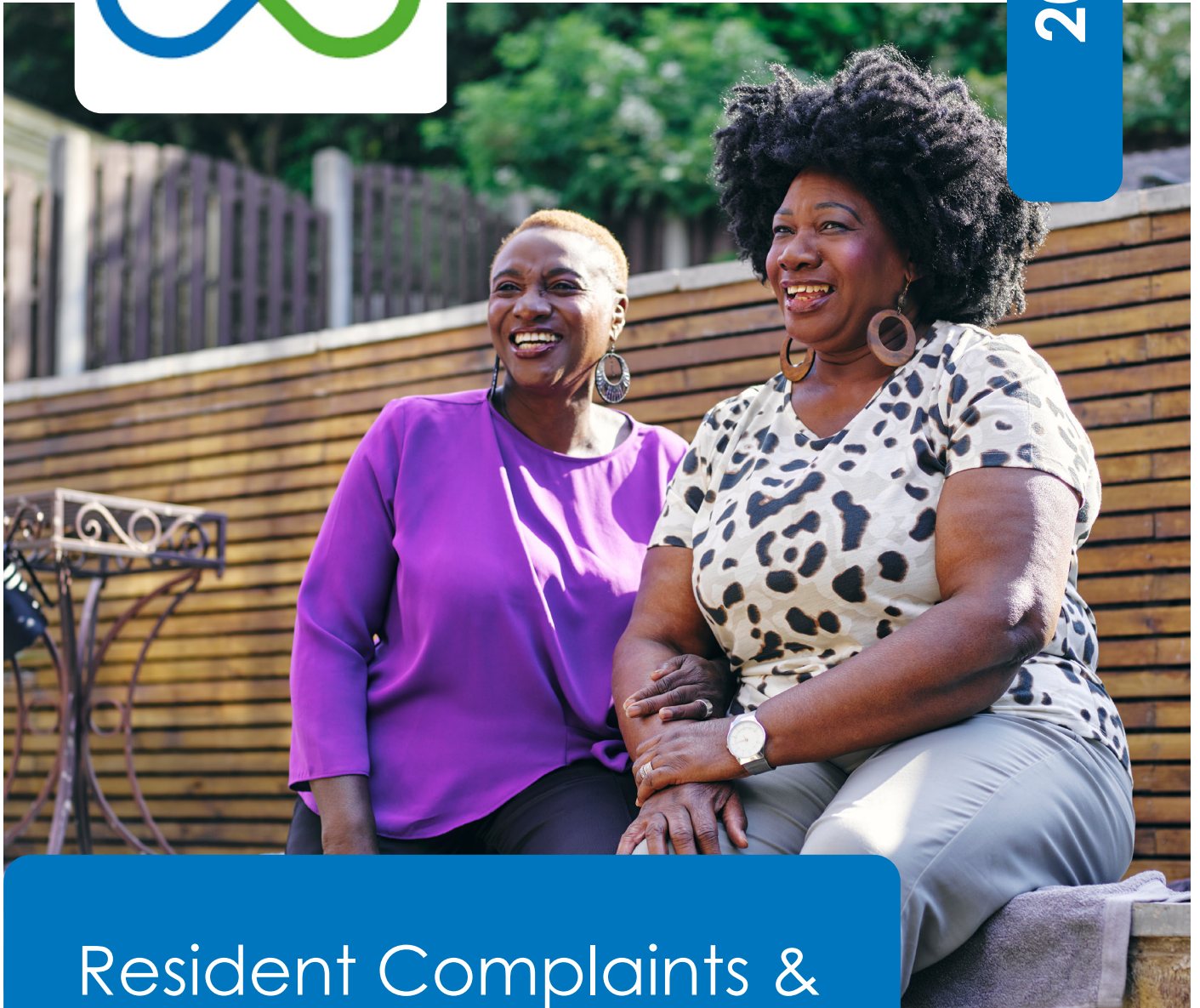


2024-2025



Resident Complaints & Service Improvement Summary Report

Welcome

Putting residents at the heart of what we do means that we listen to what residents are saying through the complaints we receive, and use this to help shape how we move forward.

We recognise that occasionally things can go wrong, and that it's important for our residents to know that they can complain to us, and that we will take it seriously. Our complaints policy outlines the process we follow to ensure our residents are heard, and explains the approach that we take when we investigate a complaint is consistent and fair.

In this summary document you can find out about complaints between April 2024 and March 2025, and see what we have done to improve our services.

Why we report

We want to tell our residents about the complaints we have handled because it is important to be open and transparent.

As members of the Housing Ombudsman scheme, we have a statutory duty to produce an annual report of our performance and complete a self-assessment against the Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code.

You can read more about this on the Housing Ombudsman Service's website at: www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk

By being transparent, we aim to build trust with our residents and partners, and faith that we are dedicated to improving our services for all residents.

