

Complaints Performance and Service Improvement Report

April 2024 – March 2025

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Introduction and overview of report

At Alliance Homes, we're committed to providing a great service to our customers but recognise that, on occasion, we don't always get things right and customers may complain about the service they have received.

When this happens, the way we manage, resolve, and learn from our mistakes is critical to improving the way we deliver services to our customers in the future, as well as maintaining transparency and accountability in our performance.

This report captures the review of our complaint performance from April 2024 to March 2025. It includes:

- An introductory statement from Joy Luxford, our Board Member Responsible for Complaints
- A summary about the complaints we've received including the response times achieved
- An update on our Housing Ombudsman cases, and their findings
- A performance report about Alliance Homes from April 2024 to March 2025
- What we've learnt from complaints and the actions we're taking to improve as a result.



Board member statement

As Alliance Homes' Board Member Responsible for Complaints and Chair of the Audit and Risk Committee, I have direct contact with the leadership team and Customer Complaints team. The Board receive quarterly updates on performance and scrutinise trends. I am happy to be able to present our Annual Complaint Performance and Service Improvement Report for 2024–25.

In the last twelve months, we have invested in broadening and embedding the Complaints Team, which has resulted in improvements in response times and outcomes for customers. We finish the year with a much deeper understanding of the reasons for complaints and with actions underway across the teams to address the root causes. The culture of learning from complaints is now systematised with actions agreed across teams.

In this report, we highlight the key messages we've heard and how we have acted in response. This ensures we're transparent with our customers on progress being made, and alongside our published self-assessment, shows how we are compliant with the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code.

We are proud of the improvements made but recognise there is still more to be done. We continue to welcome complaints, to hear feedback and learn. A customer-centric and joined-up approach is front of mind as we look to serve our customers better.

In the year ahead, we will implement deep dive reviews with input from a new Customer Complaint Scrutiny Panel to ensure we continue to identify themes, are clear on actions and implement learning outcomes. We will continue to publish our progress.

A portrait of Joy Luxford, a woman with dark hair, smiling, wearing a patterned top and a dark cardigan, standing in front of green foliage.

