



ANNUAL COMPLAINTS PERFORMANCE AND SERVICE IMPROVEMENT REPORT 2024-2025

Seymour Housing Co-operative (SHC) owns and manages 88 social housing units. The 13 units at Grove Dwellings are jointly managed with Gateway Housing Association.

Any member of the Co-op, or other stakeholder, with a grievance about the landlord's service can make a complaint to SHC, either at office@seymourhc.org or through alternative channels set out in the Co-op's complaints policy. SHC will investigate and respond directly to complaints about their service, and an SHC-independent complaints officer will investigate and respond to complaints about any Management Committee (MC) actions.

This is the first annual complaints report in accordance with the Housing Ombudsman's new complaint handling code, which became mandatory for all social landlords from 1 April 2024. This report provides information on the number of complaints managed by SHC during 2024/25 and the response times against policy. This report also sets out what SHC has learned along the way.

Complaints Volume

SHC received 5 complaints during 2024/25 from members living in the 88 homes owned and managed by the Co-op.

Stage 1 complaints were as follows:

- 1 complaint related to our repairs and maintenance service.
- 2 complaints related to how we deal with anti-social behaviour.
- 0 complaints related to rents and utility supplies for new residents.
- 0 complaints related to general rent issues.
- 2 Complaints related to staff behaviour or performance

In 0% of the cases, was the complainant dissatisfied with Seymour Housing Co-op's reply at Stage 1 of the Complaints Policy and needed their complaint to be escalated to Stage 2.

Stage 2 Complaints as follows:

- None

Housing Ombudsman Referrals

- None

Learning from complaints to improve services

Issue	Learning point
High density city living such as ours, with dwellings sharing party walls or floors with commercial properties, can give rise to issues beyond our control; especially where there is shared access, for instance, into Seymour Gardens; an area where friction can arise.	The issue with party walls made us realise that we need to acquire new and up-to-date records and contacts for our neighbours so that we can react more speedily and with greater effect as we reach out to the most appropriate people for raising and resolving issues.
Although anti-social behaviour (ASB) is excluded from our complaints policy and dealt with under a separate ASB Policy, all ASB issues are logged and sign-posted using similar response timelines.	Following recent retraining about noise complaints, we are now determined to follow the recommendations in the Housing Ombudsman Service Spotlight Report on Noise Complaints and, where appropriate, to mitigate such complaints with sound installation instead of dealing with them as ASB.
Use of shared spaces	Co-operative living is about sharing resources and managing expectations. Reinforcement of zero tolerance for stored items in shared spaces will be better managed by more frequent staff inspections to prevent resentments building up between neighbours.
Knowledge of GDPR	All our staff have taken refresher courses in GDPR training.

Conclusions:

Seymour Housing Co-operative's Management Committee acknowledges that SHC did not become fully compliant with all aspects of the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code 2024 until December 2024, when the Management Committee finally completed an update of SHC's complaints policy. This was in part due to difficulties with staff turnaround and recruitment.

The complaints we receive cover a range of issues, but the common themes of dissatisfaction which we will seek to improve are:

- Better record keeping especially contact details of connected parties.
- Looking at the incorporation of sound insulation, where appropriate, whenever void works become necessary.
- More frequent inspections of shared spaces to prevent build-up of resentment between neighbours.
- Complaints to be a permanent item on the agenda to demonstrate SHC commitment to the importance of this topic.

- SHC is acutely aware of the potential for conflicts of interest between parties involved in a complaint. As part of our updated complaints policy, we have allowed for the outsourcing of complaints to an independent body; this can provide greater neutrality and fairness while sensitive investigations are carried out.
- We will provide a copy of our Complaints Policy and Procedure to all new residents.
- Each year when our Annual Meeting takes place, we will send a copy of our current self-assessment against the Complaints Handling Code to all residents. We will also provide information within our Annual Report regarding complaints.
- In addition, the publication of this report and our Board of Trustee's response will demonstrate to residents that we value their perceptions of the services we deliver.

Approved by Committee on: 03/04/2025

Chair's Signature: Jessica Thomas

Date: 8/4/25