

<b>LONDON BOROUGH OF CAMDEN</b>	<b>WARDS:</b> All
<b>REPORT TITLE</b> London Borough of Camden Annual Complaints Report 2023/2024 (CS/2025/48)	
<b>REPORT OF</b> Borough Solicitor	
<b>FOR SUBMISSION TO</b> Resources and Corporate Performance Scrutiny Committee  Cabinet	<b>DATE</b> 8th December 2025  10 <sup>th</sup> December 2025
<b>STRATEGIC CONTEXT</b> <p>We Make Camden is our joint vision for the borough, developed in partnership with our community. In the partner document The Way We Work, which sets out how we will change as an organisation to deliver our shared priorities, we have said that we are committed to connecting to our communities and listening and responding to what we hear to make change.</p> <p>Camden Council is also committed to learning and reflecting on our delivery and our performance. Complaints and formal enquiries provide a regular and rich source of feedback from our citizens that informs us when things have gone wrong. Learning from these gives the Council the opportunity to improve services to support our citizens.</p> <p>Insight from complaints plays a key role in achieving the right outcomes for our citizens and in continually improving our service delivery to deliver on our ambitions. In addition, it can indicate wider economic and social factors at play and help direct the Council's focus and resources accordingly. As the report demonstrates, the Council, along with other councils, continues to receive an unprecedented increase in the number of complaints it receives and is required to deal with. This has placed additional pressure on the Council, but is also reflective of wider pressures on public authorities and public housing, changes in approach by the Housing Ombudsman and additional sources of representation for tenants who advise them of the routes available.</p> <p>Despite this increase in the resource demand complaints are placing on councils and other service and budgetary pressures, Camden continues to view complaints positively so it can gain insight and information about where we should be targeting limited resources, and we outline in this report how we are responding across the organisation to resource challenges that are impacting residents. The report also briefly touches on the other indicators it considers when monitoring and evaluating its own performance. As important as complaints are as a source of insight, they should be considered alongside other sources in order to gain a balanced view of performance.</p> <p>We are committed to ensuring that residents have a better, more consistent experience when contacting and engaging with our services. Improving our response to complaints and complex issues for residents is a key part of this work, and this will remain a priority for the Council in the coming year.</p>	

## SUMMARY OF REPORT

This is the London Borough of Camden's annual complaints report for the period 1<sup>st</sup> April 2024 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025.

It is a single report that includes information on complaints across all directorates and provides a corporate overview while signposting readers to detailed results for individual services. The report also provides information on decisions issued by the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO) and the Housing Ombudsman (HO) in the same period.

The Council's Constitution states that the Ombudsman's decisions on cases where there have been mistakes or failings (called "maladministration") should be presented to Cabinet on an annual basis for their information only. Therefore, the report provides the decisions issued by the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO) and the Housing Ombudsman (HO) in the same period.

### **Local Government Act 1972 – Access to Information**

No documents that require listing were used in the preparation of this report.

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## RECOMMENDATIONS

The Resources and Corporate Performance Scrutiny Committee is asked to consider the report and make any recommendations to Cabinet.

Cabinet is asked to consider and note the contents of the report and in particular note the Ombudsman's findings of maladministration in Appendix 7 of the report.

Signed:



Andrew Maughan  
Borough Solicitor

Date: 27<sup>th</sup> November 2025

## 1. CONTEXT AND BACKGROUND

- 1.1 This is London Borough of Camden's annual complaints report for the period 1<sup>st</sup> April 2024 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025. This report therefore reflects both the complaints received during this period, and the reflection, learning and change that the Council has undertaken subsequently. The report seeks to provide an update on the Council's activity over the last year to improve services in response to complaints, feedback and our organisational ambitions and priorities. The report outlines patterns, change and trends compared with previous years, and seeks to explain and update as far as possible.
- 1.2 The Council provides a wide range of services to our communities, ranging from relatively straightforward transactions to delivering complex, multi-faceted and long-term support to people in need. Our The Way We Work Strategy sets out our plan for organisational change and capability-building, and how we will shape an organisational culture focused on learning, listening and improvement.

*"We want to continue to connect with our communities on a human level, listening deeply during every conversation and responding creatively to what we are seeing and hearing. We need to continue to support our workforce to ensure that everyone has the tools and permission they need to make this possible and that they feel empowered to do so"*<sup>1</sup>

The Way We Work

- 1.3 We recognise the importance of complaints, feedback and the insight they provide to achieve this goal. When citizens do complain, we seek to learn from their complaints and identify patterns of service failure. We continue to use the feedback we receive from our complaints to fuel ideas for service improvements, both in the short and long terms – and there are notable examples of this detailed in the appendices. We also work to review complaints compared to other similar organisations - albeit Camden is rare in its openness in reporting its complaints data. This report demonstrates this in particular with regard to housing, and more significantly, with councils experiencing similar housing pressures across London. The report records the Housing Ombudsman's special investigation, which was completed in July 2025, focusing on the extremely helpful action plan which came about as a result of the joint working with them.
- 1.4 Many residents have a positive experience of engaging with the Council and receive services that are efficient and effective. Despite the increase in complaints over the last few years (an increase reflected elsewhere in London and countrywide), it remains the case that the vast majority of those to whom we provide services remain content with the services they receive. However, we know that there is work we can do across our services and with our communities and partners to improve our delivery and performance. As far as we can, we seek to use the complaints we receive as catalysts for improvement and as reminders of the impact on our constituents when we get things wrong.
- 1.5 When we receive a complaint, we seek to resolve it quickly and effectively – whilst identifying learning opportunities. Our focus as an organisation is building relational practice into all our work – developing a culture across services where honest and compassionate relationships are the priority. However, we continue to widen our definition of what constitutes a "complaint". We believe rebuilding trust through open

