

COMPLAINTS AND COMPLIMENTS QUARTER 4 AND FOR THE YEAR 2022/23

Report of the Customer Service and Equalities Manager

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report provides detailed analysis of complaints received between 1 January and 31 March 2023, (Q4), and for the year 2022/23, as a whole.

2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

- 2.1 To note and comment on the information detailed in the report and Appendix 1.

3. REASON(S) FOR RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 To ensure the Operational Board is updated on complaints and compliments received during the quarter and for the year 2022/23.

4. MATTER(S) FOR CONSIDERATION

- 4.1 There were 72 compliments recorded during Q4; a reduction of 5 on the previous quarter, details can be found on page 7 of the appendix.
- 4.2 Full details of all complaints received are shown on pages 10-14 of Appendix 1. This includes a breakdown of types of complaints in relation to service areas.
- 4.3 During Q4 a total of 123 complaints were received, all were acknowledged within the target time of 3 working days.
- 4.4 During Q4 90.91% of complaints were responded to within timescales.
- 4.5 Out of the 110 stage 1 complaints closed in Q4 2022/23:

46 complaints were upheld
34 complaints were not upheld
30 complaints were partially upheld
- 4.6 Out of the 46 upheld complaints, all were the fault of Derby Homes.
- 4.7 In Q4, the category with the highest number of complaints were received about the day-to-day repairs service (46). The Head of Service is aware, and actions have been implemented within this service area.
- 4.8 During this quarter we closed 11 stage 2 complaints.

6 complaints were upheld
3 complaints were partially upheld
2 complaints were not upheld

4.9 Where, because of a complaint investigation, good practice, or lessons learnt are identified, this is brought to the attention of the Head of Service and disseminated to the relevant officers. Learning from Complaints is discussed at Senior Management Team meetings.

4.10 Where significant failings are identified, which require a change to policy or procedure, this will be reported to the Operational Board.

4.11 **Yearly Overview – Complaints**

4.12 A summary for the year can be found on pages 3-6 of Appendix 1.

4.13 **Complaints**

We have seen a significant increase in complaints this year.

In 2022/23, 402 complaints were received; this is an increase of 100 complaints in comparison to 2021/22. This, we believe, is a direct result of raised awareness about how to make a complaint, this has been through Derby Homes channels, through the Housing Ombudsman, as well as nationally, with a social housing complaints campaign. From the complaints received, we can see an increased number of service failures/delays in undertaking repairs, for example.

4.14 The complaints we have received have been more complex and more have progressed to stage 2 complaints during this year.

Of the 355 stage 1 complaints closed in 2022/2023:

- 145 complaints were upheld
- 113 complaints were not upheld
- 97 complaints were partially upheld

4.15 During 2022/2023, 35 complaints progressed to become stage 2 complaints; this is higher than the previous year, when 20 complaints progressed to Stage 2.

Of the 30 Stage 2 complaints closed in 2022/2023:

- 9 complaints were upheld
- 9 complaints were not upheld.
- 12 complaints were partially upheld

4.16 **Housing Ombudsman**

During 2022/23, 5 complaints were escalated to the Ombudsman by customers, after exhausting the Derby Homes complaints procedure.

4.17 During 2022/23 Derby Homes had 3 cases investigated and determined by the Housing Ombudsman, resulting in the following outcomes:

- 1 maladministration and a complaint handling order was issued

- 2 no maladministration
- 4.18 Annually, the Housing Ombudsman publishes performance reports for landlords, with **five or more cases** determined within the previous financial year; these reports list:
- the overall outcomes of our decisions
 - our findings by category and decision
 - the types of orders we have made for landlords to put things right
 - the timeliness of landlord compliance with orders where the target date for compliance was during 2022/23
 - the total amount of compensation ordered
- 4.19 Landlord reports can be accessed from the Housing Ombudsman website:
- [Landlords Archive - Housing Ombudsman \(housing-ombudsman.org.uk\)](https://housing-ombudsman.org.uk)
- 4.20 In March 2022, the Housing Ombudsman revised the Complaint Handling Code; these changes came into force on 1 April 2022.

Main changes are:

- The customer does not have to use the word 'complaint' for it to be treated as such.
 - Customers chasing a service request, such as a missed appointment, can often be resolved 'there and then,' with an apology and the provision of another appointment. They may not need to enter the complaints system. However, if further enquiries are needed to resolve the matter, or if the resident requests it, the issue must be logged as a complaint.
 - The time taken to acknowledge a complaint has increased from 2 days to 3 days.
 - Advise the customer how to access the Housing Ombudsman service at every stage of the process, even when this falls outside of the complaint's procedure.
- 4.21 Landlords are required to self-assess against the new revised Complaint Handling Code by October 2022; this is accessible on Derby Homes website [code-self-assessment-website-2022.pdf \(derbyhomes.org\)](https://derbyhomes.org/code-self-assessment-website-2022.pdf)
- 4.22 **Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman**
- 4.23 The Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman deals with complaints about most council housing services, other than social housing; this includes homelessness, housing allocations, housing benefit, and home improvement services.
- 4.24 During Q4, a customer approached the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman.

4.25

The Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman found the Council at fault in its actions and decisions in responding to a customer's reports of homelessness and recommended a compensation payment of £2,500. Derby Homes delivers the Homelessness function on behalf of the Council; it was a Derby Homes based service issue that cause the adverse decision and was at fault.

4.26

Compensation

4.27

During Q4, a total of £7,687 compensation was paid out following complaints being made.

4.28

Included in this figure were 2 payments made to customers following complaints being investigated by the Housing Ombudsman and Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman.

4.29

£2,500 which was made outside of the complaint process, as stipulated by the Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman, which related to a homelessness complaint.

4.30

£660 was made to a customer following an investigation by the Housing Ombudsman; this related to an issue with kitchen repairs within the day-to-day repairs team.

4.31

During 2022/23 a total of £15,753 compensation was paid out following complaints being made.

4.32

Details of compensation payments are shown on page 15 of Appendix 1.

4.33

Additionally, compensation is paid on occasions where no complaint is received; this could be for minor damages, which are accepted without the need to go through the complaints process.

4.34

Learning from Complaints

4.35

The Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code focusses on learning from complaints.

4.36

Each quarter, we will provide a summary of a couple of cases where there is clear learning following a complaint; details can be found on page 16 of Appendix 1.

4.37

Councillor and MP Enquiries

4.38

There was a total of 124 Councillor enquiries and 75 MP enquires received during Q4.

4.39

89 Councillor enquiries, and 38 MP enquiries, were responded to within timescale.

4.40

A breakdown of enquiry reasons and ward detail has been included in the report; details can be found on pages 17-19 of Appendix 1.

4.41

In total, during 2022/23, Derby Homes received 517 Councillor enquiries and 246 MP enquiries.

The areas listed below have no implications directly arising from this report:

Consultation
Financial and Business Plan
Legal and Confidentiality
Council
Personnel
Environmental
Equalities Impact Assessment
Health & Safety
Risk
Policy Review

For more information please contact:

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Background
information:

List of appendices: Appendix 1

This report has been approved by the following:

Managing Director	Maria Murphy	26.05.2023
Finance Director/Derby Homes	Michael Kirk	25.05.2023
Accountant		
Head of Service	Taran Lalria	16.05.2023
Governance Services (checked)	Jane Haywood	16.05.2023