

# wandle

## Annual complaints performance and service improvement report

2024/25

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Reviewed and approved by the  
Board on: 23 July 2025



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# Introduction

**At Wandle, our purpose is to support people across south London who need a home, and our vision is to provide homes to be proud of and services you can trust.**

The Housing Ombudsman Service notified us of their intention to conduct a special investigation into our complaints handling based on the high volumes and high rates of determinations of maladministration and severe maladministration for our complaints that were assessed by the Ombudsman, in October 2024.

We have implemented a complaints project to change and improve our complaints handling and ensure that we are listening and responding to you effectively. We have created and implemented a new procedure, provided training for all colleagues and created new compensation guidance in line with the Housing Ombudsman requirements. We are now seeing improvements in complaint handling timescales and satisfaction with responses and appropriate redress for customers.

Recognising that Wandle has responded to the issues with its complaints handling, in June 2025 the Housing Ombudsman Service decided to close their investigation.

We know our current performance is not where it should be and needs significant improvement. We are committed to keeping our residents informed about the progress of the investigation and the improvements we are making. The insights and recommendations from the Housing Ombudsman have been pivotal in shaping our strategies, and we are confident that these efforts will lead to substantial enhancements in our service delivery.

In addition, we have outlined our commitment in our new corporate strategy that will deliver the right homes, right services and the right support.

**We aim to develop a more responsive, transparent, and customer-focused organisation, and we are thankful for the Ombudsman's continuous support.**

This report has been produced to meet the requirements of the Complaint Handling Code, and for residents to be able to explore our service – and hold us accountable for promised improvements. We have also provided a glossary of terms at the end of this document.

## How we handle complaints

We have a two-stage complaint handling process, and this is explained in more detail in our complaints policy on our website.

All new complaints are investigated at stage one, and a response will be sent within 10 working days from a member of staff involved in the initial problem.

If the customer is unhappy with our stage one response or believes we haven't done what we said we would, they can escalate their complaint to stage two of our process. We aim to respond to stage two complaints within 20 working days.



# Improving our services and learning from complaints

Below are some of the changes we made in 2024/25.

## Property condition and repairs

Our residents have requested prompt and efficient responses to their repairs. To address this, we have put in place additional interim staff to support and improve our repair service. These will be permanent positions in the future.

A project has been set up to deliver older repairs that have not been completed. These are being delivered by a new contractor, and they will contact customers, agree on an appointment, and deliver the repair.

This will free up capacity for the in-house service, which will focus on new jobs coming in as well as older jobs that require further work – these are called follow-on jobs. All customers impacted will be contacted and offered compensation.

## Anti-social behaviour

Our customers would like us to respond promptly to reports of antisocial behaviour and keep them informed throughout the case.

We have launched a new improvement plan that prioritises holding community surgeries as a preventative measure to address concerns before they escalate to antisocial behaviour.

Our housing officers have scheduled a year-long program to regularly visit their designated patches. By enhancing our community presence, we can identify and focus on areas with high demand.

## Damp and Mould

We have a dedicated team of surveyors who promptly address all cases of damp and mould. They ensure accurate diagnosis and work with residents to develop a plan for completing the necessary work. Our aim is to complete work within 14 days, and to visit within three months after completion.

We plan to create a resident damp and mould sounding board, who will work with us to ensure we deliver to a high standard and therefore hold us accountable.

## Communication

Communication is regularly mentioned as an issue when residents complain to us.

We have continued training colleagues on communication best practice through our bespoke programme.

In the coming weeks, we will introduce our agreed approach to communicating with customers when scheduling appointments, which will be outlined in our resident annual report, prioritising phone calls over text messaging.

We will also maintain contact with customers throughout the complaint handling process to verify and agree on complaint details, ensuring an open channel of communication.

## Record-keeping

We know how frustrating it is when we have not properly kept records of key decisions or actions on your case file. We have reviewed all the determinations related to record keeping and done the self-assessment against the spotlight report. All of this has informed our new complaints handling system that goes live Summer 2025.

## Our culture shift

We have outlined our commitment to residents in our new corporate strategy to ensure we are delivering the right homes, right services and the right support.

