



Housing Services annual complaints performance and service improvement report 2025/26

Contents

Section		Page
1	Introduction	3
2	Number and type of complaints	4
3	Complaint handling performance	6
4	Housing management complaints	10
5	Repairs and maintenance complaints	13
6	Complaints not accepted	17
7	Housing Ombudsman determinations	18
8	Improvements following complaints	19
9	Compliments	22

1. Introduction

The Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code sets out the expectations placed on social landlords of how they deal with and manage complaints within their service areas. As part of the code Chesterfield Borough Council is required to produce an annual report of our complaint handling performance and the improvements we have made by learning from complaints. This report is published on the Council's website and submitted to the Housing Ombudsman.

The report includes:

- an analysis of our complaint handling performance
- any findings of non-compliance with the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code
- some of the improvements we have made from learning from complaints

This report is the third annual report of our complaint handling performance and allows for comparison of both performance and the service areas where complaints have been made across the three years. Complaints are analysed overall and by housing management related complaints and by repair and maintenance services complaints.

Chesterfield Borough Council believes that complaints provide us with valuable customer feedback to help inform service improvements.

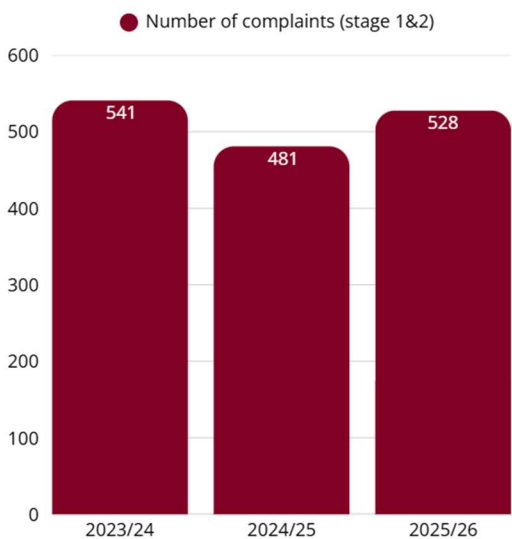
The complaint performance analysed in this report are those considered under the Housing Ombudsman's remit which covers services funded by the council's Housing Revenue Account.

Housing services such as homelessness, private sector housing and management of the housing register are outside the Housing Ombudsman's remit and therefore complaints about those services are not considered as part of this report.

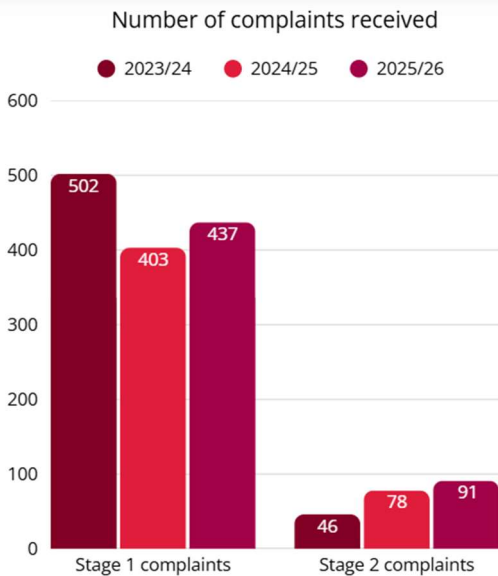
2. Number and types of complaints

- 2.1 The total number of stage 1 and stage 2 complaints received increased to 528 in 2025/26 from 481 during 2024/25. When a complaint is first received it is dealt with at stage 1 of our complaints process. A complaint is escalated to a stage 2 if the customer is dissatisfied with the stage 1 response where it will be reviewed by a senior officer.

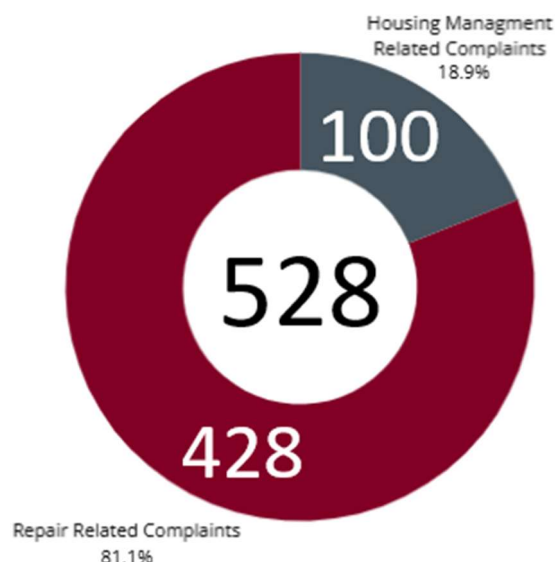
Total number of complaints received (stage 1 and 2)



