The Whiteley Homes Trust

Annual Complaints Performance Report

April 2025 - March 2026

www.thewhiteleyhomestrust.org.uk

Message from the Senior Member Responsible for Complaints

We are committed to delivering high-quality services and to responding openly, fairly and consistently when things go wrong. Complaints are a vital source of insight, helping us understand residents' experiences and identify where we need to improve.

This report sets out our complaints performance for April 2025 to March 2026, including the themes emerging from complaints, the outcomes we reached and the actions we have taken to improve services.

This is the first full financial year in which the Trust operated as a Registered Provider of Social Housing. During the year we continued to strengthen our complaints handling arrangements in line with the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code, with a particular focus on improving communication with residents, increasing accountability and ensuring that learning from complaints leads to meaningful service improvements.

While most complaints were resolved at Stage 1, the themes identified, particularly around repairs, heating and communication, highlight areas where we must continue to improve. We have taken action in response and remain committed to learning from every complaint.

I would like to thank residents who have raised concerns with us. Their feedback is essential in helping us improve our services and build trust.

"Complaints are a vital source of insight, helping us understand residents' experiences and identify where we need to improve."

Carol Morris
Trustee

Message from the Chair of the Board of Trustees

The Board welcomes this Annual Complaints Performance Report and the increased transparency it provides for residents.

Complaints provide valuable insight into residents' experiences and help the Trust identify where services, communication or processes need to improve. The Board monitors complaints performance regularly and reviews the lessons learned and actions taken in response.

This year we have seen improvements in complaints oversight, customer service training, resident engagement and improved ways to communicate directly to residents through the new text messaging service. We are also pleased to see residents becoming more involved in service scrutiny and policy development through the Resident Readership Panel and the establishment of a new Resident Voice Panel.

The Board remains committed to ensuring that complaints are handled fairly, lessons are learned and resident feedback continues to influence decision-making across the Trust.

"The Board monitors complaints performance regularly and reviews the lessons learned and actions taken in response."

Mark Henderson
Chair of the Board of Trustees

Overview of Performance

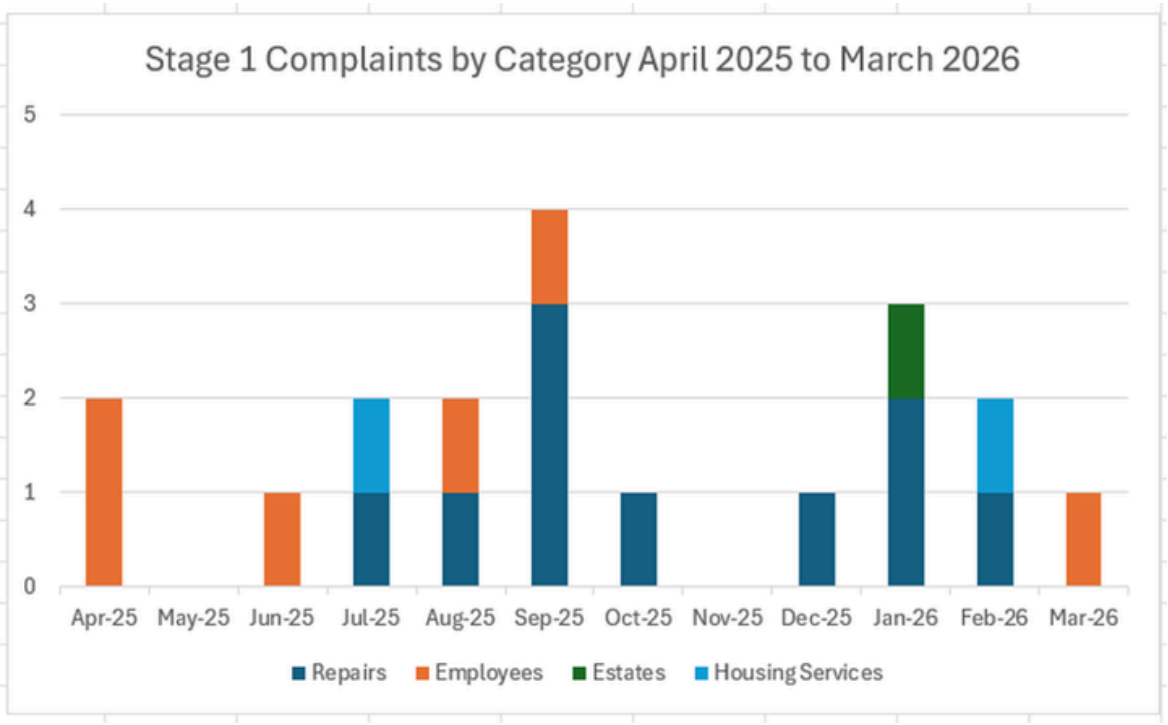
This report covers the year April 2025 to March 2026 inclusive. This is the first full year of the Trust being a Registered Provider of Social Housing and our Complaints Policy was updated during the year to reflect the standards in the Housing Ombudsman's Complaints Handling Code.

