



Annual Complaints Performance and Service Improvement Report 2024/25

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Introduction

Customer feedback gives us important information about how our customers view our services. It helps us see where we are doing well and where we can improve.

This report covers complaints and how we have responded to them from April 1 2024, to March 31 2025. It includes both qualitative (describing things in words) and quantitative (using numbers to represent information) analysis of our complaint-handling performance. We will also talk about how we've followed the rules set by the Housing Ombudsman Service, any changes we've made to our services based on what we've learned from complaints, and any compliments we've received during the same period.

Number of complaints received

In 2024-25 we received **434** formal complaints, of which **88** were escalated to Stage 2 review. One complaint was refused during this period:



This means we received **54.5** complaints for every **1,000** properties managed by Salix Homes.

We resolved **80%** of the complaints at **Stage 1**, showing that our investigations were fair and thorough.

Apart from formal complaints, we also resolved

184



issues reported by customers at an early stage, in line with the Complaint Handling Code.

These issues are reported as service requests.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

To make sure our complaints process is accessible, fair and transparent for everyone, we keep track of the demographic details of our complainants, if available. If we notice any unexpected trends, we will investigate further to ensure there is fairness in how we treat our customers.

By looking at the themes of complaints across different customer groups, we gain insight into how consistent our service standards are across various customer characteristics.

We currently record and analyse the following characteristics in relation to customers making a complaint: **age, gender, ethnicity, primary language** and **disability**.

In 2024/25, the age distribution of complainants was similar to that of the wider tenant population, with the exception of tenants aged **40-49**.



This group made up **28.33%** of complainants against 21.18% of tenants, and the largest group of complainants fell within this age range. While there were fewer complainants in the **50-59, 60-69, and 70-79** age groups compared to the tenant population, the difference was very small.

Regarding gender and disability status, the demographics of complainants matched those of the tenant population. In terms of ethnicity, the **White British population** were more likely to complain than tenants of other ethnicities. There were no noticeable differences in any of the other groups in terms of ethnicity. However, there was an increase in the number of tenants who identified as White Roma who complained this year, from zero last year to 14 this year.

Most complainants' primary language was recorded as English, which aligns with the tenant population. However, there were also complainants who primarily spoke **Polish, Arabic, Farsi, Somali, Tigrinya, Shona, and Kurdish**, indicating that language is not a barrier to making a complaint.

When we analysed complaints from individuals of '**White Roma**' origin by theme, we found that nine of the 14 complaints were about 'unresolved issues', 'poor level of service', and 'time taken'. These themes were the top three for all complaints, suggesting that ethnicity did not affect how our services were delivered.

It is important to mention that the number of complaints, whilst higher than last year, is still quite low in terms of the volume of interactions, so this needs to be considered in any analysis. We have been proactive in gathering demographic information about our customers through surveys like 'Getting to Know You', tenancy audits, and completing the new 'things to know about me' tab on each customer's Customer Relationship Management (CRM) account. We will keep gathering this data to better understand our customers, which will help us offer services that meet their needs more effectively.

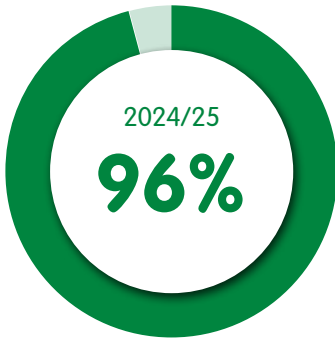
In terms of ethnicity, the White British population were more likely to complain than tenants of other ethnicities.

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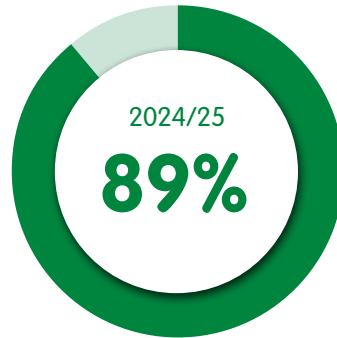


Complaints Performance

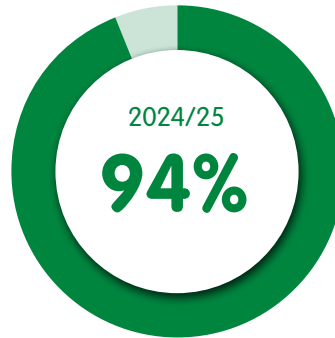
We evaluated our performance below based on the Complaint Handling Code 2024.



