



# COMPLAINT PERFORMANCE AND SERVICE IMPROVEMENT

Annual Report 2023-24



## This is Community Gateway’s Complaint Performance and Service Improvement Report, detailing our performance in 2023-24, the lessons we have learnt and the improvements we have made.

At Community Gateway Association, we value feedback from our customers as it helps us identify areas where our services or processes can be improved.

We have a dedicated Service Improvement Team which has been set up to ensure tenant feedback shapes our services and we learn from complaints and insight.

The team provide a quarterly ‘Customer Insight Report’ to our Board and Tenants Committee (Gateway Central) on our performance across several insight channels, including complaints, the Tenant Satisfaction Measures, call handling and satisfaction surveys.

During their meeting in May 2024, the Board reviewed our [self-assessment to the Housing Ombudsman](#) and analysed a detailed version of this report. It was noted that performance earlier in the year had not been where we wanted it and positively there had been a significant improvement in recent months.

Our Member Responsible for Complaints, [Pam Watson](#), provided assurance to our Board members that she receives detailed information on complaints and communication with tenants. She was pleased to report that complaints were handled fairly and effectively in line with our Complaints Policy and the Housing Ombudsman’s Complaints Handling Code.

Board acknowledged that further works are required, and plans are in place to build on the improvements that have already been made.

### Performance in 2023-2024



To manage the increased number of complaints and ensure our Investigating Officers have the skills to handle complaints, we have:

- Increased the number of people in our Complaints Team
- Worked with an external provider to deliver training to everyone who investigates complaints on the importance of complaint handling, impartiality and the different types of remedies that can be offered

As was the case across the housing sector, the Asset Management Team received the most complaints compared to all other service areas due to the volume of interactions they have with tenants through telephone calls, emails and in person.

## Lessons Learnt

### Communication with repairs

Our Tenants Committee (Gateway Central) requested a tenant led scrutiny exercise after reviewing the Insight Report as the majority of complaints related to this area. A group of tenants carried out a review and made a series of recommendations. Tenants advised they wanted us to reduce call wait time, increase communication throughout the repairs process and obtain more feedback from customers on the services we deliver. Work is underway to implement the necessary changes, and increased monitoring and training has resulted in a reduction in call wait time and improved customer service.

This has been further embedded across the wider organisation through the Customer Service Training which has been delivered to all colleagues.

### Tailoring our approach

Our customers told us we weren't taking an individual approach; for example, we weren't adjusting the timescale for an appointment based on individual needs.

We have introduced a 12-week training programme for all of our repairs call handlers to support them with customer-focused call handling, training on all technical aspects of their roles and delivering a consistent service that is tailored to the needs of our tenants. We are continuously monitoring call quality to ensure the training has the desired impact.

### Service Transformation Strategy

Through a series of customer events, our tenants informed us that they want us to focus on the Brilliant Basics. Following the feedback, we undertook a thorough review into the quality of the services that we deliver and introduced a [Service Transformation Strategy](#). The strategy aims to:

- Improve overall satisfaction and satisfaction with individual services
- Ensure our tenants are listened to, both individually and collectively, and their voices are heard across every area of the business
- Ensure our tenants feel valued and respected

## The Housing Ombudsman Service

The Housing Ombudsman is an independent, impartial and free service for social housing tenants. Alongside being able to contact the Ombudsman for support and advice, if a tenant isn't happy with the outcome of their complaint investigation, they can ask the Ombudsman to review it. The Ombudsman will check that we have handled the complaint fairly and in line with the Complaint Handling Code.

During 2023-24, The Housing Ombudsman requested information for three complaints. We have received a formal decision for one of these complaints and are awaiting the outcome for two.

The Housing Ombudsman found that CGA handled the complaint correctly. They made a recommendation asking for the sign-up process to be reviewed to ensure it fully captures the needs of tenants. This has been completed by our Allocations Team.

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