

Complaints  
performance and  
service  
improvement report  
2023/24

---



**CITIZEN**

# Number of complaint cases closed in 2023/24

- In 2023/24, a total of 5,476 Quick Resolutions were closed.
- 1,655 Stage 1 complaints were closed during the same period, with 54% of them are either upheld or partially upheld.
- A total of 485 Stage 2 complaints were closed, with 57% of them are either upheld or partially upheld.

5,476

## Quick Resolutions

Closed in 2023/24

---

2022/23 : 4,225

1,655

## Stage 1 Complaints

Closed in 2023/24

---

2022/23 : 955

485

## Stage 2 Complaints

Closed in 2023/24

---

2022/23 : 232

### The Outcome of Complaints \*

38% : Upheld  
16% : Partially Upheld  
46% : Not Upheld

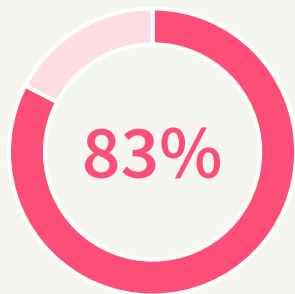
### The Outcome of Complaints \*

30% : Upheld  
27% : Partially Upheld  
43% : Not Upheld

\* : The percentage is excluding the complaint cases with unknown outcome.

# Complaint cases closed within the set target in 2023/24

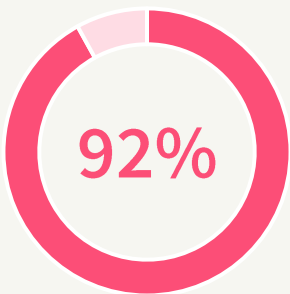
- 83% of the Quick Resolutions were closed within 72 hours.
- 92% of the Stage 1 complaints could be closed within 10 working days of the complaint being acknowledged.
- If the complaint was not resolved to the customer’s satisfaction at Stage 1, it would progress to Stage 2.  
91% of the Stage 2 complaints were closed within 20 workings days.



## Quick Resolutions

83% of Quick Resolutions were closed within 72 hours.  
(4,526 out of 5,476)

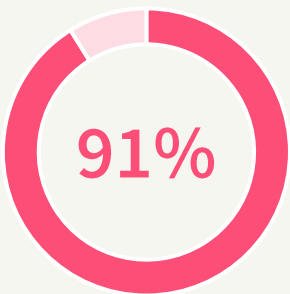
Average days to close cases: 2.9 days



## Stage 1 Complaints

92% of Stage 1 Complaints were closed within 10 working days.  
(1,522 out of 1,655)

Average days to close cases: 9.5 days



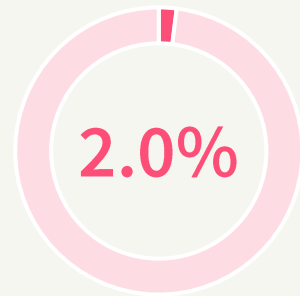
## Stage 2 Complaints

91% of Stage 2 Complaints were closed within 20 working days.  
(442 out of 485)

Average days to close cases: 18.4 days

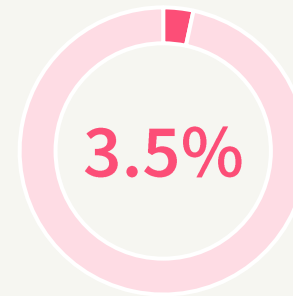
# Complaint cases extended in 2023/24

- In certain instances, some complaint cases may require an extension of the timescale because additional time is needed to investigate or wait for outside parties to provide responses.
- **Stage 1 Complaints** : We extended the time for about 2.0% of these cases.
- **Stage 2 Complaints** : For around 3.5% of these cases, we also needed extra time to deal with.



## Stage 1 Complaints

2.0% of Stage 1 Complaints were extended.  
(33 out of 1,655)



