



Wigan[♥]
Council

Housing Complaints Performance and Trends 2025/26

1. Executive Summary

This report provides an overview of housing complaints received between 1 April 2025 and 31 March 2026, highlighting key trends, service performance and the actions taken in response to customer feedback. Complaint data has been drawn from the JADU complaints management system and analysed through Power BI dashboards to support performance monitoring, transparency and continuous improvement.

Complaints play a vital role in helping Housing Services understand the experiences of tenants and identify opportunities to improve services. They provide valuable insight into where things have gone wrong, where customer expectations have not been met and where systems, processes or communication can be strengthened. Throughout the year, complaint learning has informed service improvements, supported accountability and helped ensure that the tenant voice remains central to decision making.

This approach reflects the Council's Progress with Unity principles and ways of working, placing residents at the heart of service delivery, listening to feedback, working collaboratively to resolve issues and using insight to drive positive change. Through ongoing engagement with tenants, scrutiny by tenant groups and regular performance reporting, Housing Services continues to strengthen its commitment to openness, co-regulation and continuous improvement.

Key findings indicate a small increase in overall complaint volumes, seasonal peaks in heating-related complaints and a high proportion of complaints that were upheld or partially upheld. Whilst this highlights areas where services have fallen short of customer expectations, it also demonstrates a culture of accountability and a willingness to learn from complaints. The report identifies key improvement themes and recommendations aimed at further improving service delivery, improving customer satisfaction and reducing the need for complaint escalation in the future.

2. Regulatory and Service Context

Housing complaints continue to play an important role in driving service improvement and accountability. The introduction of the Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023 and the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code has placed greater emphasis on transparency, learning from complaints and demonstrating how resident feedback influences service delivery. Housing providers are expected not only to respond effectively to complaints, but also to use complaint insights to improve services and outcomes for tenants.

During 2025/26 Housing Services continued to strengthen its complaints arrangements through ongoing development of the JADU complaints management system, enhanced governance arrangements and regular performance reporting. The service has also worked closely with the Housing Ombudsman to review policies and processes, ensuring continued alignment with the Complaint Handling Code and embedding a culture of continuous improvement.

The strengthened complaints framework supports greater scrutiny and oversight through regular reporting to senior management, the Housing Advisory Panel and tenant groups. The Tenant Complaints Focus Group continues to play an active role in reviewing complaint performance, scrutinising complaint responses and shaping improvements to policies and procedures. This approach supports co-regulation and helps ensure that tenants remain central to service development and decision-making.

3. Housing Complaints

In April 2024, the Council introduced the JADU complaints management system, which now handles the majority of Stage 1 complaints received across Housing Services. Prior to its implementation, housing complaints were recorded using a combination of the housing management system and manual spreadsheets. This approach made reporting and performance monitoring more challenging, resulting in a fragmented and inefficient process.

The introduction of JADU has provided a more streamlined and consistent approach to complaint management, improving the recording, tracking and reporting of complaints across the service.

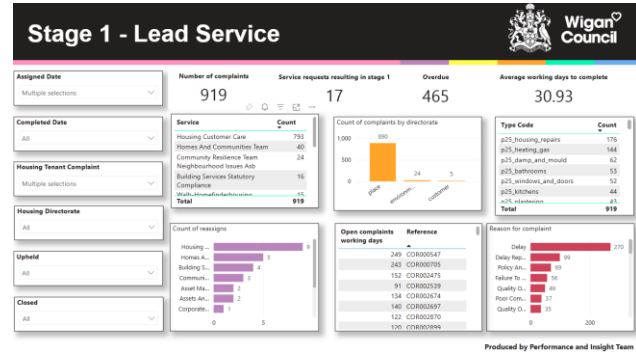
As this is now the second full year of operating under the JADU system, meaningful year-on-year comparisons can be made. This enables analysis of trends in complaint volumes, complaint categories, service areas receiving complaints, and complaint resolution times.

To support performance monitoring and data analysis, a Power BI dashboard has been developed. The dashboard provides visualisation of live complaint data held within JADU, enabling Housing Services to monitor performance, identify emerging trends, and generate key management information to inform service improvements.

4. Dashboard

Power BI dashboards provide a dynamic and interactive way to present data, using charts, lists, and summaries rather than traditional report or spreadsheet formats.

These dashboards enable the generation of key statistics and support in-depth analysis, offering valuable insights into performance and trends.



