



COMPLAINTS PERFORMANCE AND IMPROVEMENT REPORT 2024/2025

SQUARE BUILDING TRUST

Complaints Performance & Service Improvement Report 2024/25

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About Square Building Trust

The Square Building Trust owns and manages 120 affordable homes across the North Tyneside area these vary from one bedroom to three-bedroom family homes.

Operational management of these properties is via our managing agent Bernicia, whose policies the Trust has adopted.

Introduction

Complaints offer a valuable source of insight and customer feedback. By analysing complaint data alongside direct customer input, we gain a clear and comprehensive understanding of tenants' experiences and views. This helps shape our priorities, improve our standards, and ensure we consistently meet them.

We see complaints not as a negative, but as a vital safeguard that ensures tenants' voices are heard and their concerns addressed effectively. When we fall short, we have transparent processes in place to hold ourselves accountable and deliver meaningful resolutions. We also align our approach with the standards set by our managing agent, supported by regular reporting to track progress and performance.

The Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code requires social housing landlords to produce an annual self-assessment of compliance with the Code, alongside a complaint performance and service improvement report, which is the primary purpose of this document.

Our annual self-assessment against the Complaint Handling Code is included in Appendix 1 and is available on our website.

Complaints Performance in 2024/25

18 total complaints received
(16 Stage One and 2 Stage Two)

87.5% Stage One complaints were responded to in target timescales

100% Stage Two complaints were responded to in target timescales.

133.3 complaints received per 1000 homes.

87.5% of Stage One complaints were upheld

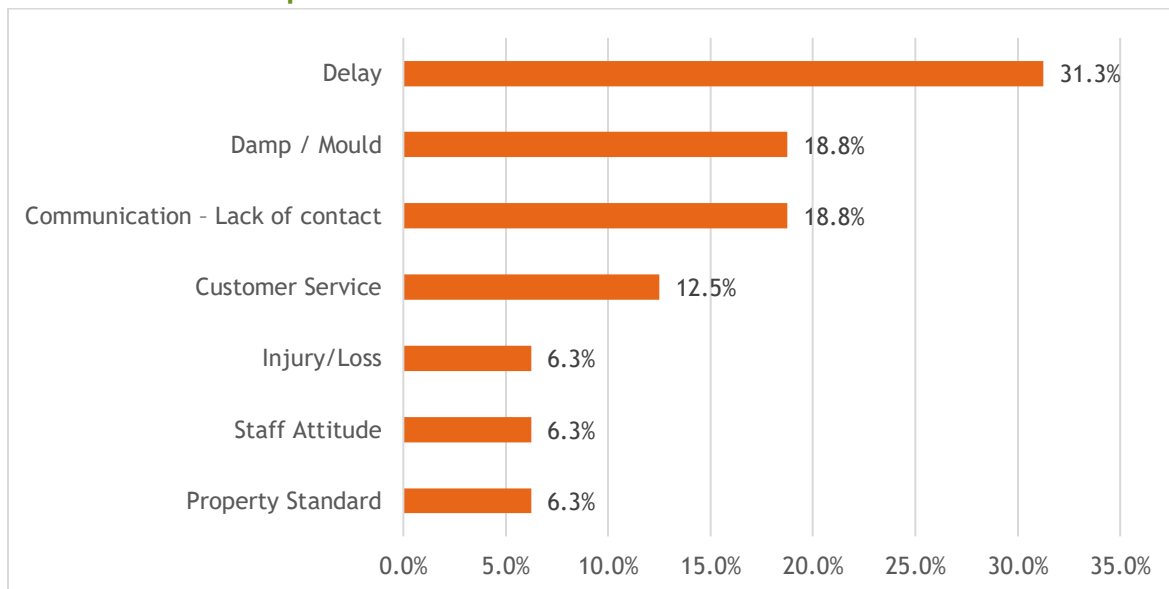
50% of Stage Two Complaints were upheld

No complaints received related to hate crime

0 housing ombudsman determinations received in 24/25

89% were resolved at Stage One of the process

Nature of Complaints



We can see that the top reasons for dissatisfaction are:

- Delays in delivering repair services
- Damp, mould, and condensation
- Communication

Delays in delivering services, primarily relates to responsive repairs, and damp, mould and condensation.

Demand in this area has grown considerably, reflecting a trend seen across the housing sector. In response, Bernicia our managing agent, has strengthened their trade resources and enhanced both the processes and management systems to better manage this increased demand. They also closely monitor updates from the Housing Ombudsman, particularly in relation to damp and mould, to ensure they remain proactive in improving our service.

Reports of poor communication still features within the reason for complaints however Bernicia has made a substantial investment in a new Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system, which has enhanced task and query visibility, will strengthen communication with tenants, and improve collaboration across the organisation.

Service Improvement & Learnings

Trends arising from complaints directed our focus to 2 priority themes. The improvements made in 2024/2025 and continue to work on are shown below:

1. Strengthen our complaint reporting to the Board, focussing on lessons learned from individual complaints.

As complaint cases are now managed through Bernicia's new CRM, Salesforce, it provides real-time access to case information and has improved our oversight and understanding of our complaint cases.

We have a specific complaints performance dashboard focused on our complaints and our reporting has been enhanced to offer ongoing visibility of key metrics. Key features include:

- Tracking of Stage 1 resolutions and Stage 2 escalations
- Monitoring of complaint response times
- Monitoring of complaint outcomes allowing us to track actions until fully resolved.

This is reviewed quarterly by the team to ensure ongoing scrutiny and continuous improvement throughout the year.

2. Work with Bernicia to improve complaint handling timescales in line with targets set within the code.

Bernicia set out to improve complaint handling timescales in line with the Housing Ombudsman's Code. This was a key area of focus for the team, which was supported by several initiatives, which were:

- Training for colleagues to understand why it is vital they are accountable, and act swiftly when a complaint is raised, as well as information about the complaint handling code and what their responsibility is when it comes to complaints
- They also introduced a weekly performance update on complaints for Heads of Service to ensure actions are completed within their teams
- They implemented deadline alerts to ensure service levels were met
- They have also introduced quality monitoring within the complaints handling process. This monitoring focuses on accurate case recording, appropriate use of extensions, and consistent resident communication.

As a result, we saw significant improvements in performance, with 100% of complaints responded to on time in Quarter Three and Quarter Four.

Key Focus 2025 - 2026

Priorities for the year ahead reflect the learning from complaints this year and continue to strengthen the processes, practices and recording systems, which support us to learn and improve from complaints; ultimately ensuring customers receive the best services possible.

This year we will:

Drive a reduction in repairs complaints through the design and implementation of our repair's module within Salesforce

Strengthen how we learn from compliments and complaints.