

# 2023/24 Complaints & Performance Improvement Report

Complaints figures featured in this report  
are across all stock types



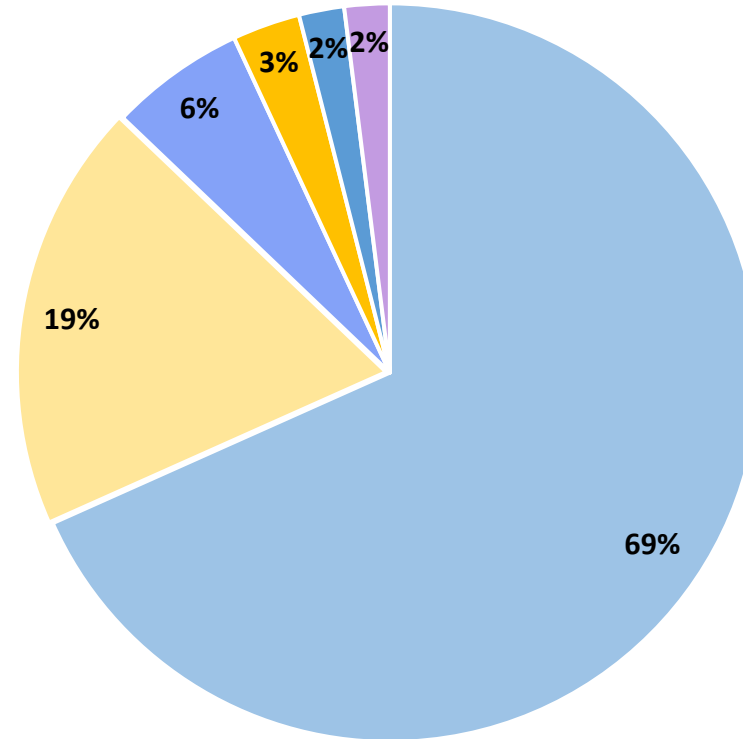
HELPING PEOPLE MAKE A HOME

- During financial year 2023/24 LFHA dealt with a total of 288 complaints at stage 1.
- 22 complaints (8%) were appealed and went on to Stage 2 during the year , where they were then resolved
- 255 stage 1 responses (88.5%) were complete on time
- 19 stage 2 responses (86.4%) were completed on time
- The Housing Ombudsman made 1 determination this year in relation to a complaint escalated to them about ASB. We fulfilled the recommendations the Ombudsman made.
- Satisfaction with complaints handling for the year was 44.7%. This increased from 36.4% for Q1 to 52.4% in Q4 but remains an area of focus for improvement.
- In order to assess what kinds of complaints are most prominent, the effect they have on the organisation, and what can be done to prevent future recurrences, this report will provide the following analysis:
  1. Number of complaints received by department
  2. Breakdown of themes coming out of complaints
  3. Breakdown of complaint outcomes
  4. Breakdown of themes specifically for complaints that weren't upheld
  5. Breakdown of compensation offered at stage 1
  6. Learning outcomes that can be taken forward from complaints

# Complaints by department

Over Two-thirds of complaints were assigned to Assets, with the majority relating to responsive repairs

Proportion of complaints by department



*Proportion of complaints by department  
Total complaints for 23/24 = 288*

■ Assets ■ Housing ■ Cross Departmental ■ Development ■ Community Spaces ■ Income Services

