

Report subject	BCP Homes Annual Complaints Performance and Service Improvement Report
Meeting date	29 October 2025
Status	Public Report
Executive summary	This report provides information on the council's handling of complaints related to the provision of landlord services to council tenants and leaseholders. The report complies with the requirements within the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code that landlords must produce an Annual Complaints Performance and Service Improvement report for scrutiny and challenge. It must be published on the section of the council's webpages relating to complaints. Cabinets response to the report must be published alongside this. In line with the Complaint Handling Code, this report sets out: • The annual self-assessment against the code • A qualitative and quantitative analysis of complaint handling performance • Any findings of non-compliance with the code by the Housing Ombudsman • Service improvements made as a result of the learning from complaints • Any annual report about performance from the Housing Ombudsman • Any other relevant publications or reports produced by the Housing Ombudsman in relation to the work of the council in dealing with complaints.
Recommendations	It is RECOMMENDED that:
	(a). Cabinet notes the content of the Annual Complaints Performance and Service Improvement Report and provides a

	response for publication on the council's website. (b). Cabinet approves the self-assessment against the Complaint Handling Code at appendix 1 for submission to the Housing Ombudsman and publication on the council's website.
Reason for recommendations	To ensure compliance with the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code
Portfolio Holder:	Councillor Kieron Wilson – Housing and Regulatory Services
Corporate Director	Glynn Barton – Chief Operations Officer
Report Authors	Kelly Deane – Director of Housing and Public Protection
Wards	Council-wide
Classification	For Recommendation

Background

1. As a registered provider of social housing, the council is subject to clear expectations from both the Regulator of Social Housing and the Housing Ombudsman regarding complaint handling. Under the Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023, the Housing Ombudsman's [Complaint Handling Code](#) became statutory from 1 April 2024, requiring landlords to adopt a two-stage complaints process that is accessible, fair, and transparent.
2. Complaints must be defined broadly as any expressions of dissatisfaction, regardless of how they are made, and the council must ensure residents (tenants and leaseholders) are not treated differently for raising concerns. The Code mandates that landlords publish their complaints policy, offer multiple channels for submission, and ensure staff are trained to handle complaints effectively. The council must also complete and publish an annual self-assessment of its compliance with the Code, and failure to comply may result in a complaint handling failure order.
3. The Regulator of Social Housing expects landlords to have robust internal procedures for managing complaints about their landlord services, with clear escalation routes and timely responses. Together, these frameworks aim to foster a culture of learning, accountability, and continuous improvement in housing services.
4. The Complaint Handling Code requires the council to produce an Annual Complaints Performance and Service Improvement report for scrutiny and challenge. This report must contain:
 - The annual self-assessment against the code
 - A qualitative and quantitative analysis of complaint handling performance
 - Any findings of non-compliance with the code by the Housing Ombudsman
 - Service improvements made as a result of the learning from complaints

- Any annual report about performance from the Housing Ombudsman
 - Any other relevant publications or reports produced by the Housing Ombudsman in relation to the work of the council in dealing with complaints.
5. The Annual Complaints Performance and Service Improvement report must be reported to the council's governing body, or equivalent, and published on the section of its website relating to complaints. The governing body's response to the report should also be published alongside this.
 6. Landlord services are provided by different teams within the council. Housing management services such as letting and rent collection are provided by BCP Homes. Property maintenance and repairs are provided by the Property Maintenance and Asset Management teams within the Customer and Property Directorate. However, all must comply with the Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling code where complaints are made about landlord services.