Joy Luxford

Member Responsible for Complaints and

Chair of the Audit and Risk Committee

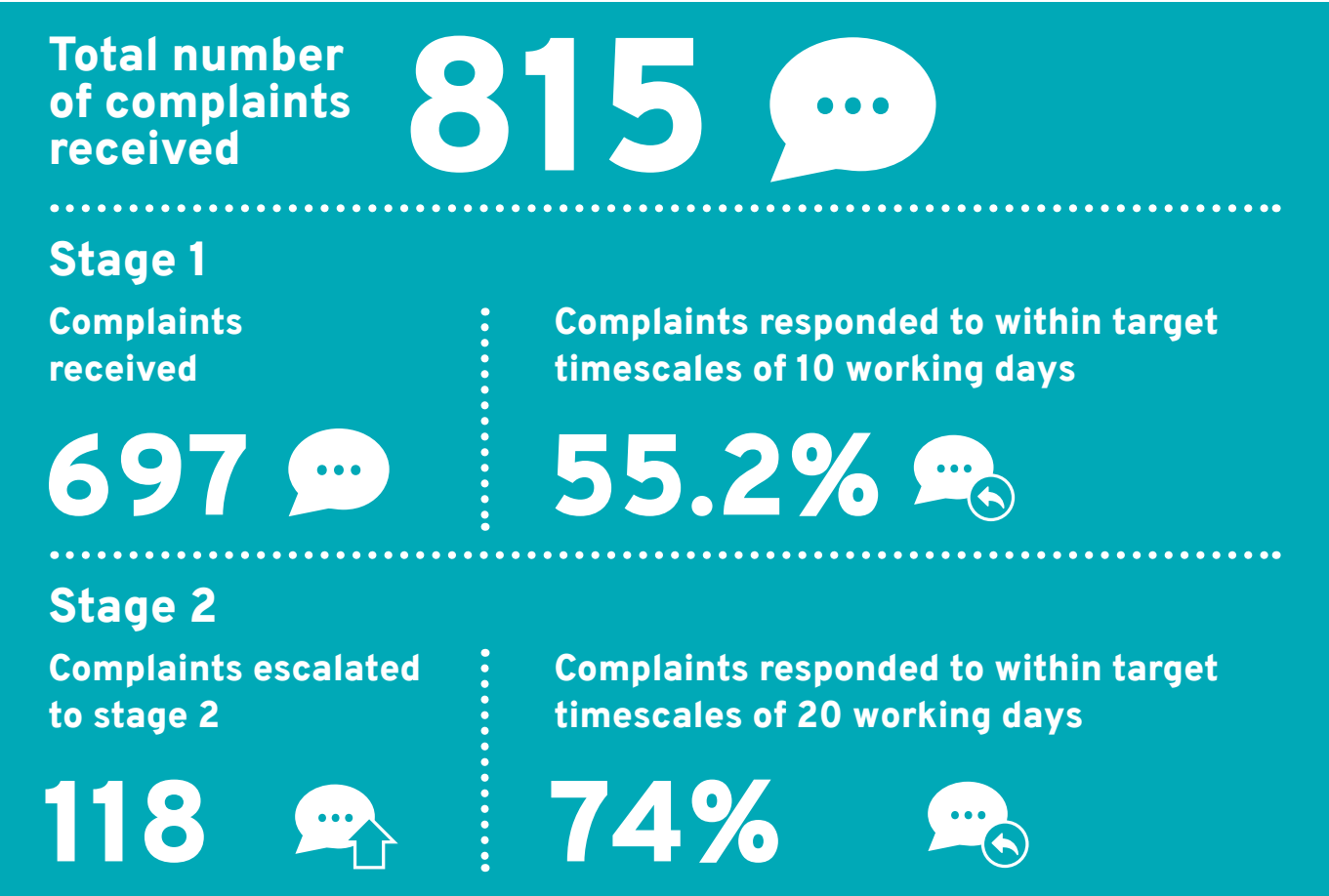
at Alliance Homes

Our complaints performance

We received 815 complaints in the period from April 2024 to March 2025. This figure includes complaints raised at stage 1 and stage 2.

This year, as our partnership with Brighter Places has ended, we are now only reporting on complaints received from Alliance Homes’ customers. This change has contributed to the decrease in the number of overall complaints.

Here is a breakdown of the number of complaints we received, and the time taken to respond to them within target timescales.



To improve how we identify and address issues, we have been working closely with our contact team on resolving customer concerns at the first point of contact whenever possible. We have also focussed on clarifying the differences between a service request and a complaint.

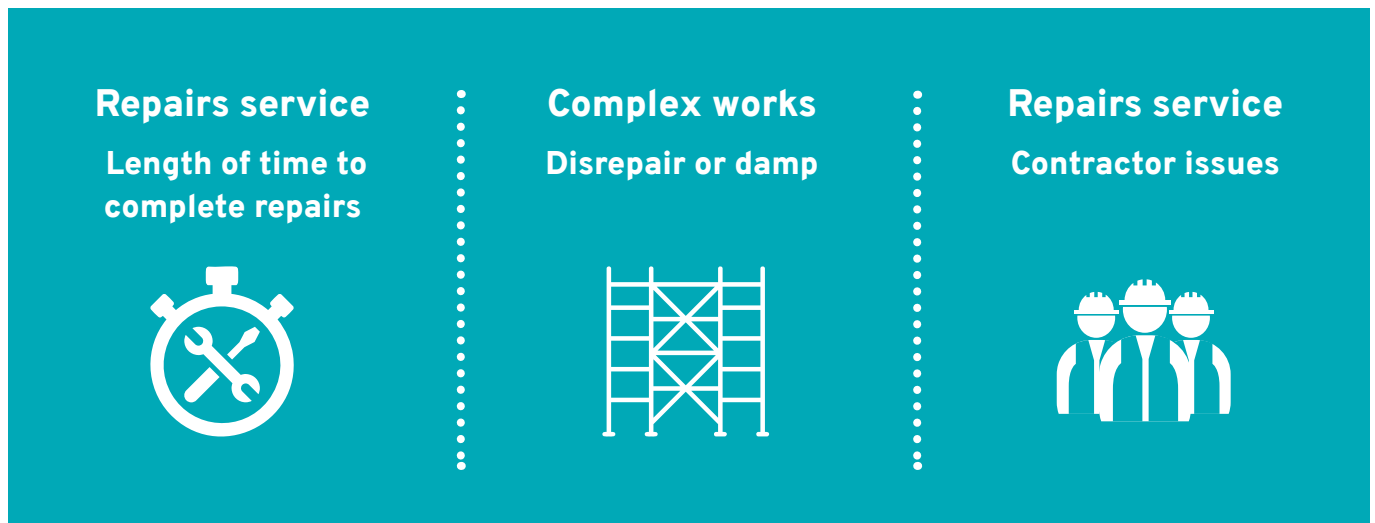
We define a ‘service request’ as a situation where we have failed to provide a service that meets a customer’s expectations and it can be resolved immediately - for example, chasing up a missed repairs appointment. We refer to these requests as “sort on the spots” and these are recorded, monitored and reviewed regularly.

When this occurs, this will be on agreement with the customer, or upon their request, and will not exclude the customer’s right to pursue a formal complaint should they wish.

The following includes a breakdown of complaints received by service area and trends, as well as information about complaints that were not accepted.

Complaints by service area

Top three reasons for complaints by service area



We are learning from the complaint trends and understand that there needs to be a focus on our repairs service, in response we have invested in these service areas to ensure a greater customer experience.

Over the past year, we have worked with service area managers and the complaints team to review complaints through quarterly 'lessons learnt' sessions. This helps us address issues and improve services for our customers while better understanding the challenges our teams are facing.

Moving forward, our priority will be on continuing to improve the customer experience in these areas.