communication and transparency is a critical part of our complaints response process. However we also take a very wide view of what a complaint is and as a result of this change in practice and approach treat, and record as such, far more interactions as complaints than we have ever done in the past. This has to some extent contributed to the increase in the number of recorded complaints. Our definition of a complaint now aligns with that of the Housing Ombudsman.

- 1.5 This is a single report on all Council services' complaints, other than the reports for the statutory Children's social care services complaints (presented to the Children, Schools and Families' Scrutiny Committee on 10<sup>th</sup> November 2025), Housing Ombudsman Annual Complaint Handling and Service Improvement Report (presented to the Resources and Corporate Performance Scrutiny Committee on 8<sup>th</sup> December 2025 and to the Housing Scrutiny Committee on 9<sup>th</sup> December 2025) and a separate Social Housing Regulator Tenant Satisfaction Measures Annual Report that is submitted to the Regulator annually in July.
- 1.6 Alongside the Housing Ombudsman and the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman, our services are subject to a wide range of external inspections and regulations. Taken together, these give a much more rounded and fuller picture of the Council's performance than complaint numbers alone:
- **Children and Learning:** Our services have been inspected by Ofsted under the Inspecting Local Authority Children's Services (ILACS) framework and rated **Outstanding**; His Majesty's Inspectorate of Prisons (HMIP) has assessed Youth Justice services as **Outstanding**; and our Special Educational Needs and Disabilities provision is shortly to be inspected jointly by Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission (CQC).
  - **Adult Social Care and Health:** The CQC inspects both our adult social care services and our regulated in-house provider services – again assessed as **Outstanding**.
  - **Housing and Property Services:** We are also now regulated by the Regulator of Social Housing, with a positive relationship formed ahead of the forthcoming assessment, and we also fall under the new Building Safety Regulator.
  - **Housing Ombudsman** – the Council was subject to a special investigation by the Ombudsman (6 other London Councils have also been subject to this). The results of this have been reported in detail to the Housing Scrutiny Committee. While this was the result of poor performance by Camden over a period, after an intensive year of co-operation and partnership working an action plan has been agreed and the Ombudsman has declared themselves satisfied with our future plans, which they consider are being actively addressed. Attached at Appendix 8 is the report submitted to the Housing Scrutiny Committee detailing the work undertaken and the agreed action plan. The Housing Ombudsman recognises the unique and unprecedented challenges London housing authorities are currently facing.
  - **Parking Operations:** Our operations are audited annually by the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA) and monitored by the Department for Transport, with consistently strong compliance.

Beyond these statutory and regulatory regimes, Camden continues to seek out independent challenge and external perspectives – for example, inviting a further Peer Review by the Local Government Association (LGA) in the coming weeks and inviting local businesses,

community groups, and voluntary and community sector organisations to learn about and discuss our work at the annual We Make Camden Summit.

This external validation reinforces what we see internally: that Camden is, in the vast majority of cases, delivering high-quality services, led by a commitment to improvement and an openness to learning. While complaints provide one very important lens on performance, they should be understood alongside the breadth of independent evidence that consistently shows, for the majority of the time, excellence across the Council and continued striving to achieve more for our residents in an era of limited resources.

- 1.7 It is also worth noting the broader cultural shifts underway. Through the Camden Model of Leadership and our ongoing work to embed a more relational culture across the organisation, we are deliberately shaping how our people engage with residents and with one another. This commitment to trust, openness and partnership is beginning to have a tangible impact on how services are experienced and how issues are resolved at the earliest possible stage. This is further strengthened by our efforts to make the Council's services more accessible and relevant to residents through our place-based Neighborhoods approach, and increased emphasis on prevention and early intervention, seen in such initiatives as the Adult Early Help pilot and Money Advice Camden. This commitment to access and a relational approach has led, in part, to more issues that might not previously have been classified as a complaint now being treated as such, thereby providing a full response and right of appeal to residents. This is because officers when interacting with residents and hearing of difficulties they may have had will actively offer the complaints procedure to residents and if necessary, aid them in following this route. In so doing assisting residents who might otherwise have been unable to use this service.
- 1.8 Taken together, these external judgments, peer reviews and cultural shifts can provide members with strong assurance that Camden continues to perform, in the majority of cases, at a very high standard, even as we remain open to challenge, feedback and improvement.

