



Coastline

Coastline
housing

Annual Complaints Performance and Service Improvement Report 2024/25





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Introduction

We are committed to listening, learning and continually improving.

When our customers tell us something has gone wrong, we will:

- Listen, apologise and acknowledge when something should have been done, or done to a better standard.
- Aim to take swift action to resolve the issues as soon as possible.
- Ensure our customers are not left out of pocket and are in the same position before the issue occurred.
- Learn from our customers' experience and make improvements to our services.

This report gives an overview of the complaints and compliments we received between the 1st April 2024 and the 31st March 2025 and an analysis of our complaints handling performance.

It also provides information on how we responded to complaints and what actions we have taken to improve our services and ensure these issues do not affect other customers in the future.

Board's Response to Annual Complaints Performance and Service Improvement Report

Based upon the content of the Annual Report and in the view of the Chair of the CEC in her role as the Member Responsible for Complaints under the Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code, the Board approved the following response for publication:

"At its meeting in May 2025 the Board received the Annual Complaints Performance and Service Improvement Report under the Housing Ombudsman Service Complaint Handling Code.

The Board noted that the performance levels and improvement actions had also been reviewed by the Customer Experience Committee and the self-assessment against the Code had been reviewed by the Audit, Risk and Assurance Committee.

The Board confirmed that complaints provide an important source of customer feedback and learning and that Coastline maintains a positive complaint handling culture.

Whilst the Board acknowledged the good complaint handling performance during the year, the Board urged that lessons continue to be learned and implemented to improve service delivery."

2024/25 complaints received

In 2024/25 we received a total of **89** Stage 1 complaints, and **25** progressed to Stage 2, for review by an independent Panel.

If the customer is in agreement we will handle the case as a service request and aim to resolve these within 4 working days. If a customer expresses the wish for the case to be handled as a complaint we will do so, or if the case cannot be resolved within 4 working days as a service request.

Our Stage 2 Panels consist of an individual from our Group Board (Non-Executive Director) an independent member from our Executive Team and a customer from our Customer Experience Committee.



Complaints refused

On some occasions we are unable to progress an issue raised through our published Complaints Policy. This could be for issues raised which are not within Coastline's control or responsibility, such as making repairs to a road which does not belong to Coastline or asking for a product or service we do not provide.

When we decline to take an issue forward as a complaint, we will provide the customer with reasons for the decision, advise which Policy exclusion has been applied from our published Complaints Policy and provide the customer with contact information for the Housing Ombudsman Service, should they wish to seek further clarification, advice or guidance.

During the year, in accordance with our policy, we did not accept **17** issues referred to us, for the following reasons:

- **15** were about a service which Coastline does not provide
- **1** was about service charge or rent increases
- **1** was for an issue which took place more than 12 months ago and the specifics of the case did not justify accepting it.

Complaint Mentors

Coastline has in place a group of involved customers who have completed training on our Complaints Procedures, Safeguarding Policy and Procedures as well as General Data Protection Regulations, who are ready to provide support to customers through any stage of their complaints journey. This initiative is designed to offer practical guidance and advice to any customer who may be feeling vulnerable or isolated, who would appreciate support when making a complaint.

During 2024/25 we received **3** requests from customers for a Complaint Mentor to be assigned to support them and we encourage anyone using the Complaints Procedures to consider the offer which is made at the start of the process by the Complaints Team.

Complaints performance

The Housing Ombudsman Service Complaint Handling Code sets out targets for all providers when dealing with complaints for customers:

Stage 1 acknowledgements to be sent within 5 working days of receipt

Stage 1 responses to be sent within 10 working days (from date of acknowledgement) or within an extension which needs to be clearly communicated with our customers. For the **89** complaints Coastline received and investigated at Stage 1, we were **85%** compliant with the Code.

Stage 2 acknowledgements to be sent within 5 working days of receipt.

Stage 2 responses to be sent within 20 working days (from date of acknowledgement) or within an extension which needs to be clearly communicated with customers. For the **25** complaints we reviewed at Stage 2, we were **100%** compliant with the Code.

