



## **Hartlepool Borough Council's Annual Complaint Performance and Service Improvement Report**

# Forward

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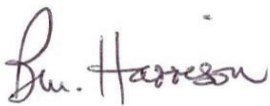
I'd like to personally welcome you to our first annual Complaint Performance and Service Improvement Report. As Chair of Finance and Policy Committee it is my responsibility to lead a positive complaints handling culture for our housing management service here at the Council.

It is an exciting time as we move forward to implement the Housing Ombudsman's new statutory Complaint Handling Code. Since taking back the management of the Council's housing stock in April 2015, any housing management complaints have been dealt with under the Council's Corporate Complaints Policy however, since April 2024 the Council has adopted a standalone Complaints Policy specifically for residents accessing our housing management services.

We take our role as a landlord incredibly seriously and we want to ensure we are accountable to our residents and any other stakeholders. Having this new policy means the complaints process is more open and transparent and the policy is readily available on the Council's website for you to access.

This report sets out the volume of complaints we have received specifically in relation to our housing management services. You'll see in the report that throughout 2023/24 we received one complaint. Alongside reporting the volume of complaints, the report also focusses on the plans we have in place for the future and our ambition to develop a more positive culture towards complaint management for the residents in our 358 homes.

I welcome the publication of this report and I am very much looking forward to embedding our new approach to handling complaints. I would also like to take the opportunity to reassure you that if you have any concerns at all about your home or the services we provide, we want to hear from you.



**Brenda Harrison**

Chair of Finance and Policy Committee and  
Member Responsible for Complaints (MRC)

## Introduction

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The Council has a new Housing Management Service Complaints Policy developed in response to the Housing Ombudsman's new Complaints Handling Code; this new policy was approved by delegated decision prior to the policy being live from 1st April 2024.

This report along with future annual reports and self-assessments, will set out how we are performing as a service in terms of complaint handling including the volumes, categories and outcomes of complaints, any learning and future service improvements.

# Summary of complaints

Year	Number of complaints	Number of stage 1 complaints	Number of stage 2 complaints	Number upheld or partially upheld	Percentage upheld or partially upheld	Refusals	Complaint referrals to the Housing Ombudsman
2023/24	1	1	0	0	0%	0	0

Year	Stage 1 response within 10 working days	Percentage stage 1 response within 10 working days	Stage 2 response within 20 working days	Percentage stage 2 response within 20 working days
2023/24	1	100%	N/A	N/A

# Reason for complaints

- How the Council’s Housing Management Team dealt with a neighbour dispute.

# Trends and risks

Given the small number of complaints received in 2023/24, we are unable to identify any specific trends or new risks that would inform changes to our service delivery, but we will keep this under review in future years.

# Service improvement and learning

Our commitment to you is to ensure we deliver the best possible service – fundamental to this is your feedback. We hope with the introduction of the new Housing Management Service Complaints Policy that you will see your feedback is encouraged at any opportunity.

During the summer we launched a new housing repairs feedback survey, which means each time you have a repair completed in your home, you will have the opportunity to tell us how we did. This will provide essential information on how our repairs service can be adapted and improved.

In October 2024, we will also be consulting you and seeking your views on all aspects of the housing management service through our tenant satisfaction survey. This survey is vital to informing and improving our service provision to our customers.

From April 2024, we have started to log all service requests, which is something we haven’t done previously, this will allow us to start to identify trends and inform learning before any escalation to a complaint. This will complement the learning from the complaints process.



# Reporting performance

The 2023/24 data on housing management complaints is due to be reported to the Finance and Policy Committee on 16th September 2024 as part of the Corporate Complaints Monitoring Report. Now we have a standalone policy to handle complaints about the housing management service specifically, all future reports and self-assessments will be reported to Finance and Policy Committee separately – the first report is due to be taken on 25th November 2024.

Under the new Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code we have completed the self-assessment, which is to assess our compliance with the Code. The self-assessment accompanies this report as Appendix 1. In future years, this annual report and our self-assessment will be published in early summer for our residents.

Year	Findings of non-compliance with the Code by the Housing Ombudsman
2023/24	0

## Future improvements

- Making complaints performance information more readily able and accessible to you. We'll be asking in our Tenant Satisfaction Survey how you would like us to do this.
- Working to embed this new culture into our service to you.

