

Governing Body Response to the 2025-26 Annual Report

The Board was pleased to note that the Regulatory Inspection of 2025 praised the work in progress to overhaul the complaints handling culture at PA Housing. This work has continued over the past 12 months, contributing to our journey to reach the highest Consumer Standards grading as confirmed by the Regulator in September 2026. Actively putting residents first and driving accountability back into the operational services is a core ambition; but this has to be underpinned by improvements to our reporting and insight in order to strengthen scrutiny and learning.

The steps we've taken, outlined in the Annual Performance and Service Improvement Report for the year, give confidence that we are progressing down this road, although there is still work required, to address the timeliness of responses in particular. The infrastructure put in place over the past year now gives us the platform needed to build from.

As PA Housing's Chair and Member Responsible for Complaints, we will ensure that the Board receives assurance that our complaints framework continues to serve both the organisation and our residents as we face significant challenges across the sector in the year ahead.

Delivering the necessary service improvements to prevent complaints, through our strengthened Business Improvement function, will be central to further stabilisation and delivering complaints handling performance fully in line with the Housing Ombudsman's expectations.

At a headline level, 2025/26 saw a 46% volume increase in Ombudsman determinations. The percentage of adverse determinations remained materially unchanged despite this significant increase in volume, reflecting the improvements we have been working to embed.

The Board is particularly interested to review the targeted interventions and service improvements delivered at local level, in the hearts of our communities. The 2% of residents making up 35% of our complaint caseload will require further focus to address issues and rebuild trust. This will remain a priority into 2026/27 and beyond. It is also reassuring to see residents being involved in shaping and monitoring services, and their feedback being used to good effect.

The vast majority of our residents engage with us positively and appropriately, even when they are unhappy about our service provision. In a small minority of cases though, our people are subjected to abusive behaviour, sometimes of an extreme nature. As a Board we actively support PA Housing's "It's Not OK" initiative which is designed to tackle this growing problem throughout the sector. Where needed we will also respectfully challenge Ombudsman determinations if we feel that the impact on our colleagues through abusive behaviour has not been fully recognised.

Overall conclusion

The report shows meaningful progress in governance, data quality, resident involvement and organisational learning. The fall in Stage 2 escalation is positive, and the organisation now has stronger tools for identifying and addressing recurring problems. Nevertheless, late responses, high upheld rates in core operational services, increasing Ombudsman determinations and concentrated repeat complaints demonstrate that residents are not yet consistently receiving the required standard of service. The central priority for 2026/27 is therefore to turn the new structures and insights into **faster resolutions, clearer communication and fewer repeated service failures**.

Suki Kalirai, Chair

Kim Francis, Board Member and Member Responsible for Complaints