



ANNUAL COMPLAINTS PERFORMANCE & SERVICE IMPROVEMENT REPORT 2023/2024

Introduction

The Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code became statutory on the 1 April 2024, which means that social housing landlords are now obliged by law to follow its requirements.

As a provider of social housing with just over 500 units, Ekaya Housing Association strives to provide excellent services, recognising that it can do better by listening to resident's expressions of dissatisfaction and resolving issues as quickly as possible.

This financial year has been a challenging one for complaints, with volumes increasing over the year. We have been working hard to address the issues that lead to residents complaining.

Overview

Many of the lessons learnt have been identified and have been addressed through our internal process of complaint management sessions for improvement workstreams and this is ongoing as part of our improvement plan. We continue to work with the Housing Ombudsman on new areas of learning.

Summary of complaint 2023/24

In the financial year 2023/24, Ekaya operated a three-stage complaints process and a total of 41 complaints were received across all departments.

Number of complaints by stage

A total of 26 complaints were handled at Stage 1 and 10 complaints were handled and responded to at Stage 2, where residents did not agree with the outcome of Stage 1. 5 complaints were responded to and handled at Stage 3, which involves a complaints panel hearing which included a resident panel member where available. Stage 3 panel hearings are held as a result of complainants not agreeing with the outcome at Stages 1 and 2 of our policy. During this year 2023/24, one complaint was refused and the reason for refusal was explained to the complainant.

Complaints by Quarter

We have seen an increase in complaints and the proportion of complaints for each quarter is as follows:

- Quarter 1 (April – June 2023) we received 2 complaints
- Quarter 2 (July – September 2023) we received 9 complaints
- Quarter 3 (October – December 2023) we received 19 complaints
- Quarter 4 (January – March 2024) we received 11 complaints

Housing Ombudsman complaints

When a resident does not agree with the outcome of a review, they can refer the matter to the Housing Ombudsman (HOS). In the financial year 2023/24, three cases have been referred to the Ombudsman and we are awaiting formal adjudication from the Housing Ombudsman.

Response time and outcome

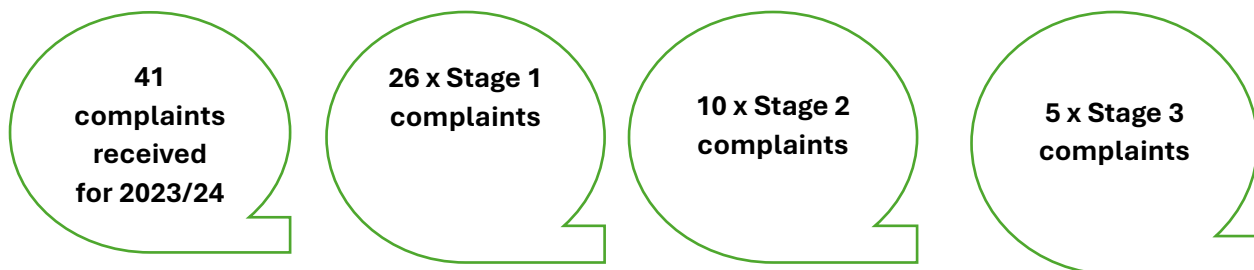
The proportion of complaints responded to within target times was 93% and 7% were outside the target time. Overall, the number of complaints upheld is 35 (85%) and not upheld 6 (15%).

Complaints by Theme (Primary reason for complaint)

