

Report to the Virtual Meeting of the Board of Management of Langstane Housing Association Limited to be held on

This report is:

For approval

For noting

A performance report

Complaints Analysis Report

Executive Summary

This report provides analysis of service complaints recorded by Langstane Housing Association during the quarter October to December 2021.

Stage one complaints performance has held steady and within performance targets. Stage two complaints performance is slightly above target for the quarter.

A breakdown of complaints received by service area is provided. Details of learning points and their status are provided in order to demonstrate compliance with procedural requirements. A summary of three compliments received for the quarter is provided.

1. Background

Effective complaints handling is an important element of the Association's work. The core values of continual improvement; acting with integrity; and being open and transparent at all times, are demonstrated through the culture of welcoming complaints and treating them as an opportunity to review service provision and learn more about what is important to tenants.

The Complaint Handling Procedure (CHP) has been in place since 2012. It is the model for handling complaints, developed by the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO), used across the public and third sectors in Scotland. Performance is reported annually to the Scottish Housing Regulator via indicators in the Annual Return on the Charter (ARC).

Changes to the model procedure that required implementation by 1 April 2021 are successfully in place.

2. Stage One Complaints (target timescale 5 working days)

	Oct – Dec 20	Jan – Mar 21	April – June 21	Jul – Sept 21	Oct – Dec 21
No. of complaints	74	74	54	73	73
Responded to in full	99%	97%	94%	92%	97%
Upheld	66%	59%	55%*	43%	45%
Responded to within timescales	79%	84%	84%*	85%	76%
Average working days to complete (new indicator)	4.95*	4.00*	4.00*	4.02*	4.47*

* indicates that these figures were calculated with cases still open on the system. Final figures for the year will vary to take into account these cases being closed off and included in the annual calculation

2.1 What does the performance trend tell us?

- a) **Number of complaints** – 73 stage one service complaints were logged during quarter three of the year. This is consistent compared to last quarter, and against the same period last year.

A detailed breakdown of all complaints is reported to the senior staff concerned on a monthly basis. Procedure requires that these are then used to identify learning points and record these onto the complaints action list. This allows prevention of recurring issues and promotion of the effectiveness of the complaints process.

- b) **Responded to in full** – Follow up action is taken to ensure teams deal with complaints as quickly as possible. Monitoring reports are issued at regular intervals to alert teams to open cases, and to summarise the complaints activity to allow for improvement actions to be identified and recorded.

There are two open stage one complaints at the time of writing this report. These cases will likely have a minimal impact upon the final figures reported on to the annual return.

- c) **Upheld complaints** – at 45% this indicator has held steady. Although difficult to identify the root cause of why complaints are made that are not upheld, it could reflect the fact that people are generally unhappy due to the impact of the pandemic affecting all aspects of their lives, and so are more likely to complain about something that is not in fact a service failure. It could also be related to poor communication about services. Information provision is something that is reviewed regularly by the teams to make improvements. In addition, improved communication to manage customer expectations is something that will be addressed via the creation of the new customer services team.
- d) **Average working days to complete** –The internal target for this indicator is to keep to within the target timescale for the complaint, which is five working days for stage one cases.

Performance this quarter is 4.47 days. This is within target of 5 working days. There are two open cases that will minimally impact this performance for reporting on to the Annual Return on the Charter. Teams continue to work hard to keep within target timescales.

2.2 What issues are being highlighted?

A detailed breakdown of all complaints is reported to the senior staff concerned on a monthly basis. A summary of complaints categories is shown below. The teams are in the process of reviewing these categories to reflect the new organisational structure. This will be fully in place for the next financial year.

Service Area	Classification	No. of Complaints	% total complaints
RENT MANAGEMENT (4)	STAFF	2	5.48
	PAYMENT	2	
CUSTOMER CARE (3)	STAFF	2	4.11
	STANDARDS	1	
LETTINGS	TRANSFER	1	1.37
HOUSING (15)	ANTI SOCIAL PROCEDURE	2	20.55
	CLEANING	3	
	ESTATE MANAGEMENT	6	
	GARDENING	1	
	PARKING PROCEDURE	2	
	STAFF	1	
ASSET MANAGEMENT (5)	ADAPTATION	1	6.85
	CONTRACTOR	2	
	CUSTOMER SERVICES	2	
PROPERTY (45)	CONTRACTOR	7	61.64
	PROPERTY CONDITION	7	
	REPAIR DELAY	23	
	REPAIR QUALITY	6	
	STAFF	2	
TOTAL		73	

As is expected for the housing sector, 61.64% of complaints relate to various aspects of the repairs and maintenance service. Half of these are about delays to the service. This reflects the external impact of limited supplies available in the construction sector, which is an issue across the UK. Outside of this, there is a broad spread of complaints covering various aspects of the service.

2.3 Learning from Complaints

Procedure requires that complaints are used to identify learning points. This allows prevention of recurring issues and promotion of the effectiveness of the complaints process. A quarterly process for identifying learning outcomes started in July 2021. It is designed to be both more productive in terms of achieving learning and improvement, and also provide a robust system to demonstrate compliance with this requirement of the Complaints Handling Procedure.

For quarters one and two of the year, seven learning points have been logged. This is an encouraging start to the new system. Not all teams have fully adopted the new process due to resource issues, and so it is expected that this will continue to be a productive process that demonstrates a commitment to the complaints handling procedure requirements, and improved outcomes for customers.

A summary of the learning points is provided below, with the current status.