Number of stage 1 and stage 2 complaints received



- 2.2 The number of stage 2 complaints increased to 91 in 2025/26 from 78 in 2024/25 though remained at a similar proportion of complaints overall (increasing from 16% to 17% of all complaints being escalated)
- 2.3 The number of repairs complaints increased from 373 in 2024/25 to 428 during 2025/26. As we complete over 3,000 repairs every month, and the number of complaints received represents a small percentage by repairs done (less than 1% customers raise a complaint).
- 2.4 We do not view higher numbers of complaints as a negative. The increase in complaints number gives the service re-assurance that our complaints process is accessible to tenants and that staff are aware of the complaint process and can raise complaints on behalf of tenants.
- 2.5 We have sought to make it easier for our tenants to complain to us by adding information on how to complain to our publicised documents including satisfaction surveys.
- 2.6 The number of housing management related complaints has fallen from 108 in 2024/25 to 100 during 2025/26.



3. Complaint handling performance

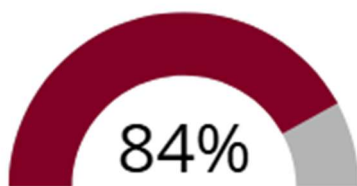
Tenant satisfaction measures – complaint handling performance

- 3.1 Tenant satisfaction measures (TSMs) are performance indicators collected for the Regulator of Social Housing so that they can assess how well social landlords are doing at providing good quality homes and services. Three of the 22 TSM measures collected relate to complaints and complaint handling.



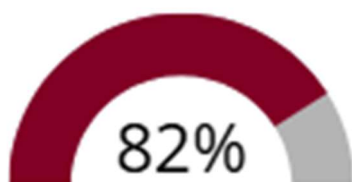
- 3.2 The data on satisfaction with approach to complaint handling is collected by surveying a random sample of our tenants. Of the 572 respondents to the TSM questionnaire, 126 (22.0%) said they had made a complaint to CBC in the last 12 months. This was a decrease from 138 out of 569 (24.3%) of respondents who made a complaint in the 2024/25 survey.
- 3.3 Information on complaints relative to the size of the landlord and complaints responded to within timescales are provided by our housing management system. Complaints responded to within timescales is split between stage 1 and stage 2 complaints.
- 3.4 Performance on responding to all complaints within timescales (stage 1 and stage 2 combined) improved from **70.1%** in 2024/25 to **83.71%** in 2025/26.

Stage 1 complaints responded within complaint handling code timescales



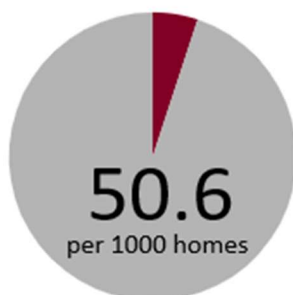
84.0% were responded to within timescale – an increase from **74.7%** the previous year

Stage 2 complaints responded within complaint handling code timescales



82.4% were responded to within timescale – an increase from 46.2 % the previous year

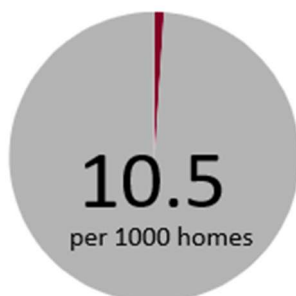
Number of stage 1 complaints received in relation to landlord size



The 437 Stage 1 complaints received works out as 50.6 complaints for every 1,000 homes that we manage.

This is an increase from 46.2 for every 1,000 homes in the previous year

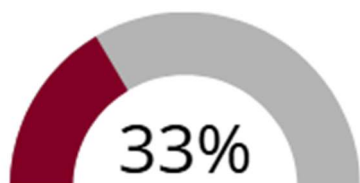
Number of stage 2 complaints received in relation to landlord size



The 91 stage 2 complaints received works out as 10.5 complaints per every 1,000 homes that we manage.

