

City of London Corporation Committee Report

Committee(s): Housing Management and Almshouses Sub Committee	Dated: 26 November 2025
Subject: Housing Complaints Update	Public report: For Information
Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?	No
If so, how much?	N/A
What is the source of Funding?	N/A
Has this Funding Source been agreed with the Chamberlain's Department?	N/A
Report of:	Judith Finlay, Executive Director of Community & Children's Services
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Summary

The purpose of this report is to provide Members with a comprehensive overview of Housing Complaints data covering Quarters 1 and 2 of the 2025/26 financial year. It also outlines the progress made by the Housing Complaints and Customer Feedback Team to date and sets out the team's objectives for the remainder of the year.

Recommendation(s)

Members are asked to:

- Note the report.

Main Report

Background

The Annual Complaints Performance & Service Improvement Report for 2024/25 proposed the following service improvements for 2025/26. These are described below with progress made to date and next steps detailed where appropriate.

Proposed Action:

1. Improve the tracking of Member and MP enquiries raised on behalf of residents.

Progress to Date:

A new tracking process is being trialled, with weekly updates for Members Responsible for Complaints. A review of the process is scheduled for January 2026.

Next Steps:

Process to be reviewed and refined in January 2026 as appropriate.

Proposed Action:

2. Improve the tracking of 'informal' requests to the Housing Complaints & Customer Feedback Team.

Progress to Date

These requests are logged and monitored in weekly meetings with the Property Services Team.

Proposed Action:

3. Acknowledgement of all complaints within five working days.

Progress to Date:

99.4% compliance was achieved across Q1 and Q2 (1 acknowledgement late in Q1).

Proposed Action:

4. Enhanced monitoring of our Lift Servicing and Consultancy contracts.

Progress to Date:

Additional administrative and contract monitoring resources have been recruited to the Repairs and Maintenance Team, which has led to tighter monitoring of services.

Next Steps:

Mobilisation of the new lift maintenance contract is planned as part of the 2025/26 procurement programme, incorporating lessons learned from previous contracts and enhanced KPIs.

Proposed Action:

5. Attendance of the Housing Complaints & Customer Feedback Team at appropriate contract management meetings to provide feedback to key contractors.

Progress to Date:

The Information, Performance and Quality Assurance Manager has attended some contract monitoring meetings as appropriate, the team regularly liaises with key contractors in relation to complaints.

Next Steps:

The Housing Complaints and Customer Feedback Team have started to share a monthly summary of Lessons Learned to Lead Investigators. There is an ambition to start to share these lessons with Contractors where appropriate.

Proposed Action:

6. Review and development of customer service ethos across Housing. To include staff training, streamlining our operations and developing and reviewing policy and procedures.

Progress to Date:

60 staff have been enrolled on MGI Customer Service refresher training; 33 staff attended Customer Service Basics Training; Customer Services Standards have been developed and made easily accessible to staff.

Proposed Action:

7. Implementation of the Civica Customer Relationship Management (CRM) module.

Progress to Date:

Civica CX CRM modules are live for Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) and Damp & Mould cases.

Next Steps:

The Civica CX Voids module is planned for implementation this year.

Proposed Action:

8. Development of detailed resident profiles to support tailoring services to better meet residents' needs.

Progress to Date:

The tenancy audit is being mobilised for commencement in early 2026.

Next Steps:

Tenancy Audit data will be analysed and used to drive service improvements and the tailoring of services for residents.

Proposed Action:

9. Producing a template to allow for consistent communication with residents regarding communal outages and repairs.

Progress to Date:

A template has been developed and trialled for lift outages on some estates; Civica CX is now being used for group communications (e.g., for communal outages impacting multiple households).

Next Steps:

Where the complaints team identify gaps in communication, feedback will continue to be shared with Heads of Service, and improvements will be implemented.

Proposed Action:

10. Mobilisation of the Chigwell contract to allow Chigwell to contact customers directly to make the first appointment for non-emergency repairs within 2 working days. With follow up reminders 24 hours before the appointment is due and another when the operative is on route.

Progress to date:

Chigwell are contacting customers to book appointments and are issuing SMS notifications when contractors are on route to jobs.

Proposed Action:

11. Guidelines to be produced by the Housing Complaints & Customer Feedback Team to provide staff with clearer expectations and standards for complaint investigation and responses.

Progress to date:

Templates have been updated with specific prompts in line with Housing Ombudsman guidance and distributed to all complaint investigators.

Next Steps:

Refresher training sessions for Housing Complaints Investigators will be scheduled to maintain consistency.