Team	Action point	Status
Housing (4)	Remind all staff visiting schemes to log scheme visits on the notice boards so tenants can see the schemes are being regularly checked.	Complete
	Remind all staff to log all contacts on QL and forward to relevant Housing Officer.	Complete
	Number of complaints about overgrown gardens following delay to new contractors starting. Work was caught up but in future tenants to be informed of delay in real-time by providing update on website/social media	Complete
	Individual advice to be given to Housing Officer involved on discussing personal information	Complete
Customer Services (2)	Review of hybrid arrangements to allow call handling to be more closely monitored	Complete
	Customer Services Manager appointed with remit to improve customer service. Calls to be closely monitored, audited and learning items to be used for coaching staff at 1-1s	In progress
Housing & Property Teams (1)	Review around the use of storage cupboards/spaces in schemes. Appears to be a mixed approach depending on the schemes.	In progress

3. Stage Two Complaints (target timescale 20 working days)

	Oct – Dec 20	Jan – Mar 21	April – June 21	July – Sept 21	Oct – Dec 21
No. of complaints	8	6	4	10	8
Responded to in full	88%	100%	75%	70%	88%
Upheld	71%	33%	25%*	29%	57%
Responded to within timescales	100%	100%	100%*	100%	43%
Average working days to complete (new indicator)	19.86*	18.67	16.67*	15.86*	21.71*

*One case remains open and will need to be taken into account for final calculations of performance

3.1 What does the performance trend tell us?

Case numbers are within expected numbers, and cover a variety of service issues this quarter as follows:

Service Area	Classification	Summary
CUSTOMER CARE	STAFF	Multi-issue complaint covering staff disclosing personal information (upheld), staff not conducting a scheme investigation properly (not upheld), and the cleaning service (part upheld)
LETTINGS	VOID MANAGEMENT	Former tenant's ex-partner had some belongings left at void property. Following attempts to have these picked up they were disposed of. Complaint was that these should have been kept. (not upheld)
HOUSING	ANTI SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR PROCESS	Incident of violence between neighbours. Tenant unhappy to receive warning letter as they were the victim (part upheld)
PROPERTY (5)	CLEANING (2)	Overcharge situation (part upheld)
	REPAIR DELAY (2)	Tenant unhappy with staff service, and the paint job carried out in flat (not upheld)
	REPAIR QUALITY	Tenant unhappy with temporary repair offered until replacement can be arranged (currently open and under investigation)

Due to this variety there is not a specific underlying issue causing concern.

Workload issues have impacted on the performance against target, with the average time taken to process a stage two complaint rising above 20 working days for the first time since the procedure was implemented in 2012. There has been successful recruitment in the team affected which will address the pressure and allow for a recovery in performance.

4. Compliments Register

The Association records compliments received in order to track where service has gone well, and recognise the efforts of staff and contractors that make efforts to ensure positive outcomes for customers.

For quarter three, three compliments were received as follows:

Area	Compliment received	Source
Aberdeen	Tenant reviewed the short Annual performance and found the contents informative and well set out. It does what it is meant to do by giving a brief insight into how the organisation is doing. Job well done Samantha.	Email
Aberdeen	Tenant phoned to pass on his thanks to Ronnie for getting his repair organised so quickly. Plumber has been out and sorted his taps and he is very thankful.	Telephone
Forres	Thanks for excellent customer service from Heatcare. Not only did they fix heater but also adjusted it so I only get heat when I need it, saving me money on heating costs and saving the planet.	Telephone
Stonehaven	Tenant advised he found Newsletter informative & interesting. He doesn't normally like restructuring but thought new look to tenant services looked good. He was pleased to see feedback information from tenants reflecting concerns not in main survey but more informal. Also thanked us for questionnaire particularly question about the pandemic.	Email

5. Alignment with Business Plan

The Langstane Group's Business Plan documents the Group's vision to "be the best we can be".

For customers, the business plan objectives are as follows:

Our customers	
OC 1	Fully understand the individual requirements of our tenants and other customers
OC2	Improve service delivery standards for tenants and other customers
OC3	Improve tenancy sustainment
OC4	Deliver value for money
OC5	Ensure Equality and Human Right Legislation is adhered to

The activity in this report is primarily aimed at delivering objectives OC1 and OC2, although OC4 and OC5 also come into play in all engagement activity.

6. Governance

Langstane Housing Association operates in a heavily regulated industry. The Scottish Housing Regulator has set down seven regulatory standards that must be adhered to. These are:

1. The governing body leads and directs the RSL to achieve good outcomes for its tenants and other service users;
2. The RSL is open about and accountable for what it does. It understands and takes account of the needs and priorities of its tenants, service users and stakeholders. And its primary focus is the sustainable achievement of these priorities;
3. The RSL manages its resources to ensure its financial well-being, while maintaining rents at a level that tenants can afford to pay;
4. The governing body bases its decisions on good quality information and advice and identifies and mitigates risks to the organisation's purpose.
5. The RSL conducts its affairs with honesty and integrity;
6. The governing body and senior offices have the skills and knowledge they need to be effective;
7. The RSL ensures that any organisational changes or disposals it makes safeguard the interest of, and benefit, current and future tenants.

This report and its actions are directly relevant in helping to meet the above standards with the exception of standard 7 which is not relevant to this report. In particular this report helps to achieve standards 1 and 2.

In addition, no other regulatory standard nor equality or human right is breached or negatively impacted by this report or its actions.

There is nothing within this report and its actions that would breach or negatively affect either the Association's Rules or charitable status or, where appropriate, any individual subsidiary Articles of Association.

7. Financial and staffing implications

No financial or staffing implications to report.

8. Risk management and assurance

It is critical that the Association complies with all aspects of the CHP. This includes:

- Identifying and recording complaints accurately
- Investigating and responding to complaints timeously
- Demonstrating and reporting on learning from complaints

Failure to fulfil the requirements of the CHP presents a high risk in terms being a significant performance failure.

9. Recommendation

Board of Management are requested to note the contents of this report.

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