

Annual Complaint Performance and Service Improvement Report 2025/2026

Reporting Period: 1 April 2025 - 31 March 2026

Foreword from the Board

At Eldon Housing Association, we remain committed to delivering the highest standards of service and ensuring that the voices of our tenants are central to how we listen, learn and improve.

This report sets out our complaints performance and the learning and service improvements delivered during the period 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026. Over the past year, we have handled 45 formal complaints, with volumes increasing steadily across the year. While this rise reflects increasing engagement and awareness of our complaints process, it also highlights important opportunities for improvement.

We have been encouraged that the majority of complaints were upheld or partially upheld, demonstrating a transparent and resolution-focused approach, with a clear willingness to recognise where service has fallen short and take appropriate action. Learning from complaints has been translated into tangible service improvements, including strengthened escalation processes, clearer communication standards, improved contractor oversight and enhanced health and safety responses.

Key themes identified throughout the year, including service quality, communication, contractor performance, anti-social behaviour and health and safety, have informed our approach to service improvement and future planning. We recognise that addressing these areas consistently and effectively is essential to delivering a positive tenant experience. While overall performance against response times has remained strong, we acknowledge that there are areas requiring further focus. In particular, tenant satisfaction with complaints handling has reduced during the year, and we are committed to understanding and addressing the underlying reasons for this to ensure tenants feel confident, listened to and supported throughout the process.

This report demonstrates our continued commitment to embedding a culture of accountability and learning across the organisation. It has been reviewed through our governance arrangements and reflects the progress made as well as the priorities for the year ahead. In 2026/27, we will focus on strengthening our approach further, including developing a dedicated framework for managing anti-social behaviour, improving internal processes to protect timely responses, and enhancing oversight of contractor-delivered services.

On behalf of the Board, we extend our thanks to our tenants, staff and partners who have contributed to this ongoing work. Complaints are a vital source of insight, and we welcome them as an opportunity to learn, improve and strengthen the services we provide.

Chair: Hony Premlal

Executive Summary

This report provides a comprehensive overview of complaints performance, learning and service improvement activity at Eldon Housing Association for the period 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026. This report consolidates evidence from quarterly complaint update reports submitted to the Quality Assurance Committee. It has been prepared for review by the Board and is intended for publication and submission to the Housing Ombudsman later in the year, in accordance with the Complaint Handling Code and related annual reporting requirements.

Headline performance

- Total formal complaints recorded: 45 (Stage 1: 39; Stage 2: 6).
- Service requests recorded separately: 1.
- Complaint volumes increased across the year (Q1: 9; Q2: 11; Q3: 12; Q4: 13).
- Outcomes across the year: Upheld 27; Partially upheld 13; Not upheld 4; Not accepted 1.

Key themes included service quality and contractor performance, health and safety, communication failures and anti-social behaviour. Learning from complaints has resulted in tangible service improvements, including strengthened escalation arrangements, policy updates, contractor controls and staff training.

Complaints Overview (April 2025-March 2026)

Volumes and case mix

Quarter	Stage 1 complaints	Stage 2 complaints	Service requests	Complaints not accepted
Q1	9	0	1	0
Q2	9	2	0	0
Q3	10	2	0	0
Q4	11	2	0	1
Total	39	6	1	1

Note: In Q4 one matter was not accepted as a complaint as the issues raised related to ongoing legal proceedings and therefore fall outside the scope of our Complaints Policy; this is included within the Stage 1 count in that quarter's summary.

Outcomes (upheld/partially upheld/not upheld)

Quarter	Upheld	Partially upheld	Not upheld	Withdrawn	Not accepted
Q1	6	1	2	0	0
Q2	7	4	0	0	0
Q3	6	5	1	0	0
Q4	8	3	1	0	1
Total	27	13	4	0	1

Across the year, the majority of complaints were upheld or partially upheld. This reflects the Association's resolution-focused approach and a willingness to identify and acknowledge service failure where evidenced, alongside clear remedial action.

Escalation to the Housing Ombudsman

In November 2025, we were notified that one complaint had been escalated to the Housing Ombudsman regarding a rent calculation error and a disputed additional week's rent following a change to the rent-year start date. The complaint progressed through Stage 1 (June 2025) and Stage 2 (July 2025), with acknowledgements and responses issued within required timescales; both stages were upheld and the Association accepted responsibility, issued a formal apology, and explained the miscalculation while confirming the charge remained payable. The Ombudsman has advised the case is awaiting allocation.

