



Complaints Update			
Meeting:	Broadland Housing Association Board Meeting 19 May 2026		
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Presenter:	Iain Grieve, Executive Resources Director		
Why this paper is coming to the meeting:	To update Board on complaint performance for 2025/26, the recent review of our Complaints Policy and Procedure and the focus on improving complaint learning, early resolution and service improvements. This paper also provides assurance on our approach to the Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code and the work to improve our response to complaints where themes have been identified through repeat complaints, escalations and upheld outcomes.		
Invitation:	The Board are invited to note updates on complaint performance and updates to the Complaint Policy and Procedure.		
Key issue(s) for the Board to consider:	The key issues that the board need to be aware of are: • Our current performance in relation to complaint volumes, outcomes and escalation from stage 1 to stage 2. • Repairs account for the majority of complaints, particularly due to repair delays, appointment communication, damp and mould, and the handling of follow on works. • The Complaints Policy and Procedure has been reviewed, with a stronger focus on early resolution, stage 2 process, reasonable adjustments, unacceptable behaviour management and learning. • Complaint learnings • Compensation spend has increased to £98,191.87, which reflects the continued financial impact of complaints, repair delays and complex cases.		
Corporate strategy reference(s):	Empowering residents to shape Broadland		
	Welcoming complaints and learning from them.		
Risk map references: (including code)	Ensuring the long-term viability of Broadland		
	Complying with all applicable regulations		
Risk map references: (including code)	CDR3		
	Lack of ownership, and poor communication with residents results in increased customer dissatisfaction as evidenced by the Tenant Perception Survey, complaints and reputational damage.		

	CDR17	a	Failure to appropriately consider the Housing Ombudsman Advisory Spotlight Reports leading to increased tenant dissatisfaction and possible negative regulatory judgements.	
		b	Adverse Housing Ombudsman decisions that appear inconsistent with precedents damage the reputation of the Association with tenants and stakeholders	
		c	Housing Ombudsman increased powers result in maladministration judgements and increased compensation orders	
Climate change implications:	There are no climate change implications arising from the report.			
Safety and Health implications:	We have received complaints about Health and safety related repairs not being carried out in a timely manner. These are raised to the Health and Safety Team, investigated as complaints and learning identified accordingly.			
Impact on needs and safety of Customers:	This report aims to assure that complaints are taken seriously.			
Tenant Feedback:	The tenant perception survey results informed us of the areas within the Complaint Handling Code Self-Assessment which required improvements.			
Independent East Position	The benchmarking data regarding complaints from the tenant perception survey indicates that Independent East landlords are in a similar position.			
Impact on Trust/Reputation:	Failure to take complaints seriously and learn from them may result in residents not trusting Broadland. This may lead to more complaints being escalated and published by the Housing Ombudsman. It may also lead to more negative social media and media attention.			
Equality, diversity, and inclusion implications:	EIA has been completed to submit with the reviewed complaints policy and procedure.			
Financial implications:	Compensation and reimbursement spend for 2025/26 is £98,191.87. This is significantly above the original annual budget of £55,000 and above the previously reforecast position of £90,000. This reflects the impact of complex complaints, repair delays, increased expectations around compensation and the importance of resolving complaints early where we are able to do so fairly.			
Value for Money: Economy – Efficiency – Effectiveness – Equity – Environmental				
Compliance with the Complaint Handling Code should demonstrate improved efficiencies, effectiveness, and the equity of compensation decisions.				

Learning from complaints should also reduce repeat service failures, avoid unnecessary escalation and reduce the long-term cost of unresolved issues.

1. Report / Background

- 1.1 This report provides an update on complaint performance and trends for the 2025/26 financial year, together with an update on the review of our Complaints Policy and Procedure.

The review has taken place at a point where complaints have moved into the Resource and Business Services Directorate. This gave us an opportunity to consider ownership, consistency, operational challenges and the pressure created by complaint volumes and stage 2 escalations.

The review has also taken account of the Tenant Assurance Panel workshop action plan looking to improve communication, ownership and learning.

The Complaint Policy and Procedure has been updated and is available to view in the board resources area.

- 1.2 The main purpose of the review has been to improve our approach to complaint handling by making it more efficient, proportionate and outcome focused. This includes not only how complaints are responded to, but also how they are being used to ensure that, as an organisation, we are learning from the complaints that we receive.

In addition to improving the efficiency of the process, there is now a stronger focus on learning from complaints as a core output, making sure that themes, repeat issues and areas of service failure are identified, acted upon and monitored with accountability.

