



2024/25 Annual Complaints Performance & Service Improvement Report



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Complaints & feedback

Delivering good service is important to us. We want our residents to find our services responsive, reliable and easy to access. We work hard to provide a great service for all our residents but there may be times when we don't get things right.

At Guinness we value all forms of feedback, including complaints, as these help us to identify areas where we need to improve. When we make a mistake, we will always apologise, aim to put things right and do things better so we don't make the same mistake again. We use the insight from complaints to improve our services.

Our dedicated complaints team are responsible for investigating complaints and liaising with the Housing Ombudsman. The team is independent and aims to resolve all complaints promptly and fairly following the Housing Ombudsman Service's Complaint Handling Code.

Over the last twelve months we have made further improvements to how we deliver services and investigate complaints. This report outlines our complaint handling performance in 2024/25 and provides an overview of the service improvements we've made.

The complaints process

We want to make it easy for residents to make complaints and access our complaints service. We publish information about how to make a complaint on our website, in our resident magazine (“Your Guinness”), in leaflets and in other communications.

When we receive a complaint, it is assigned to a complaints officer who will acknowledge it within five working days and make the resident aware of the Housing Ombudsman Service and their right to seek advice from the Ombudsman throughout the life of their complaint.

We operate a two-stage complaints process in line with the Housing Ombudsman’s Complaint Handling Code – the detail of this is on the right.

Throughout both stages of a complaint investigation, we will ensure that we keep residents regularly updated on the progress of the complaint even if there is no new information to provide.

Where we have identified a failure in service we will always acknowledge where things have gone wrong and apologise.

We have a policy that ensures our approach to compensation is fair and consistent. Any remedy we offer reflects the extent of any failures and the level of detriment caused to the resident or their household.



Our complaints process has two stages

Stage One

- We aim to resolve complaints as quickly as possible, at first point of contact where possible.
- We will ensure that the resident is given an opportunity to set out their position and to make any comments before a final decision is made.
- Within 10 working days from the complaint acknowledgment, we will provide our findings in writing. In exceptional circumstances and with good reason, we may extend the complaint by an additional 10 working days. If this happens, we will notify the resident at the earliest possible opportunity.
- If the resident is not satisfied with the outcome, they may escalate the complaint to the next stage.

Stage Two

- If the resident decides to escalate the complaint to stage two it will be reviewed by an independent officer within Guinness.
- We will ensure that the resident is given an opportunity to set out their position and to make any comments before a final decision is made.
- Within 20 working days from the escalation acknowledgment, we will provide our findings in writing. In exceptional circumstances and with good reason, we may extend the complaint by an additional 20 working days. If this happens, we will notify the resident at the earliest possible opportunity.
- If the resident is not satisfied with the outcome, they may refer their complaint to the Housing Ombudsman Service.

Occasionally, we may decide not to investigate a complaint. We consider this on individual circumstances and on a case-by-case basis.

Some examples of complaints that may not be considered include:

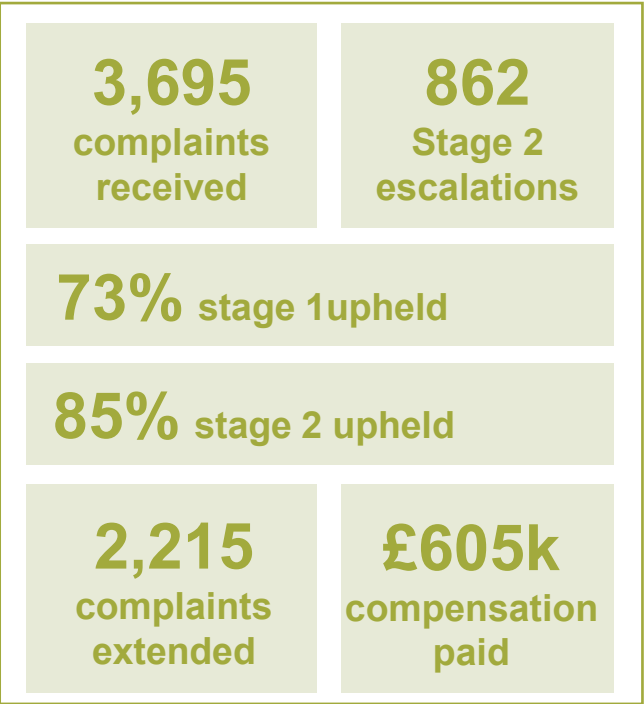
- Where the issue giving rise to the complaint occurred over twelve months before the complaint was made.
- Where the complaint has previously been considered and no substantive new information has been provided
- Where the complaint is about issues or services that are outside of Guinness’s control
- Where the complaint is about issues where legal proceedings have started or an issue relates to ongoing or possible insurance claims