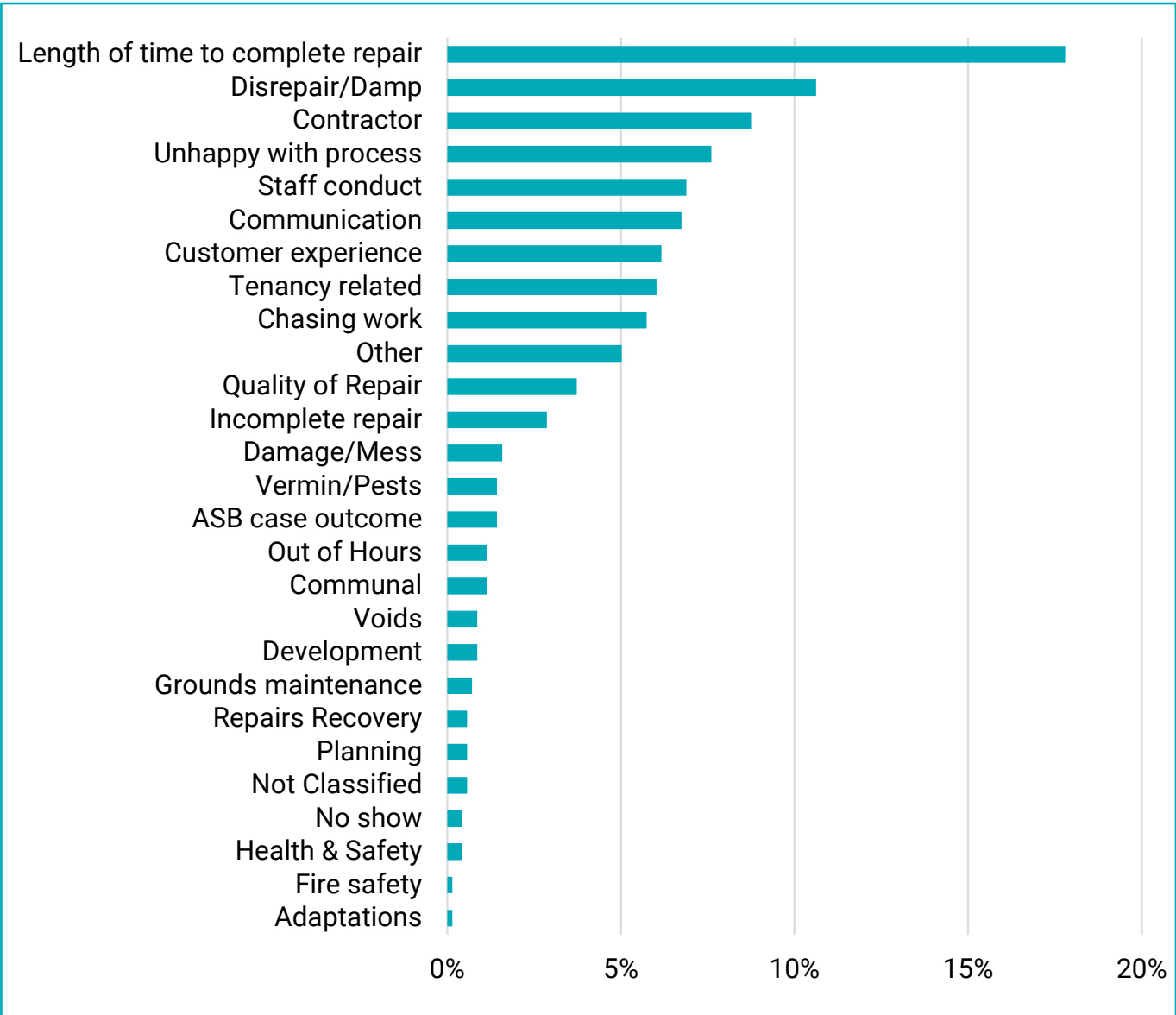
Complaint trends

As part of our continued commitment to improving customer experience and service delivery, we closely monitor and track complaint trends to identify areas for improvement.

Customers are telling us that they are unhappy with the time taken to complete repairs. They also have concerns about damp, disrepair and mess, and have issues related to their tenancy.

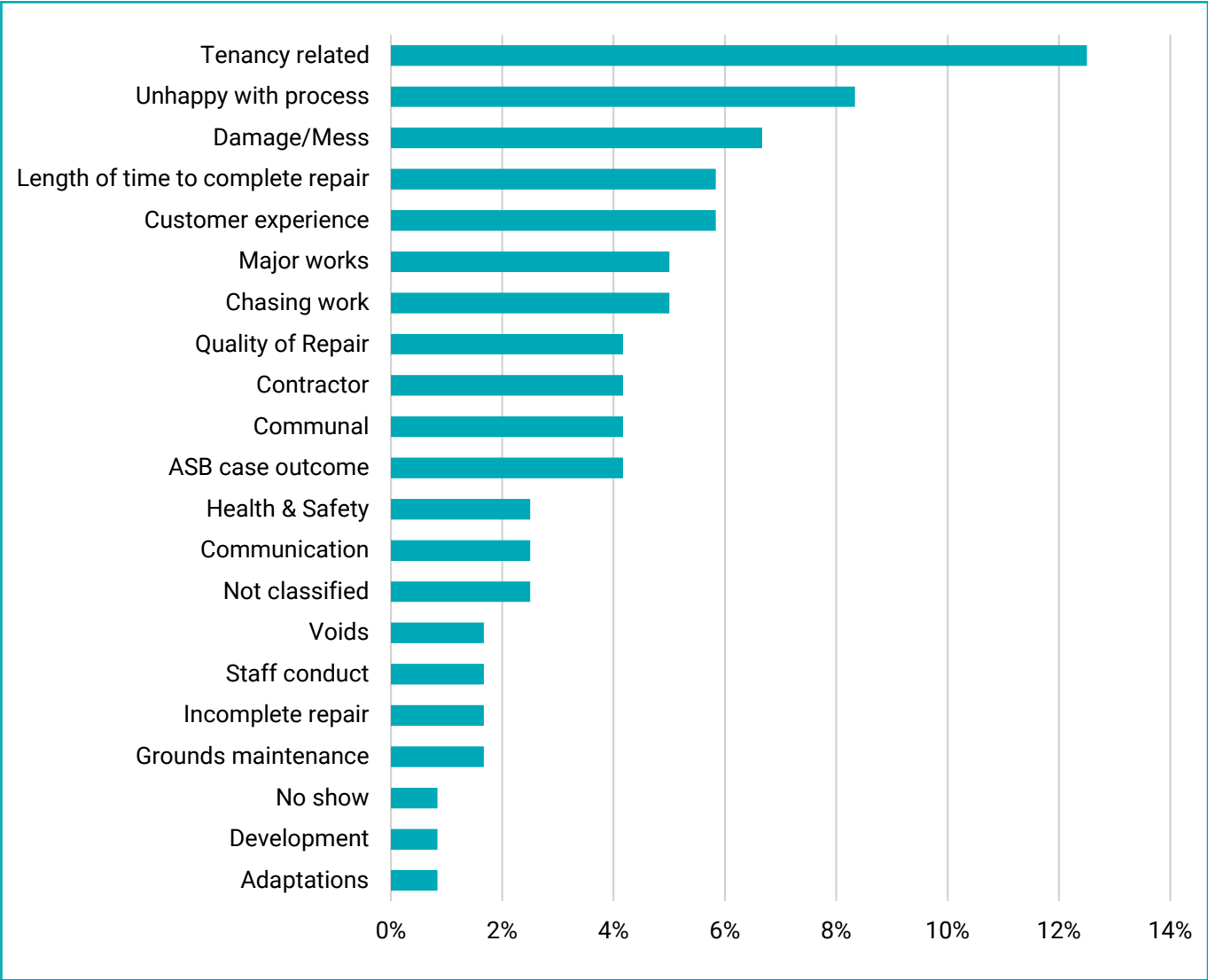
The following is a summary of complaints categorised by theme and service area for both stage 1 and stage 2 complaints.