5. Housing Complaints Analysis

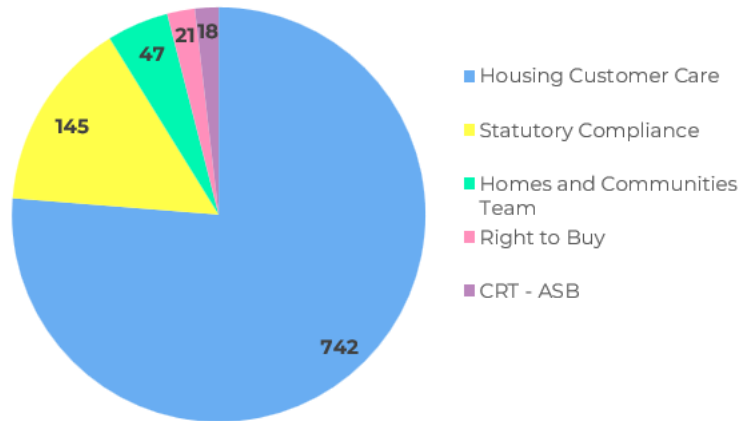
This report covers the period from 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026. During this period:

- A total of 1,023 Stage 1 housing complaints were received, representing an increase compared with the previous year.
- Of these, 178 complaints were escalated to Stage 2. This is the second consecutive year in which Stage 2 complaints have increased, rising from 102 cases in the previous year. The introduction of the JADU system has made it easier for customers to request an escalation from Stage 1 to Stage 2, which may have contributed to some of the increase in volumes.

Of the 178 Stage 2 complaints received, Repairs, Maintenance and Compliance accounted for 126 cases (70%), compared with 80% in the previous year, indicating a reduction in the proportion of Stage 2 complaints relating to these service areas.

6.Complaints By Service

The chart below shows the services in receipt of the highest number of complaints.



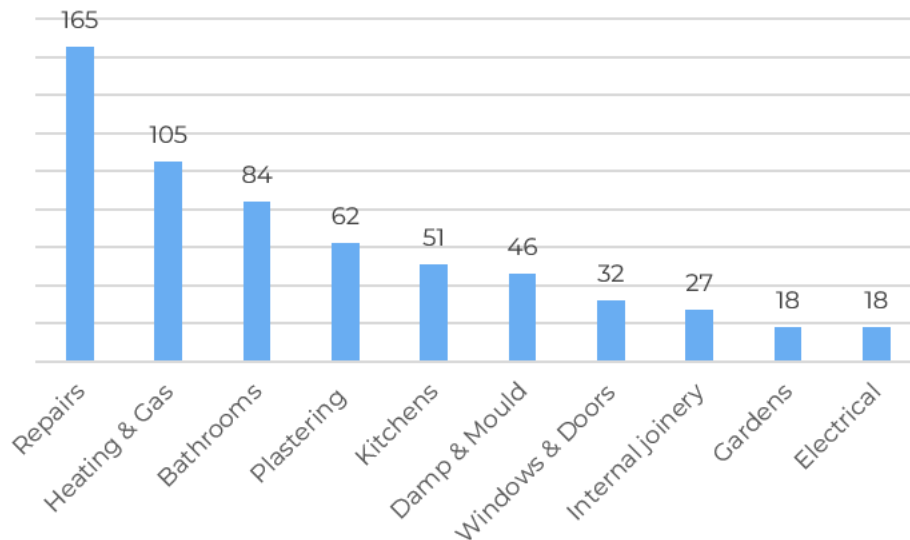
The Housing Customer Care Team, which serves as the primary point of contact for all repair and maintenance-related complaints, managed 742 complaints during the year, compared with 778 in the previous year. This represents a reduction of 36 complaints and accounts for 72.5% of all complaints received.

Complaints relating to Statutory Compliance increased significantly, rising from 22 cases in the previous year to 145 this year. This increase reflects both a genuine rise in complaint volumes and changes to the way these complaints are classified and recorded.

Most complaints continue to arise from services that have frequent and ongoing interaction with tenants. For example, almost 60,000 repairs were completed in occupied properties during the year, with each repair typically involving two or three points of contact between the tenant and the Council. In addition, almost 20,000 properties require an annual gas safety inspection. While many of these inspections and repairs are completed successfully, issues can occasionally occur that lead to a complaint being raised.

