



Our Complaints Performance

2025 - 26

What customers told us, how we responded, and how this is improving our services.



Halton
Housing



Welcome

At Halton Housing, our purpose is simple: **Improving People's Lives.**

To do this well, we need to understand how we are performing and be open with you about it. Sharing this information helps show that we listen, learn, and keep working to make our services better.

A note about this year's report

We publish this report every year, but you may notice that this year's version looks a bit different. That's because we listened to your feedback and made changes to make it clearer, easier to read and more useful. We have simplified language, explained key terms, improved the flow, and made it easier to see what you told us and what we've done as a result. Your feedback has directly shaped this report.

How we handle complaints

We follow the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code. This sets out how all housing providers must deal with complaints to ensure they are handled fairly, consistently and on time.

You can find full details about:

- our complaints process
- the role of the Housing Ombudsman
- the Complaint Handling Code

on our website: [Complaints and Feedback | Halton Housing](#).

Checking how we're doing

Every year, we review how we are doing. We share this with our Board and Customer Committee and publish the results so you can see them too.

This report is written especially for customers and explains how we've performed when handling complaints. If you have ideas about how we could make this information even clearer, we'd love to hear from you at communications@haltonhousing.co.uk.

Thanks for taking the time to read this report.

Lisa Windle

Director of Customer Experience



Contents:

What you're looking for:	Where to find it:
New to complaints or just curious?	Page 4
Language explained...	Pages 5 - 6
Our complaints performance	Pages 7 - 8
Learning from complaints	Pages 9 - 10
Satisfaction with complaints	Page 12
How complaints are monitored	Pages 13 - 14
How to make a complaint	Page 14



New to complaints or just curious?

A complaint is simply a way for customers to let us know when something hasn't gone as it should. We always aim to get things right first time, but when that doesn't happen, it's important that customers can raise concerns easily and feel listened to.

Complaints aren't just issues to fix - they help us learn. They give us valuable feedback, help us see our services from the customer's point of view, and show us where we need to make changes.

Whether you've made a complaint yourself or just want to understand more about how we handle complaints, we hope this report gives you the information you need.

By being open about complaints and how we deal with them, we aim to be transparent, build trust, and show our commitment to learning and improving our services.

If anything in this report isn't clear, please check the 'Language explained' section on pages 5-6.

Why read this report?



We know people usually complain because something has gone wrong.



This report explains what customers told us last year and what we're doing to improve our services.





Language Explained...

This page explains some of the words and phrases we use in this report. We know that complaints and housing terms can feel confusing, so we've tried to explain everything as clearly and simply as possible.

Complaint

When a customer tells us they are unhappy with a service, action, or lack of action and asks us to put things right.

Stage One Complaint

This is the first step in our complaints process. We investigate what has gone wrong and aim to respond within **10 working days**.

Stage Two Complaint

If a customer is still unhappy after the Stage One response, they can ask for a Stage Two review. This is looked at by a more senior team, and we aim to respond within **20 working days**.

Asking for a Stage Two review does not affect your tenancy or future services.

Housing Ombudsman

The Housing Ombudsman is an independent organisation that looks at complaints about landlords if customers remain unhappy after completing the landlord's complaints process. There is no cost to using the Housing Ombudsman. They are independent of Halton Housing, and contacting the Ombudsman will not affect your tenancy.

Complaint Handling Code

This is a set of rules issued by the Housing Ombudsman that all social landlords must follow. It sets standards for how complaints should be handled fairly, clearly, and within set timescales.

Upheld Complaint

This means we got something wrong. When a complaint is upheld, we apologise and take action to put things right. This might include completing outstanding work, improving communication, or offering compensation.

Not Upheld Complaint

This means we did not identify a service failure. It does not mean the complaint wasn't important or taken seriously - it means our service met the required standard, and we explain this clearly in our response.

Escalation

This simply means asking us to look at your complaint again at Stage Two. It is your right if you feel your complaint has not been resolved.

