



# **NLM Housing Association**

## **Annual Complaints Performance and Service Improvement report**

### **2024 - 2025**

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## Background

The Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023 (the Act) empowered the Housing Ombudsman to issue a code of practice about the procedures members of the Scheme should have in place for considering complaints. With these increased powers the Ombudsman also has a duty to monitor compliance with the code.

Landlords from April 2024 will now need to ensure they have a complaints policy that complies and procedures that comply with the code. To evaluate compliance all landlords must now show that it has scrutinised and challenged the compliance.

Therefore, NLM will produce an annual complaints performance and service improvement report with the oversight and commentary of the board.

## Purpose

This report summarises NLM's performance and learning from resident complaint during the period April 2024 – March 2025. This includes all complaints, for all departments covering stage 1, stage 2 and from the Ombudsman.

At NLM we recognise the importance of using the information we gather from our customers, and we are constantly striving to improve our services, and we welcome complaints, comments and compliments.

Effectively managing complaints goes beyond procedures and deadlines—it is deeply rooted in our organisational culture, as well as the behaviours and attitudes we uphold. We are committed to resolving complaints swiftly and efficiently while implementing necessary improvements and changes.

We empower our staff to approach complaints constructively, seeing them as opportunities to quickly address concerns, foster positive relationships with customers, and gain valuable insights for continuous learning and growth.

Our complaint policy has a two-stage complaint handling process with reasonable timescales to ensure complaints are handled in an efficient and fair way. This can be found at:

<https://www.nlmha.com/policies-and-procedures/>

As part of the review into complaints NLM has carried out analysis of the number and nature of complaints as well as assessed its compliance against Ombudsman's The self-assessment form, which is at the end of this report.

NLM also has a duty to report our performance on complaints through our governance arrangements and publish a copy of the annual complaints report on our website.

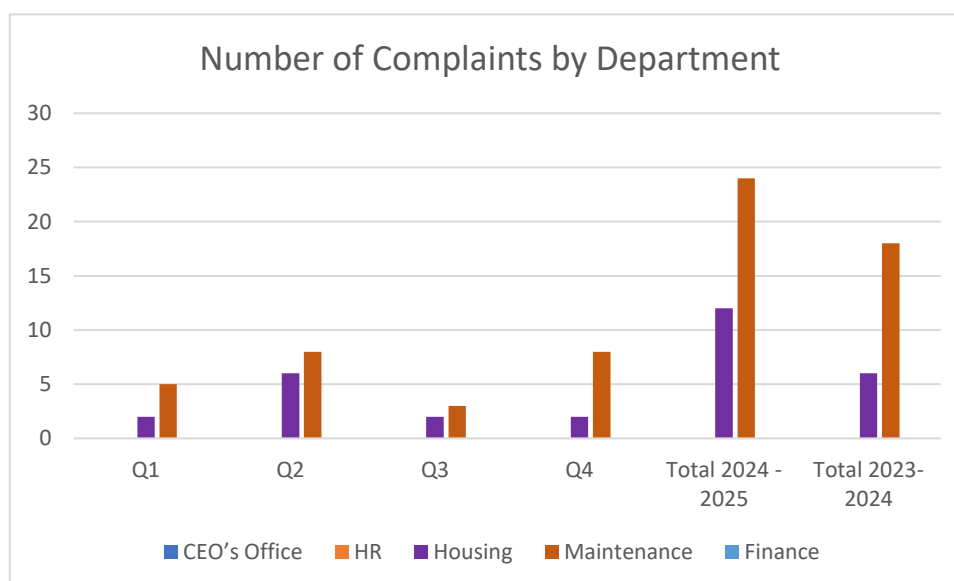
## 1 Performance

The overall number of complaints are categorised by department and highlighted below. In the year there have been a total of 36 complaints, 12 of which were for Housing Management and 24 for the maintenance department. There have been no complaints received for CEO's department, HR or finance.

