



Complaints performance and service improvement report 2024/25

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Commentary from Board

We recognise the continued importance of using complaints as a key driver for service improvement and cultural change across Notting Hill Genesis (NHG). This year's Annual Complaints Performance and Service Improvement Report, alongside our self-assessment against the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code, reflects real progress but also reminds us that more remains to be done.

The Board was encouraged by the improvements seen in 2024/25, particularly in resolution rates. The introduction of a dedicated complaints function has clearly strengthened our ability to manage and respond to complaints consistently, reduce backlog and close historic cases. We also welcome the clear identification of recurring themes, such as delays in communication, service charge queries and the handling of damp and mould, areas we must continue to address proactively and transparently.

We also welcomed the continued shift towards embedding a learning culture, but we recognise that this must be felt in every part of the organisation. It is critical that all teams see complaints not just as individual issues to be resolved, but as opportunities to understand where systemic improvements can be made. That requires clear ownership at service level and visible modelling of accountability from senior leaders.

As a Board, we are committed to ensuring that complaint insights feed directly into service design and operational change. We will continue to scrutinise progress, support transparency and uphold our responsibility to residents. By learning from those we serve, we can build a more responsive, fair and customer focused organisation.



Ian Ellis,
Chair

Executive summary

This report sets out our complaints performance for 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025, key themes, learnings and service improvements and details of NHG mentions in Housing Ombudsman Service (HOS) publications, in compliance with the Housing Ombudsman Compliant Handling Code.

The report addresses the following areas and will be considered by the Resident Forum, Operations Committee and Member Responsible for Complaints before being presented to the Group Board for scrutiny and comment:

1. What is NHG's self-assessment of its complaint handling under the new Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code?
2. What is our performance on complaints?
3. What are the key themes around complaints?
4. What are the service improvements made as a result of learnings from complaints?
5. What did the HOS publish about NHG's performance?
6. Were there any other reports or publications produced by the HOS in relation to the work of NHG?

Key findings

- NHG is compliant with the HOS complaint handling code. NHG's self-assessment against the complaint handling code is attached and is published on the NHG website.
- NHG introduced the new independent complaints service in July 2024 as part of a broader transformation of operations, we have seen an increase in the number of complaints from residents. This is noted through the number of complaints now coming through a dedicated email channel and is recognised as confirmation that the service is more accessible to residents.
- NHG had an increase of over 100% in complaints for 2024 to 2025. However, we also saw a decrease in the number of cases with negative determinations from the Housing Ombudsman. This demonstrates the positive impact of our newly established relationship management approach between the centralised complaints service and the Housing Ombudsman.
- The key themes coming through from complaints are around the speed of response to either resident queries or repairs, the quality of work carried in some instances and the level of communication throughout the journey.

Data shows delays in responding to complaints at both stage 1 and stage 2, due to the increased volumes, but a decrease in the number of negative findings from the Ombudsman for complaint handling.

- The HOS published a Landlord Performance Report of NHG's performance for the year ending 31 March 2025 in June 2025. The NHG maladministration rate of 67% was in line with the average for landlords of a similar size and type to NHG which was 68%. We also compared favourably with the national maladministration rate of 71%.

What is NHG's self-assessment of its complaint handling against the new HOS complaint handling code?

The HOS complaint handling code took effect 1 April 2024 on its new statutory footing. NHG has completed a self-assessment against this code and included it in appendix A

It sets out good practice for social housing landlords and service providers to resolve complaints quickly, and to use complaints to improve services.