This is an increase from 8.9 for every 1,000 homes in the previous year

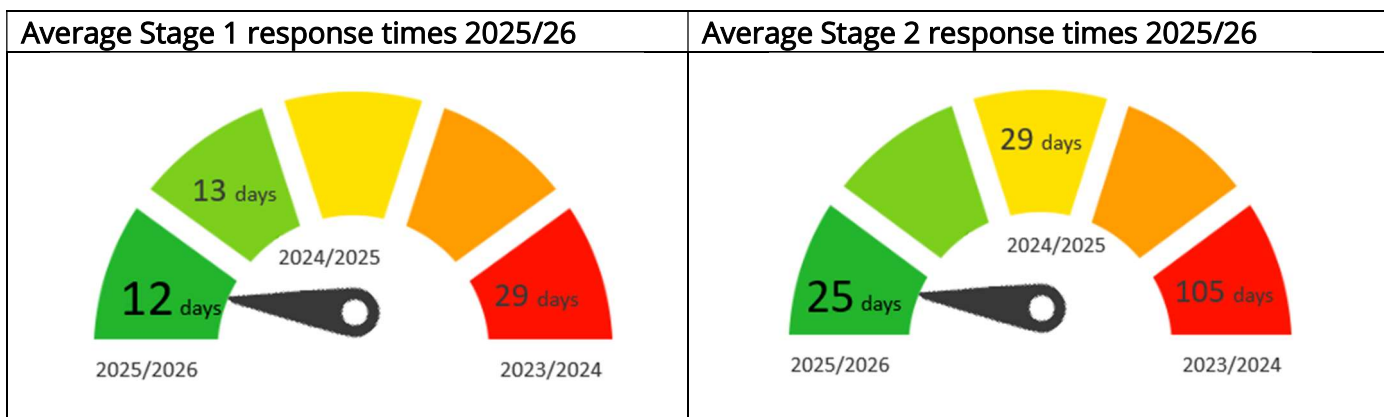
Satisfaction with landlords' approach to handling complaints



33.1 % of respondents said that they were satisfied with complaints handling – an increase from 31.2% the previous year

Complaint handling response times

- 3.5 Our average number of days to respond to both Stage 1 and Stage 2 complaints has also improved over the past three years.



3.6 Performance for responding to Stage 1 complaints is shown in the chart below. This has been a sustained improvement in performance through the year



3.7 Performance for responding to stage 2 complaints also improved through the year.



3.8 The continued improvement in performance has been due to the Housing Service taking ownership of complaint handling from the Councils Customer Services team from February 2026. This has enabled the appointment of

internal resources to handle and oversee complaints and complaint procedures. Weekly messages to senior managers to check the progress of complaint cases in their area ensure continuing focus on complaint handling to ensure sustained improvement in complaint response timescales.

Detailed complaint handling performance

- 3.9 Service reports for managers provide a visual presentation of data on performance as well as the ability to interrogate individual complaints. These are shown as 'dashboards' which can be seen in full in the attached appendices.



Appendix 1.1: All Housing Ombudsman complaints

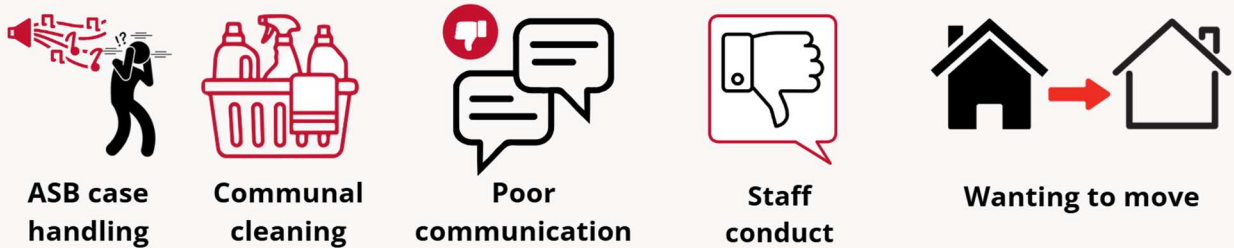
Appendix 1.2: Housing management

Appendix 1.3: Housing property services (assets, repairs and maintenance)

