



# Housing Ombudsman Service Complaint Handling Code

## Annual Complaint Handling and Service Improvement Report 2023-2024



DRAGONFLY  
MANAGEMENT

**A:** The Arc, High Street, Clowne, S43 4JY  
**T:** 01246 242424  
**E:** [enquiries@bolsover.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@bolsover.gov.uk)  
**W:** [www.bolsover.gov.uk](http://www.bolsover.gov.uk)

## **Equalities Statement**

Bolsover District Council is committed to equalities as an employer and when delivering the services it provides to all sections of the community. The Council believes that no person should be treated unfairly and is committed to eliminating all forms of discrimination, advancing equality and fostering good relations between all groups in society.

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## Foreword

### Governing Body Response

The Council is very proud of the Housing Department and is committed to delivering excellent customer services. We recognise the importance of complaints, and always strive to listen to our tenants' ensuring complaints are dealt with appropriately. We learn from complaints and tenant feedback, and take action to implement service improvements.

The self-assessment demonstrates that Bolsover District Council is compliant with the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code and that any complaints received from our tenants will be dealt with in accordance with the Code.

The updated Compliments, Comments and Complaints Policy further ensures we are meeting the requirements of the Housing Ombudsman, by aligning our processes and procedures with the Code. This has been embedded through staff training.



Cllr Mary Dooley  
Portfolio Holder for Health and  
Wellbeing  
(Including Customer Services)



Cllr Sandra Peake  
Portfolio Holder for Housing

### Bolsover Tenants Challenge and Change Group Response

As tenants, we are pleased to see that the annual complaints performance and service improvement report for 2023/24, together with the Council's self-assessments against the Complaint Handling Code, show that we are compliant.

We are pleased that going forward there will be a quarterly complaint performance report being presented at the Tenant Participation Review and Development Group meeting which will give tenants the opportunity to monitor and scrutinise the Council's complaints handling and provide constructive challenge where required.

## Introduction

The Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code became statutory from 1 April 2024, which means that social housing landlords are now obliged by law to follow its requirements.

The Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023 places a legal duty on the Ombudsman to monitor social housing landlord's compliance with the Code. Section 8 of the HOS Complaint Handling Code requires that landlords must produce an Annual Complaints Performance and Service Improvement Report for scrutiny and challenge.

This annual report provides an analysis of the complaints, comments and compliments received by the Council during 2023/24.

This report seeks to provide information on the performance of the Council's complaint handling in terms of the volume and timeliness of the responses. In addition, the report seeks to identify themes, trends and lessons learnt that drive service improvements.

The Housing Ombudsman Service (HOS) has a two-stage complaint handling process which requires:

- All Complaint Acknowledgements responded within 5 working days.
- Stage One complaints must be responded to within 10 working days.
- Stage Two within 20 working days.

During 2023/24, the Council's Complaints, Comments and Compliments Policy (CCC Policy) had a 3-stage procedure:

- Stage One Informal – 3 working days
- Stage Two Formal – 15 working days
- Stage Three Internal Reviews – 20 working days

For the purpose of this report, HOS Stage One complaints consist of the Informal and Formal stages.

Whilst the report must show the Council's performance against the new HOS Complaint Handling Code, some of the tables and charts present the data to enable analysis against the CCC Policy which was in operation during the transition period.

Whilst the main driver for the report is to look at complaints, the Council can learn a lot from the comments, compliments and M.P. enquires received and therefore this report also seeks to analyse this data.

## **Analysis of complaints performance for 2023/24**

### **Types of complaints**

The Customer Advisors have all had thorough training of the CCC Policy. Following this training the Council's Customer Advisors can appropriately determine whether the issue raised is a service request/enquiry or a complaint.

The CCC Policy defines a complaint as an "expression of dissatisfaction", however made, about the standard of service, actions or lack of action by the organisation, its own staff, or those acting on its behalf, affecting an individual or group of individuals. However, a service request is defined as a request that the organisation provides or improves a service, fixes a problem or reconsiders a decision.

The Council also receives Member of Parliament enquiries (M.P. enquiries) which are dealt with under the CCC Policy. The M.P. has been updated with the changes to the CCC Policy to follow the Housing Ombudsman Statutory Code. Within this training, the M.P.'s Office agreed to determine whether a customer would like to raise their enquiry as an M.P. enquiry or as a complaint. The M.P. was given a copy of the CCC Policy and an explanation of the stages of a complaint, so their constituents can be appropriately informed.

Currently, if a customer makes a complaint which does not fall within the CCC Policy the customer is appropriately directed to the correct place to complain or be assisted with their enquiry/request. For example, the Council has the right to deal with service requests for the first time before a complaint is made.

### **Volume of complaints (as per Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSM) figures)**

Tenant Satisfaction Measures form part of a new system developed by the Regulator of Social Housing to assess how well social housing landlords are doing at providing good quality homes and services, with one specific measure being around effective handling of complaints. There are 22 Tenant Satisfaction Measures in total which include 12 Tenant Perception Measures and 10 Management Information Measures.

Each Registered Provider will be required to complete the Tenant Satisfaction Measures annually and upload the data to the Regulator of Social Housing. The Council are also required to publish the result on the Councils' website so it is accessible to tenants.

The data below summarises the Council's compliance with the Housing Ombudsman response times. As mentioned previously, during 2023/24 the Council's complaints policy was a 3 stage process and these figures reflect performance in accordance with the Housing Ombudsman Code and the CCC Policy.

While the Council’s handling of HOS Stage Two complaints was compliant, 16 of the Stage One complaints received exceeded the HOS response times. For those that exceeded the 10 days, no formal extensions were agreed. While 7 Informal complaints were outside of the Council’s local response timescales, all the Informal complaints met the HOS response times.

**Table 1 – Number of Housing related complaints received and compliance with response times**

<b>Complaint Stage</b>	<b>Number received</b>	<b>Within BDC timescales</b>	<b>Within HOS timescales</b>
Informal (HOS Stage One)	60	53 (88.3%)	60 (100%)
Formal (HOS Stage One)	44	44 (100%)	28 (63.6%)
HOS Stage One – Total	104	97 (93.3%)	88 (84.6%)
Internal Review (HOS Stage Two)	10	10 (100%)	10 (100%)

This data is used to calculate one of the Management Information Measures

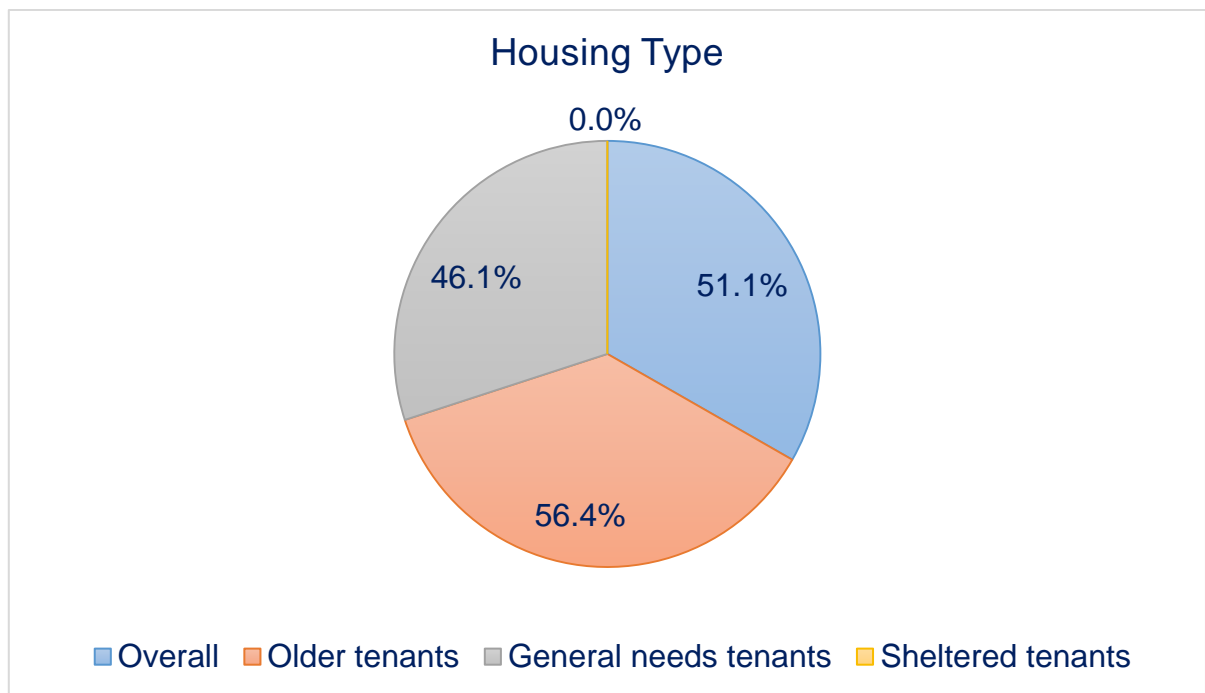
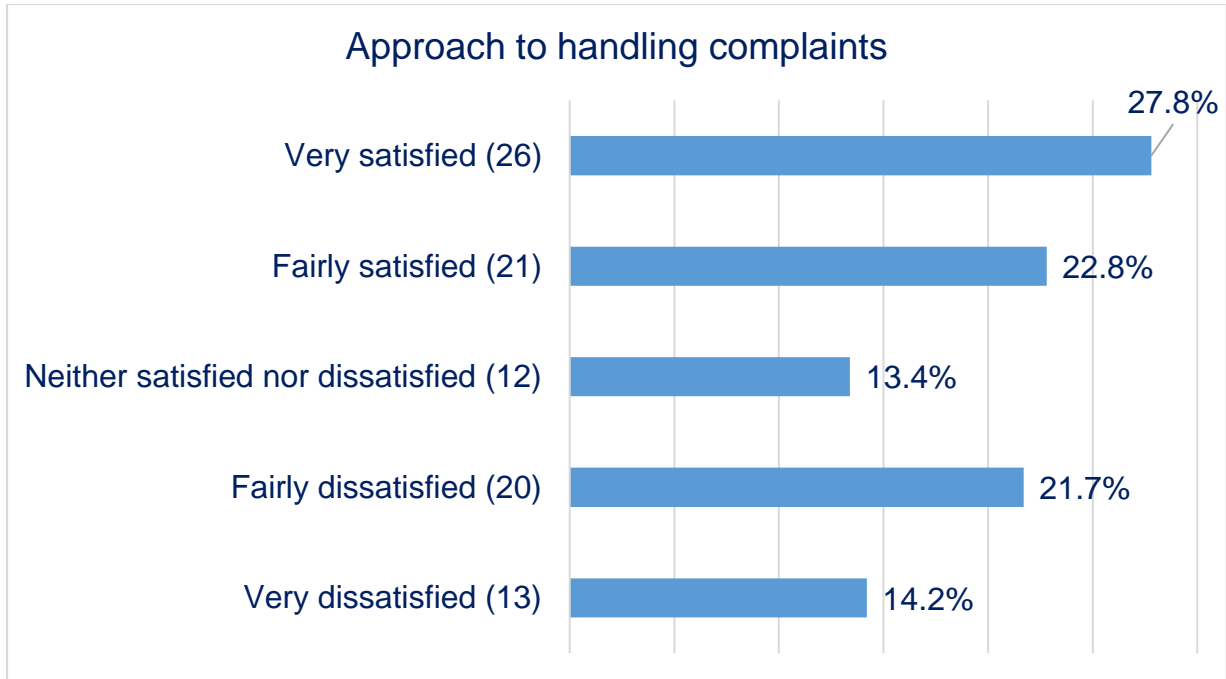
<b>Management Information Measures</b>	
CH01(1) Number of Stage One complaints received per 1000 homes	20.8
CH02(2) Number of Stage Two complaints received per 1000 homes	2.0

**Satisfaction with the complaints handling process (as per TSM figures)**

As part of the Tenant Perception Survey element of the Tenant Satisfaction Measures, respondents who had made a complaint within the last 12 months were asked to declare their level of satisfaction with the complaints handling process. 93 out of the 547 valid respondents had made a complaint in the last 12 months (unweighted figure of 95 out of 547).