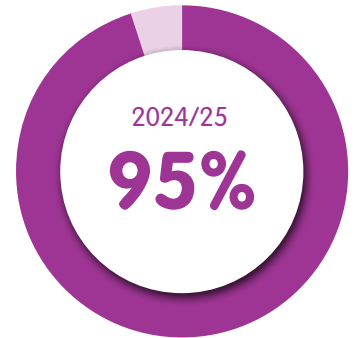
Stage 1
acknowledgements within
5 working days of receipt.



Stage 1
responses within 10 working
days of acknowledgement.



Stage 1
responses within Code
compliant timescales¹.



Stage 2
responses within 20 working
days of escalation.

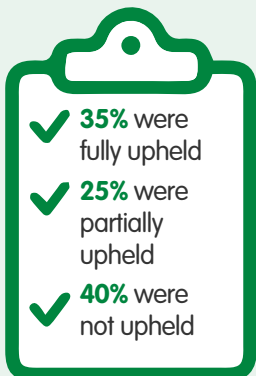


Complaint Outcomes

Stage 1

Where our investigation finds that we are at fault in some way, we will partially or fully uphold the complaint. We will also inform customers about what we've learned and any steps we'll take to avoid similar issues in the future.

Here are the overall outcomes of our formal complaints in **2024/25**:



Therefore, in **60%** of complaints, we accepted partial or full responsibility. Some complaints are complicated and include more than one complaint part, each of which receives its own investigation outcome.

You can see the details below:

- **40%** of all parts were fully upheld
- **15%** were partially upheld
- **45%** were not upheld

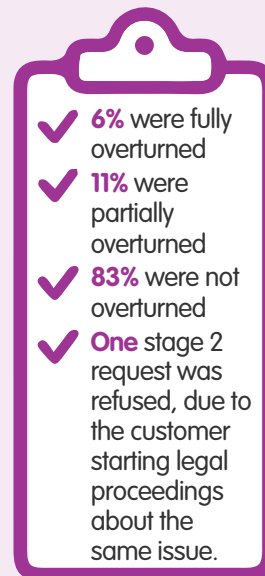
Therefore, in 55% of each complaint part we accepted partial or full responsibility.

Stage 2

When a complaint is escalated to review by a more senior manager, they will assess whether the investigation was fair and thorough. They may agree or disagree with any outcome from Stage 1.

In **2024/25** 89 complaints were received, and 88 were reviewed. One Stage 2 request was refused, due to the customer commencing legal action about the same issue.

The outcomes at Stage 2 review can be found below:



At Stage 1, **23** complaints were upheld, and **22** of those were still upheld at Stage 2. One was partially overturned to partially upheld.

43 complaints were not upheld at Stage 1. Out of those, **36** were still not upheld after being reviewed. Four were fully overturned, and three were partially overturned.

¹ Code-compliant = extension deadlines met within an additional 10 working days with Code compliant reason for extension.



Complaints by Team

The repairs teams received the most complaints (47%), followed by our housing teams with 16% of all complaints. This includes five complaints about caretaking and cleaning in our apartment blocks and five about the handling of anti-social behaviour by our community safety team. The graph below illustrates the number of complaints received by each team:

Graph 1: Complaints by team 2024/25



Outcomes by Team

It is useful to understand where a team has accepted full or partial responsibility for a complaint. The graph below shows where we have upheld a complaint by team, including where it may only be partially upheld:

