



## Annual Complaints & Compliments report

2023-2024

## INTRODUCTION

- CBH is committed to providing a high standard of service to customers. As part of our continuing effort to improve services provided, we rely on feedback from our customers.
- We want to know when we get it right, so standards can be maintained or improved, and we want to know when someone is not happy with the service they received.
- We have responded to the changes in guidance and have mirrored these changes within our own internal policies and procedures to ensure we are compliant with the Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code.
- We have introduced new QL system actions to ensure we are maximizing the data we can get from complaints to enable positive changes within the organisation.
- We have introduced Disrepair cases into the complaint procedure as of January 2024, in quarter 4, 11 disrepair cases were logged
- We implemented a learning framework last year and have continued to ensure the learning from complaints is monitored and used as a valuable source of true data to help make positive changes in and around CBH.

## 2023 – 24 At A Glance...

207 complaints received in 2023/24.

100% of complainants were responded to within 10 days or within the extended timescale agreed.

CBH have a 92.5% success rate of resolving complaints at Stage 1.

Average number of days taken to investigate and close a complaint was 9.6 days v the Housing Ombudsman mandated timescale of 10 days (This includes 42 cases that had agreed extensions.)

Compensation – 27 cases (13.4 %) resulted in compensation payments at Stage 1 or Stage 2 totaling **£13,631,02**

- £2,250,00 were from disrepair cases (3 cases in Q4)

From October 2023 actions arising from complaints have been captured. Between October and year end 38 actions have been raised , 20 have been completed and 18 remain outstanding and are being monitored.

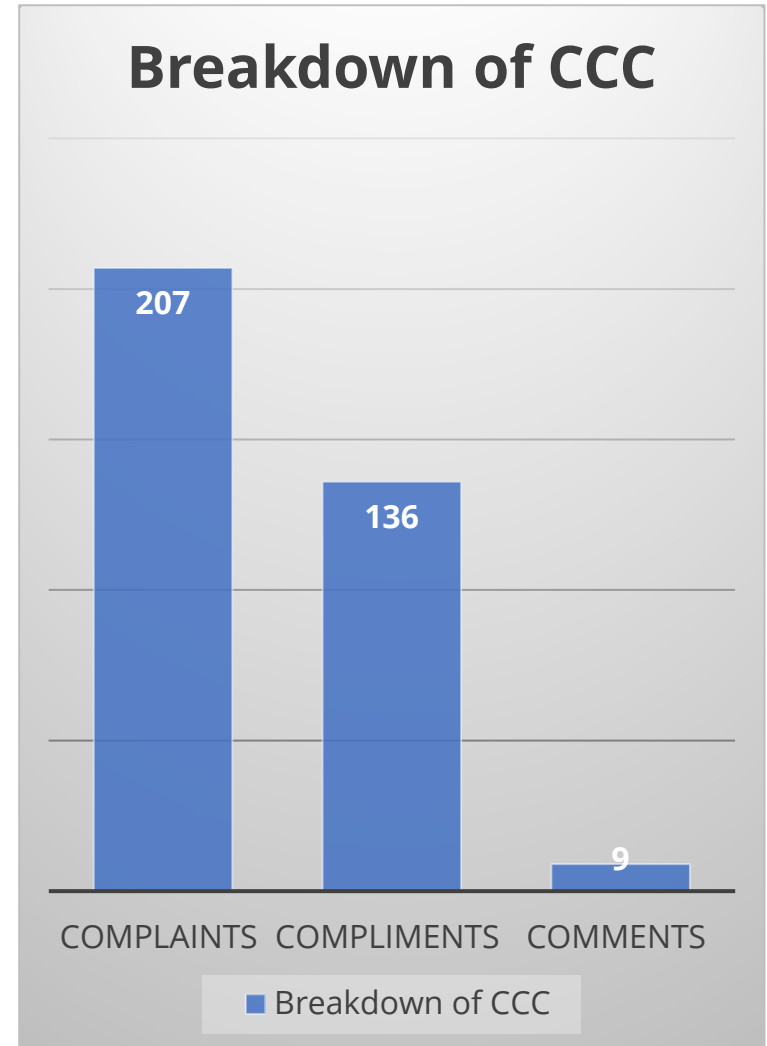
Introducing this into our complaints process has proved an invaluable asset to ensure any promises we make to residents are closely monitored until completion.

