

OTHA Annual Complaints Report 2021-22

This report tells you about the type of issues that have been raised, dealt with under the Complaints Procedure for OTHA. This covers how we handle and report on complaints about service. This report is part of our reporting to tenants.

Complaints are used to improve our service. We welcome your feedback and your comments, compliments and complaints are used to make sure our service meets the needs of our tenants, factored owners and other customers.

There are 3 types of complaint:

Stage One – frontline resolution. These are simpler complaints which can be easily resolved.

Stage Two – investigation. Stage 2 deals with two types of complaint: those that have not been resolved at stage 1 and those that are complex and require detailed investigation.

Stage One Escalated to Stage 2 – complaints that were received and concluded at the frontline stage but the customer requested escalation to a Stage 2

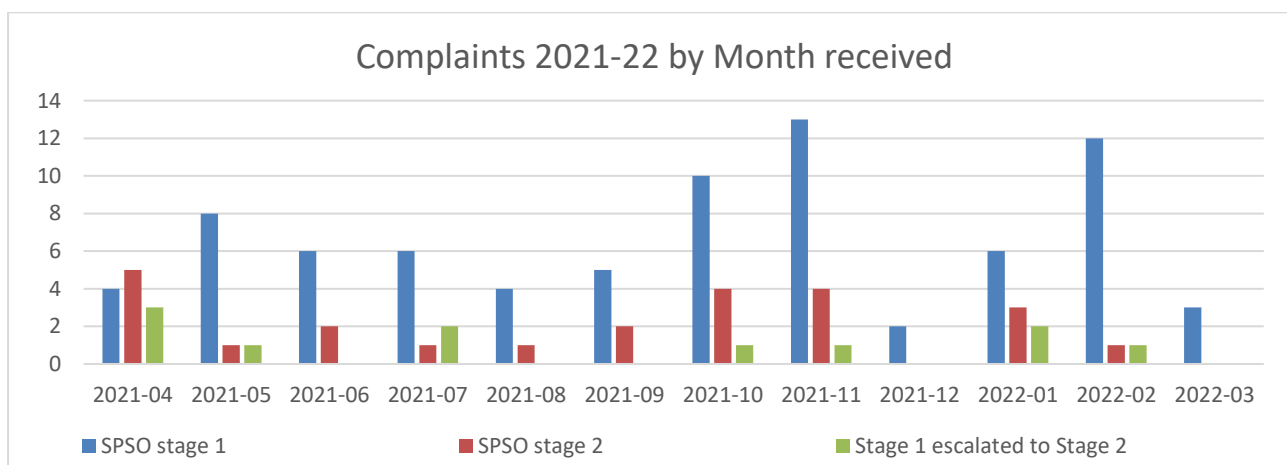
The Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO) has set out 4 Key Performance Indicators (KPI's) and these are reported as follows:-

Indicator One: The Total Number of Complaints Received

The table below shows the number of complaints received in the year by complaint type and service

Service area	SPSO stage 1	SPSO stage 2	Stage 1 escalated to Stage 2	Total
Development	4			4
Factoring	1			1
Housing Services	18	14	9	41
ICHR	2	1	1	4
Planned/cyclical	5	1		6
Repairs	49	8	1	58
Total	79	24	11	114

The following graph shows the period the 114 complaints were received



Indicator Two: The number and percentage of complaints at each stage that were closed in full within the set timescales of 5 and 20 working days

Type	Late	On-Time	% on time
SPSO stage 1		79	100%
SPSO stage 2		24	100%
Stage 1 escalated to Stage 2	1	10	91%
Total	1	113	99%

Indicator Three : The average time in working days for a full response to complaints at each stage

The table below shows the average number of days to provide a full response. The completion timescale for a Stage 1 is 5 working days and a Stage 2 is 20 working days.

Type	Average days for full response	Number complaints
SPSO stage 1	3.89	79
SPSO stage 2	13.04	24
Stage 1 escalated to Stage 2	3.18	11
Grand Total	5.75	114

Indicator Four : The outcome of complaints at each stage

The table below the resolution outcome of each complaint by type.

Outcome	SPSO stage 1	SPSO stage 2	Stage 1 escalated to Stage 2	Grand Total
Not upheld	35	19	9	63
Upheld - Contractor service failure	21			21
Resolved	17	3		20
Upheld - OTHA service failure	4		1	5
Partially upheld	2	2	1	5
Grand Total	79	24	11	114

Key Points to Note

Overall, the number of complaints submitted in the year were slightly higher than the previous year. There were 102 complaints registered in 2020-21 compared to 114 in 2021-22.

40% of the complaints were for Housing Services (including complaints about the Inverclyde Common Housing Register – ICHR), 51% were in respect of the Repairs service and the remainder split across Development, Factoring and Planned Maintenance.

One complaint was late in being fully responded to. The average days to respond in full were comfortably within the timescales of 5 and 20 working days.

The majority of complaints were not upheld - 55% (63) with only 27% (31) being either upheld or partially upheld. The remaining 18% (20) were considered to be resolved.