## Almost 60% of complaints were at least partly about a repair issue

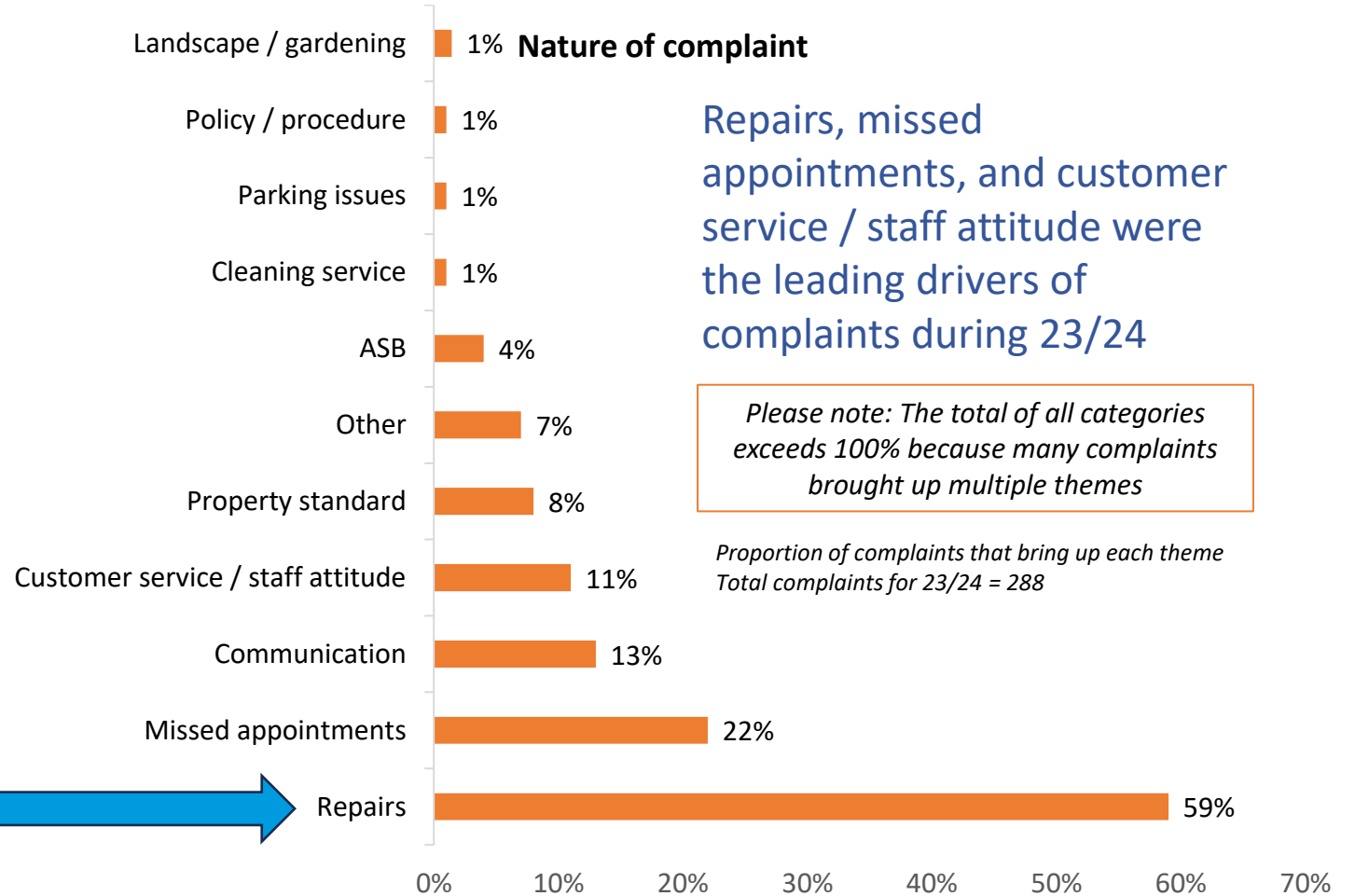
When a customer complained about a repair, this was often the result of them:

- Feeling that a serious issue (e.g. a leak, heating failure) had not been addressed with the appropriate level of urgency, or / and...
- Having received multiple repair visits, only for the issue to persist or reoccur after a short period of time.

