

# **Cabinet Member for Housing Statement**

## **Statement on the 2025–26 Annual Housing Management Complaints Report and the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code**

As the Council's lead Member for Housing, I have reviewed and scrutinised the 2025–26 Annual Housing Management Complaints Report. I am satisfied that it provides an accurate account of Wandsworth Council's complaint handling performance, the learning arising from complaints and Housing Ombudsman decisions, and the action being taken to improve services for residents.

### **Performance and learning**

- Housing Management completed 759 Stage 1 and Stage 2 complaints. Of these, 562 (74%) were resolved at Stage 1 and 197 (26%) progressed to Stage 2.
- Timeliness improved, with 77% of Stage 1 complaints and 85% of Stage 2 complaints completed within the relevant timescales.
- The Housing Ombudsman made determinations on 33 cases and issued 111 orders. Wandsworth's overall maladministration rate was 65%.
- The main complaint themes included the quality and timeliness of repairs, complaint handling delays, communication, damp and mould, leaks, major works and contractor conduct.
- Learning has focused on stronger record keeping and knowledge management, improved case tracking, earlier recognition of complaints, clearer resident communication, better oversight and quality assurance, and a more personalised approach for residents with vulnerabilities or reasonable adjustment needs.
- A monthly Complaints Insights Group now brings together Housing Management, Policy and Corporate Complaints colleagues to review themes, Ombudsman findings and wider sector learning, and to monitor improvement actions.

### **Housing Ombudsman review and service improvement**

The Housing Ombudsman's Paragraph 49 investigation identified areas requiring improvement, including repairs management, communication, complaint recording and oversight, data quality, governance, and support for vulnerable residents, including those living in Resident Management Organisation properties. The investigation closed

in May 2026, with performance continuing to be monitored through the Ombudsman's normal oversight arrangements.

The Council has responded through its Housing Improvement and Transformation Plan and a dedicated Section 49 action plan. This work includes stronger oversight of repairs, contractors and Resident Management Organisations, improved staff training, centralised complaints data, enhanced performance reporting and data assurance, and clearer escalation arrangements.

## **Complaint Handling Code and governance**

The Housing Ombudsman has agreed an extension beyond 30 September 2026 for completion of the Council's annual Complaint Handling Code self-assessment. This will allow the self-assessment to reflect and align with the wider improvements arising from the Paragraph 49 investigation. The completed self-assessment will be presented to Members later in the 2026/27 year.

The Council is also developing a standalone Housing Management Complaints Policy, alongside a complaints policy for Resident Management Organisations, and is introducing revised complaint categories aligned with Housing Ombudsman reporting. These changes should provide greater clarity for residents and staff and strengthen performance analysis, benchmarking and learning.

## **Commitment**

The substantial increase in complaints reinforces the importance of accessible, timely and effective complaint handling. I welcome the improvements in response times and the reduction in the overall maladministration rate, while recognising that further work is required to embed consistent practice and deliver sustained improvements in residents' experience.

I will continue to provide Member oversight and challenge, ensuring that progress against the improvement plans is monitored and that learning from complaints is translated into measurable service improvements. Wandsworth Council remains committed to transparency, accountability and delivering high-quality housing services for residents.



**Cllr Matthew Corner**

Cabinet Member for Housing

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