

Annual Complaints Performance and Service Improvement Report 2023-24

(Governing Body Response)

As a large Local Authority landlord, complaints in 2023/24 have been a challenge and numbers have increased in part because of significant publicity around housing issues. We have been working hard to reduce the problems which lead to residents complaining and have made good progress in this including the following key changes:

- Increasing the size of our central complaints team and the complaints team in Repairs & Investment to respond to complaints within timescales.
- Introduced a complaints procedure to ensure clarity and consistency in complaints handling across landlord complaints.
- Brought in a new complaints managements system to better analyse complaints data, this will be built on in 2024/25 to include demographic data.
- Working on improving our Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) Policy & Procedures and information booklet to improve residents' understanding and expectations of what is achievable.
- Forming a damp, mould a condensation specialist group to reduce the backlog of appointments and improve our approach to cases.
- Improving Repairs & Investment staff focus on record keeping ensuring greater understanding of why notes are important for both complaints handling and general use.
- Introduce a new 'Caretaking staff manual' so all caretakers are working to the same service standards which are aligned to our Caretaking Service Charter¹. This aims to improve cleaning standards and consistency across all estates.

Housing Ombudsman determinations have grown this year as the Ombudsman has increased its own capacity to clear their backlog. As a result, determinations received relate to a wide range of issues dating back as far as 2018 with very few relating to 2023/24 directly. Some learning points identified have already been addressed through our complaints and repairs improvement workstreams, however we will continue work closely with the Ombudsman on new areas of learning and ways to improve our services.

From 2024/25 onwards the Cabinet Member for Housing Management, Neighbourhoods and Homelessness will work with staff within the Housing and Safer Communities directorate to fulfil their role as the appointed Member Responsible for Complaints for landlord complaints.

This will include assessing themes and/or trends to identify potential systemic issues, serious risks, or policies and procedures that require revision as well as supporting a positive complaint handling culture.

¹ [How we keep estates clean and tidy | What service you can expect from us | Royal Borough of Greenwich \(royalgreenwich.gov.uk\)](https://www.royalgreenwich.gov.uk)