Proposed Action:

12. Review of the Housing Complaints Compensation Policy in line with customer feedback and analysis of complaints data.

Progress to date:

The policy was reviewed in June 2025 in line with resident feedback; a 'calculator' was created based on the updated policy for investigators to use, allowing for consistent application.

Key Data**1. Housing Complaints Data (Q1 – Q2 2025/26)**

Appendix 1 presents data covering the period 1 April 2025 – 30 September 2025, compared against 2024/25. It also includes information on transactional feedback and determinations from the Housing Ombudsman.

2. Group Compensation Data

Alongside the compensation offered to individual complainants, the CoL offered group compensation in instances of communal outages in line with the updated Compensation Policy: This was done at Otto Close, Lewisham in June 2025; Lambfold House and Penfields at York Way in July 2025, and Eric Wilkins, Avondale Park in August 2025. The compensation offered was £6,176 in total. Last financial year residents were offered £26,250 in either rent or service charge adjustments in total.

3. Complaints Learning Panel Outcomes (Lessons Learned)

Since the last Housing Complaints Update in June 2025, there have been two Complaints Learning Panels held (July and September), where relevant Heads of Service discussed lessons learned from complaints resulting in service improvements. Some examples of which are detailed below:

Communal Outage Communications

Following resident feedback regarding insufficient communication during communal outages, a new group emergency communication function in CX was introduced in July 2025. This enhancement enables timely and targeted messaging to affected residents. To support effective use of this functionality, staff have received training on Civica CX, ensuring they are equipped to maximise its communication capabilities.

Positive Complaints Culture

Heads of Service reaffirmed the importance of fostering a positive complaints culture, one that recognises complaints as valuable opportunities to improve our services. All staff are encouraged to understand their role in supporting and appropriately escalating resident concerns.

To reinforce this approach, refresher training was delivered to Estate Teams, clarifying expectations around complaint handling and providing reassurance through open discussion and Q&A on the service and process.

Compensation

Following feedback from a resident group, the Compensation Policy was reviewed and updated. As part of this update, a compensation calculator was developed to support a consistent application across all cases. The Complaints Team has made the calculator accessible to all investigators, who are now encouraged to consider it in every relevant case.

Lessons Learned Process

Investigators are encouraged to identify and highlight specific lessons learned from each case. In October 2025, the Housing Complaints and Customer Feedback Team began collating these insights and sharing them with Heads of Service and Investigators via a monthly summary document. These summaries will also be reviewed quarterly at the Complaints Learning Panel to support continuous improvement.

Key Themes identified in October 2025 included:

- Communication
- Leak Management
- Communal Repairs
- Process Refinements

4. Housing Ombudsman Annual Landlord Performance Report

Appendices 2 and 3 include the City of London's Annual Landlord Report from the Housing Ombudsman, along with the City's formal written response. These documents were shared with all Housing staff to promote transparency and learning.

Staff were also directed to the Housing Ombudsman's training resources to support continued professional development and improve complaint handling practices.

5. Housing Ombudsman Self-Assessments

The Team have carried out Self Assessments against two of the Housing Ombudsman's Spotlight Reports:

- V2 Spotlight on Damp and Mould (Appx 4)
- V1 Spotlight on Repairs and Maintenance – Repairing Trust (Appx 5)

Corporate & Strategic Implications –

Strategic implications – None

Financial implications – None

Resource implications – None

Legal implications – None

Risk implications - Housing complaints have a direct impact on the reputation of the City of London's Housing Division. By the time a resident submits a complaint, they may have already experienced a service failure, making it essential that the complaints process is handled professionally, fairly, and effectively. There is also reputational risk associated with cases investigated by the Housing Ombudsman. The Ombudsman publishes annual reports and may publicly highlight specific landlords where severe maladministration has occurred. Ensuring robust complaint handling helps mitigate this risk and demonstrates a commitment to accountability and service improvement.

Equalities implications – None

Climate implications – None

Security implications – None

Conclusion

Members are asked to note this report containing information on the Housing Complaints and Customer Feedback Team's service in Quarters 1 and 2 of 2025/26.

Appendices

- Appendix 1 – Housing Complaints Data (Q1 – Q2 2025-26)
- Appendix 2 – HOS Landlord Performance Report
- Appendix 3 – CoL Response to Landlord Performance Report
- Appendix 4 – V2 Spotlight on Damp & Mould
- Appendix 5 – V1 Spotlight on Repairs & Maintenance – Repairing Trust

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