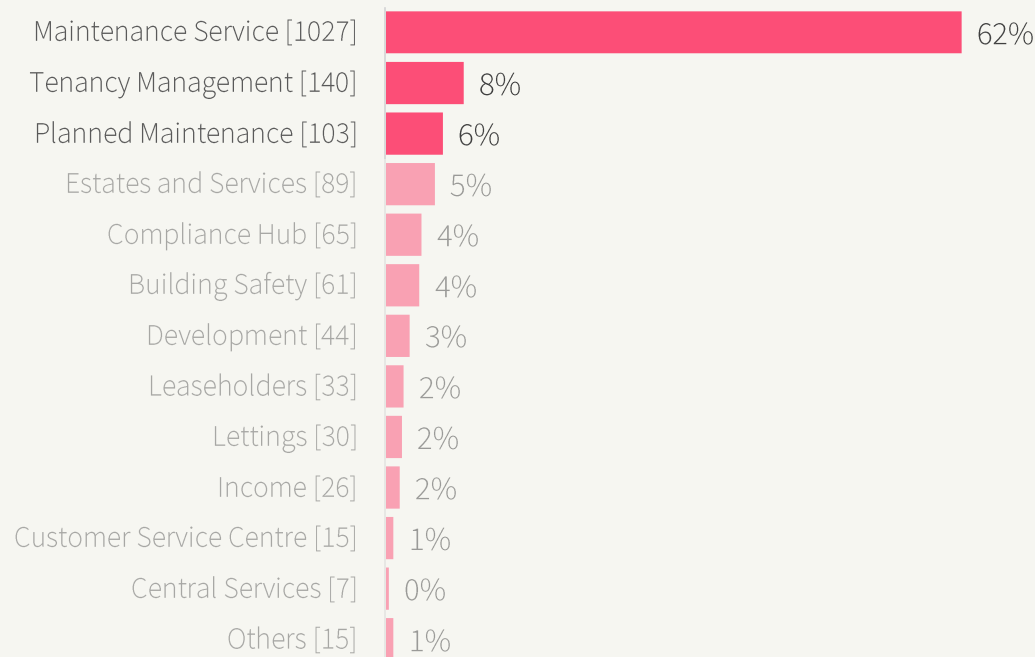
## Stage 2 Complaints

3.5% of Stage 2 Complaints were extended.  
(17 out of 485)

# Complaints by Service Area

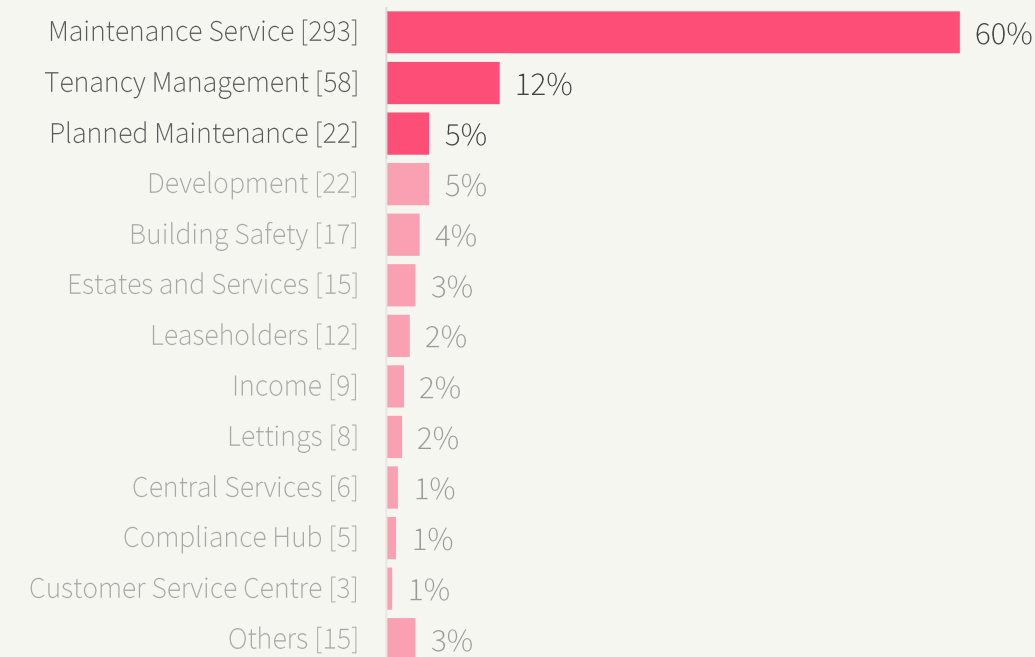
- In 2023/24 , **62%** of the closed complaints, whether they were at Stage 1 or Stage 2, were related to **Maintenance Service**.
- The second most common service area is **Tenancy Management**, accounting for approximately **8% at Stage 1** and **12% at Stage 2**.
- Following that was **Planned Maintenance**, which accounted for **6% of Stage 1** and **5% of Stage 2**.

