



South  
Yorkshire  
Housing  
Association



# South Yorkshire Housing Association

## Complaints Performance and Service Improvement Report

2024/25

# Welcome to the South Yorkshire Housing Association Annual Complaints Performance and Service Improvement Report.



## Why do we produce a report?

It is a requirement of the Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code 2024 that we produce this report.

However, it's not the only reason. Learning from complaints really matters to us:

- Complaints help us learn about any problems with our services
- We find out if our customers are unhappy and try to put this right for them.
- They are an important way for us to listen directly to what our customers really think.

## Why should I read this report?

- We want you to know we are listening!
- We want to be open and honest about any challenges we face, and your voice makes a difference – you can read what changes we have made in response to complaints
- You might recognise a problem you have experienced and see what we are doing about it
- It's important to us that you know we take complaints seriously and use them to improve.
- You can read a more detailed report and our self-assessment, or find out more about how we deal with complaints by visiting our website

# What's in the report?

This report tells you:

- More about the Housing Ombudsman Service and how we work with them.
- A message from the SYHA Board and our CEO
- How we deal with complaints at SYHA
- Why customers have complained
- What customers complained about
- How many complaints we receive and how quickly we deal with them.
- How satisfied our customers are
- Our contact with the Housing Ombudsman
- What we have learned and achieved this year
- What our plans are to continue improving next year

# What is the Housing Ombudsman Service?

- The Housing Ombudsman is a free, independent and impartial service that can investigate complaints and resolve disputes for tenants and leaseholders of social landlords.
- SYHA is a member and follows the Housing Ombudsman Complaints Handling Code 2024, including publishing this complaints report.
- We aim to follow best practice recommended by the Housing Ombudsman in handling complaints.
- If you have gone through the SYHA complaints process and you are still unhappy, you can ask the Housing Ombudsman to investigate and help resolve your complaint.
- The Ombudsman can require us to take action, such as apologising, doing repairs, or paying compensation.
- The Ombudsman helps landlords follow the Code and provides training and guidance.
- The Housing Ombudsman supported the creation of Awaab's law, which requires landlords to fix health hazards like damp and mould quickly.
- You can find out more on the Housing Ombudsman website: [www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk](http://www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk)



## A Message from our CEO

Our Board of Non-Executive Directors help keep us on track, checks we are working effectively, and supports our goals.

The Board has reviewed the annual report and self-assessment and shared a response which you can read [here](#)

“Customer complaints are a vital part of how we listen to our customers. They show us where we need to improve and help us deliver better services for our customers. I hope this report offers a clear view into how seriously we take every piece of feedback, and the steps we’re taking to turn concerns into meaningful change.”

Larry Gold, Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of SYHA.