Complaints performance

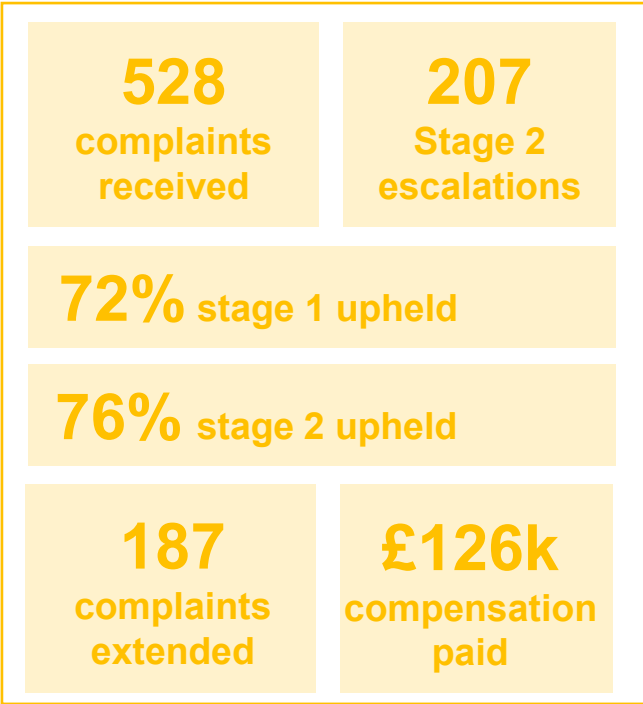
Reports about our complaints service performance are routinely provided to our Executive Team and Board.

Our complaints service is also regularly assessed by an independent third party to ensure we meet the high standards we set for ourselves.

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SBHA



Complaints performance	Guinness 2024/25	SBHA 2024/25
% stage 1s resolved within 10 working days	48%	74%
% stage 1s resolved within extension periods	70%	98%
Average stage 1 handling time (working days)	16.8	10.6
% stage 2s resolved within 20 working days	61%	76%
% stage 2s resolved within extension periods	96%	94%
Average stage 2 handling time (working days)	22.8	19

We're committed to continually improving our complaints service to ensure that residents receive a consistent service every time.

How we're improving our complaints service

- We used feedback from complaints and the Housing Ombudsman to update the training we provide our complaint handlers.
- We further increased resource on our Complaints & Resolution team to reduce complaint handling times at both stages and support fair and consistent complaint investigations.
- We made changes to our IT systems and internal processes to improve how we record and respond to failure.
- We expanded our dedicated team responsible for handling Ombudsman requests and communication.



Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs)

The Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs) were introduced by the Regulator of Social Housing in England to assess how well landlords are doing in providing good quality homes and services.

There are 22 measures, 12 of these measures come directly from our satisfaction surveys, 10 come from information we hold in our systems on our operational activity. These measures have been designed to drive up standards and improve the quality of social housing by ensuring housing providers are accountable for the services delivered to residents.

The below measures and results relate to complaints performance within the TSMs which are:

- CH01: Complaints relative to the size of the Landlord
- CH02: Complaints responded to within Complaint Handling Code timescales.
- TP09: Satisfaction with the landlord’s approach to handling complaints



Guinness & SBHA Combined

Code	Tenant Satisfaction Measures 2024/25	LCRA	LCHO
CH01 (1)	Number of stage 1 complaints received per 1,000 homes	56.0	33.2
CH01 (2)	Number of stage 2 complaints received per 1,000 homes	14.1	8.9
CH02 (1)	Portion of stage 1 complaints responded to within the Housing Ombudsman’s Complaint Handling Code timescales*	73.6%	70.0%
CH02 (2)	Portion of stage 2 complaints responded to within the Housing Ombudsman’s Complaint Handling Code timescales*	95.9%	94%
TP09	Satisfaction with the landlord’s approach to handling complaints	33.1	23.5

Learning from complaints

We understand that when things go wrong it is important to resolve the issue as quickly as possible. We also use complaints as an opportunity to learn and to improve our services and to create a positive complaint handling culture.