Graph 2: Outcomes by team 2024/25





Complaints by Theme

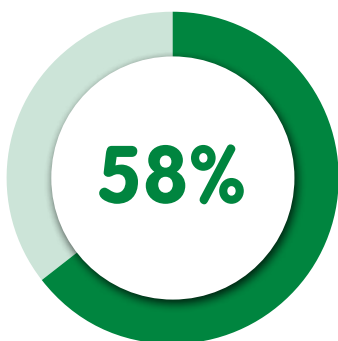
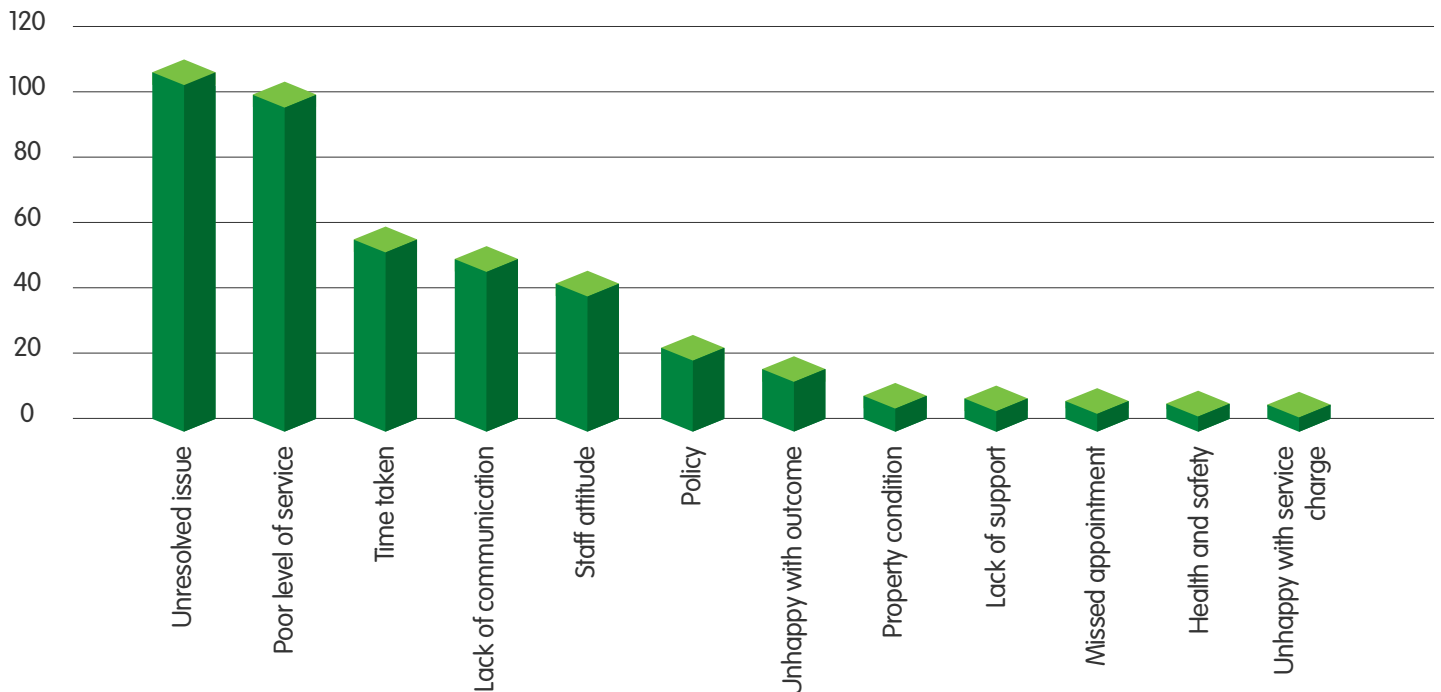
The top three themes for complaints in 2024/25 can be found in the graph below. These are:

- **Unresolved Issue** – where an issue is ongoing to a customer's dissatisfaction.
- **Poor level of service** – where tasks or jobs have not been completed to a customer's satisfaction.
- **Time Taken** – unsatisfactory time taken to complete a repair or other service request.

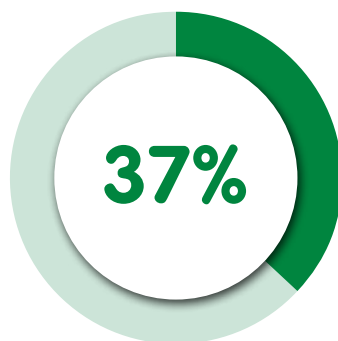
Out of the complaints concerning unresolved issues, 108 (58%) were related to the repairs team.