## **2. Scope of the report**

- 2.1 The report outlines a summary of complaints across services and our organisational approach to complaints. It necessarily presents a high-level corporate overview and there may be more context and detail that Members wish to draw out directly with services. The report seeks to highlight and signpost to that additional detail. Performance in individual service areas is detailed within the marked appendices. They have been reported for discussion to the relevant management teams.
- 2.2 This report focuses not only on volumes and timeliness of responses but also aims, when it is possible, to identify themes and lessons learnt that result in service improvements in Camden. Complaints are dealt with in two stages. Stage 1 complaints, while received centrally, are allocated to the relevant services and departments to be dealt with. Should an individual be unhappy with the decision at Stage 1, their appeal is dealt with by the central complaints team at Stage 2. Should they remain dissatisfied, they may then take matters to the Ombudsman who covers that area. The main body of the report takes a corporate view of Stages 1 and 2 and then describes the process for taking matters further to the Ombudsman. The details of the results of our cases that went to the Ombudsman are contained in an appendix, along with more detailed figures from the key operational areas. We regularly update and review our processes and run them past the Ombudsman for

their comment. We last revised our procedure at the Audit and Corporate Governance Committee on the 17<sup>th</sup> November 2025.

- 2.3 Following on from last year's creation of the separate appendices, this year's report seeks to be more precise and focused on the key statistics for members.

### 3. THE OVERALL PICTURE

#### 3.1 Number of Complaints – all stages

Level	2024/2025	2023/2024
Stage 1	5121	3,242
Stage 2	1071	741
<b>TOTAL Complaints</b>	<b>6192</b>	<b>3,983</b>

Level	2024/2025	2023/2024
Housing Ombudsman (Determinations)	95	61
Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman (Complaints investigated)	20	19

The figures above clearly show the unprecedented increase in complaints received over the last three years (100%), a figure similar to that reported by other housing stock-owning Councils. This report comments in a few places on the possible reasons behind this figure and on how the Council is responding to it. However, this increase has led to increased pressure on services and necessitated additional resources being allocated. The Housing Ombudsman has become more active and interventionist over the last few years, as reflected in the numbers above, while the Local Government Ombudsman has remained more consistent in its approach.

#### 3.2 Context – Service Provision and level of transactions

Each Appendix covers the significant areas in the Council where complaints are raised. In addition, the following adds some further detail.

#### 3.3 Property Management

We handle over 250,000 customer contacts in Property Management and carry out over 150,000 repairs and servicing orders per year, in addition to a large-scale capital works programme. The repairs service has also had to adapt, taking on fire safety works, adopting a proactive approach to tackling damp and mould, and addressing disrepair claims promptly. The service is currently working hard to be ready for Awaab's law so that we fully comply with the more stringent time limits to protect our residents. This means that the waiting time for routine repairs is longer, as the service also works to keep within its budget. A significant focus is therefore communicating clearly with residents about their repairs work and how long it will take. This is particularly the case when repairs have been promised as a result of a stage 1 complaint finding, with the option to take the matter to stage 2 for tenants. This is one area where further focus is being applied. The Council also receives complaints about its older communal heating systems, and the new Housing Investment Strategy will prioritise investment in those systems that need it most. Similarly, the strategy will see additional investment in key components such as windows and roofs. This will also help take pressure off the responsive repairs service, these being areas which result in a significant number of complaints and, often, repeat complaints.

With Awaab's Law going live on October 27th, our service has been preparing for this new

way of working. We expect an initial increase in demand for our repair services due to heightened media awareness, which may lead to a rise in complaints if requests are not handled promptly. However, we have been planning for this scenario for some time.

To better meet demand, we have introduced easier methods for reporting repairs and have established a dedicated rapid response team to manage inquiries effectively. While we will be operating with existing resources, this may result in slightly longer waiting times for routine repairs. Nevertheless, the Operations team will closely monitor the situation as Awaab's Law becomes part of our business as usual operations.

### **3.2 Housing Management (Neighbourhoods)**

This service covers all tenancy and leasehold management across the Council's 33,000 homes, comprising a diverse range of estates and street properties. The service also covers estate management and caretaking services. Casework in this area can be complex, including anti-social behaviour and high-volume services such as caretaking. In addition, it is an area which produces significant numbers of member enquiries, often linked to complaints.

### **3.4 Housing Support Services**

The Council has 8,800 households on the waiting list for social housing and receives a large number of new applications each year that have to be assessed. The service has seen a 40% increase in approaches, as well as an increase in rough sleeping. On top of this, the Council has a high demand for temporary accommodation, with approximately 1,000 households accommodated at any one time and a significant increase in families having to remain in hotel accommodation. However, the Temporary Accommodation taskforce is addressing this, and we are seeing a reduction in the number of families in such accommodation.

The Council currently has approximately 8,800 households on the waiting list for social housing and continues to receive a high volume of new applications each year that must be assessed. The service has experienced a 40% increase in homelessness applications, alongside a rise in rough sleeping across the borough. Consequently, demand for Temporary Accommodation (TA) has grown significantly, with the number of households in TA increasing from around 400 in 2017 to 1,220 in September 2025.

This growth led to a substantial number of families being placed in commercial hotels and Bed & Breakfast accommodation.