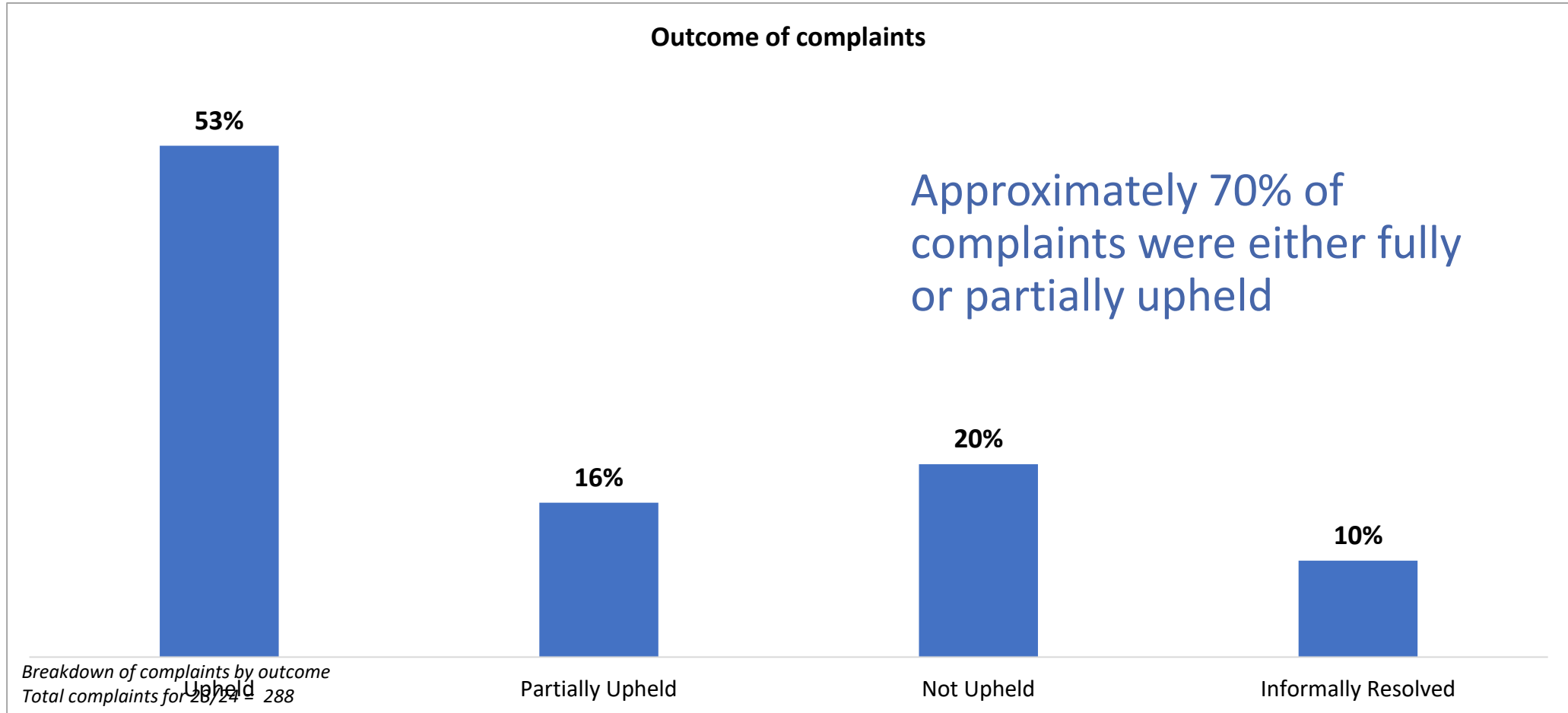
Complaints that were about repairs were often *also* about one or more of the following:

1. Missed appointments (e.g. the contractor hadn't turned up at the right time).
2. Customer service / staff attitude (e.g. struggled to get through to us on the phone to chase up repairs, feeling that they'd been treated disrespectfully).
3. Communication (e.g. we failed to keep the customer in the loop about what was happening with their repair case).

