

Housing Complaint Performance

Q3 2025-26

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Each quarter, a review is undertaken of all complaints received to understand the reasons why complaints are raised, to understand trends and areas of risk as well as to identify areas for improvement and to understand any lessons learned.
- 1.2 This report provides an overview of the housing complaints received during quarter three (Q3) of the 2025-26 financial year. It sets out information on housing related complaints including:

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- 1.3 Comparisons between 2024/25 and 2025/26 have not been provided, as they are unlikely to be meaningful due to recognised inconsistencies in complaints management during 2024/25. This was highlighted in the previous Q2 report.

2 Complaints Performance

2.1 Complaints Received

- 2.1.1 A total of 47 stage 1 complaints were received during the Q3 period, and although this shows an increase on the Q1 and Q2 periods, a downwards trend was shown in November and December.

Stage One Complaints Received – Q3			
Oct 25	Nov 25	Dec 25	Q3 Total
20	14	13	47

2.1.2 A higher than average number of complaints were received during Q3 and this was almost certainly as a direct result of the repairs contractor (MCP) experiencing operational challenges following their move into administration (covered later in this report).

Complaints Received Apr - Dec								
Apr 25	May 25	June 25	July 25	Aug 25	Sept 25	Oct 25	Nov 25	Dec 25
3	12	13	12	13	16	20	14	13
Q1 Average			Q2 Average			Q3 Average		
9.33			13.6			15.6		

2.1.3 The performance report shows a consistent number of complaints received from May to Dec, with a spike in the number of complaints received during September and October.

2.2 Complaint Escalations

2.2.1 A total of 12 stage one complaints were escalated to stage two of the complaints procedure:

Stage Two Complaints Received – Q3			
Oct 25	Nov 25	Dec 25	Q3 Total
4	5	3	12

Period	Stage 1	Stage 2	Escalation Rate
2025-26 Q1	28	5	17.9%
2025-26 Q2	41	15	36.6%
2025-26 Q3	47	12	26%

2.2.2 Fewer stage one complaints were escalated to stage two of the complaints procedure during Q3 compared to Q2, both in terms of total numbers and percentage of stage one complaints.

2.2.3 Fewer stage one complaints being escalated to stage two, typically indicates greater effectiveness at stage one, including effective triage and early intervention, thus preventing issues from becoming more complex.

2.3 Complaints Acknowledged

- 2.3.1 Complaints should be acknowledged within 5 working days, with the Council aiming for 75% of all complaints meeting this timeframe. This performance target is too low and the housing team will be working with the Council’s Customer Care team to recalibrate Housing complaint acknowledgements to 95%. This new KPI will be in place for Q1 2026/27
- 2.3.2 91% of stage one complaints were acknowledged within 5 working days and 84% of stage two complaints were acknowledged withing 5 working days. As previously reported, this will be recalibrated to 95% and the Housing complaints team are working with the Council’s Customer Care team on an improved triage procedure.
- 2.3.3 The acknowledgement of complaints is currently administered by the Corporate Complaints team, but a request for the Housing Complaints team to administer this process has been made, with a view to this becoming operational by 1st April 2026.

2.4 Complaint Responses

- 2.4.1 Stage 1 complaints should be responded to within 10 working days (target: 80%), and Stage 2 responses within 20 working days (target: 85%). These timescales are set by the Housing Ombudsman and the targets have been set by the Corporate Complaints team.
- 2.4.2 The number of complaints responded to, within the agreed timescales are set out below:

Responded within deadline		
Period	Stage 1 10 working days (Target 80%)	Stage 20 working days (Target 85%)
2024-25 Q3	68%	75%

2.5 Complaints Response Deadlines Extended

- 2.5.1 15 stage one complaints and 3 stage two complaints response deadlines were extended during the Q3 period.
- 2.5.2 The reasons for extensions has been due to staff resourcing. The Housing Department has experienced significant resourcing issues, including the vacant post of Housing Customer Relations Officer. This post has been covered by other post holders during this period.

2.6 Complaints Refused

- 2.6.1 Although a number of complaints were withdrawn by complainants, no complaints were refused during the Q3 period.

3 Complaints by Category

3.1.1 A breakdown of complaints by service area can be found below:

Service Area	Number of complaints	%
Repairs and Maintenance	33	70%
Housing Options	9	20%
Housing Management	5	10%
	47	100%

3.1.2 Complaints by service area have remained consistent with the percentages reported during the Q2 period.

3.1.3 As previously reported in the Q2 report, most complaints against landlords relate to their repairs service. 43% of complaints to the Housing Ombudsman investigated last year related to property condition and a further 18% relating to complaint handling, many of these regarding repairs and maintenance.

