



MANCHESTER
CITY COUNCIL

MANCHESTER CITY COUNCIL HOUSING SERVICES

Annual Complaints Performance and
Service Improvement Report 2025–26

1 April 2025 – 31 March 2026



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A Word from the Chair – Councillor Gavin White

Complaints play an important role in helping us understand where our services are working well and where improvements are needed. Every complaint provides valuable insight into the experiences of our residents and helps us to improve the way we deliver services.

This report outlines our performance in handling complaints during 2025-26, highlights the key issues raised by residents and demonstrates how feedback is used to drive improvements across Housing Services.

Whilst we have made progress in some areas, we recognise there is more to do. We remain committed to listening to residents, learning from complaints and delivering services that residents can trust and rely on.



Councillor Gavin White

Executive Member for Housing and Regeneration and Chair of Housing Advisory Board

About This Report

This report explains how Manchester City Council Housing Services handled complaints during 2025-26 and how resident feedback is helping to improve services.

Our aim is to always be open and transparent about our performance and demonstrate how we continue to learn

from feedback to improve services for residents.

Whilst we have made progress in some areas, we recognise there is more to do. We remain committed to listening to residents, learning from complaints and delivering services that residents can trust and rely on.

Complaints at a Glance

Headline Performance

Manchester City Council Housing Services manages over 15,000 homes and received 1,262 complaints from residents.

Key Statistics

Measure	Result
Stage 1 complaints	910*
Stage 2 complaints	352
Ombudsman determinations	19
Service requests received	9,060
Compliments received	127
Complaints refused	2

*Calculated using total complaints less Stage 2 complaints.

What This Means

The majority of residents who contacted us raised service requests rather than complaints. During the year, 9,060 service requests were received and handled by Housing Services. Complaints represented a small proportion of overall resident contact but remain an important indicator of where services can be improved.

Complaint Handling Performance

We measure our performance against a number of indicators to ensure complaints are handled fairly, efficiently and in line with our Complaints Policy.

Key Performance Indicators

Indicator	Result 25-26	Result 24-25
Resident satisfaction with complaint handling	36%	32%
Average response time	19 days	26 days
Stage 1 complaints completed within timescale	82%	47%
Stage 2 complaints completed within timescale	76%	88%



Performance Summary

Whilst our improvement journey continues, Housing Services has achieved positive progress in complaint handling, with stronger performance across a range of key indicators.

More residents told us they were satisfied with how their complaint was handled, response times improved, and a much higher proportion of Stage 1 complaints were responded to within the required timescales.

We have also seen a reduction in the number of complaints received overall, which suggests that work to resolve issues earlier and improve services is beginning to have a positive impact.

While we have made good progress, we recognise that further improvements are still required. Performance at Stage 2 did not meet the standards we expect, and improving the timeliness and consistency of responses remains a key priority. We are continuing to strengthen our processes, increase oversight of more complex cases, and use learning from complaints to drive service improvements.

A key contributor to some of the improvements has been the introduction of our dedicated Complaints Resolution Team. This team has strengthened ownership of complaints, improved the quality and timeliness of responses, and enhanced our ability to identify and act on learning. While still relatively new, we are already seeing the benefits of this approach in both performance and the experience of our residents.

As of July 2026, less than 10% of complaints are overdue demonstrating early indications of the positive impact of the new way of working.

Whilst there are clear signs of progress, we remain focused on delivering a better experience for residents and ensuring complaints lead to meaningful and lasting improvements.



What Residents Complained About

Understanding why residents complain helps us identify where improvements are needed.

Complaint Themes

Property Condition and Repairs

86.7% of complaints related to property condition and repairs.

Neighbourhood Services

10.4% of complaints related to neighbourhood services, including anti-social behaviour, caretaking and estate management.

Customer Services

2.9% of complaints related to customer service issues, including communication and contact handling.

What This Tells Us

Repairs and property-related issues continue to be the most significant area of concern for residents, accounting for almost nine out of every ten complaints received during the year.

We recognise how much this matters to our residents and over the coming months we're planning some significant changes to the way repairs and maintenance services are delivered.

The data also highlights the importance of neighbourhood services, including anti-social behaviour, caretaking and estate management. While these complaints represent a smaller proportion of the overall total, they often relate to issues that directly affect residents' sense of safety, wellbeing and pride in their neighbourhoods.

We will continue to engage with residents and partners to identify concerns early and improve local service delivery.

Although customer service complaints represent a small proportion of the overall total, we know that clear, timely and consistent communication is fundamental to a positive resident experience. Through our Customer Service Centre, front-facing Reception Services and wider engagement activity, we remain committed to ensuring residents feel informed, heard and supported in ways that reflect their diverse needs and preferences.

