

QUADRANT BROWNSWOOD TENANTS CO-OPERATIVE

23/24 ANNUAL COMPLAINTS PERFORMANCE AND SERVICE IMPROVEMENT REPORT

A REVIEW OF COMPLAINTS HANDLED BY CHS ON BEHALF OF QUADRANT BROWNSWOOD TENANT CO-OPERATIVE IN 2023-2024

Quadrant Brownwood Tenant Co-operative (QBTC) owns 136 homes, all of which are social housing. QBTC outsources service delivery to a managing agent Co-op Homes (South) Limited (CHS).

Any member of the co-op or other stakeholder who has a consumer complaint about the landlord service can make a complaint to QBTC at homes@coophomes.coop or through alternative channels set out in the complaints policy. CHS will investigate and respond to complaints about their service, and QBTC's complaints officer will investigate and respond to complaints about Management Committee (MC) actions.

This is the first annual complaints report in accordance with the Housing Ombudsman'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 CHS during 23/24 and the response times against policy. This report also sets out what CHS has learned.

Complaints volume

During 2023/24:

CHS received 5 complaints from members living in the 136 homes owned by QBTC.

- Stage 1 – 5 complaints
- Stage 2 – 4 complaints
- Referred to the Ombudsman – 4 complaints

The MC received 3 complaints from members living in the 136 homes owned by QBTC

stage 1 – 3 complaints

The volume of stage 1 complaints equates to 58.8 complaints received per 1,000 homes. This is higher than 39.7 for landlords submitting data to Housemark.

The volume of stage 2 complaints equates to 29.4 complaints received per 1,000 homes. This is high compared to 5.3 for landlords submitting data to Housemark as reported in the Housemark Tenant Satisfaction Measures 2023/24 year-end results report June 2024.

Timeliness of responses:

At stage 1 of the process 4 out of 5 (80%) of the complaints progressed by CHS were responded to within 10 working days. The fifth complaint was responded to in 13 working days. Performance against the target response time is just below median performance, which is 85.3% from Housemark data. At stage 1 of the process all of the 3 (100%) of complaints progressed by the MC were responded to within 10 days.

At stage 2 of the process 2 out of 4 (50%) of the complaints progressed by CHS were responded to within the 20 working day policy target. The other two complaints (50%) were responded to in 21 and 27 working days. Housemark have not reported response performance for stage 2 complaint handling.

Learning from complaints

All of the complaints progressed by CHS covered multiple issues.

- All included complaints related to CHS's repairs and maintenance service

- All included complaints about communicating and listening
- 2 included complaints relating to rent setting
- 2 included complaints relating to management of temporary housing arrangements
- 2 included complaints relating to complaint handling
- 2 included complaints about withholding consent for thermal efficiency works
- 1 included complaint a relating to handling of a Subject Access Request

3 of the complaints progressed by CHS were referred to the Housing Ombudsman Service in 2023/24. The Ombudsman did not issue any determinations in 23/24. CHS provided evidence requested for 2 of the 4 cases referred to the Ombudsman in 23/24. Additional insight from determinations by the Ombudsman in these cases will be reported in 24/25.

CHS referred three complaints to the Management Committee (MC) during 23/24 that the MC chose log, investigate and respond to directly as the complaints were about action being taken by the MC, including dealing with the issues as insurance claims. The MC provided partial information on two of three complaints for this annual report, and may have received more complaints directly..

This annual report therefore under reports by one, or more, complaints. QBTC acknowledges this under reporting. The MC made improvements in November 2024 – adopting a new policy that outsources complaint handling to CHS. The new policy is published on QBTC’s page of the website of CHS

Learning from complaints in 23/24 to improve services

The five complaints dealt with by CHS cover a range of issues, and the volume of complaints is too low to identify trends, but we take learning from each individual complaint.

Issue	Learning points for the landlord
A series of repairs were carried out over time to address plumbing leaks. As the repairs didn’t fully resolve the leaks we recommended a replacement bathroom.	We realise repeat repairs have a big impact on households and leaks cause additional damp and potentially mould problems. The initial repairs carried out were correctly diagnosed and proportionate, however ongoing issues then necessitated full replacement. The co-op will consider making earlier replacement in a similar situation in the future.
Complaints have said that progress on repairs and maintenance, including major repairs has been too slow, resulting in excessive delays, and they have not been kept adequately up to date with progress.	CHS increased the number of customer service advisers during the year to improve call answering our customer services number and to monitor and progress repair issues. We realise the importance of keeping customers up to date. We will improve our communications, including better communication when we are waiting for other stakeholders.
Some complaints have involved requests for services that are outside of policy.	We aim to respond positively to all requests for service. Where we refuse service requests because they are outside of policy, we will be clearer in communicating policy.
Some complaints involved major works for households with household members who have vulnerabilities and temporary accommodation was an option. Complainants told us that we failed to empathise with vulnerabilities.	We realise the significant stress caused by major works in your home, and that the stress is more severe where household members have vulnerabilities. We have improved our communication to seek to better convey our empathy. We consider appropriate referrals to Occupational Health to help make informed decisions on a case-by-case basis and will seek

	to communicate more effectively between parties.
A complainant disagreed with the co-op's policy that rents are rebased at re-let.	Rent policy results in neighbours with similar homes but different tenancy start dates paying different levels of rent. We will be clearer in explaining the Co-op's rent policy.
The information provided under a Subject Access Request (SAR) has been the subject of complaints.	We realise members always have a purpose when they make a SAR. We follow legal requirements on the provision and redaction of information. We will seek to better explain the information that is provided through a SAR.
A complainant with an issue that had persisted for 8 years complained that we only reviewed service provision over the last 6 months.	We have updated our complaints policy to review service delivery over the past 12 months, rather than 6 months, in complaint investigations.
Most complainants were dissatisfied with communication and complaint handling from Co-op Homes	CHS improved tracking of our complaint handling timescales last year to help improve performance in 24/25. The Co-op should be easy to contact via CHS via telephone on 020 3166 2608 and always reply to an email within 48 hours. The Co-op is keen to know if we fall short and we're grateful for all feedback on our complaints process.

MANAGEMENT'S COMMITTEE'S RESPONSE TO THE ANNUAL COMPLAINTS PERFORMANCE AND SERVICE IMPROVEMENT REPORT

In July and November 2024 the Management Committee received:

- the 23/24 annual complaints performance and service improvement report for residents living in homes owned by QBTC and managed by CHS.
- An updated complaints policy, for consumer complaints from residents living in homes owned by QBTC and managed by Co-op Homes, which meets the requirements of the new Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code 2024
- A self-assessment against the new Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code 2024

The Management Committee has a Member Responsible for Complaints (MRC), the Secretary or other nominated member, who provides assurance to the Committee on the effectiveness of complaints handling. The MRC and the Committee updated its complaint policy in November 2024. The MC considered and approved the self-assessment that QBTC did not fully comply with all aspects of the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code 2024 until November 2024.

Given the size of the Co-op, QBTC does not have enough complaints to learn from trends, but we have reported on the themes from five complaints received in 23/24 that were handled by CHS.