When adding together those that were ‘very satisfied’ and ‘fairly satisfied’, this represents a 51.1% satisfaction level.

The charts below show the satisfaction levels of those making complaints by housing type, indicating that those in general needs housing are less satisfied. This low number of complainants is reflective of the fact that traditionally the Council receives a low level of complaints.



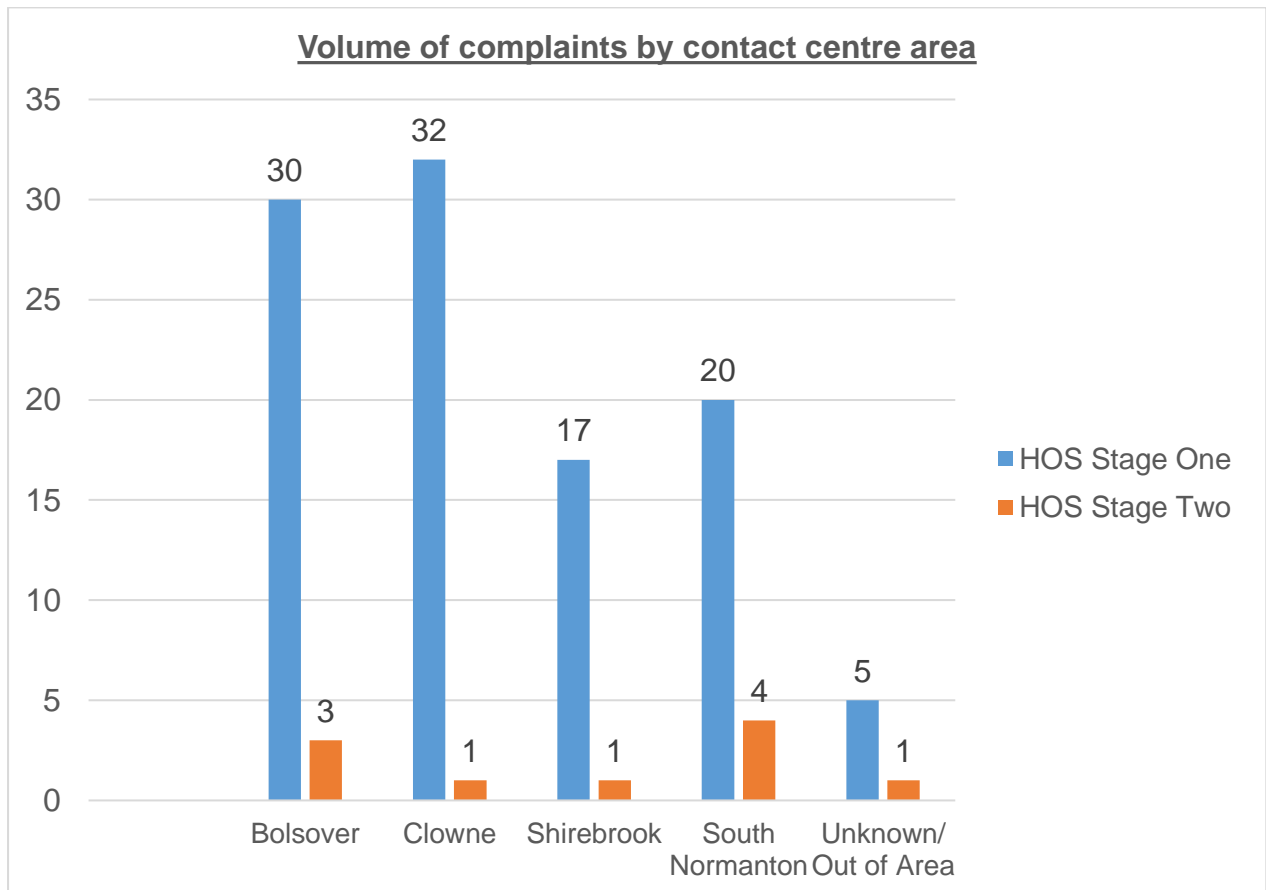


## Volume of complaints by contact centre area

When analysing the complaints received by contact centre area, a larger proportion in total are received from the Bolsover and Clowne areas. This mirrors the TSM Perception Measures survey responses indicating that tenants in those areas are more likely to complain. This requires further investigation into whether this is related to property types found in those areas or whether dissatisfaction can be attributed to the teams operating in those patches. According to the complaints data for 2023/24, tenants in the Shirebrook area have complained the least and the difference in volume of complaints in Shirebrook and South Normanton is the reverse of that found from TSM survey respondents. See analysis on satisfaction with complaint handling by contact centre area further on in the report.

**Table 2 – Volume of complaints received by contact centre area**

Contact Centre Area	HOS Stage One	HOS Stage Two	Total
Bolsover	30	3	33
Clowne	32	1	33
Shirebrook	17	1	18
South Normanton	20	4	24
Unknown/ Out of Area	5	1	6
<b>Total</b>	<b>104</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>114</b>



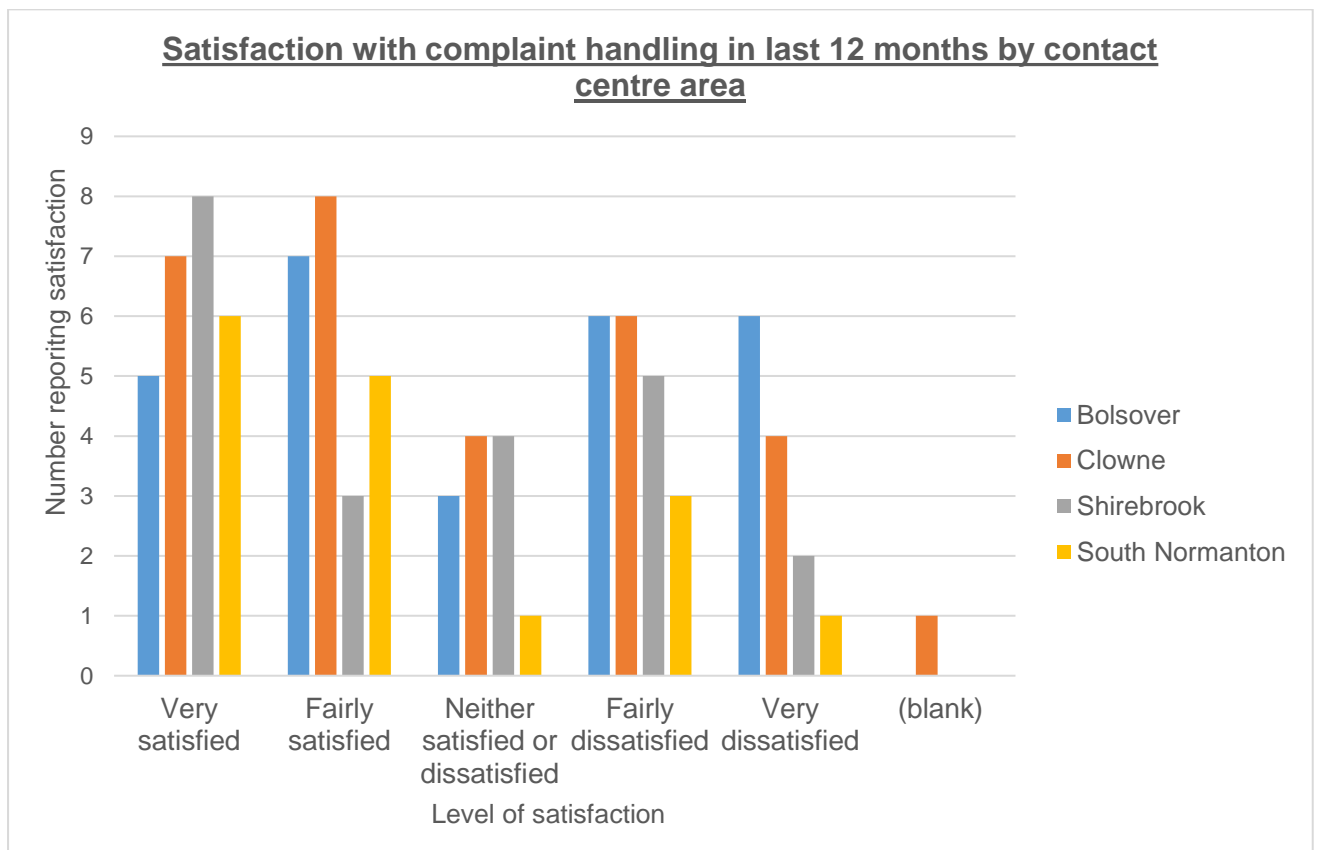
### Satisfaction by contact centre area

Those indicating their satisfaction with complaints handling can also be broken down by contact centre area, via the responses to the Tenant Perception Survey. There were a higher number of survey respondents within the Bolsover and Clowne areas making a complaint with the levels of satisfaction and dissatisfaction in Bolsover split equally at 44.4% each, the highest dissatisfaction.

Tenants in Clowne had higher satisfaction (50%) compared to dissatisfaction (33.3%). Within Shirebrook 50% were satisfied compared to 31.8% dissatisfied and South Normanton tenants were most satisfied at 68.8% satisfaction, with dissatisfaction significantly lower at 25%.

**Table 3 – Satisfaction with complaint handling in the last 12 months by contact centre area**

Level of Satisfaction	Bolsover	Clowne	Shirebrook	South Normanton	Grand Total
Very satisfied	5	7	8	6	26
Fairly satisfied	7	8	3	5	23
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	3	4	4	1	12
Fairly dissatisfied	6	6	5	3	20
Very dissatisfied	6	4	2	1	13
(blank)	0	1	0	0	1
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>95</b>



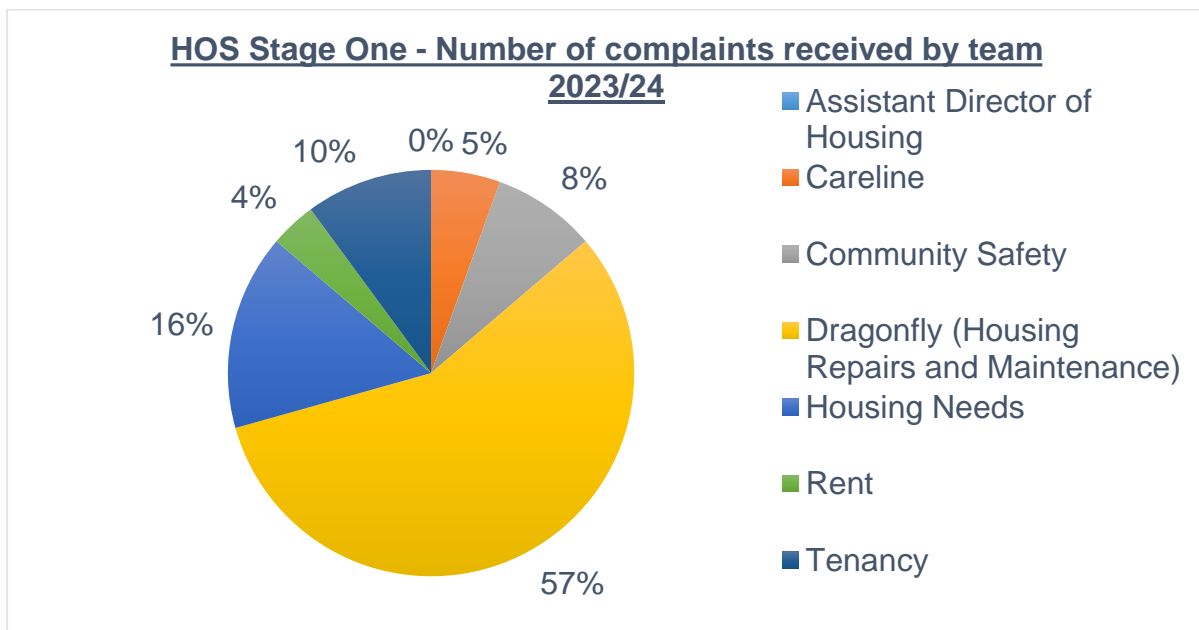
## Themes and trends in the complaints received

Some customer contacts/complaints received during 2023/24 covered more than one service area, therefore the totals below do not mirror the actual volume of contacts received. Out of 114 complaints, 63 (55%) related to Dragonfly (Housing Repairs and Maintenance). The next most common service area was Housing Needs (19, 17%) followed by Tenancy (15, 13%).

