



Operations Committee

Meeting Date: 26 June 2025

Agenda Item: 9

Meeting Date:	26 <sup>th</sup> June 2025
Title of Paper:	Complaints Report including Self-Assessment against complaint handling code
Status:	For discussion
Confidentiality:	Non-confidential
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Attachments:	Appendix 1 – 2025 Complaint Handling Code Self-Assessment Appendix 2 – May Complaints Dashboard
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1. Purpose of paper
- 1.1 The report provides an overview of complaints received and managed in 2024/25 with reference to lessons learnt, service improvements as a result, and an overview of cases with the Housing Ombudsman. The report also provides our latest Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code self-assessment.
2. Recommendation
- 2.1 The Committee is asked to **NOTE** the complaints management performance and self-assessment.
3. Annual Overview
- 3.1 In 2024-25 there were a total of 85 complaints received. This is a year-on-year increase in complaints logged from 73 in 2023/24 and 62 in 2022/23 as represented in Chart 1 below. The committee asked to see the seasonal trends in complaints, also represented in Chart 1, and will note that generally across the previous three years we have seen peaks and dips around the same months in each year, just of a higher volume in 2024/25.

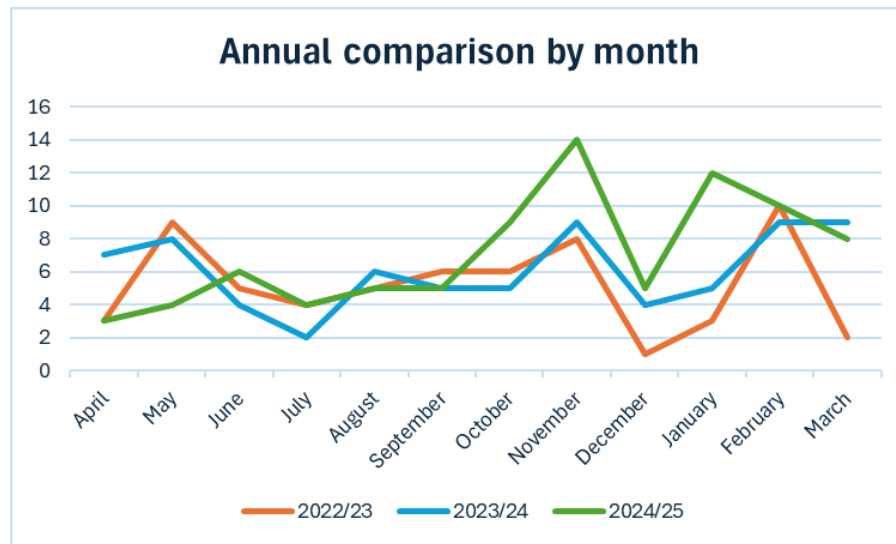


Chart 1

3.2 This overall number of 85 complaints is split by 72 at Stage 1, and 13 escalated to Stage 2.

### 3.3 Complaint locations

The table below outlines the areas where our complaints have been received, also shown as a percentage for that area. This has highlighted a higher-than-average number of complaints received per property for several areas, in particular Evelyn Mansions and from our street properties. We believe the increase in complaints from Evelyn Mansions may be down to the fact that there has been an increase in activity at the estate and opportunities for issues to arise and complaints to be made, not necessarily in relation to the major works themselves. Whilst the number of complaints for street properties remains relatively low, it is a higher percentage when looking at street properties as a proportion of our stock.

Area	Number of complaints	As a % of Estate
Evelyn Court	10	3.2%
Stoke Newington	12	4.3%
Navarino Mansions	4	1.6%
Evelina Mansions	9	12.5%
Stepney Green	9	7.8%
Street	6	13.3%
Smaller blocks	22	5.32%

Table 1

3.4 Complaint by service area

The table below shows the service areas in which we have received these complaints.

Service area	Number of complaints	As a % of overall
Repairs	41	57%
Housing	18	25%
Repairs & Housing combined	6	8%
Compliance	3	4%
Asset	4	6%

Table 2

3.5 Demographics

Whilst less than 5% of our residents population has made a complaint to us, to gauge if there is any over or under representation when it comes to accessing our complaints service we have analysed the demographics held on our housing management system.

Chart 2 below shows us that disproportionately more females have made complaints to us compared to the representative base of our residents. There is mixed research on whether gender has an impact on likelihood of making a complaint with some suggesting females are more likely to express dissatisfaction with a service, but without comparison data from previous records it will be an area to monitor as we collect data throughout 2025/26.



Chart 2

IDS has a diverse resident population, with over 24 recorded ethnicities. These have been consolidated into five main groups. We note from Chart 3 below there is generally an equal representation of residents who have made a complaint to us across the ethnic groups,

however the highest level of discrepancy relates to residents where we have no recorded data on their ethnicity. This remains an ongoing data collection point as the annual tenancy audits are carried out to ensure we have a full set of data.