However, significant progress has been made following the establishment of the Temporary Accommodation Taskforce, which is focused on strengthening homelessness prevention, increasing TA supply, and enhancing tenant support. As a result of this work and the service restructure, while the overall number of households in TA continues to rise, there are now no homeless families residing in commercial hotels and no families have been placed in Bed & Breakfast accommodation for longer than six weeks.

### **3.5 Parking Operations**

In 2024 the Parking Service issued 338,507 Penalty Charge Notices (PCNs) and received over 105,000 customer contacts. In addition to the PCNs issued, Parking also carried out



over 597,000 permit transactions.

### **3.6 Environment Services**

Around 23 million recycling and waste collections are undertaken borough-wide each year, which is an average of 100,000 per ward every month. The service also sweeps 1,379 streets (at least weekly) and empties 1,600 litter bins.

### **3.7 Adult Social Care (ASC) and Health**

ASC receives over 6000 referrals per year and will have contact with many thousands more Camden residents, family members and organisations throughout the year, with 3,500 drawing on care and over 1,000 carers supported.

## **4. Overarching nature of complaints**

- 4.1 There was a 55.45% increase in the total number of complaints from last year, with a 57.96% increase in Stage 1 complaints and a 44.53% increase in Stage 2 complaints.
- 4.2 This significant increase in complaints corresponds with a rise in complaints reported by most local authorities, particularly those in London. According to the Housing Ombudsman's July 2024 report, 47% of the cases they determined came from residents living in social housing in London postcodes. London is disproportionately represented in complaints to the Ombudsman, though just one in six social homes nationally are in London. No other region in England shows such a significant disparity between the proportion of social housing and the number of complaints. The reasons for this are complex; however, we believe it reflects challenges around the age of the stock, the density of accommodation and levels of overcrowding. This trend has now been ongoing for several years. The ombudsman has recognised that London faces additional pressures due to higher costs, more intense demand, older stock, complex cases, density, and diverse tenants.
- 4.3 Our residents deserve high-quality, responsive, and compassionate services, and we have been committed to improving these services. As a council, we have faced years of underinvestment, resulting in a shortage of resources, particularly for affordable housing in London. For Camden, we have made significant investments to expand and invest in our social housing stock, but our income and resources are not sufficient to address the challenges we face in homelessness and housing quality. We are taking steps to address this resource gap – but it remains a core and ongoing challenge across all our services. Where complaints arise from issues of service, consistency and officer behaviour, we are focusing our efforts on improving performance and providing clarity for our staff on our expectations for communication and service quality and delivery.
- 4.4 In relation to Housing, the increase in the number of complaints is, of course, driven by service failure, but it is also related to the industry which now exists around disrepair cases generally and particularly in London. The number of legal cases brought by claims companies, which cold-call tenants and leaseholders, has risen exponentially over the last five years. They advise that tenants also make complaints at the same time, if they have not already. Clearly, if a tenant has a disrepair issue which we are failing to address properly or in a timely manner, then they are entitled to complain and ultimately seek legal redress. However, this industry has meant that where we direct resources is to some extent dictated by those who complain, and issues which were not previously the subject of

a complaint now are. The rise in the number of complaints now, compared to five years ago, can also be taken as a direct comment on the level of service now being provided, but, as can be seen, it should be seen through the lens of the changing environment in which we operate.

- 4.5 Appendix 1 also reports on the Housing Ombudsman special investigation and outcome. This was reported in detail to the Housing Scrutiny Committee in September and these issues have been picked up in our annual performance report which is coming to the Resources and Corporate Performance and Housing Scrutiny Committees in December.

## **5. Corporate Complaints Service Response**

- 5.1 Over the last year we have continued to develop and transform the processes and resourcing within the Corporate Complaints team to respond to the significant increase in the number of complaints received by the Council. Considering complaints is a role that all departments are required to undertake; however, the role of the central team is vital to the overall smooth running of the system. Aligned with the increase in complaints, we have provided additional resources to the central complaints team and to individual services, such as Property Management (see Appendix 1 for further detail). In Central Complaints, for example, at the start of the calendar year, we had 9 employees, where now we have 12 employees dealing with stage 2/ombudsman and triaging stage 1 complaints to the appropriate departments. We have also seen a decrease in the times of year when complaint numbers were traditionally reduced. These periods allowed some “catch up” but are now less significant than they were. We had a backlog in dealing with stage 2 complaints earlier this year, due to a surge of appeals being received and issues around internal work allocation, but the numbers are now at more manageable levels, thanks to increased productivity, updated working practices and additional resources.
- 5.2 The Chief Executive and Directors last year agreed on an escalation process to ensure that services are responding quickly and effectively to complaints. Stage 2 and Ombudsman cases are sent directly to Heads of Service and Directors when no response has been received from the services, and this has had a positive impact on response times. Senior officers and the Council have clearly communicated to services the importance of reflecting complaints and insights from feedback. In Central Complaints, this action has resulted in increased speed responding to complaints and, in addition, reduced delays in processing complaints, such that all Stage 1 complaints and, now that the backlog has been managed from December, Stage 2 complaints are assigned within 48 hours of receipt. This has occurred in the context of a significant increase in the volume of complaints across the organization, a trend which is sadly continuing. The Housing Ombudsman reports that, from 19/20 to 24/25, there was a 230% increase in complaints across the country.
- 5.3 We have begun more regular meetings between the Corporate Complaints Team and Housing and Property managers to go through active Housing Ombudsman cases to ensure that Ombudsman decision orders are complied with within the required timescales and are closely monitored. We are particularly focusing on why cases move from stage 1 to stage 2, particularly regarding repairs. The Housing Ombudsman special investigation required significant input, primarily from Housing Colleagues but also from Central Complaints, furthering the already well-established teamwork.
- 5.4 Further development of the new case management system has enabled swifter allocation of cases, improved monitoring of performance and outcomes, and an audit trail of who is

