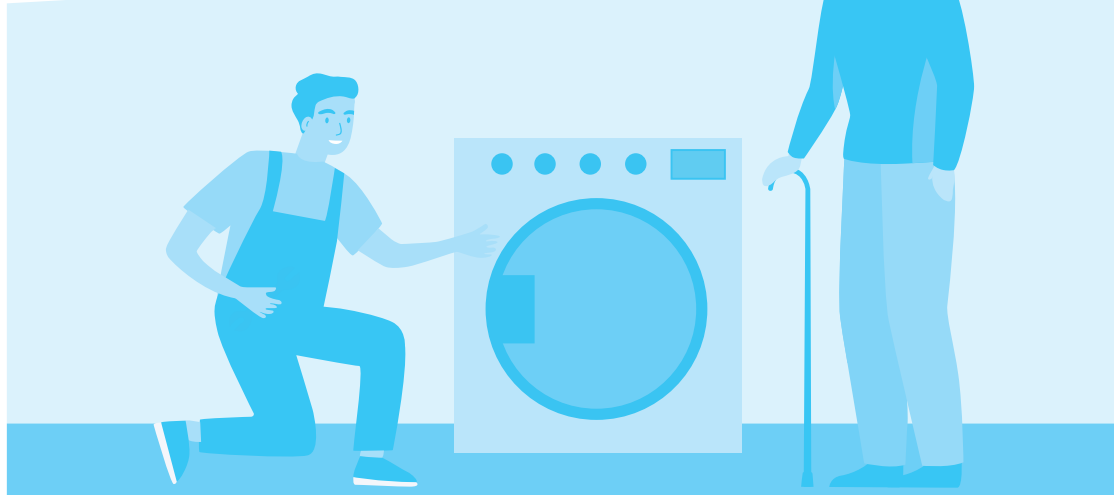




SPITALFIELDS
HOUSING ASSOCIATION
স্পিটালফিল্ডস্ হাউজিং এসোসিয়েশন

Annual complaint performance and service improvement report

2024 – 2025



Purpose

This report outlines the key elements required by the Housing Ombudsman Service's (HOS) Complaints Handling Code to ensure accuracy, transparency, and consistency.

It provides opportunities for sector benchmarking with other landlords, and clearly communicates to Spitalfields Housing Association (SHA) residents how complaints have influenced service improvements or changes, as well as the successes and challenges in complaint handling.

The findings issued under the HOS Duty to Monitor track Complaint Handling Failure Orders and any determinations of maladministration in complaint handling.

This report is published annually when more than five determinations are made, highlighting severe maladministration findings and making them available on the website. It may also reference past performance and forms part of the HOS special learning reports on landlord complaint handling and service provision.

Board statement

Throughout 2024–2025, SHA has implemented significant changes and improvements to our complaints process, including launching a new website to enhance communication and user experience as residents transition to more digital interactions.

The SHA Board and staff acknowledge that, at times, our services may not meet residents' expectations, leading them to raise formal complaints. For this, we sincerely apologise.

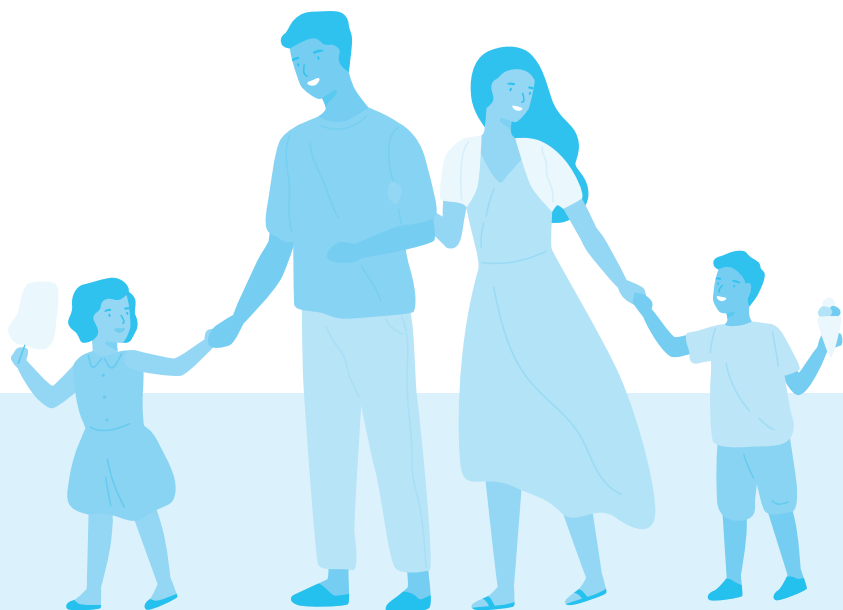
We are committed to working closely with residents to improve our services. Enhancing our complaints process has been a top priority, with new staff training programmes and workshops introduced last year. Additionally, we appointed a dedicated Complaints Officer and a Member Responsible for Complaints (MRC) to oversee complaint resolution, in line with Housing Ombudsman Service (HOS) requirements. Following a self-assessment, we are assured that we are compliant with the new Housing Ombudsman Code as of April 2024.