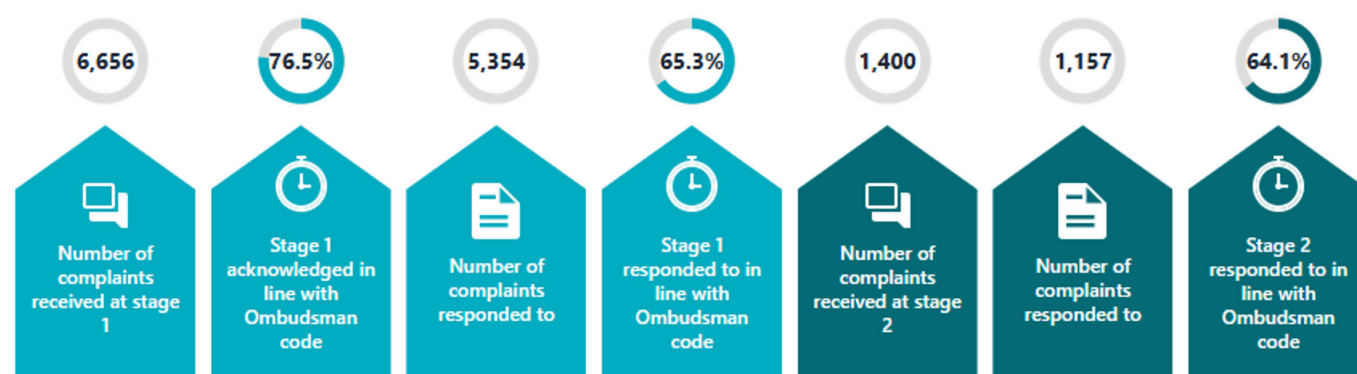
What was NHG's performance on complaints during 2024/25?

During 2024 to 2025 we received 6,656 stage 1 complaints, this is a circa. 100%+ increase in overall numbers compared to the previous year (3,298 in 2023 to 2024). Overall, this equates to 98.94 complaints per thousand homes (based on provisional SDR).

Centralising the service and adding a new channel through which residents could make a complaint gave rise to a significant increase in the expressions of dissatisfaction registered. 24% of expressions of dissatisfaction (2038) were resolved in Service Recovery, meaning the issue was service recovered to the residents' satisfaction, with 76.5% of these resolved within 5 days, and a formal response was not requested. Of the 6,656 complaints that were logged at Stage 1, 1,400 were escalated to stage 2 as of 31st March 2025.

The demand of more complex cases continues to put increased workload onto colleagues. As a result, only 65.3% of stage 1 complaints were responded to in compliance with the HOS code timeframes (including where the resident has been informed of an extension) and 64.1% of stage 2 complaints were responded to in compliance with the HOS code timeframes (including where the resident has been informed of an extension). We have added additional resources to the complaints service to address the backlog of complaints which were not responded to in time and to meeting ongoing levels of complaints as we move into the new reporting year.

Summary of complaints April 2024 to March 2025

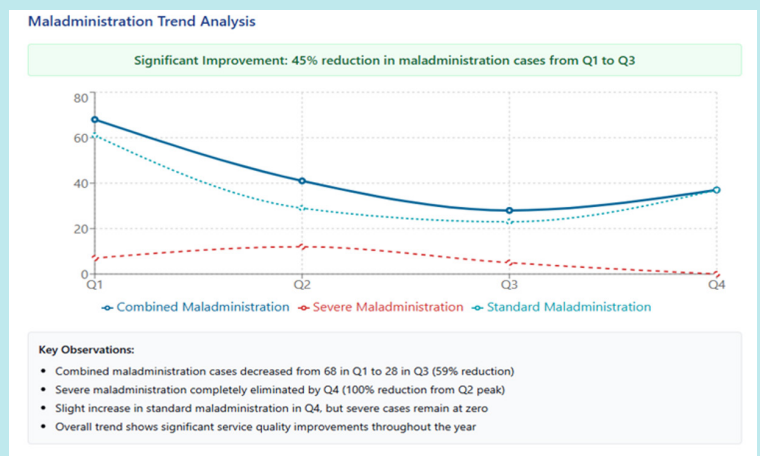
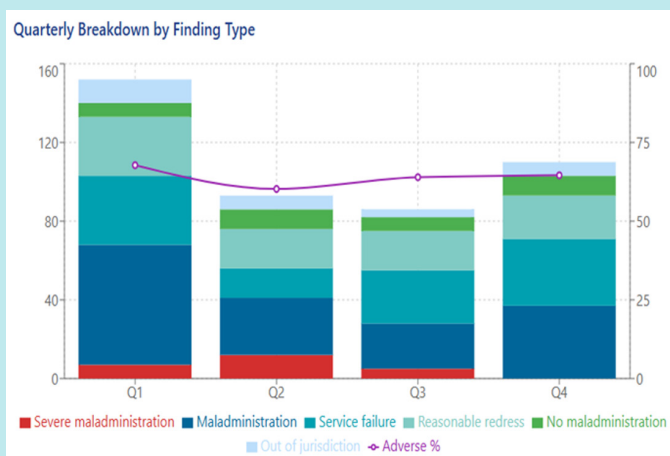