Stage 1 Complaints by Service Area



[ ] : Number of Complaints

Stage 2 Complaints by Service Area

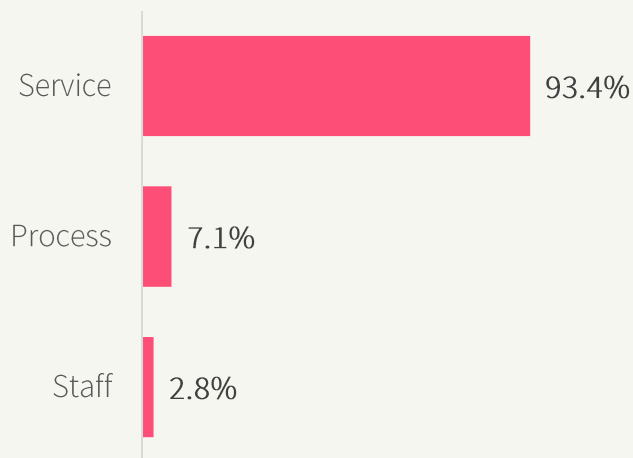


[ ] : Number of Complaints

# Complaints by Category

- Each Stage 1 complaint is carefully assessed and categorised into one or more of the following categories:  
**Service:** Problem has not been resolved first time or there is a quality issue.  
**Process:** Relates to situations where a process either failed or took an excessive amount of time.  
**Staff:** Staff attitude or behaviour has been cited or where a member of staff has failed to take an action that they were responsible for.
- Most complaints (93.4%) are related to the “Service” category**, while only a few are related to our staff themselves. It indicates that our staff maintains a positive attitude and behaviour towards customers.

% of Complaints by Category



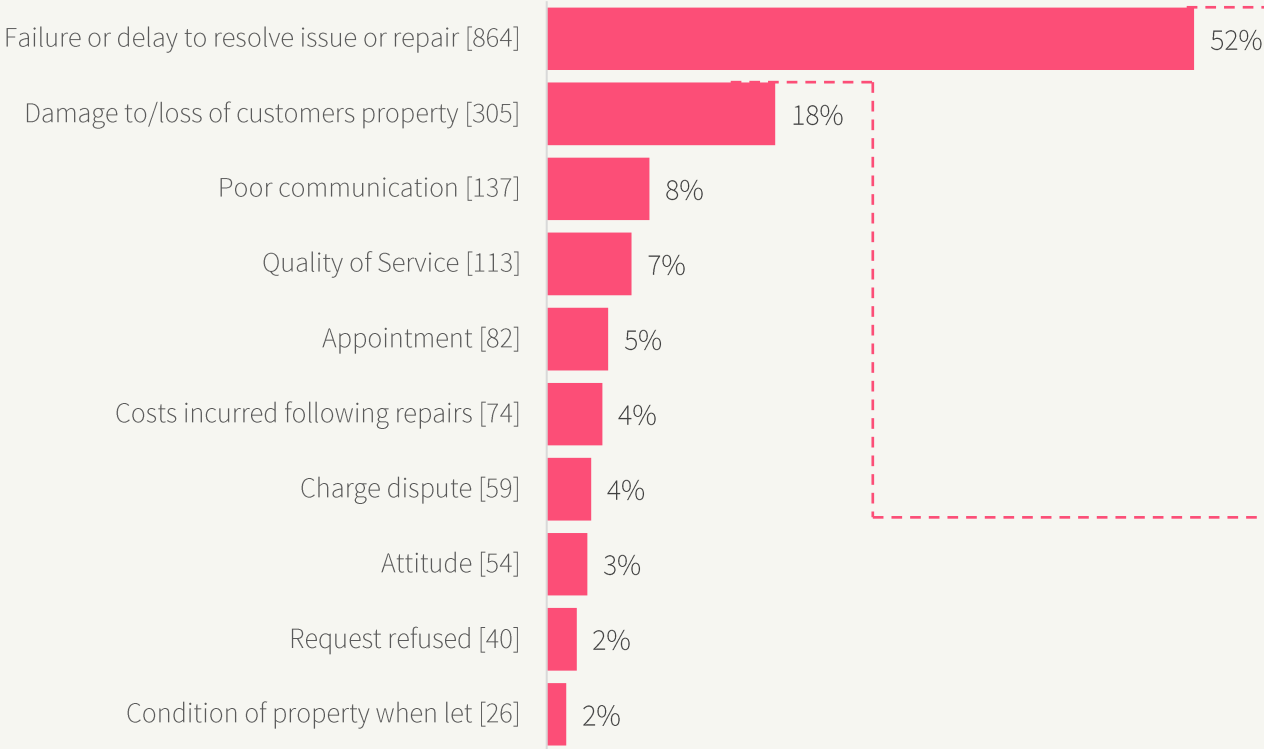
Number of Complaints by Service Area by Category

