

Annual complaint performance and service improvement report (2025/26)

Foreword from the Member Responsible for Complaints (MRC)

As the Member Responsible for Complaints, I am pleased to present our annual complaints report. Over the past year, we have seen a significant improvement in customer satisfaction with complaints handling as measured through Tenant Satisfaction Measures. This has improved from 33% to 41.9% and is now above sector median, reflecting our commitment to delivering a better experience for our residents.

We have also made notable progress in complaints handling, with a higher proportion of cases being concluded within Housing Ombudsman timescales (91% this year compared to 69% the year before). We have also seen a reduction in the number of cases referred to the Ombudsman (9 cases this year compared to 16 last year). Importantly, we have had no findings of severe maladministration, demonstrating the robustness of our processes and our dedication to fairness and accountability.

The Customer Influence Committee continues to provide strong oversight of every case that reaches the Housing Ombudsman, ensuring that learning and improvement remain central to our approach. We maintain a learning culture: feedback from complaints is actively listened to and acted upon, and this report provides clear evidence of the resulting service improvements and changes we have made.

As MRC, I receive quarterly updates on complaints performance, which enables me to maintain a strong line of sight and ensure that lessons are being applied consistently across the organisation.

I am confident that this report demonstrates both the effectiveness of our complaints handling and our ongoing commitment to using resident feedback to drive meaningful improvements in the services we provide.

Catherine Turner

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Member Responsible for Complaints

Complaint Volumes

Complaint volumes for the last three years are as follows:

Year	Stage 1	Stage 2
2023/24	1016	62
2024/25	576	65
2025/26	729	123

Key points to note are:

- Stage 1 complaints have risen to 729 in 2025/26 (increase of 26.6% from the previous year).
- Stage 2 complaints increased to 123, 89% up from the previous year.
- The proportion of complaints progressing from Stage 1 to Stage 2 increased year-on-year, from approximately 6% in 2023/24 to 11% in 2024/25, and then to 17% in 2025/26.

Complaint Performance and Outcomes

Complaint Stage	% resolved within target timescale	% resolved in compliant way*	% of complaints upheld
Stage 1 (10 working days)	91%	99%	63%
Stage 2 (20 working days)	83%	93%	55%

*extension agreed with customer

Key points to note are:

- 99% of stage 1 complaints are resolved in a compliant way¹, and only 9% require an extension beyond 10 working days; compared to 31% in the previous year. This is a great improvement and reflects the performance focus within the team.
- Stage 2 compliance with Housing Ombudsman timescales stands at 93%, compared to 80% last year.
- Over half of complaints are upheld, demonstrating the balance in judgement that is inevitably made.

¹ Where the case extends beyond 10 working days, it can be extended with the customer's agreement and remain compliant with the Housing Ombudsman's code

Summary of complaints the landlord has refused to accept

There were 8 complaints refused last year for reasons set out in the Policy. 4 were non Eastlight residents (ASB and Fly-tipping reported); 2 were criminal matters and needed to be reported to Police; 2 were rejected as the decision around a direct let/managed move were policy decisions and there was a more appropriate appeal process.

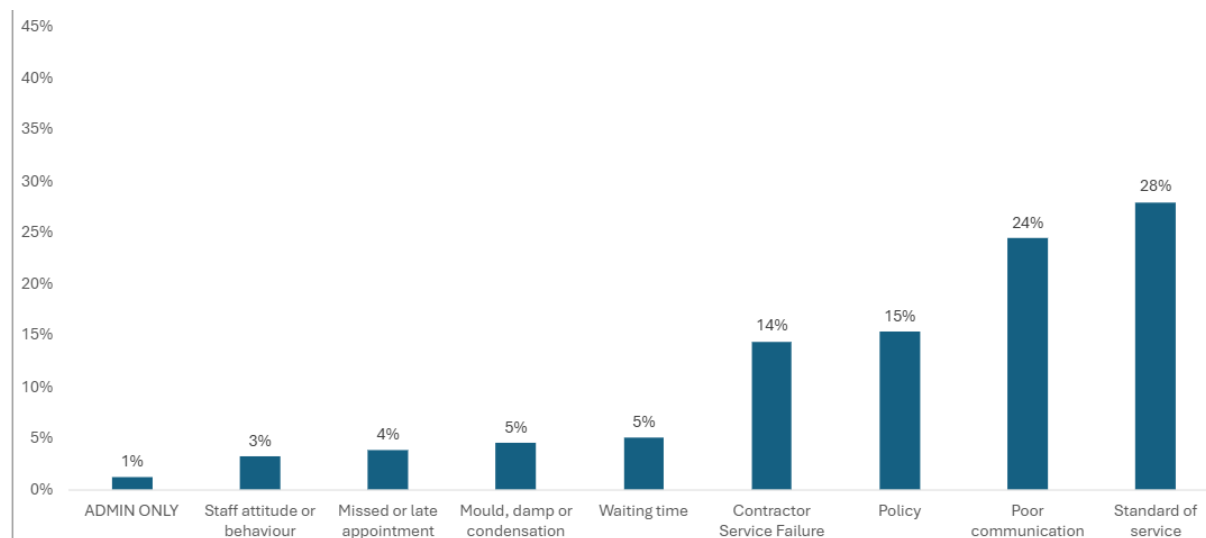
Cause of Complaints

We define a ‘complaint’ as an expression of dissatisfaction, however made, about the standard of service, actions or lack of action by Eastlight, our own staff, or those acting on our behalf, affecting a resident or group of residents. Customers are not required to use the word ‘complaint’ for us to handle it like one.

In line with Housing Ombudsman guidance, we distinguish between service requests and complaints; service requests are resolved at first contact and not logged as complaints.