*Includes complaints logged before 31 March 2024 and responded to between 1 April 2024 and 31 March 2025

Housing Ombudsman cases

We received 295 informal enquiries from the Ombudsman over 2024 to 2025 (these are cases where a resident has asked the Ombudsman to advocate on their behalf to progress their complaint through our process), this equates to 4.4% of the complaints that we received in the year receiving intervention from the Ombudsman. 74% were from general needs tenants, with 38% of cases relating to housing management and 32% were about repair issues.

Our quarterly breakdown of complaint findings demonstrates several encouraging developments throughout the 2024-25 reporting year. The most significant positive development has been our management of those cases at risk of severe maladministration. We've achieved consistent improvement in this critical area, beginning with 7 cases in Q1, temporarily rising to 12 in Q2, then steadily decreasing to 5 in Q3, and most impressively, recording zero severe maladministration findings in Q4. This progressive reduction demonstrates our commitment to addressing the most serious service issues with colleagues and implementing remedies and preventative measures at the information request stage.



Despite varying case volumes across quarters, our complaint handling processes have shown increasing consistency. The adverse findings percentage has stabilised throughout the year, settling at 63.55% in Q4 compared to the year-high of 67.76% in Q1. This stabilisation indicates that the centralised service is starting to reap benefits of a targeted and focused team working on ombudsman cases.

Throughout the year, we've placed increasing emphasis on delivering quality solutions that effectively address resident concerns. This is evidenced by the decrease in the severity of the findings from severe maladministration and maladministration to service failure. Overall the maladministration rate reduced from 42.07% in Q1 to 32.73% in Q4, a c27% decrease over the year. These figures reflect our commitment to working with our service delivery colleagues providing practical, resident-focused outcomes rather than simply processing complaints.

In conclusion, the data reveals an organisation that has successfully enhanced its quality focus, demonstrated resilience through fluctuating demand periods, and significantly reduced its most serious service failures. These positive developments create a strong foundation for further improvements in resident satisfaction as we continue building on these encouraging trends in the coming year.

At the end of March 2025 we had 225 cases awaiting determination with the Ombudsman.

What are the key themes around complaints?

A substantial proportion of complaints received have been related to repairs and quality of works, accounting for a high proportion of overall complaints across NHG in 2024 to 2025.

Key insights from complaint data analysis

Based on analysis of the complaint data from 2024-2025, clear patterns have emerged that highlight priority areas for service improvement:

Repairs - The predominance of repair-related complaints points to systemic challenges in repair responses. Residents frequently report slow response times for repair issues like plumbing problems and damp/mould concerns.

Communication failures - Communication represents the second largest complaint category. Residents report ignored emails, lack of updates on reported issues, and poor follow-up.

Financial concerns - Complaints about service charge increases without adequate explanation or perceived value represent a significant source of resident frustration.

Health and safety issues - Health-related complaints, particularly regarding damp, mould, and basic sanitation issues, impacting resident wellbeing and enjoyment of their home.

