



## Annual Complaints and Service Improvement 2023/24

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### Introduction

- 1.1 The association aims high and is committed to providing high quality and accessible services to tenants by ensuring that services meet the needs of people who use them or are affected by them.
- 1.2 As part of our Customer Service Excellence approach, we actively encourage tenants' feedback through our complaints policy, which provides a valuable indicator of our performance.
- 1.3 The association has been well placed to respond to the new Tenant Satisfaction Measures having conducted a mapping exercise last year of the current tenant engagement measures and key performance indicators against the proposed Regulator of Social Housing Tenant Satisfaction Measures.
- 1.4 Our analysis of customer feedback tells us what we are doing well and where things are going wrong, so that we can then put them right, learn from them and take action to ensure they don't happen again. It also assists and feeds into our continuous improvement reviews.
- 1.5 This report provides a summary of all the complaints, comments and compliments received from customers during 2023/24.
- 1.6 The association's complaints policy was reviewed in January and May 2024, and takes account of the Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code. The Housing Ombudsman Code requires landlords to publish a self-assessment against the requirements of the Code by the end of June. We have appointed a Board Member Responsible for Complaints - Sharon Thomas - who meets with the team and reviews complaints, is involved in lessons learned from complaints, and reports to Board.

### 2. Complaints Received

- 2.1 We continue to receive feedback, both positive and negative, about our services. These include minor complaints/comments that we may not have received previously unless the situation escalated. Minor complaints are subject to a streamlined procedure and are often noted over the telephone or during an interview with the tenant. Wherever possible, staff members will resolve the complaint immediately.
- 2.2 All tenants who provide a repair satisfaction survey with a negative response are contacted to discuss the issue and agree whether a complaint should be made.
- 2.3 During 2023/24, we received 40 formal complaints, an increase of 11 from last year. The table below shows a comparison of complaints received from 2019/20 to 2023/24:

Year	Units	Complaints	Complaints as % of tenant base	Acknowledgement on time	Response On time
2023/24	1115*	40	3.5%	100%	87%
2022/23	1108*	29	2.6%	100%	100%
2021/22	1101*	13	1%	100%	100%
2020/21	1100	12	1%	92%	100%
2019/20	1089	12	1%	100%	92%

\*Number does not include Managed for Others, Leaseholders or Shared Ownership

- 2.4 Analysis of the complaints received shows that 17 were about repairs/maintenance, 8 about Contractors conduct and not being kept informed, 3 about service levels, 4 relating to cleaning standards, 4 about pest control, 3 were in relation to the level of service received from Arawak Walton staff and 1 was about rent. 8 of the 40 complaints were not upheld.
- 2.5 Complaints continued to be raised through multiple channels, including website, email, telephone, letter, home visits, and via the Ombudsman.
- 2.6 Of the 40 complaints, three were reviewed by the Operations Director as a second stage review. All complainants are informed about their right to escalate the complaint to the Housing Ombudsman service and 3 took this option in this year, 2 of them having started the process at the Ombudsman rather than notifying us initially of their complaints.

### 3. Service Improvement - Examples of Action taken in response to complaints

- 3.1 We have held Contractor appraisals to make Contractors aware of our service requirements and to make sure they understand the etiquette of keeping

appointments and customer service whilst working in tenant's homes. We have flagged our systems to indicate specific tenant needs to enable them to offer a bespoke service linked to equality factors (eg limited mobility - wait longer than usual).

- 3.2 We have carried out training sessions for staff on repairs/damp and mould management, customer service and complaint handling. We have introduced home visits to access properties to provide a proactive approach to managing damp and mould, repairs and tenant wellbeing. We accessed 57% of properties in 2023/24.
- 3.3 We introduced a Mail Log so all hard copy correspondence is recorded, date stamped, and forwarded to the appropriate person without delay. The Log enables us to evidence all mail received at the office.
- 3.4 We are asking all tenants who contact the office for their up-to-date email and contact telephone numbers so we can contact them quickly in the event of a delay to repairs being completed. 75% of email addresses have been received.
- 3.5 In keeping with the Ombudsman's advice, the association will seek to resolve expressions of dissatisfaction and complaints at the earliest possible opportunity and will provide compensation in the form of flowers, well-being hampers and compensation where appropriate.
- 3.6 Our focus for the coming year is to continue to carry out home visits to tenants so we can manage the condition of our homes and improve relations with our tenants.

#### **4. Compliments**

- 4.1 We received 114 compliments during the year. 107 related to repairs / contractor service, 1 on cleaning standards, and 6 in relation to staff.

#### **5 Anti-Social Behaviour Complaints**

- 5.1 Housing Officers offer the ASB complainant a range of options, from simply logging the report to taking immediate legal action.
- 5.2 Where the tenant chooses to open a formal case (all complainants are offered this option) the information is recorded. When an action plan has been completed and the problem resolved the cases are classed as closed.

There were 17 new cases in 2023/24 (compared to 12 in 2022/23) with 8 carried over from 22/23. Of these, 4 remain active (13 closed) and have been carried forward into 24/25. Most cases relate to noise nuisance. There were some cross over themes such as drugs and verbal abuse.

The table below sets out the past five years Anti-Social Behaviour Complaints. The other tables provide analysis of the numbers, types and actions taken in relation of ASB complaints during the last year.

Anti-Social Behaviour Complaints	
Year	Complaints
2023/24	17
2022/23	12
2021/22	10
2020/21	7
2019/20	14

Anti Social Behaviour Cases Analysis	No.	Ethnic Origin of Complainants:	No.
<b>Number of new cases in 2023/24</b>	17	BME:	10
Number of Active Cases:	4	Non-BME:	1
Number of Inactive Cases:	13	Unknown/Not applicable	6
<b>Broad Issue of new cases in 2023/24</b>	<b>No.</b>	<b>Action Taken - new cases in 2023/24</b>	
Noise	7	No further action following investigation	7
Property condition	0	Mediation	1
Criminal Damage	1	Tenancy warning Issued	6
Drugs	5	Legal action	0
Harassment	2	Liaison with GMP	3
Verbal abuse	3	Safeguarding referral	1

**N.B.**

The 8 cases carried over from 22/23 have been resolved.

The total number of issues and actions exceed the total number of cases because a case may entail more than one issue and/or more than one course of action.

The association is registered as a Hate Crime reporting centre.

**6. Financial and value for money implications**

6.1 The resources for this activity are provided through in house staff with support bought in from external agencies. The Housing team are supported with complex ASB cases by Anti-Social Behaviour specialists and an independent mediation service provider.

**7. Consultation**

7.1 Our Tenant Quality Panel review policies where there is link to service provision. Our Board Member Responsible for Complaints reviews cases, is involved in lessons learned, and reports to Board, who are keen we continuously improve to offer high levels of service to tenants.

8. Board considered the annual complaints report at their meeting on 22 May 2024.

The Complaint Handling Self-Assessment was presented and discussed at the meeting held on 12 June 2024.

The Self-Assessment had been prepared in conjunction with the Board Member Responsible for Complaints (MRC), Sharon Thomas, and the Chair of the Tenant Quality Panel (TQP) Elizabeth Webster.

Board acknowledged the work that had gone into preparation of the documents and thanked the MRC and TQP rep for their input. Board acknowledge the comprehensive approach to managing complaints, wish to see quarterly reporting this year, and noted a learning culture has developed so tenants receive high levels of service.

The MRC takes an active part in reviewing complaints and will report regularly to Board.