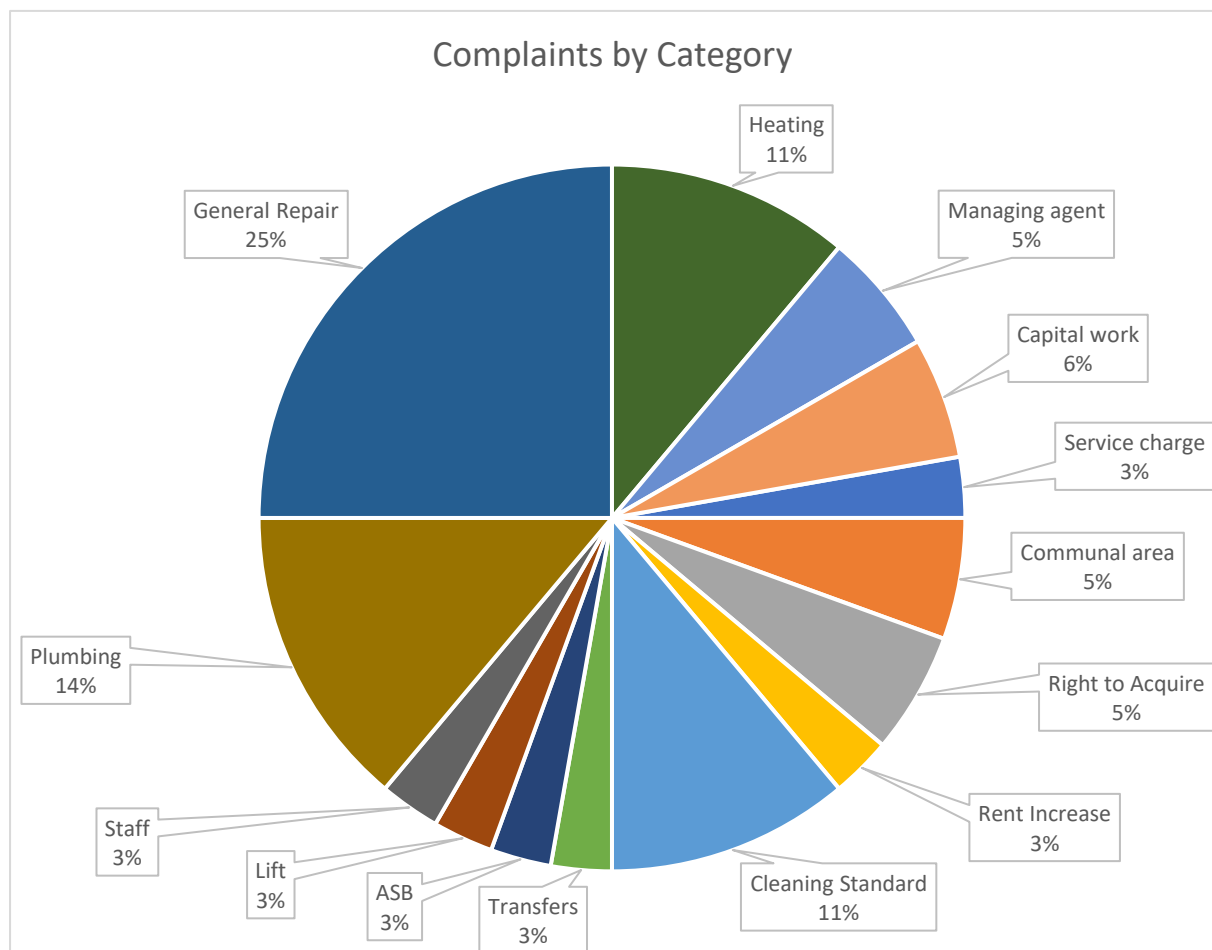
## 1.1 Department

Department	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Total (2024 - 2025)	Total (2023 - 2024)
CEO's Office	0	0	0	0	0	0
HR	0	0	0	0	0	0
Housing	2	6	2	2	12	6
Maintenance	5	8	3	8	24	18
Finance	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	7	14	5	10	36	24

Overall, the number of complaints received by NLM has increased. The housing department has seen an increase in the number of complaints in the cleanliness of estates and this has been addressed. The Repairs service has also seen an increase in complaints, in particular because of repair requests being denied for repairs which are tenants' obligations.