The changes to stage 2 complaints support this approach by introducing a more proportionate review model, reducing unnecessary demand on resource while maintaining independence in oversight. This will enable us better focus on resolving, learning and continuous improvements.

The main change is that stage 2 panel meetings will no longer be the default position. The stage 2 complaint will now be reviewed by a member of the Executive Team and a Board member who will decide whether a meeting is needed.

Where a meeting is not needed, a stage 2 response will still be issued following a review.

We have introduced a formal approach to managing unacceptable behaviour, ensuring that excessive, repetitive or disproportionate contact does not place unnecessary strain on resources. This supports the organisation to provide a fair and timely service to all complainants. The policy also aligns the application of

reasonable adjustments to ensure that the complaints process remains fair and accessible while remaining practical and proportionate in practice.

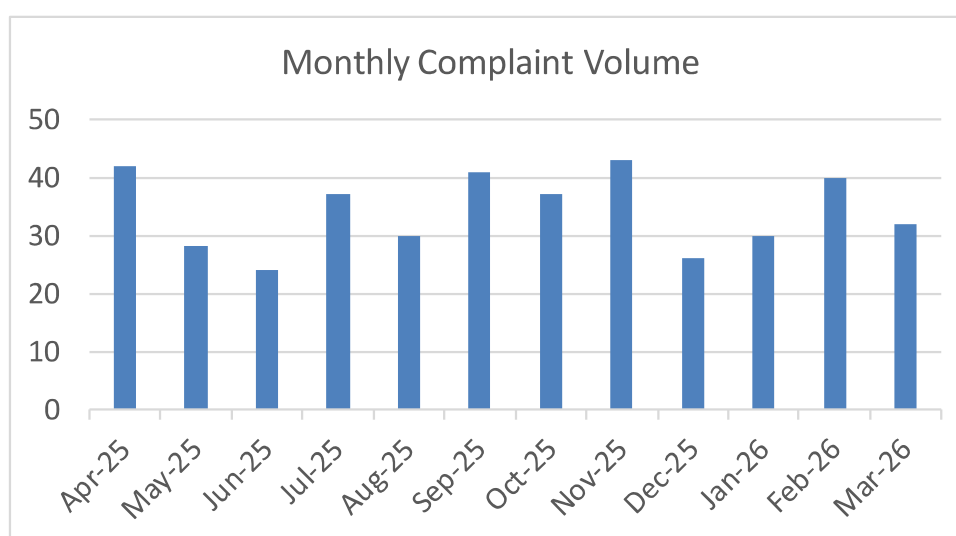
Expectations around compensation has been clarified, with awarded and accepted offers being made in full and final settlement at stage 1. Where compensation awards made in full and final settlement are accepted by the complainant, the compensation level will not be reviewed during any stage 2 review.

The key focus from this revised approach that we have taken is to place emphasis on learning from complaints, accountability and actions. Learning is treated as a core output of the process, with focus on identifying root causes, repeat issues and opportunities to prevent complaints from arising. This includes taking feedback from staff and complainants and ensuring that actions from complaints are followed up, owned and monitored through the organisation from Executive level through to those operationally responsible for embedding the learning and service improvements and taking forward actions.

2. Performance

2.1 During 2025/26, we received 410 stage 1 service complaints.

Complaint volumes fluctuated month by month, with the highest volumes recorded in November 2025 and February 2026. The below table demonstrates the monthly complaint volume experienced this financial year.



There was a noticeable dip in December, which reflected the shorter working month and holiday period. Complaint numbers increased again in February.

2.2 Our performance data shows that the 410 complaints were linked to approximately 347 individual complainant/property records.

There were 45 residents who complained more than once. Of these:

- 34 residents complained twice.
- 7 residents complained three times.
- A small number of residents complained more frequently.

