



**Our  
Complaints  
Performance**

**2023-24**



**Halton**  
Housing



# Introduction

Our purpose at Halton Housing is to improve people's lives, by providing homes that are safe and well-maintained and by delivering excellent services. It is important that we understand how our we our performing, that we share performance information with our customers, and that we take action to continually improve our services.

The number of complaints that we receive is a good indicator of how well our services are performing from a customer's point of view. They provide us with opportunities to understand what has gone wrong and to take action quickly to put things right and to learn from complaints to improve our services in the future.

Our complaints process is governed by the Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code.

More information on our complaints process and the role of the Housing Ombudsman and the Complaint Handling Code is available on our website: [Complaints and Feedback | Halton Housing](#)

Each year we assess our compliance against the requirements of the Complaint Handling Code, we share this assessment with our Board and Customer Forum and publish a copy of our self-assessment [here](#).





# Our Performance

Below is our complaint performance for April 2023 – March 2024, along with key themes and actions that we have taken, or are taking as a result, to improve our services.

## Stage One Complaints



\* Changes and improvements to how we collect, and report complaints means a direct comparison to previous year is not possible.

We have changed and improved how we log, and report on complaints. Unfortunately, this means comparing our performance with the previous year is not possible. However, in general we are seeing a rise in complaint volumes.

This year along with the Regulator for Social Housing and the Housing Ombudsman we have taken action to raise awareness of our complaints process, to ensure that customers who are experiencing issues with our homes or services, know how they can report that us. It is positive that our customers are engaging with our complaints process, however our overall aim is always to reduce the number of complaints we receive by improving our services

Despite an increase in the number of complaints, our performance in managing those complaints has remained largely the same as the previous year. We aim to respond to all stage one complaints within 10 days and last year we responded to 96% within this time frame.



