



Dolphin Living

Annual Complaints Performance and Service Improvement Report 2025/26

September 2026





Board Statement



Statement from the Governing Body as overseen by the MRC Jo Moran

As the Member Responsible for Complaints, I am pleased to present Dolphin Living's Annual Complaints Performance and Service Improvement Report for 2025/26.

Complaints provide us with valuable insight into the experiences of our residents and help us understand where we can improve the services we deliver. We are committed to fostering a positive complaints culture where residents feel listened to, concerns are addressed fairly, and lessons learned results in meaningful improvements.

During 2025/26 we received 96 complaints, comprising 84 Stage 1 complaints and 12 Stage 2 complaints. Whilst complaint volumes increased compared to previous years, we consider this, in part, to be a positive indication that residents are aware of their right to complain and have confidence in raising concerns with us. During the year we increased the visibility of our complaints process through increased resident communications, guidance materials and a new enhanced website.

I am pleased that the escalation rate was reduced to 14%, a significant improvement from the previous year. This demonstrates a stronger focus on resolving concerns at the earliest opportunity and reflects closer cooperation between Dolphin Living and Touchstone.

We recognise that our Stage 1 response performance has not always met the standards we expect. Changes in staffing and service pressures affected our ability to consistently achieve target response times. In response, we have strengthened oversight arrangements, enhanced complaint monitoring and made the decision to bring Stage 1 complaint handling in-house from April 2026. This will provide greater accountability and ensure learning can be embedded more effectively across the organisation.

Throughout the year we have continued to learn from complaints. Improvements have been made to communication during heating and hot water outages, monitoring follow-on repairs, compensation processes, resident privacy arrangements and complaint governance. These



improvements are directly informed by residents' feedback and demonstrate our commitment to continuous improvement.

I would like to thank residents who took the time to share their experiences with us. Complaints, compliments and feedback all help us improve our services and deliver better outcomes for residents. We remain committed to being open, transparent and accountable in our approach to complaint handling.

Jo Moran

Member Responsible for Complaints

Executive Summary

This report outlines the annual complaint performance for financial year 2025/26 and the key learnings and service improvements made following the resolutions of complaints. The report is a requirement of the Housing Ombudsman Handling Code (section 8.1)

Please note: Dolphin Living as a charity has several entities. One of these is Dolphin Housing Limited (DHL) which is a Registered Provider (RP). Under the RP we have 153 homes. For the purposes of this report to allow us to provide significant quantitative and qualitative data we have used all complaints received across Dolphin Living, 828 homes. We take the best practice approach and apply the Housing Ombudsman Handling Code across our portfolio regardless of tenancy type.

During 2025/26 Dolphin Living received 96 complaints, consisting of 84 Stage 1 complaints and 12 Stage 2 complaints. Whilst complaint volumes increased compared with previous years, this reflects our commitment to encouraging feedback and ensuring residents understand how to raise concerns.

We have continued to strengthen our complaints framework through improved governance arrangements; dedicated complaints oversight and a greater focus on organisational learning. The introduction of quarterly learning reviews with our Managing Agent has improved our ability to identify recurring issues and implement service improvements.

The percentage of complaints escalated from Stage 1 to Stage 2 reduced to 14% from 25% in 2024/25 demonstrating improved early resolution and increased focus on responding to residents' concerns before escalation became necessary.



Performance against Housing Ombudsman timescales remained strong overall, with 88% of complaints responded to within target timescales and 100% of Stage 2 complaints completed within the Complaint Handling Code requirements.

During the year we continued to improve awareness and accessibility of the complaints process through resident communications, guidance leaflets, engagement activities and a new website with a dedicated Complaints area

Learning from complaints has directly informed service improvements in repairs, contractor management, compensation processes, communication standards and complaint handling arrangements. These improvements support our commitment to delivering better outcomes for residents and ensuring complaints drive positive organisational change.

Background

This annual report is a requirement following the publication of the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code 2024. Landlords are required to complete an annual complaints performance and service improvement report, to share this report with their Board and to publish the report with a response from the Board on their website by no later than 30th September (for housing providers with under 1000 units) each year.





Complaints Performance 2025/26

Total complaints received:	96
• Stage 1 complaints	84
• Stage 2 complaints	12
% of complaints progressed to stage 2	14%
% of complaints responded to within Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code timescales	88%
Number of Housing Ombudsman determinations	2
Number of refused complaints	0

Complaints Volumes

Complaint volumes for the last three years are as follows:

Year	Stage 1	Stage 2
2023/24	52	5
2024/25	35	12
2025/26	84	12



Complaint Escalation Rates

Complaint escalations for the last three years are as follows:

Year	%
2023/24	10
2024/25	25
2025/26	14

Response Rates

Complaint Stage	% resolved within target timescale
Stage 1 (10 working days)	77%
Stage 2 (20 working days)	100%

Outcomes

% Upheld	%Partially Upheld	%Not Upheld
50%	43%	7%

Housing Ombudsman determinations: 2x No maladministration

Outcome 1: Resident offered the same goodwill payment previously refused by resident. Adjudicator considered offer fair and reasonable

Outcome 2: Adjudicator stated Landlord relied on a clear relevant policy framework. The approach was found to be consistent, proportionate and aligned with its role in managing access to social housing.