3.1.4 We also look at the type of complaints made and categorise them across all service areas:

Repairs Type of Complaint		
Type of Complaint	Number	%
(R/M) Missed appointment by contractor	9	28%
(R/M) Quality of work carried out by contractor	6	19%
(R/M) Time taken to complete repair	4	13%
(R/M) Contractor not responding to calls or communications	3	10%
(R/M) Ongoing delays to repairs	4	9%
(R/M) Damp and Mould	2	6%
(R/M) Electrical	1	3%
(R/M) Heating & hot water	1	3%
(R/M) Kitchen installation	1	3%
(R/M) Missed appointment by CPBC staff	1	3%
(R/M) No available stock or trade to complete repair	1	3%
	33	100%

- 3.1.5 The repairs contractor (MCP) experienced significant operational challenges following their move into administration, which understandably affected service continuity. The subsequent delay in finalising a new contract (MCP+) also contributed to a reduction in capacity, during which time the volume of complaints increased.
- 3.1.6 These issues are now being addressed as part of the transition to the new contractual arrangements. And the new preferred bidder for the new contract has now been secured. We will however understand the lessons learnt from the complaints received.
- 3.1.7 For context a total of 1841 repairs were raised during Q3 resulting in 33 Stage 1 complaints. This equates to 1.8% of repairs raised resulting in a complaint and therefore 98.2% in repairs raised not escalating to a complaint.

Stage 1 complaints			
	No of jobs raised	No of Stage 1 complaints	% of jobs raised making Stage 1
2024-25 Q1	1,473	21	1.4%
2025-26 Q2	1,874	26	1.4%
2025-26 Q3	1,841	33	1.8%

3.1.8 9 stage one complaints were raised relating to Housing Options:

Type of complaint – Housing Options		
Type of Complaint	Number	%
(HO) Homeless Application	4	45%
(HO) Communication and Support	3	33%
(HO) Suitability of TA	1	11%
(HO) Staff Conduct	1	11%
	9	100%

- 3.1.9 45% of complaints relating to Housing Options related to Homeless Applications and 44% related to Communication, Support and Staff Conduct. These figures have been shared with the Interim Head of Strategic Housing Services, who will be reviewing these individual cases, to further develop an understanding of what led to these cases being raised as formal complaints.
- 3.1.10 Significant focus on the current management arrangements is also currently underway and it is anticipated that once these matters have been reviewed and the ABRITAS system is fully operational from 25 March, performance will improve and complaints lesson learned.
- 3.1.11 Five stage one complaints were raised relating to Neighbourhood Management:

Neighbourhood Management		
Type of complaint		
Type of Complaint	Number	%
(HM) ASB	4	80%
(HM) Staff Conduct	1	20%
	5	100%

3.1.12 80% of complaints raised related to ASB. These complaints raised issues relating to how ASB cases have been managed and how staff have communicated with tenants.

3.1.13 Although ASB case management audits are currently in place, there have been delays to the implementation of the new MRI ASB case management system. It is intended however to provide a detailed workstream plan shortly which will identify when MRI will be capable of delivering the ASB system compliant outputs.

4 Trends

4.1 Although data has now been available for 9 months it is challenging to identify trends relating to the repairs service, due to the disruption and impacts associated with the repairs contractor (MCP) experiencing significant operational challenges following their move into administration and which subsequently has distorted the data.

4.2 During the Q3 period high levels of missed appointments by the contractor have been reported as well as concerns relating to the quality of work carried out by the contractor. It is very difficult to interpret this as a trend or whether this has been the impact of the contractor going into administration.

4.3 The average number of complaints received throughout 2025/26 has remained consistent, apart from months September and October. Again the increase in complaints during these months are almost certainly attributed to the challenges that the contractor was facing during this period.

4.4 The number of complaints received relating to ASB will require further scrutiny, to understand whether this is a result of an ASB case management system not being in place, or whether there is a training issue for staff who are delivering the service.

4.5 The number of complaints received relating to Housing Options, including staff conduct, communication and support, will also require further scrutiny to understand whether this is a staff training issue or a process failure. It is also important that a full performance related report is presented to Cabinet as soon as possible regarding the Housing Options service but this is subject to the ABRITAS system going fully live to ensure the integrity of the data and subsequent comparatives with other councils.