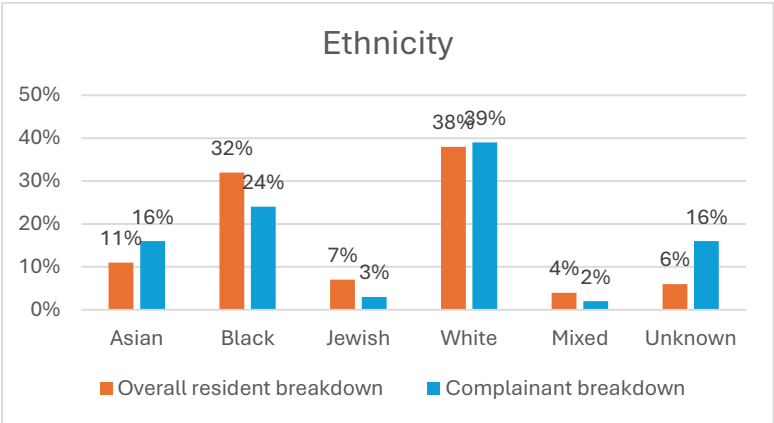


Chart 3

The chart below breaks down our resident population by tenure type. The results indicate our biggest area of tenure being general needs is represented accurately within our complaints data, but there is underreporting from our sheltered schemes and over reporting from our residents who are homeowners. We know from TSM results that generally our sheltered residents are overall more satisfied with our services than general needs residents, but this data is not collected for homeowners and an area of work to consider going forward.

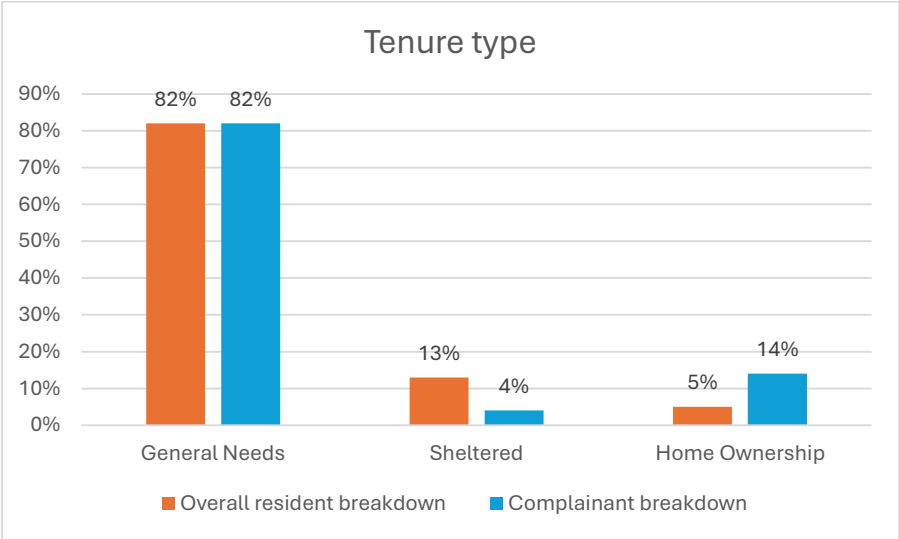


Chart 4

### 3.6 Response times

In accordance with the Ombudsman's complaint handling code, Stage 1 complaints have a ten working day timeframe for a written response and Stage 2 have 20 days.

The table below shows the on-time response rate broken down by stage and overall. In 2021/22/23 the stages were not reported on separately so only the overall figure is shown.

Year	Stage 1	Stage 2	Overall
2024/25	98.4%	83.3%	96%
2023/24	100%	80%	99%
2022/23	Not recorded		57%
2021/22	Not recorded		50%

Table 3

### 3.7 Service Improvements

Listening and acting on customer feedback is a key priority. We have been recording monthly lessons learned to share with our colleagues and residents as they are published on our website. The following actions have been identified to improve our service delivery to residents as a direct result of customer complaints, recognising the importance of the resident voice.

Theme	Service improvements
Staff training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increasing the use of the Housing Ombudsman's e-learning modules to ensure all staff embed the culture and awareness of complaint handling. Also to provide an understanding of the importance that every interaction matters and to minimise missed opportunities for reporting and escalation to Stage 2.</li> <li>Further case management meetings held with the housing team and management to ensure there are no barriers to progression or escalation where an issue remains unresolved for a resident.</li> </ul>
Improved processes and procedures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identified issues with contractors not attending the correct address. We have asked that contractors are more robust in attempting to contact residents when on site to limit missed appointments.</li> <li>Updated and improved sales and staircasing procedures following a change in staffing to ensure that any current staff dealing with such enquiries can progress and contribute to the sale, resulting in a smoother transition and communication with the resident selling and incoming purchaser.</li> <li>Introduced our Estate Management Policy to provide further clarity and procedures in dealing with reports of Anti-Social Behaviour.</li> </ul>

Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Residents have raised concerns that they are unclear about what their service charges are for. We updated our annual template to include a breakdown, so the charges are more clearly explained. Whilst we have some further work to do for future years, based on feedback since the new templates were issued, we have overall noted a drop in enquiries following the annual notification being sent.</li> <li>We have introduced an automated survey to all shared owners and leaseholders following the purchase of a property to avoid any missed opportunities to collect relevant household information and communication.</li> </ul>
Damp and mould	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We have actively encouraged resident reporting of any damp and mould instances or concerns which saw an increase in demand of inspections and plans. We have increased resources for inspections and ensured contractors are skilled up to carry out in depth and effective treatment.</li> <li>We have introduced reporting mechanisms with our contractors in readiness for Awaab's Law which comes into force in October 2025 since April 2025. We are already confident our reporting and monitoring of damp and mould cases is effective ahead of the legislation.</li> </ul>
Repairs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Following a successful trial with EVO our repairs contractor at Evelyn Court, this model has been extended to all our stock for day-to-day dwelling repairs providing a clear, transparent and easier customer journey for the resident when reporting their repair.</li> <li>Alongside this, weekly meetings with the contractor and IDS to approve/reject any works awaiting approval to speed up any delay to the residents when reporting a repair.</li> <li>Concerns were raised about contractors on site about their behaviour. We requested that all contractors provide copies of DBS checks on their operatives working on our sites and assurance sub-contractors are also working to these contracts.</li> </ul>

#### 4. Ombudsman updates

- 4.1 During 2024/25 we received one determination of maladministration from the Housing Ombudsman which was summarised in the last Operations Committee meeting papers. For the purposes of this annual report this has been summarised again below. We also await determinations from three further complaints being reviewed by the Ombudsman, where evidence has been submitted as part of their investigation process.

The Complaint	The handling of reports of damp and mould and of a leak flooding the basement below the property.
Findings	<p>The report commented positively that IDS had acknowledged its failings in relation to the delays and its poor communication. The landlord raised repairs, and communication appeared to improve with senior staff available for contact. However, the Ombudsman does not consider that £200 was sufficient compensation for the poor communication and significant delays or adequately reflected the impact on the resident.</p> <p>The report acknowledged the complexities in a resolution when reliant on a managing agent and could see IDS were challenging and chasing responses.</p> <p>However, the issues in the complaint were not resolved within a reasonable period of the Stage 2 response.</p>
Determination	Maladministration in the handling of the reports of damp and mould and basement leak.
Orders and recommendations	<p>Increase compensation to £1000</p> <p>Visit and complete a report of the current findings and provide an action plan to the resident and agree a time frame for ongoing updates.</p> <p>Check with the household for any vulnerabilities that would impact future repairs service delivery</p> <p>Recommendations included reviewing the damp and mould self-assessment and publish on our website and completing the managing agent self-assessment.</p>
Compliance	The Ombudsman have confirmed compliance with the orders.

## 5. Self-Assessment

- 5.1 Following the Complaint Handling Code becoming statutory on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2024, landlords are obliged by law to follow its requirements and submit the assessment annually. The Ombudsman has provided guidance to confirm landlords must submit their self-assessment by 30<sup>th</sup> September each year along with this report and a response from the 'Governing Body'.
- 5.2 The Code consists of nine sections covering 68 different provisions. The self-assessment has been reviewed and supporting evidence and commentary provided by service managers, senior and corporate management team members internally. In addition to this, feedback has been sought from residents who have been through our complaints process within this reporting period to ensure their experience was reflective of that reported in the self-assessment. Two residents provided their feedback and agreed their experience was in line with the complaint handling code. The self-assessment has also been reviewed by Debbie Fox, our Member Responsible for Complaints.
- 5.3 The self-assessment completed in June 2025 is attached as **Appendix 1**.

## **6. Year to Date Complaints Performance**

- 6.1 The complaints dashboard for May is included as **Appendix 2**. This shows 13 complaints received in April and May with 10 complaints at Stage one and three escalated to stage two of our complaint's procedure.
- 6.2 There has been a big focus on closing actions that related to closed complaints to ensure that we are properly following through on agreements with residents and properly closing off complaints. At the last committee meeting there were 12 complaints with open actions, this has now reduced to 8 showing the attention in this area.

## **7. Relevant Organisational and Legislative Implications**

### **7.1 Strategic Objectives**

This paper supports:

- Strategic Objective 1 – Providing excellent resident-centred services – we will ensure services are accessible, resident-focused, and continuously improved.
- Strategic Objective 4- Being a well-run organisation - We will uphold strong governance, effective risk management, and regulatory compliance.

### **7.2 Risk Management Implications**

This paper is linked to the management of the following strategic risks:

- Risk 3 – Customer needs and priorities are not understood and/or used leading to misaligned service offer and dissatisfaction.

### **7.3 Legal/Regulatory Associations**

#### **Consumer standards**

- Neighbourhood and community standard
- Safety and quality standard
- Tenancy standard
- Transparency, influence and accountability standard

## **8 Resident, Staff and EDI Implications**

### **8.1 For Staff:**

- All resident facing staff have completed training in line with the Ombudsman's complaints handling code.



## 8.2 For residents:

- Two residents with experience of our complaints process provided feedback on the accuracy of the self-assessment and agreed their experience was reflective of the self-assessment.
- Information is provided in section 3.5 about the different demographics of residents accessing our complaints service, to begin looking at representation.
- Our complaints dashboard is published on our website each month to provide transparency to residents.