Channels, services/teams/schemes

Across the year, complaints were received through multiple channels including email, letter, telephone/verbal reports, complaint forms and in-person contact. The quarterly reports evidence cases spanning housing management, extra care and support services, facilities/asset management and contractor-delivered services. Complaints were raised by tenants, next of kin and professionals.

Quarterly breakdown and narrative explaining any spikes/changes

Quarter 1 (April–June 2025)

We recorded 9 Stage 1 complaints and 1 service request in Quarter 1. Complaints in this period were mainly linked to service quality. Response timeliness was 89% in this quarter, with performance improving in subsequent quarters. Please note that the dip in response compliance was attributable to difficulties in contacting the complainant, which delayed the Association's ability to fully resolve the matter within the required timeframe.

Quarter 2 (July–September 2025)

Quarter 2 saw an increase to 11 formal complaints (9 Stage 1 and 2 Stage 2). Themes included service quality and anti-social behaviour (ASB). The Association maintained 100% compliance with acknowledgement and response times, supported by appropriate use of policy-compliant extensions where required.

Quarter 3 (October–December 2025)

Quarter 3 recorded 12 formal complaints (10 Stage 1 and 2 Stage 2). Complaints were mainly concentrated in Asset & Facilities Management and Housing Services, with issues relating to Health & Safety, service quality and communication. Performance remained strong, with 100% compliance for acknowledgements and responses, and the average response time improved to 12.92 days (from 15.09 days in Quarter 2).

Quarter 4 (January–March 2026)

Quarter 4 recorded 13 formal complaints (11 Stage 1 and 2 Stage 2), continuing the upward trend across the year. Response timeliness remained at 100%, while acknowledgement compliance reduced to 83.33% due to an internal routing issue which was addressed as a learning point. One matter was not accepted under the complaints policy due to ongoing legal proceedings, and learning was identified to strengthen consistency in handling such cases.

Performance Against KPIs and Timeliness

Acknowledgement times, response times (Stage 1 and Stage 2), compliance rates

Quarter	Acknowledgement compliance	Response compliance	Average formal response time (days)
Q1	100%	89%	11.56
Q2	100%	100%	15.09
Q3	100%	100%	12.92
Q4	83.33%	100%	15.42

Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs) - Complaints Handling (TP09)

The latest TSMs results show satisfaction with complaints handling (TP09) fell from 100% in 2024/25 to 65% in 2025/26, though it remains above 2023/24.

Of those who completed the survey, 21% reported making a complaint in the last 12 months, representing 17 tenants. Acuity Research & Practice undertakes our annual TSM survey and provides benchmarking to help us compare performance with peer landlords. Acuity notes tenants do not always distinguish between formal complaints and general requests, a common TSMs issue. Therefore, they advise that results should be treated with caution given the small base: 15 responded by post (73% satisfied) and two responded online (neither were satisfied).

This outcome has been documented in the Association's TSMs Action Tracker. To enhance performance in this area, we will be reinforcing and refreshing staff to recognise when a tenant is making a complaint so that this can be addressed in accordance with established policies and procedures. This will improve the tenant experience of complaint handling.

While the current figure is below our desired threshold, benchmarking results remain encouraging. Acuity's median complaints satisfaction for landlords with fewer than 1,000 homes is 39.9%, with the Association performing above this benchmark.

Key Themes and Trends

Top recurring themes

Across 2025/26, complaints most commonly related to service quality and operational delivery, including delays, communication issues, and the performance of third-party contractors.

A significant theme throughout the year was anti-social behaviour (ASB) and tenancy management, particularly where behaviour or wellbeing concerns required sensitive handling.

Health and safety and property condition issues also featured prominently, including building safety and repairs affecting tenant wellbeing.

Additional themes reflected in the year's cases included:

- Security and access control, including expectations around communal security and parcel safety.
- Rent/service charge and eligibility/tenancy clarity, where tenants sought clearer explanations and decision-making rationale.

Several themes point to higher-risk learning areas:

1) ASB management and prevention

Quarterly reporting highlighted that ASB concerns were being managed through the complaints route rather than through a dedicated ASB framework, reinforcing the need for clear, consistent ASB policies and processes.