Percent of stage 1 complaints by theme

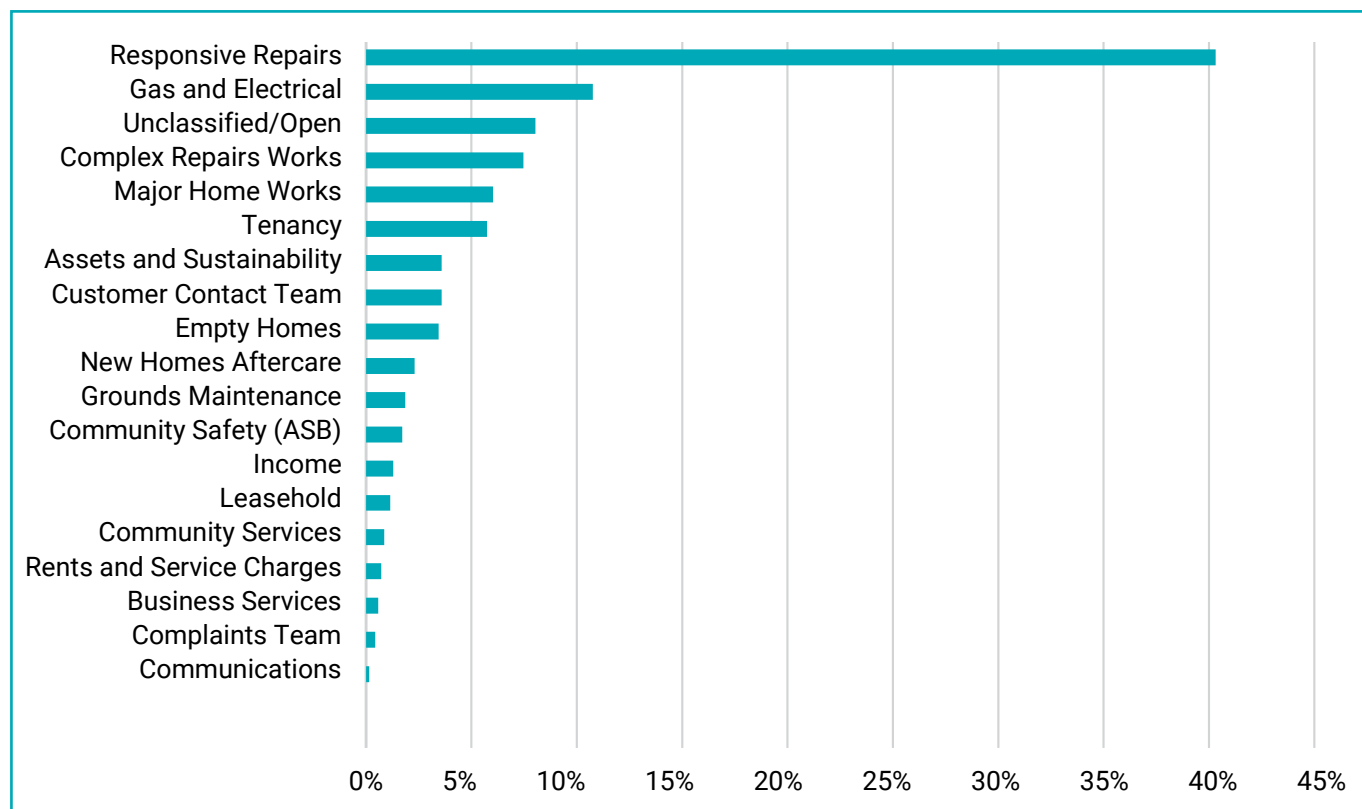


Complaints categorised as 'Other' are those assigned to multiple themes throughout the complaints process.

