

# United Reformed Church Retired Ministers' Housing Society

## Annual Complaints Performance and Service Improvement Report (2025)

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## **1. Introduction**

This report outlines RMHS's complaint handling against the Housing Ombudsman Service Complaint Handling code (which is referred to hereafter as, the Code). It reflects upon complaints received during the period 1 January 2025 to 31 December 2025 and reviews our handling of these. It considers what we have learned, changes made within the reporting period and outlines the improvements we have committed to.

### **Definitions used in the report:**

Complaint: A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction, however made, about the RMHS' standard of service, actions, or lack of action by the RMHS, its staff, or those acting on its behalf, affecting a resident or group of residents.

## **2. Compliance with the Complaint Handling Code.**

RMHS aims to deliver an excellent standard when handling complaints, in compliance with the Complaint Handling Code (the Code). The Code sets out the framework for handling complaints in a manner which is equitable, transparent, and objective. At RMHS complaint resolution is delivered impartially and professionally so we can learn from outcomes and drive service improvements.

After receiving approval from RMHS's Board in January 2025, the Complaints Policy v2.2 came into effect on 1 February 2025. This policy gave operational responsibility for complaint handling to the Complaints Officer. The incumbent has completed the Housing Ombudsman Service Complaint Handling Code eLearning. Concurrently, Board appointed a director to fulfil the role of Member Responsible for Complaints (MRC). This Director has lead responsibility for oversight of complaints and supports a positive complaint handling culture at RMHS.

In February 2025, a revised Start of Tenancy Pack was introduced. This is given to all new tenants on sign up and includes a copy of the Complaints Policy. Residents are reminded in the RMHS Newsletter, which is produced three times per year, that the RMHS Complaints Policy is published on our website <https://rmhs.org.uk/services-for-residents/rmhs-policies/>. A paper copy of the complaints policy is available on request for residents who do not engage with online services to ensure the policy is available in a clear and accessible format for all residents.

It is made clear in the complaints policy that at any point during the complaints process a resident can escalate their complaint for review by, or seek support from, the Housing Ombudsman Service.

### 3. Complaints received.

During the reporting period (1 January to 31 December 2025) RMHS received a total of six stage 1 complaints and two stage 2 complaints. No complaints were excluded. Table 1 shows the number of complaints received per quarter.

	<b>Q1</b> 01/01/2025 – 30/03/2025	<b>Q2</b> 01/04/2025 – 30/06/2025	<b>Q3</b> 01/07/2025 – 30/09/2025	<b>Q4</b> 01/10/2025 – 31/12/2025	<b>2025 TOTAL</b>
<b>Stage 1</b>	1	0	4	1	<b>6</b>
<b>Stage 2</b>	1	0	1	0	<b>2</b>
<b>Housing Ombudsman Service</b>	0	0	0	0	<b>0</b>

Table 1: Complaints received by RMHS in 2025.

The six stage 1 complaints and two stage 2 complaints were acknowledged and fully responded to within the required timescales.

	<b>Q1</b> 01/01/2025 – 30/03/2025	<b>Q2</b> 01/04/2025 – 30/06/2025	<b>Q3</b> 01/07/2025 – 30/09/2025	<b>Q4</b> 01/10/2025 – 31/12/2025	<b>Within time frame</b>
<b>Stage 1</b>	1	n/a	4	1	100%
<b>Stage 2</b>	1	n/a	1	n/a	100%
<b>Housing Ombudsman Service</b>	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

Table 2: Percentage of complaints responded to within target.

The themes outlined in Table 3 (below) are listed in numerical order according to their occurrence from highest to lowest.

Communication	7
Delays in completion of repairs	3
Dissatisfaction with procedures	2

Table 3: Themes that occurred in complaints received by RMHS in 2025.

Thematic analysis of the complaints has revealed that the most common themes were communication, followed by delays with repairs.

100% of stage 1 complaints, and 50% of stage 2 complaints received in 2025 expressed dissatisfaction with RMHS communication with residents. The theme of communication included a lack of response from RMHS to emails and voicemail messages, unclear or incorrect information being provided and not keeping residents informed of changes in policy or procedures that directly affect them. One stage 1 complaint suggested a lack of communication between RMHS staff.

In addition to communication, 50% of stage 1 complaints also expressed dissatisfaction regarding delays to completion of repairs. Although external factors including adverse weather conditions and unavailability of local contractors had contributed to delays in the completion of repairs, residents had not been kept informed of this by RMHS which caused them additional anxiety and frustration.

It is of note that all elements within complaints relating to communications were upheld. The outcome of complaints received by RMHS is detailed in table 4 (below):

<b>Outcome</b>	<b>Stage 1</b>	<b>Stage 2</b>
Upheld	3	1
Partially upheld	3	0
Not upheld	0	1

Table 4: Complaint outcomes

One stage 2 complaint was not upheld because the complainant was dissatisfied with a decision that had been made according to policy.