RESOLVED AT STAGE 1	RESOLVED AT STAGE 2	ESCALATED TO OMBUDSMAN
<b>191</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>2</b>

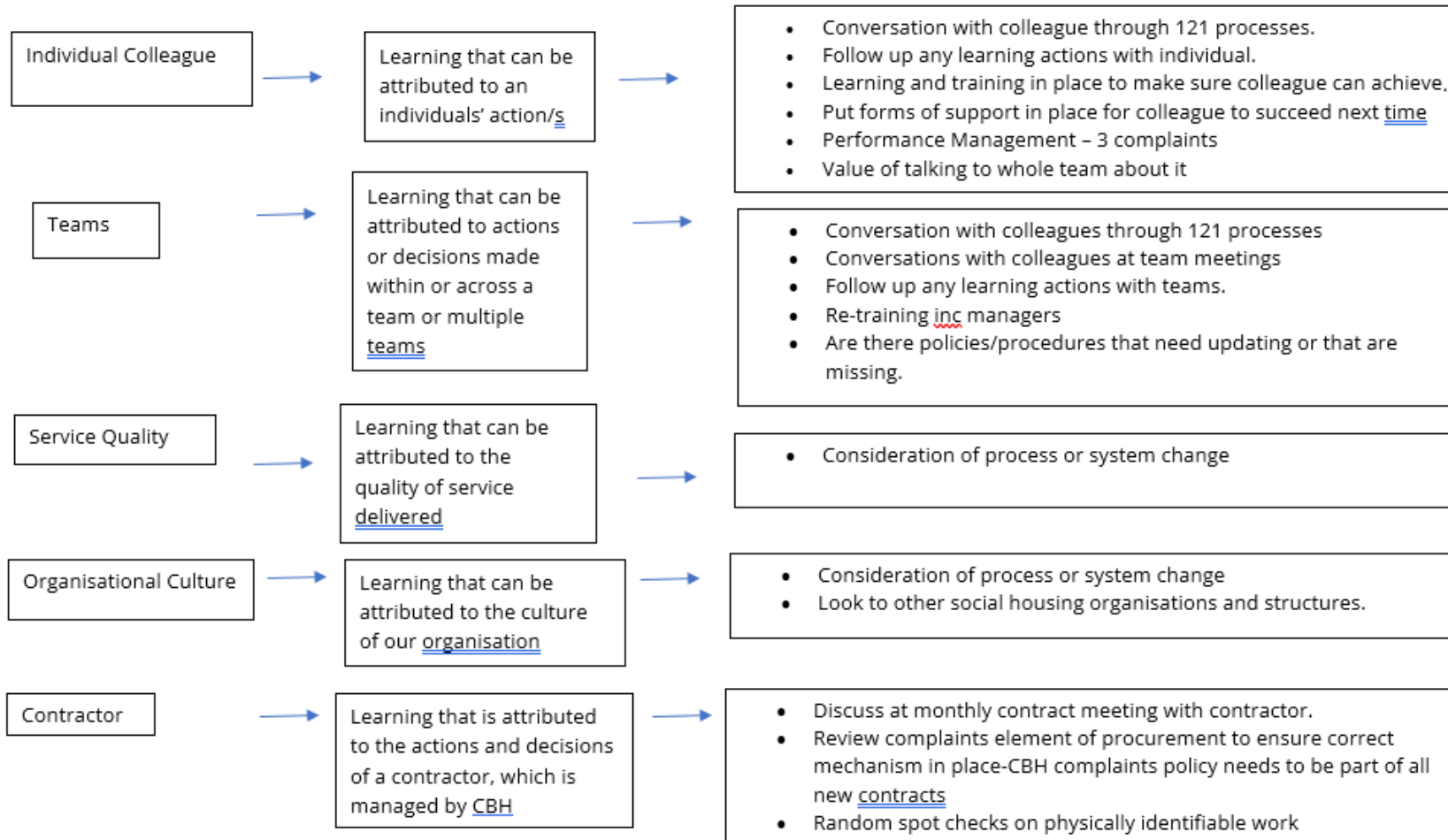
UPHELD	PARTLY UPHELD	NOT UPHELD
91	56	32