Service Area	Service	Process	Staff	Total
Maintenance Service	988	40	18	1,027
Tenancy Management	120	26	11	140
Planned Maintenance	98	5	4	103
Estates and Services	82	7	1	89
Compliance Hub	63		2	65
Building Safety	58	2	3	61
Development	40	3	1	44
Leaseholders	27	9		33
Lettings	22	9	1	30
Income	19	10		26
Customer Service Centre	9	1	5	15
Central Services	6	3		7
Others	14	3	1	15
Grand Total	1,546	118	47	1,655

# Top Complaint Reasons and Root Causes

The top 10 reasons for complaints are as follows:

## Top 10 Complaint Reasons



### Failure or delay to resolve issue or repair

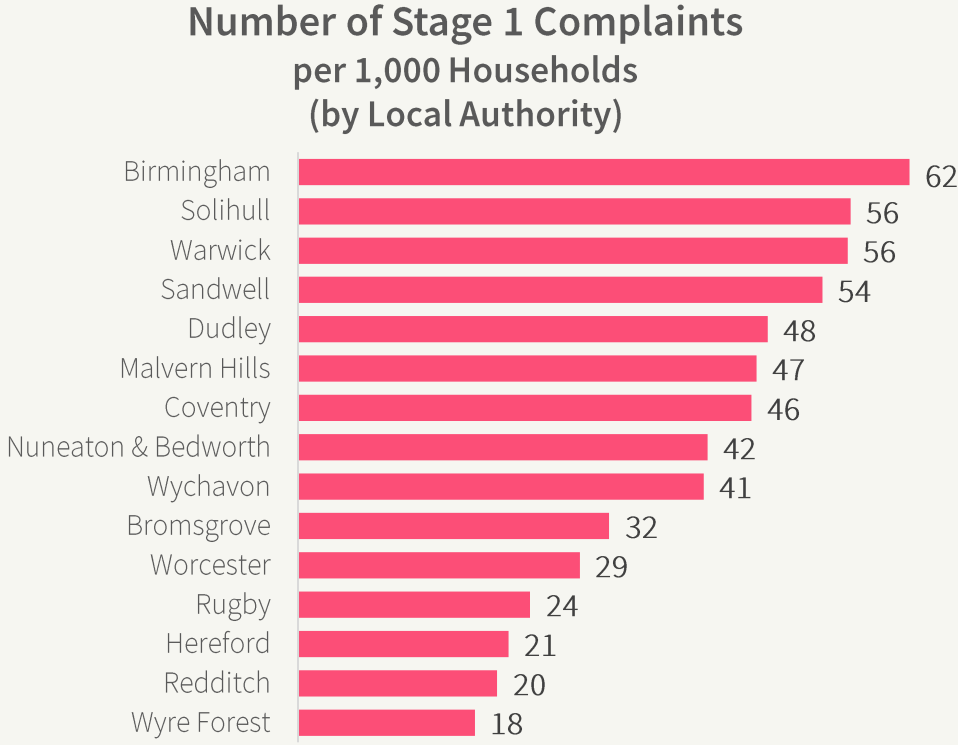
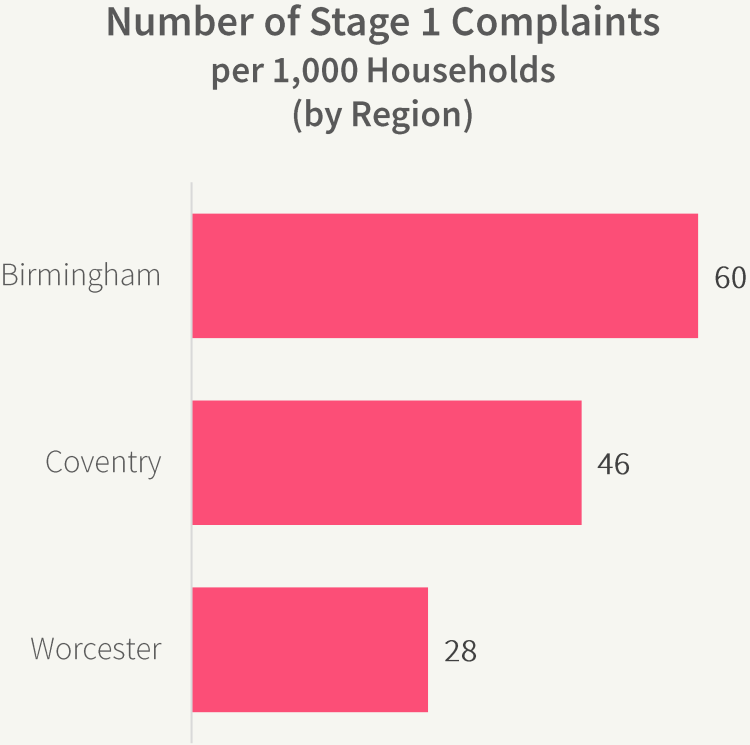
Main Root Cause	Number of Complaints	% of Total
Unreasonable delay in completing repair	335	20%
Leaks	143	9%
Damp & Mould	119	7%
Same issue/repair problem recurs over time	104	6%
Unreasonable delay in responding to enquiry	86	5%