SHA is currently piloting a new complaints procedure for staff, fostering a culture of learning and continuous improvement. Our values emphasise ongoing development—learning from the Housing Ombudsman Service, our staff's experiences, and, most importantly, our residents' feedback.

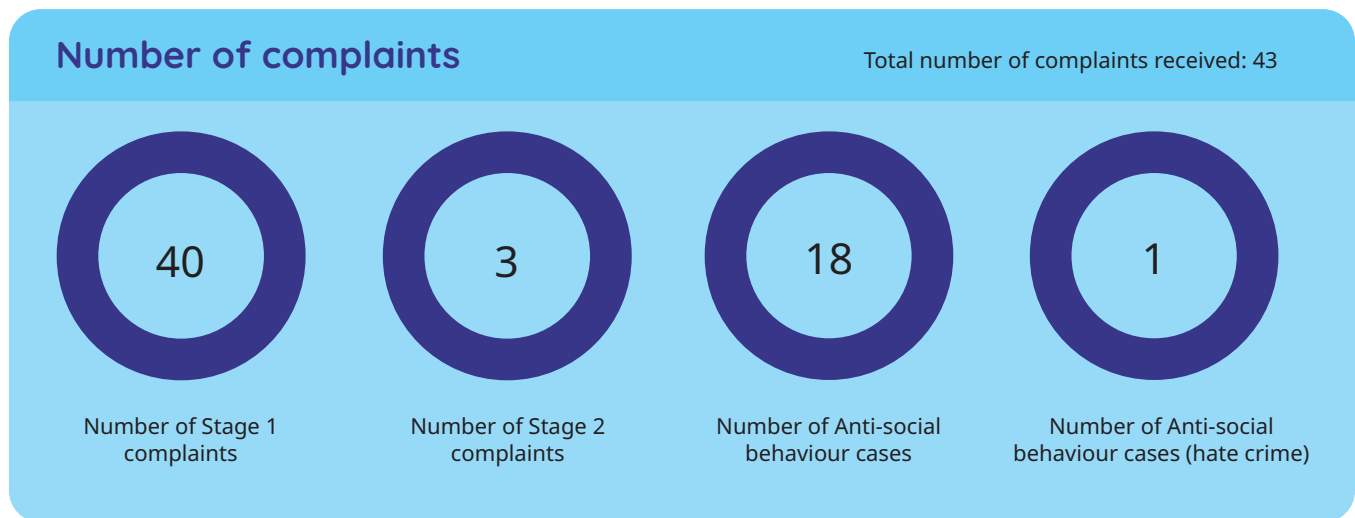
To align with the latest HOS guidelines, we have updated our **Complaints, Compliments, and Feedback Policy**, which can be found here: [SHA Complaints Policy](#).

We will continue to share updates on our findings through the News section of our website, and through a bi-annual newsletter: [SHA News](#).

2024–2025 has been a year of change and progress for SHA. We remain committed to ongoing learning, integrating improvements, and making positive changes in how we support our residents, by ensuring resident welfare and home safety remains our top priority.



Complaint performance: April 2024 – March 2025



Summary of findings

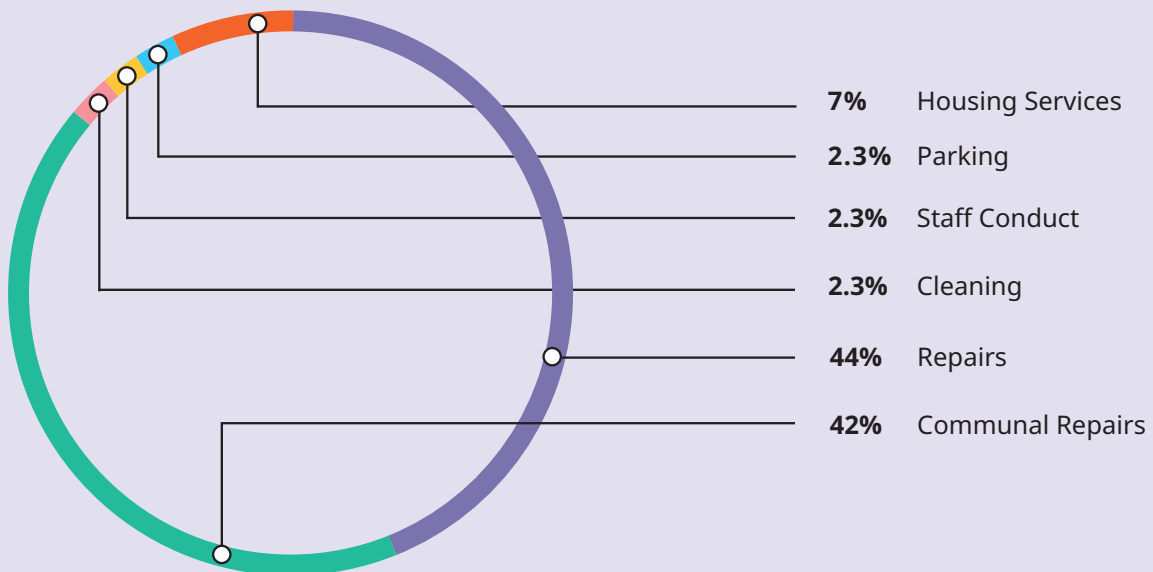
Residents have highlighted that resolved repair issues sometimes reoccur, leading to excessive back-and-forth communication between complainants and staff.

