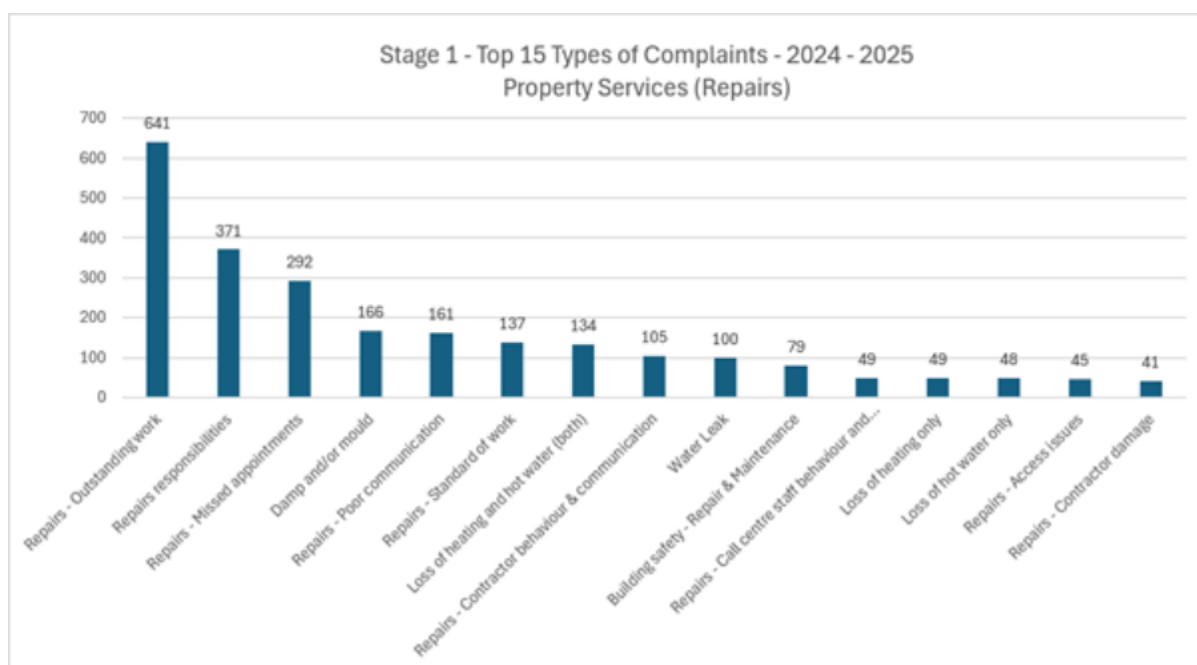


Appendix 1

Property Management Services (Repairs (leasehold and tenanted properties), planned works and facilities management)

Service Area	Number of complaints	percentage upheld	percentage responded to within 10 days	percentage responded to outside 10 days	Average w/days
Repairs & Operations	2546 (1656)	60.50% (62%)	88.20% (51%)	11.80%	7.8 (18)

(2023/2024 figures in brackets)



1. Despite significant improvements in customer service, complaints management, response times, and overall management control, there has been a noticeable increase in complaints regarding the repair service and the condition of the housing stock. Additionally, there has been a significant rise in legal challenges across London, primarily driven by no-win, no-fee solicitors. These firms often solicit complaints, diverting resources away from residents who need assistance the most.
2. To tackle the underlying issues, the Housing Investment Strategy will allocate £670 million and implement proactive asset management to improve property

conditions and ensure better quality housing for residents. The Housing and Repairs Transformation Programme is already working on introducing updated policies, procedures, and systems. This initiative includes a Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system designed to streamline staff processes, allowing them to manage and track complaints from resolution to completion.

3. In November 2024, the Housing Ombudsman released its investigation report titled "Paragraph 49" regarding Camden Council. The report identified 14 required actions, primarily concerning our complaint handling, as well as issues related to leaks, damp, mould, and general repairs. It is important to note that investigations of this nature are not uncommon; neighbouring councils and large housing associations in London have faced similar inquiries in the past.
4. It is essential to acknowledge that some of the individual cases highlighted in the investigation revealed that we did not adequately handle complaints, and we let some of our residents down. While many of these cases were from at least two years ago, particularly during the COVID lockdown, we fully accepted the Ombudsman's findings.
5. Since that report, we have been working closely with the Ombudsman, providing extensive documentation on our working methods and repair policies, and we have addressed the 14 action points they requested. Following our comprehensive efforts, the Housing Ombudsman officially notified us in July that they were satisfied with our progress and that their investigation is now closed.
6. As customer activity in Property Services continues to rise each year, we do not expect a decrease in complaints in the near future. To put this into perspective, the Housing Repairs Customer Contact manages over 275,000 customer interactions annually, with approximately 150,000 related to repairs and servicing. Our ongoing engagement with residents through various initiatives, such as Better Homes improvements and fire safety, results in around 500,000 customer interactions each year, which naturally leads to a likelihood of complaints.