Annual self-assessment against the Complaint Handling Code

7. The Housing Ombudsman self-assessment is an annual submission that social housing landlords complete to show their compliance with the Code.
8. The self-assessment helps landlords identify areas for improvement and informs residents about service provision, and since April 2024, compliance with the Code is a statutory duty for landlords. Landlords submit their self-assessment via a dedicated electronic form, and this submission also forms part of their annual complaint handling and service improvement report, which must be published online for residents to access.
9. The self-assessment form can be found at Appendix 1. It outlines the compliance of the council with the Code's provisions related to complaints handling. The key findings include:
 - **Definition of a Complaint:** the council complies with the Code's definition of a complaint and ensures that all expressions of dissatisfaction are treated as complaints and forwarded to the correct team
 - **Accessibility and Awareness:** the council makes it easy for residents to complain by providing multiple channels and ensuring all staff are aware of the complaints process. The complaints policy is available in a clear and accessible format on the website, [Make a complaint about BCP Homes](#).
 - **Complaint Handling Staff:** BCP Homes has a dedicated Complaints Officer and complaints coordinators in key areas to ensure effective administration of complaints.
 - **Complaint Handling Process:** the council follows a two-stage complaints process and ensures that complaints are acknowledged, defined, and logged within five working days. Responses are provided within the specified timescales, and extensions are communicated to the residents.
 - **Putting Things Right:** the council acknowledges when something has gone wrong and sets out actions to put things right, including apologies, explanations, and financial remedies.
 - **Self-assessment, Reporting, and Compliance:** an annual complaints performance and service improvement report, which includes a self-assessment against the Code, is reported to the governing body.

Analysis of complaint handling performance

10. A comprehensive analysis of complaint handling performance for 2024-25 is set out within appendix 2. It presents detailed statistics regarding the volume and nature of complaints received, their respective outcomes, and the subsequent actions taken to address key recurring issues. The report further underscores compliance with the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code and its ongoing commitment to continuous improvement and resident-focused service delivery.
11. During the 2024-25 financial year, 164 complaints were recorded predominantly concerning Housing Management (58.5%) and Property Maintenance (23.2%). Of these, 16.5% were upheld, 35.4% were partially upheld, and 48.2% were not upheld. Most complaints were resolved at Stage 1.
12. Analysis of complaint trends identified areas for improvement including communication, accountability of processes, staff training, and cross-team collaboration. Responsive measures implemented include customised communication strategies, revised processes, enhanced staff development initiatives, and improved integration of legacy teams.
13. Additionally, the report notes receipt of 310 compliments throughout the year, reflecting positively on resident satisfaction.

Findings of non-compliance with the code by the Housing Ombudsman

14. The Housing Ombudsman may issue a complaint handling failure order (CHFO) where a landlord fails to ensure that its complaints process is accessible, consistent and enables the timely progression of a resident's complaint in line with the complaint handling code.
15. A CHFO may be issued by the Ombudsman where:
 - An individual complaint is not being progressed through a landlord's complaint procedure
 - Where a landlord fails to provide information to the Ombudsman as requested
 - Where a landlord fails to comply with its membership obligations of the Housing Ombudsman scheme.
16. Failure to comply with the terms of a complaint handling order could result in the Ombudsman taking further action including referral to the Regulator of Social Housing.
17. There have been no complaint handling orders issued to the council. There have also been no issues raised by the Ombudsman regarding previous self-assessments against the complaint handling code.

Service improvements made as a result of the learning from complaints

18. The council is expected to learn from complaints and make improvements to services where required. Key areas of learning and actions taken are set out in the table below:

Theme	Learning	Actions Taken
Communication and Customer	Need for clearer, more consistent communication during	Tailored communication plans for projects; weekly updates for decanted tenants; improved

Engagement	major works, complaints, and ASB cases.	complaint tracking; training for staff; better appointment and insurance communication.
Process Improvements and Accountability	Gaps in application checks, charge accuracy, and complaint oversight.	Updated hospital admission processes; reviewed mutual exchange procedures; strengthened internal checks; improved fire safety communication.
Staff Training and Support	Need for better customer service and disability awareness.	Toolbox talks for operatives and training for call handlers, planning teams, and technical staff; improved supervision of cleaning teams.
Repairs, Maintenance and Safety	Delays and inefficiencies in repairs and safety procedures.	Prioritisation of urgent issues; sourcing materials before work; first-time fix emphasis; reinforced out-of-hours repair protocols; coordinated fire safety updates.
Cross-Team Collaboration	Legacy team misalignment and communication gaps.	Integration of legacy teams; joint working in senior living blocks; improved internal communication to reduce errors.
Facilities and Cleaning	Inconsistent cleaning standards and supervision.	Updated cleaning schedules to include windows and textured flooring; supervisor inspections; flagged resource needs.
Resident Engagement and Support	Inconsistent support for vulnerable residents and lack of early intervention.	Encouraged early issue identification; reinforced equal treatment; distributed fire safety and no-smoking communications in high-rise blocks.