handling the cases. Users are becoming more familiar with the functionality, which has improved case record keeping and accessibility to information.

## **6. Performance – Time taken to respond within timescales**

- 6.1 It is acknowledged that target timescales are not an absolute marker of success or of quality. The case management system has provided a better understanding and appreciation that the end-to-end time (i.e. the time from receipt of the complaint to the complete and satisfactory resolution), alongside qualitative measures, are better markers of success.
- 6.2 Our timescales are informed by the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman's (LGSCO) and the Housing Ombudsman's (HO) Joint Complaints Handling Code. Compliance with the Code is mandatory for Landlords. The proposed timescales for responding to a Stage 1 complaint remain at 10 working days, and to a Stage 2 complaint at 20 working days. Stage 1 can be extended for complex cases by a further 10 working days (20 working days in total), and for Stage 2 complaints a further 20 working days (40 working days in total). The reasons for the extension must be clearly explained to the citizen, together with the expected timescale for response. Performance should therefore be considered with these permitted extensions in mind.
- 6.3 73.5% of stage 1 complaints were responded to within 10 working days. This is a performance improvement compared to last year's 44%. This is even taking into account the significant increase in complaints. Housing Neighbourhoods and repairs are now dealing with stage 1 at 90.09% which is a notable improvement over past years, again in the face of significant increases overall in numbers.
- 6.4 The drivers of performance are likely to be a combination of:
- increase in the resources to respond to this.
  - the nature of the complaints is complex, with residents requiring an approach which involves multiple services, most often Housing services, Adult Social Care and Children's Services.
  - there has been a continued focus on the quality of response and appropriate resolution rather than the time taken to complete the response, ensuring that residents' issues are resolved appropriately.
  - there is a continued focus on improving communication with residents to keep them informed.
  - in areas with a low volume of complaints, those that are outside the timescales have a significant impact on the overall Council performance.
  - better use of the case management system has meant more accurate recording and tracking of complaints, resulting in improved performance in meeting the timescales.

## **7. Outcomes (Upheld/Not Upheld)**

The number of upheld cases at the formal stage 1 remains stable at 45.3%, being 45% last year. It seems that a figure of around 50% of complaints being upheld at stage 1 in other councils is average.