Larry Gold, SYHA CEO

# How do we handle complaints at SYHA?

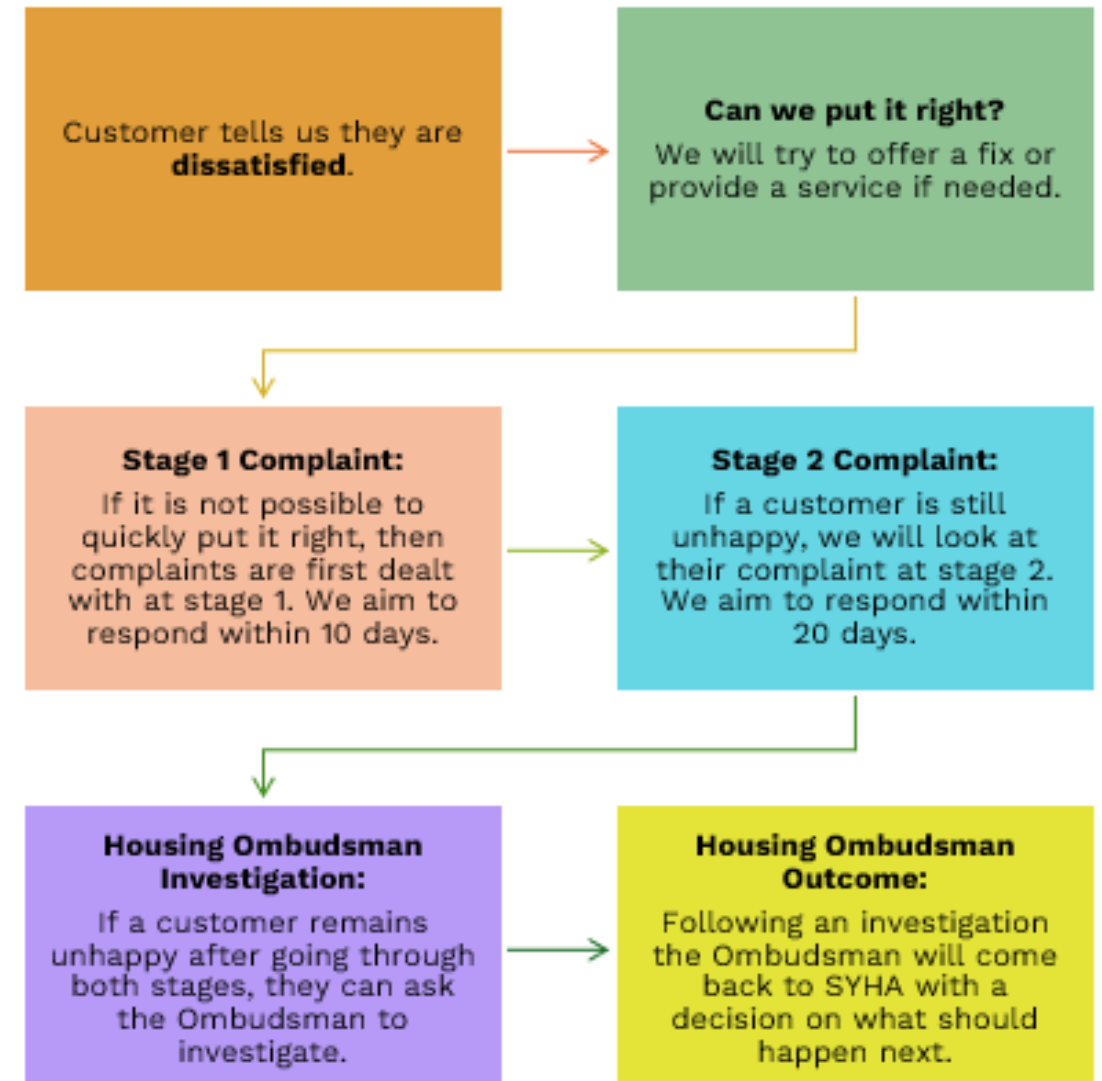
We believe that everyone deserves a home they can settle in, and access to support and opportunities that can help them to thrive. We always aim to provide great services for our customers.

Your feedback – good or bad – helps us see what's working well and where we can improve.

If something goes wrong, please let us know so we can fix it.

Our Complaints Process is simple, and you can contact us in person, by email, phone, letter or through our website.

## Our Complaints Process





# Who handles your complaints at SYHA?

The Member Responsible for Complaints (MRC) oversees how we handle complaints, as required by the Housing Ombudsman.

We think our MRC is very special!

Our MRC is Pam Hankinson, a SYHA tenant and Board member. She's passionate about representing customers. Pam is also part of the campaign 'Stop Social Housing Stigma', so you can be assured that Pam really understands how important her role is.

What does the MRC do?


- Encourages a positive approach to complaints
- Keeps the Board updated on complaint handling
- Helps us improve by challenging and supporting us

Our Customer Experience team handle the Complaints Process

They make sure we respond quickly, fairly and learn from complaints.

If you're unhappy with any SYHA service, speak to any employee and we'll explain what happens next.



A decorative graphic on the left side of the slide featuring several speech bubbles in various colors (green, orange, yellow, red, blue) and shapes, arranged in a cluster. The bubbles vary in size and orientation, with some pointing towards the right and others pointing away. A large, light blue oval shape is at the bottom, resembling a shadow or a base for the bubbles.

# Why have customers complained?

We always look into the reasons or 'root causes' of why our customers have made complaints.

This year the top three reasons why a complaint was made are:

## Customer Care & Customer Service

- This makes up 33% of all our complaints, and includes issues such as cancelled or late appointments, and poor or unclear communication.

## Responsiveness

- This makes up 25% of all our complaints and includes issues such as how quickly we respond to repairs.

## Quality of Housing

- This makes up 21% of all our complaints and includes issues such as damp, mould and condensation problems in homes.

Complaints about customer care have increased this year, especially around communication. This affects all areas of the business, and we're looking into it further.



# What do people complain about?

- We receive complaints for all different areas of our business.
- The area that receives the most complaints is Property Service with 78% of all our complaints. This is the team that carries out repairs and includes all contractors who work for SYHA.
- We expect this, as it's also the main area of work for us. However, we know that there are improvements we can make.

Area of SYHA business	What does this area do?	% of Complaints Received
Property Services	Carries out repairs and maintenance on homes.	78%
Landlord Services	Supports customers with rent payments, their neighbourhoods & dealing with any Anti-social Behaviour	12%
LiveWell Services	A range of services and schemes that support customers with their physical and mental health needs, independence and wellbeing.	5%
Customer Connect	Dealing with customer contact to SYHA, including reporting repairs and making a complaint.	3%
Development	Building & managing new homes.	1%
Leasehold & Service Charge	Managing leasehold & shared ownership properties.	1%

# How do we deal with complaints about our partners?

We often work with partners or 'contractors' to make sure we can deliver our repairs services across the region.