# Nature of complaints

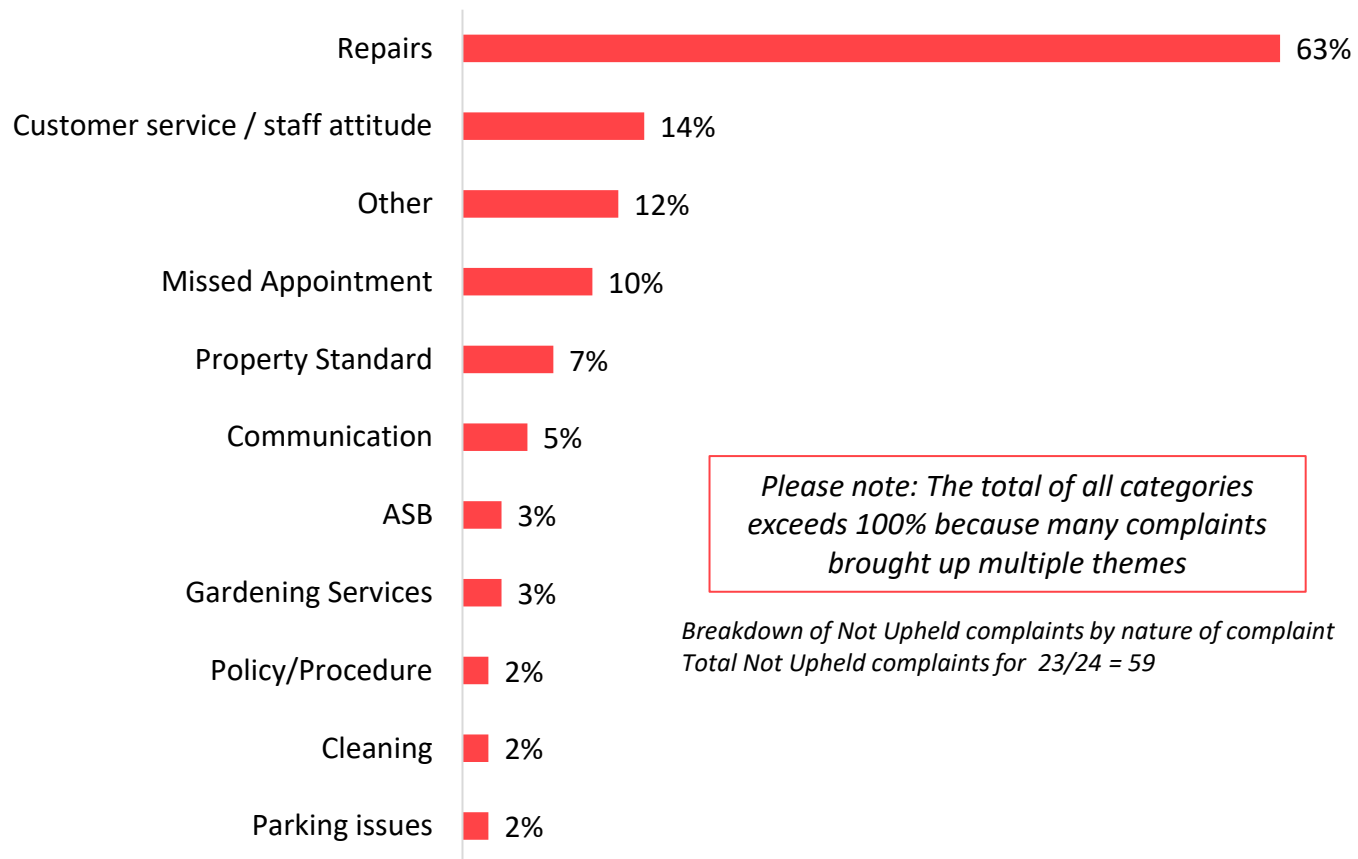


# Outcome of complaints



# Complaints not upheld

**Breakdown of Not Upheld complaints by nature of complaint**



*Please note: The total of all categories exceeds 100% because many complaints brought up multiple themes*

*Breakdown of Not Upheld complaints by nature of complaint  
Total Not Upheld complaints for 23/24 = 59*

**Key themes as to why complaints weren't upheld:**

For repairs:

- Repair issue hadn't been previously reported to us, so we couldn't realistically have addressed it before the complaint was lodged.
- Repair visit was made within the required timeframe and the issue was addressed appropriately.
- Repairs were logged with the appropriate priority

Customer service / staff attitude:

- The call with the customer has been listened back to, and no evidence of service failure has been found.

