



COMPLAINTS: ANNUAL PERFORMANCE AND SERVICE IMPROVEMENT REPORT

YEAR 2024/25

The Riverside Group Limited



CONTENTS

01.	Foreword and introduction	3
02.	Our performance	4
03.	Customer feedback	9
04.	Listening to and acting on feedback	10
05.	Our priorities for improvement	11



01. Foreword

As a Group Board Member, Chair of the Riverside Customer Experience Committee, and the Member Responsible for Complaints (MRC), I am pleased to present our second Annual Performance and Service Improvement Report.

The report provides information about our complaints activity throughout the year and how we have performed in dealing with them. More importantly, the report shows what we have learnt because of the complaints and how we intend to improve services as a result.

Like last year, customer satisfaction with the management of complaints is not where we want it to be. Put simply, we need to do better. That said, we're confident that the organisation is now in a much better place when it comes to the structure and consistency of how it is operating when it comes to complaints. A new leadership team are in place along with new operating structures which are designed to create greater consistency.

With repairs continuing to be a huge focus of complaints, delivering an improved repairs service is, and will continue to be, a key focus for Riverside as a direct response to the feedback we have received through complaints. It is therefore pleasing to see that volumes of complaints have dropped significantly in that area.

The Customer Experience Committee, as the governing body for complaints within the group, has independently scrutinised, challenged, and supported Riverside on its approach to the management of complaints and compliance with the changing expectations from our regulator and the Housing Ombudsman Service. We have also worked with the Riverside team to start to develop a more positive culture towards complaint management.

We've shared our annual report with our customer panel to make sure it is transparent and a true reflection on how we are tackling the complaints we receive.

We are confident that will start to bear fruit in the coming years with a resulting improvement in customer satisfaction and other measures.

Sam Scott

Chair of Customer Experience Committee and
Member Responsible for Complaints (MRC)



02. Our Performance

Overall

8,214

Complaints this year

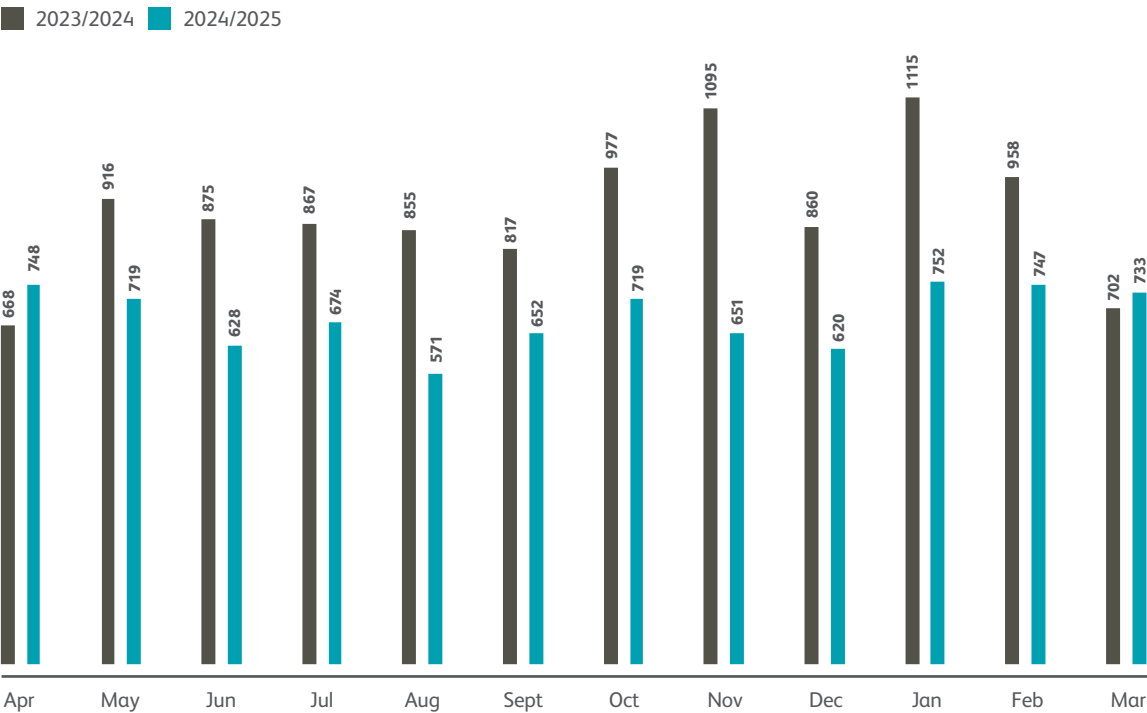
26%

Decrease in complaints

1.9%

increase in complaints handling satisfaction

Number of complaints by year



Reasons for complaint

We've seen a major reduction in the volume of complaints this year, in particular repairs related cases. In 2024/2025 we logged 565,902 repairs groupwide averaging 47,159 per month and 10,883 per week. Understandably, repairs remains our number one complaint type.