### Damage to/loss of customers property

Main Root Cause	Number of Complaints	% of Total
Damage caused through action (Accidental Damage)	221	13%
Damaged caused through inaction (Delays in repairing reported repairs)	56	3%

# Complaint Rate by Property Location

- In the following analysis, we calculate the number of complaint cases we received in 2023/24 for every 1,000 assets in the specific groups.
- A higher complaint rate in a group may mean they are more dissatisfied with our services, or that more of them are likely to complain, or that relatively more people know how to complain, compared to groups with lower complaint rates.
- **By Local Authority:** Customer complaint rates tend to be higher in Birmingham, Solihull or Warwick.

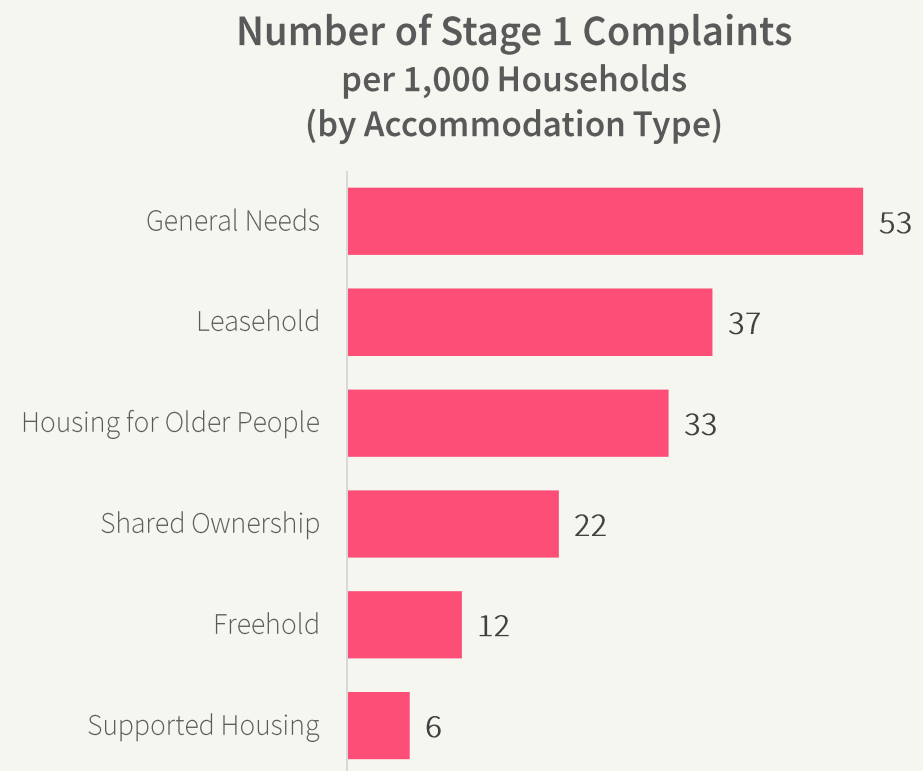
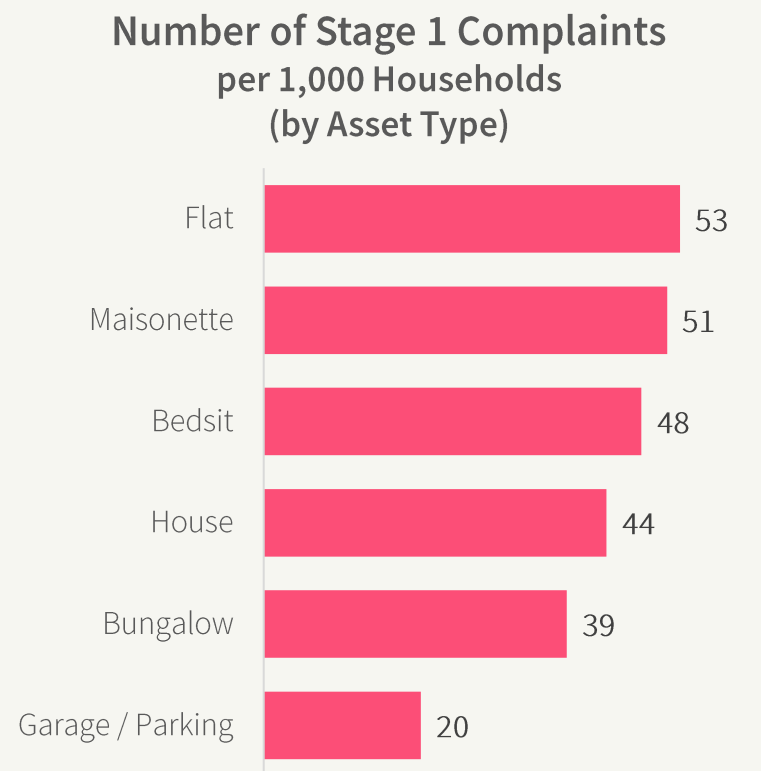