Regarding complaints about poor level of service, 38 (37%) were related to the repairs team, and 17 (17%) were about the housing teams, including caretaking and cleaning and community safety. Of the complaints about time taken, 39 (67%) were related to the repairs team. The remaining complaints were spread among several other teams.

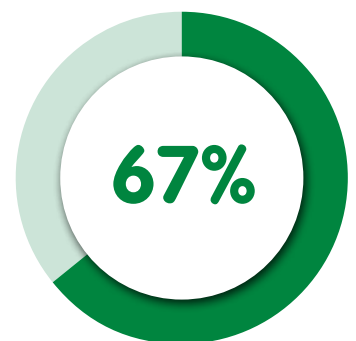
Graph 3: Complaints by theme 2024/25



58%
of complaints relating to unresolved issues concerned the repairs team.



37%
of complaints relating to poor level of service concerned the repairs team and 17% were about the housing teams, including caretaking and cleaning and community safety.



67%
of complaints relating to time taken were related to the repairs team. The remaining complaints were spread among several other teams.

Outcomes by Theme

Looking at complaints by theme where the overall outcome was either fully or partially upheld helps us identify areas needing improvement in each department. We conducted a more detailed analysis to break down the highest category of upheld complaints, which is 'unresolved issues'.

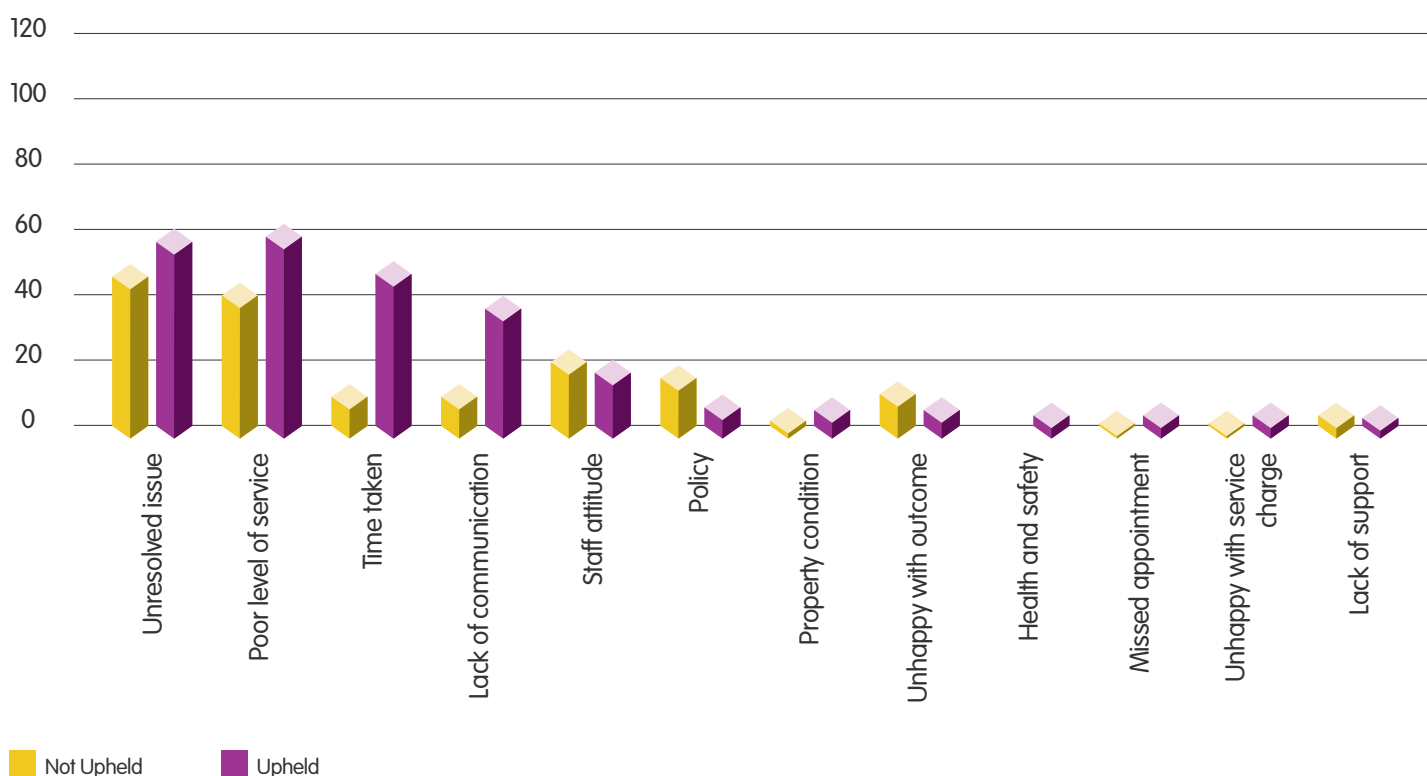
For complaints fully upheld regarding 'unresolved issues', nearly three-quarters were linked to the repairs service.