During the year, 19 formal complaints were logged and two of these were escalated to Stage 2. The breakdown of the Stage 1 complaints by category is shown below. We received one complaint from a market rented tenant which has not been included in this report.

We also received two complaints about venue hire. As these complaints fall outside our landlord services, they were recorded separately and are not included in this report. However, we investigated and responded within the same timescales, and the Community Team made some changes to their processes as a result.

Most complaints were resolved at Stage 1. The themes within repairs, heating and communication indicate where we need to maintain focus on service quality and resident communication.

Stage 1 Complaints by Category April 2025 - March 2026



Performance Summary

- **19** formal complaints were logged (landlord services)
- **17** complaints were resolved at Stage 1 and **2** complaints were escalated to Stage 2
- Repairs accounted for **10** complaints (53% of all landlord-service complaints)
- Employee-related complaints accounted for **6** complaints (32%)
- **1** complaint was referred to the Housing Ombudsman Service during the year (from 2024/25)
- **1** complaint about repairs was received from a Market Rent tenant and has been excluded from this report
- **2** additional complaints relating to venue hire were recorded separately (outside landlord services)

Complaints Category	Number of Complaints	% of all Complaints	Number of Complaints resolved at Stage 1	Number of Complaints resolved at Stage 2 *	Number of referrals to the HOS **
Repairs	10	53%	8	2	1
Estates	1	5%	1	0	0
Housing Services	2	10%	2	0	0
Employees	6	32%	6	0	0
TOTAL	**19**	**100%**	**17**	**2**	**1**

* The residents may still ask the HOS to investigate if they are not satisfied with the response at Stage 2

** The HOS referral was a complaint from 2024/25 but referred to the HOS in July 2025

Complaint Themes

The key themes provide important insight into resident expectations and where service delivery and communication need to be strengthened.

Repairs and property issues continued to be the largest category of complaints, although the proportion reduced from 68% in 2024/25 to 53% in 2025/26.

Three of the repairs and property complaints related to the high cost of heating homes with infra-red heating systems. In response, the Trust carried out surveys to review the efficiency of heating systems, provided residents with guidance on how to use the systems effectively and completed improvement works identified through the surveys.

A third of all complaints this year related to communication and employee conduct. Of the six employee complaints received:

- **Three complaints were upheld and related to failures to respond to emails, conduct on the telephone and the failure of an agency support worker to respond to an emergency call**

- **The remaining employee complaints were investigated thoroughly and were not upheld**

The two complaints about Housing Services were the failure to adequately deal with an ASB case and the change in priority for a transfer application following the introduction of our new Allocations policy. Both complaints were partially upheld.

All complaints are investigated by a senior manager who reviews whether policies and procedures have been followed appropriately and whether actions and communication were reasonable and proportionate.

Outcomes of Complaints

Of the 19 formal complaints logged in 2025/26, the outcomes at Stage 1 were as follows:

- **8 were upheld (42%)**
- **4 were partially upheld (21%)**
- **7 were not upheld (37%)**

The two Stage 2 complaints were reviewed by Heads of Department who had not previously been involved in the cases:

- **One complaint was partially upheld**
- **One complaint was not upheld**

Following review, there were no changes to the original decisions.

One complaint from 2024/25 was escalated to the Housing Ombudsman Service during this year and, at the end of the reporting period, we were waiting for the case to be allocated to a caseworker. This complaint related to delays in carrying out repairs.

An **upheld complaint** means that we identified service failures and areas where we need to improve.