Only shows local authorities with more than 100 assets.



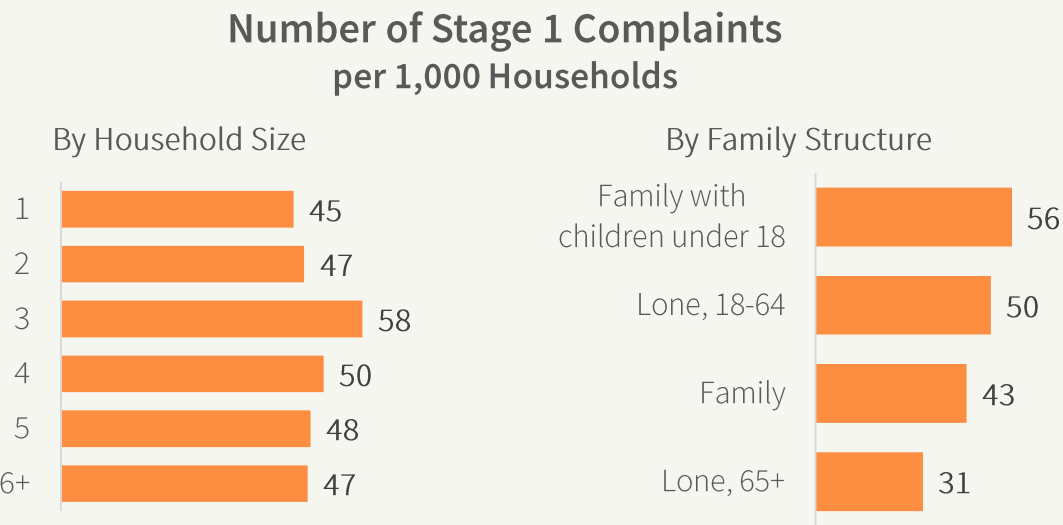
# Complaint Rate by Asset Type and Accommodation Type

- By Asset Type: Customer complaint rates tend to be higher in Flat and Maisonette.
- By Accommodation Type: General Need customers have higher complaint rates.