7.Complaints handled by the Customer Care Team

The top ten categories of complaints received by the Housing Customer Care team are as follows:



Due to changes introduced earlier in the year to improve the accuracy of complaint recording, Heating and Gas complaints were recorded under two service areas: Housing Customer Care, which received 109 complaints (105 plus a further 4 recorded under separate categories), and Building Services Statutory Compliance, which received 148 complaints. This gives a combined total of 257 Heating and Gas-related complaints, representing an increase of 95 complaints compared with the previous year.

Alongside these changes in recording practices, there has also been a change to the complaints handling process. All Heating and Gas complaints are now managed directly by the Council rather than by the contractor. This approach ensures that all tenant complaints are handled consistently, follow the same procedures and timescales, and are managed in line with the requirements of the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code.

8.Complaint Trends

Enhanced data recording in JADU has enabled a better understanding of seasonal trends in complaint volumes. The Power BI dashboard allows for targeted analysis across various parameters, such as time periods, service areas, and complaint statuses.

For example, complaints related to Gas and Heating services averaged 37 per quarter during the first half of the year, rising sharply to 96 in Quarter 3 and 85 in Quarter 4, which is comparable to the trend last year. This increase is likely

attributable to seasonal factors, as colder weather typically leads to higher usage of heating systems. Boilers and heating units that may have been inactive during warmer months are brought back into operation, which can reveal faults or performance issues.

Additionally, the winter period places increased demand on contractors, potentially affecting response times and service delivery. These pressures can contribute to a rise in complaints and should be considered as part of ongoing service planning and contract management.

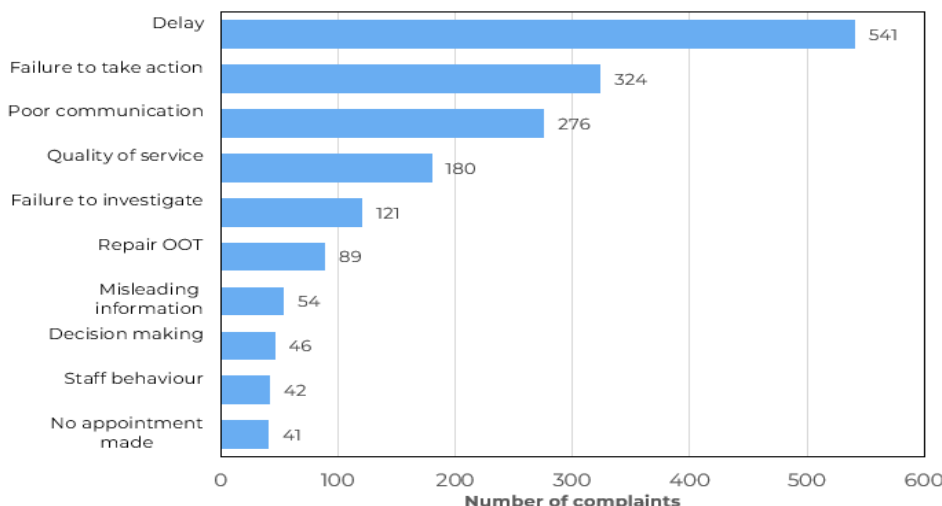
9.Reasons For Complaints

While complaint volumes have increased during the year, this should be considered in the context of high service demand across Housing Services. Repairs and maintenance teams completed approximately 60,000 repairs to occupied properties during the year, while almost 20,000 homes required annual gas safety inspections. These services involve frequent interaction with tenants and therefore naturally generate a higher proportion of complaints when service delivery falls below customer expectations.

Increased complaint volumes can also reflect greater accessibility and awareness of the complaints process. The introduction of JADU has made it easier for customers to raise concerns and monitor progress, whilst greater promotion of tenant rights and complaint routes has encouraged customers to provide feedback where service standards have not been met.

Many complaints are nuanced and personal to each individual, and in some cases span multiple service areas. To identify broader patterns, we analyse complaints based on their primary theme. The chart below illustrates the main complaint categories.

Due to differences in how the new IT system captures complaint reasons, direct comparisons with previous years are limited. However, several recurring themes remain evident - particularly those related to repairs and maintenance.



Delay continues to be the most frequently cited reason for complaints, with 541 complaints recorded this year compared to 266 last year. – an increase of 275 when compared to last year. Of these, 394 complaints (73%) were associated with delays in repairs and maintenance, and 86 with statutory compliance – heating, hot water etc.