The Complaint Handling Code (the code):

The code contains 72 things that set-out how we should work with residents to investigate complaints fairly, objectively, and to ensure we learn from our residents' experience to improve for all.

We self-assess against the code each year and are pleased that for the second year we have met all of the requirements of the code. This means we handle complaints fairly and to a high standard.

You can find out more including our formal report to our Board of Management and view our self-assessment by scanning the QR codes below.



*Scan for our
self-assessment*



*Scan for the
Arches website*

A message from our Board of Management

The changes to the law and to the enhanced regulation of Housing Associations present a significant challenge to the whole of the sector.

Here at Arches we continue to evolve to meet this challenge. As we reflect on the 2024–25 reporting year, it is clear that complaints and service feedback have been a vital source of insight into our operational effectiveness, service quality, and resident expectations. This report demonstrates not only our continued compliance with the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code, but also a deepening commitment to transparency, learning, and continuous improvement.

We are especially pleased that as a small organisation; our staff responded proactively to the higher standards and demands of the regulation. We are also really pleased that we have engaged with a positive group of residents to help test our responses and performance, and their participation and constructive challenge has been invaluable.

We recognise that the increase in complaint volumes — a 92% rise — is testament to increased resident awareness and confidence in using the complaints process. This reflects well on the accessibility and visibility of our policy, which we will continue to promote, especially among under-represented resident groups.

The report shows high performance in timely responses, with 100% of complaints closed within statutory time frames, and 87.5% of Stage One complaints resolved within our own more stretching target of 10 days. This responsiveness, maintained during our busiest year for complaint handling, is noteworthy. The year has also been marked by deliberate, data-led improvements to how we manage complaints.

We have enhanced systems to better handle service-linked repairs, accelerated compensation payments, and refined contractor oversight processes — all in direct response to resident feedback.

Our learning culture is taking root, and our action plans demonstrate an increasing capacity to turn feedback into service redesign. We have even reorganised the business and how we operate in order to reflect this new emphasis on being focussed on resident experience and feedback

Looking ahead, our executive focus will centre on:

- **Equity in Service Access:** Closing the gap between our resident demographic and those accessing the complaints process, particularly across ethnic groups, by enhancing cultural awareness and communication strategies.
- **Service Request Intelligence:** Strengthening the analysis of service requests to capture early indicators of service dissatisfaction and opportunities
- **Contractor and Asset Management:** Embedding lessons from upheld complaints to refine the services we deliver and our contractors, ensuring timely and high-quality repairs, and holding partners accountable to our standards.
- **Resident-Centric Design:** Deepening resident involvement in capital programme communications and post-repair inspections to reduce repeat complaints and raise satisfaction.
- **Assurance through Governance:** Continuing robust oversight through regular reporting, case reviews, and independent scrutiny to ensure we remain focused on residents' experiences and maintain high-quality standards.

We are proud of the progress made, but we remain vigilant. The complaints we receive are an essential indicator of where we must continue to evolve. Our priority remains delivering services that are fair, responsive, and rooted in the voice of our residents.

Alan Long Board Chair

Terry Gallagher

**Member Responsible for Complaints,
on behalf of the Board of Management.**

Our performance

Here are some headlines of how our complaints service has delivered for residents in the last year.



80

Total number of
complaints investigated
in 24/25



65

Total number of
complaints upheld in
24/25



8

Key areas where we
got things wrong

You can read more about our eight key areas for improvement in our 'You said, we did' section on the next few pages.

You said, we did

What we've learnt from complaints

Key area	What residents found	What we have done about it
Boiler/ heating repair management	<p>Appointments have been changed or cancelled.</p> <p>Delays completing emergency boiler repairs.</p> <p>Repeated breakdowns over a short period of time, including to newly installed boilers.</p> <p>Struggling to get minor repairs completed, such as to thermostats.</p> <p>Appointments are cancelled without a new appointment being made.</p> <p>Warranty conditions delaying boiler repairs.</p>	<p>We now expect that contractors show us that they have exhausted all options before resorting to an appointment change, to ensure that changes are minimised and only take place when absolutely necessary.</p> <p>We are reviewing breakdowns of newer boilers to see whether there are patterns to suggest that this is due to a manufacturing or installation error. This will tell us whether we need to reconsider which boilers we chose to install in our properties, or whether contractors need to take action to train their engineers to improve the quality of repair.</p>
'Making good' to ensure repairs are fully completed	<p>Operatives are sometimes failing to 'make good', which means returning the area to the correct state after completing a repair.</p>	<p>We are training colleagues on technical knowledge of repairs so that the correct instructions for making good are included on job orders, avoiding the need for operatives to go back again to complete this later.</p> <p>We are working with contractors to improve their quality of feedback to ensure we are able to progress works to completion promptly.</p> <p>From 1st April 2025 a new Maintenance Officer role has been created to provide a dedicated resource for more consistent post-works inspections to ensure contractor quality.</p>