2) Communication and routing controls

Quarter 4 identified that delayed internal routing of complaint correspondence contributed to reduced acknowledgement compliance. This was addressed as a learning point and reinforced the importance of timely escalation to the Complaints Co-ordinator.

3) Health and safety

Health and safety-related concerns, including repairs and property condition affecting tenants' wellbeing, remained a source of dissatisfaction, requiring timely action, clear communication, and robust oversight.

Learning and Improvement Measures

Good resolution during the year was underpinned by:

- Early acknowledgement and clear written responses
- Formal apologies where fault was identified
- Practical corrective action, and clear explanation of decision-making.
- Senior leadership involvement in complex and escalated complaints

Where appropriate, complaints were logged even where a complainant did not pursue them formally, to ensure learning was captured and risks addressed.

The year's complaints have prompted several key developments:

- **Strengthened Escalation and Safer Practice:**
Following a service failure linked to the warden-call system, processes were tightened to reduce recurrence risk, including nightly checks of the handset and strengthened welfare-check procedures, clearer handovers, and staff retraining.
- **Clearer Communication Standards and Follow-through:**
Learning across the year reinforced the need for consistent, timely communication - particularly where tenants or representatives require updates on next steps, repairs progress, or service decisions. Actions taken included clearer explanations in responses, improved expectation-setting, and strengthening internal follow-up where service delivery depends on third parties.

- **Contractor standards and repairs service recovery:**
Complaints strengthened expectations for respectful conduct in tenants' homes (including not removing personal items without permission) and drove practical service recovery, including completion of overdue repairs, faster progression of urgent requests, and improved emergency cover and escalation arrangements.
- **Health & Safety and Building-Related Risk Management:**
Where complaints raised health and safety risks such as leaks/water ingress, boundary safety, and lift reliability, responses focused on prompt investigation, remedial action, and prevention measures.
- **Pest Control and Environmental Management Improvements:**
Complaints led to more structured interventions where pests were impacting wellbeing. Actions included engaging pest control programmes, follow-up visits, and wider preventative measures where environmental factors (such as waste management) contributed to recurring issues.
- **Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB):**
ASB was a recurring driver of complaints. Actions taken included senior staff engagement, meetings with parties involved, and escalation to legal remedies where necessary. Learning also reinforced the need for a dedicated framework to reduce reliance on the complaints process for ASB case management, with work initiated to strengthen policy and procedural consistency.
- **Security, Access Control and Tenant Reassurance:**
Complaints about communal security and contractor access led to clearer site-based access controls and communications. Actions included reminding tenants of responsibilities where appropriate (e.g., parcel handling expectations), tightening contractor access arrangements, and ensuring access information is handled securely while enabling services to be delivered effectively.
- **Handling Tenants' Money and Property (Policy and practice strengthened):**
Learning from complaints involving tenants' personal property led to improvements in safeguards and organisational learning, including a lessons-learned review, reinforcement of staff awareness through supervision/team discussions, and updating the Handling Tenants' Money and Property policy to reduce future risk.
- **Complaint Handling Discipline and Governance Assurance:**
Quarter 4 learning identified that internal routing delays contributed to reduced acknowledgement compliance in that quarter. This was used as a learning point, with staff reminded about timely routing to protect compliance and ensure tenants receive prompt confirmation that their complaint has been received.
- **Remedies and Redress:**
Where appropriate, remedies included apologies, practical fixes, goodwill gestures and compensation offers, used to recognise distress and inconvenience and to support timely resolution alongside service improvements.

Evaluation of the Effectiveness of the Previous Complaints Services Improvement Plan