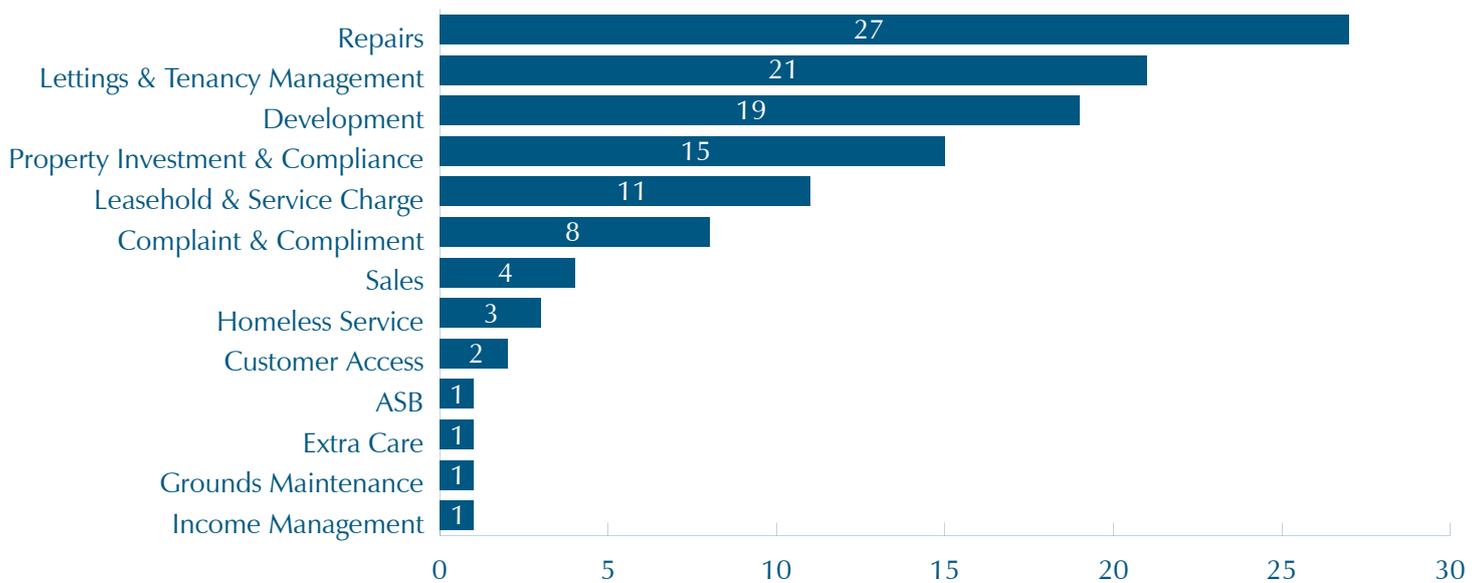
Stage 1
85%
compliant
with Code

Stage 2
100%
compliant
with Code

Complaints by service area

Complaints can be received in a number of different ways, across a number of different service areas.

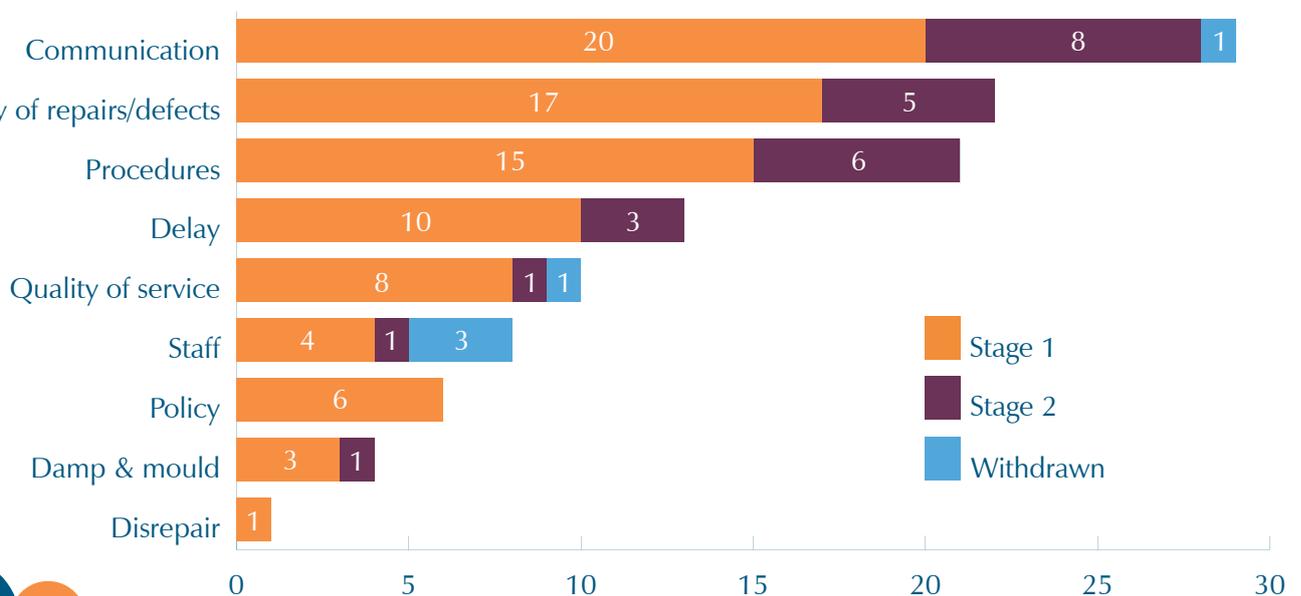
The graph below illustrates the number of complaints received for each service area.



