

Peter Birtwistle Trust Annual Complaints Performance and Service Improvements Report 2024/25

Analysis of Complaints for 2024/25

TSM CH01 the number of stage one complaints in the relevant stock type in the reporting year - 5.

TSM CH02 proportion of stage one complaints responded to within the Housing Ombudsman complaint handling code timescales -100%

In the year to 31st March 2025 the trust received 5 complaints. Of the 5 complaints 2 related to property condition. (potential damp and draught). These were dealt with as a complaint as the residents expressed dissatisfaction in how we had dealt with previous service requests. The other 3 complaints related to gardening, communication and access issues.

We have not had cause to refuse to accept any complaints.

There were no stage two complaints and no reports from the Housing Ombudsman.

The trust is a small organisation, and residents are known by name to all members of staff. Complaints are relatively low due to the high importance given to service requests from residents.

The increase in complaints this year is being looked at positively as we have been working hard to raise awareness of the complaints process and reduce any barriers, either real or perceived to residents making complaints.

On reflection we are doing well in the promotion of the complaints process. We need to ensure service requests, especially those that are given a 'long term' ranking are not forgotten and that regular reviews take place. Communication between residents and staff, especially keeping residents up to date with progress on repairs and work on gardens and grounds needs to be given priority.

Service Improvements

We are continuing to improve the complaints process and have introduced some new documentation. We have produced a flow chart to illustrate the process, and we have produced feedback forms to allow residents to comment on the process and help us to improve.

We are continuing to promote the Housing Ombudsman and have started to include information on an annual basis in the resident's newsletter.

We have developed a complaints objective.

Complaints are now a fixed agenda item at the trust meetings.

We are continuing to actively encourage residents to make complaints about services in our day-to-day interactions, explaining that complaints are a positive way to change service delivery, that they can remain anonymous, and they are not 'making a fuss'.

The appointing of the MRC has ensured complaints are overseen by a dedicated trustee. This will ensure complaints are scrutinised and reviewed consistently.

Lessons Learned 2024-25

Issue – Property Condition

The charity received one complaint about damp and another about draughts.

Learning Point

Both complaints were initially service requests and we realise how important it is to respond to service requests promptly and engage with the residents at the earliest opportunity.

Issue – Gardening

One complaint related to work completed by the charity's gardeners.

Learning Point

We realise that decisions on grounds maintenance can cause dissatisfaction and it is difficult to please everyone all of the time. We will continue to encourage ground staff to engage with residents and explain why certain actions are necessary – such as reducing the height of a hedge for health and safety reasons.

Publication

The trust's website is now live, the self-assessment, improvement report and trustee statement are available to view. Residents will be informed and given the option of a hard copy via the regular newsletter.

We currently publicise the complaints policy in our Residents' Handbook and regular residents' newsletter. We also publicise the Housing Ombudsman in the Residents Handbook and give all new residents a copy of the leaflet entitled Information for Residents about the Housing Ombudsman's Service.