Quality of work - When repairs are completed, the quality is often questioned, leading to repeated complaints about the same issues. This suggests a need for improved contractor management, better quality control measures, and more effective work verification processes.

The impact of **staff turnover** - Residents mentioned frequent changes in local officers, contributing to inconsistent service.

Enhancing our complaint handling process

Responding to resident feedback

In response to the clear patterns emerging from our complaint data analysis, and in line with our Better Together aspirations for creating 'better connections' by listening to residents and acting in response, comprehensive enhancements to our complaints structure were implemented in July 2024. These strategic improvements directly address the predominant concerns raised by residents, particularly around repairs, communication failures, and financial matters.

Our centralised approach aims not only to rectify existing shortcomings but also to leverage insights from complaints to drive meaningful service improvements. The data clearly shows that focusing on maintenance response systems, communication protocols, and quality control measures will yield the greatest impact for our residents.

We are fully dedicated to creating a culture of quick, transparent and resident-focused service. Our aim is to improve resident satisfaction and trust in our organisation by being responsive and delivering excellent service consistently, addressing the concerns around repair quality, health and safety issues, and staff turnover that our analysis has highlighted.

As the new complaints function becomes established, our focus during 2025-26 will be to conduct detailed root cause analysis and deep dives, giving us further insights into how we improve customer experiences from the source. This approach will be particularly valuable in addressing the systemic challenges in maintenance response and communication that represent our largest complaint categories.

We have also established a dedicated customer journey team, who will take these insights and focus on improving the customer journey around repairs and service charge to mitigate further occurrences of systemic issues. This targeted approach directly responds to the areas generating the highest volumes of complaints, ensuring our improvement efforts deliver maximum benefit to residents.

Understanding complaint handling exclusions

Where a resident raised an issue but NHG did not handle it as a complaint, the matter was recorded on our systems and responded to with an exclusion letter. The situations where this occurred include:

- A complaint relating to ongoing court proceedings
- A first request for service, information or an explanation of our policies and procedures
- Reported cases of neighbour disputes, anti-social behaviour, hate crime or domestic abuse, unless residents are complaining about how we have handled their reports
- A claim is being dealt with by our insurers
- A complaint about a subject access request (SAR). This is dealt with under our SAR policy
- Where we have already responded to the complaint
- Where the complaint is being pursued in an unreasonable manner in line with our unacceptable behaviour policy

What are the service improvements made as a result of learnings from complaints?

Case study: Addressing failings in the management of data protection, domestic abuse and mutual exchanges (54g)

Background: The Housing Ombudsman Service (HOS) has used its authority outlined in paragraph 54(g) of The Housing Ombudsman Scheme to direct Notting Hill Genesis (NHG) to conduct a senior management review of the learning from case reference, 202308384 where the investigation report outlines several concerns with how NHG manage data protection, domestic abuse and mutual exchanges.

Actions taken to improve

Data protection practices: In light of increasing digital threats and stringent regulatory requirements such as GDPR, improving data protection practices is crucial for us. A comprehensive approach is already in place to safeguard sensitive tenant information and maintain trust. We have a robust data protection training programme for all staff, ensuring they understand the importance of data security and their role in maintaining it. Front line staff

are also aware of how to report a data breach so that NHG can react swiftly and effectively in the event of a data breach, protecting both the organisation and its residents. However, as a result of this case we now have regular internal audits of data handling processes that will help identify and address any vulnerabilities before they can be exploited. Additionally, we now enforce strict protocols for data sharing, including secure file transfer methods and encryption standards, which should minimise the risk of data breaches.

Handling of domestic abuse cases: Domestic abuse is a sensitive and complex issue that requires a nuanced approach from housing providers. Our frontline Housing teams already have robust training in this area. Clear referral pathways to support services and local authorities are already established to ensure that victims receive prompt and appropriate assistance. However, to improve our handling of domestic abuse cases, we are considering specialised training for all frontline staff. This training will focus on recognising the often subtle signs of domestic abuse and responding appropriately and sensitively. To encourage reporting, we are also considering developing a confidential and user-friendly mechanism for residents to disclose domestic abuse concerns. Regular reviews and updates of domestic abuse policies, in consultation with our resident involvement team, will help ensure that our approach remains effective and resident led.