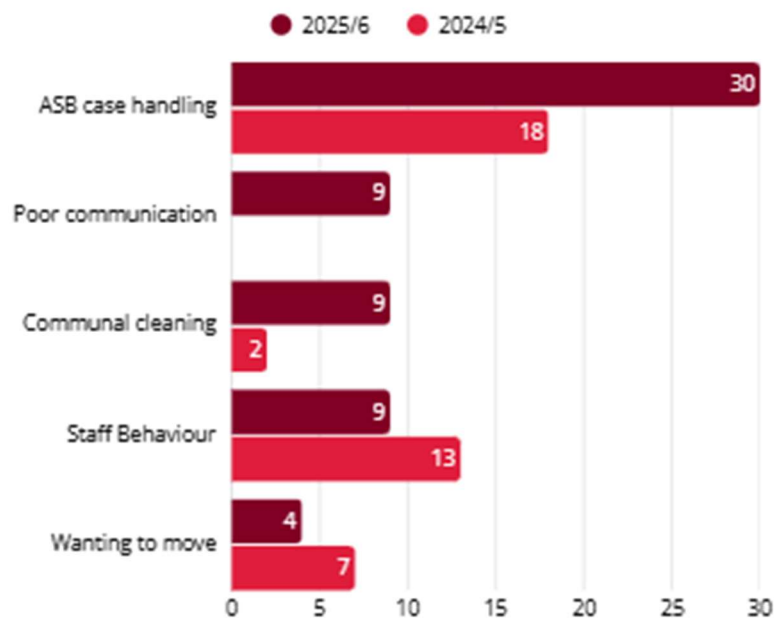
Appendix 1.4: Housing complaints equalities monitoring

4. Housing management complaints

Top 5 reasons for complaints about housing management



Top five reasons for housing management complaints received in 2025/26 and 2024/25 (includes upheld and not upheld complaints)



Note: Poor communication was not a recorded complaint category in 2024/25

- 4.1 Although the number of complaints related to ASB case handling has increased, the % of complaint cases upheld or partially upheld remains similar (23% in 2025/26 and 22% in 2024/25).

Comparison of housing management complaint outcomes with previous years
(stage1)

Outcome	2023/2024	2024/2025	2025/2026
Upheld/ partially upheld	41%	27%	43%
Not upheld	51%	44%	41%
Escalated to stage 2	8%	27%	16%
In progress	N/A	2%	N/A

Outcome of complaints for housing management 2025/2026

Area of complaint for housing management	Total (Stage 1)	Upheld	Partially upheld	Not upheld	Escalated Stage 2
ASB case handling	30	3	4	14	9
Communal cleaning	9	5	1	3	0
Poor communication	9	1	6	2	0
Staff conduct	9	0	3	5	1
Wanting to move	4	1	2	0	1
Policies	4	1	1	1	1
Rent	3	0	0	3	
Rodent infestation	3	1	0	2	0
Fly tipping/ rubbish	3	2	1	0	0
Condition of property	2	0	0	2	0

Area of complaint for housing management	Total (Stage 1)	Upheld	Partially upheld	Not upheld	Escalated Stage 2
Compensation request	2	0	2	0	0
Grass cutting/ estate maintenance	1	0	0	0	1
Overgrown gardens/ garage sites	1	0	0	1	0
Other	5	0	2	2	1
Total	85	14	22	35	14
%		16.5%	26%	41%	16.5%

4.2 The proportion of complaints that we fully uphold about housing management is low at 16.5%. The main reason for fully upheld stage one complaints are around communal cleaning. Reword to make clearer

4.3 Of the fifteen cases escalated to a stage 2 complaint none were fully upheld and eight were partially upheld following review.

Reason for Stage 2 escalation housing management	Total	Fully upheld	Partially upheld	Not upheld
Disagrees with S1 response	9	0	4	5
Not happy/ satisfied with S1 response	5	0	4	1
Issues not resolved	1	0	0	1
Total	15*	0	8	7
%		0%	53%	47%

*the total figure of 15 stage 2 complaints for housing management is higher than the 14 escalated in the previous table as it includes stage 2 complaints escalated from stage 1 complaints that were responded to 2024/25.