The top three reasons for complaints were:

- Unreasonable delays to carry out agreed actions
- Communication failures
- Repairs not complete as promised



Unreasonable delays

- Services are not consistently delivered within reasonable timescales.
- There is a need for greater accountability when things go wrong.
- We need to consider the individual support needs of residents when responding to service requests.

Communication

- Calls are not always returned within the promised timescale
- Proactive updates are sometimes not provided to residents.

Repair appointments

- Repair appointments are sometimes delayed or missed.
- Contractor performance is not always consistent.
- More than one visit is sometimes required to complete a repair.

What we've done and are doing

- Restructured, retrained, and increased the resourcing of our complaints and repairs teams.
- Continued to embed our Great Service programme for managers and colleagues to provide tools and techniques to ensure our service is responsive, reliable and consistent.
- Implemented a new process for monitoring service requests to improve accountability when things go wrong.
- Further developing training to help identify support needs and make reasonable adjustments where these are needed.

What we've done and are doing

- Increased the use of our Customer Relationship Management system (CRM), so more teams are using this routinely – improving how we monitor and manage communication with residents.
- Continued to increase engagement and consultation with residents, and the ways we capture and use resident insight.
- Introduced bulk resident communications functionality in our systems to help us provide proactive updates to residents more efficiently.

What we've done and are doing

- Revised our repairs processes and have implemented training that focuses on taking accountability to increase the number of first appointment repair fixes.
- Reviewed our practices for maintaining oversight of our third-party contractors including the completion of works carried-out on behalf of Guinness, record keeping, and communication with residents.
- A review of the no-access process to ensure communications are both frequent enough and clear enough to residents. This work includes engagement with residents.

Housing Ombudsman

If a resident remains dissatisfied with our final complaint response, we refer them to the Housing Ombudsman Service who will consider the complaint under their own formal assessment process.

Once an investigation is complete, the Housing Ombudsman Service shares its determination and investigation report which outlines findings, recommendations and orders.

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Within in each determination, the Ombudsman may make one or more of the following findings:

- **No maladministration** – where Guinness have acted in accordance with our obligations.
- **Service failure** – where there is evidence of a minor failing.
- **Maladministration** – where there was a failure which has adversely affected the resident.
- **Severe maladministration** – where there is evidence of serious detrimental impact to the resident.
- **Redress** – there is evidence of maladministration, but Guinness have taken steps to put things right
- **Outside jurisdiction** – the complaint has not been considered by the Ombudsman

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SBHA

Findings	2024/25 (volume)	2024/25 (%)	2024/25 (volume)	2024/25 (%)
No maladministration	34	10%	3	5%
Service failure	80	23%	19	34%
Maladministration	130	37%	26	47%
Severe maladministration	8	2%	0	0%
Redress	67	19%	8	14%
Outside jurisdiction	31	9%	0	0%

Learning from Ombudsman determinations

The Guinness Partnership aims to learn from every complaint and promotes a positive complaint handling culture, using feedback from residents and the Ombudsman as opportunities to improve.

When we received a determination from the Housing Ombudsman Service, we review their findings, action any orders and recommendations and implement any improvements that are required.

Over the last 12 months we have made changes to our services to support continuous improvement and learning from Ombudsman determinations.



Learnings and improvements made

- We revised our repairs processes and have implemented training that focuses on taking accountability to increase the number of first appointment repair fixes.
- We reviewed our practices for maintaining oversight of our third-party contractors including the completion of works carried-out on behalf of Guinness, record keeping, and communication with residents.
- We continued to embed our Great Service programme for managers and colleagues to provide tools and techniques to ensure our service is responsive, reliable and consistent.
- We are undertaking a review of the no access process to ensure communications are both frequent enough and clear enough to residents. This work includes engagement with residents.
- We updated our CRM case management system to allow the management of our end-to-end Lettings process.
- We updated our CRM case management system with specific fields to report and monitor reasonable adjustments required for residents during the complaints process.
- We introduced and embedded a new approach to handling reports of anti-social behaviour as part of our Neighbourhood strategy.
- We made improvements to our Documents and Records Management Policy to support our Knowledge and Information Strategy.
- We are developing a training programme to enhance our knowledge and understanding of neurodiversity within our policies and procedures.
- We established a dedicated managing agent team to improve how we handle and respond to concerns raised about services in buildings owned and managed by third parties.