Other services receiving complaints about delays included:

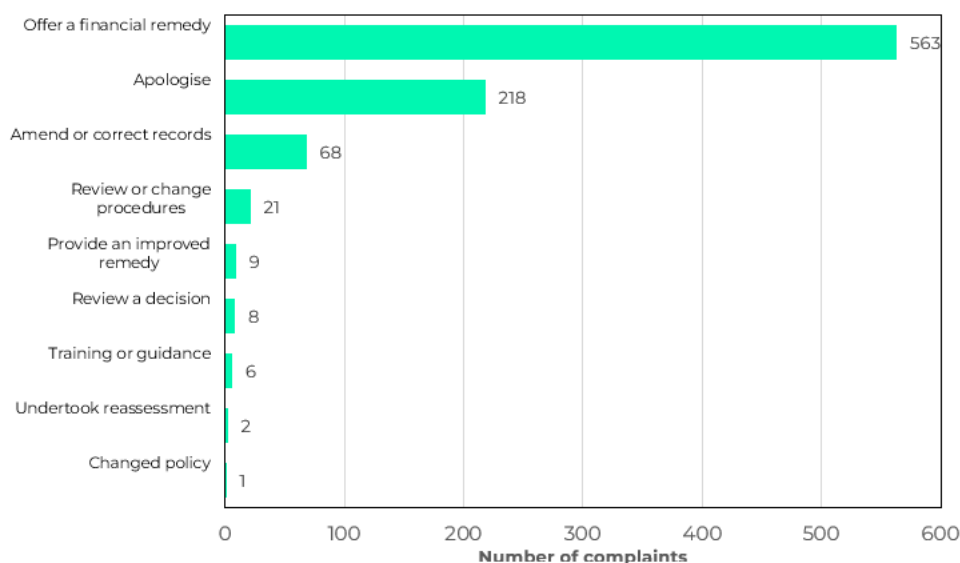
- Right to Buy - 21 complaints compared to 5 last year
- Homes and Communities Team - 16 complaints
- Community Resilience Team - Anti-Social Behaviour: 10 complaints
- Asset Management - 4 complaints

The “Delay – Repair out of target” reason narrows the complaint reason down even further and relates specifically to those repairs not completed within their target date. Of the 89 complaints, 74 were in relation to repairs and 15 for statutory compliance.

Failure to do something was the next highest-ranking category with 324 complaints, with 214 complaints assigned to Housing Customer Care and 54 to statutory compliance. As stated earlier in the report these services have high number of interactions with tenants so it stands to reason that they would have the highest complaint volumes.

10. Corrective Actions

Once a complaint has been resolved, the resolution method is documented as a corrective action. This data can then be used to generate statistical reports and insights.



11. Top Three Corrective Actions

Financial Remedies – this year 563 cases resulted in compensation awards, indicating a significant service failure or adverse impact on residents. This represents an increase of 495 cases compared with the previous year. A total of just under £63,555 was paid in compensation. This is the first year that compensation payment data has been available within the dashboard, and therefore no comparative financial data is available. The three most common complaint categories that resulted in compensation payments were:

- Heating, gas and hot water: £31,022 across 178 cases
- Housing repairs: £9,756 across 94 cases
- Bathrooms: £5,837 across 57 cases

Apology (218 instances) - the second most common response, demonstrating a strong emphasis on acknowledging faults and maintaining customer relations. Many complaints were resolved through recognition of error rather than procedural or financial changes. However, the number of apologies highlights the need to learn from mistakes and to stop them from recurring.

Record Amendments - 68 complaints led to updates or corrections in tenant or service records. This demonstrates a focus on data accuracy and administrative follow-up.

12. Upheld Complaints - Key Insights:

Q1 and Q2 recorded the lowest number of complaints, with 194 and 209 respectively. Of these, 144 complaints in Q1 and 157 in Q2 were upheld, representing 74% and 75% respectively.

Q3 recorded the highest volume of complaints at 318 and the highest number of upheld complaints at 251, equating to 79% of all complaints received.

In Q4, the number of complaints fell slightly to 302, with upheld complaints reducing to 232. However, the proportion upheld remained high at 77%.

Across the year, 76% of complaints were upheld, compared with 70% in the previous year. While this indicates that a significant proportion of complaints raised by tenants were substantiated, it also reflects the Council's open and transparent approach to complaint handling. Housing Services actively encourages feedback and seeks to resolve concerns fairly, recognising where service standards have fallen short and taking responsibility where appropriate.