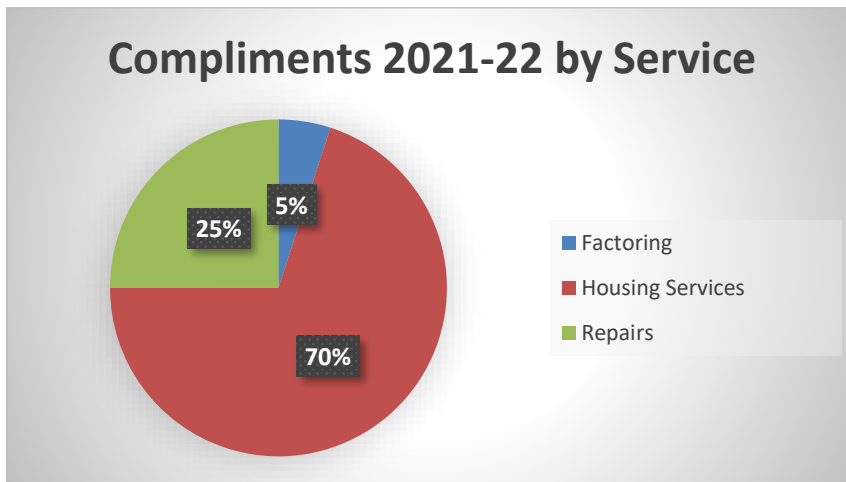
The Association's Complaints Handling Procedure defines a resolved complaint as follows:-

A complaint is resolved when both the organisation and the customer agree what action (if any) will be taken to provide full and final resolution for the customer, without making a decision about whether the complaint is upheld or not upheld.

Compliments

We also record positive feedback, the chart below shows the volume of compliments received by service area. 20 compliments were received in the year.

Most compliments relate to the helpfulness of staff members, the quality of work done or the general quality of service.



Appeals

The Association occasionally deals with Appeals against decisions. These are generally in respect of housing application decisions. There were 4 in the year, all in respect of the ICHR. 2 were upheld and 1 was not upheld and 1 was resolved..

Main Themes Arising During the Year

The themes have varied during the year as seasonal or workload factors affected reporting. The key themes have been:

- Poor performance from our main repairs contractor and gas engineer. Common complaints were about appointments not being kept, poor standard of workmanship, attitude of contractors and mess left behind.
- Damage caused to tenants' flooring following repairs
- An increase in complaints about staff attitude – these were confined to a busy period for complaints in Quarter 3 and none were upheld.
- Complaints regarding Anti-Social Behaviour handling, none were upheld but are a measure of how much of a detrimental impact anti-social behaviour can have on our customers and their enjoyment of their home.
- Increase in complaints relating to housing application processing or allocation decisions. These increased at the time when a newbuild scheme was coming off site.
- The condition of a property at letting stage
- Our response to estate management issues in common areas
- Defects in a recent new build property.

There was a sharp increase in the number of complaints received in October and November 2021. This was due to a number of factors but was mainly due to a new reactive repairs and void contract being put in place and staff and material shortages made it more difficult to carry out works on time and to a high standard.

On top of the labour shortage, contractors are finding it extremely difficult to retain and recruit suitably experienced tradesmen as they have moved onto other sectors hence the drop in quality and workmanship. Both our reactive and void contractors are working hard to address this serious issue.

It has to be acknowledged that it has been a difficult time for staff and customers. The prolonged periods of restrictions and delays to works as a result of Covid 19 is having an impact and it has sometimes been difficult to maintain the levels of customer service expected by customers.

Issues for Action Plan

The following items were added to the Action Plan 2021-22.

- Standard letters and leaflets to be developed in respect of pest infestation to give information and advice on what to look out for and what action to take if an infestation is present.
- Regular reports are being run and weekly meetings being held with reactive contractor to keep on top of jobs where there are materials on order and tenant no accesses. Tenants are being kept updated where materials are on order and if there are any further delays being experienced.
- Where it is felt necessary, then two Maintenance Officers will be attending pre inspections in order to manage tenant expectations and protect staff from vexatious complaints.

5. Issues for the Action Plan

Remedial action was as follows:

- *Main repairs contractor service failures needed to be managed proactively in the period as the contract wound down to its end.*
- *OTHA repairs staff to Improve follow up for long jobs marked as incomplete. There are recurring issues with replacement doors taking much longer than the normal timescale – better follow up is required from OTHA to chase these up*
- *Issues with a stage 3 adaptation - quality of work, delays and defects as a result of contractor failure have been addressed.*
- *Reiteration of need for special communication/access arrangements to meet individual needs to be adhered to by all contractors.*
- *Defects in one development site – progress completion and pro-active communication with residents.*
- *Rent setting policy – procedures improved and staff training to ensure consistency.*
- *Cancellation of kitchen replacement in properties in one area - improve communication with tenants affected and develop a plan for the future of the area.*
- *Handling of ASB cases arose in several cases. A specialised newsletter on anti-social behaviour and how this is handled has been distributed on a targeted basis to manage expectations.*
- *Changes have been made to improve liaison on voids, to clarify standards for the tenant when viewing.*
- *Some administrative delays were experienced and apologies were offered. Specifically delays in issuing cheques/decoration allowances have been ironed out.*
- *ICHR Website security was checked and confirmed.*
- *Better communication for landscaping increase in charges was required.*
- *Staff are implementing a stricter policy for suspensions from the housing list for operational reasons as many applicants are bidding without seriously intending to accept an offer of housing.*
- *It was agreed to hold off letting a bedsit following a serious incident and some repeated incidents of anti-social tenants. This will be reviewed once we can review alternative options. Our Asset Management Strategy is being reviewed so we can look at low demand housing and what options there may be other than letting.*