It is important that our customers experience the same high standards of customer service no matter who is carrying out the work.

If we receive complaints about a contractor's work, we deal with that complaint in the same way as all our other complaints.

However, we work closely with our partners to monitor work and talk about any challenges, making sure they deliver work to our required standards

Who do we work with?

Here are the details of the contractors we usually work with and what they do.

Ashley and McDonough	Day to day repairs Out of hours repairs for heating and hot water Gas Servicing Planned Works (*Sometimes called Stock Improvement Programme)
Burngreave Building Company (BBC)	Day to day repairs Out of hours repairs Works on empty properties (*Sometimes called Void Works)
Other contractors	Asbestos surveys Fixed electrical tests Damp, Mould & Condensation work Legionella testing Fire works (e.g. alarms, emergency lighting)

# How many complaints do we receive?

In 2024/25 we received the following complaints:

- 329 complaints at Stage 1 of our complaints process (261 were made in 2023/24)
- 29 complaints progressed to Stage 2 of our complaints process (18 were progressed in 2023/24)
- We didn't accept 9 complaints, known as 'exclusions'. This usually happens when the issue is about a decision made by another organisation, not SYHA. We will always explain to you if we can't take a complaint and give some advice.
- We received fewer complaints in the last part of the year (January to March), likely because the dry weather meant fewer problems with heating, hot water, and leaks.



91% of complaints were resolved at Stage 1



We received 59 complaints for every 1000 homes



We had a 26% increase in complaints this year

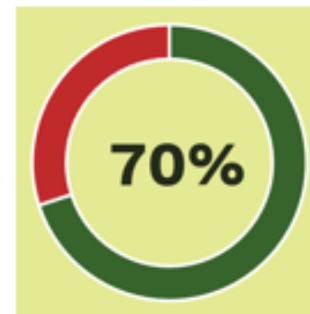
# How quickly do we respond to complaints?

- We aim to respond to Stage 1 complaints within 10 working days
- We aim to respond to Stage 2 complaints within 20 working days
- Sometimes we need more time. This is called an 'extension' and we monitor these carefully.

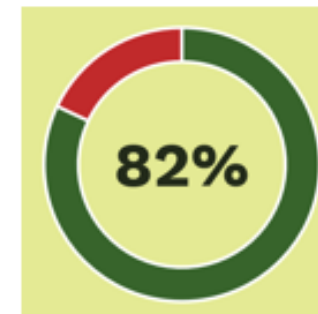
## Our performance for Stage 1 complaints



**stage 1**  
acknowledgement sent within 5 working days



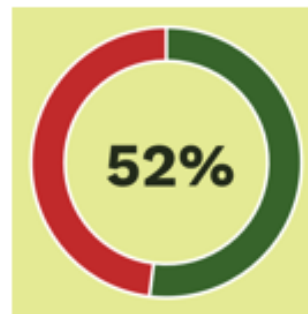
**stage 1**  
responses within 10 working days



**stage 1**  
responses within Code complaint timescales\*

\*The Housing Ombudsman Complaint handling code – met with an additional 10 working days

## Our performance for Stage 2 complaints



**stage 2**  
responses within 20 working days



**stage 2**  
responses within the Code timescales\*

\*The Housing Ombudsman Complaint handling code – met with an additional 20 working days



81% of our customers told us they were satisfied with how their complaint was handled



Customers have told us that they like it when we stick to our promises



But our annual survey found only 39% of customers are satisfied with our complaint handling

# How satisfied are our customers?

We regularly ask customers how we handled their complaint because their feedback matters to us.

Everyone who makes a complaint is invited to complete a survey.

This year, 81% of customers said they were satisfied with how we handled their complaint—above our 75% target.

*“It was dealt with well and I got a letter of apology from SYHA”*

*“I was so happy to receive the compensation”*

We’re now getting in touch more quickly about complaints, and customers have told us they really value being kept updated throughout the process.

Can we do better?

- In our annual tenant satisfaction measures survey, only 39% of customers who said they made a complaint were satisfied with how we handled it.
- When we followed up, we found many hadn’t made a formal complaint but were unhappy with some services.
- We’re working to make it easier for all customers to raise complaints or report problems so we can fix things quickly.
- We also want to improve by fully addressing all issues in a complaint, doing what we say we’ll do, and responding on time.

# Housing Ombudsman Investigations

If a customer remains unhappy with our handling of their complaint, they can ask the Housing Ombudsman to investigate.