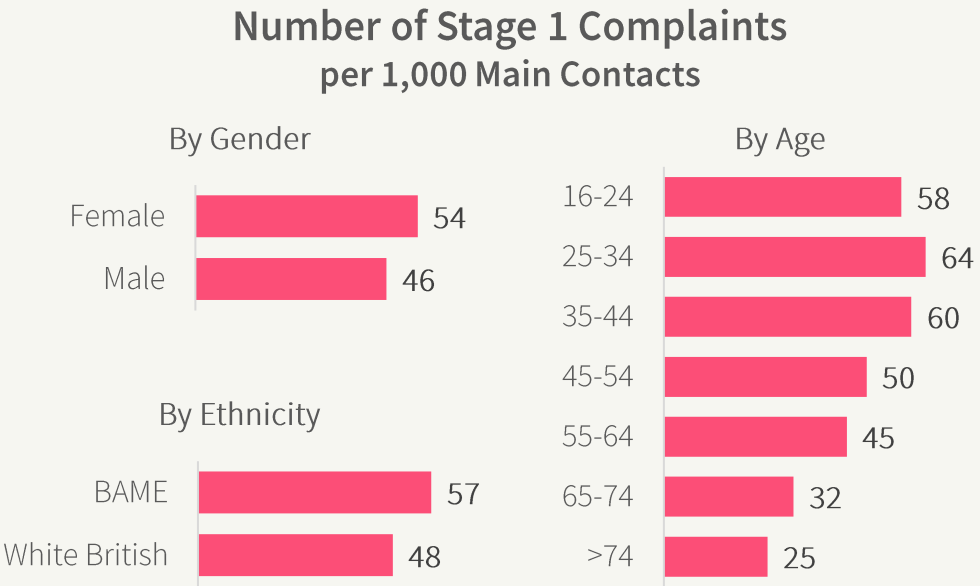


# Complaint Rate by Customer Demographic

- **By Household Size:** There is no significant pattern showing that the household size affects the complaint rate. However, households with 3 people tend to have more complaints.
- **By Family Structure:** Families with children tend to have more complaints than other family structures.



- **By Main Contact’s Gender:** Complaints are more likely to come from female main contacts, with 54 complaints per 1,000 female main contacts compared to 46 for males.
- **By Main Contact’s Age:** As age increases, there's a noticeable decline in complaint rate, with the lowest rates among those aged 74 and older.
- **By Main Contact’s Ethnicity:** Main contacts who are BAME have a relatively high rate of complaints than the average.

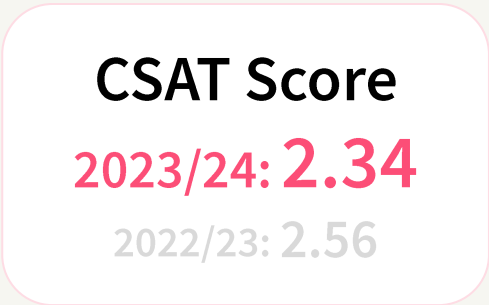


# Customer Satisfaction on Complaint Handling

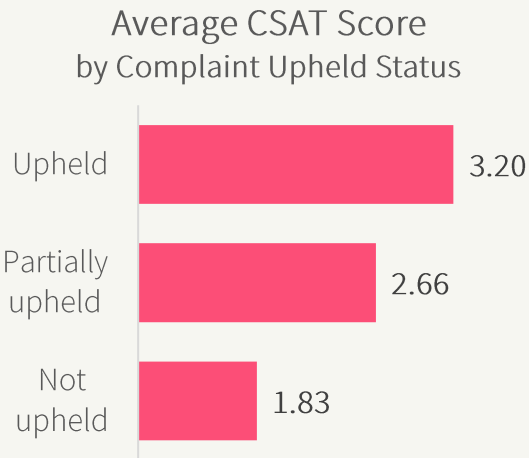
# Customer Satisfaction on Complaint Handling

As part of our ongoing commitment to enhancing customer satisfaction and continuously improving our services, we send survey to ask our customers who have made a complaint how they feel our advisors handled their complaints.

- In 2023/24, there were 442 survey responses received. The average score we obtained from these responses was 2.34 out of 5.



- Customers generally have greater satisfaction when their complaints are upheld.
- On average, complaint cases that were upheld received a CSAT score of 3.20, while those that were not upheld received only 1.83.



Complaint Upheld?	Number of Responses	Average CSAT Score
Upheld	125	3.20
Partially upheld	59	2.66
Not upheld	158	1.83
Unknown	100	1.90

# Customer Satisfaction on Complaint Handling (continued)

- These are some of the positive comments regarding how our advisors handling the complaints:



## Honest Feedback, Proactive Solutions

The staff gave a great breakdown of my complaint and was honest about mistakes on both sides. She understood the need for better training and reassured me Citizen would work with individuals so this would be avoided in the future for myself or other tenants.

- **Charmaine**  
Customer in Coventry  
12/12/2023



## Prompt Action After Understanding My Issue

Today I had a visit from your contractor who is responsible for the faulty vent. I had previously tried to have this issue looked at with great difficulty, but as soon as She took on board my complaint, things moved rapidly.

- **Terence**  
Customer in Birmingham  
23/01/2024



## Empathetic Support

She is the first person to listen and empathise with the fact that my husband was racially abused, which our daughter, also of mixed heritage, heard. She also understood the mental impact that it had on our family.

- **Joanne**  
Customer in Bromsgrove  
09/10/2024

# Customer Satisfaction on Complaint Handling (continued)

- These are some of the negative comments regarding how our advisors handling the complaints:

## Lack of Communication and Follow-up

- "Because I didn't get a phone call like I was told she would ring me."
- "The points I have highlighted have not been answered."