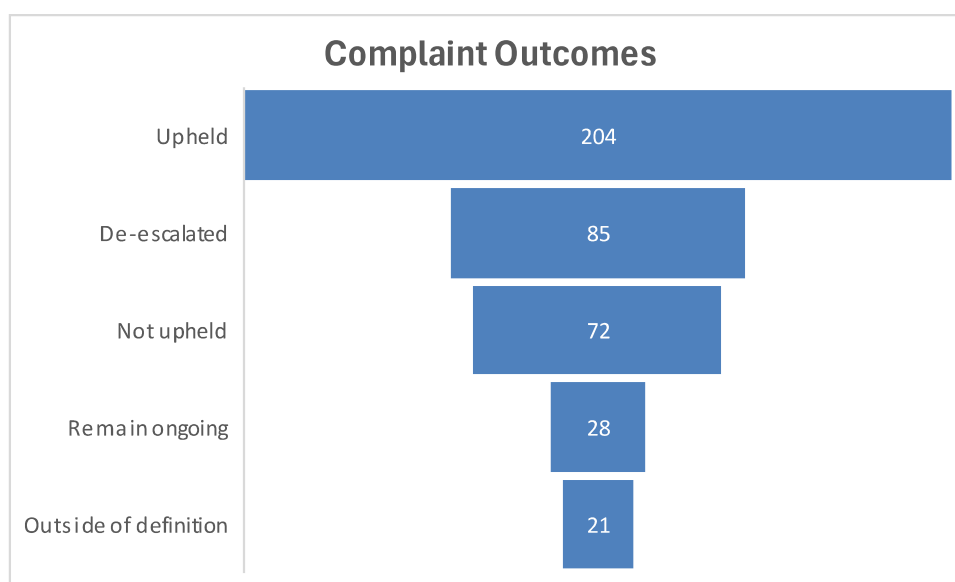
Repeat complaints could indicate unresolved issues or poor communication or that residents feel that previous complaints have not resulted in meaningful change.

Repeat complaint analysis will be used more actively as part of the complaint learning cycle moving forward, in particular where the same resident, property or complaint theme appears more than once.

The new Complaints Policy and Procedure support this analysis by introducing clear control measures around how repeat and ongoing contact is managed. We have included a structured approach to managing unacceptable behaviour where contact becomes excessive or disproportionate as well as appropriate application of reasonable adjustments for both complainants and us as an organisation to ensure that residents are supported to engage with the process in a fair, accessible and proportionate way.

These measures intend to provide consistent and proportionate management of repeat and excessive contact allowing us to remain focused on resolving issues and identifying underlying causes.

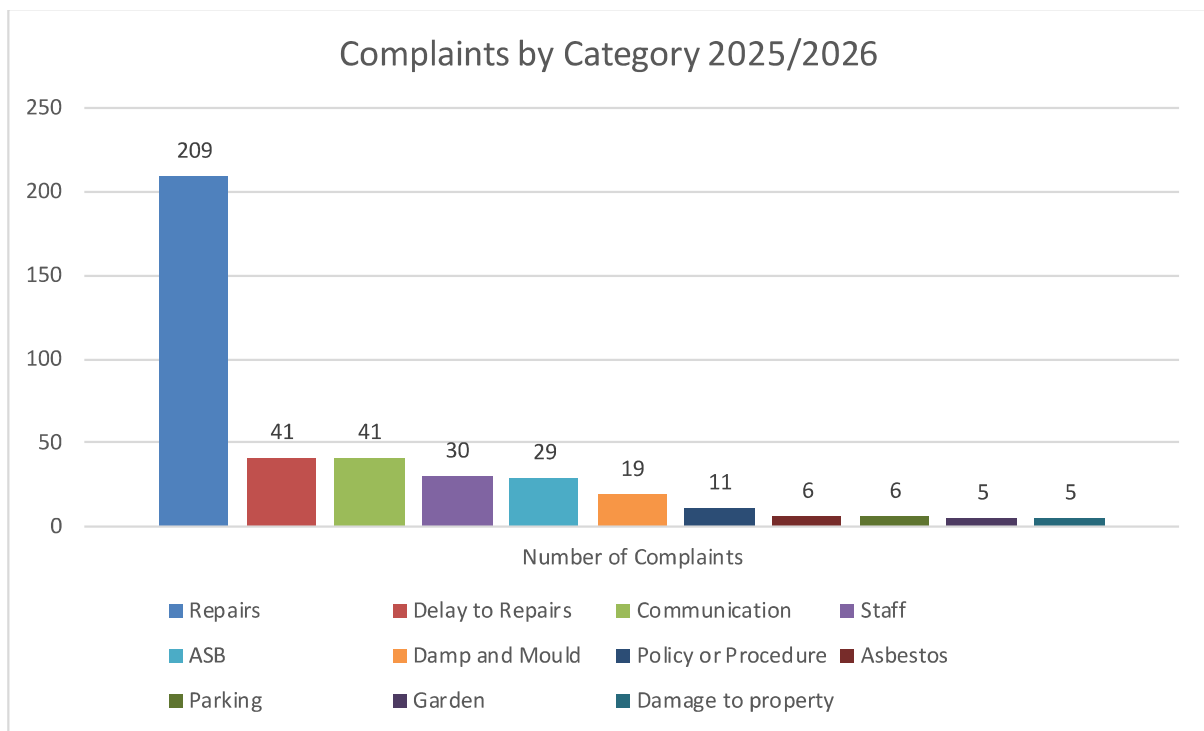
2.3 Complaint outcomes



The number of upheld complaints shows that the significant proportion of complainants are raising genuine concerns. This supports the need for continued focus on learning and service improvement.