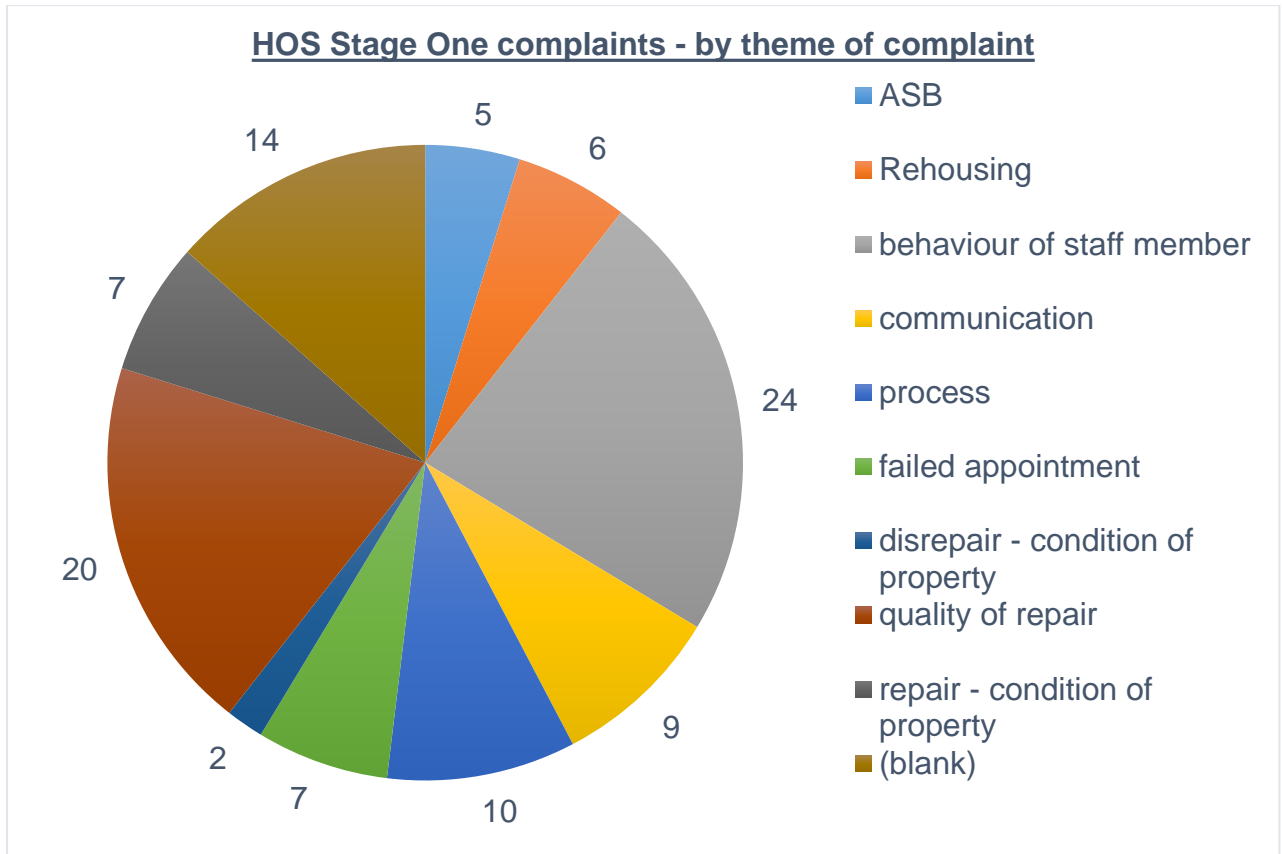
**Table 4 – Breakdown of customer contact by team – complaints**

Team	HOS Stage One	HOS Stage Two	Total for Team
Assistant Director of Housing	0	1	1 (1%)
Careline	6	1	7 (6%)
Community Safety	9	3	12 (11%)
Dragonfly (Housing Repairs and Maintenance)	62	1	63 (55%)
Housing Needs	17	2	19 (17%)
Rent	4	1	5 (4%)
Tenancy	11	4	15 (13%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>109</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>-</b>
Total (excluding cross cutting)	104 (5 cross cutting)	10 (3 cross cutting)	

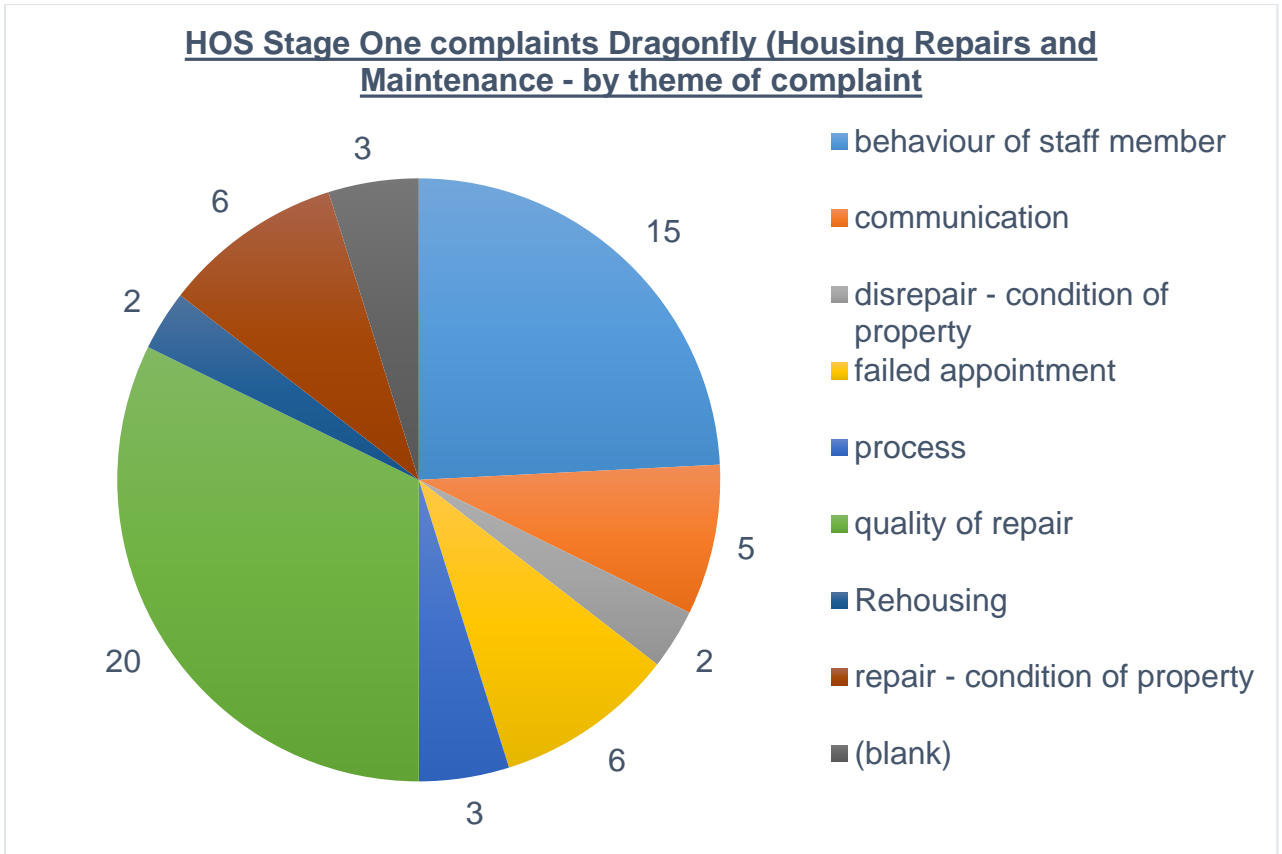
The chart below shows the breakdown of complaints received by team for those at HOS Stage 1. The largest proportion related to Dragonfly (Housing Repairs and Maintenance).



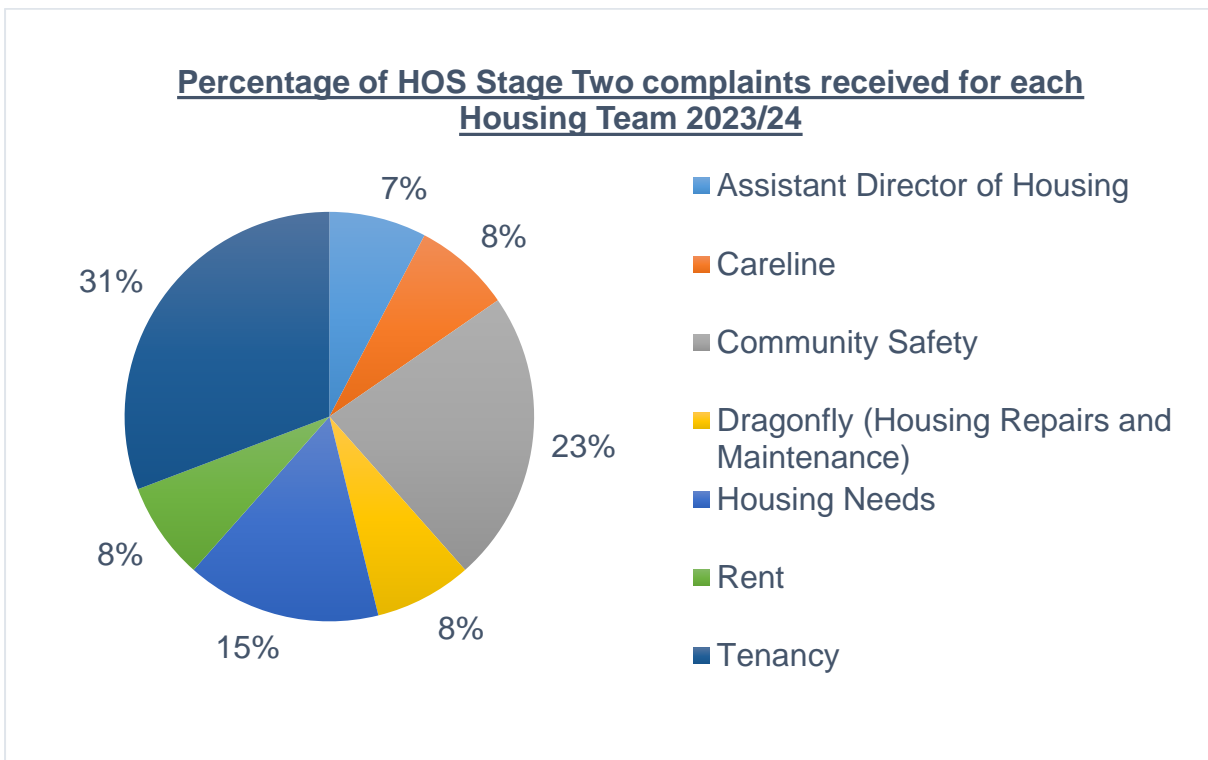
When analysing the themes of the HOS Stage One complaints, the most common factor was behaviour of staff member, followed by quality of repair. However, there were two further themes related to condition of property adding further weight to the investigation on the quality of the repairs service. 14 of the complaints had no clear theme.