5. Repairs and maintenance complaints

Top 5 reasons for complaints about repairs



Chasing repairs



Missed appointments



Delays with repairs

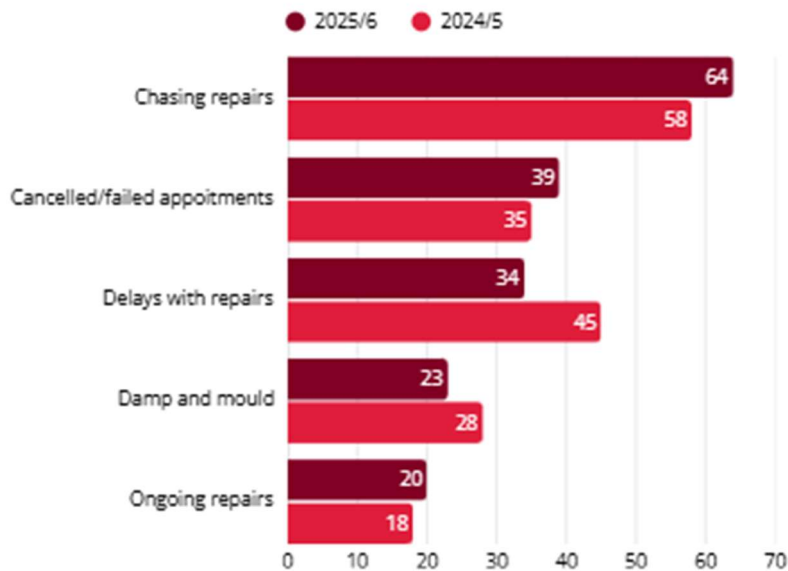


Damp & Mould



Ongoing repairs

Top five reasons for repairs related complaints received in 2025/26 and 2024/25
(includes upheld and not upheld complaints)



- 5.1 The top five reasons for complaints about our repair service are the same as 2024/25. Complaints about 'delays with repairs' and 'damp and mould' decreased from the previous year.

Comparison of repair complaint outcomes with previous years (stage 1)

Outcome	2023/2024	2024/2025	2025/2026
Upheld/ partially upheld	72%	66%	60.5%
Not upheld	19%	14%	20.5%
Escalated to stage 2	9%	15%	19.5%
In progress	N/A	5.0%	N/A

Area of complaint for Repairs	Total (Stage 1)	Fully Upheld	Partially upheld	Not upheld	Escalated Stage 2
Chasing repairs	64	28	18	7	11
Cancelled/ missed/ failed appointment	39	23	6	7	3
Delays with repairs	34	14	8	4	8
Damp and/ or mould	23	5	7	8	3
Ongoing repairs/ works <i>Repeated works/ visits to the same repair job</i>	20	10	2	4	4
Outstanding repairs/ works <i>Where work has started but not been completed</i>	16	6	5	2	3
Staff behaviour/ conduct	16	8	5	1	2
Condition of property	14	5	2	2	5
Damage caused during a repair	13	4	3	1	5
Availability of appointments/ wait time	14	3	4	5	2

Area of complaint for Repairs	Total (Stage 1)	Fully Upheld	Partially upheld	Not upheld	Escalated Stage 2
Poor communication	12	6	1	1	4
Quality of work	11	3	1	4	3
Voids – condition property	9	4	0	3	2
Fencing needs replacing	8	2	2	0	4
Compensation Request	8	1	1	4	2
Time taken for emergency/ urgent repairs	7	3	1	3	0
Damage caused by delays attending a repair	7	5	0	1	1
Voids – length of time for work	5	3	0	1	1
Rodent infestation	5	1	1	1	2
Out of hours call handling	5	1	2	1	1
Mess left by operative	4	3		1	
No notification/ consultation of works	4	0	2	2	0
Works related to disrepair claims	4	0	1	3	0
Tenant obligations	2	2			
Gas enforcement lock change	2	0	0	2	0
Other	6	1	0	4	1
Total	352	141	72	72	67
%		40%	20.5%	20.5%	19%

- 5.2 Tenants needing to chase up repairs was the main reason that complaints were upheld.
- 5.3 The reasons for complaints not being upheld follows the same trend as the previous year with the correct procedure being followed being the majority reason and delivered to the required standard the second most recorded reason.
- 5.4 In contrast with Housing Management complaints the majority of repair complaints escalated to stage 2 were upheld or partially upheld during 2025/26.