Top 3 complaint types

■ Repairs ■ Tenancy Management ■ Building Safety ■ Other



Repairs
62%

Our highest complaint type is repairs. This includes faults with repairs, repair timeframes and missed appointments. This is expected due to the high volume of repairs performed each year, but we are working with our repairs team to improve our services.



Tenancy Management
19%

Our second highest complaint type shows that customers are telling us they are dissatisfied with how we are handling issues around tenancy management and anti-social behaviour.



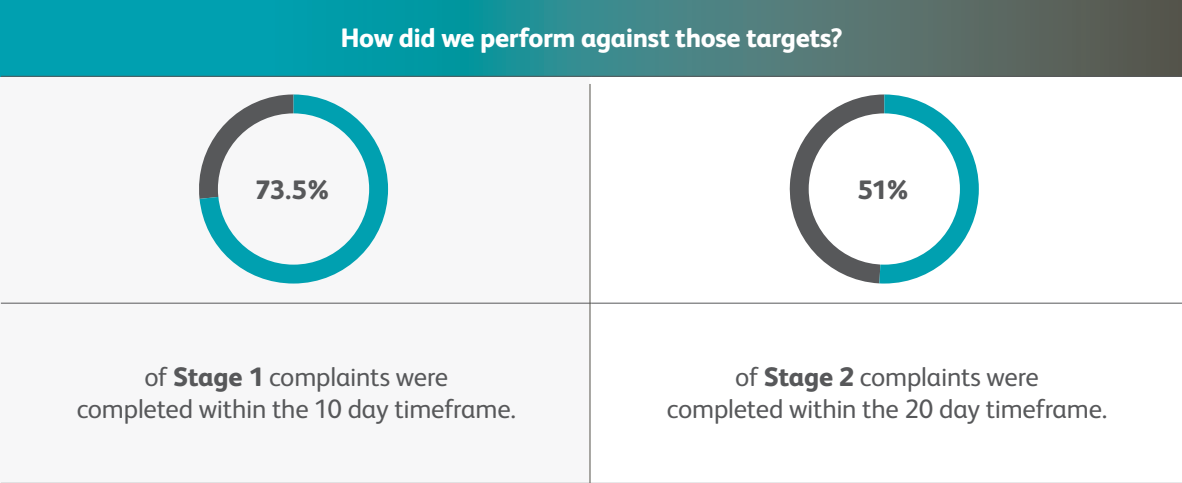
Building Safety
14%

This is followed by building safety complaints – we record higher volumes in our London region reflecting the number of high-rise buildings and include communal lifts.

Our complaints teams have focused on building stronger relationships with our operational teams and sharing customer feedback and insight. A reduction in complaints has resulted in more manageable workloads for our colleagues, allowing our complaints officers to spend even more valuable time with customers.

Timeframes

In line with the Housing Ombudsman Service complaint handling code, **our target timeframe for complaints is to respond within 10 working days**. This extends to 20 working days when a complaint is escalated to Stage 2.



We want to improve how we respond to customers and focus on getting it right first time. Our ambition is to resolve complaints and put things right for you, our customers, with the right outcomes. We need to make sure that we are fully confident that issues have been resolved for you, so sometimes it can take a little longer.

Some complaints can be very complex, and we may need to keep them open for much longer as we work with customers to a satisfactory resolution.

Although we have reduced the overall volume of complaints over the last year, we are still experiencing similar volumes of complaints being escalated to Stage 2.

This year we will have more focus on escalation reasons, identifying the business area and the root cause, and we will achieve this through our newly formed Continuous Improvement team.

The newly formed Ombudsman Compliance team have just completed a self- assessment against the Housing Ombudsman Spotlight report on **‘Repairing Trust’**. We will ensure we are embedding the Spotlight report into complaints projects, coordinating with Strategy and Planning teams and aligning with Awaab’s Law and other regulatory change.