Compensation

A payment we may offer when we have made a mistake, for example due to delays, distress, or inconvenience caused.

TSMs (Tenant Satisfaction Measures)

These are standard questions that we must survey customers on, required by the Regulator of Social Housing. They ask customers how satisfied they are with services such as repairs, safety, complaints handling and more. They help compare performance across housing providers.

CRM (Customer Relationship Management system)

Our internal system used to record contacts, complaints, actions, and learning. This helps us track complaints properly and make service improvements.

Service Failure

When a service does not meet the standard we expect or have promised to customers.

Learning from Complaints

We record what went wrong and what could have been done better so we can improve services and prevent the same issues happening again.

Customer Committee

A group of customers who help review performance, challenge decisions, and provide feedback to make sure services reflect customer priorities.

Decent Homes Standard

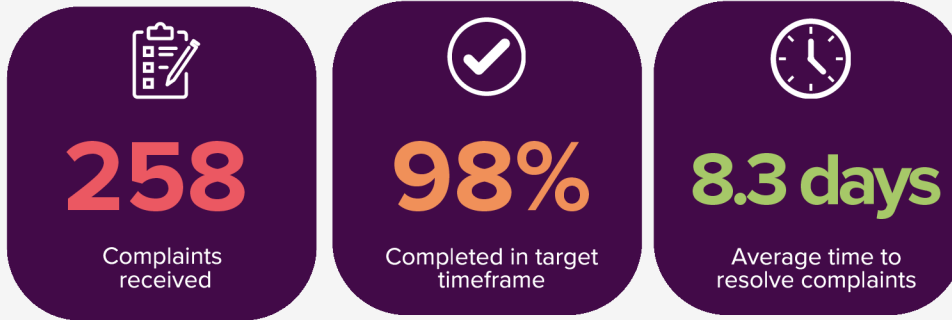
A government standard that sets out the minimum condition a rented home should meet to be safe, warm, and in good repair.

We have included this section to make sure our complaints report is easy to understand and accessible to everyone. If anything is still unclear, please contact us, and we'll be happy to explain.

Our Performance

Below is our complaints performance for 1st April 2025 – 31st March 2026, along with key themes and actions that we have taken, or are taking as a result, to improve our services.

Stage One Complaints:

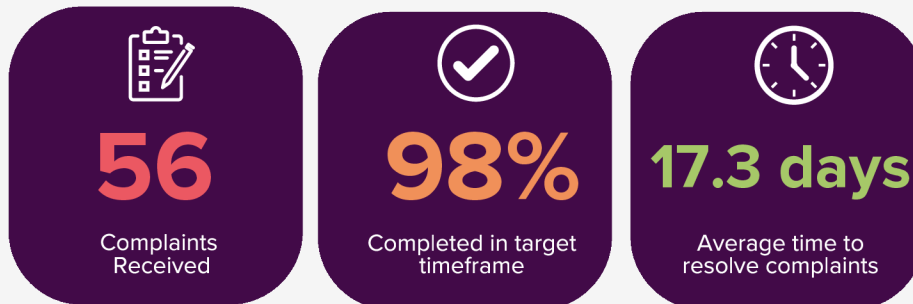


We received 258 complaints compared to 421 in 24/25, which is a 39% reduction in formal complaints received.

Our target time frame for responding to stage one complaints is within 10 days, achieving a 98% response rate compared to 97% in 24/25.

Our average days to resolve a stage one complaint was 8.3 days compared to 8.1 days in 24/25.

Stage Two Complaints:



We received 56 complaint escalations to stage two, compared to 66 in 24/25 which is a 15% reduction in complaints reaching stage two.

Our target time frame for responding to stage two complaints is within 20 days, achieving a 98% response rate compared to 94% in 24/25.

Our average days to resolve a stage two complaint was 17.3 days, compared with 16.3 days in 24/25.