### We will:

- Listen and act, valuing residents' feedback to inform our decision making
- Do more to exceed expectations and to be transparent about our performance
- Make sure it's easy to get in touch with us across all channels
- We will continue to review and improve our approach to resident engagement and scrutiny to ensure that we achieve the right impact in the right places at the right time.

### Making it happen:

- We will ensure that services and service delivery take full account of the new consumer standards and the Code of Practice.
- We will seek to co-produce with our residents how our services are shaped and delivered.
- We will use insight and data to understand as much as we care about residents and their needs, and the homes they live in.

## Wandle and the Housing Ombudsman

We are a member of the Housing Ombudsman Service, and residents can get in touch with them at any point during their complaint. The Ombudsman's role is to investigate complaints and resolve disputes involving the residents of social landlords. They make the final decision on any disputes and will issue 'determinations' on any cases that they are involved in.

In November 2024, the Housing Ombudsman published the Annual Landlord Performance Report; a copy of our report can be found [here](#).

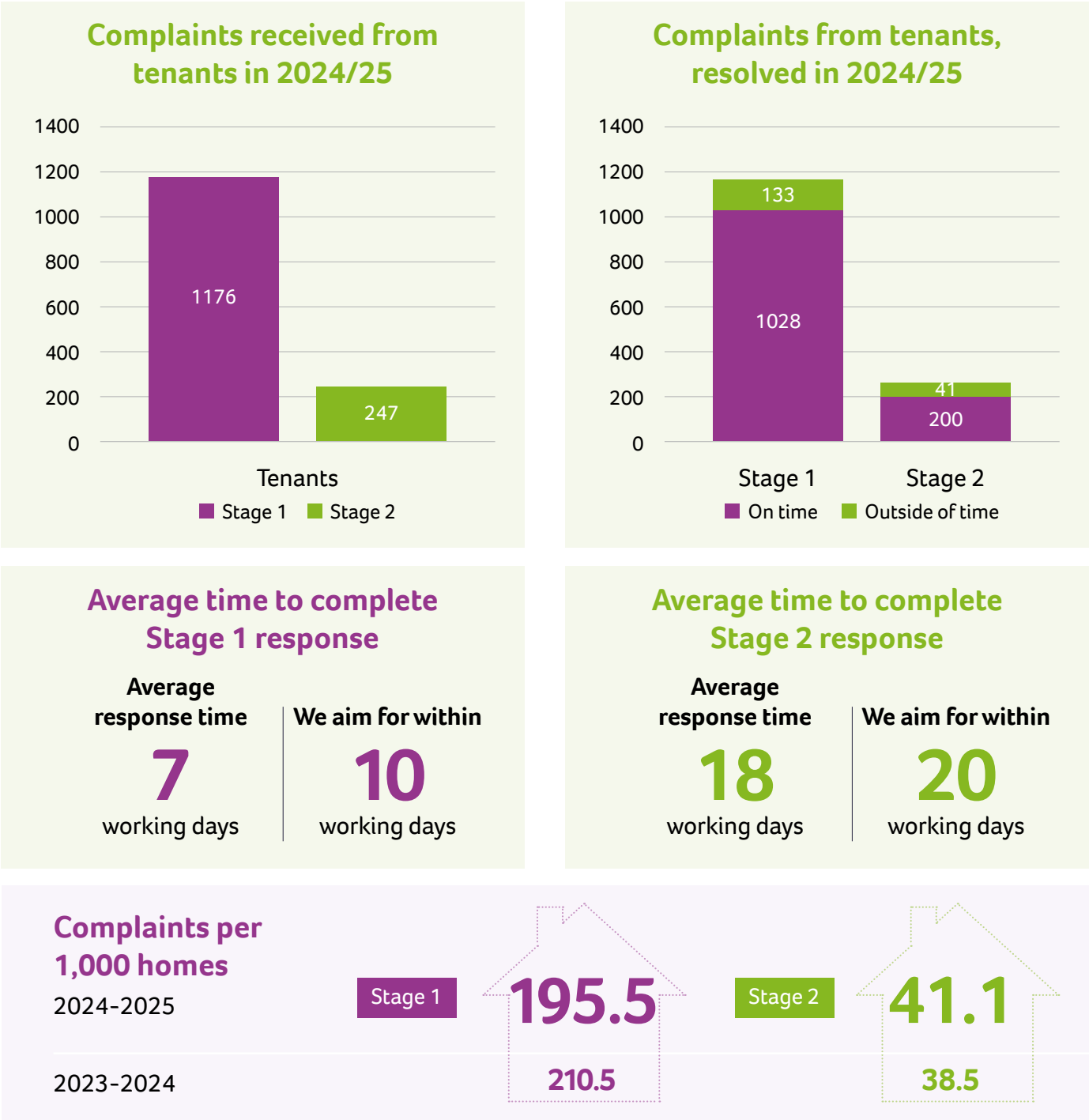
All figures referenced in this report cover the period from 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025.