57% of the HOS Stage One complaints related to the Dragonfly (Housing Repairs and Maintenance) team. When assessing those complaints by theme, they account for nearly two thirds of the complaints related to 'behaviour of staff member'.



For the complaints received at HOS Stage Two, (as outlined in Table 4), the largest proportion related to Tenancy, closely followed by Community Safety and Housing Needs (homelessness).



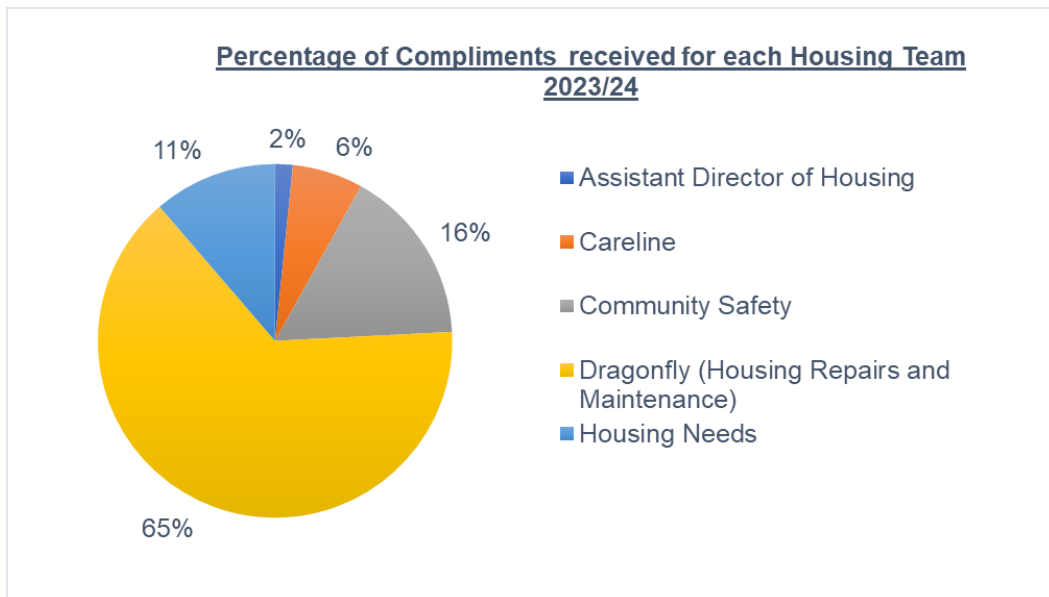
## Volume of compliments, comments and M.P. enquiries

The following charts show the volume of compliments, comments and M.P. enquires received by team. For compliments and comments the largest proportion related to Dragonfly (Housing Repairs and Maintenance). However, for M.P. enquiries the majority related to Housing Needs (homelessness).

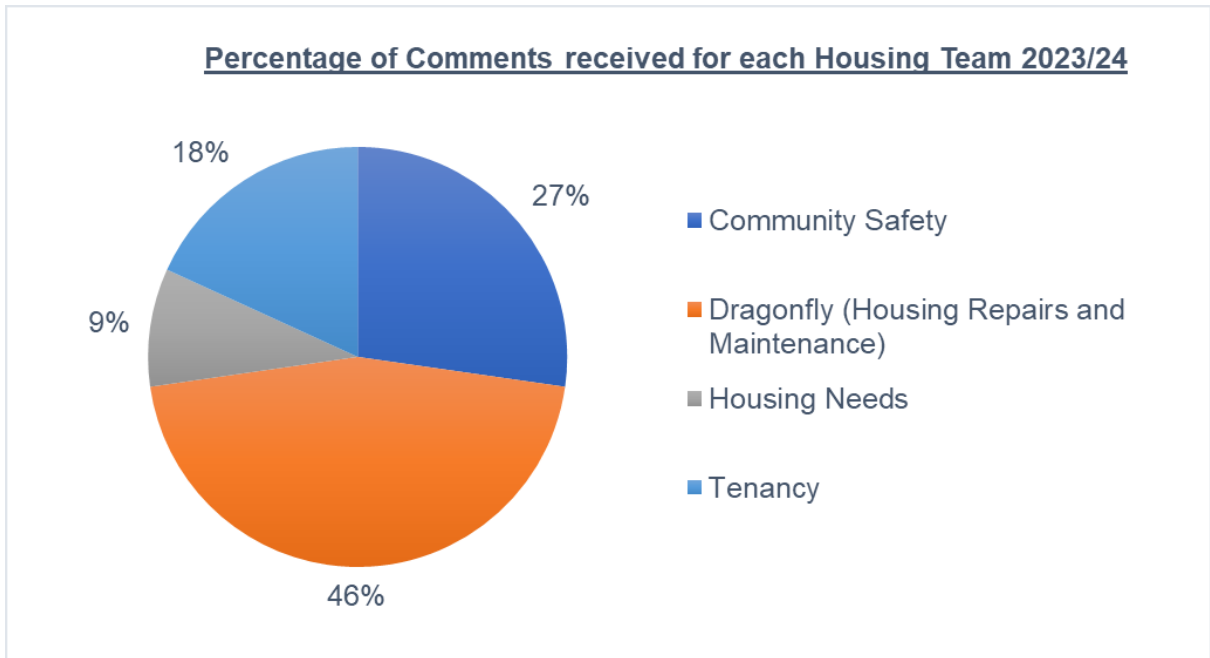
**Table 5 – Breakdown of customer contact by team – compliments, comments and M.P. enquiries**

Team	Compliments	Comments	M.P. enquiries	Total for Team
Assistant Director of Housing	1	0	1	2
Careline	4	0	0	4
Community Safety	10	3	19	32
Dragonfly (Housing Repairs and Maintenance)	40	5	15	60
Housing Needs	7	1	59	67
Rent	0	0	3	3
Tenancy	0	2	11	13
<b>Total</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>108</b>	<b>-</b>
Total (excluding cross cutting)	61 (1 cross cutting)	10 (1 cross cutting)	95 (13 cross cutting)	

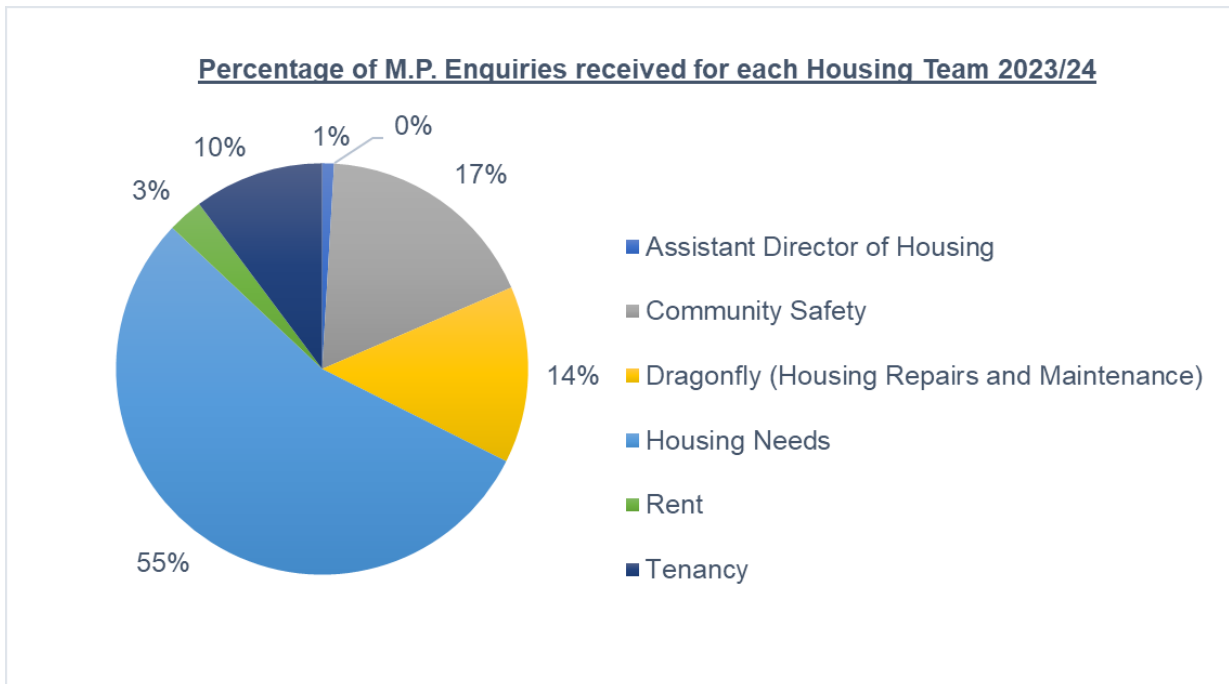
When analysing the compliments received in 2023/24, Dragonfly (Housing Repairs and Maintenance) received the most compliments, followed by the Community Safety team and Housing Needs, respectively. This is useful to note as whilst repairs and maintenance has featured heavily as a core reason for complaint, this shows that a tenant’s personal experience of the service by the team appears to influence their bias in response to the Council. There are clearly positives to be taken from the service delivered, as well as areas for improvement.



The Council received a limited number of comments from tenants during 2023/24 and all were passed back to the teams for further action where required.



The chart below shows volume of M.P. enquires by team. When analysing the M.P. enquiries received during 2023/24, the highest number related to the Housing Needs team and the most common themes were rehousing applications, ASB and disrepair (condition of property).

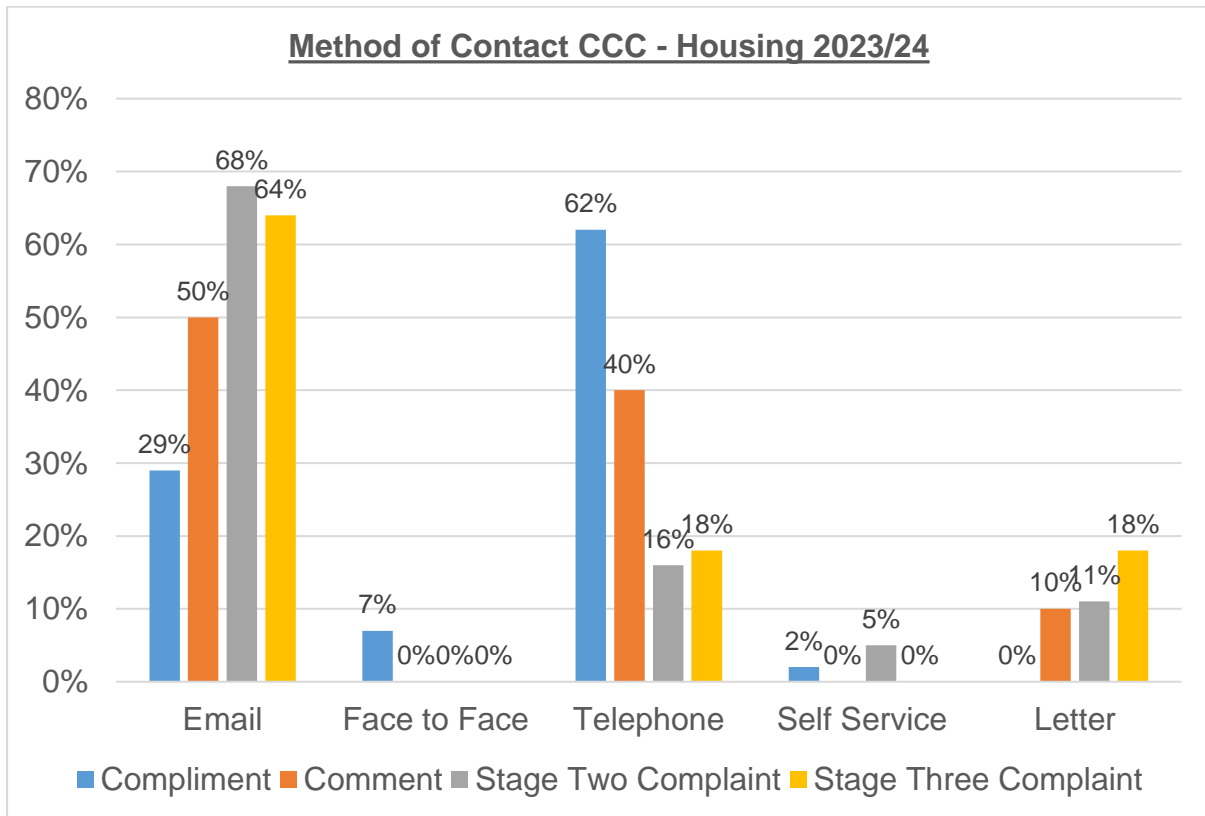


### Method of contact

When analysing how tenants contact the Council to pass on a compliment or make a complaint, most compliments were via telephone, but Stage Two and Stage Three complaints were mostly via email followed by telephone and letter, respectively. This is interesting as through previous tenant surveys it has shown that tenants prefer contact via post/letter however the preferred method of contacting the Council in relation to complaints is clearly email.