Reason for Stage 2 Escalation Repairs	Total	Fully upheld	Partially upheld	Not upheld
Disagrees with S1 response	22	5	8	9
Not happy/ satisfied with S1 response	20	6	7	7
Issues not resolved at S1	15	8	4	3
Repairs not carried out/ completed	10	8	1	1
Not kept updated/ informed by CBC	4	4	0	0
Appointment not kept	2	0	1	1
Wrong/ contradictory information given	2	1	0	1
Incorrect information on system	1	0	0	1
Total	76*	32	21	23
%		42%	28%	30%

*the total figure of 76 stage 2 complaints for repairs is higher than the 67 escalated in the previous table as it includes stage 2 complaints escalated from stage 1 complaints that were responded to 2024/25.

6. Complaints not accepted

- 6.1 Recording details of complaints that were not accepted was a new requirement in the Housing Ombudsman revised 2024 complaint handling code.
- 6.2 The reasons for not accepting a complaint include:
- Service requests e.g. requesting a repair for the first time or reporting anti-social behaviour
 - Issues where legal procedures have been started
 - Issues which have already been fully investigated at Stage 1 and Stage 2 of the complaints procedure
 - Duplicated complaints such as ones where a Stage 1 or Stage 2 is already open and has not yet received a response
- 6.3 New updates to our complaint handling system have been implemented to enable this data to be captured from February 2025. Where a complaint is not accepted, the customer is informed and given the reason why.

Complaints not accepted 2025/26

Reason	Number
Service Request	39
Duplicated complaint	36
Legal issue	1
Fully investigated at stage 1 and stage 2	2
Historical issue (out of timeframe)	1
Other Council (not CBC issue)	1
Total	80

7. Housing Ombudsman determinations

- 7.1 If customers are unhappy with the way their complaint has been dealt with after completing Chesterfield Borough Council complaints process they can request that the Housing Ombudsman reviews their case.
- 7.2 The Housing Ombudsman publishes a report detailing the decisions made against each landlord each autumn. The Housing Ombudsman will publish this report [here](#).
- 7.3 For the five cases determined by the Housing Ombudsman during 2025/26 the following outcomes and orders were made:

Housing Ombudsman decisions	Count
Determinations (cases with decisions)	5
Total findings (of which)	9
Maladministration	7
Service failure	1
No maladministration	1
Orders made (instructions given by HO)	18
Compensation paid	£2,300

- 7.4 All the orders were complied with within the timescales set by the Housing Ombudsman.

8. Improvements made as result of learning from complaints

- 8.1 The examples below demonstrate how learning from customer complaints has led to improvements in policies, procedures and service delivery across the Housing Service.

Lack of Clarity on Succession Rights

- 8.2 A complaint regarding the lack of clarity around succession rights and uncertainty about how long a decision should take prompted the Housing Management team to review its procedures. As a result, a new succession template letter was developed to improve consistency and provide clearer information to tenants throughout the process.

Snagging Repairs at New-Build Homes

- 8.3 Complaints highlighted that tenants were sometimes unclear about whether responsibility for repairs at new-build properties rested with the Council or the developer. To address this, a dedicated Customer Liaison Officer is now provided as a single point of contact for residents of new-build homes, ensuring clear communication, improved support and better management of expectations.

Repair Communication

- 8.4 A complaint was received regarding outstanding roofing repairs where communication with the tenant had been poor and updates had not been provided consistently. Following the complaint, a new Team Leader was appointed, and clear expectations were set regarding ownership of repair cases, proactive communication with tenants and improved planning of repair works. These expectations were subsequently reinforced with all repairs supervisory staff through team briefings and toolbox talks to help reduce complaints arising from poor communication.

Developing Multi-Trade Operatives

- 8.5 A complaint was received concerning a leak that required multiple visits by plumbers without the underlying issue being resolved. The need for additional work by a bricklayer was not identified at an early stage, resulting in avoidable delays and repeat appointments. In response, a shared mailbox was introduced and is monitored throughout the day by staff across repairs and supervisory teams. This has improved communication between trades and enabled the

correct resource to be identified more quickly, reducing unnecessary visits and delays. In addition, all trade operative job descriptions were reviewed and updated to include an element of multi-trade working, increasing the number of repairs that can be completed during a single visit and supporting a "right first time" approach.

Using complaints as part of service reviews and service development

- 8.6 Complaint information plays a key role in identifying opportunities for improvement and informing service development across the Housing Service. Feedback received through complaints is used alongside performance information and tenant engagement activities to help shape service reviews and drive continuous improvement.