Mutual exchange procedures: The mutual exchange process can be complex and often causes frustration for residents. To improve this service, we made significant changes to the procedure in August 2024. This focused on streamlining the application process allowing for easier submission and tracking of applications. However, we are implementing clear timelines for each stage of the mutual exchange process and communication to all parties involved, setting realistic expectations and reducing anxiety. Implementing a thorough checklist for property inspections will also ensure consistency and fairness in assessments, reducing disputes and delays. We now have a robust policy that explains the mutual exchange process, requirements, and potential outcomes which will empower residents to make informed decisions. Regular reviews of completed exchanges will now help identify areas for continuous improvement in the process.

Additional service improvement

As we enter the third year of our Better Together corporate strategy 2023-2026, we're pleased to report meaningful progress in transforming our complaint handling processes and related services. This section of the report highlights our achievements during 2024/25 and outlines how our improvements align with our strategic priorities of better connections, better homes, and better places, whilst acknowledging the journey ahead.

Centralised complaints service

July 2024 marked the launch of our centralised complaints service, and we're now able to reflect on its first year of operation. The transition from local officer-led complaint handling to our impartial, centralised model has yielded encouraging results. We've observed noticeable improvements in consistency and quality of responses, though we recognise there remains room for further enhancement.

Our dedicated complaints team has established effective collaborative relationships across the organisation, resulting in more thorough investigation of issues and more comprehensive resolutions. Senior complaint investigators have successfully managed several complex complaints, providing the additional support and expertise needed to resolve challenging issues whilst capturing valuable learning opportunities.

Progress against our five key priorities includes:

- **Positive complaint culture:** We've seen a gradual shift in perception, with both staff and residents increasingly viewing complaints as opportunities for improvement rather than criticisms
- **Enhanced reporting mechanisms:** New reporting frameworks have improved visibility of complaint trends, though we continue to refine our approach
- **Improved outcomes for customers:** We've focused on putting residents first in our complaint handling, ensuring that resolutions address the root issues rather than just symptoms.
- **Root cause analysis:** We're becoming more effective at identifying underlying issues, though translating these insights into preventative measures remains a work in progress
- **Customer-led service design:** Resident feedback is increasingly influencing service improvements, with several tangible changes implemented based directly on complaint insights. We are now planning to introduce a complaints panel of residents in 2025-26 to scrutinise our complaint response letters and score our service, ensuring we maintain the highest standards of communication and resolution

Repairs service - measuring improvement

Following the establishment of our centralised repairs hub in 2024/25, we've focused on enhancing its effectiveness. Whilst the full benefits are still emerging, we've seen encouraging trends in repair completion rates and satisfaction levels.

The repairs inspector roles introduced last year have proven valuable in maintaining quality standards, though coverage across our entire portfolio remains a challenge we're addressing. Their work has been particularly effective in reducing instances where repairs are prematurely marked as complete which is a source of dissatisfaction among residents.

Our system enhancements to flag properties with frequent repairs have enabled us to take a more proactive approach with problematic properties, though we acknowledge this work is still in its early stages. The correlation between early intervention and reduced long-term repair needs is becoming increasingly evident.

Service charge improvements - progress update

The centralised service charge team established within Operations has now been functioning for a full year. Their impact is beginning to materialise through more consistent processes and improved transparency for residents. Whilst challenges remain in managing resident expectations around costs, the foundation for better service has been firmly established.

The team has successfully improved the consistency of our approach to service charges, with residents noting greater clarity in communications. Customer-facing colleagues report increased confidence in handling service charge queries, though complex cases still often require specialist input and we recognise we have a way to go before all residents will feel positive about this area of service.