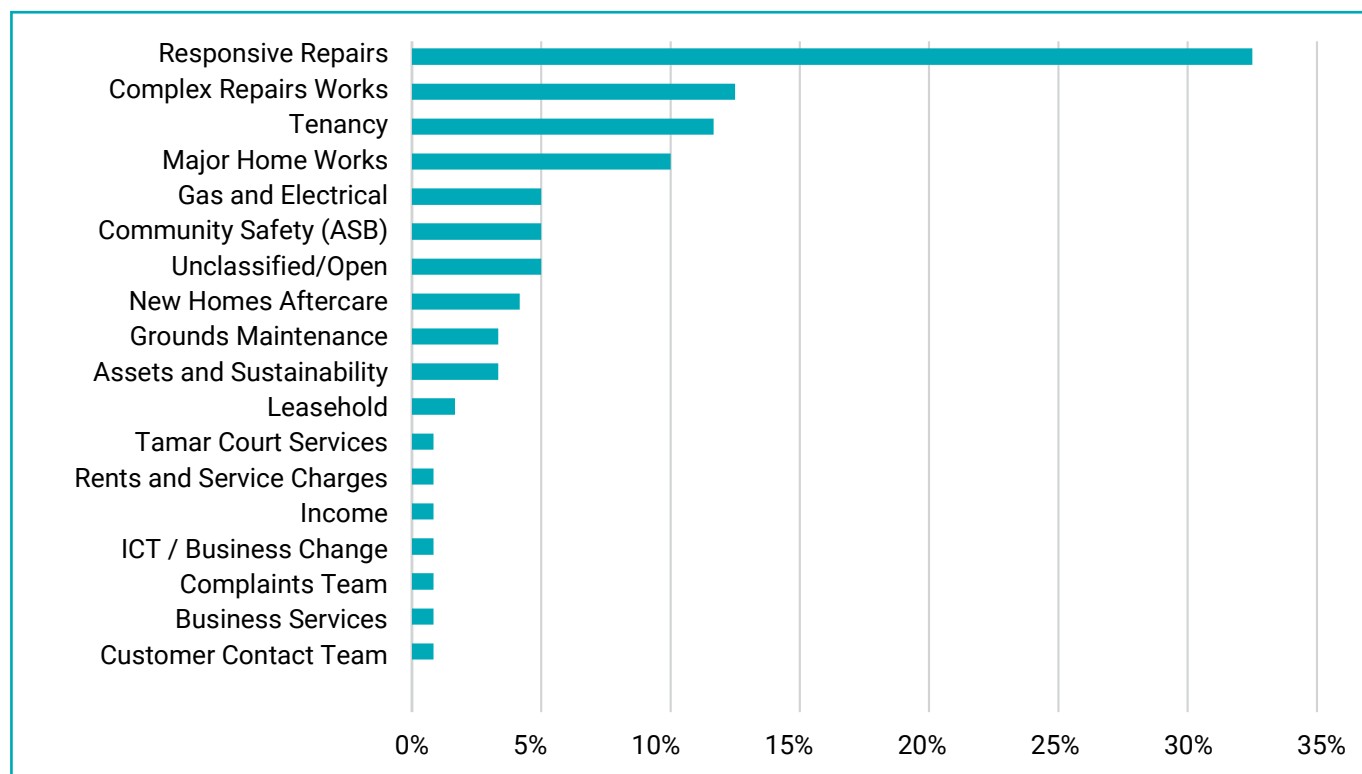
Percent of stage 2 complaints by theme



Percent of stage 1 complaints by service area



Percent of stage 2 complaints by service area



Complaints categorised as 'Unclassified/Open' are complaints that are still open and being investigated by the feedback team (as of 31 March 2025).

Complaints not accepted

We have accepted all complaints submitted in the past year.

However, there have been instances where customers have asked to raise a complaint for issues that we refer to as 'service requests', such as first-time repair requests.

It is important that we can provide a response and resolve customer concerns before a complaint can be raised. Therefore, these requests have been dealt with as service requests rather than formal complaints.

