

## Complaints Handling 2024-25

In accordance with the Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling code EPIC must produce an annual complaints performance and service improvement report which is reported to EPIC'S governing body and published on the section of its website relating to complaints.

The governing body's response to the report must be published alongside this report for scrutiny and challenge, which must include:

- The annual self-assessment against this Code to ensure their complaint handling policy remains in line with its requirements.
- A qualitative and quantitative analysis of the landlord's complaint handling performance which is highlighted within this report.
- Any findings of non-compliance with this Code by the Ombudsman.
- The service improvements made as a result of the learning from complaints which is highlighted within this report.
- Any annual report about the landlord's performance the Ombudsman
- Any other relevant reports or publications produced by the Ombudsman in relation to the work of the landlord
- The annual complaints performance and service improvement report

Between April 2024 and March 2025, EPIC received a total of :

- 19 stage 1 complaints, with
- 5 of these being escalated to stage 2.
- EPIC has one ongoing case being investigated by the Housing Ombudsman. The Housing Ombudsman Service has been provided with all requested information and we are currently awaiting the outcome of their investigation.

The table below shares the number of complaints received between April 2024 and March 2025 and the period they were received.

Period	Stage 1	Stage 2	Ombudsman	Upheld	Not upheld
Apr-June 24	7	3	0	6	4
Jul-Sep 24	5	1	0	4	2
Oct-Dec 24	4	1	1	0	5
Jan-Mar 25	3	0	0	1	2
Total	19	5	1	11	13

## Annual Summary of Compliments and Complaints

EPIC is required as part of the complaints process to confirm with tenants whether or not complaints have been upheld, 52.6% of complaints were upheld at stage 1; 20% upheld at stage 2, The overall percentage of complaints upheld is 41.7%.

EPIC monitors complaints by Business Area as per the table below

From analysis of these complaints, it is evident that there is no particular theme or trend that would suggest that there is one specific area within either team or service area for EPIC to address. EPIC will continue to monitor the data analysis and if future trends do become apparent, will act accordingly to address them.

Complaints received by type/service areas	April 2024 – March 2025
Rent arrears	1
Repairs and Maintenance	8
Maintenance/Housing	4
Housing	8
Out of Hours Service	1
Conduct of contractor	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>24</b>

Complaints received have included issues relating to:

- Damaged double glazed units.
- Noise and disturbance from contractors.
- Damp and mould.
- Condition of garden.
- Anti-social behaviour.
- Fencing repair.
- Garden maintenance.

EPIC positively views complaints as beneficial information for improvement and continuous learning. Following feedback from complaints in 2024-25 EPIC made a number of changes to service delivery with further improvements planned. These include:

- Changes to Out of Hours call options and improved communication around a dedicated phone line.
- Changes to EPIC's pest control procedures.
- Changes to call-back procedures following dissatisfaction with a repair.
- Changes to EPIC's complaints log process and template responses with an improved tone and plain English.
- Increased engagement with, and confidence in, our contractors' performance due to their handling of complaints.

## Annual Summary of Compliments and Complaints

- Training for all staff on complaints procedures and complaints vs service requests, and the use of the correct terminology when responding to and talking to tenants.
- Complaints and associated feedback have highlighted the need for and has driven plans to engage better with tenants and improve communication around anti-social behaviour. This work is planned to take place in 2025, with specialised training having taken place in April 2025.
- Ensuring that we are closing the loop by providing clear communication to tenants, which is followed up in writing.
- Provision of advance notice of works to communal areas that may affect tenants ability to enjoy their homes.

**EPIC has produced a Service Improvement Plan relating to complaints and following the complaints it received and learnings in 24/2025 which includes training and feedback – see following page.**

<b>Annual Complaints Self-Assessment - Service Improvement Plan 2025/26</b>	
<b>What are we looking to improve or change ?</b>	<b>By when</b>
Recording of complaints to be captured as part of the Housing Management IT system to enable better reporting and tighter case management.	April 2025 Completed
MRC to Staff Conference to continue to promote a culture of openness and transparency where complaints are seen as beneficial information for improvement to all staff.	Jun-2025
Ensure that all staff are aware of the V10 of the Complaints Policy by way of team discussions/training and a completed attestation.	Jun-25
Annual Tenant Survey 2025/26 to include consideration for tenants to become involvement in a Complaint Handling Group.	Aug-25
Improve data collection and tenant demographics to analysis trends so that we can target and provide assistance and assurance to those groups who need it most.	Sep-25
Carry out Tenant Ambassador Training on the Regulator of Social Housing's Transparency, Accountability and Influencing Standard to better improve understanding around complaints.	Oct-25
Share as part of the Tenant Ambassador Meeting, an update on complaints, comments and feedback	Dec-25
Member Responsible for Complaints to attend Senior Leadership Team to promote a culture of openness and transparency in respect of complaints.	Dec-25
Follow up from Annual Tenant Perception Survey on Complaints feedback, providing clarity on service requests versus complaints and any other concerns raised.	Nov-25
Staff to continue to meet with Best Practice Group - Stoke on Trent and Staffordshire to share learning.	ongoing
Encourage Staff to make best use of Housing Ombudsman Landlords Learning Hub.	ongoing
Ongoing learning from complaints reporting to Senior Leadership Team and Board, for comments and feedback.	monthly/quarterly

## Annual Summary of Compliments and Complaints