The Council have had a significant move towards increasing digital transactions over the last four years and made several changes to the self-serve functions on the Council website. It is therefore encouraging to see tenants choosing to use this method of contact.

For 2023/24 data was not gathered in relation to the method of contact for complaints classified as 'Stage One Informal' (equivalent to HOS Stage One). This will be rectified for 2024/25 under the new statutory code and revised local policy, as this type of complaint no longer exists within the new CCC Policy.





## Benchmark data

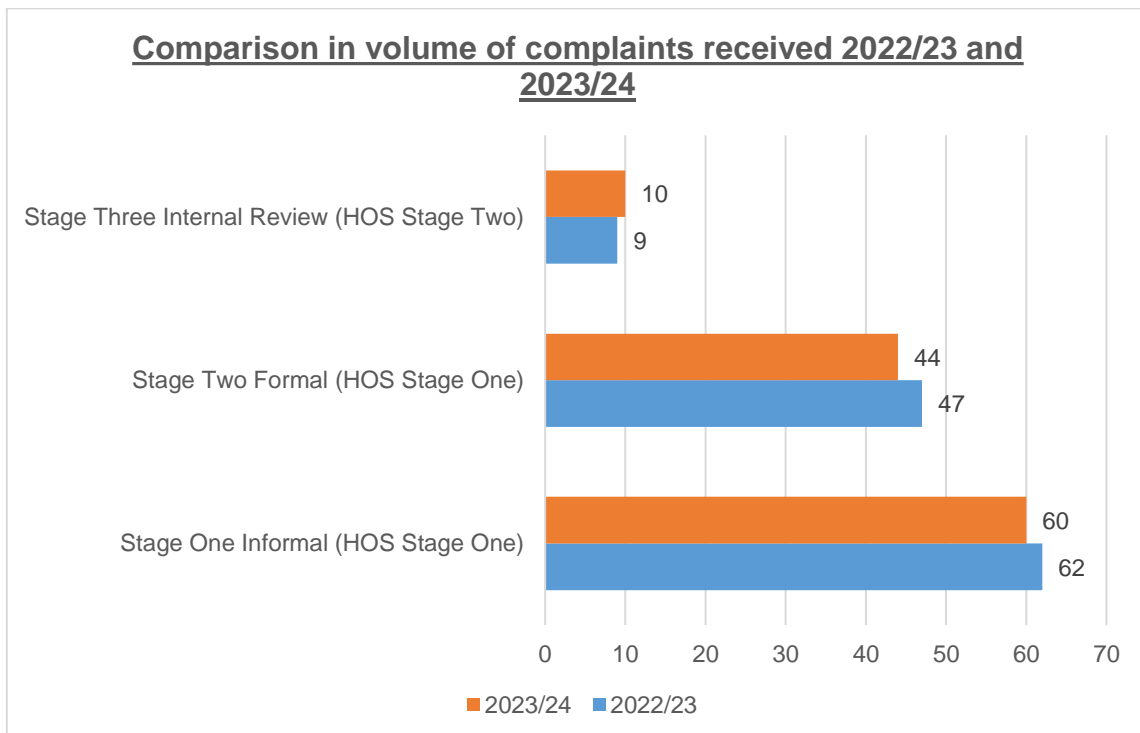
### Comparison in volume of complaints received – 2022/2023

When comparing changes in local complaints data, this is in relation to the Council’s 3-stage CCC Policy in place at the time, not the HOS code. In 2022/2023 there were 62 Stage One Informal complaints made. 33 of these were related to Dragonfly (Housing Repairs and Maintenance). The other 29 were categorised as Housing Management and Enforcement.

For Stage Two Formal complaints in 2022/2023 there were 47. 18 of these were related to Dragonfly (Housing Repairs and Maintenance). The other 29 were categorised as Housing Management and Enforcement.

There were 9 Stage Three complaints in 2022/2023. 2 of these were related to Dragonfly (Housing Repairs and Maintenance). The other 7 were categorised as Housing Management and Enforcement.

In comparison to the 2023/2024 data both Stage One and Stage Two complaints have decreased from 62 to 60 and 47 to 44, respectively. Stage Three complaints have increased slightly from 9 to 10.



### Comparison with national trends on themes for complaint

A HOS Spotlight report on complaints about repairs from March 2019 acknowledges that repairs is “...year on year,...consistently the biggest category of complaint we deal with...”. The report indicates that the most common causes of complaints about repairs fall in to four areas:

- “ 1. New lettings
- 2. Responsibility for the repair
- 3. The time taken to carry out repairs
- 4. Record-keeping ”

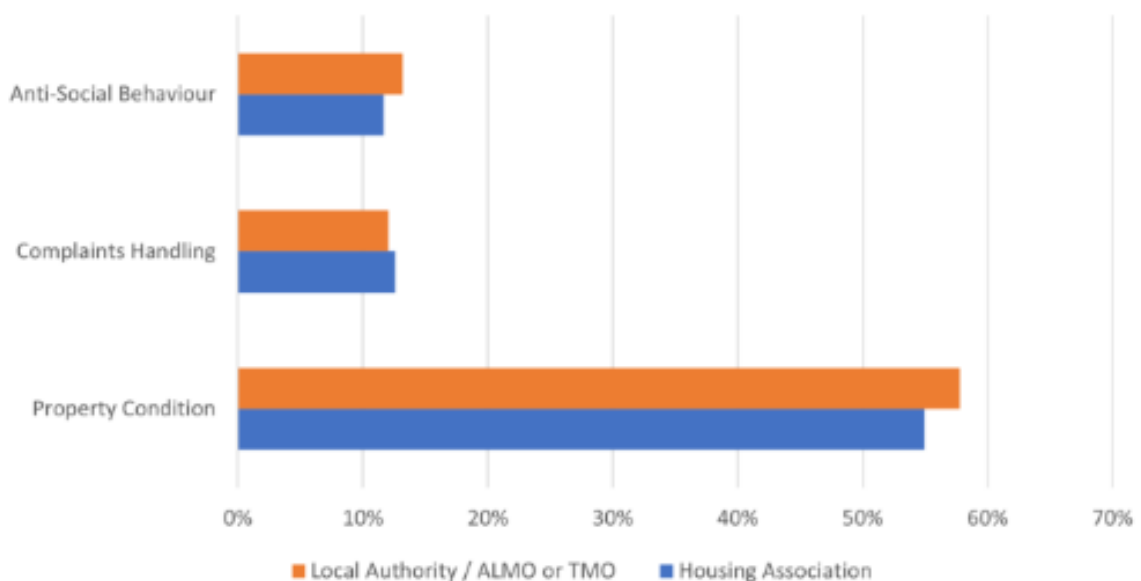
(HOS, (March 2019), Room for improvement: Spotlight on repairs, p7)

When reviewing repairs complaints for 2023/24, they do not typically fall into any of these areas, and most commonly relate to the quality of the repair, staff conduct, timing of the repair, and contact with the tenant during the repair process.

### Comparison with national trends in reasons for complaints 2023/24

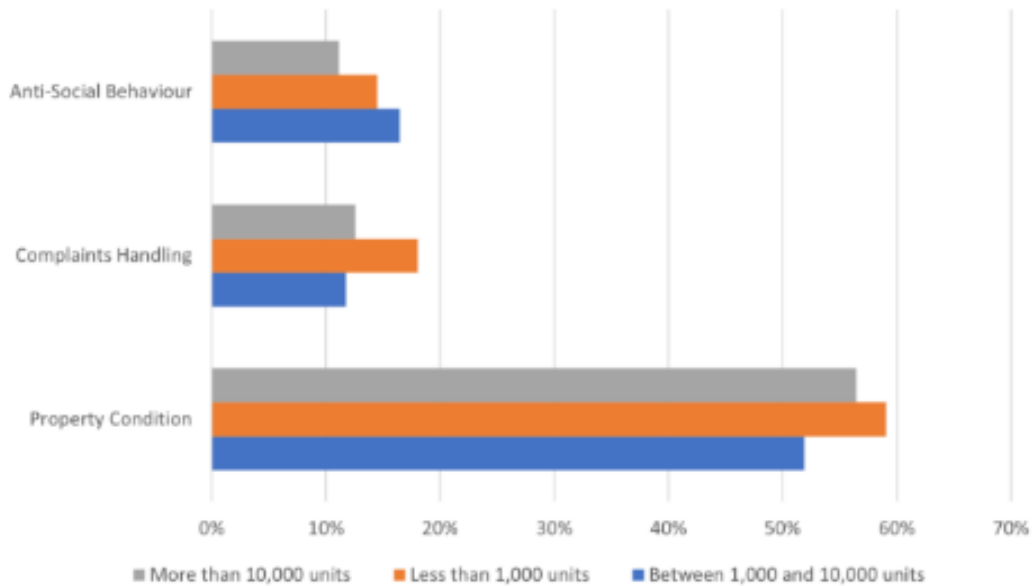
At the time of producing this report, the HOS have not yet published their analysis of Q4 2023/24 data. However, when looking at their analysis at Q3 2023/24 and previous quarters for the year, by landlord type and size of landlord, ‘property condition’ was the top category of complaint they received, with anti-social behaviour at a similar rate to the Council’s complaints related to community safety. This indicates that the reasons for tenants complaining is comparable with the national picture.

## Type of landlord



[Q3 Quarterly Data 23-24 | Housing Ombudsman \(housing-ombudsman.org.uk\)](https://housing-ombudsman.org.uk)

## Size of landlord



\*Note: The Council have between 1,000 and 10,000 units

[Q3 Quarterly Data 23-24 | Housing Ombudsman \(housing-ombudsman.org.uk\)](https://www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk)

## Findings of non-compliance

In 2023/24, there were 16 Complaints categorised as HOS Stage One which were responded to outside of Housing Ombudsman timescales (10 working days), however all were within the CCC Policy timescale of 15 working days.

The Housing Ombudsman Code became statutory on the 1 April 2024 and the Council updated its CCC policy to reflect these timescales.

In the future, any complaints which are out of the Housing Ombudsman timescales the reasons will be documented and the Council will investigate. Measures will be put into place to ensure that complaints can be answered within the Housing Ombudsman timescales contained within the Statutory Code.