19. Additional performance indicators will be established for complaints handling. These and feedback to residents will be publicised.

Annual performance report from the Housing Ombudsman

20. The Housing Ombudsman provides annual individual performance reports for all landlords who have had five or more findings as a result of complaints that it has investigated.
21. There are eight possible findings that the Ombudsman can determine once it has looked at the evidence available to it. These include:

- **No maladministration** – Where the landlord acted in accordance with its obligations in the tenancy agreement and relevant policies and procedures. Minor failings may have been found but these have caused no detriment to the resident.
 - **Service failure** – Where there is evidence of a minor failing, but action is still needed to put things right. Service failure is a form of maladministration.
 - **Maladministration** – Where there was a failure which has adversely affected the resident.
 - **Severe maladministration** – The most serious failure, where there is evidence of serious detrimental impact to the resident.
 - **Resolved with intervention** - Where the resident and landlord have agreed to enter into mediation and, with the Ombudsman's intervention, reached an agreed outcome which resolves the complaint satisfactorily.
 - **Redress** - There is evidence of maladministration, but the landlord has identified and acknowledged this prior to the Ombudsman's investigation and has, on its own initiative, taken steps that puts things right.
 - **Outside jurisdiction** - The complaint will not or cannot be considered by the Ombudsman.
 - **Withdrawn** - The resident withdrew their complaint, and the Ombudsman is satisfied as to the circumstances.
22. The Landlord Performance report for 2024-25 for BCP Council is provided in appendix 4. It includes information on the number of cases determined by the Housing Ombudsman, the number of maladministration findings and orders made. There have been no findings of severe maladministration.
23. The report sets out the areas where most findings of maladministration are found; complaint handling, anti-social behaviour and property condition. The council is fully compliant in complying with orders made by the Ombudsman to put things right and include compensation payments to residents.

Other relevant publications or reports produced by the Housing Ombudsman in relation to the work of the council in dealing with complaints

24. The Housing Ombudsman can conduct further investigations into a landlord beyond an individual complaint to establish if the evidence that has been provided to them is indicative of systematic failure.
25. It can also issue wider orders that require landlords to go beyond the scope of the individual complaint and take steps to extend fairness and protection to wider residents.
26. There have been no other publications or reports produced in relation to the work of the council in dealing with complaints.

Options Appraisal

27. Not applicable.

Summary of financial implications

28. There are no financial implications associated with this report. Failure in service delivery can lead to payments of compensation to residents. There have been additional resources set aside to provide another member of staff to help manage complaints and ensure compliance with the Complaint Handling Code.

Summary of legal implications

29. There are no legal implications associated with this report. However, failure to comply with the Complaint Handling code may result in action by the Housing Ombudsman and the Regulator of Social Housing.

Summary of human resources implications

30. There are none associated with this report, but an additional member of staff will be recruited to support complaint handling.

Summary of sustainability impact

31. Not applicable.

Summary of public health implications

32. There are no specific public health implications associated with this report. However, an accessible complaints handling process allows residents to raise concerns and ensures that they have redress if not listened to. This can ensure the provision of safe homes and contributes to wellbeing.

Summary of equality implications

33. There are no changes to policies or service delivery because of this report. Any equality implications brought about by changes as a result of learning from complaints would be considered through an equality impact assessment.

Summary of risk assessment

34. Failure to manage complaints may result in action by the Housing Ombudsman to ensure compliance with the Complaint Handling code. The Regulator of Social Housing may also take action where there is a failure to meet the outcomes related to complaint handling set out in the consumer standards.

Background papers

None

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Annual self-assessment against the Complaint Handling Code

Appendix 2 – Analysis of complaint handling performance 2024-25

Appendix 3 - Housing Ombudsman Landlord report BCP Council