Complaints Received 1ST April 2025 - 31st March 2026

84

Stage 1 Complaints

12

Stage 2 Complaints

14%

of Complaints
escalated to Stage 2

88%

of Complaints
responded to within
Handling Code

2

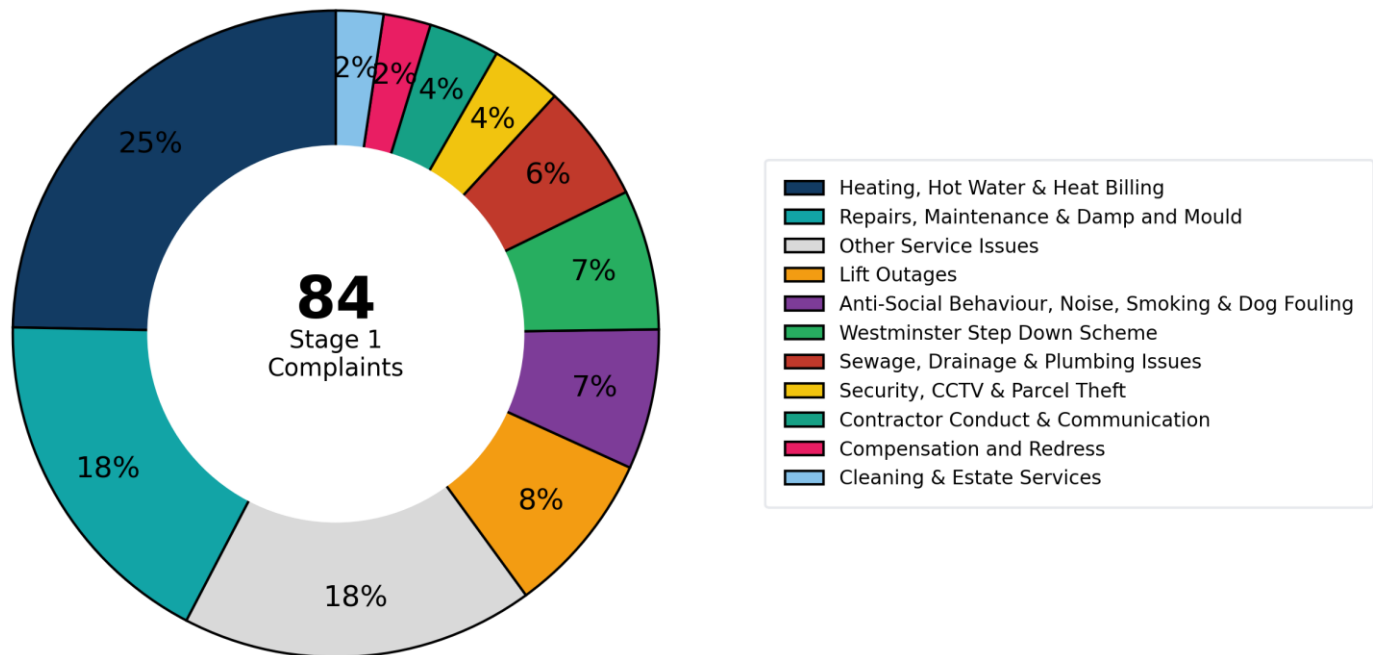
Determinations from
the Housing
Ombudsman

93%

of Complaints
upheld/partially
upheld



Complaint Themes 2025/26



Analysis of complaint themes throughout 2025/26 identified heating and hot water issues as the most significant area of resident concern, accounting for one quarter of all complaints received.

Repairs and maintenance issues represented a further 26.2% of complaints, whilst neighbourhood management concerns accounted for 15.5%.

These trends have informed a programme of service improvements focusing on communication during works, contractor performance and repairs oversight.

Regular learning reviews have enabled Dolphin Living to identify recurring issues and implement targeted actions designed to improve resident experience and reduce repeat complaints on the same issue.



Complaint Themes Summary

Heating, Hot Water and Heat Billing (25%)

Heating and hot water complaints remained the most significant source of complaints during 2025/26. Residents raised concerns about service outages, communication during periods of disruption, compensation arrangements and heating charges. A substantial proportion of these complaints related to persistent heating and hot water issues at Hopkins Street.

Repairs and Maintenance (26.2%)

When repairs, damp and mould, building maintenance, communal repairs and lift failures are combined, over one quarter of complaints related to the maintenance and upkeep of homes and communal areas. Common concerns included delays in completing repairs, insufficient updates and follow-on work not being completed within expected timescales.

Neighborhood Management Issues (15.5%)

Complaints concerning anti-social behaviour, smoking, noise nuisance, dog fouling, sewage upsurges and cleaning standards continued to feature throughout the year. These complaints highlighted the importance of proactive estate management and clear communication with residents.

Westminster Step Down Scheme (7.1%)

The introduction of the Westminster City Council Step Down Scheme generated a notable number of complaints during Quarter Four. Residents raised concerns regarding the impact on existing communities and requested additional information regarding the scheme and consultation process.