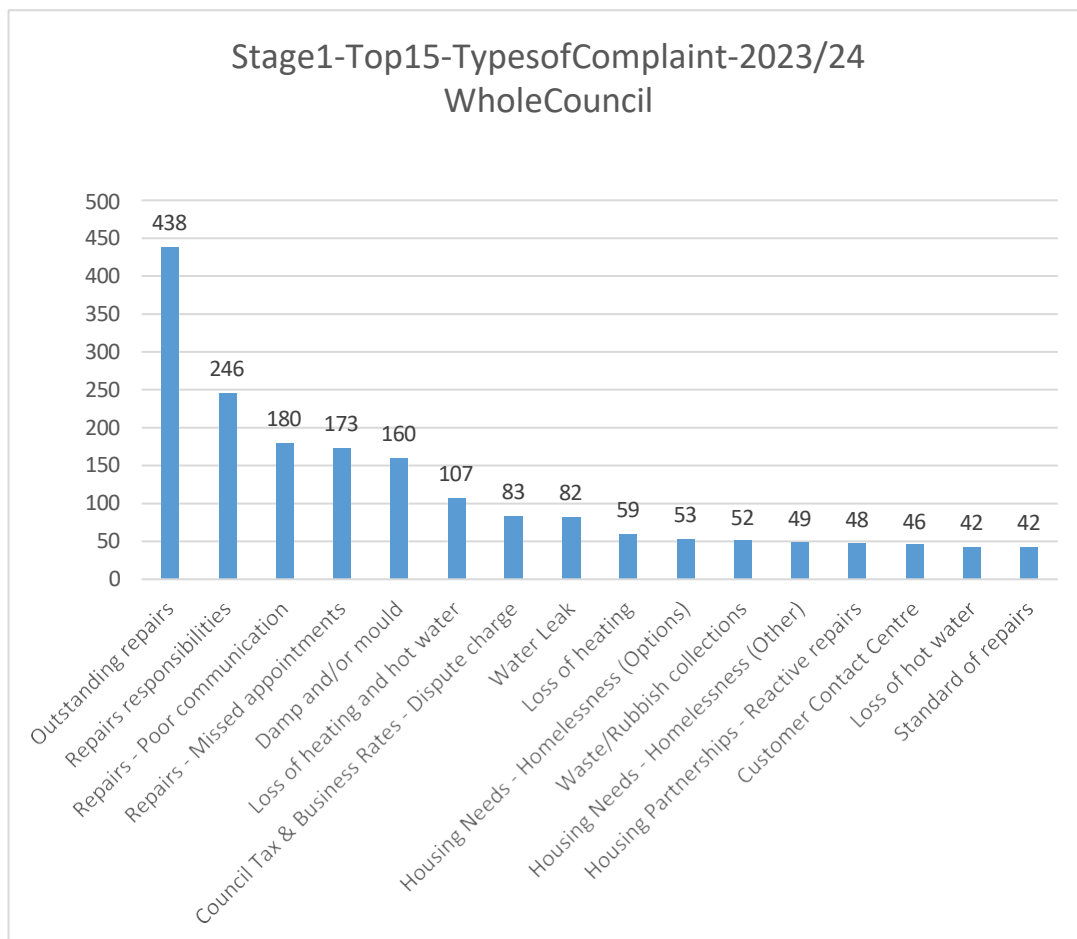
## **8. Types of Complaint**

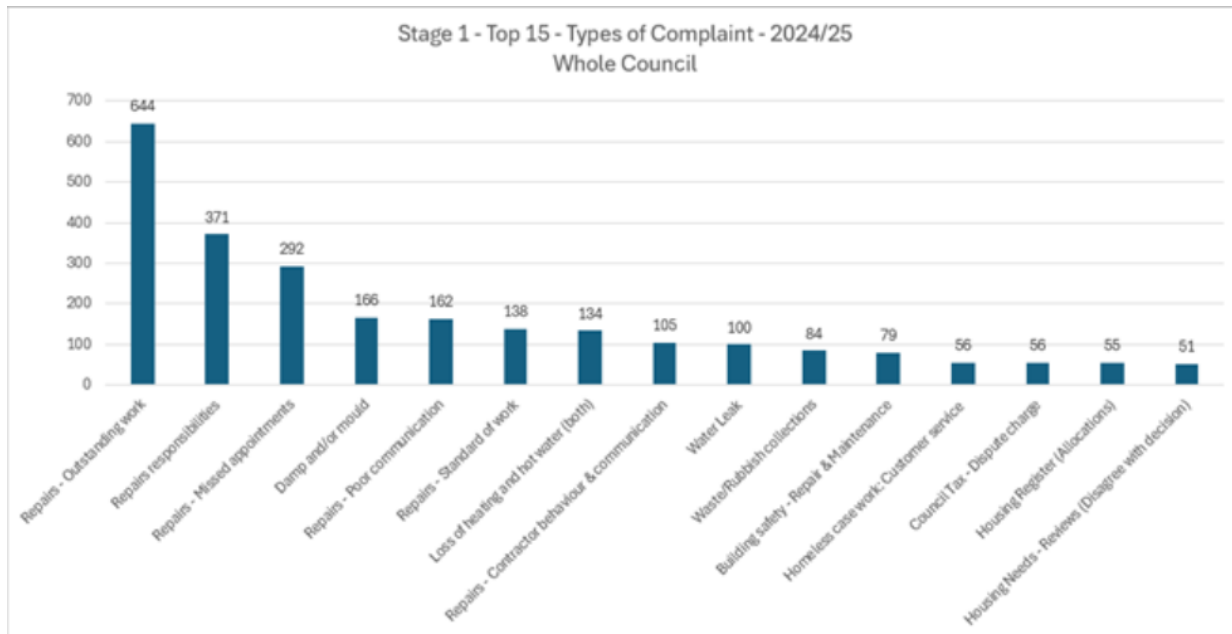
- 8.1 The high-level types of complaints set out in the complaints case management system are:

1. Delay in providing a service
2. Lack of communication
3. Staff behaviour/Poor customer service
4. Quality of service
5. Disagree with decision/action
6. Compensation request
7. Lack of information/advice/access to service

8.2 A number of these areas have been and continue to be addressed through better and more thorough training of staff. They are matters which can and are being addressed. Some matters, when analysed, relate to fundamental issues around infrastructure and resources that can only be addressed in the longer term.

8.3 The case management system is also able to report in more detail about the reason for complaints. These allow services to specifically identify the issues and themes and make targeted service improvements as a result.





The figures from last year to this year are consistent with little change.

## 9 Escalation from Stage 1 to Stage 2

- 9.1 The proportion of stage 1 complaints that progressed to stage 2 has decreased to 21% compared to 23% in 2023/2024. However in overall terms there has been, because of the increase in stage 1, an increase in stage 2 of 44.5%

## 10. Stage 2 Reviews – 2023-2024

### 10.1 Stage 2 complaints summary recorded by directorate and division

2024-2025

Figures in brackets relate to 2023-2024. Where there are no figures in brackets, there were no complaint cases in 2023/2024.