Relocation process - resident experience

Our revised relocation policy has been in effect throughout 2024/25, supporting numerous households who needed temporary relocation due to emergency or prolonged works. Initial feedback indicates improvement in resident experience, though we continue to refine our approach based on learning from each case.

The enhanced case management protocols have ensured more consistent communication with displaced residents, reducing uncertainty during what remains an inherently disruptive process. Our clear guidelines on rent arrangements and storage of personal possessions have helped alleviate some common concerns, though we recognise the emotional impact of temporary displacement requires ongoing attention.

We've also adopted the preferred, sensitive language around relocations as advised by the HOS to replace the crude term 'decant'.

Communications improvements

Our new communication platform KORI (Keep Our Residents Informed) makes it easier for local and central teams to send messages to groups of residents (in an estate, block or other grouping) by SMS, email or letter depending on the urgency, message and resident communication preferences. KORI creates an easily accessed record on the customer profile on CRM of what's been sent to improve information management and continuity of service.

Learning from complaints - systemic improvements

Our commitment to thorough root cause analysis during 2025-26 will lead to several systemic improvements across our services, though embedding these changes consistently throughout the organisation requires sustained focus. We've identified recurring themes that inform our improvement priorities, with particular attention to communication quality, expectation management, and technical competence.

The integration of our complaints service with our Customer Experience department has enhanced our ability to identify pain points in the customer journey. This holistic view has proven valuable in prioritising improvement efforts, though translating insights into effective intervention remains a complex undertaking.

Challenges and forward focus

Whilst we've made significant progress, we acknowledge ongoing challenges including increasing service expectations, growing complexity of property maintenance requirements, and evolving regulatory standards. These challenges reinforce the importance of our Better Together approach as we continue to adapt and improve.

Our focus for 2025/26, the final year of our Better Together strategy, will be:

- **Enhanced reporting and root cause analysis** - We will make this our primary focus for the coming year, strengthening our ability to identify patterns, predict emerging issues, and implement preventative measures
- **Complaints panel** - Establishing a resident panel to review our complaint responses and score our service quality, providing direct accountability and driving continuous improvement
- **Putting residents first** - Further embedding a resident-centric approach throughout our

complaint handling process and wider service delivery

- Embedding **consistent complaint handling excellence** across all teams
- Developing more sophisticated **analytical capabilities** to transform complaint data into **actionable insights**
- Further **integrating complaint learning into our service design and improvement processes**

The improvements highlighted in this report demonstrate our ongoing commitment to the Better Together vision. While there remains considerable work to do, the foundations established in previous years are now yielding tangible benefits for our residents. We will continue to listen, learn and adapt our approach to ensure we deliver services that truly meet the needs of the communities we serve, recognising that improving resident satisfaction is a continuous journey rather than a destination.

What did the HOS publish about NHG's performance?

The HOS published a Landlord Performance Report of NHG's performance for the year ending 31 March 2025 in June 2025. The NHG maladministration rate of 67% was in line with the average for landlords of a similar size and type to NHG which was 68%. We also compared favourably with the national maladministration rate of 71%.

Were there any other reports or publications produced by the HOS in relation to the work of NHG?

A Housing Ombudsman's recent determination found no maladministration in our handling of both the communal door entry system repairs and the leaks into our resident's property. This case was also publicised by the Housing Ombudsman as an example of sector best practice.

NHG was mentioned in the November 2024 learning from severe maladministration publication in relation to our handling of ASB. NHG was also mentioned in the April 2025 learning from severe maladministration publication in relation to timely and transparent communication with residents.

The Housing Ombudsman published the learning from our 54(f) review on 15 May 2025. This case relates to a complaint received in 2021, with a determination issued by the Ombudsman in December 2023.

NHG did not feature in any of the Complaint Handling Failure Order (CHFO) quarterly reports published by the HOS.