Missed appointments:

- Evidence has been provided to show that the contractor did in fact make their visit at the agreed time but couldn't gain access.

# Compensation

Missed appointments was the main reason compensation was offered at stage 1, Gesture of Goodwill was the largest combined total of compensation offered at stage 1

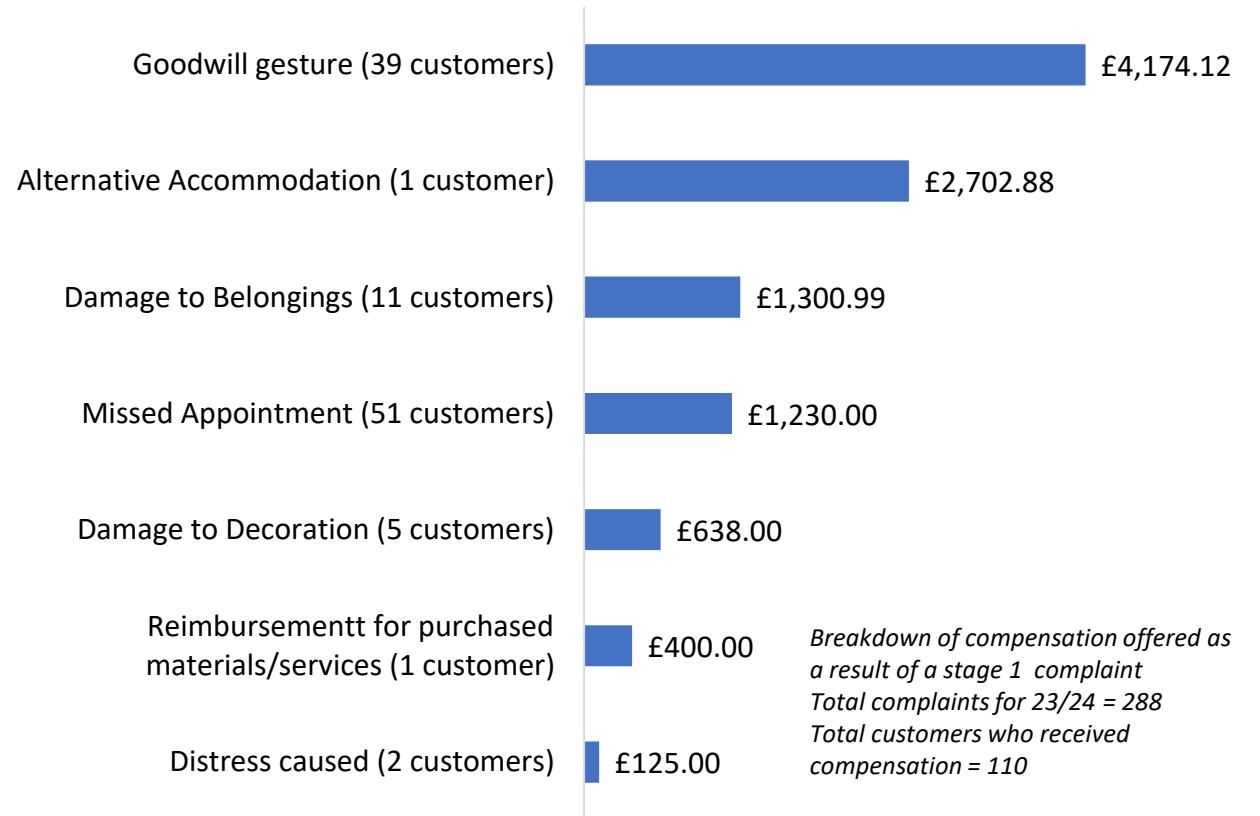
Total amount offered at stage 1 in compensation in 23/24 =