Additionally, concerns about vandalism and anti-social behaviour in communal areas have been raised. While Action Plans have started to accompany complaints, ensuring more structured follow-ups, repair issues sometimes slip through the cracks or remain unresolved due to poor communication between staff and residents.

Communication between residents and staff has improved, supported by two recent staff training workshops, with more planned. Additionally, residents have requested clearer information on cyclical repairs, which will be shared through the new user-friendly and accessible SHA website and newsletters.

SHA has fully cooperated with the Housing Ombudsman Service, meeting all requirements and maintained open communication. This includes appointing a dedicated Complaints Officer and a newly designated Member Responsible for Complaints (MRC), in accordance with HOS requirements.

Types of complaints



Complaint reasons

The majority of complaints arise from incomplete or repeated repairs, often leading to delays. Communal area repairs typically follow a longer cyclical schedule, and residents need clearer explanations regarding these timelines.

Another challenge is that residents are expected to report complaints promptly; however, some issues accumulate, resulting in multiple complex complaints being submitted at once, which can take longer to resolve.

Additionally, there is sometimes confusion over the responsibilities of residents versus those of the landlord.

Improvements underway

The complaints process has improved, particularly in terms of dialogue between Stage 1 and Stage 2 escalation, with complaints being flagged earlier. SHA's responses are becoming more personalised, allowing residents to better understand the reasoning behind decisions.

Housing Officers (HO) are now engaging more regularly with residents, which is helping to break down barriers. Staff have been trained to better deal with multiple or complex complaints, shifting the responses towards more proactive, structured, solution-driven approach.

Staff are receiving individual guidance on handling complex cases, and Action Plans have proven useful in ensuring complaints are managed more effectively. In-person meetings are to take place with contractors every two months to discuss outstanding issues and resident needs, alongside a structured Service Improvement Plan.

SHA have recently implemented the following:



Improved communication: New website (www.spitalfieldsha.co.uk) and newsletter: <https://online.flippingbook.com/view/909470573>



Updated the Complaints Policy as per the HOS April 2024 changes



Put together internal Complaints Procedure for all staff as guidance (under review)



Undertaken 2 Complaints training and workshops for staff



Undertaken walkabouts with residents in communal areas



Appointed a Complaints Officer, and appointed a Member Responsible for Complaints (MRC) as per HOS Complaint Handling Code

Actions:

Statement from Member Responsible for Complaints (MRC):

At SHA, we observed a surge of historic complaints relating to the easing of rules following the post Covid-19 lockdown, particularly in communal area repairs, due to increased usage while residents sheltered at home.

When managing complaints, we sometimes receive multiple complaints at once, each requiring resolutions within different timeframes. To reduce risks, some issues related to repairs require additional professional opinions, and this can take longer to resolve.

This year SHA's complaints record has improved. We appreciate our residents for bringing these matters to our attention, as their feedback helps us improve the service we provide. With the input of our staff, we have already made significant improvements to the complaints process, and remain committed to further enhancing our standards going forward.

Useful links:

- [Complaints self-assessment](#)
- [SHA annual report](#)
- [Complaints, compliments and feedback Policy](#)
- Complaints procedure (coming soon)

Action points:

→ Post complaint feedback form: send to all complainants following a closure of a complaint.

→ Provide feedback to contractors following complaints regarding repairs.

→ Prioritise disabled and vulnerable residents by addressing complaints from groups facing health inequalities.

→ Internal Complaints Procedure: finalise procedure following staff review.

→ Intranet: internal staff communication platform to improve communication and share tips and complaints findings internally.

→ Complex complaints: provide guidance and training to staff on dealing with complex complaints.

→ Improve writing skills when communicating with residents regarding complaints: provide clearer explanations and reasoning behind decisions made.

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