Overall, the themes emerging from complaints help us better understand what matters most to residents and where we need to focus our improvement efforts. By listening to feedback and acting on the learning it provides, we can deliver services that better meet residents' needs and expectations.



The Role of the Housing Ombudsman

The Housing Ombudsman is an independent body that investigates complaints about social housing landlords when a resident remains dissatisfied after completing the landlord's complaints process. The Ombudsman reviews evidence from both the resident and landlord before reaching a determination and, where appropriate, can order corrective action.

The Ombudsman also publishes a Complaint Handling Code that all social landlords must follow. Housing Services welcomes the scrutiny provided by the Housing Ombudsman and is committed to using the learning from determinations to drive meaningful service improvements, strengthen complaint handling and continue to deliver better outcomes for residents.

Housing Ombudsman Performance

Ombudsman Outcomes 2025–26

Indicator	Result	%
Determinations issued	19	
Total findings	25	
Maladministration (including Service Failures)	22	73.6%
Maladministration for Repairs related complaints		68.4%
Maladministration for ASB / Tenancy related complaints		26.3%
Compensation ordered	£10,039.25	

Maladministration

Of the findings issued by the Housing Ombudsman during the year, 22 were classed as maladministration findings. Performance against sector averages and compliance measures will be included once final benchmarking data is available.

Maladministration rate as a total % = 73.68% (this includes Service Failures, the national average for Landlords of a similar size was 72%)

Maladministration for Repairs related complaints = 68.4%, the national average for landlords is 73%.

Maladministration for ASB / Tenancy related complaints = 26.3%, national average for landlords is 66%.

*At the time of publication, the Housing Ombudsman has not yet published sector-wide maladministration benchmarking data for 2025/26. The most recent available benchmark is the 2024/25 Annual Complaints Review, which reported a maladministration (uphold) rate of 72% for local authority landlords

Compensation Breakdown by Service (as ordered by the Housing Ombudsman)

Repairs	£8489.25
Complaint Handling	£1250.00
ASB Case Handling	£300.00
TOTAL	£10039.25

Ombudsman Orders Breakdown

Order	Numbers Issued
Compensation	13
Apologies	10
Repairs Related	5
Process Reviews	2
TOTAL	30

PFI and TMOs

Manchester City Council manages roughly 2,600 council homes through three major Private Finance Initiative (PFI) partnerships in Grove Village, Miles Platting and Ardwick.

There are also approximately 400 social homes managed by two independent Tenant Management Organisations (TMOs). These resident-led groups take on responsibilities like repairs, estate caretaking and tenancy management. These schemes are SHOUT TMO (Shiredale Estate) and Avro Hollows TMO in Newton Heath.

Of these, there was 1 determination received 1 amount of compensation ordered to pay by the Housing Ombudsman.

Learning from Ombudsman Decisions

Every Ombudsman determination is reviewed by Housing Services to ensure lessons are identified and improvements are implemented where needed. Learning from determinations informs policy reviews, staff training, quality assurance activity and service improvement planning.

Learning from Complaints and Service Improvements

How Resident Feedback Is Driving Improvement

Complaints provide valuable insight into residents' experiences and help us identify opportunities to improve services.

The Housing Ombudsman highlights the importance of landlords using complaints as a source of learning and continuous improvement. Housing Services is committed to ensuring resident feedback influences decisions, service design and operational delivery.

Learning from complaints is a key area of focus for Housing Services. During the coming year, we will work closely with our dedicated resident-led Complaints Forum to review themes, identify opportunities for improvement and ensure residents'

experiences directly inform service changes. We will also engage with residents to understand how they want to receive updates on the actions we have taken in response to complaints, helping us to demonstrate the impact of resident feedback and strengthen transparency and accountability.



Here are some ways we have learnt from resident complaints and made improvements to services:

- Feedback and learning from resident complaints have helped shape improvements across our Housing Services. This has contributed to us achieving a C2 grading from the Regulator of Social Housing, demonstrating that we meet the required consumer standards. While this is a positive achievement, we continue to use complaint outcomes, resident feedback and service insights to drive further improvements as we work towards achieving a C1 grading.
- Through learning from complaints about repairs and property condition, we identified the need for more comprehensive data about our housing stock. We have therefore surveyed 88% of our properties, providing a clearer picture of property condition and supporting more informed decisions about future repairs, maintenance, and investment priorities.
- Learning from complaints has reinforced the importance of timely communication and easy access to services. By improving our call handling arrangements, 93% of calls were answered within an average of under two minutes during the year 2025-26, helping residents access advice, support and service updates more quickly.
- Resident feedback highlighted the importance of accessible, local services and the value of face-to-face support. In response, we extended opening hours at our White Moss Road and Cheetham Housing Offices, making it easier for residents to access advice and support. We will continue to review resident

feedback and have further service improvements planned.