Service Area	Stage 2	Stage 2 Upheld
<b>Corporate Services</b>	<b>39 (30)</b>	23% (20%)
<b>Supporting Communities</b>	<b>997 (669)</b>	<b>34% (49%)</b>
Property Management	666 (457)	60% (57%)
Housing - Neighbourhoods	83	39%
Environment & Sustainability	73 (20)	22% (40%)
Housing - Housing Solutions	34	32%
Public Safety	32	44%
Housing - Leaseholder Services & Housing Income	27	33%
Housing - Allocations, Lettings and Private Housing Services	23	35%
Housing Management	18 (89)	61% (33%)
Housing support services	15 (49)	47% (39%)

Economy Regeneration & Investment	11 (21)	43% (14%)
Recreation	7	67%
Tenancy Management	2	0%
Resident Safety	2 (6)	0% (33%)
Development	1 (1)	0% (100%)
Housing - Innovation & Improvement	1	0%
Community Services	1 (26)	100% (31%)
Economy, Regeneration & Investment	1 (21)	0% (14%)
<b>Supporting People - Adults &amp; Health</b>	<b>24 (13)</b>	<b>37% (46%)</b>
<b>Supporting People - Children &amp; Learning</b>	<b>11 (29)</b>	<b>36% (24%)</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>1071 (741)</b>	<b>32% (47%)</b>

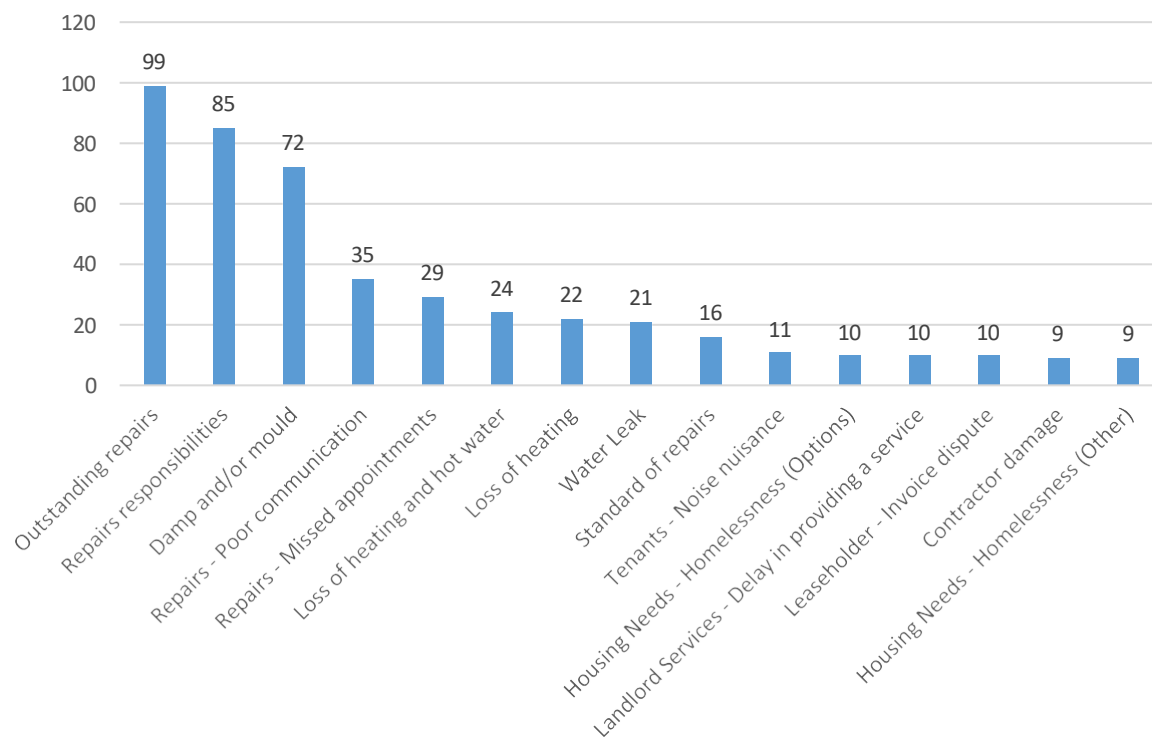
10.2 There were a total of **1071** Stage 2 reviews of complaints, which is a 44.5% increase from the previous year.

10.3 This increase is attributed to the following:

- Making it easier and more accessible for citizens to submit their Stage 2 via a form which goes straight into the case management system
- Increased profile of the Housing Ombudsman and Regulator of Social Housing in the media, increasing awareness of residents.
- Delays in responding to Stage 1 complaints resulting in requests for escalation to Stage 2 reviews.
- Intensive participation project
- Additional Stage 1 complaints.