The number of de-escalated complaints is also positive. It shows that early contact and practical resolution is being used to avoid unnecessary formal progress where a reasonable and agreeable outcomes can be achieved.

2.4 Complaints by category



Repairs remain the largest complaint category. When repairs, communication, damp and mould and damage to property are considered together, they account for a significant proportion of the complaints received. To help understand the proportion of complaints to the volume of repairs, 1% of repairs resulted in a complaint being raised.

This is consistent with previous reporting; however, the approach is now shifting to a more accountable learning structure. Complaint themes relating to repairs are being analysed to identify specific service failures, repeat issues and underlying causes, with actions tracked through the complaint learning process and reported on to Wider Leadership for progress updates and accountability.

We want to provide more assurance around how these issues are being addressed. Placing ownership, structure and monitoring the actions from complaints and the learning. There is now a more consistent approach to ensuring that learning is translated into service improvements. This aims to reduce repeat complaints and improve the overall quality of the service provided to complainants.

3. **Stage 2 complaints**

- 3.1 There were 44 complaints escalated to stage 2 during 2025/2026. This gives a stage 2 escalation rate of approximately 10.7%.

This is a positive position when considered against the number of stage 1 complaints received. It suggests that most complaints are either resolved at stage 1 or de-escalated.

With the increase in stage 2 complaints, we have reconsidered our approach. Stage 2 can be resource intensive, particularly where panel meetings are arranged by default.

4. **Housing Ombudsman**

- 4.1 This financial year, we received 3 Housing Ombudsman Determinations. We have 1 outstanding action from the orders of that determination which has dependencies on Neighbourhood Management related findings which are outside of our control in order to complete.

5. Policy and Procedure Update

- 5.1 The Complaints Policy and Procedure has been fully reviewed. The core principles of the two-stage complaints process remain unchanged:

The review has focused on making the process more robust and proportionate.

- 5.2 Key changes:

The policy and procedure have been strengthened to respond to operational pressures, increasing complaint volumes and the need to ensure that the complaint process remains fair, proportionate and sustainable. The key areas of strengthening are set out below.

The approach to stage 2 complaints has been altered so that panel meetings are no longer the default position. Instead, all stage 2 complaints are subject to an initial review by a member of the Executive Team, who determines whether a panel meeting is required with a further check from a Board Member.

We have introduced management of unacceptable behaviour to our policy and procedure aligning to Housing Ombudsman guidance for landlords. This reflected the need to make sure that excessive, repetitive or disproportionate contact does not place undue pressure on staff time and resources. By managing this appropriately, Broadland will be better able to maintain consistent, fair and timely service for all complainants, while still progressing and resolving complaints fairly.

Reasonable adjustments are considered and applied, so that the complaints process remains accessible and fair for residents who require additional support. In addition to that the policy recognises that proportionate adjustments may also be required in how we manage the process, particularly where the complexity, volume or nature of contact creates operational challenges. This ensures that both accessibility and effective service delivery are balanced.

To ensure consistent decision making, reduce risk of repeated escalation on resolved complaint elements and provide clear outcomes for residents, we have introduced a control measure to compensation awards where an offer of compensation is accepted in full and final settlement at stage 1, that award will then not be reconsidered at stage 2.

Our key emphasis when strengthening our process is through learning from complaints. Our new approach ensures that learning is identified as a core output from the service. Learning is to be identified through complaint investigation, feedback and complaint themes and data trends. Actions will be clearly defined and owned and delivery of those actions is monitored through Wider Leadership Group.

6. Complaint Learning

- 6.1 Each complaint, more so where upheld, provides us with an opportunity to learn and improve our services.

Learning from complaints is now a key priority of the complaints service. Clear expectations that actions arising from complaints are not only identified but delivered and embedded within services.

Responsibility for implementing improvements will be with Executive Directors and Assistant Directors, who are accountable for ensuring that actions arising from complaints within their service areas are progressed, monitored and completed. This aims to ensure ownership and that translate into measurable service improvements.

A programme of sample complaint reviews will be undertaken to support quality assurance. This review will identify further learning opportunities, assess consistency in complaint handling and inform future staff training and development. Learning will continuously be fed back into the organisation and embedded into day to day operations.