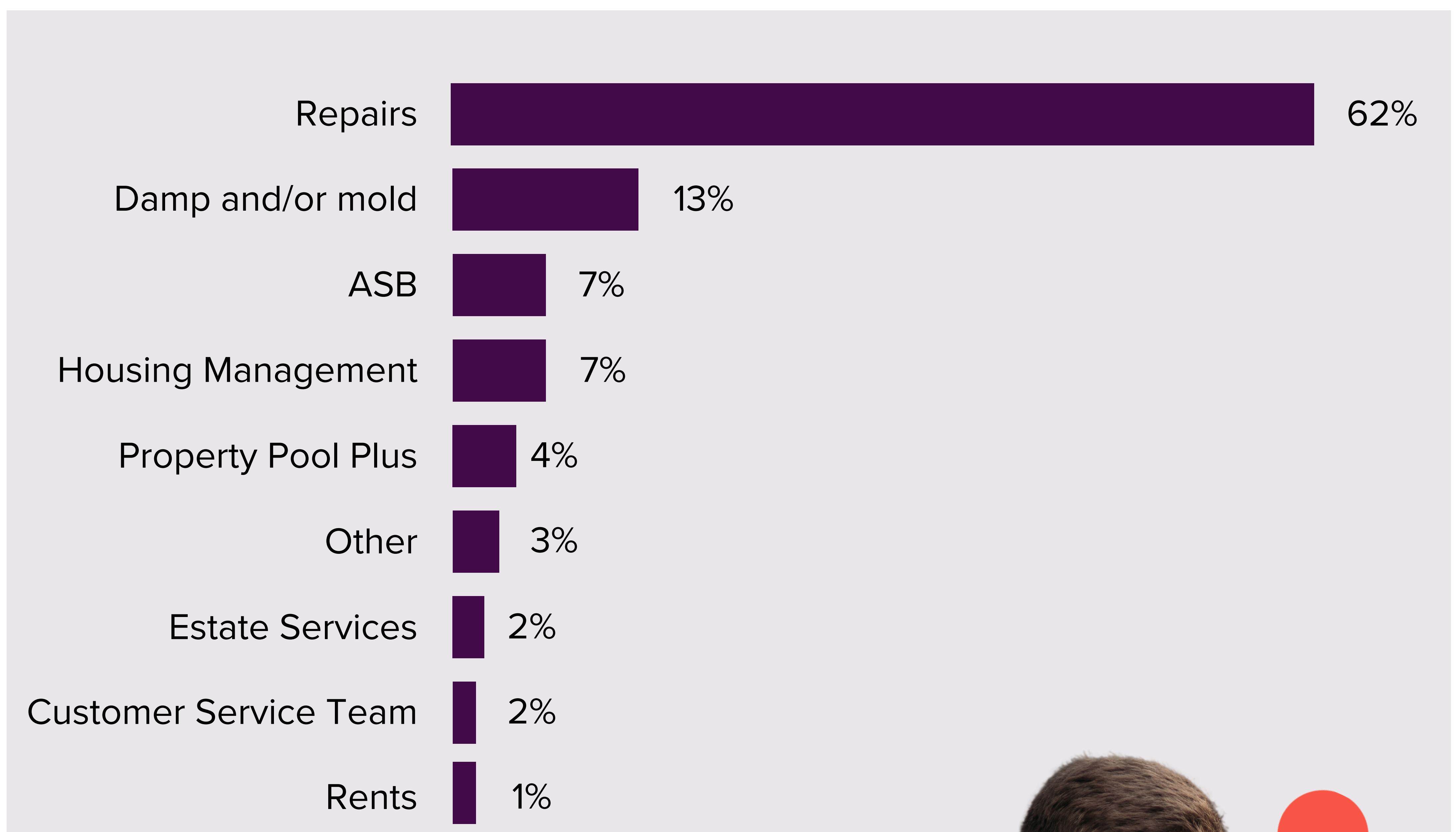
## Reasons for complaints

The highest number of complaints that we received last year were about repairs, making up 62% of all complaints. Repairs is one of the key services that we provide to our customers. Customer feedback tells us that the quality of our repairs services has a significant impact on our customers' overall satisfaction with us as a landlord.

The reasons for complaints about repairs usually relate to the quality of the repair, the time taken to complete the repair, or that the repair has not resolved the issue first time.

The chart below shows the reason for the Complaints for Stage One Complaints last year.

### Complaint reasons April 2023 - March 2024





## Stage Two Complaints



**61**

Complaints  
Received



**92%**

Responded to in target  
timeframe (rounded  
from 96.2%)



**19 days**

Average time to  
resolve complaints

61 complaints escalated to stage two of our process. This is 18% of all complaints received. Our target time frame to respond to stage two complaints is 20 days and we responded to 92% within this timeframe.