Complaints by theme

When we review and analyse complaints received, we need to clearly understand why the issues have arisen so we can tackle the root cause and make improvements which will stop issues from recurring.

During the year the biggest area of dissatisfaction from our customers was in relation to our 'communication' and our 'quality of repairs/defects', followed by 'procedures' and 'delay'. The graph below illustrates the number of complaints received for each key theme.





Complaints outcomes by stage and tenancy type

Stage 1

When we investigate a complaint, the Investigating Manager will review the root cause, identify improvements which we need to put into place, ensure our customers are not left 'out of pocket' and acknowledge where we could have, and should have, done things better.

The written Stage 1 findings will confirm to the customer whether the Investigating Manager has fully upheld, partially upheld or rejected a complaint along with reasons why the decision has been made.

All Investigating Managers take ownership of the issues raised through to completion of any outstanding works as well as implementation of improvements or further action identified.

During 2024/25, of the **89** Stage 1 complaints which were reviewed **72** were upheld or partially upheld, **9** were rejected, **3** were still under review as at 31st March 2025, and **5** were withdrawn.

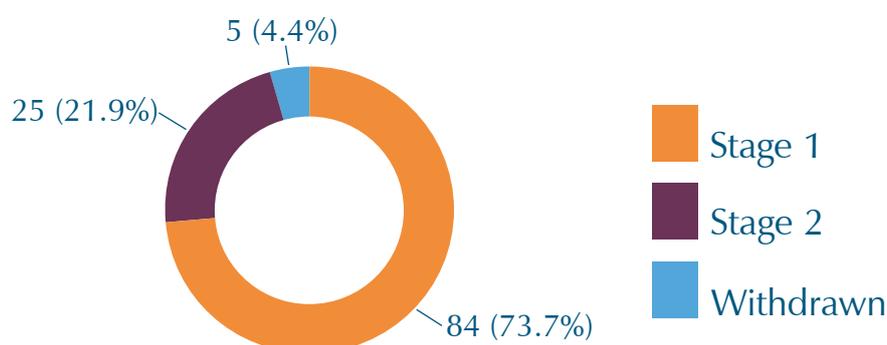
Stage 2

When a customer escalates their complaint to Stage 2, an independent Panel Review will take place. The customer is invited to attend so the Panel can hear the customer's concerns first-hand. The Panel will review the investigation and decision made by the Stage 1 Investigating Manager and will write to the customer with their findings, highlighting where further action can be taken to improve our ongoing service delivery and processes, for the benefit of all Coastline customers.

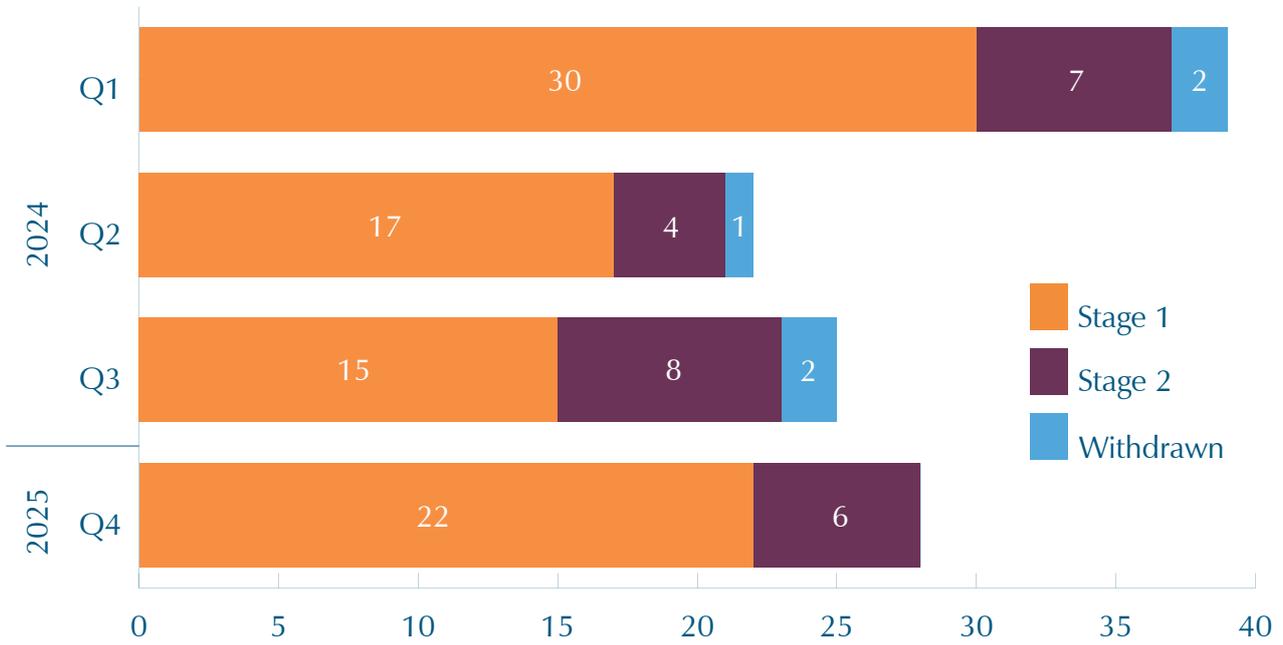
The Stage 2 findings will confirm to the customer whether the Panel has fully upheld, partially upheld or rejected a complaint along with reasons why the decision has been made.