# Complaints we handled in 2024/25<sup>1</sup>

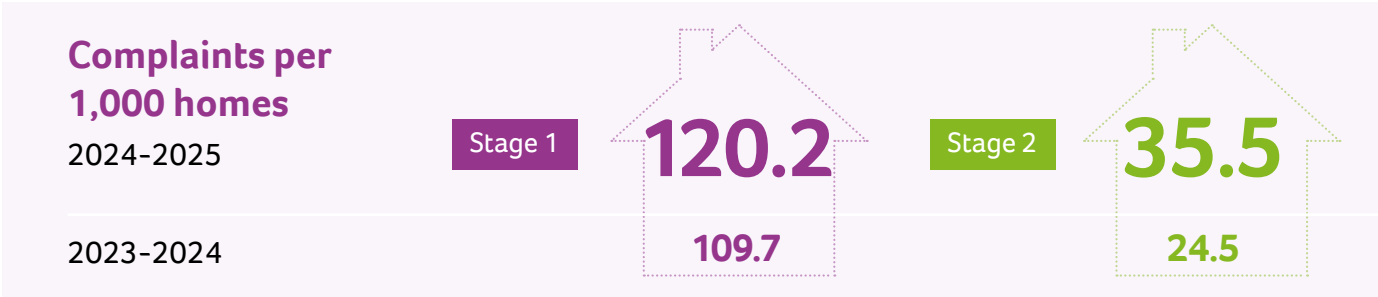
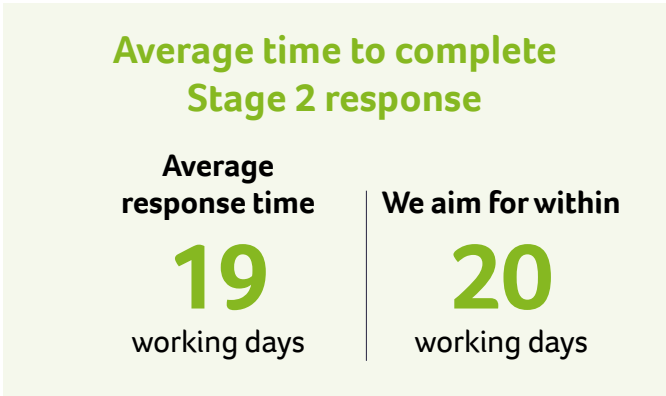
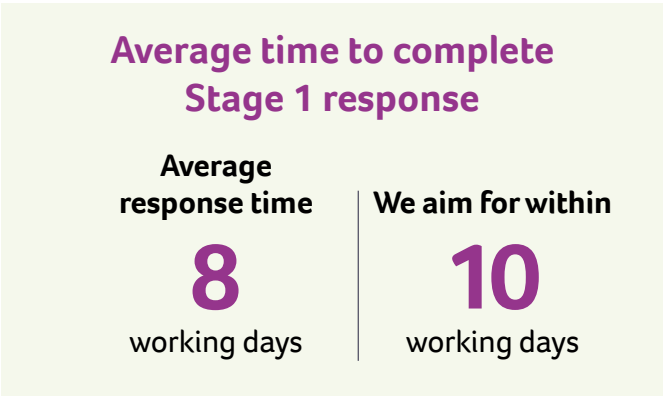
