

Complaints Taskforce Meeting

27TH November 2025

Attendees:

- David White – Housing Transformation Manager
- James Hart – Customer Liaison Officer
- Victoria Bond – Assistant Manager, Housing Solutions
- Karen Carter – Choice Based Lettings Team Manager
- Kerry Lecomber – Tenant Engagement Co-ordinator
- Adam Gayford – Compliance Manager
- Hannah Spalding – Repairs Planner
- Fabio Dellabella – Mechanical Manager
- Christie Solomons – Health and Safety Manager
- Alan Fletcher-Hill – Compliance Electrical Manager
- Jeremy Robbins – Housing Management Lead
- Richard Winch - Mid Suffolk Portfolio Holder

DW opened the meeting and advised there have been issues with the dashboard for figures but JH advised what he is presenting is about 95% complete now.

Apologies from Cllr Hendry and Liz Perryman.

Actions from the last meeting

- DW and JH have a process for lessons learnt and will be looking at themes and using this meeting to follow up and check progress.

Q1 Complaints Stage One & Two)

JH advised there was a really big improvement in Repairs and Maintenance – year on year down to about a third of what it was. Improvement in communication down to new handbook. Two years ago were receiving 100 complaints per quarter so an important area for improvement.

- Those that do come through are largely upheld.
- 30 or 35 were acknowledged on time with average response time within 10 days.

Cllr Winch enquired why it's different from figures reported to the Regulator, DW advised is because this is just repairs and we report total for everything to the Regulator.

The group discussed issue with 'Blank' responses for Compliance which **AFH will feed back to colleagues - Action.** Compliance have issues with the data and average working days.

Discussed issue of complaints sitting with other departments and then getting passed on after a delay. DW advised that is the case. Team discussed issue and possible ways to resolve. JH advised that history of complaint will include which departments it has already been submitted to so must be resolved between the teams.

Tenancy Services just down on previous year with an even split between upheld, not upheld and not considered to be a complaint. Always a high number of the latter for the department as

often the complaints system is used for ASB reporting. JR advised they have weekly meetings set up to allocate complaints.

Housing Solutions figures are around the same as previously, however they have a very low amount upheld and over half not a complaint – they are around issues with housing bandings etc.

Stage 2

JH reported a big decrease in these – down from 29 to 12 and largely on time.

Themes; not being listened to handling ASB with a lack of proactive measures. Need to work more closely between Tenancy Services and Communities ASB team.

With Planned works complaints, communication is often listed as an issue along with a lack of progress with work. **Action: Need to ensure there is representation of that team at this meeting.**

Complaints about lack of communication from damp and mould contractor. However we now have another contractor covering reactive issues. DW advised we have initial feedback that new contracts were going quite well in terms of performance.

Compliments

A couple of compliments highlighted about responsive repairs. Seems to be appreciation of the new Total Mobile system and the amount of communication tenants now get keeping them updated.

Complaints Annual Report

Will go to Overview and Scrutiny (O&S) in February. Housing make up around 50% of all complaints but year on year repairs have seen a decrease of around 37%. After O&S it will be published on the website and sent to the Housing Ombudsman.

Standard Objectives

These are now required by the Housing Ombudsman (HO) which JH took the meeting through. A form agreeing to sign up to it will be shared with all staff who handle complaints and new staff will be required to sign as part of induction. HO objectives set for all responders on their PDR.

Discussed getting report to O&S outside of the meeting to speed up reporting of data.

Lessons learnt in last quarter and changes made

DW advised of register he and JH are keeping for all areas. This is separated into themes and shared at this meeting, and it will be up to the service areas to implement and manage.

Complaints Scrutiny

KL updated the meeting with details of the action plan and progress against it. DW advised that a check through "Getting To Know You" project information against jobs that were carded (as no answer) found that two households were listed as hard of hearing and four had limited mobility. Discussed communication preference and how it's recorded on Open Housing.

Any other business

In terms of acknowledgement a report goes to tenant board, O&S etc. The biggest area of failure is that we're not acknowledging on time. We think this is because the system is not being marked correctly.

Issue is also due to complaints being re-issued as with the wrong department. This means the average time taken to respond is brought down.

DW advised that process in Tenancy Management team could be replicated in other areas with a weekly check-in to ensure they have been sent to the right staff members. HS advised that she will send on a complaint and adding a 'Teams' message that it's been sent as back up.

Discussed completing outcomes when complaint was fresh in mind to enable JH to look at the themes in time. Discussed how complaints are mis-categorised and how that can be improved.

Action: Get the Tenant Experts to review the form and categories and website area that is currently available.

KC advised of a complaint about an application that became inactive inappropriately so have a new process to ensure it can't happen again.

AG advised that in terms of lessons learnt his team have been having their own complaints meetings with the Gas contractor looking at the information coming back and found it to be largely an issue due to lack of parts. Looking at the complaints, they served default notice of failing KPIs and created a bespoke parts list for engineers' vans. FD is carrying out random spot checks. Has removed work from those contractors and the service has improved.

Action: Add to lessons learnt spreadsheet. DW advised of need for evidence in terms of improvement in complaints.

AG advised to invest back into properties in terms of pipework for example. He's created a specification planned works with around £2m for replacing wiring, pipework, radiators etc. Recruiting a contract manager for this. It is very disruptive and will be carrying out roadshows in the right areas at weekends where tenants can meet contractors and our staff to have their expectations managed. However, expect there still to be some complaints due to it. DW advised of need for a disturbance allowance via a policy. Will also need to look at vulnerabilities of tenants and what support we can offer. AG advised of heavy reliance on pre-surveys, considered lots of different options. Contract will start in April to ensure bad weather is avoided.

CS enquired of training forthcoming. **Action: JH advised he can look at carrying some out.** Next meeting due February 2025.