Security and Resident Safety (3.6%)

Security-related complaints primarily concerned parcel thefts and requests for CCTV footage following incidents. These cases highlighted the need to communicate our CCTV processes and security responsibilities clearly.



Key Learning from Complaint Themes

Analysis of complaint trends during 2025/26 identified three key areas for improvement:

Communication

Many complaints arose not because of the service issue itself, but because residents felt they were not kept informed. (when dealing with a third party) This was particularly evident during heating outages, major repairs and complex cases involving multiple parties.

Action Taken

- Improved resident communications during service disruptions.
- Introduced more proactive updates for ongoing cases.
- Strengthened communication expectations with contractors and managing agents.

Repairs Oversight

A significant number of complaints related to delays in repair completion and follow-on work.

Action Taken

- Increased monitoring of outstanding repairs.
- Improved oversight of contractor performance.
- Introduced enhanced tracking of complex repairs.
- Updated damp & mould processes in line with current and new regulations

Learning and Accountability

Complaint reviews demonstrated the importance of resolving concerns at the earliest opportunity and ensuring learning is embedded across the organisation.

Action Taken

- Quarterly complaint learning reviews introduced with Dolphin and our Management Agent.
- Complaint performance reported to senior management, Operations Committee and the Member Responsible for Complaints.
- Decision taken to bring Stage 1 complaint handling in-house from April 2026.

YOU SAID	WE DID	OUTCOME
Residents told us communication during heating & hot water outages lacked regularity and was inconsistent	Introduced proactive outage communication at regular intervals, focusing on clarity and transparency of updates	Residents now receive clearer, regular information during service interruptions
Repairs requiring multiple visits and follow-on works are not being sufficiently tracked and overseen	Following a system upgrade our managing agent has enhanced monitoring of outstanding repairs and contractor performance	Improved oversight and faster completion of follow-on works
Compensation payments took too long to process	Reviewed internal procedures with our managing agent and clarified payment responsibilities	Improved monitoring and reduced payment delays
Goodwill & Compensation offers were inconsistent	A full review of the Compensation policy was undertaken & is now in line with Housing Ombudsman recommendations	Updated Compensation policy is clearer for residents to understand and available on our website for easy reference.
Residents wanted concerns resolved earlier	Implemented quarterly complaint learning reviews and brought Stage 1 complaint handling in-house from April 2026	Lower escalation rate and greater organisational accountability

Priorities for 2026/27

Priority 1: Improve response times	Priority 2: Resolve more complaints at Stage 1
Priority 3: Embed complaint learning	Priority 4: Strengthen resident communication
Priority 5: Monitor Consumer Standards compliance	



Customer Feedback

We encourage feedback from our residents and receive feedback from a range of sources, including our annual customer surveys, ongoing customer satisfaction surveys, resident engagement meetings, 1-2-1 home visits and suggestions from our teams & Managing Agent.

62%

**Resident satisfaction
with our approach to
Complaints Handling**

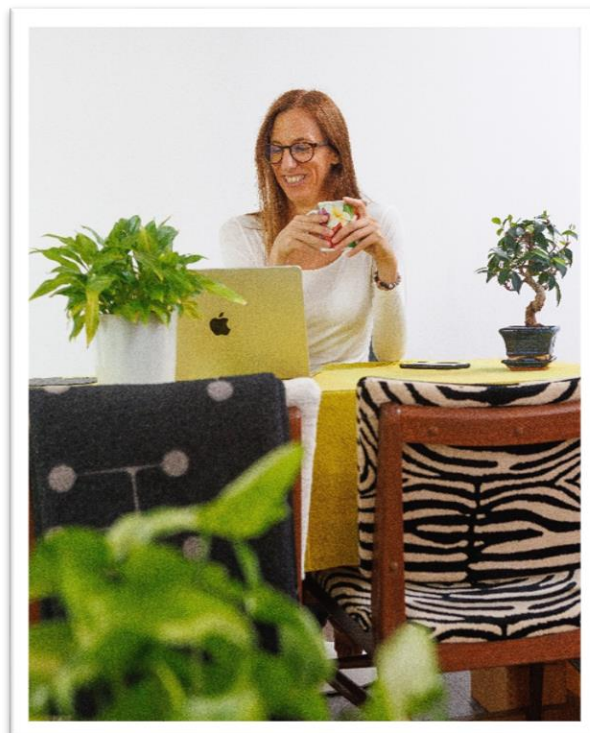
Our residents who had cause to complain during the year commented:

‘Thank you for listening to us and reconsidering your decision.’

‘I’m content to accept your offer in order to reach a resolution on the issue.’

‘Thank you both again for your assistance in bringing this matter to a conclusion’

‘.. I do want to acknowledge the amount of work which has clearly gone into it.’





We will continue to work with our residents, listening to their feedback and striving for continuous improvement across Dolphin Living and our 3rd party suppliers.

For more information on our complaints and feedback handling process:

Contact us:



Phone: 020 7113 3340



Email: info@dolphinliving.com



Website: www.dolphinliving.com

