

NORTH CAMDEN HOUSING COOPERATIVE

2023/24 ANNUAL COMPLAINTS PERFORMANCE AND SERVICE IMPROVEMENT REPORT

This is the first annual complaints report in accordance with the Housing Ombudsman Service's new complaint handling code, which became mandatory for all social landlords from 1 April 2024. This report provides information on the number of complaints managed by North Camden Housing Cooperative (NCHC) during 23/24 and the response times against policy. This report also sets out what NCHC has learned.

NCHC owns 106 homes, all of which are social housing.

Over the course of 2023/24 we received three complaints from three members living in NCHC homes. All three complaints are related to how we have dealt with repairs and maintenance services. One of the complaints was referred to and investigated by the Housing Ombudsman Service 2023/24.

	Stage 1	Stage 2	Referred By Ombudsman
Volume	3	0	1
Total	3	0	1

Issues

1. Complaint was logged regarding lack of action dealing with a damaged back garden wall that had been previously reported.
 - a. Complaint was upheld due to inconsistent updates and NCHC not completing works & resolving in a timely manner.
2. Disrepair claim due to issue with bedroom window
 - a. The complaint was upheld due to NCHC not having a skilled contractor to complete works and not acting in timely fashion to resolve issue. A full review of contractors is underway.
3. Handling of sewage flooding property and handling of arrangements to decant and communication.
 - a. Complaint was upheld and settlement agreed, and issue resolved. Communication to be improved.

Learning Points

1. A review of our complaint logging practices has shown room for improvement. We plan to enhance our complaint recording systems, ensuring that all issues, whether classified as a service request or formal complaint are captured accurately. This will involve setting clearer distinctions between service requests and complaints to improve how issues are escalated and addressed.
2. Additional training sessions will be provided for all relevant staff to improve their ability to identify and log both service requests and complaints. This training will cover best practice in complaint handling, the importance of timely follow-ups and effective communication to ensure swift and efficient resolution process.
3. To provide Members with flexible and accessible means of submitting complaints, all current complaint channels (phone, email, online, letter and in person) will remain active. We will also review and assess these channels to confirm their effectiveness and ease of use for Members.

Conclusion

This report highlights the key areas for improvement during 2023/24 period. To enhance our services, we are committed to:

- Keeping Members better informed about progress of repairs.
- Improving our recording and logging processes to accurately capture all Member issues.
- Providing additional training to staff to improve the identification and timely logging of service requests and complaints.

We believe these actions will lead to improved Member satisfaction and a stronger complaint management process that aligns with the Housing Ombudsman's Code of Conduct.

Management Committee Response – November 2024

The Management Committee (MC) has reviewed the following documents:

1. The 2023/24 Annual Complaints Performance and Service Improvement Report.
2. Notification from the Housing Ombudsman regarding complaints.
3. NCHC Self Assessment
4. The updated Complaints Policy

The MC supports the updated Complaints Policy, which aligns with the Housing Ombudsman's Code of Conduct and recognises the importance of distinguishing service requests from complaints. By ensuring prompt response and effective communication, NCHC can better address Member needs and enhance service delivery.

Moving forward, quarterly complaints reports will be submitted to the MC. These reports will facilitate continuous monitoring and improvement of our complaint handling, ensuring we meet the expectations of our Members and the Housing Ombudsman.

The MC acknowledges that this report reflects data from 2023/24 and appreciates that the improvements implemented as of April 2024 are aimed at addressing past performance. This approach will support continuous learning and progress, ensuring we meet evolving standards and Member expectations.