Tenant Challenge Panel

- 8.7 Complaints are routinely considered as part of the scrutiny work undertaken by the Tenant Challenge Panel. Information relating to complaints received within each service area under review is analysed to identify recurring themes, trends and opportunities for improvement. During 2025/26, the Panel reviewed both the Voids Service and Rent Recovery Service. Complaint feedback helped inform the Panel's recommendations and contributed to the identification of service improvements designed to enhance the customer experience.

Anti-Social Behaviour Review

- 8.8 The Housing Management Service undertook a review of its anti-social behaviour (ASB) case management arrangements with tenants. Through a series of workshops, tenants considered both operational practices and complaints received regarding the handling of ASB cases. Feedback gathered through this process informed the development of a new ASB Service Commitment and helped shape improvements to communication, engagement and support for victims of anti-social behaviour.

New ICT System for Repairs

- 8.9 During 2025/26, the Council continued the implementation of a new repairs and maintenance management system, Total Mobile, which was introduced in August 2026. The system has been designed to address several of the common themes identified through repair-related complaints, particularly around

communication and customer updates. It provides greater visibility of repair appointments and operative attendance, enabling staff to keep tenants informed of progress and changes to scheduled works. This will improve the customer experience by reducing uncertainty, minimising the need for tenants to make repeated enquiries and ensuring they receive timely updates throughout the repair process.

Ongoing Reporting and Scrutiny

- 8.10 Complaint handling performance, trends and learning outcomes are reported monthly to the Strategic Housing Board and quarterly to the Tenant Performance Group and Housing Advisory Board. This regular reporting ensures that complaint performance remains subject to effective oversight and scrutiny, and that learning from complaints continues to inform service improvement activity across the Housing Service.

9. Compliments

- 9.1 The ICT system' used for recording complaints also gives the opportunity for tenants to express satisfaction and pay compliments to the service. A selection of compliments received by the Housing Service during 2025/26 are set out below.

XXX fitted us with some new items in the bathroom including a new bath and new tiles.

He did a fantastic job , was a very tidy worker and a lovely polite person.

I reported that my door wasn't locking on Saturday. I spoke to XXXXX who got someone out to me within an hour. The workman was called XXXX and he was polite, professional and fixed the problem, also told me why it had happened. I would like XXXX to receive recognition for the great job he has done and also for making me feel safe. I live with my daughter so I was really worried about the door being unlocked.

A plasterer has attended the property for the last two days and has done fantastic job and has gone above and beyond.

XXXXXX has had a tradesman attend today regarding an adaptation - has had some handrails fitted
Caller says she doesn't know the tradesman's name however she is really pleased with the quality of the work. She also wishes to pass on how courteous and polite he was too and she was really impressed with the way he dealt with her

I had a new heating system installed yesterday and I just wanted to let you know what a brilliant job the two guys did. They were so respectful of my house and didn't leave any mess at all. They were so polite and talked me through everything. Honestly I was so impressed and I just wanted to make sure I passed this on. I don't have their names. Thank you!

I was at my daughter's house on Monday while she was having a new door fitted. The fitter was so tidy. He cleared up really well and professional in his job. I would like to pass on my thanks to him.

Had logged an Online repair for her shower not working and the electrician has already turned up so wants to say thank you to whoever has actioned this so promptly

Gas engineer just been out today to repair pressure vessel and PRV. Tenant would like to compliment him, very neat and tidy and pleased with work he did.

I'd just like to message you to say, the person representing you in this van is a delight, after finishing his job he's collected a bit of rubbish off the grass next to where he's been working, it's a lovely thing to see as a resident of the area

I had an appointment for an EPC check on the 5th September which was completed by XXXXX. I wanted to send a thank you as I live on my own in a Bungalow and XXXXX arrived showed me his ID and explained what his job role was and what the reason for his visit was, offering reassurance about this. He was thoughtful and considerate of me and my home and just really nice. Thank you

He visited 10 minutes ago to inspect the new boiler and radiators we had fitted last month. He was extremely polite and friendly and also helped me with the temperature gauges on 3 of the radiators which were facing the wrong way so he fixed this for me. I also asked him to praise the workmen who had carried out the boiler replacement. They were very considerate and efficient too. All in all a very positive experience of Chesterfield Borough Council so thank you.

Ms XXXXX says the kitchen she has had fitted in her CBC property has exceeded all expectations, she is delighted with it and the team who fit it were brilliant.