The highest areas of concern related to the treatment of damp and mould and unresolved leaks. Action has been taken to improve our handling of ongoing damp and mould issues (see Key learning themes and actions 2024/25 on page 10).

We have also allocated extra plumbing resources to address the rise in unresolved leaks and improved our process by rescheduling jobs if a leak cannot be located instead of closing them down.

The graph below illustrates the outcomes of complaints by theme throughout 2024/25:

Graph 4: Complaints Outcomes by theme 2024/25



Housing Ombudsman Service (HOS)

We received five Housing Ombudsman determinations in 2024/25 which contained one finding of maladministration and two findings of service failure. The maladministration determination related to handling of reports of a neighbour breeding dogs.

We also received one determination of no maladministration and one determination of the complaint being outside the HOS jurisdiction.

Within the determinations, Salix Homes received nine orders and complied with 100% of these.

The Housing Ombudsman awarded compensation totalling £625 across the three determinations, which was paid to customers in full.

We did not receive any additional reports from the Housing Ombudsman regarding Salix Homes' work. However, we have used information and research from the Ombudsman Spotlight publications to evaluate and improve our services.

After receiving the Ombudsman determination about the handling of dog breeding and the communication with the customer, we arranged refresher training for staff within the housing and community safety teams. This focused on the importance of following anti-social behaviour procedures and continuing to keep customers updated throughout the handling of the case.



Learning from Complaints

In 2024/25 we continued to focus on learning from feedback and complaints, to ensure that we are listening to the customer voice and making the necessary improvements to our service provision as a result. We accept that we do not always get things right, but we are committed to learning from our mistakes, sharing the learning with other internal departments and customers, and making positive changes to prevent the same issues from happening again.

We have continued to publish our **‘Lessons Spotlight’** campaign which focusses on one theme at a time, with ‘putting yourself in the customer’s shoes’ as a thread

running through all the Spotlights. Recent themes include managing customer expectations and empowering our teams with training. We also shared success stories to ensure that good practices were understood and adopted by different areas of the organisation.

We made complaints and learning a regular agenda item in our monthly meetings with service managers. During these sessions, we review the latest performance and share any identified learning points. We collaborate to determine actions that can enhance our overall performance.

Key learning themes and actions 2024/25



Managing customer expectations and clearly explaining the process from the outset improves customer satisfaction.

Clear, timely and frequent customer communication is essential when making changes to service provision or where things are taking longer than expected.

Effective record keeping and checking the information held on our systems improves the customer service and overall efficiency.



Customer service training includes the importance and impact of managing expectations and providing clear explanations to improve customer understanding.

Clear expectations set by managers around communication with customers. All customers to be proactively contacted with any change to a repair appointment.

Managers working with their teams to reiterate the importance of effective record keeping and training delivered on the housing system.



All customer facing teams have received customer service training.

Lack of communication is no longer in the top three complaints themes. Increased contact with customers about repairs has been well received.

Reports demonstrate an increase in the completion of fields relating to customer data on the housing system.

As a result of implementing actions from complaints learning, we have already seen positive outcomes for customers, both in terms of reduced complaints in specific areas and improved overall service performance.

For instance, in quarter four of 2025, we received three complaints about 'poor level of service' concerning standards of caretaking and cleaning in high rise, low rise and sheltered blocks.

