



Annual report on complaints

Year ended 31 March 2025

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This year, we’ve made some strong improvements in how we deal with complaints. We’ve worked hard to make the process simpler, clearer, and easier for everyone to use. We’ve also used what we’ve learned from complaints to make our services better for all our customers.

We know people want to see how things are changing, so we’ve been regularly sharing updates throughout the year about what we’ve learned.

These updates cover different topics, like how we talk to customers, how service charges are explained, and other areas where things haven’t gone quite right.

One thing we’re proud of is that we replied to every stage 2 complaint on time. That shows we’re taking complaints seriously and acting quickly. But we also know there’s more we need to do. Some customers still don’t feel happy with how we handle complaints, and we want to change that and make further improvements in the year ahead.

We’re working hard to improve how satisfied people feel with our complaints service. Listening to our customers helps us understand what’s working and what needs to get better. If you ever need help, or want to tell us what you think, we’re always here and happy to listen.

**James Reseigh,
Director of Neighbourhoods**

LiveWest Board response



LiveWest's Board Member Responsible for Complaints (MRC), John Newbury, has confirmed LiveWest are correctly following the Housing Ombudsman's Complaints Handling Code. This has been confirmed after looking at the 2025 annual submission.

As part of the review, John has confirmed that:

Our Customer Compliments, Complaints and Feedback Policy was updated and agreed in April 2025. This had involvement from the Customer Services Committee (CSC) and InFocus, our customer group. Some of the changes in the policy include making it clearer who can make a complaint, updating how long before we acknowledge complaints, and giving customers more time to escalate their complaint to stage 2 of our complaints process.

The CSC update Board quarterly and yearly about how we are performing with complaints and learning from them. LiveWest's maladministration (where there is a serious failure affecting the customer) rate dropped from 71% to 37%, with no failure orders issued. To improve how we handle complaints, we introduced three initiatives:

- A Customer Complaints Panel to improve how feedback and complaints are used to improve things.
- A Compensation Panel to make sure cases are reviewed fairly.
- Deep dive reviews to look at how we can put things right when we make mistakes.

All of this works towards our plan to deliver respectful, safe, and customer-focused services. The MRC will carry on making sure we follow our plans and policies. The Chair of the Board has agreed this response, and will be presented at the next CSC and Board meetings.

Complaints and feedback

We put our customers first and at the heart of everything that we do. We want to always provide excellent customer service and get things right first time. We know that sometimes things can go wrong, and when this happens we want to quickly put things right. This means saying sorry, recognising our mistakes, what it means to our customers and resolving their concerns as quickly as possible. We use information from our customers' complaints and feedback improve our services.



Our Service Improvement team manages complaints and speaks to customers about their concerns, as well as working with colleagues and teams across LiveWest.



Our teams work hard to make sure that complaints are resolved quickly and fairly, following the timescales in the Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code. They also look at where improvements can be made.



As of April 1 2024, the Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code became compulsory, meaning that all members of the Housing Ombudsman Scheme (like LiveWest) legally must follow its guidelines.



This report includes our complaint handling performance for the year 2024/25, as well as how we have improved our services following complaints.



Our complaints process

There are two stages to our complaints process. If a customer is not satisfied with our response to their complaint at stage 1, the complaint can be taken to stage 2.






Stage 1

We will:

-  Confirm we have received the complaint with the customer at stage 1 within 24 hours.
-  Confirm our understanding of the complaint and acknowledge it within 5 working days of it being received.
-  Give the customer details of the colleague who will be investigating the complaint.
-  Continue to work to resolve the complaint during the investigation.
-  Respond to the complaint and confirm our findings within 10 working days of the complaint being acknowledged.
-  Provide 28 days for customers to escalate a complaint to stage 2 if they are not satisfied with our response and findings.

Stage 2

We will:

-  Confirm the complaint has been moved to stage 2 with the customer within 24 hours.
-  Confirm our understanding of the complaint and acknowledge it within 5 working days of it being received.
-  Give the customer details of the colleague who will be investigating the complaint.
-  Respond to the complaint within 20 working days from the date we acknowledged the stage 2 complaint.
-  Let our customer know that they are now able to refer their complaint to the Housing Ombudsman Service if they are not satisfied with our response and findings.

If we need more time for our response because the complaint is complicated, we will let the customer know and explain why. For stage 1 complaints will usually be no more than 10 days, and for stage 2 no more than 20 days.

Do we accept all complaints?

Our complaints policy confirms that we will accept a complaint unless there is a valid reason not to do so. Our policy explains the situations where this might happen.

Over the past year we have excluded complaints for the following reasons from our policy:

- Complaints that have previously been considered and cannot be supported by our complaints process any further, including matters then dealt with by the Ombudsman service.
- Complaints about issues where more than 12 months has passed, unless they are part of an ongoing issue.
- Complaints where legal or court proceedings have formally started (such as a Claim Form and Particulars of claim having been filed at court) or have been issued.
- Formal claims for liability or personal injury, which need to be assessed by our insurer.
- Complaints where we have no responsibility and/or are not the statutory body for decision making (such as the police, NHS or Local Authority services or courts system).
- Stage 1 complaints relating to decisions where existing appeals processes are in place (such as decisions made about the allocation and management of our homes) these complaints could only be considered at stage 2 following the appeal process.