\*10 Complaints were withdrawn at Stage 1

## Breakdown of CCC



# LEARNING FRAMEWORK



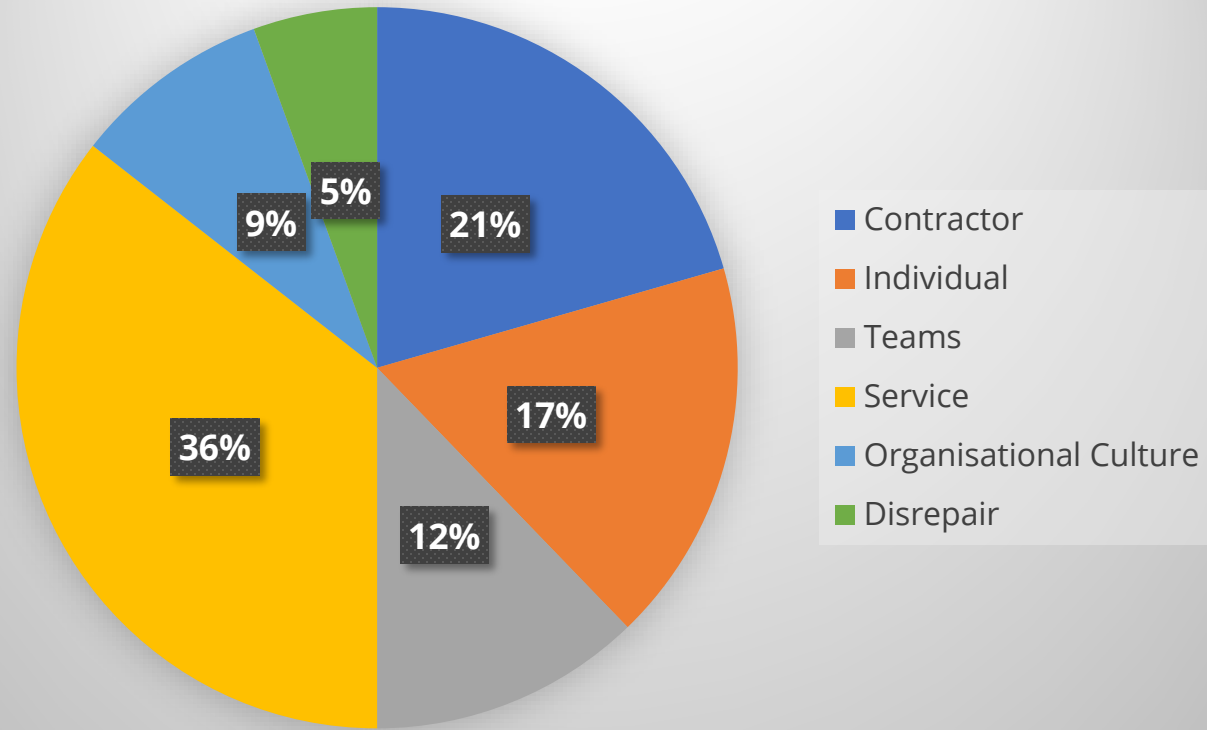
The Complaints Officer has developed and implemented a learning framework to aid Investigating Officers in identifying meaningful 'lessons learnt' from complaints, and to guide them in implementing appropriate actions.

This has been shared with all investigating officers and will be monitored by the Complaints Officer.

The Project & Change Team are embedding the framework into the QL complaints case module.

The benefits of the framework are already evident. In April 2023 100% of complaint cases had lessons learnt recorded without any requirement for intervention by the Complaints Officer.

## Learning From Complaints



Having the framework in place has allowed us to evaluate complaints and breakdown areas of learning across CBH. CBH have identified learning in 100% of cases in 2023/24.

