

Empower Housing Association (EHA) values all feedback received from tenants and their representatives and recognises the important role it plays in shaping and improving the services we provide. Feedback helps EHA understand tenants' experiences and identify opportunities to improve service delivery and tenant satisfaction.

Complaints form an important part of this feedback process, providing valuable insight where services may not have met expectations or we have got things wrong. By reviewing complaints openly and positively, EHA is able to identify learning, strengthen working practices and implement service improvements to help prevent similar issues from occurring in the future.

EHA will continue to maintain a strong focus on complaint handling, performance monitoring, learning outcomes and service improvements through regular quarterly and annual reporting to the Board, regular reporting to our tenants and ensuring continued oversight and accountability across the organisation.

Annual Self-Assessment against Complaint Handling Code (June 26)

The completed annual self-assessment of EHAs complaint handling demonstrates compliance with the Complaint Handling Code and gives assurance to Board that EHA continues to provide an accessible and positive complaint handling process overall for tenants.

Complaint Handling Performance 2025/26

Detailed below is a breakdown of the number of complaints including themes and service areas which have been the focus of complaints April - March 2025/26:

	Number of complaints refused	Total number of complaints	Theme of complaints	Complaint Stage		
				Stage 1	Stage 2	Ombudsman
Contractor Conduct	0	1	Contractor Failure to adhere to timescales & poor communication Defects by contractor caused by lack of attention Unsafe storage of contractor tools	1	0	0
Process Failure	0	1	Tenant Health and Safety risk, where responsibility of Care Provider in line with SLA.	1	0	0
Behaviour	0	1	Tenant Aggressive behaviour towards own care staff.	1	0	0
Adaptation *	0	1*	Adaptation Work was poorly executed and communication was inconsistent*	0	1*	0
Total 25/26	0	4		3	1	0

**Escalated from a stage 1 complaint in 2024/25*

As a result of the complaints received during 2025/26, all complaints were upheld and key learning and service improvements were identified to ensure that EHA continues to improve service delivery and tenant experience. Learning identified through complaints has focused on communication, contractor management, record keeping, response times and ensuring appropriate consideration of tenants' individual needs. One complaint from 24/25 was escalated to Stage 2.

3, stage 1 and 1, stage 2 complaints were received during the year, equating to 10 Stage 1 complaints per 1,000 homes which is in line with EHA's target for 25/26 and 3 for stage 2 which is above target of 0. The table below details the key learning and service improvements identified across EHA services during the year where complaints were received.

Service Area	Complaints Upheld
Contractor Conduct	1
Key Learning - Contractors failed to adhere to agreed timescales. - Defects were caused by lack of attention to detail and poor workmanship. - Unsafe storage of contractor tools created health and safety concerns. - Communication and follow-up actions identified during complaint investigations were not consistently progressed.	
Service Improvements - Increased monitoring of contractor performance and adherence to timescales. - Additional quality assurance inspections introduced during and after works completion. - Improved escalation and tracking process to ensure actions identified through complaints are completed. - Strengthened communication processes between contractors, tenants, and internal teams.	
Process Failure	1
Key Learning - Clarification was needed regarding the responsibility of the Care Provider in line with the Service Level Agreement. - Delays in communication and escalation processes impacted the timely resolution of concerns. - Complaint investigations identified gaps in coordination between contractors, care providers, and internal teams.	
Service Improvements - Reviewed and reinforced SLA responsibilities with care providers and contractors. - Improved communication protocols between all parties involved to ensure timely updates and resolutions. - Enhanced EHA monitoring arrangements to ensure process compliance and early identification of service failures.	
Behaviour	1
Key Learning - A complaint was received regarding aggressive behaviour towards care staff. - The incident highlighted the importance of ensuring staff feel supported when managing challenging situations. - The complaint process identified the need for clear recording and escalation of behavioural concerns involving tenants.	
Service Improvements - The incident was reviewed with relevant staff and managers to ensure appropriate follow-up actions were taken. - Recording of behavioural complaints was reviewed to support consistent handling and monitoring of concerns raised.	
Adaptation* Follow on from 24/25	1
Key Learning - Adaptation works were not completed to the expected standard, resulting in dissatisfaction with the quality of workmanship. - Communication with the resident throughout the adaptation process was inconsistent and unclear. - The complaint highlighted the need for improved oversight of specialist adaptation works and customer engagement.	

Service Improvements

- Strengthened communication processes to ensure our tenants receive regular updates throughout adaptation projects.
- Improved coordination between contractors, occupational therapists, and maintenance teams involved in adaptation works.
- Enhanced monitoring of adaptation projects to ensure works are completed to the required specification and within agreed timescales.

Housing Ombudsman

There has been no intervention or reporting by the Housing Ombudsman in relation to EHA's compliance with its Complaints and Feedback Policy and Procedure or the Housing Ombudsman Service (HOS) Complaint Handling Code during 2025/26.

EHA continues to review publications, Spotlight Reports and wider learning issued by the Housing Ombudsman Service to support continuous learning, service improvement and effective complaint handling across the organisation. EHA also maintains access to the HOS e-learning hub to ensure a positive complaint handling culture and ongoing colleague development remains embedded throughout the organisation.

During 2025/26, EHA has considered learning from a number of Housing Ombudsman publications, including the Housing Ombudsman's "Learning from Severe Maladministration" reports, which highlighted key themes including communication failures, delays in repairs and adaptations, poor record keeping and insufficient consideration of residents' vulnerabilities and individual needs. This learning has been reflected within EHA's service improvement actions, colleague training and review of operational procedures.

Colleague Training

All colleagues have attended refresher Complaint Handling training in April 25. This covered how all colleagues are expected to approach complaints in line with EHA's Complaints and Feedback Policy and Procedure, including the need to acknowledge when we get things wrong and how we put them right.

All colleagues will be made aware of the free Ombudsman online training tools to support complaints and ASB learning. Along with additional focus workshops to allow one on one training.

Sharing Learning and Service Improvements

During 25/26 quarterly complaints bulletins have been put in place and issued to all colleagues, reporting on the number of complaints, service requests, learning and service improvements.

Conclusion

EHA remains committed to delivering high-quality services and getting these right and ensuring that complaints are used positively to drive learning and service improvement across the organisation.

During 2025/26, EHA received 10 complaints per 1000 homes stage 1 and 3 per 1,000 stage 2.

Reviewing complaints received during the year has enabled EHA to identify further opportunities for learning and improvement, particularly in relation to communication, timely completion of repairs and adaptations, contractor management, record keeping and colleague training. Service improvements have been implemented across these areas to strengthen service delivery and improve tenant experience.

EHA also recognises that some themes identified during 2024/25, including communication and record keeping, continue to require ongoing focus. These areas will remain a priority during 2026/27 through continued colleague training, strengthened oversight and embedding best practice learning from Housing Ombudsman publications and engagement with peers across the Specialist Supported Housing sector.

By continuing to learn from complaints, tenant feedback and wider sector good practice, EHA aims to reduce the likelihood of repeat issues, improve tenant satisfaction and ensure services remain responsive to the needs of tenants and their representatives. Ongoing engagement with tenants, care providers and stakeholders will continue to support the organisation in refining services and maintaining high standards across all areas of operation.