

OTHA Annual Complaints Report 2022-23

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

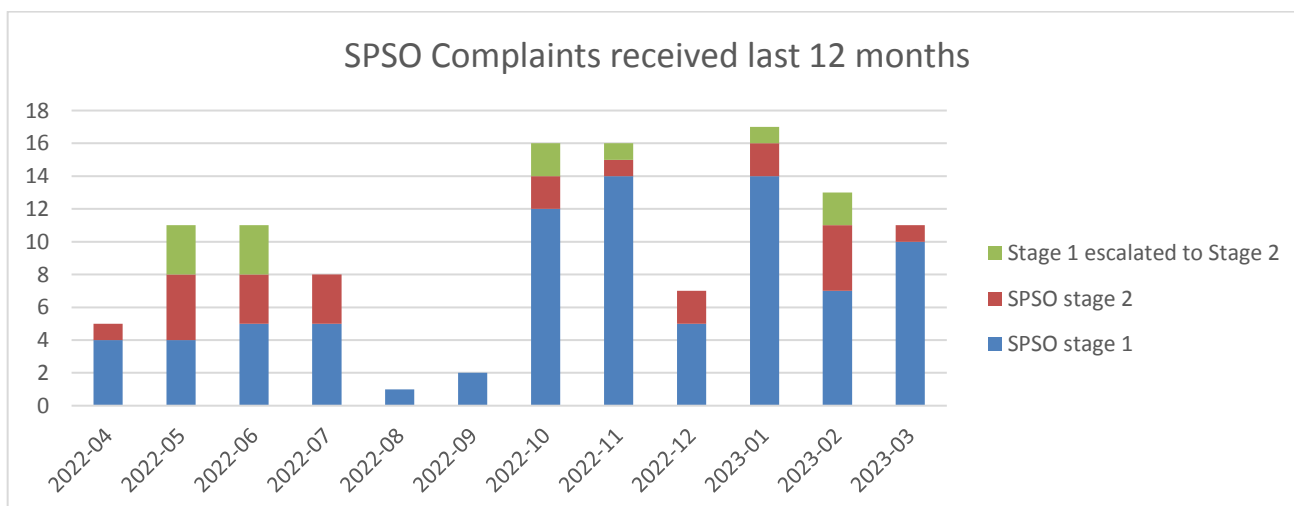
The Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO) has set out 4 Key Performance Indicators (KPI's) and these are reported as follows:-

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	9	11	4	24
ICHR		3	2	5
Planned/cyclical	2	1	1	4
Repairs	68	7	5	80
Total	83	23	12	118

The following graph shows the period the 118 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	Total	% on time
SPSO stage 1	2	79	81	98%
SPSO stage 2	1	22	23	96%
Stage 1 escalated to Stage 2	0	12	12	100%
Total	3	113	116	97%

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	3.81	81
SPSO stage 2	13.57	23
Stage 1 escalated to Stage 2	2.75	12
Grand Total	5.64	116

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	24	14	8	46
Partially Upheld	8	6	1	15
Resolved	12	2		14
Upheld - Contractor service failure	32		2	34
Upheld - OTHA service failure	5	1	1	7
Grand Total	81	23	12	116

Key Points to Note

Overall, the number of complaints submitted in the year were slightly higher than the previous year. There were 114 complaints registered in 2021-22 compared to 118 in 2022-23.

25% of the complaints were for Housing Services (including complaints about the Inverclyde Common Housing Register – ICHR), 68% were in respect of the Repairs service and the remainder split across Development, Factoring and Planned Maintenance.