## Housing Ombudsman Cases and Outcomes

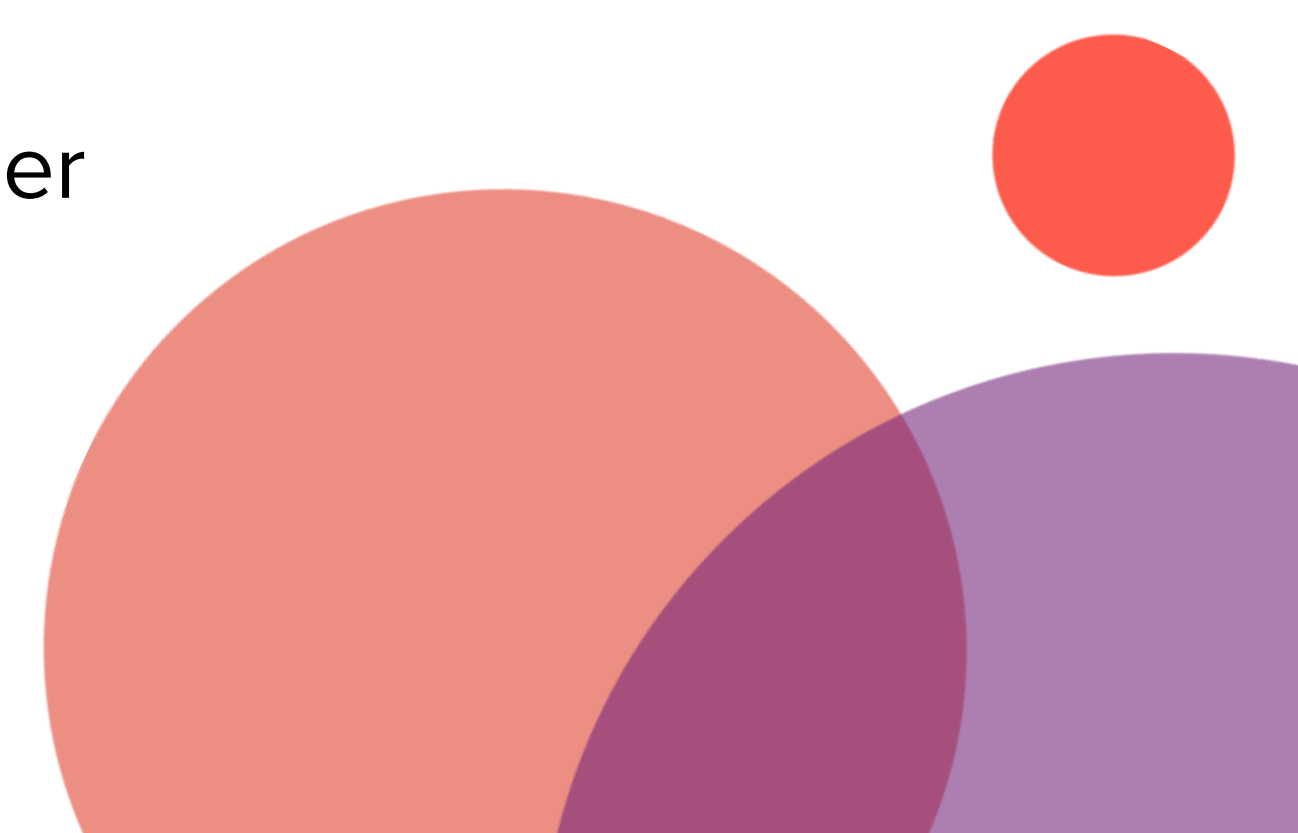
After stage two of our complaints process, if customers remain unhappy with our response, they can escalate their complaint to the Housing Ombudsman. More information on the Housing Ombudsman and how to escalate a complaint can be found [here](#).

Last year the Housing Ombudsman accepted 4 cases for investigation from Halton Housing Customers, three of those investigations have been concluded with the outcomes below.

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

Housing Ombudsman Outcome	Brief description	No. cases Apr 23 – Mar 24
No Maladministration	Landlord has following relevant policies / procedures / legislation. Minor or no service failings	0
Service Failure	The lowest level of maladministration, minor failings where some action is required to put things right	2
Maladministration (complaint handling)	There has been a failure related to complaint handling e.g. failed to respond to a customer in time	1
Maladministration (services)	Where there has been a failure related to the delivery of services e.g. landlord failed to provide a repair	0
Severe Maladministration	Where failings have had a significant impact on customers or have occurred over a long period of time	0
Resolved with intervention	Where with the Housing Ombudsman's intervention an agreed outcome was reached, that resolves the complaint satisfactorily without the need for further investigation.	1
Reasonable redress	Where there is some level of failings but the landlord has already acknowledged this and put things right before the Housing Ombudsman have completed their investigation	0
<b>Total</b>		<b>4</b>

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





## Complaints Outcomes

When we investigate a complaint, if we find that we have failed to deliver the standard of service that we should have, a complaint will be upheld. If we find that there has been no service failure, then we will explain in our response to the customer that the case has not been upheld. In our response letter, we will clearly explain why we have reached that outcome.

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

Complaint outcomes	Upheld	Not upheld
Stage 1	61%	39%
Stage 2	67%	33%





## Satisfaction with Complaints

Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSM's) were introduced by the Regulator of Social Housing in April 2023 for all social housing providers. There are 22 measures covering areas like repairs, safety and complaints. One of the questions in the survey is "How Satisfied are you with Halton Housings approach to Complaints"

You can find out more information about what TSM's are, why we collect them and our results [here](#)

We have been collecting TSM surveys since April 2023 and here are the results related to complaints:



The key reasons for dissatisfaction with complaints are:

- Customers sometimes feel their complaints are not taken seriously
- Customers sometimes feel they are not kept fully updated
- Some customers feel it can take too long to fully resolve their complaint and/or complete actions that we have agreed as a result of the complaint.