5 Outcomes

5.1 Although higher number of complaints were received during Q3 compared to Q1 and Q2, fewer complaints were upheld and fewer complaints were escalated to stage two of the complaints process. A pattern like this usually points to improved customer

handling, even if overall complaint volumes have risen. It can suggest that while more people are contacting services, the quality of responses and resolutions is stronger

Complaints Upheld		
Year 2025-26	Stage 1	Stage 2
Q1	75%	80%
Q2	80.4%	73.3%
Q3	55%	67%

5.2 12 complaints were escalated to Stage Two of the complaints procedure. 8 related to repairs, 3 related to housing options and 1 related to Neighbourhood management.

Service Area	Number of complaints escalated to stage two
Repairs and Maintenance	8
Housing Options	3
Neighbourhood Management	1
	12

5.3 A total of £2250 was paid out in compensation and this was less than the total paid out in Q2, despite there being an increase in the number of complaints raised.

Year 2025-26	Compensation
Q1	£1900
Q2	£2700
Q3	£2250

6 Members Enquiries

6.1 In this quarter we received 17 Enquiries from the local MP and 2 from local Councillors.

	October	November	December
ME	1 x MCP/ Repairs	0	1 x MCP/ Repairs
MP	1-Community Safety 2-Housing Register 1-MCP/Repairs 2- Temp Housing	1-Homelessness 2-Housing Register 1-MCP/Repairs 1-Temp Housing 1-Overgrown Garden	1-ASB 1-Council Property 2-Housing Register 1-Temp Housing

7 Housing Ombudsman

7.1 During Q3, the Housing Ombudsman has not issued any findings of maladministration.

7.2 There are currently 14 cases under consideration for investigation by the Housing Ombudsman. 5 cases relate to one tenant.

8 Customer Satisfaction

8.1 9 Complaint survey responses were returned during Q3.

Question	Metric					Score
How easy was it:	Very Easy	Fairly Easy	Neither	Fairly Difficult	Very Difficult	
To make your complaint?	3		4	2		33%%
Where you satisfied:	Very Satisfied	Fairly Satisfied	Neither	Fairly Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied	
That you were kept informed?	3	0	2	1	3	33%
How your complaint was handled?	3	0	1	1	4	33%
With the outcome of your complaint	2	0	0	2	5	22%

8.2 33% found it easy to make a complaint and 22% found it difficult to make a complaint.

8.3 33% were satisfied with how they were kept updated and 44% were dissatisfied.

8.4 33% were satisfied with how their complaint was handled and 55% were dissatisfied.

8.5 22% were satisfied with the outcome of their complaint and 77% were dissatisfied.

8.6 These are very low levels of feedback and responses and now that the Customer Resolutions Officer is now in post, survey responses will be sent out immediately after the complaints response has been sent. The level of responses will be monitored and if they remain low then telephone surveys will be considered.

9 Learnings and Service Improvement

9.1 As previously reported the repairs contractor (MCP) experienced significant operational challenges following their move into administration, and this impacted on service continuity. The subsequent delay in finalising a new contract (MCP+) also contributed to a reduction in capacity, during which the volume of complaints increased.

- 9.2 The Council are at the later stages of procuring a repairs and maintenance contractor with view to onboarding in April 2026.
- 9.3 Although the performance of the current contractor (MCP+) has improved and stabilised during December and January, it is not anticipated that any further significant improvements will be delivered between now and the end of the contract on 31 March 2026.
- 9.4 ASB training will be delivered to the Housing Management team to help improve the consistency of ASB case handling, and to encourage a victim-centred approach to ASB case management. The necessary accurate and electronic handling of ASB data etc will however only be achieved when the MRI system becomes operational.

10 Focus on Q4

- 10.1 The Senior Leasehold and Customer Resolution Officer joined the Housing team on 26th January 2026 and the Customer Resolutions Officer will be joining the team on 23rd February 2026.
- 10.2 Additionally two Resident Engagement Officers, joined the team on 9th February 2026
- 10.3 When these staff members have been able to complete their inductions, the service will be well resourced and therefore ensure that Housing Complaints best practice is developed, delivered and embedded. This will include:
- Triaging of complaints
 - Complaints monitoring and tracking process
 - Strengthening of the landlord – resident relationship
 - Improving complaint investigations
 - Improving complaint ownership
 - Communication with tenants and complaint responses
 - Lessons learned and root cause analysis
- 10.4 Further work is required around complaint surveys and how to increase the number of responses, whilst maintaining independence.