We are working across the wider business to review the common trends from your complaints to ensure that we have a better understanding of the reasons behind customer dissatisfaction. We plan to work with our colleagues to implement improvements that will rebuild our trust with you and increase customer satisfaction.



Ombudsman complaints

We welcome the guidance provided by the Housing Ombudsman and the learnings from when customers do not feel satisfied with the outcome of their complaint.

Over the last 12 months we've received a number of determinations (listed below) which advised us on failings in our complaint handling.

Housing Ombudsman determinations

■ 2024/25

■ Difference from 2023/24

109 +18%
Complaints Investigated by the Housing Ombudsman

This is a 18% increase on last year.

9 +12.5%
Severe Maladministration Complaints

These are cases where the HOS have determined a serious failure.

167 +31%
Maladministration Findings

Each case can have multiple findings; there has been one or more failures in service identified in these cases.

33 -2.9%
findings of no maladministration

14 -6.6%
findings of reasonable redress

4 +33.3%
findings of mediation

We review each Housing Ombudsman Service (HOS) case to ensure we understand gaps in our service, identify service improvements and share with colleagues and stakeholders across the business.

We have also provided training and support for our colleagues in areas such as complaint handling, anti-social behaviour, management lets and repairs. This makes sure our teams have the knowledge and skills to handle your complaints effectively and efficiently.

For our tailored service policy, we consulted with customers through the customer experience perception and annual supported housing surveys.

We then presented this to our scrutiny panel to share the findings and obtain any further feedback or suggestions. We will continue to work with a small group of customers going forward through co-creation.

Additionally, because of HOS complaints regarding service charges, we have made it a focus to **improve our service charge plan**, including:



The re-design of the service charge communications sent to customers to make them more transparent.



Reviews of all core service charge processes and systems to ensure adequate controls and accuracy of service charge estimates.



A managing agent project has been set up to focus on estates where we are not the freeholder to improve relationships with managing agent.

How we’re handling complaints, and what we’re learning

We want to be open with you about how we manage complaints and how we’re working to improve.

Headline	Description and learnings
Refusal of 20 complaints	We’ve had to refuse 20 complaints. These were all in line with our complaints policy, which sets out the types of issues we can and can’t look into.
Three Complaint Handling Failure Orders	We also received three Complaint Handling Failure Orders from the Housing Ombudsman. These were due to delays in how we handled some complaints. We’re really sorry this happened. As soon as we were made aware, we took action to put things right. We’ve also strengthened our Ombudsman Compliance Team to make sure we stay on top of things going forward.
Mentioned in two Ombudsman reports	Where the landlord, for example, has failed to comply with its legal obligations, its policies and procedures or unreasonably delayed in dealing with the matter.



For more information

To contact the Housing Ombudsman

0300 111 300
info@housing-ombudsman.org.uk



03. Customer feedback

Whilst we analyse statistics, data and complaint trends, we also ask our customer how they feel about their experience of our complaint service.

Here's a sample of the feedback customers gave us:

"**They couldn't improve**; everything was dealt with. With understanding and efficiency"

"Once the wheels were in motion, **the complaint was dealt with efficiently**. I was kept up to date with everything via email, text, and telephone."

"To be honest **the person who handled my complaint was fantastic** he kept me informed all the way through the process"

"**Could have dealt with the complaint the first time** I raised it instead of leaving it 8 months and a stage 2 complaint to address the problem. All in all almost 2 years to get it done"

"From the complaint over the phone to the complaint being rectified. Riverside, and the painting company; **I commend them all**. All kept me up to date with latest information. They were always polite and friendly. I thank them all."



"**We can't thank you enough for everything you have done** and the outcome we wanted, we know to others it doesn't sound much but to us having the window means we can continue to run our home and garden the best way we have done for many years."

"Should have responded in a timely manner instead of me having to chase and chase and **mention contacting the ombudsman to get anything done**."

"**I had to escalate the complaint to next stage**. The repair will be outstanding for 18 weeks since it was first reported to completion. Once I'd escalated the complaint it was dealt with fairly quickly."