## Learning from Complaints

When a complaint has been investigated and closed, we log opportunities for learning and improvement in our Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system so that we can use this to improve our services.

Last year the key areas for improvement were identified as:

- Improve wait times for repairs
- Improve quality of the repairs service
- Improve communication with customers about key services such as repairs, Anti-Social Behaviour and complaints
- Keep customers informed
- Take action we say we will, in a timely manner

## Service Improvements

**Here are some of the actions that we have taken or are working on to improve our services as a result of complaints and customer feedback:**

- ✔ Implemented a new Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system to improve our communication and engagement with customers particularly in relations to repairs, complaints and cases of Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB)
- ✔ In CRM we have designed a new and improved way to track actions related to open repairs, complaints or cases such as ASB to ensure that we are delivering on our promises.
- ✔ Improved communication about how to make a complaint to us, including information on how to escalate to the Housing Ombudsman.
- ✔ We have used our customer magazine REACH to increase awareness of the different types of Anti-Social Behaviour, the different agencies involved with tackling ASB and how best to report it, as well as piece that focussed in on Noise complaints as our number one driver of ASB reports.
- ✔ We have delivered complaint training to all relevant colleagues with a real focus on ensuring that our customers are listened to and treated with respect.
- ✔ We have recruited more maintenance technicians to improve repair wait times. Repair wait times have reduced by 4.3 days in 2023-2034 compared to the previous year.
- ✔ We have created a new central Customer Resolutions team to improve the consistency and quality of our complaints handling.
- ✔ We are reviewing the way that we plan and schedule repairs to improve communication with our customers and also the number of repairs that are delivered right first time.



## Our Key Areas of Focus for April 2024 - March 2025

- Continue to improve our repairs service, with a key focus on
  - reducing wait times
  - improving the number of repairs completed on the first visit
  - improve communication around repairs.
- Review and improve our repairs appointment systems and processes, to ensure that we are giving customers the best possible appointment times and excellent communication regarding the status of their repairs.
- Improving the information that we provide to customers about the services that we deliver, the standards of service that they can expect and how we are performing in these areas.
- Improving communication with customers, providing clear and accurate information about our policies and procedures.
- Keeping customers informed about the things that matter most to them including the progress of any outstanding issues.
- Ensuring that our services are easy to access, easy to use and delivering consistent quality to all our customers.





# Complaints Performance Scrutiny and Oversight

We measure complaints performance monthly and report our performance every three months to our Customer Forum and Board. Along with the performance information, we provide an explanation of what is driving performance, and any actions that we are taking, or will take to improve performance.

We update our website every three months with the latest complaints performance information, as well as key learnings from complaints and any actions taken as a result.

This annual performance report is a new report that has been shared with both our Customer Forum and Board, prior to being published on our website, and below is a summary of the response from both.

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The Halton Housing Board are committed to making sure that customers receive the best possible service, at every step of their journey with us. Complaints are a vital source of information; that help us to understand how we are performing from our customer's perspective, where there is opportunity for improvement and what decisions we need to take to support the deliver of that improvement.

As a board we welcome accurate and transparent information about the complaints we receive and how well we respond to them. We want to foster a culture of learning from customer's experiences and using that learning to improve the services that we deliver. We want to make it as easy as possible for customers to engage with us, to make a complaint when necessary and continuously look for ways to ensure that all customer voices are heard.

The Annual Complaints Performance and Service Improvement Report provides assurance that we are compliant with the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code and that we are responding to customer complaints well and in a timely manner. However, there are areas where improvement is needed.

Delivering an excellent repairs service must remain a top priority and we will continue to support Halton Housing colleagues to deliver improvement in this area. We will track and monitor progress and provide constructive scrutiny and challenge.

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**Jennifer Halliday - Member responsible for complaints**



# Annual Complaints Performance Report

## 2023-24



**Halton**  
Housing