- 6.2 The main current learning themes remain linked to:

- Repair wait times
- Appointment cancellations and rescheduling
- Follow on works
- Communication with residents
- Damp and mould
- Record keeping
- Reasonable adjustments
- Managing expectations

- 6.3 One of the key examples of complaint learning relates to repairs scheduling. Complaints have shown that many complaints stem from frustrations where appointments are delayed, cancelled, rearranged at short notice, or where there is no communication provided about what happens next. This is even more difficult where the resident has already waited a long time for the original appointment.

The scheduling app improvements are helping to address this by improving operative availability, giving better visibility to the team using the system and supporting better communication around appointments.

The intended outcome is that residents receive better communication and information and that appointments are better managed and staff have improved visibility of what is happening. This should lead to a better service for residents and fewer repeat complaints about this same issue.

- 6.4 These examples demonstrate that complaint learning is leading to changes in our policy, procedure and day to day operations.

- Changes to both Complaints and ASB policies, procedures.
- Follow up arrangements for Disabled Facilities Grants.

- Additional guidance around collecting ASB evidence, including use of ring doorbell footage.
- Updates to ASB and Neighbourhood Management Policies to clarify where neighbour disputes are better resolved through mediation.

7. Compensation and reimbursement.

7.1 Compensation and reimbursement spend for 2025/26 was £98,191.87. This is above the annual budget and reforecast position..

The level of spend reflects the financial impact of service failures, delays and unresolved issues and should be recognised as a cost associated with inadequate service delivery. As such, it represents a use of resources that could be avoided through more effective and timely resolution of issues.

The focus on early resolution, improved complaint handling and learning from complaints aims to address this. By identifying root causes, preventing repeat service failures and improving overall service performance, the organisation will be better placed to reduce both the volume of complaints and the associated compensation spend over time.

A review of the compensation policy is underway with focus and strict guidance on claims being made for matters that should be claimed through home contents insurance which is a clause of our tenancy agreements.

A strong focus on improving performance in repairs, management of damp and mould and complaint handling will help to better manage this budget moving forward.

7.2 Payments equal to or greater than £2000.00:

Area	Issue	Value
Kings Lynn	Integrity of entrance door compromised (prolonged)	£9350.00
Kings Lynn	Leak damage and damp and mould (prolonged)	£5590.00
North Walsham	Major works and temporary accommodation (prolonged)	£3677.33
Kings Lynn	Damp and mould, major works and temporary accommodation (prolonged)	£2550.00
Lowestoft	Asbestos disturbance without awareness	£2150.00
Sheringham	Damp and mould – home and furniture damage (prolonged)	£2000.00
Whissonsett	Damp and mould – home and furniture damage (prolonged)	£2000.00

8 Current position and landscape moving forward

8.1 Complaint handling remains challenging. Residents are more aware of their rights, there is greater visibility of Housing Ombudsman decisions and expectations around communication, accountability and compensation have increased.

This is not necessarily negative. It means residents are using the complaints process to hold landlords to account and expect landlords to respond properly. However, it does increase operational pressure and reinforces the importance of having a process that is fair, clear and proportionate.

- 8.2 The focus moving forward is to ensure the updated procedure is used consistently by all teams.

This includes recognising when something should be treated as a service request, when it should be a formal complaint, taking early action to resolve matters.

9 Conclusion and Next Steps

- 9.1 2025/2026 has shown that complaints are a key area of insight into our residents experience and our service performance.

The number of upheld complaints shows that residents are often raising valid concerns. Repairs remain the main contributing factor of complaints, with communication, delays in completing and appointment management being consistent themes.

- 9.2 The review of the Complaints Policy and Procedure is a positive step. It makes the approach more practical, more proportionate and more focused on learning and improvements. It should also improve consistency, audit and record keeping as well as accountability and ownership. The approach to reasonable adjustments and unacceptable behaviour should help us provide a fairer and safer service for residents and staff.

- 9.3 Next steps:

- Implement the new Complaints Policy and Procedure.
- Continue monitoring compliance with the Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code.
- Embed use of new administration methods in complaint packs and templates.
- Bi-monthly complaint learning reviews at Wider Leadership Group.
- Use complaint analysis to identify unresolved issues and repeat themes.
- Continue work on the Power BI complaints dashboard and the proposed complaints module on BBS.
- Complete the Compensation Policy review.
- Continue to provide ongoing complaint handling training and best practice updates.

Our overall aim is to provide a resident focused, fair and learning led complaints culture that helps us improve services and reduce repeat failures.