**£10,570.99**

**110 customers were offered compensation (38% of all complaints made)**



**Reasons for compensation and amounts paid**

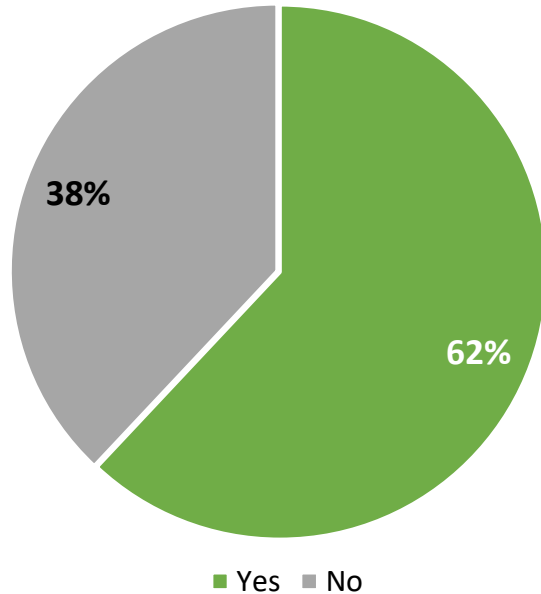


5 complaints at stage 2 led to the customer being offered compensation when they hadn't been offered it at stage 1.

6 customers offered compensation at stage 1 had their offer of compensation increased at stage 2

More than 60% of complaints led to the identification of service improvements

Were service improvements identified as a result of complaint?



*Proportion of complaints where service improvements were identified  
Total complaints for 23/24 = 288  
Total complaints where service improvements were identified = 178*

## Improvements identified

The following slides will outline the learnings taken from complaints in these service areas:

Responsive Repairs

Planned Works

Statutory Services / Building Safety

Neighbourhood Services

Income Management

Community Spaces



# Learning outcomes: Responsive repairs

**Our newly established contact centre is in place**, with five new customer service advisors and the new customer contact manager in post. All staff are receiving on-going training, and this will help to ensure a high level of service.

**Out of hours call handling** SLAs and call monitoring are being reviewed by the newly appointed contact centre manager, following complaints that our of hour wait times are excessive and calls are being terminated unnecessarily. Consideration will be given to what targets need to be put in place and what checks can be enforced to ensure a high level of service is maintained.

**Staff will be undertaking training on using language line** to ensure that they can communicate effectively with customers whose first language is not English and that service requests can be fully understood and communicated to the contractor, to avoid confusion.

Staff training was provided at the Quarterly Lunch, **to help teams identify between service requests and complaints** and how best to handle both.

**For persistent repairs issues, staff are reminded to check work order histories** and if three or more work orders have been raised within a short period for the same issue, they are encouraged to arrange for either a senior engineer or a supervisor to attend the next appointment.

**Surveyors are being encouraged to sync their tablets more frequently** to ensure appointments are being noted and actioned. This is following a complaint relating to non-attendance from a surveyor.

We are training our **contractors** on the new approach to complaints and the importance of professionalism and respect when dealing with our customers. We are highlighting the person behind the missed appointment and the impact this can have.

## Learning outcomes: Planned works (inc. cyclical works)

We will assess whether a **new boiler** is needed ahead of schedule when we it is clear from the number of repairs that there is a significant issue with the current installation. This follows a complaint due to the number of repairs needed to one boiler over several years and listening to the impact of this on the customer and her family.

A request for a **new kitchen** will be considered as a service request rather than a complaint.

Where a complaint relates to the **current condition of the kitchen**, it is useful to check photographs held on the system following stock condition surveys. This allowed us to review the rapid deterioration of a kitchen following a complaint and assess the cause this.