Complaints performance

Between 1 April 2024 – 31 March 2025 we have received:



1,762
new complaints



350
stage 2
complaints



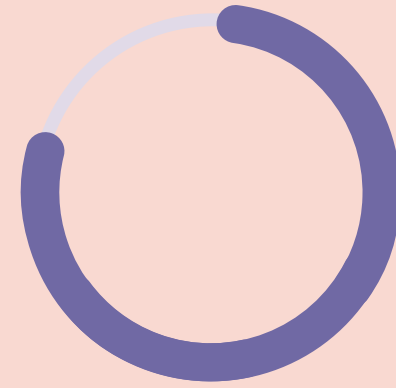
1,118
compliments

We report to the Customer Services Committee about complaints performance, including:

- Complaint themes.
- What we have found about complaints and what will happen next.
- Numbers of complaints.
- How satisfied customers are with how we handle complaints.
- Housing Ombudsman determinations.
- How we are learning from complaints.

78%

of complaints were
either fully or partially
upheld at stage 1



85%

of complaints were
either fully or partially
upheld at stage 2



Complaints received by business area:

Complaints about repairs and the condition of our customers' homes are our most common, so we are making sure we focus on these to improve services.

70%

1,241 complaints
received about repairs



4%

70 complaints received
about development



23%

401 complaints received
about neighbourhoods



3%

50 complaints received
about home ownership



Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs)

Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSM's) were introduced as part of the Social Housing Regulation Act. The Regulator of Social Housing uses the measures to make sure that all social landlords are looking after homes and neighbourhoods, keeping people safe, handling complaints well, and treating customers with fairness and respect.

The TSM's that look at how well we are performing with complaints are:

- Complaints compared to how big the landlord is.
- Complaints responded to within Complaint Handling Code timescale.
- How satisfied customers are with how their landlord handles complaints.

TSM measure	Customers who rent their homes	Shared owners
How many of our customers are satisfied with how we handle complaints?	43.2%	29.4%
How many of our stage one complaints were responded to within the Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code timescales?	99%	100%
How many of our stage two complaints were responded to within the Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code timescales?	97.3%	100%
How many stage one complaints do we have for every 1,000 homes.	47.8 for every 1,000 homes	17.4 for every 1,000 homes
How many stage two complaints do we have for every 1,000 homes.	10.1 for every 1,000 homes	5.9 for every 1,000 homes



Learning and improving our services

We see complaints as a chance to put things right and learn from what our customers tell us to improve our services.

The top reasons for complaints in 2024-25 were:

- Communication.
- Not doing what we said we would.
- Delays.

To improve things, we are investigating these themes and improving our complaint handling.

How have we improved complaint handling?

We have:

- Carried out reviews of complaints across the different services we offer.
- Produced complaints learning articles for customers.
- Reviewed our compensation guidance.
- Introduced a compensation panel.
- Introduced a Customer Complaints panel.
- Improved how we check things are on track after we close a complaint.
- Improved our complaints system.
- Carried out training for all colleagues.
- Shared complaint learning and actions with business leaders.
- Given training to our Service Improvement team regularly.

In depth reviews

We carry out in depth reviews of complaints across the different services we offer. This is part of our work to understand where things are going wrong and where we can improve them.

Some areas that we have looked at over the past year include:

- Damp and mould.
- Contractors we use.
- Home ownership.
- Estate services.



Housing Ombudsman Service

Customers can make use of the Housing Ombudsman Service at any time during their complaint. If a customer is not satisfied with our final response to their complaint, we will let them know that they can refer their complaint to the Housing Ombudsman Service and provide contact details.

Complaints which go to the Housing Ombudsman Service will be investigated and a decision made based on what the Housing Ombudsman Services considers to be fair.

The Housing Ombudsman Service will then share their decision within a formal report. This includes what they have found, which they call ‘findings’. It also includes any recommendations for what needs to happen next.

Last year we had a strong performance and achieved a **37% maladministration rate**, compared to the national maladministration rate of 71%.

Findings that the Housing Ombudsman might issue are:

- **No maladministration:** where the landlord has done things in line with its policies and procedures.
- **Service failure:** when there is a minor failing found, and action is needed to put things right.
- **Maladministration:** where there is a failure which has affected the resident.
- **Severe maladministration:** where there is evidence of serious impact to the resident.
- **Redress:** where there is evidence of maladministration, but the landlord has accepted this and taken steps to put things right.
- **Mediation:** where the resident and landlord have agreed to enter mediation, and with the Ombudsman’s help came to an agreed solution.
- **Outside jurisdiction:** The complaint has not been considered by the Housing Ombudsman.

Our findings from the Housing Ombudsman for 2024/25:



HOS findings	2024/25	2023/24
Severe maladministration	0%	2%
Maladministration	23%	29%
Service failure	13%	29%
Mediation	0%	0%
Redress	27%	12%
No maladministration	35%	12%
Outside jurisdiction	2%	10%
Withdrawn	0%	5%

Learning from Housing Ombudsman decisions

We use complaints, compliments, and feedback as opportunities to learn and improve services. This includes from the findings in Housing Ombudsman decisions.