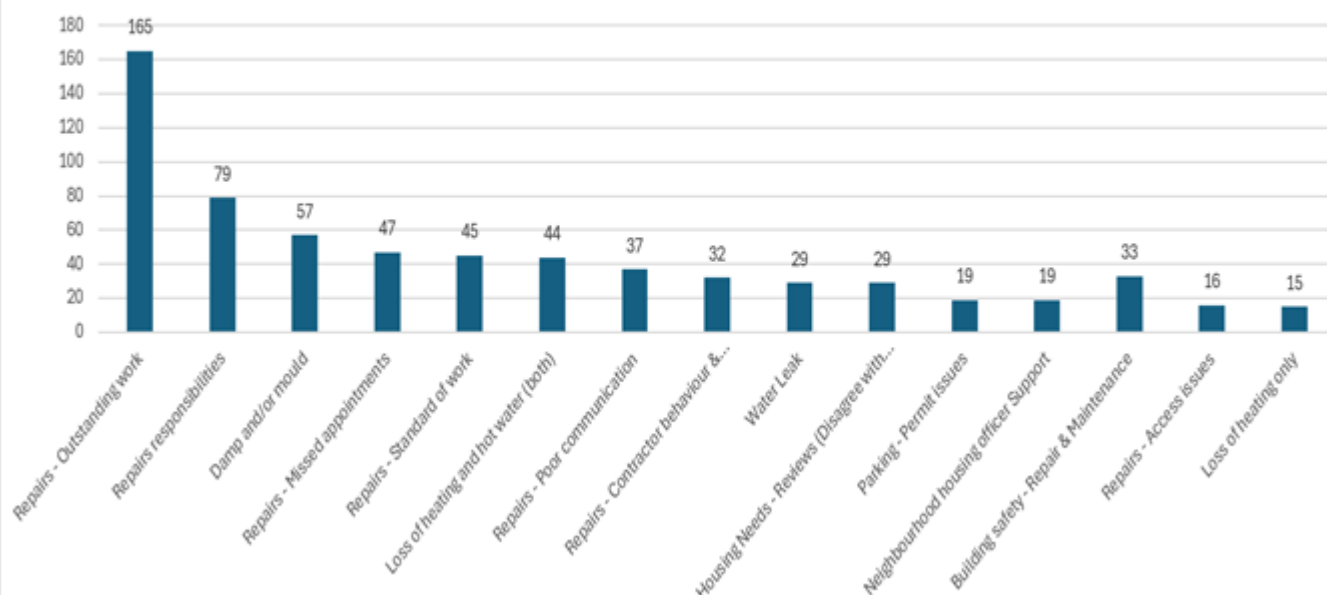
## Stage 2 - Types of complaint

Stage 2 - Top 15 - Types of Complaint - 2023/24  
Whole Council



2024-2025

Stage 2 - Top 15 - Types of complaints - 2024/2025  
Whole Council



As would be expected, the reasons for stage 2 remain similar to last year, being follow-ups from stage 1.

- 10.5 In Property Management, the main reason for a Stage 2 review is ongoing delays to outstanding repairs which were not resolved at Stage 1. In Housing Management, the main reasons are noise nuisance, delays in service provision, and leaseholder invoice disputes. Officers are working in particular on stage 2 complaints concerning repairs, which represent the majority of complaints appealed in the system.

## **11. From Stage 2 to an Ombudsman**

- 11.1 Whilst a resident can approach the LGSCO or the Housing Ombudsman at any point, an Ombudsman will generally only formally investigate a complaint once it has been through our local procedures at Stages 1 and 2.
- 11.2 The proportion of stage 2 complaints (1071 – up from 741) that were formally investigated by either the LGSCO (20 from 19 last year) or the Housing Ombudsman (95 up from 61 last year cases) is 10% compared to 11% in the previous year. This indicates that the majority of complainants are satisfied with the outcomes at Stage 2, and where they are escalated to an Ombudsman, only a small proportion of those are formally investigated by them.

## **12. Legal Implications**

- 12.1 There is a statutory requirement for the Council to have a complaints process in relation to certain established services, for example, Children's Services under the Children Act 1989 and Adult Social Care services under the Local Authority Social Services and National Health Service Complaints (England) Regulations 2009.
- 12.2 The Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman, set up under the Local Government Act 1974; and the Housing Ombudsman, under the Housing Act 1996, are independent and responsible for dealing with complaints about local authorities where there has been maladministration causing injustice or a service failure.
- 12.2 Section 5A of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 requires the Monitoring Officer to report annually on any relevant Ombudsman complaint decisions against the Council. The October 2020 Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman guide says the Ombudsman will support a flexible approach to how the council will discharge this duty as long as the intent is fulfilled in some meaningful way, and a council's performance in relation to Ombudsman investigations is adequately communicated to elected members.



### **13 Resource Implications**

- 13.1 Funding for the complaints service is secured through revenue budget provision within Business Support Services. Financial remedies are paid from directorate services' budgets. There are no specific financial implications arising from this report.
- 13.2 Given that we have introduced a new financial remedies policy, it is proposed to report on how this has impacted remedies payments against last year at the beginning of the next financial year.

### **14 Environmental Implications**

- 14.1 The information and data presented in this report have no environmental implications.

### **15. Appendices**

Appendix 1 - Property Management Services  
Appendix 2 - Housing Management (Neighbourhoods)  
Appendix 3 - Housing Support Services  
Appendix 4 - Parking Operations  
Appendix 5 - Environment Services  
Appendix 6 - Adult Social Care and Health  
Appendix 7 - Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO)  
Housing Ombudsman (HO)  
Appendix 8 -Housing Ombudsman - Section 49 Special Investigation