This year 5 customers have asked the Housing Ombudsman to investigate the handling of their complaint. The Housing Ombudsman has reached an outcome on 3 investigations:

The Ombudsman identified areas for improvement in all three investigations and found that we had maladministration in complaint handling and in our response to repairs. We have apologised to the customers affected and have taken action to implement the Ombudsman's recommendations and orders to put things right.

We are sorry we didn't meet our standards with these complaints, and we've learned from them.

- We need to do more to support customers with extra needs.
- We must follow through on what we say and stick to our policies.
- Our complaint responses should be clear, caring, and show we understand how customers feel—especially in cases of anti-social behaviour.
- When compensation is needed, we must make sure it's fair for everyone affected





# What did we learn this year?

It's important we learn from complaints to improve our services for everyone.

This year we improved the way we record and share what we learn, and we have:



We will share “You Said, We Did” updates on our website every quarter.



Improved our repairs services by trialing a dedicated member of staff for complaints & introducing new text messages to remind customers of repairs appointments.



We've improved communication by making our website clearer and giving staff more support to handle complaints.



We've updated our Anti-Social Behaviour Policy and worked with LiveWell services on complaint handling

You said..

..when you make a complaint, we didn't always understand your issues.

..we booked the same repair twice, which led to contractors arriving unexpectedly to carry out a repair that had already been fixed.

..you didn't understand why the application to buy your home had been rejected

..you felt more action needed to be taken against your neighbour's tenancy.

# You Said... We Did....

We Did..

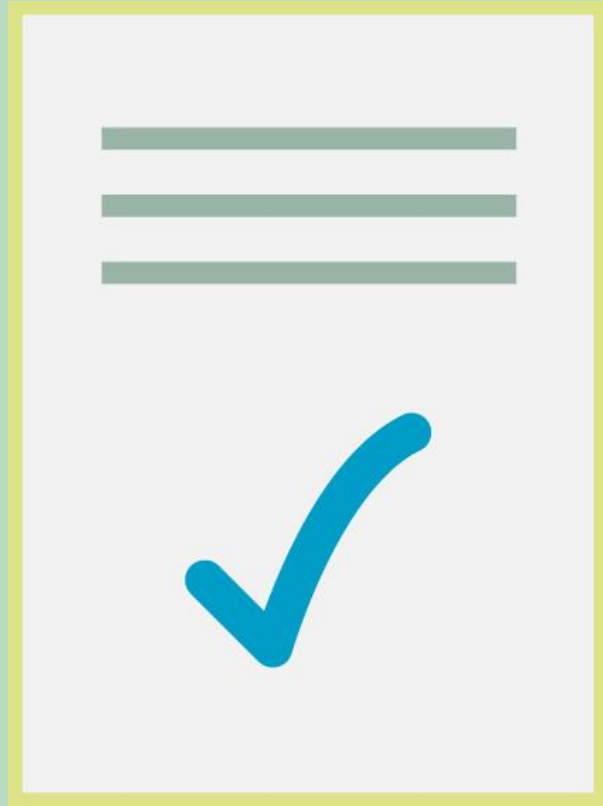
We gave staff refresher training to help them listen and fully respond to complaints.

We have made sure our advisors check the repair history before booking a new repair.

When we decline applications, more detailed information is added to explain why. We will always include a link to the website that explains the Government's criteria for the Right to Acquire scheme.

When we refer anti-social behaviour cases to our solicitors for legal advice, we will update the complainants with the action taken (unless it would be inappropriate to do so).

# How can we improve next year?



In 2025/26 we are planning to do the following:

- Launching our 'Tell us More' Data Collection Campaign
- Launching our Vulnerability Policy
- Improving our training and support offer to all SYHA staff and contractors on complaints.
- Reviewing our Compensation Policy to make sure that this is a fair offer for all customers and is offered proactively when appropriate.
- Continuing with our Quality Checks of complaint responses and supporting staff to deliver good quality responses.
- Working to understand the new Heat Network Regulations and how this might affect our complaints policy.
- Getting independent advice and recommendations for improvement from TPAS on our complaints policy and processes
- Continuing with improvements to our IT system to help us manage our complaints handling and performance better.
- Continue our trial of dedicated staff to respond to complaints about repairs and maintenance issues.
- Linking in with our new Customer Committee

# Thank you for taking the time to read this report

We hope you have learned more about our  
complaints policy and performance this year.

If you want to find out more, you can visit [our website](#)

If you have any feedback or questions about this report  
please contact:

- Email: [enquiries@syha.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@syha.co.uk)
- Call: 0114 2900 200 or 0800 1380 380

You can also visit our website to find out more about  
being involved in SYHA services

[www.syha.co.uk/our-customer-opportunities](http://www.syha.co.uk/our-customer-opportunities)



**syha.co.uk**