During 2024/25, of the **25** Stage 2 complaints which were reviewed by a Panel, **19** were upheld or partially upheld, **5** were rejected and **1** was still under review as at 31st March 2025.

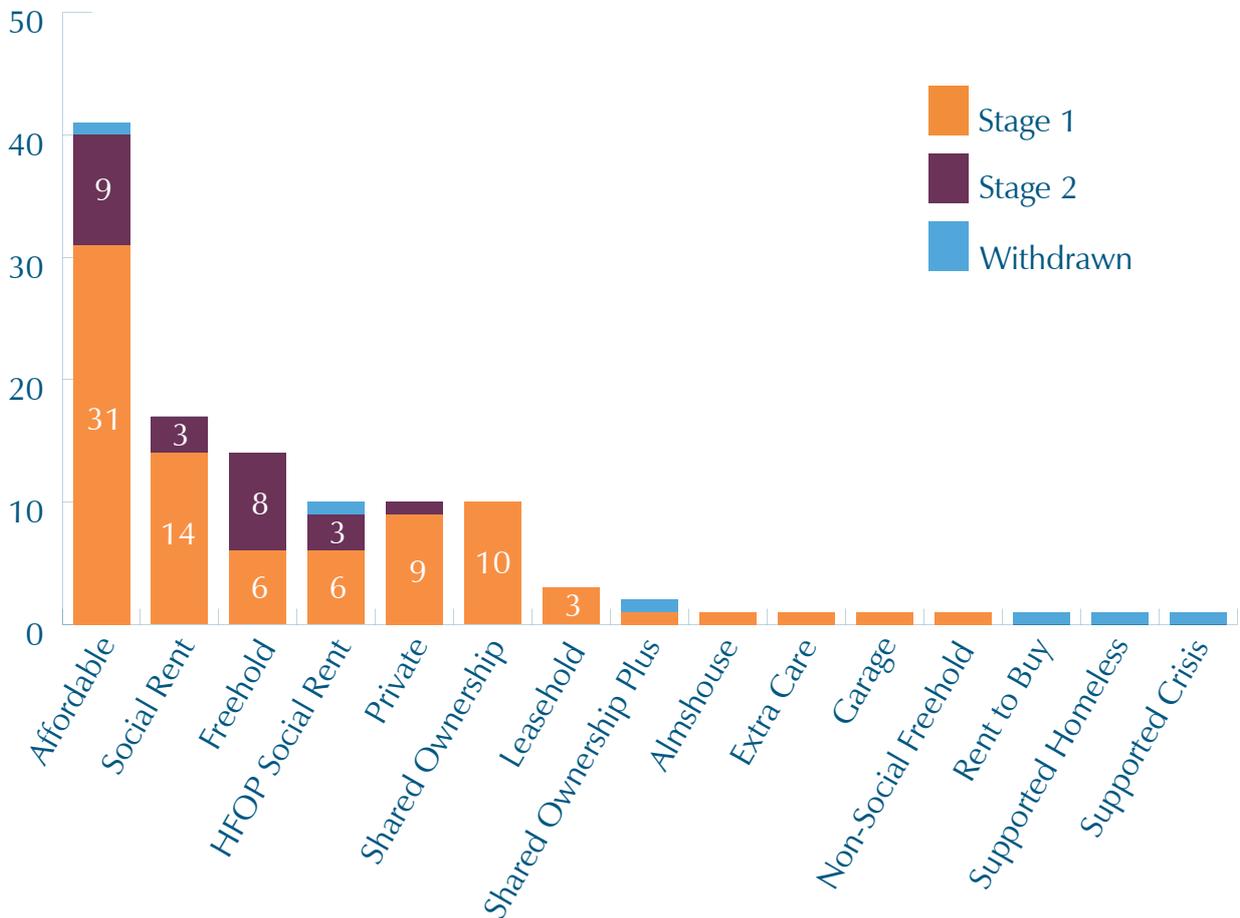
Complaints proportion by stage



Complaints per quarter



Complaints by tenancy type



Learning from our mistakes

We are always keen to take the time to listen to our customers, to hear what is being said to us and to understand how our services or processes have affected or negatively impacted our customers. When we receive a complaint, it is important we look carefully at what's gone wrong so that we can learn from our mistakes and improve services going forward.

We are pleased that a total of **79** commitments and improvements to our services were identified during 2024/25 as a result of complaints received from our customers. The top five themes identified for improvement were Communication, Quality of Service, Procedure, Training and Process.

The following are examples of improvements that were identified:

- Supervisors taking ownership of damage caused on site by operatives and recognising the impact this would have on our customers.
- Ensuring reasonable adjustments are being made by colleagues for our vulnerable customers.
- Ensure colleagues are proactively providing the details of Victim Support to customers.
- Making changes to make certain our customers are aware of when chimney works will be happening to avoid unexpected mess.
- Training has been given to colleagues to ensure sales content online is consistent to avoid confusion for customers.

During the year we also met and consulted with involved customers to review our dedicated complaints web page and have made several improvements to the language, content and amount of information we provide.

Service improvements and commitments identified

| Teams | Communication | Quality of Service | Procedure | Colleague Training | Resourcing | Process | Health & Safety | Timing & Organisation |
|----------------------------|---------------|--------------------|-----------|--------------------|------------|----------|-----------------|-----------------------|
| Development | 9 | 6 | 1 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 0 |
| Leasehold & Service Charge | 3 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Tenancy | 7 | 2 | 4 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Complaints | 0 | 2 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Repairs | 8 | 3 | 0 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 | 2 |
| Sales | 3 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Property Investment | 2 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 0 |
| Grounds Maintenance | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| Totals | 32 | 14 | 9 | 8 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 3 |