Our *Complaints and Resolutions Policy* clearly sets out what is and isn’t considered a complaint, with service requests handled separately by the Customer Service Team. Complaints that fall within the definition are not refused.

The root cause of complaints over the last year is:



Key points to note are:

- Standard of service, poor communications with customers, policy decisions and contractor failure make up the biggest cause of complaints, together contributing to 81% of complaints.

- We have taken action to address the root cause of complaints and that is detailed further on in this report.

Customer Satisfaction with Complaint Handling

We measure customer satisfaction in complaint handling. Customer Journey Surveys are our method for collecting transactional customer satisfaction i.e. how customers feel about a service immediately after having received it.

Key points to note are:

- Customer Journey Surveys show mean satisfaction scores of 5.7 (handling) and 5.2 (outcome) out of 10.
- Customers are most positive about the Customer Experience Team, ownership of issues, and ease of reporting.
- Less positive feedback relates to the outcome and being kept informed.

Customer satisfaction with complaints is one of the Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs). The latest performance is as follows:

2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2025/26 sector median	2025/26 sector top quartile
35.1%	33%	41.9%	38.8%	45.1%

Key points to note are:

- Customer satisfaction with complaint handling has increased significantly with a 8.9 point increase in the year, reflecting the Customer Experience Team’s efforts to drive this up. This is now above the sector median.
- Improving satisfaction remains a priority, supported by initiatives such as the Think Customer programme, investment in a new customer portal, and service redesigns to better meet customer needs.

Housing Ombudsman Cases

2023/24	2024/25	2025/26
5	16	9

Summary of Housing Ombudsman Determinations

Category	Severe Maladministration	Maladministration	Service Failure	Reasonable Redress	No Maladministration	Total
Complaints Handling	0	3	1	0	2	6
Property Condition / Repairs	0	0	1	2	0	3
Anti-Social Behaviour	0	0	5	1	0	6
Damp & Mould (D&M)	0	0	0	0	1	1
Damages / Insurance	0	0	1	0	0	1
Estate Management	0	0	0	0	0	0
Staff	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	0	3	9	3	3	18*

(*Each case can include a number of determinations)

Maladministration rate %

2023/24	2024/25	2025/26
83%	70%	65%

(note: service failure counts as maladministration)

Key points to note are:

- Our maladministration rate has reduced significantly demonstrating our organisational learning and compliance. It is now below sector average.

- We have had no findings of severe maladministration, indicating no systemic or critical failures at the most serious level.
- Reasonable Redress - shows that where things went wrong, remedies were appropriate, but learning opportunities remain.
- Service Failures are the most common outcome (9), especially in our anti social behaviour management. This points to operational delivery and consistency issues and improvements have been made in year which are listed below.
- There have been no findings of non-compliance with the Code by the Housing Ombudsman.
- Some of the cases we have received determinations on this year date back two years so there is a lag in the Housing Ombudsman outcome and the service
- Determinations are reported to the Member Responsible for Complaints and shared anonymously with the Customer Influence Committee for oversight and assurance. Board also receive assurance within year about complaints performance.

Service Improvements from Complaints: What We Did and the Impact for Residents

The following improvements demonstrate how learning from complaints is driving tangible changes to services

1. Customer Experience & Communication

- Launched the *My Eastlight Team*, providing residents with a dedicated Neighbourhood Lead to reduce handoffs and build trusted relationships
- Introduced a new customer portal to improve communication, access to services, and self-service for repairs and rent queries
- Assigned a named complaint handler to each case, ensuring personal contact throughout
- Reviewed and improved letter templates to ensure clear, supportive, customer-focused communication
- Delivered empathy and conflict management training for frontline teams
- Strengthened call monitoring, record keeping, and customer service training
- Added QR codes in communal areas to make it easier for customers to access service standards and report issues

- Formed a strategic partnership with the John Lewis Partnership to support systems thinking and improve communication and “no access” processes (to start in 2026)

2. Repairs & Property Services

- Strengthened repairs service to deliver improvements in timescales and quality, including a flexible workforce model and outsourcing of stores to improve efficiency and effectiveness
- Updated the Repairs Policy and introduced a clear Repairs Pledge, co-designed with residents
- Delivered an SLA recovery programme with weekly performance monitoring
- Improved scheduling and strengthened collaboration between CST and operational teams
- Introduced clearer “no access” processes to reduce failed visits
- Strengthened contractor management and feedback loops
- Delivered a Resident Scrutiny bootcamp focused on complex repairs to co-create improvements

3. Damp & Mould

- Updated Damp & Mould policies and processes in line with regulation, including Awaab’s Law
- Moved accountability for Damp & Mould cases to a specialist team to ensure clear ownership
- Introduced cross-team meetings (HST, Assets, Compliance, CST) and implemented 360 case tracking to improve visibility and coordination

4. People Capability & Culture

- Delivered targeted training for Customer Experience Teams, Stage 2 handlers, and customer-facing colleagues
- Set a complaints management objective for all colleagues to strengthen accountability

- Rolled out the *Think Customer* programme to embed consistent behaviours
- Introduced a staff bonus linked to customer outcomes (TSMs)

5. Policy, Compliance & Assurance

- Strengthened the Customer Experience Team to support demand and timely resolution, generating improved Stage 1 performance (69% to 91% within 10 working days) and higher customer satisfaction
- Updated Complaints and Compensation Policies and achieved compliance with the Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code
- Completed an Internal Audit of complaints handling, with Reasonable Assurance and actions to strengthen compensation processes
- Reviewed the Managing Behaviour Policy to ensure it is fit for purpose and supports customer outcomes
- Built in a further review of complaints in our resident scrutiny plans for 2026/27

Further Information

For more information or queries please contact the Customer Experience Team
customer.experience@eastlighthomes.co.uk