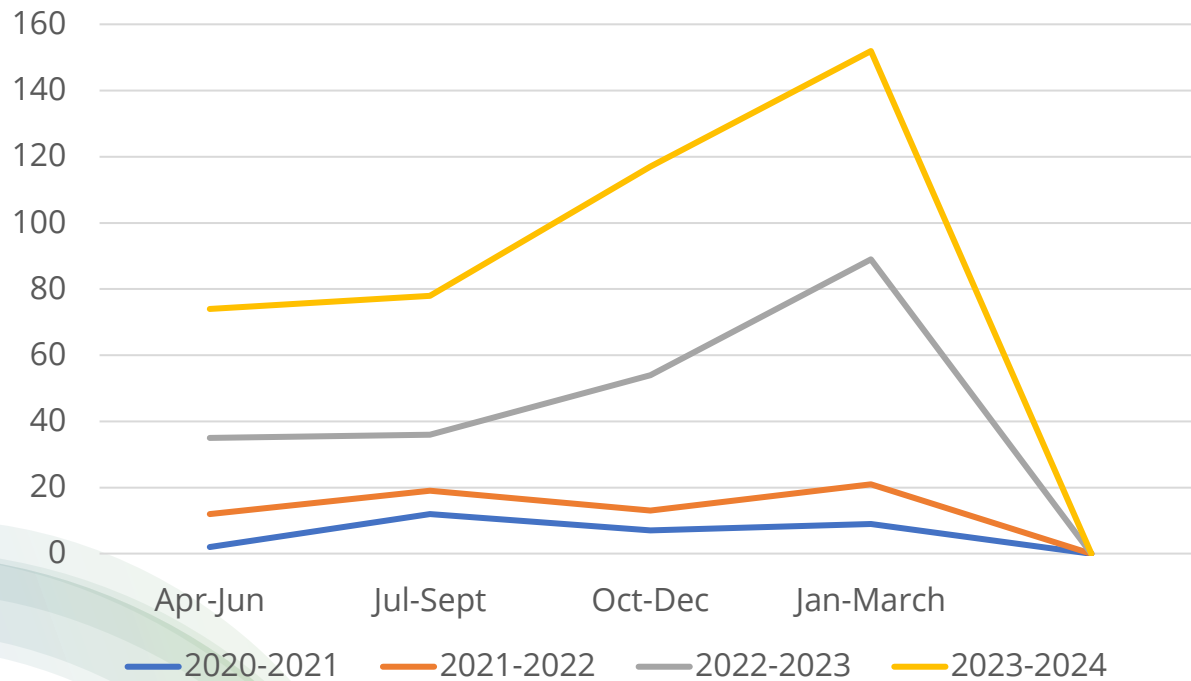
Moving forward we will continue to analyse the trends and patterns available to us to improve services across the business.

Learning from complaints has resulted in identification of projects to bring positive changes. These ongoing projects include:

- Review of licence agreement (party wall)
- Review of repairs induction programme
- Introduction of complaints management into relevant contractor tender documents
- Introduction of a draft fencing policy
- Introduction of SMS satisfaction surveys for ASB and complaints

# LAST 12 MONTHS

## Complaint Annual Patterns



In 2023/24 we have seen a 38.2% increase in reported complaints from the previous year. Nationally, there has been a 586% increase in received complaints since the introduction of the Complaints Handling Code since 2021.

As illustrated, there is an increase following the introduction of the Housing Ombudsman Complaints Handling Code and our work around accessibility to our complaints process.

## NEXT STEPS

Annual review of Housing Ombudsman Service complaints handling code (March 2025)

Ongoing programme of training for new starters and existing complaint handlers

Review of Stage 2 complaints process

To maintain our 100% response rate within HOS timescales to Stage 1 & Stage 2 complaints/communication

To establish positivity around complaints and the learning and value they bring to CBH

To monitor and report on declined complaints and promises (Listen & Act)

Develop quarterly complaints focus groups to capture residents lived experience

Work in partnership with the 'Member Responsible for Complaints to ensure the role has a positive impact

Integrate complaints handling process into new CBC governance model, and explore opportunities to align with the CBC approach to complaints handling

Review capacity and resource for managing complaints across all service areas with a view to reducing the number of stage 1 extensions applied

# Identified Service Improvements

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Continue with our repairs and maintenance service improvement project

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Customer Service and Customer Contact

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Maintenance of Communal areas

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## Governance Response to the Annual Report

Cheltenham Borough Council Cabinet Housing Committee are committed to ensuring that customer complaints are handled effectively and in a timely manner, and that as an organisation we identify learning to deliver a great customer experience.

The committee routinely scrutinise complaints performance data, and this has been enhanced through the appointment of Councillor Flo Clucas, Cabinet Member for Housing and Customer Service, into the role of Member Responsible for Complaints ('MRC').

This appointment will ensure that there is a strong awareness of complaint performance within the Housing Committee and wider members, and that there is scrutiny of complaints handling and of emerging themes.

The Committee recognise that further improvements are required in repairs and planned maintenance, as this is the number one driver for complaints, and this will continue as part of the repairs and maintenance service improvement project.

We will also focus on making service improvements in the areas of customer contact and maintenance to communal areas.

The MRC and Housing Committee aim to support colleagues to embed a culture of positivity and learning from complaints by exploring themes and supporting changes to ineffective processes, policies, or behaviours.