"**It could have been improved** "By listening more to the Tenant and making regular phone calls to check the Tennant is OK and being helped properly"

"**I feel that they could have asked what we felt would be a satisfactory solution** to the problem so as it would never arise again"

04. Listening to and acting on feedback

Listening to your feedback, and doing something about it, is key to improving and developing our systems at Riverside. This allows us to identify what is working well, and what isn't working for you and needs to be improved. Here are just a few examples of how we have listened to you, our customers, and how we moved forward following your feedback:

“My repair is complicated and not likely to be completed within the standard turnaround time”

In a recent survey, customers told us that the 28-day repair turnaround time was not being met for more complex repairs or where parts had to be ordered. They outlined that they were happy to wait longer to ensure the job was done correctly, so we introduced a new 56-day repair window for these instances, with the promise to clearly communicate with customers on how long their repair may take.

“I want a say in contractors as they are paid for through my service charges”

We received feedback from customers that they want more say in their contractors and the services they provide. As a result of this feedback, we have begun to consult with our involved customers on contract specifications when we procure a new contractor, including planned maintenance (such as kitchens and bathrooms) and lift maintenance. For details on how to become an involved customer and have your say, visit our website at: www.riverside.org.uk/getinvolved.

“The skip days in Langley are working really well!”

Customers in Middleton have given positive feedback about our ‘skip days’ initiative. This was organised after receiving several complaints about the amount of fly-tipping and litter in the Langley area. The ‘skip day’ has helped reduce the litter in this area and the Community Team have continued to organise these, with the idea also being used in other local areas suffering with fly tipping.

“We want clearer information on safety in high rise buildings”

Customers living in shared blocks like high-rise flats told us they wanted better, clearer information on how to stay safe. We introduced posters/digital boards in these buildings to enhance visibility of this type of information. These new measures also ensure we’re complying with the enhanced building safety laws that came into effect in the past year.

“My Riverside is not AA accessible”

Customers with accessibility let us know that they struggled to use our digital communication channels such as My Riverside. We commissioned an accessibility audit and worked through 90 changes to meet the new AA requirements, including new colour contrasts, replacing missing captions and keyboard friendly navigation.

05. Our priorities for improvement

So, what are we doing to improve?

Take a look below for a breakdown of the main measures we're taking to reduce complaints and drive up our customer satisfaction, outcomes and ease of reporting.

Operational



We're investing in new technology and training for our teams to make sure your concerns are dealt with efficiently.

We've also introduced a dedicated Customer Complaints Team in the London region. This team takes full ownership of each complaint from start to finish, helping to streamline the process and ensure a consistent experience.

If your complaint needs to be reviewed further, we have specialist Stage 2 Handlers who carry out a full and fair review.

We continue to invest in building a culture of accountability through our newly launched Leadership First programme, designed to strengthen collaboration, enhance communication, and grow capacity — all with the aim of delivering better outcomes for our customers.

Complaint handling



We've upgraded our systems and enhanced colleague training to help us resolve complaints more effectively and deliver better outcomes.

We will ensure that we are compliant with the standards set out in the Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code and share our Self – Assessment with you. We have invested a new complaint e-learning module for our colleagues.

We are also exploring new ways to keep you updated in real time — such as through SMS or email — to keep you in the loop on your complaint.

Customer feedback-based



Over the past year, customers who've taken part in our complaint's scrutiny group have told us they're really pleased with the improvements we've made so far.

Your feedback has been, and will always be, invaluable to us. We are currently engaging with you through interviews and surveys as part of an ongoing project where we are reviewing how you experience our complaints process. We will use this insight to further improve the service we provide to you.


We're always looking at how we work to make sure we're putting you — our customer — at the heart of everything we do.



Get in touch or find out more

 www.riverside.org.uk
email: complaints&disputeresolution@riverside.org.uk

Customer Service Centre

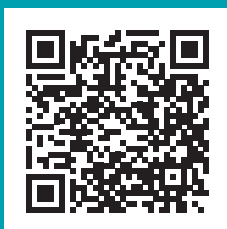
 **24 hours, 365 days a year.** So you can call
at the weekend or even on Christmas Day
0345 111 0000

 Speak to a member of our team

 We are happy to accept **Relay UK** calls.

 **Calling from London?** Use our dedicated
Customer Service Centre number: **0300 123 9966**

My Riverside is the
quickest and easiest way
to manage your tenancy,
**get started by scanning
the QR code below.**



The Riverside Group Limited

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A charitable Registered Society under
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