Disrepair claims

During 2024/25, we received **7** disrepair claims from solicitors acting on behalf of our customers. Of these, **3** were closed by the customers' solicitors. We have **6** cases are currently ongoing, including **2** carried over from the previous year.

We encourage any customer who believes their property requires repairs to report these direct to Coastline in the first instance. We have a dedicated Damp and Mould Team in place who will visit within a few days and take proactive action to help alleviate any problems and help to stop these recurring.

If you have previously reported the issues and these have not been resolved, our Complaints Procedures are designed to provide swift and easy way to resolve these issues, and it's completely free of charge.

Housing Ombudsman and Information Commissioners Office Determinations

During 2024/25, **5** complaints were referred to the Housing Ombudsman Service for independent review, following conclusion of our Complaints Procedures at Stage 2. **8** cases remain under assessment by the Ombudsman and they relate to our Antisocial Behaviour (ASB) handling, staff conduct and noise disturbance.

During the year the Ombudsman Determined **2** cases.

1 case, in relation to ongoing repairs was reviewed by the Ombudsman who provided a Determination in January 2025. Whilst four areas of the complaint were outside of the Ombudsman's jurisdiction, it did find three service failures in relation to:

1. Coastline's response to the residents reports of noise and ASB handling
2. staff conduct
3. complaint handling.

Coastline was instructed to issue a formal written apology to the customer and pay £300 compensation (£100 for each of the three service failures identified).

1 case, in relation to a Subject Access Request (SAR) and delays in our response was found to be outside of the Ombudsman's jurisdiction. The Ombudsman declined to take this case forward as the issues fall under the remit of the Information Commissioners Officer (ICO). A complaint was also made by the customer to the ICO who provided findings to Coastline in November 2024 with recommendations that we improve our response process by purchasing and installing new extraction and redaction software, review the language used when replying to concerns about redactions in personal data and undertake annual reviews of our SAR procedures.



Compliments

In 2024-25, we received a total of **1,742** compliments.

Our Repairs Team and contractors providing services continue to receive the highest number in addition to other teams and individual colleagues being highlighted by our customers as delivering excellent levels of customer service.

The graph below shows a breakdown of all of our teams and contractors where compliments were received over the year.