#### **4. Escalation to the Housing Ombudsman**

We are pleased to report that no complaints were escalated to the Housing Ombudsman for 2025.

#### **5. Lessons learned from complaints.**

The complaints received by RMHS in 2025 taught us that:

- Clear, timely and regular communication is essential to forming and maintaining a good relationship between RMHS and our residents. Listening to their needs builds trust and improves tenant satisfaction, making residents feel valued by the Society.
- Communication is of high importance to our residents, and RMHS must continue to improve verbal and written communication across all areas of our service provision. This should be available to our residents in their preferred format.
- Repairs and Maintenance: When delays occur, residents want to be informed about this as soon as possible and receive regular updates at agreed intervals until the repair is completed. This reassures residents that the repair to their home has not been forgotten about and reduces worry.
- Policy and procedures: The complaints with regards to procedure highlighted issues within our pre-tenancy and property sale procedures (that have been addressed outside the complaints procedure). This led to an improved understanding of how residents benefit from clearer explanation of the context behind our working procedures and decisions made.

- Policy and procedures: When policies change, our residents should be kept informed and be kept informed of who to contact for clarification on matters of procedure.

## **6. Service Improvements**

The RMHS's vision is that Ministers retiring from the United Reformed Church, and their spouses, have a safe and affordable place to live in their retirement.

In 2025, the following service improvements were made to achieve this:

- To improve the experience of our residents, RMHS developed an enhancement to its CRM, so residents receive text and email communication at key stages of the repairs process.
- The Property Services Team has introduced a provision to ensure that residents who do not use mobile phones/email are contacted by telephone when a job is raised and informed of the contractor who will attend.
- Whole team learning: A training programme was developed to ensure that the HomeMaster CRM is used to its full potential. This resource facilitates effective internal communication which improves resident experience.
- In May 2025 RMHS Board and Staff participated in an away day to determine RMHS's vision and the values that determine how we interact with our residents.
- Team Development: All RMHS staff participated in Customer Care training linked to RMHS's core values (Christian Ethos, Caring, Collaborative, Accountable and Adaptable).
- In July 2025 RMHS conducted a Wellbeing Survey to engage with our residents. The aim of this was to receive feedback directly from residents to better understand what matters most to them, and to highlight where improvements can be made.
- Throughout 2025 RMHS staff have worked with an external consultant to review and develop RMHS policies to ensure compliance with legislation. This led to the production of an Asset Management Handbook aimed at residents providing clarity around how our properties are managed and maintained.  
A Housing Services Handbook will be launched in Spring 2026 to support our residents from the start to the end of tenancy.

The feedback received from complaints in 2025 was integral in the decisions taken regarding focus areas for the delivery of the Strategic Plan for 2025. We are encouraged to see these improvements reflected in the feedback we receive from our residents.

## **7. Feedback from residents**

The feedback we receive from our residents is important to us. In 2025 complaint outcomes, feedback from the Wellbeing Survey and comments/compliments received were discussed at team meetings to improve our understanding of our resident's needs.

The wellbeing survey asked our residents a range of questions regarding their experiences of having RMHS as a landlord. The overall participation rate for this was 81%. The findings have been shared with residents in the RMHS newsletter and are available on our website.

We engaged with Acuity who suggested sampling a smaller cohort in 2026 including residents who did not engage, and new residents who began their tenancies after the surveying period had closed.

We continue to review our options for gathering resident feedback more widely and future surveys will be redesigned according to Tenant Satisfaction Measures so we can benchmark more effectively.

## **8. Feedback from our Governing Board**

Board oversight and feedback are critical to RMHS's continuous improvement, ensuring transparency and accountability in complaint handling. The Board actively oversees the complaints management framework, with a Member Responsible for Complaints appointed in January 2025. During 2025, the Board received three formal updates at scheduled meetings. Board feedback on complaints handling, including commentary on this report, is published on the RMHS website, providing residents with clear visibility of Board-level monitoring and oversight.

RMHS reviewed its governance structure in 2025 and in 2026 Board will be supported by a Resident's Committee which will meet twice per year. The Resident's Committee will review reports on complaint volumes, themes, and emerging trends. This active engagement will continue to enable robust scrutiny of complaint handling practices, with constructive challenge supporting ongoing improvement.

## **9. Conclusion**

RMHS is committed to delivering high-quality customer service supported by a transparent, responsive, and effective complaints management framework. Resident feedback is a critical source of insight that informs organisational learning, service improvement, and risk management. By strengthening staff capability and ensuring clear visibility and access to the Complaints Policy, RMHS promotes a culture of openness and accountability. Feedback received in 2025 has directly informed policy

and procedural enhancements and shaped the Strategic Development Plan, which will guide the transformation of services, operating models, and service delivery to better meet resident needs.