## Service improvements

### Improvements 2023/24

- 1) As a result of the statutory changes from 1 April 2024, the Customer Service, Complaints and Standards department have reviewed and aligned the CCC Policy and Customer Service Standards to meet the requirements of the Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code. This is to ensure the process is effective for both the Council and the Ombudsman whilst resolving complaints quickly and improving services through learning. The approach to complaint handling offers an emphasis on early intervention and being proactive with the customer to ensure their issues and concerns wherever possible, are resolved at the earliest opportunity.
- 2) Acknowledgement and response templates have been adapted to meet the new requirements ensuring the Council is being open, transparent and communication is clear. The template ensures the Council demonstrates an understanding of the issues, the expected outcome or remedy, or clear reason for decisions, timeframes and the escalation process if a resolution is not met are clearly set out.
- 3) A revised Complaints, Comments and Compliments leaflet has been updated to reflect the new CCC Policy and the Customer Service Standards Leaflet is also updated. The leaflets will be available in paper format at each of the contact centres and online via the Councils website in accessible format by request. The 3rd Party Authorisation has been added as an improvement to streamline the process alongside the new timescales, escalation process and contact details for the Council and the Housing Ombudsman.
- 4) Mandatory corporate Customer Service, Standards and Complaints training has been adapted to reflect the updated CCC Policy and Customer Service Standards. Training will also be delivered to all new Council employees. Customer Advisors have also had training to ensure upon first point of contact they establish whether the enquiry is a complaint or service request and adapted to ensure that all relevant data can be gathered clearly.
- 5) One of the main improvements is that the Council have streamlined complaints onto one corporate system for effective monitoring. Previously initial repairs complaints were reported separately within the main Housing system.
- 6) Accessibility of making and escalating a complaint has where improved as complaints can now be raised or escalated verbally or in writing. Previously this was just in writing. Customers can request a verbal response following Housing Ombudsman guidance; however the Council will also give a written response together with a verbal response.

## OFFICIAL

- 7) The Customer Service, Complaints and Standards department have biannual service review meetings with the Housing Management department and Dragonfly Management (Bolsover). Complaints and Standards reporting have been added to the agenda to enable discussion on performance and updates in relation to any complaints trends or improvements identified.
- 8) In February 2024, all tenants were written to, advising them of the annual rent change which included information about the 53 week year, and the need for an extra weeks rent. This generated some complaints in the way the monthly rent had been calculated. As a result of 2 complaints being received from tenants, an article was placed in the Bolsover Homes Newsletter Issue 8 to all tenants, together with an explanation on the Council's website to limit any further complaints. Since this the Council have not received any further complaints
- 9) Following an increase in reports of attacks by XL bullies and the change in legislation the Council received some comments and complaints about tenants with suspected XL Bullies. Officers arranged for information to be sent to all tenants in the February rent letter, as well as an article in the Bolsover Homes Newsletter to inform tenants on the reporting procedure.

### **Forward Improvements 2024/25**

- 1) The Council intend to collate data on areas of complaints received to gain meaningful information and analysis and to be able to identify trends and make improvements. This information will be fed back to Council tenants quarterly in reporting at the Tenant Participation Review and Development Group Meetings, and with Councillors at the Customer Services Scrutiny Committees. These meeting reports and minutes are published on the Councils website which will ensure customers are kept informed.
- 2) Where the Council have made changes as a result of customer feedback or complaints, officers will ensure that this is fed back, this will be in the form of articles within the Bolsover Homes Tenants Newsletter and via the Council's website.
- 3) Officers will capture the method of contact preferred by tenants to report an issue, complaint or compliment, and any reasonable adjustments or 3rd Party authorisations required to ensure all tenants have access to the Council's services.
- 4) Due to the revised consumer standards that became operational as of 1 April 2024, the Council are required to ensure under the Transparency, Influence and Accountability Standard to ensure that officers are addressing complaints fairly, effectively and promptly to build trust with the Council's tenants. From April 2024, all tenants will be informed of the complaints process as part of the property sign-up procedure and new tenancy visits and given advice on how to

contact the Council should they wish to make a complaint. The Council endeavour to ensure that regular updates are provided to the tenant throughout the complaints process, so they are aware of steps to be taken by the Council and the clear timescales.

- 5) From 1 April 2024, the Council will keep a formal record of any complaints refused. While this is something that rarely occurs, if at all, to improve transparency all such contact will be recorded including where a complaint is redirected elsewhere when the complaint falls outside the scope of the CCC Policy or relates to a service by another provider.

## **Tenant scrutiny of complaints**

The Council will include complaints reports as part of the Tenant Participation Review and Development Group meetings. This group is the most strategic consultative group and consists of an equal mix of Tenants, Councillors and Officers.

Tenants were consulted in March 2024 as to potential future report formats and reviewed the information currently presented to Councillors via Customer Services Scrutiny Committee. Tenants were happy with the format and understood that the report will be specific to Housing related complaints rather than all services across the Council.

Tenants will use the data presented to assess any trends related to service areas/teams, any changes in volume, identify areas that need to be considered by the Challenge and Change Group (tenant scrutiny group), and compliance/non-compliance with response times.

Tenants involved in Challenge and Change work (tenant scrutiny) were also engaged in the production of this report, reviewing the presentation of the data and providing tenant feedback on service performance and areas for improvement.

## **Housing Ombudsman Service (HOS) reports to landlord**

No formal determination was made by the HOS for 2022/23 in relation to Bolsover District Council complaints handling. The HOS only create individual reports for landlords with five or more findings of maladministration to ensure meaningful interpretation can be achieved. During 2022/23 the Council had no findings of maladministration.

Whilst the HOS are yet to publish their reports for 2023/24, officers are aware that no cases were escalated to the HOS during 2023/24.

## Appendix A: Self-assessment form 2024

This self-assessment form has been completed by the Complaints and Housing Management Services Teams, and has been reviewed and approved by the landlord’s governing body (Executive) and Bolsover Tenants Challenge and Change Group (tenant scrutiny).

The Council have published this self-assessment as both a standalone document and as part of the Annual Complaints Performance and Service Improvement Report on the website, with hard copies available in each contact centre.

### Section 1: Definition of a complaint

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence Commentary / explanation
1.2	A complaint must be defined as: <i>‘an expression of dissatisfaction, however made, about the standard of service, actions or lack of action by the landlord, its own staff, or those acting on its behalf, affecting a resident or group of residents.’</i>	Yes	Bolsover District Council – Compliments, Comments and Complaints Policy April 2024 – section 3.1 page 6 and page 9.  Portfolio Member updated and Policy approved at Customer Services Scrutiny 25.03.24, Executive 15.04.24.  CCC Overview refresher training delivered via ‘Teams’ 18.04.24 to key service area Managers, Officers, Directors Recorded training available on staff portal.  Senior Leadership Team updated at a number of team meetings via P. Brown, Service Director for Complaint handling.

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Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence Commentary / explanation
			Policy uploaded to website.
1.3	A resident does not have to use the word 'complaint' for it to be treated as such. Whenever a resident expresses dissatisfaction landlords must give them the choice to make complaint. A complaint that is submitted via a third party or representative must be handled in line with the landlord's complaints policy.	Yes	<p>Bolsover District Council – Compliments, Comments and Complaints Policy April 2024 – section 3.2 page 6.</p> <p>CIS (customer information system) scripts updated to reflect CCC Policy changes.</p> <p>Third party authorisation form is completed.</p> <p>Cllrs and the MP have been updated with CCC Policy and changes.</p> <p>Customer Advisors updated via team meetings and attending overview training 12.06.24 regarding the changes to policy and new 2 stage process. Customer advisors aware to give tenants the choice to make a complaint if dissatisfied with an outcome. Must fall within scope of policy.</p>
1.4	Landlords must recognise the difference between a service request and a complaint. This must be set out in their complaints policy. A service request is a request from a resident to the landlord requiring action to be taken to put something right. Service requests are not complaints, but must be recorded, monitored and reviewed regularly.	Yes	<p>Bolsover District Council – Compliments, Comments and Complaints Policy April 2024 – section 3.1 page 6.</p> <p>Training has been delivered to all assistant Directors and Heads of service. They have cascaded this to staff which includes a detailed explanation as to the difference between a Service request and a complaint.</p> <p>CCC Overview refresher training delivered via 'Teams' 18.04.24 to key service area Managers, Officers, Directors. Senior Leadership Team updated at a number</p>



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Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence Commentary / explanation
			of team meetings via P. Brown, Service Director for Complaint handling. Recording of training available on staff portal.
1.5	A complaint must be raised when the resident expresses dissatisfaction with the response to their service request, even if the handling of the service request remains ongoing. Landlords must not stop their efforts to address the service request if the resident complains.	Yes	This is not specifically stated within the policy, but the Council do this in practice. The CCC Procedures to be updated for Service Areas to follow to meet policy requirements and will be included here.
1.6	An expression of dissatisfaction with services made through a survey is not defined as a complaint, though wherever possible, the person completing the survey should be made aware of how they can pursue a complaint if they wish to. Where landlords ask for wider feedback about their services, they also must provide details of how residents can complain.	Yes	Bolsover District Council – Compliments, Comments and Complaints Policy April 2024 – section 3.2 page 6.  Advice and or link to how to make a complaint has been added to external satisfaction surveys and the Realtime Satisfaction survey. Performance team updated.

## Section 2: Exclusions

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence Commentary / explanation
2.1	Landlords must accept a complaint unless there is a valid reason not to do so. If landlords decide not to accept a complaint they must be able to evidence their reasoning. Each complaint must be considered on its own merits	Yes	Bolsover District Council – Compliments, Comments and Complaints Policy April 2024 – page 9.  CCC Procedures to be updated for Service Areas to follow and meet policy requirements.
2.2	A complaints policy must set out the circumstances in which a matter will not be considered as a complaint or escalated, and these circumstances must be fair and reasonable to residents. Acceptable exclusions include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The issue giving rise to the complaint occurred over twelve months ago.</li> <li>• Legal proceedings have started. This is defined as details of the claim, such as the Claim Form and Particulars of Claim, having been filed at court.</li> <li>• Matters that have previously been considered under the complaints policy.</li> </ul>	Yes	Bolsover District Council – Compliments, Comments and Complaints Policy April 2024 – page 9-11.
2.3	Landlords must accept complaints referred to them within 12 months of the issue occurring or the resident becoming	Yes	Bolsover District Council – Compliments, Comments and Complaints Policy April 2024 – page 9.

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Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence Commentary / explanation
	aware of the issue unless they are excluded on other grounds. Landlords must consider whether to apply discretion to accept complaints made outside this time limit where there are good reasons to do so.		
2.4	If a landlord decides not to accept a complaint, an explanation must be provided to the resident setting out the reasons why the matter is not suitable for the complaints process and the right to take that decision to the Ombudsman. If the Ombudsman does not agree that the exclusion has been fairly applied, the Ombudsman may tell the landlord to take on the complaint.	Yes	<p>Compliments, Comments and Complaints Procedures to be updated.</p> <p>Corporate procedures to be updated to reflect advice to CSCO and Service areas.</p>
2.5	Landlords must not take a blanket approach to excluding complaints; they must consider the individual circumstances of each complaint.	Yes	Bolsover District Council – Compliments, Comments and Complaints Policy April 2024 –page 9.