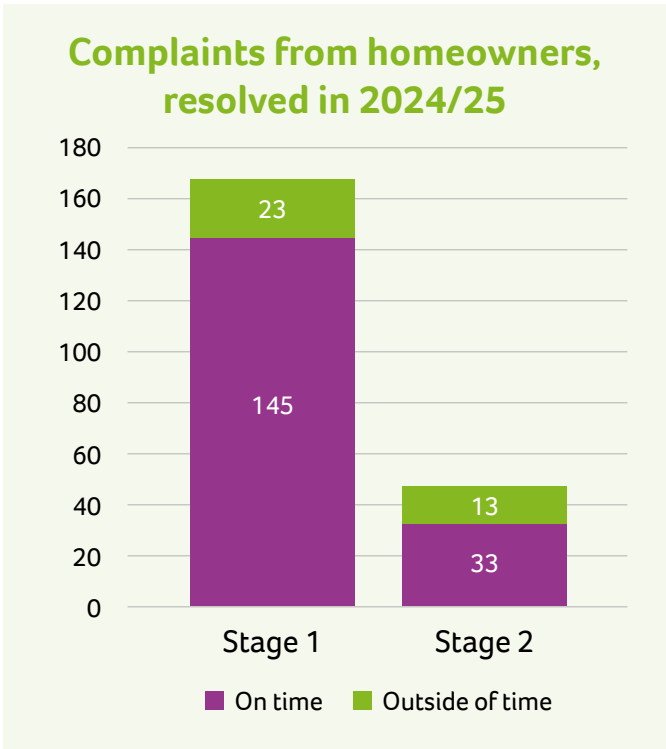
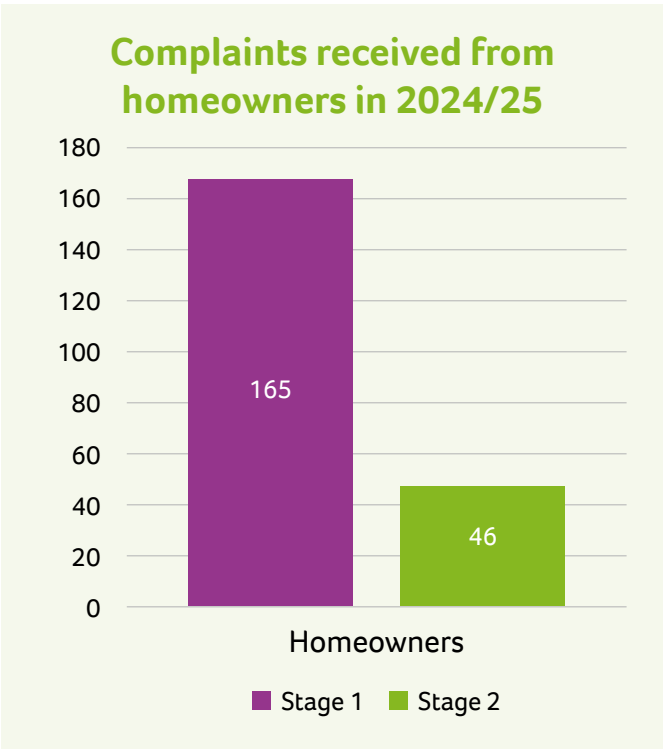
In this report, we are reflecting on complaints handled from 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025.

