

# Learning from Complaints 2023/24

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Customer Voice and Value Team  
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# Learning from complaints

## Sector context

The new Complaint Handling Code that came into practice on 1 April 2024, continued the focus on learning from complaints, including a new performance and service improvement report to be published annually. Bi-annually we produce a learning from complaints report to outline the key learning areas from our complaints and how this has been used to improve services.

Some learning actions can be, and are, quickly implemented. This might be speaking with staff or changes to procedures. Where a system change or Policy change is required, this may take a slightly longer period of time.

## Wrekin context

The new Locality areas are designed to create greater joined up working and clearer accountability for teams. The six areas combine housing, repairs and care staff with regular meetings to discuss performance. Quarterly monitoring boards are an opportunity to discuss complaint trends and ways to improve services.

# Learning from the Ombudsman

The Housing Ombudsman Service routinely publish reports and learning documentation, identifying key issues and recommendations for the sector. Two examples are as follows follows:

## Spotlight report - Attitudes, respect and rights – relationship of equals

This report investigates what it means to be vulnerable in social housing today, but also most importantly, how landlords can respond effectively and how to do so without stigma or marginalisation. Read more [here](#)

The findings showed:

There is a pressing need for landlords to create human-centric policies, adapt to meet the needs of all their residents and make sure the most vulnerable residents are not left behind. For many landlords, their current approach is potentially inadequate for responding effectively to the needs of the population it serves

## Wrekin position

The learning from these cases have been shared on the intranet with staff and will be used as examples within future training and awareness sessions also. The Customer Service Programme outlined in this agenda is designed to strengthen Wrekin's position further.

# Learning from complaints

Following each complaint, staff are asked to identify a root cause and any actions they will take to learn and reduce the chance of these happening again.

During Quarters 3 and 4 of 2023/24, 312 complaints have had learning actions outlined. For the year 502 from the 649 complaints received. In each 'Wrekin Voices' report which is presented to the Customer Committee, specific examples of learning actions are included. To view the Wrekin Voices report click [here](#).

These can be categorised in the following ways:

Type of action	Number of learning actions Q1 & Q2	Number of learning actions Q3 & Q4	Total
Process improvements made	56	83	139
Customer communication enhancements such as changing letters, adding information to website	56	79	135
Employee discussion (individual discussions and cases to inform training)	40	77	117
Not upheld	11	20	31
Availability of staff/appointments	11	3	14
Positive change programme actions	5	3	8
Staff communication improvements	4	18	22
Contractor management discussions	3	14	17
Timeliness of actions improved	2	8	10
Follow up works required	2	7	9
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>190</b>	<b>312</b>	<b>502</b>

Process improvements have included things like changes to bring in additional technical expertise for oversight of adaptation works during voids Customer communication has included changes to share information about grounds maintenance.

A number of actions will be included within Positive Change Review work.

Staff discussions have taken place to embed the culture of learning from complaints. Equally, these will inform the design and delivery of a customer service training.

# Learning from complaints

We continue work on the key themes identified in our service improvement report for 2023/24 and published as part of the Code of Complaint Handling requirements. These are:

- **Customer care training programme**

The main reasons for complaints is communication. We recognise this is an area for us to continue to improve upon. One of our values is to “communicate clearly” and we have more work planned so this is regularly reviewed. This has included coaching with individual teams and process changes. A customer care programme will run throughout 2024/25 and then continue with all our new employees to improve this further.

- **Locality working and plans**

From customer feedback, including complaints, we have seen there is more to do so that customers have a clear point of contact and services work in a joined-up way. A locality way of working is being introduced so a team are assigned for each area covering repairs, housing and care. The housing teams are also working on locality plans with their communities to address key priorities.

- **Grounds maintenance**

A change of approach has been undertaken through this year. From this a new rota will start in March 2024 and will be communicated with all staff and residents. Further enhancements will follow such as making this more tailored to areas, such as on the app.