Complaints Outcomes

When we investigate a complaint and find that we have failed to deliver the expected standard of service, the complaint will be upheld. If there is no service failure, we will explain in our response that the case has not been upheld. Our response letter will clearly outline the reasons for our decision.

These are the outcomes of the complaints that we investigated last year.

Complaint outcomes	Upheld	Not upheld
Stage 1	66%	34%
Stage 2	54%	46%

Housing Ombudsman Cases and Outcomes

After the stage two of our complaints process has been concluded, if customers remain unhappy with our response, they can escalate their complaint to the Housing Ombudsman. More information on the Housing Ombudsman and how to escalate a complaint can be found [here](#).

Last year the Housing Ombudsman accepted 9 cases for investigation from Halton Housing customers Those investigations have been concluded with the outcomes and compensation awarded below.

More detailed guidance on the possible outcomes following a Housing Ombudsman complaint can be found [here](#).

Category		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Number of complaints cases determined within the quarter		3	3	1	2
Determinations	Service Failure	1	2		2
	Maladministration	2	4	2	
	Severe Maladministration				
	Total determinations	3	6	2	2
Compensation	Amount awarded by Ombudsman	£800	£1600	£500	£150

**Please note that the Housing Ombudsman can make more than one determination on each case. This is why our total number of determinations is greater than the number of cases within the quarter.

Learning from Complaints

After investigating and closing a complaint, we consider all opportunities for improving and enhancing how we deliver our services.

Last year, some of the areas it was evident we need to get better at were:

- ✔ Listening to what our customers are telling us and where possible taking the right action to making things better .
- ✔ Keeping our customers updated throughout the complaints process, reducing the time we take to resolve complaints and ensuring we do what we say we will, when we say we will.
- ✔ Enhancing our communication channels and the language we use e.g. plain English, and easy to understand.
- ✔ Improving wait times and the quality of the repairs service, updating our customers along the way.



What have we improved from our learning and your feedback?

The main reasons for complaints are repairs, communication and service delivery. Listening to customer complaints and feedback has been the most important driver of service improvement over the past year. Working closely with our customers and independent experts, we have focused on making our services easier to access, more consistent, and clearer to understand. We will continue to embed these improvements with your support.

Here are some of the key changes we've made and what they mean for you:



The Halton Housing Deal

We introduced The Halton Deal to clearly set out:

- how we support customers to manage their tenancies
- how customers can work with us to help us be the best possible landlord

What this means for you:

Expectations on both sides are clearer and easier to understand, including available support and how we work together to maintain safe, well-managed homes and neighbourhoods.



Customer Committee

Working with TPAS (Tenant Participation Advisory Service) and customers, we designed and introduced a new Customer Committee. The committee provides independent customer challenge and assurance across complaints handling, repairs, and wider service delivery.

What this means for you:

Customers now have a stronger voice in how services are delivered. Lived experience directly informs decisions, and learning from complaints is actively used to drive improvement.



Repairs Quality Framework

We introduced a new Repairs Quality Framework to raise standards and improve consistency. It sets out clear expectations for quality, monitoring, follow-up, and learning when repairs fall short.

What this means for you:

Repairs are completed to a more consistent standard, with clearer accountability and a stronger focus on putting things right quickly when issues occur.



'How We Communicate' Review

We completed a detailed review of how we communicate with customers, working directly with customers to understand:

- the language and tone we use
- how easy it is to contact us
- how clear and understandable our processes are

As a result, we have introduced:

- targeted training for staff responding to complaints
- improved customer access channels
- better training for frontline staff to clearly explain our services

What this means for you:

It's easier to contact us, responses are clearer, and customers feel better supported when raising concerns or complaints.



Complaints Framework – Listen, Learn, Act

We introduced the Listen, Learn, Act framework to strengthen how we capture learning from complaints, feedback surveys, and Housing Ombudsman outcomes. Based on feedback, we are now reviewing this framework to better evidence the positive impact our changes have on customer experience.

What this means for you:

We can clearly demonstrate that we are listening, learning, and making meaningful changes that improve customers' homes and lives.

