

Cabinet Member for Housing Statement

Statement on the 2024–25 Annual Housing Management Complaints Report and Compliance with the Housing Ombudsman’s Complaints Handling Code

As a major local authority landlord, Wandsworth Council recognises the challenges and opportunities presented by housing complaints in 2024–25. The number of complaints we receive has increased, reflecting greater resident awareness of their rights and the mechanisms available to address concerns. We must rise to this challenge and this year’s Annual Housing Management Complaints Report details our performance, learning, and ongoing commitment to service improvement.

I have reviewed the 2024–25 Annual Housing Management Complaints Report and confirm that it records the Council’s practices, performance, and learning over the past year. The report also includes our annual self-assessment against the Housing Ombudsman’s Complaints Handling Code.

Performance and Learning:

- In 2024–25, the Housing Directorate completed 329 complaints at stages 1 and 2. Of these, 221 (67%) were resolved at stage 1, and 108 (33%) escalated to stage 2.
- Timeliness was achieved in 71% of stage 1 complaints and 69.44% of stage 2 complaints.
- The Housing Ombudsman Service (HOS) made determinations on 25 cases, resulting in 108 orders. Wandsworth accepted all determinations.
- The most common complaint topics were service delays or failures (68%), staff error or attitude (26%), and issues related to repairs, communication, damp and mould, major works, and anti-social behaviour.
- Learning from complaints has led to improvements in complaint handling, record keeping, communication, policy and practice, and staff training. Notably, a dedicated mould removal team was expanded, and a new Vulnerable Residents policy was introduced with staff training.
- Resident engagement has been strengthened through focus groups and regular communications, ensuring that feedback directly informs service improvements.

Compliance with the Housing Ombudsman’s Code:

- The annual self-assessment confirms that Wandsworth's complaints procedures are largely compliant with the Code.
- Areas of non-compliance identified in 2024 related to the timing and location of published reports, and the need for a standard objective on complaint handling for all relevant staff. Actions are underway to address these, including closer alignment of governance timetables and collaboration with Organisational Development to embed complaint handling objectives.
- The Council is committed to transparency and continuous improvement, with regular reporting to Members and publication of performance data.

Commitment to Improvement:

Wandsworth Council values the feedback and recommendations of the Housing Ombudsman. We are committed to addressing all findings and embedding learning across the Housing Department. Progress will be tracked by the executive leadership team and reported to the Cabinet Member for Housing. The changing culture and greater scrutiny on large social landlords is long overdue and welcomed, and we need to rise to this challenge so our tenants receive the best possible service from us.

Conclusion:

Wandsworth Council remains dedicated to delivering high-quality housing services and to learning from complaints to drive improvement. The collaborative efforts of the Complaints Team, Housing Directorate, and residents will ensure that our complaint handling continues to meet the highest standards.



Cllr Aydin Dikerdem
Cabinet Member for Housing
Wandsworth Borough Council
The Town Hall, Wandsworth, SW18 2PU