In 2024–2025 the main areas identified by the Housing Ombudsman within decisions are:

- Property condition.
- Complaint handling.
- Anti-social behaviour.

Area	Actions
Property condition	<p>Improving how we handle repairs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Updated our customer service offer and made our repairs more flexible.• Encouraged customers to report and track their repairs online through our customer portal.• Started reviewing how we deal with difficult repairs and preparing for Awaab’s Law.• Looked at how we deal with appointments where we can’t enter the home to complete work.• Improved how we review and report on how repairs are going.• Introduced new technology for our Surveying team.• Worked closely with contractors we use to make sure they are doing a good job. <p>Responding to damp and mould reports</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Made a new Damp and Mould Operational Procedure for us to follow.• All colleagues now have to complete damp, mould and condensation training.
Complaint handling	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• We continue to follow the Housing Ombudsman Service mandatory code.• Provided complaint handling training and guidance for all colleagues.• Our Complaints team have regular training to make sure they are giving a great service.• Improved how we keep track of what we have promised as part of complaints.• Updated our compensation guidance to keep it fair and compliant, and set up a new panel to manage it
Anti-Social Behaviour	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Carried on developing the ‘solve an issue’ tool on our website for our customers to use.• Introduced an Anti-social Behaviour Customer Service Standard for us to follow.• Created an Anti-Social Behaviour and Enforcement team to help with issues.• Each case has a dedicated colleague to manage it.• We’ve made it clear what the difference is between reporting a neighbour’s behaviour and making a formal complaint.• Our teams have had training to give a better service and be more flexible.

Complaint learning articles for customers

We share information with customers about what we have learnt from complaints. By sharing what we have found and are doing, customers can be sure we are improving things.

Some complaint areas that we have focused on over the past year include:

Subject	We have
Communication: how can we improve communication to help reduce complaints?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Improved the way we deal with requests from customers to get a call back.Introduced a standard for how we record contact with our customers.Improved how we handle complicated queries and complaints.Introduced new systems to support better communication with our customers.Introduced mandatory 'why we need a customer culture' training.
Complaint escalations: why are our complaints escalating?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Held complaints training that all colleagues need to complete.Regular reporting on how we are doing.Introduced a way to track all actions from complaints and communication about them.Updated our compensation guidance.Set up a group to review compensation.
Repairs and no access appointments: how can we improve things so we can complete as many appointments as possible?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Introduced more flexibility for customers to choose an appointment time slot which suits them.Encouraged customers to use our customer portal to view and manage their own appointments.Developed a new mobile phone based repair tracking tool for many of our repairs.Improved how we send 'no access' letters when we can't get into a home to complete work.Introduced a 'Customer Promise' and a 'Repairs Service Standard'.
Support needs and vulnerabilities: what more can we do to understand and support our customers?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Introduced reasonable adjustments guidance.Updated our Repairs Service Offer and Complaints Policy to recognise customer vulnerabilities.Made sure we are flexible with how we deliver services for customers.Highlighted how important it is to ask customers about their support needs when we talk to them.Increased awareness about vulnerabilities across LiveWest.
Service charges: how can we better support our customers by improving our services and reducing complaints?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Produced a 'Your service charges explained' guide.Updated the information about service charges on our website.Made changes to improve the way we support and manage service charges.Recognised that we can improve the information we provide to customers at the start of their tenancy.Improved how we manage contracts.

Our plans for the next year

Over the next 12 months, we want to keep getting better at fixing problems and helping our customers.

- **Listening and learning:** We will use feedback and complaints to make our services better and to keep customers happier.
- **Better communication:** We will make sure customers know what is happening and get clear answers quickly.
- **Repairs:** We know repairs cause the most frustration, so we will:
 - Invest more money on our repairs service.
 - Work even closer with the contractors we use
 - Use new technology so it's easier to report and track repairs.
 - Focus on problems like damp and mould and long delays.
- **Helping vulnerable customers:** We will provide ongoing training for colleagues and update policies so we can be more flexible and supportive to customers who need extra help.
- **Being open:** We will regularly share what we've learned from complaints and explain what we're doing to improve our services.

Our goal is to always improve, be honest, and give safe, respectful, and customer friendly services.



Contact us



Access our **Customer Portal** [here](#)



Visit our website, **livewest.co.uk**



Call us on **0300 123 8080**

Join us on social media

Find us on Facebook at **@WeAreLiveWest** and join our Your Views group.

Or Instagram **@WeAreLiveWest**

How you can get involved

There are many different ways you can give us your views, from taking part in a quick survey or attending a focus group or even joining our customer scrutiny group, InFocus.

Take part in our exciting campaigns for you to give your views on our different services, strategies and policies. We really want to hear what you have to say. We ask for your views in a variety of ways, including surveys, polls, questionnaires and focus groups.

Your views matter to us, to find out more about all of the ways you can **get involved**, [click here](#)