

BOARD

CUSTOMER FOCUS COMMITTEE

21st May 2025

Complaint Performance and Service Improvement Report

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report sets out the regulatory Complaints and Service Improvement report required by the Housing Ombudsman each year. Within this report is the annual complaint handling performance, the annual self-assessment against the complaint handling code and information regarding our complaint learning and service improvements. Areas to note within this report are that complaints have risen this year in line with the sector increases. The handling timescales are improved especially across stage two complaints and the escalation rate to stage two has decreased. Within the report is sets out complaint themes and areas of learning with actions being taken to address service improvements.

The annual self-assessment has been conducted with the tenant complaint panel to feature the customer voice within this document. The outcome of the self-assessment is that we are compliant against the Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code. There is also a summary and the associated Housing Ombudsman determinations for the year.

1.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1.1 The Customer Focus Committee is asked to consider the content of this report and consider if the Self-Assessment gives assurance that we are compliant with Complaint Handling Code and approves for submission.
- 1.2 The Customer Focus Committee is asked to also provide scrutiny and challenge on the contents of the report and a response to this report with the intent it will be published to our tenants and customers on our website and provided in our annual submission.
- 1.3 The recommendations will be included within the minutes and shared as an update to Ongo Homes Board.

2.0 IMPACT ASSESSMENT ON CROSS CUTTING THEMES

THEME	IMPACT – Positive and / or Negative	Relevant to report?
Risk and Health and Safety (H&S)	The Regulator of Social Housing expects providers to take account of risk and health and safety in the delivery of its services. Complaints are one of the opportunities to listen to our tenants and customers and highlight potential health and safety Risks.	Yes
Governance	The National Housing Federation (NHF) Code of Governance requires Ongo to ensure Board has	Yes

THEME	IMPACT – Positive and / or Negative	Relevant to report?
	<p>access to insight, views, and consideration of its customers. This includes customer feedback and learning from complaints.</p> <p>The Complaint Handling Code 2024 states that landlords must produce an annual Complaint Performance and Service Improvement report for scrutiny and challenge.</p>	
RSH economic regulatory standards	<p>The Regulator of Social Housing (RSH) two main objectives:</p> <p>Economic objective: to make sure that registered providers (landlords) are well-managed and financially stable.</p> <p>Consumer objective: to make sure that tenants get quality accommodation, have choice and protection, and can hold their landlords to account.</p>	Yes
RSH consumer regulatory standards	<p>The RSH said that under the new standards, which follow the Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023, landlords will need to: ensure tenants are safe in their homes, listen to tenants' complaints and respond promptly to put things right and be accountable to tenants and treat them with fairness and respect.</p> <p>The transparency, Influence and accountability standard sets out Landlords must ensure complaints are addressed fairly, effectively, and promptly. This report sets out assurance of how that standard is met.</p>	Yes
Other statutory/regulatory compliance, e.g. legal, charity commission, FCA	The new complaints handling code becomes statutory from 1 April 2024. Maladministration decisions could lead to increased risk to Ongo's Reputation.	No
Financial	Enhanced HO interventions are leading to higher levels of compensation being paid. A failure to repair could lead to more disrepair claims.	Yes
Value for Money (VFM)	Ongo delivers all services in line with VFM principles.	Yes
Equality, diversity & inclusion (EDI)	Ongo has several methods that considers equality and diversity in the services it provides to tenants.	Yes
Human resources	N/A	No

THEME	IMPACT – Positive and / or Negative	Relevant to report?
Customer voice/impact	<p>Excellent service delivery can best be achieved by the genuine and active influence of residents in the way the organisations operate and interacts with its customers.</p> <p>Ongo publicises its complaints data to tenants and our involved tenants group Community Voice.</p> <p>The Tenant Complaint Panel has been actively involved in the Self-assessment process for the complaint handling code ensuring our tenant voice is present across our complaint handling services</p>	Yes
Sustainability and Carbon Reduction	N/A	No

3.0 BACKGROUND

3.1 Each year we report on our complaint handling and service improvements in line with our regulatory responsibilities within the Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code.

3.2 The Transparency, Influence and Accountability consumer standard requires landlords to have a simple, accessible, and publicised approach to complaint handling and provide accessible information about what complaints we receive, complaint handling performance and service improvements.

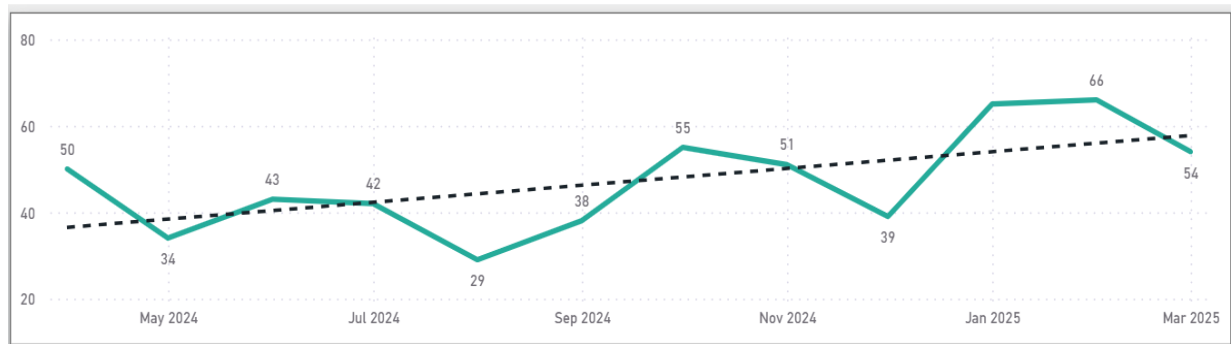
3.3 The information in this report aligns to our objectives within our corporate plan and Customer Focus Strategy which sets out Ongo will have a positive complaint culture across the organisation and empowering our colleagues to own customer concerns and resolutions.

