman's Annual Complaint Review 2022/23](#), Beyond Housing was recognised as being one of only five landlords who had no maladministration findings, recognising our positive complaint handling approach.

By contrast, your organisation is one of only five in England where we have made five or more findings and did not have a single one upheld. This indicates a positive complaint handling culture within your organisation.

Rosemary Du Rose  
Chief Executive  
Beyond Housing Ltd  
Brook House  
4 Gladstone Road  
Scarborough  
YO12 7BH

11 October 2023

By email: [customer.feedback@beyondhousing.co.uk](mailto:customer.feedback@beyondhousing.co.uk)

Dear Rosemary

**Annual Complaints Performance Report for 2022-23**

We will shortly be publishing our fourth annual landlord performance reports for the complaints investigated involving members of our Scheme.

These reports are an important part of promoting openness and accountability in service areas and complaints handling, as well as identifying potential areas for learning.

I wanted to draw your attention to your individual report because we have found no maladministration for your organisation in the 5 findings we have made during 2022-23.

You and your staff deserve considerable recognition for this outcome. As you will see from the national data, there are 90 landlords with a maladministration rate of 50% or above.

By contrast, your organisation is one of only five in England where we have made five or more findings and did not have a single one upheld. This indicates a positive complaint handling culture within your organisation.

I will be sharing these cases more widely because, whilst we know that learning can be found where landlords get things wrong, there are also plenty of lessons in good practice casework too and this drives the positive complaints learning culture that we want to see nation-wide.

Our annual landlord performance reports will be made publicly available on 17<sup>th</sup> October.

Yours sincerely



Richard Blakeway  
Housing Ombudsman

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# Complaints self-assessment

REPORTING PERIOD  
APRIL 2023 – MARCH 2024

## 2024 annual self-assessment

All landlords are required to conduct an annual assessment against the Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code. Each landlord is expected to answer the questions within the self-assessment in order to understand their position against the expectations of the code and to enable the Ombudsman to monitor our compliance with the Code. It ensures that all landlords provide information in a consistent way, to allow effective analysis and insight into compliance with the Code.

You can read Beyond Housing's 23/24 annual self-assessment against the code [here](#).