## Tenants

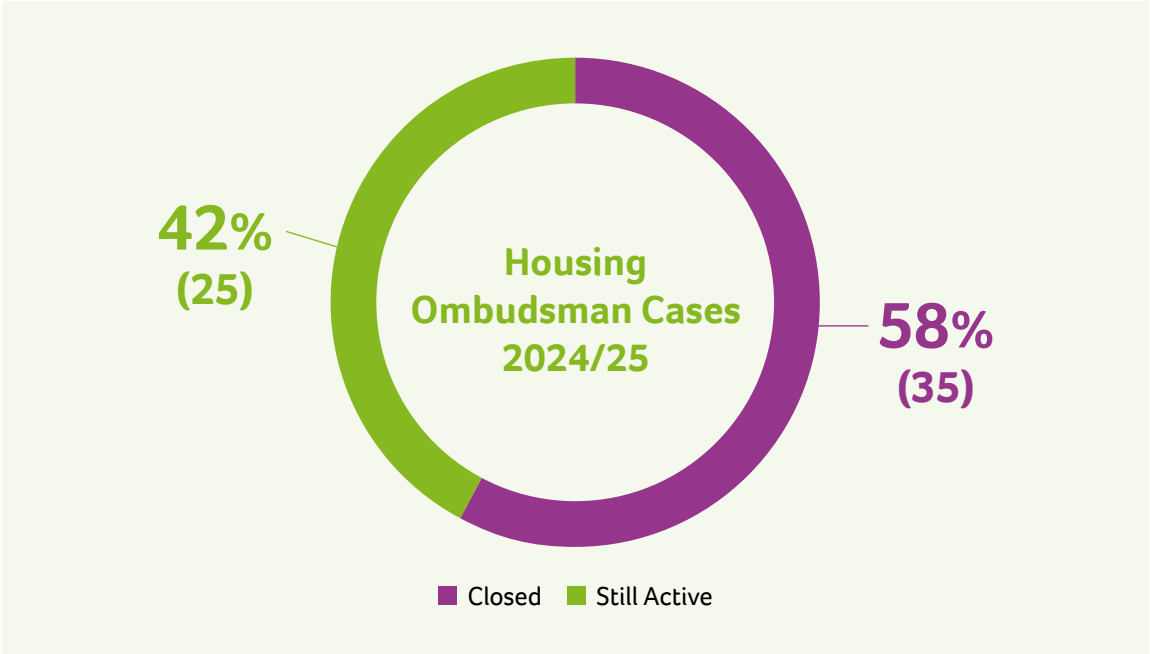


1. In this report, we are reflecting on complaints handled from 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025. Some complaints that were opened in this period were closed later; and some complaints that were raised before 1 April 2024 were closed during the year the report covers. This explains why there are differences between the numbers when we talk about complaints received and complaints resolved – for example, in this year we completed 1161 responses to complaints, but we received 1176 complaints. We'll make it clear which data we're using to help you, but this is why you may see small differences.

Homeowners<sup>2</sup>



2. Homeowners’ includes leaseholders and shared owners.



The report provides an overview of our performance throughout the year and compares us with other housing service providers.

We were notified in October 2024 of the Housing Ombudsman’s intent to carry out a special investigation regarding our complaints service as a result of a high level of maladministration findings in their determinations.

We have been working closely with the HO service since then and have had productive meetings

where our service improvement actions have been considered by them.

We are awaiting the findings of this engagement which will either confirm a full investigation will take place or that the HO service will monitor our service improvement actions and outcomes.

During the year we received 13 determinations that had an element of severe maladministration within them. We hold an individual case review meeting following all determinations so that we can learn from the findings.

| Ombudsman decisions                 |                        |                            |                                   |
|-------------------------------------|------------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 51 determinations with 154 findings |                        |                            |                                   |
| 51                                  | 154                    | 127                        | 242                               |
| Determinations                      | Findings               | Maladministration findings | Orders made                       |
| £48,951                             | 88%                    | 40                         | 0                                 |
| Compensation                        | Maladministration rate | Recommendations            | Complaint handling failure orders |

For more information about the Ombudsman process, please refer to the glossary.



We received 51 determinations and 145 findings that include poor communication, sub-standard property conditions, repair issues, damp and mould, missed appointments and antisocial behaviour.

To improve these services and get to the root cause of these issues, we launched three projects that focused on repairs, complaint handling and damp and mould. This has involved a dedicated project group that are committed to improving these services and the customer experience.

Including customers in our improvement work was key to making these changes and ensuring their voice was heard. We partnered with the tenant engagement experts TPAS to consult with two of our key customer groups. They shared their