This was fed back to the Caretaking and Cleaning Manager, due to this being an unusual spike within this service area. The manager is aware of the issues and is carrying out a higher number of spot checks to ensure this trend does not continue. No new complaints of this nature have been received since.

We have been rigorous in our efforts to embed the importance of learning from customer feedback into our service culture.

This includes training for colleagues on how to identify and record learning as well as taking action to improve services as a result.



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Additionally, improvements and positive actions resulting from feedback are discussed in our 'Complaints Oversight Group', which is one of our customer sub-groups. The Group has made suggestions to improve the layout, language and style of complaint response letters. All the suggestions have been implemented to the satisfaction of the Group.

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Further examples of positive action we have taken to improve services as a direct result of learning lessons from complaints feedback can be found below:

You Said

... Poor communication between subcontractors and Salix means that customer issues aren't reported or actioned.

... When lifts are out of order for an extended period of time, additional communication and support needs to be offered to customers affected. Also relevant internal teams need to be made aware.

... When a leak is potentially affecting electrics, we should advise customers that an operative will attend to ensure the electrics are safe.

... An enquiry was missed due to a member of staff being on annual leave so the customer did not receive a response.

... Customers have repeatedly tried to make contact to discuss a Right to Aquire application without success.

... Information was not recorded on the system about contact preferences, meaning a customer was contacted by telephone in the evening.

... Customer expectations raised when the surveyor agreed to carry out repairs outside of our remit.

... Issues caused by scaffolding not being removed after work completed.

We Listened, We Improved

✓ After speaking with the subcontractor, they confirmed that any communication incidents would be reported to us. Caretakers have been reminded of the importance of keeping the pavements as tidy as possible.

✓ Building Safety Team has reviewed their internal and external communication in the event of a lift being out of use for an extended period of time.

✓ Service Manager has reiterated the message regarding making safe during a leak, even when the customer's own item is responsible for the leak.

✓ Team has been reminded of the importance of arranging cover when on leave including using a shared CRM queue as best practice.

✓ Following an increase in the team, a dedicated officer is now responsible for dealing with all Right to Aquire applications.

✓ Customer record amended on CRM. Senior officers have implemented an evening deadline for calling customers regarding the satisfaction survey.

✓ Training for surveyors has been provided to support them with managing customer expectations.

✓ Tender process reviewed to include a service level agreement on scaffolding removal.

Compliments

In 2024/2025, a total of 256 compliments were recorded on our system which is consistent with the previous year. The Customer Service Centre team received the most compliments (57%), followed by the Repairs teams (30%). Compliments were also given for various other service areas and individuals, including those in housing, income management, environmental services and 1st Response teams.

Most compliments were about the standard of service (70%), while others praised the quality of work, staff attitude, and speed of service.

Examples of compliments received from customers can be found below;

“ I would like to thank and compliment Ged Oakley for his help recently when I was struggling moving furniture. Although I’m a leaseholder not a tenant, he went over and above the call of duty to help me, in fact, I don’t think that I could’ve managed without his help. He’s always friendly and hardworking and keeps the block clean, but he really did help me a few weeks ago and I think he deserves some recognition. I did offer him a little reward but he would not accept it under any circumstances. He is an asset to Salix. **Caretaking and Cleaning** ”

“ Thanks to the lads who came this morning and cleared the car parking area of refuse including a large carpet tile, some discarded wooden fencing material, bottles, paper and an amount of rotting leaf matter which had collected in the puddles on the uneven surface. It looks so much better now. **Environmental Services** ”

“ Tenant Erica would like to compliment plumber Ryan Heard who attended her property yesterday. Ryan was friendly and helpful every step of the way and explained everything he was doing as he went along when replacing a corroded pipe in the bathroom. The tenant was very happy with the work carried out. **Repairs** ”



“ Susan called and spoke to Brittany who is still training. She said that she was very helpful and lovely to speak to. She states she has spoken to a lot of people from Salix and she wishes everyone was like her! **Customer Service Centre** ”

“ I wanted to say thank you to Lorissa for coming out for my damp and mould inspection, she has sent all the jobs across and she was a very very lovely lady. **Healthy Homes** ”



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