A high uphold rate should therefore be considered in the context of a positive complaint handling culture, where the focus is on listening to tenants,

acknowledging mistakes, putting things right and identifying opportunities for improvement, rather than defending decisions unnecessarily. Complaints provide valuable insight into the customer experience, enabling services to understand recurring issues, strengthen processes and deliver lasting improvements for tenants. Learning from complaints continues to be embedded across Housing Services through performance monitoring, service reviews and improvement activity, supporting the Council's commitment to transparency, accountability and continuous improvement.

The consistently high uphold rate reinforces the importance of maintaining a strong focus on service quality, early resolution and learning from customer feedback, ensuring that complaints are used as a catalyst for improving both customer experience and service outcomes.

13. Performance

Tenants are actively encouraged to raise complaints therefore it is essential that we demonstrate these complaints are managed efficiently and effectively. This is achieved by closely monitoring the performance of the teams responsible for managing them.

Our analysis includes:

- The number of complaints allocated to each service area
- Identification of seasonal trends, as previously outlined
- The volume of complaints closed
- Timeliness of complaint resolution, including whether extensions were required
- Whether the original complaint was upheld

This approach ensures transparency and accountability, while also supporting continuous improvement in service delivery.

The table below shows how we performed over the year.

Measure	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Total
Complaints closed	194	209	318	302	1023
Number in time	130	156	234	180	700
% in time	67%	74.6%	73.6%	59.6%	68.4%
Out of time	64	53	84	122	323
Avg days taken to close	26	20.7	24.5	23.4	23.7

14. Key Insights

The complaints performance data shows a significant increase in complaint volumes during the second half of the year, alongside challenges in maintaining response times and target compliance.

Q1 recorded the lowest number of complaints at 194. Of these, 130 were completed within target timescales, giving an in-time performance rate of 67%. A total of 64 complaints were closed late, and the average time taken to close a complaint was 26 days, the highest average closure time recorded during the year.

In Q2, complaint increased slightly to 209. Performance improved notably, with 156 complaints completed within timescales, resulting in the highest in-time completion rate of the year at 74.6%. The number of late cases reduced to 53, the lowest quarterly figure, while the average closure time fell to 20.7 days, demonstrating a more efficient complaint handling process.

There was a significant increase in complaints recorded in Q3, rising from 209 in Q2 to 318. As noted earlier in the report, some complaints can be attributed to faults or service delays that tend to occur seasonally, such as heating system failures. These seasonal issues appear to have had a negative impact on complaint levels during this quarter.

Q4 recorded a slight reduction in complaints to 302, but performance against timescales declined significantly. Only 59.6% of complaints were closed within target, the lowest level of the year, while 122 cases were completed late, representing the highest number of overdue complaints across all quarters. Although the average closure time improved slightly to 23.4 days compared with Q3, timeliness performance remained a significant area of concern.

Across the year, 1,023 complaints were closed, with 700 completed within target timescales, resulting in an overall compliance rate of 68.4%. The average time taken to close complaints was 23.7 days. While performance was strongest during Q2 and remained relatively resilient throughout Q3 despite increased demand, the deterioration in Q4 had a notable impact on overall results.

15. Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs) – Complaint Handling Results

The figures in the table below have been reported as part of the Tenant Satisfaction Measures housing management indicators.

Measure	2023/24 Result	2024/25 Result	2025/26 Result	Diff +/-
Satisfaction with complaints handling	33%	37%	39.8%	+2.8%
Number of Stage 1 complaints received per 1000 homes	45.7	43.4	48.2	+4.8
Number of Stage 2 complaints received per 1000 homes	0.9	4.8	8.4	+3.6
Proportion of Stage 1 complaints resolved within timescales.	14.1%	48.6%	68.4%	+19.8%
Proportion of Stage 2 complaints resolved within timescales.	68.4%	39.2%	34.8%	-4.4%

The year-on-year performance data presents a mixed picture, showing continued improvements in some key areas of complaint handling, alongside increasing complaint volumes and ongoing challenges in resolving escalated complaints within target timescales.

Satisfaction with complaints handling has improved steadily over the three-year period, increasing from 33% in 2023/24 to 37% in 2024/25 and reaching 39.8% in 2025/26. The 2.8% increase during the year indicates that tenants are becoming more positive about their experience of the complaints process, reflecting improvements in service delivery and complaint management.