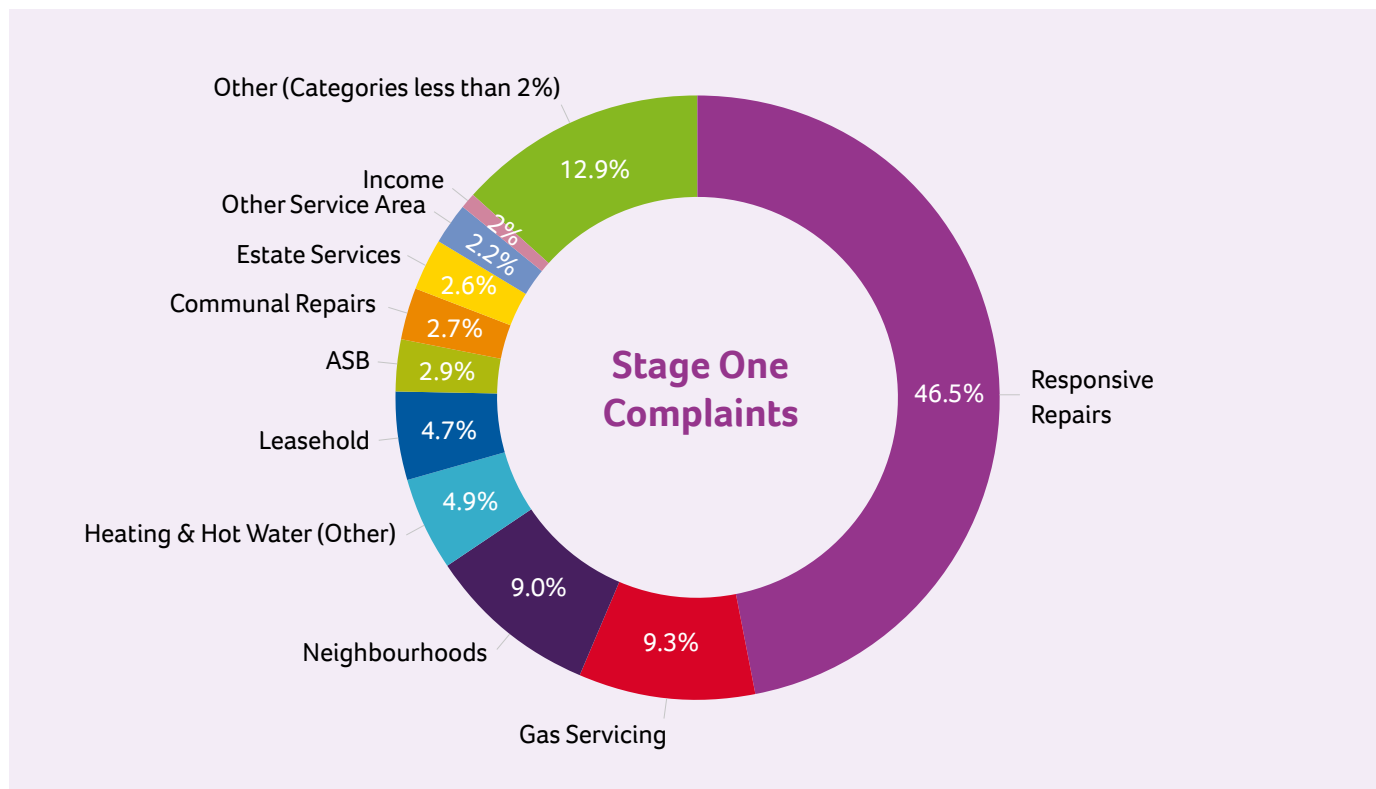
experiences and valuable insight that is being used to shape our future.

We also delivered additional training for colleagues who handle complaints, as well as the Housing Ombudsman e-learning on the Complaints Handling Code.

This training has equipped our staff with the necessary skills to handle complaints promptly and effectively. Our response time for Stage 1 complaints is now seven working days, compared to a target of 10 working days, and Stage 2 complaints are addressed within 18 working days, against a target of 20 working days.



# What do residents complain about?



The most common reasons for residents lodging a stage one complaint were:

## Repairs (46.5%)

- Residents were unhappy with the time it took for a repair to be completed, as well as multiple visits per repair.
- Missed and late cancelled appointments with little to no notice.
- Poor communication, with few updates.

## Gas services (9.3%)

- The four-hour appointment window does not fit in with schedules, and many residents said they would prefer a fixed appointment that they can book themselves.
- Gas service appointments are regularly missed, and they would like to be sent a text reminder the day before.

## Neighbourhoods (9%)

- There is a general disconnect between residents and housing officers, and a real desire to see them out and about on estate visits. This would make it easier and more effective to report concerns such as cleaning standards of the communal areas, antisocial behaviour and rehousing requests.