Our commitment

These improvements reflect our ongoing commitment to learning from complaints and customer feedback, and using this learning to improve services for everyone. We know from what you've told us that these changes matter.

We will continue to listen, learn and act, ensuring complaints lead to positive and lasting change. The improvements set out in this report are also being embedded into our key priorities within 'Our Future Focus' for 2026/27, so that what you tell us continues to shape how we plan, deliver and improve our services.

2025 - 28
Our Future Focus
Improving People's Lives



Satisfaction with Complaints

Tenant Satisfaction Measures – what are they?

Every year, housing associations like us are asked to check how customers feel about the services they receive. This is done through a short survey called Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs).

At random, a number of our customers are asked the same 12 questions that all landlords ask. This makes things fair and allows results to be compared. We share our results publicly, and so does the Housing Regulator.

What you told us about complaints in our TSMs in 2025-26:

One of the questions asks how satisfied you are with how we handle complaints. Not everyone who answers has made a complaint, so this score reflects overall confidence in how we deal with problems. This is what customers told us:



Last year, 42% of customers said they were satisfied. **This year, that's increased to 52%** - a 10% improvement! We're really proud of this.

Across housing associations, this question is often one of the lowest-scoring ones, so this increase tells us that customers are starting to see and feel the changes we've made.

Why this matters

Complaints and feedback help us understand what needs to improve. This rise in satisfaction shows that:

- customers feel more listened to,
- responses are clearer,
- things are improving when something goes wrong.



A wider positive picture...It's not just complaints.

This year's results also show improvements in:

- how well we keep you informed,
- feeling treated fairly and with respect,
- and overall satisfaction with our services.

You can read more about our TSMs and the full results [here](#).



How Complaints are monitored

We measure complaints performance monthly and report quarterly to our Customer Forum and Board. Along with performance data, we explain the factors driving performance and any actions taken or planned for improvement.

Our website is updated quarterly with the latest complaints performance information, key learnings from complaints, and actions taken as a result.

You can find more information about complaints on our website [here](#).

This annual performance report has been shared with both our Customer Forum and the Board, before adding it to our website.

“

Listening to customers and learning from complaints is key to improving services, and this report shows how that's happening in practice.

As Chair of the Customer Forum, it's great to see real progress in how complaints have been handled during 2025–26. There have been fewer complaints overall, response times have been strong, and there's been better alignment with the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code. These improvements make a real difference to how customers feel when something goes wrong, and how confident they are that their concerns will be taken seriously.

The Customer Forum regularly reviews detailed complaints data, along with real examples of customer experiences. This helps us look beyond the numbers and understand what it's actually like for customers raising issues, particularly when it comes to repairs and communication.

While progress is clear, we know there's still more to do - especially around keeping customers informed, resolving issues more quickly, and making sure agreed actions are followed through. We'll continue working closely with Halton Housing to make sure complaints are used as a positive way to drive change.”

Lisa Cogley
Chair of the Customer Forum (2025-26)



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As the Member Responsible for Complaints, I am encouraged by the progress Halton Housing has made over the past year in strengthening how we listen to, learn from, and respond to complaints. Complaints are a vital source of insight, and they provide us with a direct view of where our service can improve.

Over the year, our learning has highlighted the importance of making our services easier to access, more consistent and clearer to understand. We have also used Ombudsman outcomes to further improve services.

While there is always more to do, I am confident that Halton Housing is continuing to develop a positive complaints culture—one that views complaints not as a failure, but as an opportunity to learn and improve. I will continue to seek assurance that learning from complaints leads to tangible action and sustained improvement for our customers.

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Sharon Pennington

*Member Responsible for Complaints and
Chair of the Customer Committee*



How to make a complaint

Details about complaints, including how to make a formal complaint, our complaints process and how to contact the Housing Ombudsman can be found on our dedicated website page [here](#).





Annual Complaints Performance Report

2025 - 26



Halton
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