

Annual Compliant Handling Code Self-Assessment 2024/2025



Governing Body's Response

In the 2024/25 financial year, we began a transformation of our complaints service—an important step that directly supports the ambitions set out in PA Housing's Corporate Plan 2024–2029. In working to improve how we handle complaints, we are actively putting people first, driving better services, and strengthening the organisation. This work is helping to build a more open and accountable culture, where residents' voices are not only heard but used to shape change. It also contributes to other priorities in the plan: improving service quality, using resources wisely, engaging communities, and applying insight and innovation to solve problems and prevent them from recurring. How we respond to our residents' complaints is a core component of delivering in line with our values and making our long-term vision a reality.

The transformation started from May 2024 with new leadership and a diagnostic phase, which led to targeted changes to strengthen the service. We've introduced clearer accountability, improved controls, and strengthened our quality assurance framework throughout the business. Importantly, responsibility for resolving complaints now sits with the teams closest to the issue, with support from a central team of technical complaints experts and focused roles for handling complex or cross-functional cases. This structure is helping to deliver more consistent, higher-quality responses and is starting to strengthen and develop our learning culture across the business.

This approach has started to deliver meaningful results. Complaints are being handled more effectively, and insights from complaints are feeding into service design to prevent issues recurring. As a result, the complaints function now plays a much more visible and strategic role within PA. It helps us stay accountable, build trust, and drive meaningful improvements that matter to residents.

There's still more to do, but the Board has seen evidence to demonstrate that we are on the right track and making clear progress. Our Tenant Satisfaction Measures scores for complaints handling have risen, albeit still lower than we want them to be, and our maladministration rate with the Housing Ombudsman Service has fallen. These are positive signs that residents are beginning to see and feel the difference. The right infrastructure is now in place to keep building on this momentum.

At the same time, we acknowledge that challenges remain. At PA, complaint volumes have increased by over 60% in the past year, placing pressure on our teams and, at times, causing delays. This mirrors wider sector trends. The Housing Ombudsman has reported a 474% increase in complaints about poor living conditions since 2019/20, with repairs now accounting for 45% of its workload. As more residents escalate their dissatisfaction, this leads to additional investigations, compliance orders, and requests for information, which directly affect landlord capacity. In response, we've created a dedicated team to manage Ombudsman enquiries and determinations. This is another example of how we are adapting to meet growing expectations and sustain improvements in resident experience. Complaints remains a high priority across our governance structure, with regular reporting and scrutiny at both Board and Customer Committee levels. Our Member Responsible for Complaints, Kim Francis, plays a central role in this. Kim brings both

professional expertise in customer experience and valuable lived experience as a PA resident, ensuring complaints oversight remains grounded, proportionate, and resident-focused.

In 2024/25, we also welcomed two independent reviews of our complaints service; one by BDO, focusing on compliance and assurance, and another by our resident-led Service Improvement Panel, providing scrutiny from the perspective of those who are taken through our complaints process. Their feedback has been constructive and insightful. The Service Improvement Panel's findings were presented directly to our Customer Committee, giving Board members first-hand insight into what matters most to residents. We are already acting on their recommendations, with a built-in review process to ensure delivery of the agreed changes and improvements.

Looking ahead, with Awaab's Law coming into effect from October 2025, we and the wider housing sector anticipate further increases in complaint volumes and resident demands, particularly around housing conditions and repairs. Thanks to the improvements made last year, we believe we are now in a stronger and more resilient position to manage this rising demand. The refined structures, clearer accountability, and specialist resources we have put in place will better enable us to respond effectively and maintain a high standard of service as these new regulatory requirements come into force.

We will also be migrating to a new and improved complaints management IT system during 2025/26, which will deliver improved analytics and reporting capability as part of our improvement journey.

Underpinning all this, we continue to focus on the root causes so that residents feel less need to complain in the first case. Over the past couple of years our investment decisions have included a doubling in the size of our Neighbourhood Coordinators team to increase visibility and responsiveness on the ground, creation of a new Contracts and Partnerships team to hold estate contractors and managing agents to account more forcefully, and provision to invest an additional £10m per annum into our property improvements programme to drive up quality and reduce responsive repairs volumes.

The foundations are now in place to continue this positive direction, with performance, learning, and resident outcomes at the core of our approach. While we recognise there is still much further to go, the improvements made so far are meaningful and demonstrate what can be achieved when we listen, act, and stay committed to continuous improvement and getting things right.



Suki Kalirai
On behalf of the PA Housing Board

26 June 2024