

The Board of Greatwell Homes met on 23 May 2024 and considered the **annual report on Complaint Handling & Service Improvements for 2023-24**.

Following discussion at the meeting, the Board agreed the following response to be shared with customers and the Housing Ombudsman Service:

Overall, the Board stated that they had great confidence in the report and transparency within.

There was challenge from the Board to ensure that Greatwell Homes understands the differing needs and experiences of different customer groups and communities in relation to repairs complaints.

There was a need for assurance that the business will go beyond standard consultation methods (such as on-line surveys) and ensure that we go out into our communities to understand the experience of customers who may not be engaged with or trust the landlord.

This followed a short discussion from the 2023-24 Tenant Satisfaction Measures that noted that satisfaction with repairs was lower for BAME customers than customers from other backgrounds.

There was a discussion around the notion of 'gatekeeping' with customer complaints, and Board were advised that in Q1 of 2024-25 the number of stage one complaints received had increased by over 200%, which provided assurance as to this point. The increase is attributed to the revised wording within the Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code that became effective on 1 April 2024, in that where customers express dissatisfaction they must be given the choice to make a formal complaint.

Board asked for assurance with data integrity and were keen to understand if the number of stage two complaints have (or will) rise in tandem with the increase in stage one complaints. It was agreed that feedback will be provided on this point in future reports.

Board was very supportive of the service improvements that have been implemented across the year in response to complaints and agreed that the review of the repairs function in 24-25 presents an opportunity to ensure higher rates of satisfaction with the service that attracts a large amount of customer feedback.