## Heating and hot water (4.9%)

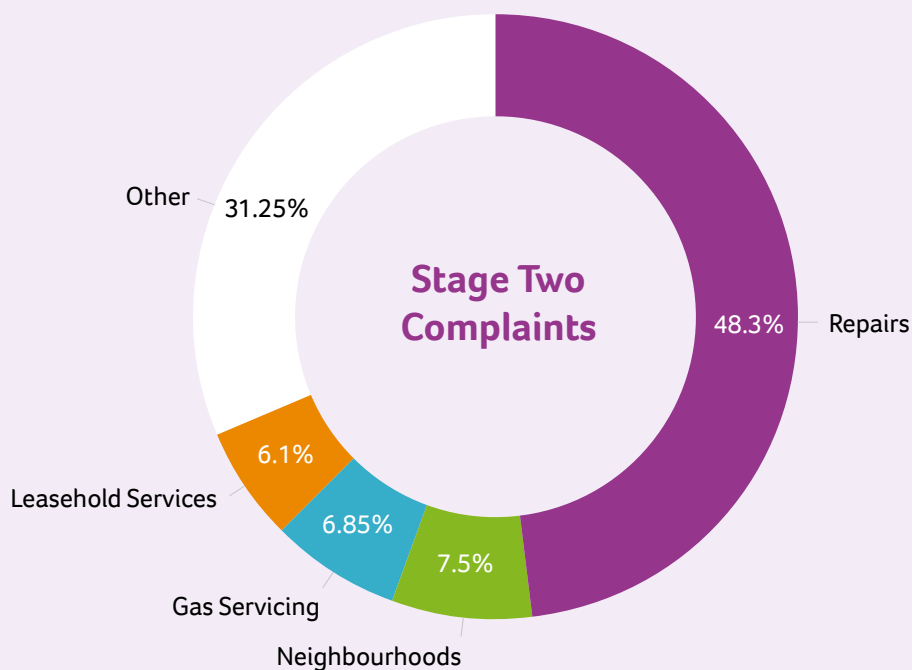
- There is a perceived delay in responding to heating and hot water issues, as well as the length of time it takes residents to report an issue.

## Why are cases being escalated to stage two?

Too many complaints are being escalated to stage two. To make sense of why this is happening, we reviewed the themes of escalated cases, and they are:

- Agreed resolutions are not yet complete when we issue our response
- Inconsistent and unsatisfactory response quality
- Not addressing all complaint points at stage one
- Unsatisfactory compensation or redress
- Lack of communication and follow-up after our stage one response.

The category of complaints at stage 2 are broken down into the below:

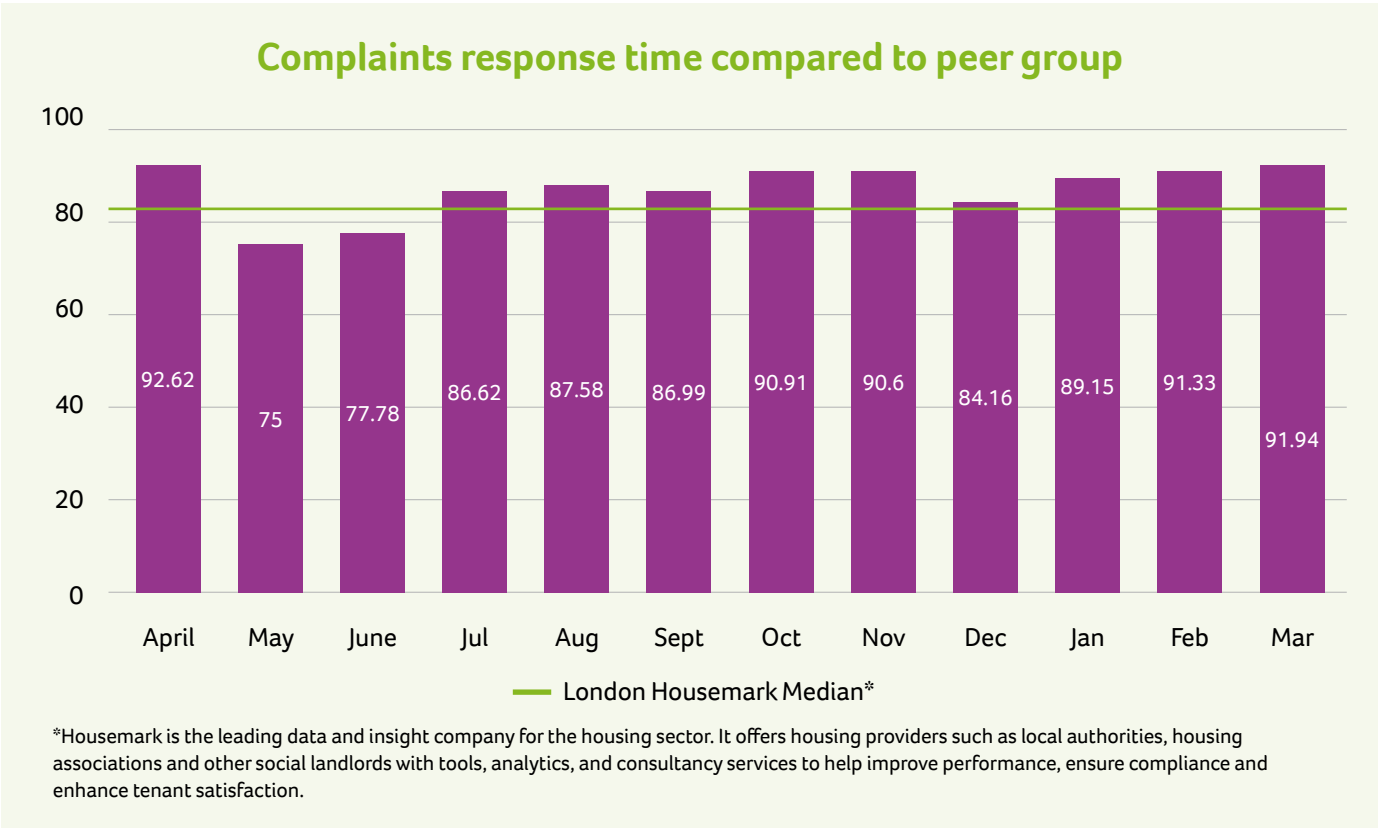


## Refused complaints

In the 2024/25 period, we initially declined to log a complaint as it had already been addressed. However, after further discussions with the Housing Ombudsman, we reconsidered our position, accepted the complaint, and successfully resolved the issue.

# Are we responding to complaints on time?

Our complaint response time has significantly improved compared to our peer group. In 10 out of the last 12 months our response times have been better than our peer group. We recognise the need to enhance the quality of our responses and record-keeping to ensure we have all necessary information when addressing complaints. This is being addressed through our complaints handling project.



# Are customers happy with our approach to complaint handling?

In 2024/25 we surveyed 1266 customers as part of our Tenant Satisfaction Measure (TSM) surveys. 543 customers told us they had logged a complaint in the last 12 months. 16.4% of these customers said they were satisfied with our approach to complaint handling, an improvement against 12.6% last year, but still below our target of 25%.

We are working on a project to improve how we handle complaints and enhance the customer experience. We have created a new guide for complaint handling and compensation.

We have also trained our staff on complaints handling, including the Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code, and provide this training to new employees during

their induction. Additionally, we have started a Repair and Damp and Mould project to address the main causes of complaints.

| Satisfaction with complaint handling (%) |         |
|--|---------|
| Target                                   | Actual  |
| 2024/25                                  | 2024/25 |
| 25                                       | 16.4    |
| 2023/24                                  | 2023/24 |
| 25.3                                     | 12.6    |

# Glossary of terms

## Housing Ombudsman

The Housing Ombudsman is responsible for resolving disputes between tenants and landlords in the social housing sector, promoting fair treatment, and improving complaint handling across the industry.

## Housing Ombudsman Determination

A formal decision made by an Ombudsman after investigating a complaint.

## Housing Ombudsman Findings

These are the formal outcomes of investigations into complaints. These are:

### No maladministration

The landlord acted appropriately.

### Service failure

A minor failing occurred that needs to be addressed, but it didn't cause significant harm.

### Maladministration

A failure by the landlord that negatively affected the resident.

## Severe maladministration

A serious failure with significant detrimental impact on the resident.

## Resolved with intervention

The complaint was resolved through mediation with the Ombudsman's help.

## Redress

The landlord acknowledged the issue and took steps to resolve it before the Ombudsman's investigation concluded.

## Outside jurisdiction

The complaint falls outside the Ombudsman's authority to investigate.

## Withdrawn

The resident chose to withdraw the complaint, and the Ombudsman agreed with the circumstances.

## Notes



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