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

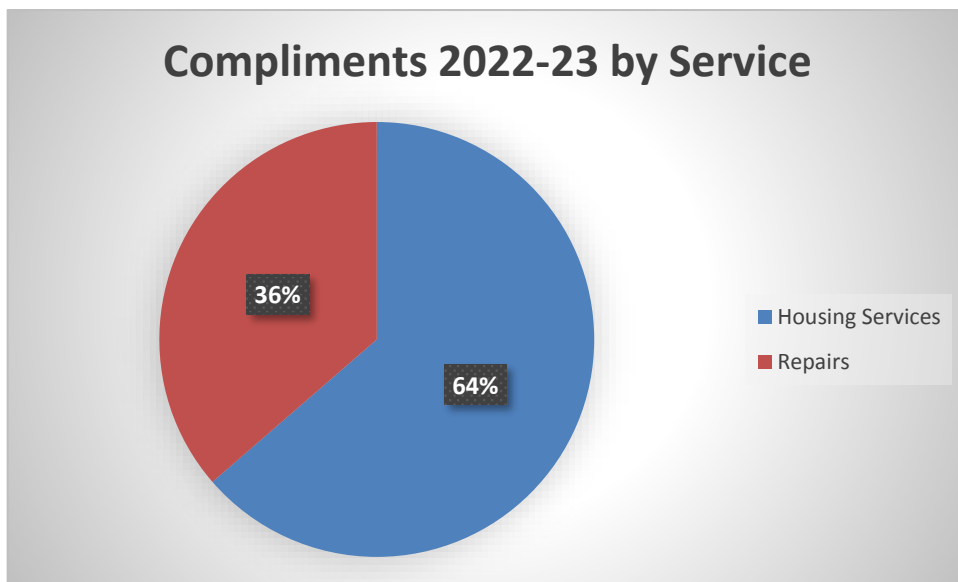
The majority of complaints in this year were either upheld or partially upheld – 48% (56) with 40% (46) not upheld. The remaining 12% (14) were considered to be resolved.

The increase in complaints in respect of the Association’s repairs service was not unexpected. This has been a very difficult year for the RSL sector as a whole.

Compliments

We also record positive feedback, the chart below shows the volume of compliments received by service area. 33 compliments were received in the year. This was an increase from the previous year when 22 compliments were recorded

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. There were 3 in the year, 2 in respect of the ICHR and 1 for a Housing Services decision. 2 were 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:

- A small number of complaints about defects procedures. Newbuild developments are subject to defects period of one year and this can prompt dissatisfaction from customers.
- A new Allocations Policy and application process was introduced in April 2022 and this resulted in a small number of complaints in Quarter 1. These have subsequently reduced as staff and customers became familiar with the changes.
- Delays with the Planned Maintenance programmes caused by Covid 19 continue to impact customers.
- Several complaints were received about the Association's policy of retaining a month's rent in advance when issuing refunds of rent credits to tenants. This is likely to reflect the current situation regarding the cost of living and the difficulties tenants are having.
- An increase in complaints about staff attitude. None were upheld and the increase may also be reflective of the difficult circumstances our tenants are finding themselves in and they are becoming more anxious and upset as a result.
- Complaints regarding Anti-Social Behaviour complaints handling continues to be a feature, 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.

- Poor performance from our main repairs contractor and gas engineer. Common complaints were about appointments not being kept, the length of time it was taking for jobs to be completed and poor standard of workmanship.

The number of complaints regarding the repairs service increased due to the upheaval caused by both of the repairs and void contracts being terminated by the contractors due to lack of profits. An interim contractor was temporarily appointed, however, proved unsuccessful due to inexperienced tradesmen which led to poor quality works being carried out. The interim contractor was also poor at communicating with our tenants which led to further complaints.

At present, we have sourced local contractors who are delivering a much better service and we have noticed a decrease in repairs complaints during the last quarter of the financial year as the works are being carried out on time and a good standard of quality is now being achieved.

Issues for Action Plan

The following items were added to the Action Plan 2022-23.

- Newsletter item in the December 2022 issue with information about rent in advance requirements. This is a recurring item.
- The Estate Management Policy was reviewed in September 2022 and a large scale consultation process took place. The complaints categories were re-worded to make it clearer to customers how complaints were handled and the timescale for the most complex complaints was reduced from 6 months to 4 months.
- Newsletter item in the Spring 2023 edition about Unacceptable Behaviour – which included a section on the staff/customer relationship and the Customer Care Charter

Reporting Significant Failures

If you are a tenant of a registered social landlord (RSL), such as a housing association or co-operative, or if you are a council tenant, you can report a significant performance failure (SPF) to the Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR). A group of tenants or an individual acting on behalf of tenants, such as a representative of a registered tenants' organisation, can also report an SPF. More information can be found at www.housingregulator.gov.scot