### Section 3: Accessibility and Awareness

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence Commentary / explanation
3.1	Landlords must make it easy for residents to complain by providing different channels through which they can make a complaint. Landlords must consider their duties under the Equality Act 2010 and anticipate the needs and reasonable adjustments of residents who may need to access the complaints process.	Yes	<p>Bolsover District Council – Compliments, Comments and Complaints Policy April 2024 – section 3.3 page 6.</p> <p>Multiple channels – letter, email, face to face, via staff.</p> <p>Policy includes Equality Act 2010 and catering for individual needs. A full Equality Impact Assessment will be completed to support the updated policy.</p>
3.2	Residents must be able to raise their complaints in any way and with any member of staff. All staff must be aware of the complaints process and be able to pass details of the complaint to the appropriate person within the landlord.	Yes	<p>Bolsover District Council – Compliments, Comments and Complaints Policy April 2024 – section 5.4 page 18.</p> <p>CCC Overview refresher training delivered via 'Teams' 18.04.24 to key service area Managers, Officers, Directors. Senior Leadership Team updated at a number of team meetings via P Brown Service Director for Complaint handling.</p> <p>Recording of training available on staff portal.</p>
3.3	High volumes of complaints must not be seen as a negative, as they can be indicative of a well-publicised and accessible complaints process. Low complaint volumes are potentially a sign that residents are unable to complain.	Yes	<p>Performance reporting monitored by Scrutiny, and Executive.</p> <p>Service Review meetings are held annually and biannually depending on the service area requirements, Corporate Complaints and Customer Service Standards are to be introduced as an agenda item to discuss CCC</p>

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Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence Commentary / explanation
			volumes and type, information will be shared and service areas will be required to provide any updates to recurring complaints and evidence any improvements. In addition any Complaints that also result in a compliment will be recorded. Through the training for CCC/Customer Service Standards the message is to not view a complaint a negative but as a mechanism for learning.
3.4	Landlords must make their complaint policy available in a clear and accessible format for all residents. This will detail the 2 stage process, what will happen at each stage, and the timeframes for responding. The policy must also be published on the landlord's website.	Yes	The Bolsover District Council – Compliments, Comments and Complaints Policy April 2024 is on the website in an accessible format, information leaflets have been reviewed to incorporate the Policy changes and timeframes.
3.5	The policy must explain how the landlord will publicise details of the complaints policy, including information about the Ombudsman and this Code.	Yes	Bolsover District Council – Compliments, Comments and Complaints Policy April 2024 – section 5.2 page 18, the role of the ombudsman page 15-16, the Regulators code page 17-18.
3.6	Landlords must give residents the opportunity to have a representative deal with their complaint on their behalf, and to be represented or accompanied at any meeting with the landlord.	Yes	Bolsover District Council – Compliments, Comments and Complaints Policy April 2024 – section 3.2 page 6.  Third party authorisation form includes section for complaints.
3.7	Landlords must provide residents with information on their right to access the Ombudsman service and how the	Yes	The Bolsover District Council – Compliments, Comments and Complaints Policy April 2024 is on the website and staff portal in an accessible format, the information leaflet

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Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence Commentary / explanation
	individual can engage with the Ombudsman about their complaint.		<p>has been reviewed to incorporate the Policy changes and timeframes.</p> <p>Customer Service Standards Leaflet also to be updated Changes have been passed to the Communications Officer to include within the next In Touch district Publication and the Tenants Magazine. Included within Stage 2 response template.</p>

## Section 4: Complaint Handling Staff

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence Commentary / explanation
4.1	Landlords must have a person or team assigned to take responsibility for complaint handling, including liaison with the Ombudsman and ensuring complaints are reported to the governing body (or equivalent). This Code will refer to that person or team as the 'complaints officer'. This role may be in addition to other duties.	Yes	Customer Service, Standards and Complaints Manager Customer Standards and Complaints Officer (CSCO)  These officers present Complaints handling and performance monitoring reports to Customer Services Scrutiny Committee.
4.2	The complaints officer must have access to staff at all levels to facilitate the prompt resolution of complaints. They must also have the authority and autonomy to act to resolve disputes promptly and fairly.	Yes	<a href="mailto:CCAdmin@bolsover.gov.uk">CCAdmin@bolsover.gov.uk</a>  Complaints are a key priority for the authority, emails come from a designated CCC Admin email address. Customers can make a complaint via a number of channels which are also forwarded directly to a CCC Admin email inbox for the attn of the Customer Standards and Complaints Officer (CSCO).  Updates to portfolio holder monthly.
4.3	Landlords are expected to prioritise complaint handling and a culture of learning from complaints. All relevant staff must be suitably trained in the importance of complaint handling. It is important that complaints are seen as a	Yes	Bolsover District Council – Compliments, Comments and Complaints Policy April 2024 –Section 5 page 17-18.  Customer Service, Standards and Complaints Manager and the Customer Standards and Complaints Officer attend relevant Ombudsman training. Cover and additional resource for the service is in place with a Customer Advisor

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Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence Commentary / explanation
	core service and must be resourced to handle complaints effectively		working temporarily 1 day per week and covering any absence to maintain effective complaint handling. Service reviews meetings held with the key service areas monthly, biannually or annually depending on service needs agenda to include Customer Service Standards and Complaints. CSCO to update re performance and services areas to update re improvements to service delivery following comment or complaint.



## Section 5: The Complaint Handling Process

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence Commentary / explanation
5.1	Landlords must have a single policy in place for dealing with complaints covered by this Code. Residents must not be treated differently if they complain.	Yes	Bolsover District Council – Compliments, Comments and Complaints Policy April 2024.
5.2	The early and local resolution of issues between landlords and residents is key to effective complaint handling. It is not appropriate to have extra named stages (such as ‘stage 0’ or ‘informal complaint’) as this causes unnecessary confusion.	Yes	Bolsover District Council – Compliments, Comments and Complaints Policy April 2024 – 2 stage process only.  Officers advised in recent training of new CCC Policy and Procedure that informal stages are not appropriate.
5.3	A process with more than 2 stages is not acceptable under any circumstances as this will make the complaint process unduly long and delay access to the Ombudsman.	Yes	Bolsover District Council – Compliments, Comments and Complaints Policy April 2024 – 2 stage process only.
5.4	Where a landlord’s complaint response is handled by a third party (e.g. a contractor or independent adjudicator) at any stage, it must form part of the 2 stage complaints process set out in this Code. Residents must not be expected to go through 2 complaints processes.	Yes	The Council allow 3rd party complaints and complaints from the local MP. These are carried out in accordance with the 2-stage process as set out in the policy.

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Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence Commentary / explanation
5.5	Landlords are responsible for ensuring that any third parties handle complaints in line with the Code.	Yes	Policy shared with 3 <sup>rd</sup> party organisations and also available on website. 3rd party auth is now included within the CCC form.
5.6	When a complaint is logged at Stage 1 or escalated to Stage 2, landlords must set out their understanding of the complaint and the outcomes the resident is seeking. The Code will refer to this as “the complaint definition”. If any aspect of the complaint is unclear, the resident must be asked for clarification.	Yes	Bolsover District Council – Compliments, Comments and Complaints Policy April 2024 – Section 4.9 page 11.
5.7	When a complaint is acknowledged at either stage, landlords must be clear which aspects of the complaint they are, and are not, responsible for and clarify any areas where this is not clear.	Yes	Bolsover District Council – Compliments, Comments and Complaints Policy April 2024 – Section 4.9 page 11.  Included within Stage 1 and Stage 2 Template.
5.8	At each stage of the complaints process, complaint handlers must: a. deal with complaints on their merits, act independently, and have an open mind; b. give the resident a fair chance to set out their position;	Yes	Bolsover District Council – Compliments, Comments and Complaints Policy April 2024, Page 5 Introduction.  Corporate procedures to be updated to reflect advice to CSCO and Service areas

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Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence Commentary / explanation
	<p>c. take measures to address any actual or perceived conflict of interest; and d. consider all relevant information and evidence carefully.</p>		
5.9	<p>Where a response to a complaint will fall outside the timescales set out in this Code, the landlord must agree with the resident suitable intervals for keeping them informed about their complaint.</p>	Yes	<p>Bolsover District Council – Compliments, Comments and Complaints Policy April 2024 – responses page 13.</p>
5.10	<p>Landlords must make reasonable adjustments for residents where appropriate under the Equality Act 2010. Landlords must keep a record of any reasonable adjustments agreed, as well as a record of any disabilities a resident has disclosed. Any agreed reasonable adjustments must be kept under active review.</p>	Yes	<p>Bolsover District Council – Compliments, Comments and Complaints Policy April 2024 – Section 3.3 page 6-7.</p> <p>CCC Leaflet includes access for all statement. The Housing department records any disabilities a resident has disclosed, record not kept by the Complaints Officer. If a disability is disclosed during a complaint the Housing department will be informed and the Council will ensure that any reasonable adjustments are met.</p>
5.11	<p>Landlords must not refuse to escalate a complaint through all stages of the complaints procedure unless it has valid reasons to do so. Landlords must clearly set out these reasons, and they must comply with the provisions set out in section 2 of this Code.</p>	Yes	<p>Bolsover District Council – Compliments, Comments and Complaints Policy April 2024 – page 18 explains this</p>

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Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence Commentary / explanation
5.12	A full record must be kept of the complaint, and the outcomes at each stage. This must include the original complaint and the date received, all correspondence with the resident, correspondence with other parties, and any relevant supporting documentation such as reports or surveys.	Yes	Excel Spreadsheets with all complaint data. CCC system keeps a record. Folders within a dedicated drive on the system where all correspondence is saved.  Bespoke admin system for recording all stages of Complaints and monitoring response timeframes, templates embedded within system and golden thread of hierarchy for responding to complaints dependent on level. 3 year data retention for all records.
5.13	Landlords must have processes in place to ensure a complaint can be remedied at any stage of its complaints process. Landlords must ensure appropriate remedies can be provided at any stage of the complaints process without the need for escalation.	Yes	Bolsover District Council – Compliments, Comments and Complaints Policy April 2024 – Remedies for a complaint page 13-14.
5.14	Landlords must have policies and procedures in place for managing unacceptable behaviour from residents and/or their representatives. Landlords must be able to evidence reasons for putting any restrictions in place and must keep restrictions under regular review.	Yes	Bolsover District Council – Compliments, Comments and Complaints Policy April 2024 – page 17-19 Vexatious/habitual complaints
5.15	Any restrictions placed on contact due to unacceptable behaviour must be proportionate and demonstrate regard	Yes	Bolsover District Council – Compliments, Comments and Complaints Policy April 2024 – page 17-19 Vexatious/habitual complaints.

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<b>Code provision</b>	<b>Code requirement</b>	<b>Comply: Yes / No</b>	<b>Evidence Commentary / explanation</b>
	for the provisions of the Equality Act 2010.		

## Section 6: Complaints Stages

### Stage 1

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence Commentary / explanation
6.1	Landlords must have processes in place to consider which complaints can be responded to as early as possible, and which require further investigation. Landlords must consider factors such as the complexity of the complaint and whether the resident is vulnerable or at risk. Most stage 1 complaints can be resolved promptly, and an explanation, apology or resolution provided to the resident.	Yes	Bolsover District Council – Compliments, Comments and Complaints Policy April 2024 – page 11-12.
6.2	Complaints must be acknowledged, defined and logged at stage 1 of the complaints procedure <b><u>within five working days of the complaint being received.</u></b>	Yes	Bolsover District Council – Compliments, Comments and Complaints Policy April 2024 – page 11.
6.3	Landlords must issue a full response to stage 1 complaints <b><u>within 10 working days</u></b> of the complaint being acknowledged.	Yes	Bolsover District Council – Compliments, Comments and Complaints Policy April 2024 – section 4.9 page 11-13.
6.4	Landlords must decide whether an extension to this timescale is needed when considering the complexity of the	Yes	Bolsover District Council – Compliments, Comments and Complaints Policy April 2024 – section 4.9 Page 11.

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Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence Commentary / explanation
	complaint and then inform the resident of the expected timescale for response. Any extension must be no more than 10 working days without good reason, and the reason(s) must be clearly explained to the resident.		
6.5	When an organisation informs a resident about an extension to these timescales, they must be provided with the contact details of the Ombudsman.	Yes	Bolsover District Council – Compliments, Comments and Complaints Policy April 2024 – page 11.
6.6	A complaint response must be provided to the resident when the answer to the complaint is known, not when the outstanding actions required to address the issue are completed. Outstanding actions must still be tracked and actioned promptly with appropriate updates provided to the resident.	Yes	Bolsover District Council – Compliments, Comments and Complaints Policy April 2024 – page 11.  Updates are logged within an Excel document and are monitored to provide regular updates to the customer.
6.7	Landlords must address all points raised in the complaint definition and provide clear reasons for any decisions, referencing the relevant policy, law and good practice where appropriate.	Yes	Acknowledgement Stage 1 and Stage 2 templates.  Include within procedure advice.
6.8	Where residents raise additional complaints during the investigation, these must be incorporated into the	Yes	Bolsover District Council – Compliments, Comments and Complaints Policy April 2024 – section 4.10 page 13.