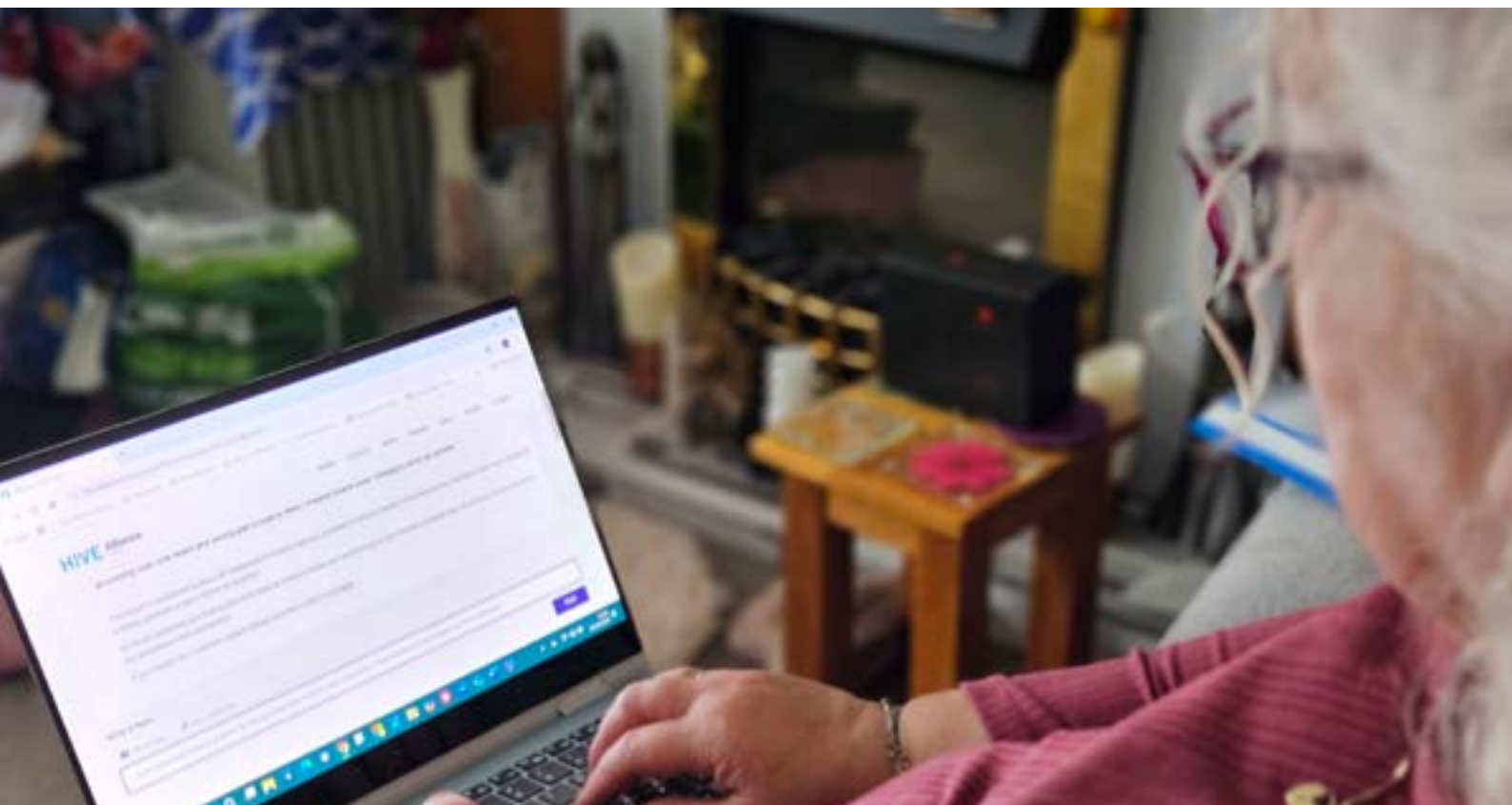
Initial queries will always aim to be resolved by one of our teams whenever possible, before a formal complaint is recorded.

Using feedback to make things better

Understanding customer feedback, how customers felt, and the reason for challenges are important for improving our services. Complaint trends are reviewed on a quarterly basis by senior leadership and our Board members. This helps us to focus our efforts on where improvements need to be made.

In response to the trends that we have seen in our complaints, we have made significant changes to improve customer experience and service delivery.

Here are some examples of customer feedback and what we've done in response:



Customers told us that ...

...the empty homes standard was not good enough.

In response, we restructured the team, adding two supervisors, created two teams, and introduced one property inspector to improve quality control and management. This has given us capacity to focus solely on our customers, review the structure of the repairs service and take steps to improve efficiency.

As a result, we've seen improved specification consistency, better collaboration between departments, increased productivity and higher overall quality and finish. Key changes included:

- post-inspections are carried out on every property and include detailed information, photographs and snagging lists before properties are handed over
- supervisors now complete final day visits to address snagging and ensure team accountability.

...the length of time to complete repairs is too long.

In March 2024, we left our repairs partnership with Bristol-based housing association Brighter Places. In preparation of this we have been reviewing the structure of the repairs service to improve efficiency.

We have realigned the team to ensure we have the right people in the right places, increased resources for the number of properties we manage and allocated more budget for recruitment.

Continued improvement: In 2025-26, we are updating our repairs system to improve efficiency, maximise spend, provide better customer service and enable better management of workstreams and trends. This will also help us prioritise safety, monitor productivity and focus on high-value tasks.

...need to do more to help with damp and mould.

We established a dedicated complex works team last year to directly support customers experiencing damp or mould issues. We are expanding the team to provide even greater help. Additionally, we have developed a specific damp and mould policy that complies with Awaab's Law and meets the needs of customers. The policy is available on Alliance Homes' website, visit www.alliancehomes.org.uk/policies.

...the quality of the repairs taking place was not always good enough.

We've introduced a quality checking process to make sure the repairs carried out meet our standards consistently.

For repairs linked to complaints, a repairs manager now reviews and approves the work before it's signed off.

Continuing to learn from our complaints

We are always looking to learn from the complaints we receive. This means recognising when we've made mistakes, understanding what went wrong, and using those lessons to make improvements.

Here are some of the things we've learnt and introduced over the past year when we haven't gotten it right.

Pest and vermin

What we've learnt

Over the past year, we have seen an increase in complaints around rats and vermin. Following an Ombudsman determination, we have carried out a full review of our pests policy.