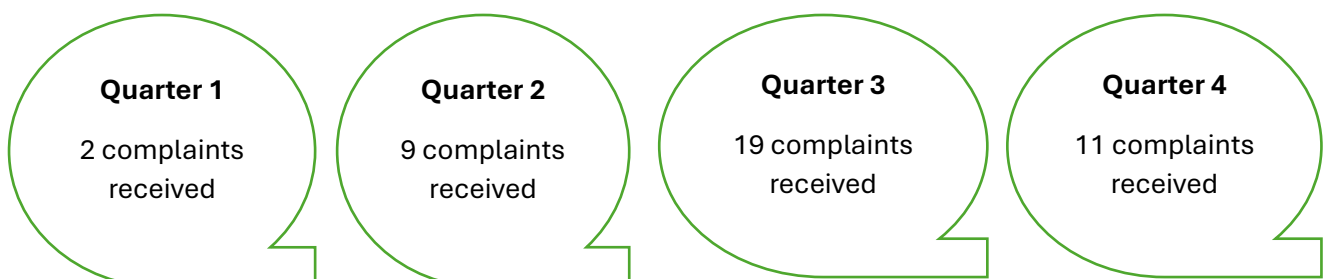
Primary area	Findings
Estate services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Weeds and overgrowth not cleared Cleaning and ground maintenance were not cleared in line with the agreed schedule
Unresolved Anti Social Behaviour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Poor Communication and follow up
Repairs heating	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Delay in rectifying heating and hot water Failure to keep residents updated on delays due to waiting for parts
Repairs (general)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Delay in work being undertaken Quality of work (poor workmanship) Poor communication- failure to keep customers informed
Staff and Contractor's behaviour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Poor attitude/behaviour

The charts below illustrate the trend of our complaint's performance

Breakdown of complaints



Complaints by Quarter



Complaints Response Time 2023/24

Responded with target

38 of the 41 (93%)
complaints received

Responded outside the
target

3 out of the 41 (7%)
complaints received

Complaints by Service Area

**Repairs and
maintenance**

31 complaints
received

**Housing
management**

7 complaints
received

**Supported
Housing**

3 complaints
received

Complaints by Theme (Primary reason for complaint)

Repairs

(general)
28 received

Repairs

(heating
related)
4 received

Estate
services

4
received

Unresolved
ASB

3 received

Contractor's
behaviour

2 received

Complaints investigation outcome

Of the 41
complaints
received 35 were
upheld

6 complaints
were not upheld

SERVICES IMPROVEMENT AS A RESULT OF COMPLAINT

Each quarter we report complaint performance and lessons learnt to the Ekaya Senior Management Team and the Board. For complex cases we hold a formal review case conference which allows us to also capture lessons from individual cases, this enables us to learn from complaints, prevent them repeating and improve our service delivery to customers. We keep lessons learned tracker and will be feeding these back through You Said, We Did, campaign during 2024-2025.

Below sets out the steps for service improvements:

Theme	Lesson learnt	Services Improvements
Keep residents informed of progress of their repairs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proactively checking raised jobs before closing any repairs to avoid residents' complaining of repair delays. • Closely monitor contractors' performance and behaviour 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase in Post Inspection's and satisfaction survey of repairs completed. • Work orders issued with every job.
Improved processes and procedures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changing a policy based on a complaint and feedback from a complainant • Case conference with all teams involved to discuss and embed lessons learned and improve service delivery • Increase post inspection of repairs and follow up on actions • Ensure all complaints responded within the timescale 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy changed after consultation • Post inspection 100% of repairs related complaints • Carry out follow up for action agreed on complaints • Case conference as part of service improvement
Estate services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure contractors meet resident expectations. • Holding resident meetings to address estate wide issues for common complaints themes to reduce complaints for the same issue 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Joint resident estate inspection. • Better management of expectations and provide greater clarity of our service standards • Reviewing all cleaning and ground maintenance services and looking to re-tender the services borough wide due to

		<p>listening to complainants.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus groups to be arranged to address common issues in different areas.
Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote our email addresses management monitoring the info email inbox • Out of office messages to be updated when staff leave the organisation • Embedding a culture of listening to the complainant 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communicate our online contact details on the website and text messages for repairs and general enquiries inboxes. • Promptly update staff out of office messages especially when they have left the organisation
Repairs (general)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better communications about follow-on works • Repairs targets to be complied with in accordance with our policy • Residents were unaware of when repairs had been raised. • Not happy with the door replacement of the front door – wrong door choice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We are updating our system to enable us to update residents when a work order has been raised to the contractor. • Contractor to provide resident information with details of our standard doors for choices and selection • Department inboxes to be used for all communications to prevent emails going to different individuals and emails being missed
Anti social behaviour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better update on how anti social behaviour is handled and actions that are being taken 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manage expectations and give clear information on powers of RP's and agencies in tackling ASB • Keep a record of action taken centrally and notes of discussion with both/all parties • Keep the complainant updated on process and action taken