**Insulation works** are messy and can cause significant disruption to families, leading to complaints. This work will be planned and carried out considerately.

Where contractors failed to attend appointments, **we have provided compensation to the customer**, in line with our policy, and recharged these costs to the contractor. These costs are now included within KPI reporting and discussed in more detail, as part of the agenda at monthly contractor meetings.

We are training our contractors on the **impact** of missed appointments.

**Sure Maintenance have launched a new portal**, which will allow staff to view photos of no access cards uploaded by engineers from site. This will allow staff to discuss failed access details with customers on the initial call and hopefully prevent the need for a complaint and further investigation.

**ASB cases should be recorded in full**, including email addresses and contact number for all involved parties. Staff should consider the trauma informed training that they've undertaken when communicating with customers and to carefully consider the impact of the language they're using.

Our **ASB policy and procedure** is due for renewal and this will be carried out mindful of recent feedback from complaints, including consideration to those who find capturing evidence difficult due to their needs.

**We've improved our mutual exchange process** to ensure all building safety documentation i.e. gas check certificates, electrical certificates etc. are provided at the point of exchange.

**Tone of Voice** training is improving how we communicate with our customers. Our written work is becoming more accessible as a result.

# Learning outcomes: Community spaces

A customer logged a complaint to say that the gardening team had been failing to trim back hedges and properly maintain a garden at one of our blocks of flats. On investigation it was found that residents had asked the team to take a scaled back approach and allow the area to become wilder. **The team will now keep written records of such agreements and ensure that the wider team know of any similar matters.**

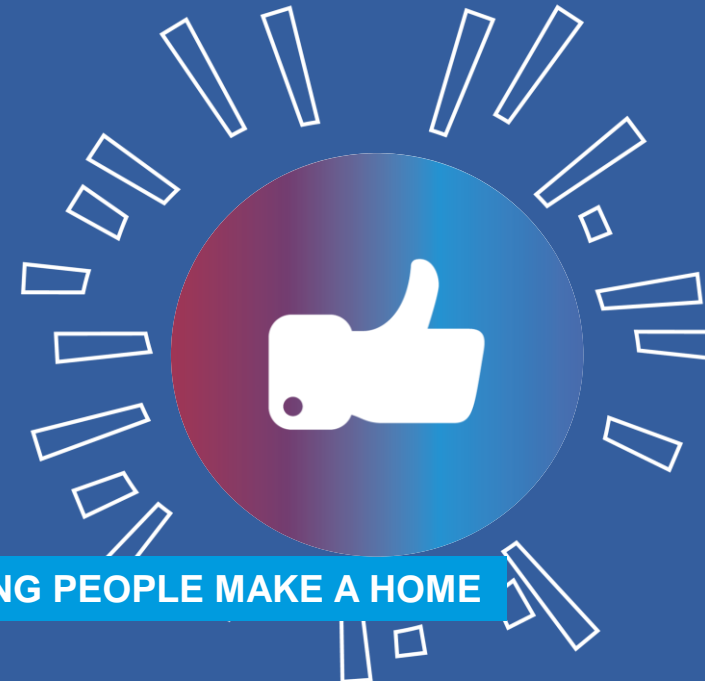
We received a complaint that **cleaning logs hadn't been completed at one of our block of flats**, suggesting that our new cleaning contractor, Hi-Spec, had not been visiting. Upon investigation of van tracker data, we determined that they had been on site, but had failed to complete the log. They have been reminded of the importance of completing this paperwork as it provides added assurance to customers that the work is being completed.

Staff have been reminded to monitor large account balances more closely and proactively contact customers to amend direct debits, to prevent overpayments accumulating

It was notable that we received very few complaints relating to this area of the organisation. This in itself led to a review of the interactions we are having with customers and are we having enough challenging conversations where needed. The team is using this information to move towards a "quality rather than quantity" approach to payment agreements with customers.

# Thank you

For any queries or comments, please contact:  
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