What we're doing as a result

To address this issue and minimise future complaints, the management of vermin and pests has been moved to our home repairs service. This will ensure that pest control is contract-managed and coordinated with any repairs needed to clear vermin and pests.

Communication needs

What we've learnt

Feedback through our complaints process highlighted that communication needs are not always being met, particularly for customers with specific accessibility adjustments such as large format text.

What we're doing as a result

In response to this, and in coordination with our Life Through Your Lens project (more information about this project can be found on page 13), we have updated our internal housing management system to incorporate communication accessibility as an alert. We have also produced large-format text service-out cards, which are used as standard for all customers.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (ED&I)

Understanding our customers, their demographics, needs and accessibility requirements, is important to providing services that truly meet their needs. In 2025, we introduced **Life Through Your Lens**. This project is an organisation-wide effort to better understand our customers so that we can improve the services we provide.

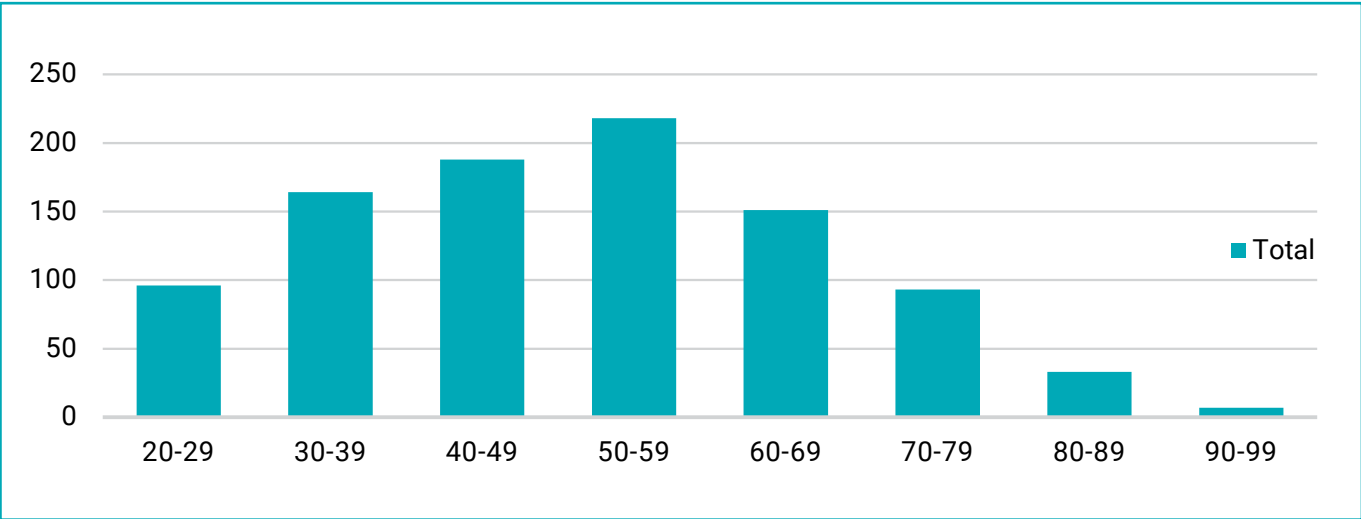
We will achieve this by collecting and using personal customer and household data to help us shape how we interact and engage with customers based on their specific needs.

We will also analyse the data to see where there are gaps in our service offerings and delivery. This will help us understand what changes we need to make to ensure that all customers have fair access to our services and benefit from equitable outcomes.

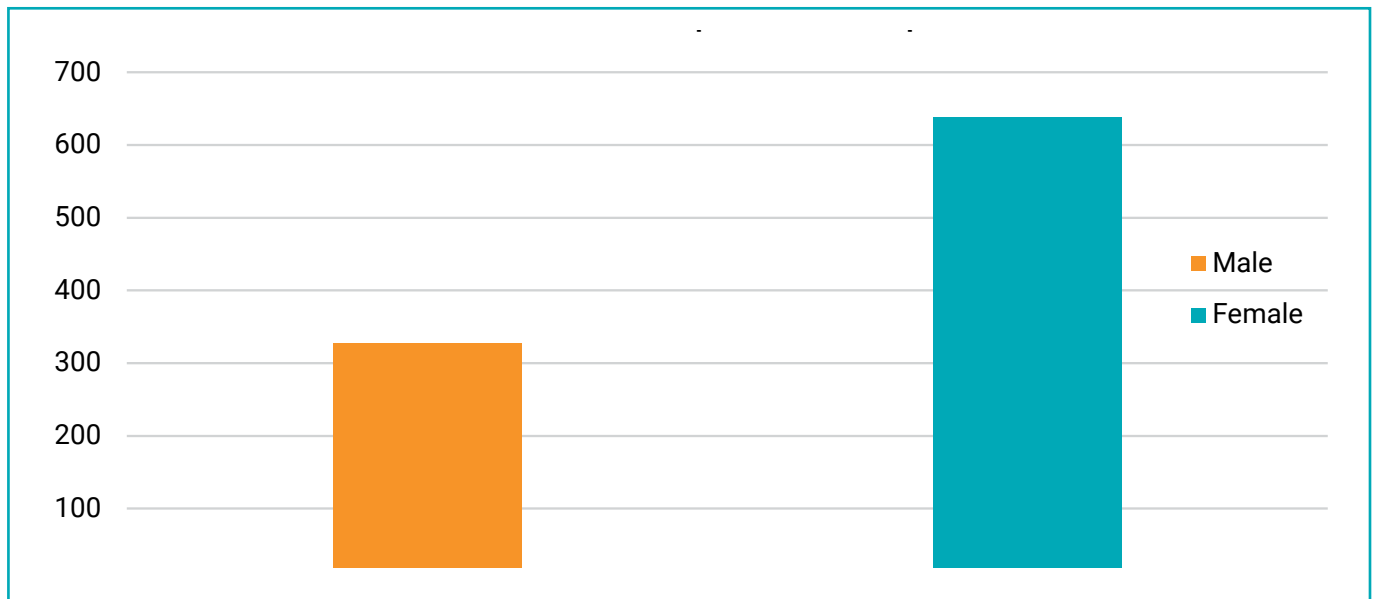
As a result of this project, we will be able to share much more information regarding ED&I and complaints next year. This will help us to focus on whether any protected characteristics are being treated unfairly and take steps to address this. The following data shows the gender and age breakdown of complaints received between April 2024 and March 2025.