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Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence Commentary / explanation
	<p>stage 1 response if they are related and the stage 1 response has not been issued. Where the stage 1 response has been issued, the new issues are unrelated to the issues already being investigated or it would unreasonably delay the response, the new issues must be logged as a new complaint.</p>		
6.9	<p>Landlords must confirm the following in writing to the resident at the completion of stage 1 in clear, plain language:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. the complaint stage;</li> <li>b. the complaint definition;</li> <li>c. the decision on the complaint;</li> <li>d. the reasons for any decisions made;</li> <li>e. the details of any remedy offered to put things right;</li> <li>f. details of any outstanding actions; and</li> <li>g. details of how to escalate the matter to stage 2 if the individual is not satisfied with the response.</li> </ul>	Yes	<p>Bolsover District Council – Compliments, Comments and Complaints Policy April 2024 – responses page 13.</p> <p>This is included as standard in all Stage 1 responses.</p>



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Stage 2

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence Commentary / explanation
6.10	If all or part of the complaint is not resolved to the resident's satisfaction at stage 1, it must be progressed to stage 2 of the landlord's procedure. Stage 2 is the landlord's final response.	Yes	Bolsover District Council – Compliments, Comments and Complaints Policy April 2024 – complaints handling process, page 12.
6.11	Requests for stage 2 must be acknowledged, defined and logged at stage 2 of the complaints procedure within five working days of the escalation request being received.	Yes	Bolsover District Council – Compliments, Comments and Complaints Policy April 2024 – page 11.
6.12	Residents must not be required to explain their reasons for requesting a stage 2 consideration. Landlords are expected to make reasonable efforts to understand why a resident remains unhappy as part of its stage 2 response.	Yes	Bolsover District Council – Compliments, Comments and Complaints Policy April 2024 – Introduction, Page 5.
6.13	The person considering the complaint at stage 2 must not be the same person that considered the complaint at stage 1.	Yes	Bolsover District Council – Compliments, Comments and Complaints Policy April 2024 – The Complaints handling process page 12.
6.14	Landlords must issue a final response to the stage 2 <b>within 20 working days</b> of the complaint being acknowledged.	Yes	Bolsover District Council – Compliments, Comments and Complaints Policy April 2024 –page 11.
6.15	Landlords must decide whether an extension to this timescale is needed	Yes	Bolsover District Council – Compliments, Comments and Complaints Policy April 2024 –page 11.

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Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence Commentary / explanation
	when considering the complexity of the complaint and then inform the resident of the expected timescale for response. Any extension must be no more than 20 working days without good reason, and the reason(s) must be clearly explained to the resident.		
6.16	When an organisation informs a resident about an extension to these timescales, they must be provided with the contact details of the Ombudsman.	Yes	Bolsover District Council – Compliments, Comments and Complaints Policy April 2024 – page 11.
6.17	A complaint response must be provided to the resident when the answer to the complaint is known, not when the outstanding actions required to address the issue are completed. Outstanding actions must still be tracked and actioned promptly with appropriate updates provided to the resident.	Yes	Not explicitly stated within the CCC Policy but responses are monitored by the CSCO and service areas are made aware they must ensure all actions are completed and update the CSCO.
6.18	Landlords must address all points raised in the complaint definition and provide clear reasons for any decisions, referencing the relevant policy, law and good practice where appropriate.	Yes	Bolsover District Council – Compliments, Comments and Complaints Policy April 2024 – responses page 13.
6.19	Landlords must confirm the following in writing to the resident at the completion of stage 2 in clear, plain language: a. the complaint stage;	Yes	Bolsover District Council – Compliments, Comments and Complaints Policy April 2024 – responses page 13.  This is included as standard in all Stage 2 responses.

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Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence Commentary / explanation
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>b. the complaint definition;</li> <li>c. the decision on the complaint;</li> <li>d. the reasons for any decisions made;</li> <li>e. the details of any remedy offered to put things right;</li> <li>f. details of any outstanding actions; and</li> <li>g. details of how to escalate the matter to the Ombudsman Service if the individual remains dissatisfied.</li> </ul>		
6.20	Stage 2 is the landlord's final response and must involve all suitable staff members needed to issue such a response.	Yes	Bolsover District Council – Compliments, Comments and Complaints Policy April 2024 – responses page 13.

## Section 7: Putting things right

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence Commentary / explanation
7.1	<p>Where something has gone wrong a landlord must acknowledge this and set out the actions it has already taken, or intends to take, to put things right. These can include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Apologising;</li> <li>• Acknowledging where things have gone wrong;</li> <li>• Providing an explanation, assistance or reasons;</li> <li>• Taking action if there has been delay;</li> <li>• Reconsidering or changing a decision;</li> <li>• Amending a record or adding a correction or addendum;</li> <li>• Providing a financial remedy;</li> <li>• Changing policies, procedures or practices.</li> </ul>	Yes	Bolsover District Council – Compliments, Comments and Complaints Policy April 2024 – remedies page 14.
7.2	Any remedy offered must reflect the impact on the resident as a result of any fault identified.	Yes	Bolsover District Council – Compliments, Comments and Complaints Policy April 2024 – section 4.11 page 13- 4.
7.3	The remedy offer must clearly set out what will happen and by when, in agreement with the resident where	Yes	Bolsover District Council – Compliments, Comments and Complaints Policy April 2024 – section 4.11 page 13- 4.

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Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence Commentary / explanation
	appropriate. Any remedy proposed must be followed through to completion.		
7.4	Landlords must take account of the guidance issued by the Ombudsman when deciding on appropriate remedies.	Yes	The CCC Policy has been edited to include Remedies which were suggested within the HO Complaint Handling Code.

**Section 8: Self-assessment, reporting and compliance**

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence Commentary / explanation
8.1	<p>Landlords must produce an annual complaints performance and service improvement report for scrutiny and challenge, which must include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. the annual self-assessment against this Code to ensure their complaint handling policy remains in line with its requirements.</li> <li>b. a qualitative and quantitative analysis of the landlord’s complaint handling performance. This must also include a summary of the types of complaints the landlord has refused to accept;</li> <li>c. any findings of non-compliance with this Code by the Ombudsman;</li> <li>d. the service improvements made as a result of the learning from complaints;</li> <li>e. any annual report about the landlord’s performance from the Ombudsman; and</li> <li>f. any other relevant reports or publications produced by the</li> </ul>	Yes	<p>Performance Bolsover District Council – Compliments, Comments and Complaints Policy April 2024 – section 5 page 17-18.</p> <p>Performance reporting quarterly to the Customer Services Scrutiny.</p> <p>From April 2024, this will also be reported to the Tenant Participation Review and Development Group (a Cllr and Tenant meeting).</p> <p>Annual Performance report and Ombudsman decisions presented Scrutiny, Standards Committee and to Executive.</p> <p>Service Review Meetings for Complaints to discuss service improvements.</p>

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Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence Commentary / explanation
	Ombudsman in relation to the work of the landlord.		
8.2	The annual complaints performance and service improvement report must be reported to the landlord's governing body (or equivalent) and published on the on the section of its website relating to complaints. The governing body's response to the report must be published alongside this.	Yes	The Assessment 23-24 will be presented to the Customer Services Scrutiny meeting on 3 <sup>rd</sup> June 2024, executive on 24 <sup>th</sup> June, submitted to the Tenant Participation Review and Development Group on 16 <sup>th</sup> July 2024.
8.3	Landlords must also carry out a self-assessment following a significant restructure, merger and/or change in procedures.	Yes	The Council will fully comply with this requirement.
8.4	Landlords may be asked to review and update the self-assessment following an Ombudsman investigation.	Yes	The Council would fully comply with any request.
8.5	If a landlord is unable to comply with the Code due to exceptional circumstances, such as a cyber incident, they must inform the Ombudsman, provide information to residents who may be affected, and publish this on their website Landlords must provide a timescale for returning to compliance with the Code.	Yes	The Council will fully comply with this requirement.

## Section 9: Scrutiny & oversight: continuous learning and improvement

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence Commentary / explanation
9.1	Landlords must look beyond the circumstances of the individual complaint and consider whether service improvements can be made as a result of any learning from the complaint.	Yes	Bolsover District Council – Compliments, Comments and Complaints Policy April 2024 – section 5 page 17-18.
9.2	A positive complaint handling culture is integral to the effectiveness with which landlords resolve disputes. Landlords must use complaints as a source of intelligence to identify issues and introduce positive changes in service delivery.	Yes	Bolsover District Council – Compliments, Comments and Complaints Policy April 2024 – section 5 page 17-18.  Presented at Customer services scrutiny quarterly, trends analysed.
9.3	Accountability and transparency are also integral to a positive complaint handling culture. Landlords must report back on wider learning and improvements from complaints to stakeholders, such as residents' panels, staff and relevant committees.	Yes	Updates in the In Touch & Tenants Magazine, Updates on the websites reports and Self Assessments, Performance posters.
9.4	Landlords must appoint a suitably senior lead person as accountable for their complaint handling. This person must assess any themes or trends to identify potential systemic issues, serious risks, or policies and procedures that require revision.	Yes	Customer Service, Standards and Complaints Manager.  Presented at Customer Services Scrutiny quarterly, trends analysed.  From April 24 this will also be presented and discussed in the Tenant Review and Development Meetings.



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Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence Commentary / explanation
9.5	In addition to this a member of the governing body (or equivalent) must be appointed to have lead responsibility for complaints to support a positive complaint handling culture. This person is referred to as the Member Responsible for Complaints ('the MRC').	Yes	Executive portfolio holder with responsibility for complaints. Bolsover District Council – Compliments, Comments and Complaints Policy April 2024 – section 7.8 page 23
9.6	The MRC will be responsible for ensuring the governing body receives regular information on complaints that provides insight on the landlord's complaint handling performance. This person must have access to suitable information and staff to perform this role and report on their findings.	Yes	Executive portfolio holder with responsibility for complaints.  Bolsover District Council – Compliments, Comments and Complaints Policy April 2024 – section 7.8 page 23.  Monthly meetings with Customer Services & Complaints manager and the MRC, discussed in 121s with Director for Executive, Corporate Services and Partnerships.
9.7	As a minimum, the MRC and the governing body (or equivalent) must receive: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. regular updates on the volume, categories and outcomes of complaints, alongside complaint handling performance;</li> <li>b. regular reviews of issues and trends arising from complaint handling;</li> <li>c. regular updates on the outcomes of the Ombudsman's investigations and progress</li> </ul>	Yes	Performance Bolsover District Council – Compliments, Comments and Complaints Policy April 2024 – section 5 page 17-18.  Performance reporting quarterly to the Customer Services Scrutiny.  Annual Performance report and Ombudsman decision presented to Scrutiny, Standards Committee and to Executive.  Monthly meetings with Customer Services & Complaints manager and the MRC, discussed in 121s with Director for Executive, Corporate Services and Partnerships.

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Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence Commentary / explanation
	<p>made in complying with orders related to severe maladministration findings; and</p> <p>d. annual complaints performance and service improvement report.</p>		
9.8	<p>Landlords must have a standard objective in relation to complaint handling for all relevant employees or third parties that reflects the need to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. have a collaborative and co-operative approach towards resolving complaints, working with colleagues across teams and departments;</li> <li>b. take collective responsibility for any shortfalls identified through complaints, rather than blaming others; and</li> <li>c. act within the professional standards for engaging with complaints as set by any relevant professional body.</li> </ul>	Yes	<p>Performance Bolsover District Council – Compliments, Comments and Complaints Policy April 2024 – section 5 page 17-18.</p> <p>Mandatory training for all new employees.</p>