Improve Complaints Recording: Enhance the complaints recording log to effectively review trends and improve reporting of service requests.	Achieved – Complaints recording has significantly improved, as highlighted in quarterly reports to the Quality Assurance Committee.
Enhanced Reporting and Learning: Improve reporting mechanisms to provide efficient information for learning, service improvements, and effective reporting.	Ongoing / Achieved – Reporting has improved, but we expect continued progress as we continue enhance our complaint handling process from learning opportunities.
Regular Review and Discussion: Make complaints a standing agenda item for tenant site meetings and Tenant Panel meetings, ensuring effective complaints handling and oversight.	Ongoing / Achieved – Similar to last year, the Annual Complaint Summary Report will be provided to the Tenant Panel for review and discussion.
Review Staff Code of Conduct: Ensure the expectations for complaint handling are included in the staff Code of Conduct / Charter.	Ongoing - Training provided to staff on expectations for complaint handling. Staff Code of Conduct to be reviewed by HR to include this.
Enhance Staff Induction and Training: Provide staff training and support dealing with complaints against the new code and implement revised policy and procedure. Discuss complaint handling during staff induction and onboarding, with additional training provided as needed.	Ongoing / Achieved - Complaint handling training materials have been developed, and annual complaint handling training is currently provided to staff. Additionally, induction training has been introduced for Head Office staff.
Regularly Review Complaints Policy and Procedure: Keep complaints as a standing agenda item for Tenant Panel, SLT and Quality Assurance Committee meetings to ensure effective handling and oversight.	Achieved / Ongoing – The Policy was revised this year to reflect updated contact details for the Housing Ombudsman. Complaints is a standard agenda item for SLT and Quality Assurance Committee meetings.
Develop Complaints Data Dashboard: Enhance real-time tracking, reporting, and learning opportunities through a more developed complaints data dashboard.	Ongoing – Our complaints log has been improved however further work is required to create a real time dashboard, this is underway.
Understand and Monitor Service Requests: Develop a clear understanding of service requests and the best methods for reporting and monitoring them.	Ongoing - This area still needs additional attention and continued effort.
Promote a Culture of Accountability and Learning: Encourage staff to view complaints as opportunities for learning and improvement.	Ongoing / Achieved – Complaint handling training has helped staff see

	complaints as learning opportunities. This focus will remain ongoing.
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Forward Look: Priorities for 2026/27

Building on the learning from 2025/26, the Association will deliver an improvement plan during 2026/27 focused on the areas most closely linked to tenant experience, timely complaint handling, and recurring themes (including anti-social behaviour, communication and contractor performance).

Priority 1: Implement a dedicated ASB framework

Anti-social behaviour (ASB) was a recurring driver of complaints in 2025/26 and quarterly reporting has already identified the need for a clearer and more consistent framework. In 2026/27, the Association will approve and implement a comprehensive ASB policy and procedures, supporting consistent case handling and reducing the extent to which ASB matters are managed through the complaints route.

Priority 2: Protect acknowledgement timeliness through stronger routing controls

Timely acknowledgement is essential to tenant confidence and Complaint Handling Code compliance. In 2025/26, Quarter 4 reporting identified that acknowledgement compliance reduced due to internal routing delays, and this was addressed through staff reminders. In 2026/27, the Association will strengthen this by incorporating reminders into the annual complaint handling training provided to staff and during staff meetings.

Priority 3: Strengthen third-party and contractor assurance for recurring issues

Reporting highlighted recurring operational risks linked to access arrangements and the reliability of third-party services, reinforcing the need for stronger oversight and learning loops where contractor performance contributes to dissatisfaction.

Priority 4: Maintain strong governance oversight and keep policy under review

To ensure the complaints framework remains effective and up to date, the Association will continue regular review of the Complaints Policy and Procedure and retain complaints oversight through standing governance arrangements.

Conclusion:

Complaint handling during 2025/26 demonstrates the Association's continued commitment to fairness, accountability, transparency and learning-led improvement. During the year, 45 formal complaints were recorded (39 Stage 1; 6 Stage 2) and volumes rose steadily across the quarters; most outcomes were upheld or partially upheld, reflecting a resolution-focused approach and a willingness to acknowledge service failure where evidenced.

Learning from complaints has been translated into practical service improvements and strengthened controls, including safer escalation and welfare-check arrangements, clearer communication standards, enhanced contractor oversight, and service recovery actions across repairs, health and safety, pest control, security/access and ASB management.

The 2026/27 priorities set out in this report provide a clear and measurable forward plan, including implementing a dedicated ASB framework, strengthening routing controls to protect acknowledgement timeliness, strengthening third-party/contractor assurance, and maintaining robust governance oversight.

Subject to Board approval, this report is suitable for publication and for submission to the Housing Ombudsman as part of the annual Complaint Handling Code reporting requirement later in the year.