3.4 It is important our complaint performance aligns to our company values, driven to ensure we are delivering the right services to our tenants and customers, being responsible for owning customer concerns and dissatisfaction and putting things right and working in partnership across the organisation to ensure we recognise where we can improve services.

4.0 Complaint Handling Performance

4.1 There have been five hundred and sixty-six stage one complaints received this year this is an increase of one hundred and fifty five percent compared to last year and the largest complaint volumes we have seen. Across the sector there have been significant increases in complaint volumes, this is something the Housing Ombudsman sees as a positive complaint culture and an accessible service within an organisation. The chart below shows the complaint volumes throughout the year. Full details of our complaint performance are within Appendix 1 – Complaint Performance

Chart Complaint received Stage one



- 4.2 We have responded to ninety seven percent of stage one complaints within the complaint handling code timescales. There have been eleven complaints handled outside of the timescales at stage one, and these are due to human error and accidental delays. Stage two complaint timescales have improved this year, and seventy two percent of complaints were handled within the code timescales. This will be improved further this year due to a strengthening of the leadership team and governance on Stage two complaints.
- 4.3 There have been five complaints declined during this period. The reasons for this are two complaints were where the subject of the complaint arose over twelve months ago and three complaints had already exhausted the complaint process. This equates to less than one percent of the complaints received providing assurance that the complaints process is accessible and in line with the complaint handling code.
- 4.4 There has been twelve percent of stage one complaints escalated to stage two. This is a reduction from the previous year where twenty nine percent of stage once complaints were escalated. This is a positive reduction and reduces the risk of complaints being investigated by the Housing Ombudsman but more importantly shows that the stage one complaint handling quality has improved.
- 4.5 Analysing our complaint trends fifty five percent of our complaints were for our repairs and Maintenance services, twenty percent for Customer Services and eight percent for anti-social behaviour and tenancy services. The overarching theme in these areas was communication and not keeping our customer informed throughout service delivery, followed by dissatisfaction on appointment times and not resolving repairs.
- 4.6 It is important to understand the demographics of our complainants to ensure our complaints services are accessible and fair. The detail shows us we have complaints across all age ranges, we are seeing more complaints from female tenants, and we have received complaints from our disabled tenants and a range ethnicities in line with our tenant demographics. The demographic detail can be seen in Appendix 2 – Complaint Demographics
- 4.7 Across the organisation we have paid two hundred and seventeen thousand pounds in compensation to our tenants. Compensation payments are used to often remedy

complaints and to put things right and approximately seventy-five thousand pounds of this is directly attributed to complaint resolutions.

5.0 Housing Ombudsman and Self-Assessment

- 5.1 There have been thirteen new Housing Ombudsman investigations this year, this is an increase of three from the previous year. We have also received eight determinations and one appeal review from the Housing Ombudsman. Two cases with no maladministration, two with service failure and four with maladministration findings. The appeal review maintained the original decision of Severe Maladministration which was reported in 23/24. We have nine cases awaiting decision from the Housing Ombudsman. You can see the summary table in Appendix 3 – Housing Ombudsman Summary table and the full reports are available in the discretionary reading papers
- 5.2 The self-assessment has been reviewed annually in line with the Complaint handling codes expectations. The self-assessment shows we are fully compliant with some further enhancements highlighted for continuous improvements. The submission dates have been revised by the Housing Ombudsman and the self-assessment must be submitted to the regulator before 30th September 2025. Appendix 4 – Housing Ombudsman Self-Assessment
- 5.3 In January we were approached to carry out a compliance check against our 24/25 self-assessment submission to date we do not have the report regarding our compliance this will be reported to this committee when received.

6.0 Complaint learning

- 6.1 We have recorded one hundred and thirty-two complaint learning records across our complaint handling. There are four main focus areas from our complaint learning these are communication (keeping our tenants informed throughout service delivery), Missed or delayed repair appointment timescales, Attitude of colleagues and contractors and repairs not resolved. To ensure we are listening to our tenants' actions have been or are being progressed to improve our service delivery. A full summary is included in appendix 5 - Complaint Learning Summary.

7.0 Customer Voice

- 7.1 The Customer satisfaction on the regulatory tenant satisfaction measures (TP09) was twenty eight percent. After further analysis of this it showed that ninety-one percent of respondents had not raised a stage one or two complaint. This shows it is not a reflection on the complaint handling itself but a disparity on completing the question or understanding of the complaint process. This is a challenging measure across the sector. We will continue to explore how we can improve this performance measure.
- 7.2 The Tenant Complaint Panel has been continually active throughout the year and have been involved in auditing complaints against the code, looking at complaint performance, scrutinising Housing Ombudsman reports, conducted the annual self-assessment and have been consulted on proposed actions to improve services.

Through their work they have made several changes to improve services, for example ensuring complaint communication is standardised, agreed a minimum data standard for complaint handling process and scrutinising learning actions ensuring they are customer focused. There has been full transparency in our complaint handling, and they have informed us where changes need to be made to our website.

Associated background papers:

Appendix 1 – Complaint Performance

Appendix 2 – Complaint Demographics

Appendix 3 – HO Investigation Table

Appendix 4 – Housing Ombudsman Self-Assessment

Appendix 5 - Complaint learning summary

Discretionary Reading:

Housing Ombudsman Reports x 9

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