Our current data shows that female customers and those aged 50-59 are more likely to make a complaint.

Age profile of complainants



Gender split of complainants



Working with you to resolve complaints

We are committed to improving customer experience, especially when handling complaints. We have made some significant changes, including introducing a centralised complaints model to better address customer concerns.

Centralised complaints model

All complaints are now managed by a dedicated team of four complaints advisors and one manager, who oversee the complaints process from start to finish. This change was implemented as a result of customer feedback which highlighted issues such as:

- poor communication when dealing with a complaint
- the need to repeat information to multiple colleagues
- lack of clear ownership in managing complaints.

The centralised complaints model has led to regular “lessons learnt” sessions with service managers across Alliance Homes to address common complaint themes and trends, with the view to improving our services.

We have provided our complaints advisors with tablets so that they can meet customers face-to-face when needed. This is important for us to build trust, strengthen relationships with dissatisfied customers and work towards making things right.

We have introduced a new reporting system that enables us to identify themes and trends more effectively. It also provides clearer visibility of our complaint process.

The Housing Ombudsman Service (HOS)

We have submitted our self-assessment against the Housing Ombudsman code. As part of our commitment to being transparent, we have published it online. You can review it by following this link, [complaints-self-assessment-2025.pdf](#).

In the last year Alliance Homes have received outcomes from four Complaints.

Case Type	Determination	Actions
Repairs and adaptations	<p>Service failure by the landlord in relation to its handling of the residents' request for adaptations.</p> <p>Service failure by the landlord in relation to its handling of outstanding repairs at the property</p> <p>Service failure by the landlord in relation to its handling of the resident's complaint.</p> <p>Maladministration in relation to its handling of the resident's request for a transfer to a new build property.</p> <p>Maladministration in relation to its knowledge and information management.</p>	<p>A senior manager has sent a written apology to the resident.</p> <p>We have self-assessed using the Ombudsman's Spotlight report on knowledge and information management.</p> <p>Carried out a case review in relation to our transfer process to ensure it is able to offer support to vulnerable residents at the appropriate time during the transfer process.</p> <p>Carried out a review of the complaints process to ensure that it adheres to its complaints policy and the Ombudsman's complaint handling code.</p>
Service charges	<p>Service failure in relation to the landlord's response to the resident's enquiry about the personal heating service charge.</p> <p>Service failure in relation to the landlord's response to the resident's enquiry about moving to another property.</p> <p>Maladministration for the landlord's handling of the resident's reports of maggots and flies in the communal areas.</p> <p>Maladministration for the landlord's handling of the resident's reports of cracks in the gable end of the block.</p> <p>Maladministration in relation to the landlord's complaint handling.</p>	<p>A senior manager has sent a written apology to the resident.</p> <p>Met with the resident face to face, to discuss how Alliance Homes intends to proactively manage the maggot and flies issue, and to discuss rehousing options in full and how Alliance Homes can provide support.</p> <p>Additional training has been provided to our customer contact team to help identify the differences between service requests and complaints.</p> <p>Repairs policy has been reviewed.</p> <p>Worked with a consultant to review the heating system, this has led to individual boilers being installed.</p>

Case Type	Determination	Actions
Compensation	Service failure by the landlord in its handling of the resident's report of a defective hot tap in the bathroom and the amount of compensation it offered after repairing the tap	The compensation policy has now been reviewed and updated.
Reports of ASB	No maladministration has been found by the landlord in respect of its handling of the resident's ASB reports.	N/A

Next steps

As part of our continuous improvement in complaint handling, we will continue to embed lessons learned from complaints and keep customers informed about the changes we've made following their feedback. Over the next 12 months, we will:

- Create a customer complaints scrutiny panel to review complaint case examples and how they were handled, focussing on areas for improvement
- Continue our lessons learnt sessions with service managers
- Work with other housing providers to improve our Alternative Dispute Resolution for customers with damp and mould focussing on how we can help support customers throughout the resolution process
- Complete more face-to-face visits to build stronger relationships with our customers when they make a complaint
- Continuous training with our complaints team to reduce the number of complaints escalating to stage 2, including developing soft skills.

If you need this document in another format, such as large print, Braille or a different language, please let us know.

You can contact us by calling 03000 120 120, emailing act@alliancehomes.org.uk or writing to us at 40 Martingale Way, Portishead, BS20 7AW.