

COMPLAINTS REPORT FOR APRIL 2020– MARCH 2021

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Executive Summary

Context

This paper sets out the complaints performance for April 2020 – March 2021, with a focus on Q4 January – March 2021.

Questions this paper addresses

1. Are we achieving the SPSO timescales for Stage 1 and Stage 2 complaints?
2. How has Covid-19 and the remobilisation of our service has impacted on the number of complaints and how does this compare with the previous year?
3. What continues to be the main drivers of complaints?
4. Review of complaints to evidence how we respond to complaints and learned lessons.

Conclusions

1. 175 complaints were received from our Rented Customers throughout the year of which 81 were received in Q4. 151 of these were Stage 1 and 24 were Stage 2. 40 of these were unsubstantiated, unreasonable or withdrawn.
2. 142 of the 151 rented Stage 1 complaints received April 2020 – March 2021 were responded to within the 5-day target. 22 of 24 closed Stage 2 complaints were responded to within the 20-day target. The number of cases escalating to Stage 2 remains low with only one 1st stage complaint escalated to Stage 2 which indicates that we continue to respond appropriately to the satisfaction of the complainant to their initial complaints.
3. Of the 151 Stage 1 complaints, 68 of these were received in Q4. Of the 24 Stage 2 complaints, 13 were received in Q4. This increase reflects as we moved out of lockdown and back to more normal services for customers there was an increase in the number of complaints but not as yet back to the level received last year.
4. The main driver of complaints continues to be repairs maintenance-led (with an increasing number relating to MMR service during Q3) but a small number coming from other services including service delivery, factoring and development.
5. Service Delivery will be adopting the complaints monitoring and lessons learned tool used by the Maintenance Team to help with recording all outcomes and lessons learned and enables us to understand any themes coming out of complaints and

lead to service improvements. This will enable us to meet the requirements of the new SPSO guidance from April 2021.

Input Sought

Home Scotland Board are recommended to **NOTE** our Complaints performance.

The Report

Are we achieving the SPSO timescales for Stage 1 and Stage 2 complaints?

Stage 1 – **Rented**

YTD, 94% (142 of 151) Stage 1 complaints responded to within the 5-day target. In Q4, this figure was 91% (62 of 68 complaints).

Of the 151 Stage 1 complaints YTD, we resolved 70 within 24 hours of receipt (46.4%). All Stage 1 complaints YTD were responded to and resolved in an average of 2.8 days which is within the SPSO target of 5 days, and which is very positive during the current climate. For Q4, we had an average response of 2.7 days.

Mid-Market Rent

YTD, 22 complaints were received, and only one was a Stage 2 complaint. In Q4, there was only one Stage 1 complaint received and was responded to within the 5-day target. (100%)

Stage 2 – **Rented**

YTD, we have received 24 Stage 2 complaints of which 92% (22 of 24) were responded to within the 20-day target. In Q4 this figure was 100%. (13 complaints).

How the remobilisation of services has impacted on number of complaints?

As in the previous quarter, in Q4, we have seen the number of stage 1 complaints almost double compared to the first half of the year as we remobilised our services. This is potentially due to customers being willing to wait during the first lockdown for repairs but as time has passed and we have had to continue to complete Emergency repairs only, customers have become more unhappy to wait for non-urgent repairs.

68 of the rented Stage 1 complaints were received in Q4, against a YTD total of 151. Thirteen Stage 2 complaints were also received in Q4, from a total of 24.

We are now starting to see the number of complaints return to pre-Covid numbers as demonstrated in the table below.



What are the main drivers for complaints?

As is expected, the main driver for complaints continues to be related to the repairs maintenance service, but the type of complaints varies so it is challenging to identify trends which would allow us to take action to reduce complaints. Given the number of jobs completed, the number of complaints continues to be low and we continue to work very closely with our contractors.

Further meetings have been held with Mears, in regard to the Standard of cleaning across our Glasgow properties and an action plan will be agreed so we can show we are responding to the type of issues that customers do not necessarily make formal complaints but comes out in responses to our Customer Satisfaction Surveys and Rent Consultation process.

We also have one case that has been raised to the First Tier Tribunal and we will report back on the outcome of this and if there are to be any changes to our processes.

A separate report has been provided to Board on issues that are being raised by customers at Holmlea Primary School (Spean Street) development and how we are responding to these.

Review of Complaints to understand any lessons learned.

All complaints are reviewed to understand if any lessons can be learned.

Stage 1

The introduction of the Estate Liaison Officer role has provided a new way to respond to all maintenance complaints this year and we are currently advertising for an additional ELO post which will allow us to be even more responsive to our customers. An example of lessons learned from some of our Stage 1 complaints include:

- A few complaints have arisen due to the repair not being noted as an emergency at time of logging. For example, a complaint was raised as the vulnerability of the customer was not recognised by Novus Planners, which led to the delay of a repair to a shower for a disabled customer.
- A repair was delayed when an error was made in ordering a part for a shower and led the customer being dissatisfied.
- Poor communication to a customer when a specialist part was required. The customer was not notified of the lead time for the part and that there would continue to be a disruption to hot water/heating over the festive period.
- A number of complaints relate to missed or changed appointments not being communicated to the customer – and on occasions the customer had taken time off work so they would be able to provide access.

Stage 2

- A complaint has been escalated to Stage 2 following the need for the customer to be decanted due to flooding from above into her property. The customer was moved into two hotels, but alternative accommodation had to be found as the hotels each closed their restaurant facilities as further lockdown was introduced.

As this was just a couple of days before Christmas, the customer was then moved into a Mid-Market property on a temporary basis and we arranged very quickly for all her personal items to be moved and a payment to be made to replace the food she had lost. The customer although happy to move into the property, had raised at that time that she felt too many people were contacting her (Maintenance, Housing Manager, and FIP). In retrospect it may have been better for one person to co-ordinate but given the time of year, we were keen to get the customer settled and this involved a number of colleagues.

This was a complicated case as the complainant then started to raise issues around historical repairs and lack of contact from her Housing Manager over the past two years. She was also unhappy about the level of payment she was to receive from her own insurer and felt that Home Group should be able to have an impact on this.

The customer advised that she did not wish to move back to her own tenancy once the works were complete due to the stress that this would cause her and her son and was advised that we would look for alternative accommodation.

This complaint may have come partly due to the very stressful situation that the customer found herself but also it could perhaps have been managed by more frequent communication whilst the customer was in the decant accommodation, and whilst we were looking to find alternative accommodation for her. This can be a judgement call however, as the Housing Manager had contacted her on a few occasions and there had been

nothing to address at the time, so we advised the customer to get in touch with her should she wish to discuss any issues.

The customer decided that she would like to apply for a Mid-Market Property and her application was processed and she is now rehoused on a permanent basis.