A **partially upheld complaint** means that there were some service failures or areas for improvement, but there were also areas where policies and procedures had been followed correctly.

A **not upheld complaint** means that the investigation found no service failures.

Timelines and Complaint Handling Code of Practice

The Trust completed an annual self-assessment against the Housing Ombudsman Complaints Handling Code and, at the date of this report, assessed itself as fully compliant. The self-assessment has been reviewed and approved in line with Code requirements and is published separately alongside this report.

We aim to respond to complaints within the timescales set out in the statutory Complaint Handling Code, namely 10 working days at Stage 1 and 20 working days at Stage 2, with extensions only applied where permitted and communicated clearly to residents.

Complaints Stage	Number of Complaints	Number Responded to within Target	% Responded to within Target
Stage 1	19	17	89.5%
Stage 2	2	2	100%
TOTAL	**21**	**19**	**90.5%**

- At Stage 1, 17 of 19 complaints (89.5%) were responded to within the target timescale of 10 working days
- Two Stage 1 complaints were responded to outside the target. These cases were all received in the first half of the year, and the delays highlighted the need for stronger tracking and oversight arrangements
- In response, we strengthened complaints monitoring and reporting during the year. As a result, from October 2025 to March 2026, all complaint responses were issued within target timescales
- At Stage 2, both complaints were responded to within the target timescale of 20 working days

Lessons Learned and Service Improvements

We are committed to learning from complaints and using resident feedback to improve our services. We have used feedback from complaints to identify specific service improvements. Key actions taken during the year include:

- Launching a new text messaging service so we can provide updates to residents quickly in the event of emergencies or service failures
- Expanding the Caretaker and Security team to provide an on-site presence seven days a week until 10pm
- Appointing a named Complaints Officer to improve oversight and provide residents with a consistent point of contact
- Engaging TPAS to investigate a complex complaint relating to employee conduct and to help rebuild trust with a resident
- Developing an Unacceptable Behaviour Policy to set out clear guidance on how the Trust will respond to unacceptable behaviour
- Updating our Anti-Social Behaviour Policy to improve clarity around the definition of ASB, how cases are managed and the support available to victims
- Delivering comprehensive customer service training for all employees during early 2026
- Implementing a new Damp and Mould Policy in line with the requirements of Awaab's Law, supported by additional training for the Property Team
- Launching a programme to improve loft insulation and installing new insulation in more than 200 homes, prioritising homes with lower EPC ratings
- Offering surveys to all residents with infra-red heating systems to assess efficiency, provide guidance on system use and identify any improvement works required
- Creating a Resident Readership Panel and Resident Voice Panel to involve residents in decision-making, policy reviews and service improvements

These actions are aimed at addressing the root causes of complaints and improving both service quality and resident confidence.

We continue to share lessons learned through resident engagement sessions, newsletters and other communications so residents can see how complaints and feedback influence service improvements.

Our Focus for the Year Ahead

We are committed to dealing with complaints from residents fairly and ensuring we learn from complaints and resident feedback to continually improve our services.

In the year ahead, we will focus on addressing the key themes identified through complaints and strengthening service quality. Our priorities are:

a. Completing a Stock Condition Survey of All Residential Dwellings
This will help us prioritise our asset management programme and future investment in residents' homes.

b. Improving Energy Efficiency in Our Homes
We will continue the loft insulation improvement programme and work with Elmbridge Borough Council to secure planning permission for a replacement window programme.

In addition, we will commission a Heating Strategy to establish a clear and prioritised investment roadmap for heating systems over the short, medium and long term.

c. Reviewing the I'm Okay Service
We will work with residents to review the I'm Okay service and consider whether alternative services may better meet residents' needs.

d. Reviewing the Out of Hours Service
We will carry out a review of the out of hours service to ensure it meets the needs of residents and the Trust and provides good value for money.

e. Continuing Policy Reviews
We will continue reviewing key policies to ensure services remain compliant, resident-focused and easy to understand.

f. Strengthening Resident Scrutiny
We will ensure the Resident Voice Panel provides effective scrutiny of performance and meaningful input into service improvements and decision-making.

We will continue to monitor complaints performance closely and use resident feedback, complaints and engagement activity to improve services and strengthen trust with residents across Whiteley Village.