## Poor Resolutions and Handling

- "The issue wasn't resolved fully, and the compensation given wasn't adequate given the time I have spent without the use of my boiler."
- "wasn't prepared to honour her colleague's promises regarding compensation."

## Dismissive or Unprofessional Behaviour

- "She pretended she didn't understand my complaint and failed to address what I complained about."
- "She dismissed my complaints and marked my complaint as resolved before the work was completed."

Learning from complaints

# Learning from complaints themes and trends

Learning	Actions we have or are taking
Failure or delay to respond to a repair was a biggest root cause of complaints. Our current repairs workforce was not large enough to complete repairs that had built up during the Covid pandemic and respond to repairs currently being raised by customers.	We have invested over £2m in 2023-24 to partner with Axis, a repairs company. They are supporting us to respond to customer repairs. Our repairs response times are decreasing.
Costs incurred following a repair is one of our top four root causes of complaints. Many of those complaints request reimbursement of costs for temporary heating or dehumidifiers supplied to customers.	We are redesigning our process so that it is easy for customers to claim these costs without having to make a complaint. We will implement the new process in 2024.
In 2023-24 we received 204 complaints about leaks, customers were dissatisfied with how long it takes us to identify the cause of the leak and the time taken to gain access to other properties to stop the source of a leak.	During 2024 we are complete a number of actions to improve our response to leaks and reduce the impact on customers. <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Texting or calling customers in properties that may be the cause of the leak to support them to identify if their home is the source and enable us to gain quicker access to repair.</li><li>• Promoting the importance of contents insurance to customers so that they can replace damaged belongings.</li></ul>

This is our learning from complaints themes and trends. We monitor and learn from all complaints and implement many more small improvements too.



## Learning from complaints – Future actions

Our 2024-25 complaints learning action plan includes improving our services in response to customer complaints and Housing Ombudsman's reports about:

- Adapting our services to respond to the individual needs of customers with vulnerabilities
- Record keeping and using the knowledge we have about our customers, properties and neighbourhoods
- How we calculate service charges and the information we provide to customers about the service they are paying for

We will report about these improvements in our 2024-25 Complaints Performance and Improvement Report

# Statement from the Citizen Board: Response to Annual Complaints Performance and Service Improvement Report 2023/24

Citizen is pleased to be able to share this Annual Complaints Performance and Service Improvement Report 2023/24 with customers, colleagues and key partners on behalf of the Board.

We recognise the importance of effective complaint management in maintaining trust and transparency with our customers. Our response outlines our commitment to continuous improvement, transparency and accountability.

Our Annual Complaints Performance and Service Improvement Report provides a comprehensive overview of our complaint handling performance. We are pleased to see that there has been an improvement in ensuring the timely resolution of complaints but acknowledge that customer satisfaction around complaint handling remains a priority. We are committed to understanding the root causes of dissatisfaction and taking steps to address them.

We believe that every customer complaint should be addressed promptly and effectively and will continue to improve our response times and communication with customers. The Board and Customer Assurance Committee will receive quarterly reports on complaint performance, including volume, categories, outcomes and learning.

In line with the Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code, a self-assessment has been completed. This has determined that our complaint policy and processes are fully compliant with the Code requirements. The outcomes were also presented to our Customer Assurance Committee and Board. Citizen's complaints policy and process has also been subject to a detailed review by an independent customer scrutiny group, who provided valuable customer insight into the complaints handling process at Citizen and made several recommendations for improvements.

## Statement from the Citizen Board continued:

To address the issues highlighted in the report, we will focus on the following areas in the coming year:

- Enhancing our resolution processes to ensure that complaints are addressed comprehensively and effectively
- Improving our communication, ensuring timely and clear updates are provided to customers on the progress and resolution of a complaint
- Implementing changes to our housing management system to enhance the complaints handling experience and record keeping to improve our understanding of customer experience
- Providing additional training to colleagues on effective complaint resolution strategies and continue to develop a positive complaint handling culture
- Seeking regular feedback from customers to understand their experiences and identify areas for improvement
- Continuously monitor data and learning to improve our complaint handling processes to increase satisfaction levels and further drive service improvements

Maintaining transparency and accountability with our customers is important and we are committed to delivering the improvement plans for our complaints service so that it meets the needs and expectations of our customers.

The Customer Assurance Committee and Board will be provided with quarterly updates on complaints handling performance and improvements that have been implemented and hold management accountable for achieving the expected outcomes.

# Thank you

---