Additionally, the Ombudsman has reported a staggering 474% increase in complaints related to housing stock conditions nationwide over the past five years.

7. However, we have introduced a dedicated Resident Oversight Panel, which has been instrumental in developing our new compensation policy and ensuring better quality of our responses. We have also expanded our case management team to ensure timely, high-quality replies, established a new completion team, and appointed a Lessons Learned Lead to foster a culture

change across our organisation. Furthermore, our investments in online systems have begun to show real improvements.

8. Our new approach to thinking from a resident's perspective has made a difference in the past year. The Lessons Learned Lead (LLL) for repairs works very closely with our resident panel members, systematically analysing past repair projects to identify what worked and what did not. By drawing on insights from past experiences, this role fosters a culture of continuous improvement within the team.

The LLL has implemented best practices and streamlined processes that enhance efficiency and reduce the likelihood of repeated mistakes. Regular workshops and feedback sessions are now held to share these valuable findings, enabling team members to learn from one another and build on each other's successes.

9. The Resident Oversight Panel has played a crucial role in developing our new compensation policy, which came into effect on August 1st. They have also ensured that the quality of our responses meets high standards by collaborating with the case management team and reviewing our customer replies. Our extensive work with this panel has led to an expansion of its membership. We have created a dedicated microsite on the Camden website to promote transparency regarding the panel's work.
10. To address the rising demand for our services, we have strengthened our case management team by hiring additional staff and reallocating existing resources. This expansion enables us to manage more cases effectively and efficiently. Furthermore, we have standardised our processes to improve workflow and ensure that each case is handled in accordance with the Ombudsman's standards. These strategic measures ensure we have the capacity to respond to the increasing demand.
11. Response times have significantly improved, with the percentage of complaints responded to within 10 working days rising from 37.2% last year. This is a positive development, especially considering the continued increase in the total number of complaints. However, the performance for responses within 20 working days has decreased from 76% last year to 52.8% this year, which reflects the growing volume of complaints.
12. Introducing a completion team focused on managing complaints from start to finish already delivers significant benefits. By promptly addressing complaints, the team enhances customer satisfaction and demonstrates our commitment to quality service. This approach has led to a notable reduction in unresolved complaints. These early successes highlight the value of a specialised team in complaint management, leading to a better customer experience.

13. We have significantly improved how we handle stage 1 complaints, resulting in enhanced customer satisfaction. Over the past 12 months, our independent outbound call provider, KWEST, has contacted over 1,000 residents who submitted complaints. As a result, we have observed a noticeable increase in positive feedback and stronger relationships with our customers. We share this feedback through our monthly ward updates and on our website.
14. When we analyse the types of complaints we receive, we find that a quarter of them are related to outstanding repairs, specifically delays in service or issues with the quality of the services provided. To address this more effectively, we introduced a new front-end reporting system, ROCC, last December. This system not only allows residents to self-report a wider variety of repair issues than ever before, but, as of June, also enables them to self-track certain types of existing repairs, allowing them to see the status of their requests. As a result, we have noticed a decrease in enquiries to the contact centre.
15. We have upgraded our telephony and back-office repairs systems to enhance communication for residents and streamline our support processes. These new systems improve communication between residents and the council and facilitate better information sharing among our internal teams. For example, Chat AI implementation helps triage resident inquiries and gather essential initial information. This enables our contact centre staff to assist more residents efficiently. Furthermore, our improved automatic scheduling for repair appointments allows our operatives to serve more residents effectively. These enhancements are supported by a stronger framework for collecting, recording, and reporting service data, enabling us to make continuous improvements over time.
16. We have initiated a new London council complaints forum to effectively address and learn from complaints management practices across councils. This platform allows us to share experiences and strategies, enabling us to adopt best practices in handling stage 1 complaints. By drawing on the collective expertise of other councils, we aim to enhance our processes and ensure that we respond to complaints more efficiently and effectively. This collaboration is a significant step toward improving our complaint resolution efforts and better serving our residents.