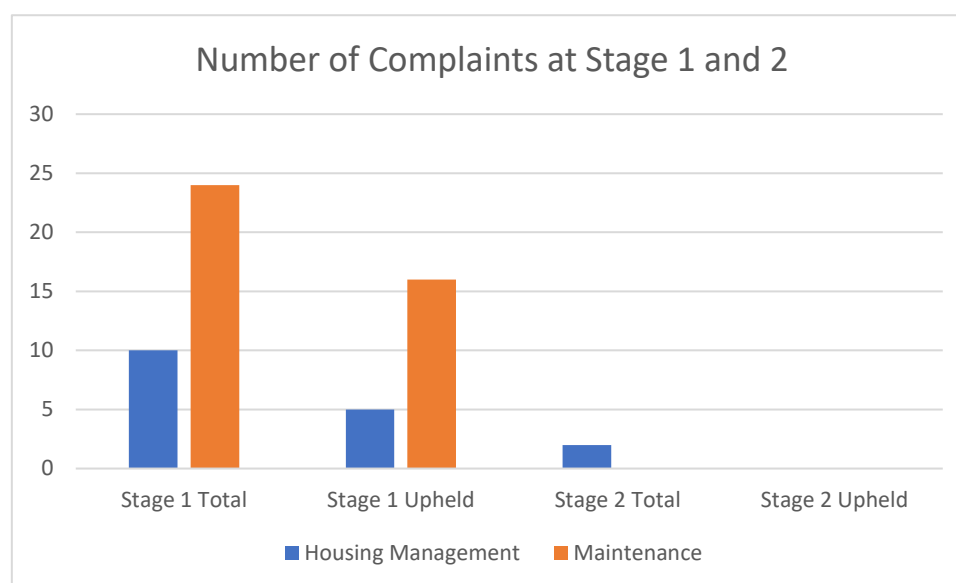


## 1.2 Category of Complaint



### 1.3 Complaint Results

Department	Stage 1 Total	Stage 1 Upheld	Stage 2 Total	Stage 2 Upheld
Housing Management	10	5	2	0
Maintenance	24	16	0	0



Twenty-one complaints were upheld at stage 1. The nature of the upheld complaint details into three main themes; detailed below.

#### 1.3.1 Engagement with the Ombudsman

Three cases were taken to the ombudsman service by Tenants. All three cases were referred back to NLM to be dealt within its complaints process.

There were no decisions made or findings of fault by the Ombudsman service against NLM.

#### 1.3.2 Oversight of Complaints

All complaints are received into the Complaints mailbox, which is monitored by Directors and the CEO. Complaints are then allocated and monitored by the Director of the department to ensure they are actioned appropriately and within timescales.

A standing item on Weekly management meetings include the number of complaints as well as complaint casework.

The Committees and Board are updated with the number, nature and stage of complaints in the quarterly reports. The Board has also appointed a Complaints Champion to lead on the oversight of complaints.

### 1.3.3 Using insights from complaints to improve services

As NLM values its residents feedback, we have taken the approach of embracing complaints and learning from them. We have identified three main areas to improve our services and outlined some of actions below.

### 1.4 Complaint Themes

Theme of complaint	Examples of actions taken to improve services
Communal Area Cleaning	<p>NLM has put greater emphasis on neighbourhood inspections as we have two dedicated neighbourhood officers. We have reviewed the cleaning on our estates and have changed contractors on some of the sites.</p> <p>There is ongoing monitoring to assess improvements in the cleaning standard.</p>
Problems with Heat Network	<p>Many of our homes are part of heat networks, but NLM is not the owner and therefore has to liaise with external organisations to resolve heating issues.</p> <p>Where NLM is finding difficulty in resolving issues with third parties, NLM has used its own contractors to expedite resolutions to heating issues.</p> <p>We are also working with managing agents to meet services to agreed Service Level Agreements (SLA).</p>
Plumbing issues	<p>We have liaised with residents to make them aware of their repairs duties as well as NLMS. In many cases residents were not aware of their responsibilities on internal blockages. We have distributed Tenants handbooks to the residents as well giving them contact details of reputable companies who they can contact to resolve the issues.</p> <p>NLM also considers each case on its merits and helps those with specific needs.</p> <p>Overall, we are communicating more with our residents in disseminating tenancy and repairs information through various media such as phone calls, in writing, through our website and our new MyHome portal.</p>



# **Board response to Complaints Self-assessment and Annual Complaints Report - August 2025**

## **Background**

NLM Housing Association Board is publishing its response to the Association's Complaints Self-Assessment and Annual Complaints Report in line with the Housing Ombudsman Service's Complaint Handling Code April 2024.

## **Issues for consideration**

The Board welcomed the NLMHA Annual Complaints Report which reported in broad terms that actions identified in the self-assessment 2024 had been completed. Of note were:

- Need to improve response times at stage 1 and 2 complaints
- Clear learning identified from complaints which the Board were glad to see
- The previous year's Tenant Satisfaction Measures actions on complaints were completed (staff training and broadening the definition of a complaint).
- Minor improvements in Tenant Satisfaction Measures on Complaints Handling

The Housing and Assets committee noted the % completed in target time over 2024/25 was again lower than target in 3 of the 4 quarters, similar to 2023/24. The team will be much tighter on ensuring they do not wait until the deadline to respond, and the Housing and Assets Committee will press for improved performance.

There had been a 50% increase in complaints this year, but this is likely due to better identification of complaints and a greater awareness of how to make a complaint rather than any deterioration in service, which is welcome. Complaint issues have been quickly resolved e.g. cleanliness of estates in Summer 24. There have been no complaints dealt with by the Ombudsman.

Learning from complaints is clearly identified and acted upon, for instance we have increased inspections of communal areas in response to complaints about communal cleaning, and proactively distributed information about tenants' responsibilities as we experienced an increase in complaints about blocked pipes.

The Board is pleased to confirm that the role of Member Responsible for Complaints is being transferred to Ebrahim Rawat.