The number of Stage 1 complaints received per 1,000 homes increased from 43.4 in 2024/25 to 48.2 in 2025/26, an increase of 4.8 complaints per 1000 homes. This reverses the slight reduction seen in the previous year and may indicate either increased service demand, greater willingness to raise concerns, or improved awareness and accessibility of the complaints process.

Stage 2 complaints have continued to rise significantly, increasing from 4.8 to 8.4 complaints per 1,000 homes during the year. This represents a 75% increase and

follows a substantial rise from 0.9 in 2023/24. The continued growth in escalated complaints suggests that more customers are seeking further review of their concerns, which may indicate increasing customer expectations or challenges in achieving resolution at Stage 1. It is worth noting that tenants are able to escalate their Stage 1 complaint to a Stage 2 complaint in the JADU complaints handling system at any stage of the process, which could account for the increase in Stage 2 complaints since the system was introduced.

Performance in resolving Stage 1 complaints within target timescales has improved considerably over the three-year period. Timeliness increased from 14.1% in 2023/24 to 48.6% in 2024/25 and further to 68.4% in 2025/26. The 19.8% improvement during the year is particularly significant and demonstrates substantial progress in complaint handling efficiency and responsiveness.

In contrast, Stage 2 performance has continued to decline. The proportion of Stage 2 complaints resolved within timescales fell from 39.2% in 2024/25 to 34.8% in 2025/26, a decrease of 4.4 percentage points. This follows a significant deterioration from 68.4% in 2023/24. Again, it is worth noting that Stage 2 complaints are handled by a central team, who also handle all of the Stage 2 complaints received by the Council.

Overall, the data suggests that significant progress has been made in handling Stage 1 complaints, with improvements in customer satisfaction and timeliness despite higher complaint volumes. However, the continued increase in Stage 2 complaints and declining Stage 2 performance highlights a key area for improvement.

16. Learning From Complaints

Housing Services recognises that complaints provide valuable insight into the customer experience and help identify opportunities for improvement. Throughout 2025/26, complaint themes and trends have been routinely reviewed through governance arrangements and learning reviews to ensure that lessons are captured and acted upon.

Key areas of learning identified during the year included delays in repairs and maintenance, communication with tenants, record accuracy and the management of heating and gas related services. In response, Housing Services has strengthened monitoring arrangements, reviewed internal processes and improved complaint reporting capabilities through the JADU system and Power BI dashboard.

Learning from complaints is shared across service areas and informs service improvement activity, staff training and performance management

arrangements. This supports the Council's commitment to improving service quality, increasing customer satisfaction and reducing repeat service failures.

The service also benefits from independent tenant scrutiny through its Complaints Focus Group. The group regularly reviews complaints performance data, complaint response letters and complaints policies and procedures, providing constructive challenge and helping to hold the service to account. Members bring valuable lived experience insight, ask questions and sense check proposed changes, ensuring that complaint handling remains transparent, customer-focused and responsive to tenant expectations. Feedback from the group informs ongoing service improvements and strengthens Housing Services' approach to learning from complaints.

To support continuous improvement, the Council is implementing a structured Lessons Learned Review Programme that uses complaints, Ombudsman determinations, tenant feedback, councillor enquiries and performance information to identify root causes, embed learning and monitor improvement through established governance arrangements.

Moving forward, we will be incorporating compliments into this performance report. A further report is due to go to Housing Advisory Panel later this year pulling together all learning from complaints and compliments, along with other insights.

17. Recommendations

Despite increasing complaint volumes and rising customer expectations, Housing Services has continued to improve its complaint handling arrangements during 2025/26. Improvements in Stage 1 response performance, stronger governance arrangements, stronger tenant scrutiny and continued investment in complaints systems have provided a solid foundation for ongoing improvement.

However, the rise in Stage 2 complaints, the high uphold rate and challenges in maintaining response times during periods of peak demand demonstrate that further work remains necessary to improve service outcomes and customer experience.

- i. Continue monitoring seasonal complaint trends to anticipate service pressures.
- ii. Provide additional training and guidance to staff based on complaint themes.
- iii. Improve data accuracy and record-keeping to reduce administrative errors.

- iv. Evaluate the cost-effectiveness of financial remedies and explore alternatives.
- v. Further develop early resolution strategies to reduce upheld complaint rates.