You said, we did

Key area	What residents found	What we have done about it
Planned Programmes (i.e. replacement bathrooms, kitchens and windows)	<p>Poor communication and project management of works when a new property is added to an already started programme due to an emergency need.</p> <p>Poor quality installation of replacements (bathrooms/ kitchens/ windows)</p> <p>Excessive delay in replacing a faulty door.</p>	<p>Many of the complaints about our planned programme management related to instances when we had to add a property to the programme quickly due to an emerging need. This meant some of our normal communication steps around making sure we understood the residents needs, and that contractors were given tailored instructions were missed. We have now improved tenant liaison arrangements for residents by making sure there is dedicated Repairs Coordinator in these cases, and have improved our policy and process to include a new Resident Needs checklist.</p> <p>Together with residents we have mapped their journey when receiving major capital investment works in their home and have created new tools to ensure that communication meets their needs.</p> <p>Due to some persistent quality issues one contract has been drawn to an early end, ceasing their contribution to the delivery of the planned works programme.</p> <p>We have enhanced the specification for contractors to provide tenant liaison for all new contracts to be procured for delivering the new planned works programme.</p> <p>Contractors are now required to carry out more frequent reviews of stocks (in vans) to ensure they have more ready access to parts and supplies to be able to complete repairs within time, and with minimal appointment disruption for the resident.</p>
Responsive Repairs	<p>Repairs not being completed.</p> <p>Poor communication on status of repairs.</p>	<p>The review of our Operations teams has provided greater resource to improve consistency of management of works in progress (WIP). We are now more proactive in pursuing contractors for action, and communication with the resident.</p>
Service Charges	<p>Service charging errors.</p> <p>Service charge statements are not clear.</p>	<p>Relevant staff have been retrained on service charge duties, and our internal financial processes for making sure the right costs are charged to service charges has been enhanced with new controls to verify that charges are made correctly.</p> <p>In the coming year we will be reviewing annual service charge letters and statements together with residents to ensure they are clear and easy to understand.</p>

You said, we did

Key area	What residents found	What we have done about it
Contractor Conduct	<p>Contractor failing to keep garden gates closed, posing a risk to young children at play.</p> <p>Contractor damaging residents property/home.</p> <p>Misinformation from the contractor regarding appointments.</p> <p>Rude and aggressive behaviour by engineer.</p>	<p>Accidents do occasionally happen. When they do we insist that the contractor offers an apology and covers the cost of replacement. When this does not happen we will now cover costs directly, and then pass on these costs to the contractor. All instances where damage is caused are reviewed in-line with the contractor code of conduct.</p> <p>We require that contractors improve new employee inductions and training so that all of their colleagues provide correct advice consistently before being able to take calls from our residents.</p> <p>As a result of our concerns and feedback appropriate action has been taken with relevant personnel. We also insist that our larger contractors have suitable anti-bullying and harassment policies in place to protect our residents from aggressive and intimidating behaviour, and that staff are trained in their policy. Similarly we have required all contractors to update their staff on the contractor code of conduct.</p>
Anti-social Behaviour Case Management	<p>Lack of consistent management and progression of cases through the ASB process.</p> <p>Application of Policy on fences as ASB interventions.</p>	<p>We have improved how we manage anti-social behaviour cases so that it is more systems-led. Officers now have more defined steps to follow, with built-in improved letter templates which has streamlined the time taken.</p>
Repair Diagnosis	<p>Not recognising when issues worsen, which caused greater disturbance for the residents.</p> <p>Not communicating why changes to damp mould and condensation repairs were needed, leaving the resident unsure about what would happen.</p> <p>Officers are sometimes failing to note action required on all matters raised by the resident during an inspection.</p>	<p>Our new operating model has increased the capacity and is building the knowledge of our repairs team so that fewer repairs need a pre-inspection by a surveyor, and repairs can be completed in less time overall.</p> <p>Surveyors will also have more time during inspections by only focussing on repairs that could not be diagnosed over the telephone by repairs coordinators.</p>

It's thanks to complaints from our residents that we have been made aware of these issues, and have been able to put things right. For more information on how to complain please scan the QR code on page two or visit our website [here](#)

Get Involved

Did you know that we have a Resident Scrutiny Panel?

Made up of volunteers, they play a vital role in testing and giving feedback on the services we provide to our residents. This year the group have been involved in scrutinising our complaints service and made recommendations to our Board of Management on how things could be improved.

We're always looking for new residents to get involved in our scrutiny work. If you would like to find out more about the role and how the panel works, please contact **Kirsty Waller**, our **Resident Engagement & Communications Officer** on **0114 228 8100**.



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