

Cornwall Housing Board

Response to Complaints Annual Report 2023/24

20 June 2024

The Board of Cornwall Housing (CHL) was presented with the Complaints Annual Report 2023/24 by the Executive Director of Housing Operations at its 11 June 2024 meeting. The presentation and reports included CHL's self-assessment against the Housing Ombudsman's Complaints Handling Code, an updated version of CHL's Complaints Policy and CHL's Complaints Annual Report 2023/24.

"This is the second consecutive year the CHL Board has received an annual report relating to complaint handling performance, and was encouraged to see the improvements made over the past 12 months. It is clear that CHL has prioritised responding to complaints and the improvement in 'on time' responses was significant, as well as addressing the backlog of complaints from 2022/23.

It was encouraging to see how CHL has established an open and transparent culture of accepting its service failures with the high percentage of complaints it upheld showing how the organisation is taking the opportunity to learn from complaints, as the Board agrees they are a rich source of information which should be used to make improvements and influence service delivery. The Board was pleased to note that the vast majority of actions detailed in the complaints improvement plan had been delivered.

The Board was proud of the work taking place with involved residents in CHL's Tenant Forum to undertake bi-annual reviews of the quality of complaint responses, and supports the continued delivery of this activity. The Board was also pleased to note that CHL did not receive any complaint handling failure orders from the Ombudsman, which demonstrates CHL's co-operation and willingness to learn and develop.

However, the Board recognise there is still much work to be done before complaints performance reaches satisfactory levels. More complaints should be resolved at Stage 1 of the process and CHL should aim to reduce cases reaching the Housing Ombudsman by taking swift and decisive action to fulfil promises detailed in complaint responses. Furthermore, the Board would like to see an improvement in complaint satisfaction scores through the TSM results and in-house surveys.

The Board wishes to continue receiving quarterly complaints reports, which began in 2023/24, as it feels it is important to continue the close oversight and challenge implemented over the past 12 months. These reports will also enable the Board to monitor progress of the complaints service improvement plan throughout 2024/25, which it was in full support of and is keen to see delivered. The Council, through its Commissioner, will also be notified of any findings of severe maladministration should they arise and receive quarterly updates.

To conclude the Board and the Council supports the progress made in 2023/24, is assured that CHL is compliant with the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code through its Complaints Policy, annual report and self-assessment evidence and looks forward to building on the improvements made to date.

As CHL's Members Responsible for Complaints (MRCs), Karen Ayling, Non-Executive Director makes this statement on behalf of the CHL Board and Louise Wood, Cornwall Council Commissioner, makes this statement on behalf of the Council."



Karen Ayling
Non-Executive Director



Louise Wood
Service Director – Housing and Planning
(Cornwall Council)