- Resident feedback highlighted the challenges many households were facing because of rising living costs. In response, we introduced our Kindness Rail, which provided over 100 quality winter coats to residents and children. Building on the success of this initiative and the positive feedback received, we have expanded our support by launching a School Uniform Rail to help families manage back-to-school costs.



- Tenant Satisfaction Measures improved across all areas during the year, providing encouraging evidence that the improvements we have made in response to resident feedback and complaints are having a positive impact on residents' experience of our services.
- Learning from complaints and resident feedback highlighted the need for stronger oversight of service performance and resident outcomes. In response, we redesigned our monthly and quarterly performance reporting for the Senior Leadership Team and Housing Advisory Board, providing greater transparency, enhanced scrutiny, and a clearer focus on delivering improvements for residents.
- Changes have been made to the way we manage anti-social behaviour cases following lessons identified through complaints and case reviews. These

include new performance measures, strengthened management oversight, and improved recording of work with partner agencies, helping to ensure a more consistent and accountable service.

- To improve how we support the diverse needs of our residents, we introduced a new Vulnerability Policy. This helps ensure vulnerabilities are identified and taken into account when delivering services, leading to more tailored and effective support.
- Residents told us they wanted more flexibility in how they pay for services. In response, we are introducing Direct Debit payments, providing an additional secure and convenient payment option that better meets residents' needs.
- Working alongside residents through our Resident Readers Group and Your Voice Group, we reviewed and updated our Rent and Community Living Fund policies to ensure they better reflect residents' needs, experiences and expectations.
- We expanded our resident engagement offer through new initiatives, including the development of a dedicated LGBTQ+ Residents Group, our Buzzin' With Pride celebrations for Manchester Pride, the Brits in Our Backyard event to engage young people with culture and future opportunities, and our Oasis-inspired celebration of Mancunian pop culture. These activities have helped us engage with a wider range of residents, strengthen community connections and promote inclusion across our neighbourhoods. The insight, feedback and learning gathered through these initiatives will help shape our developing Resident Engagement Strategy, ensuring it reflects the diverse interests, priorities and experiences of residents across our communities.
- We introduced a dedicated Complaints Resolution Team and strengthened how complaints performance is monitored across Housing Services. This has improved accountability, increased visibility of performance across service areas, and created a stronger framework for identifying trends, capturing learning and monitoring service improvements. This has contributed to improvements in the way complaints are handled, responded to and used to improve services.



Looking to the future

Using feedback from residents, performance information, complaints and Ombudsman findings, we have identified the following priorities for the coming year.

Neighbourhood Housing

One of the key priorities is to ensure that satisfaction with how Anti-Social Behaviour, Hate Crime and Domestic Abuse cases are dealt with increases through ongoing work with residents.

We have recently started a Resident Performance Group to meet quarterly to discuss these issues. Additionally, we are focusing upon the work Housing Officers do across estates with an emphasis on greater visibility for residents through surgeries and walkabouts as well as ensuring we are working to improve our biennial tenancy visit rates.

We are also working hard on our Estates and Clean and Green offer to improve the wider aesthetics of estates to ensure they are neat, tidy and safe spaces for residents.

Repairs and Property Services

Over the coming months we are planning some changes to the way repairs and maintenance services are delivered to residents.

Subject to Council approval, during 2027, we are aiming for most of this work to be brought back in-house. As part of this transition, repairs operatives currently employed by Equans would transfer to Manchester City Council, and services would be delivered directly by our in-house team.

Improving Complaint Handling

We will continue to improve how we handle complaints by providing quicker, more consistent responses, greater emphasis on learning from and ensuring residents receive a high-quality service.

We will further embed our dedicated Complaints Resolution Team, introduce our new Complaints Policy and work closely with our resident-led Complaints Forum to shape improvements. We will also be more visible with our performance so residents can see how their feedback is helping us improve services and make a real difference.

Strengthen Resident Voice

Our new Resident Engagement Strategy will be launched later this year, creating more opportunities for residents to influence the services they receive and the decisions that affect their communities. We will place a greater focus on involving young people in shaping services, supporting Manchester being recognised as a UNICEF Child Friendly City, while also increasing engagement with underrepresented groups to ensure we are representative of the diverse communities we serve.

Through stronger partnerships with residents and communities, we will continue to promote community cohesion, celebrate diversity and a greater sense of belonging.

Get Involved

If you would like to tell us about your experiences, provide feedback or become involved in shaping services, please contact us.

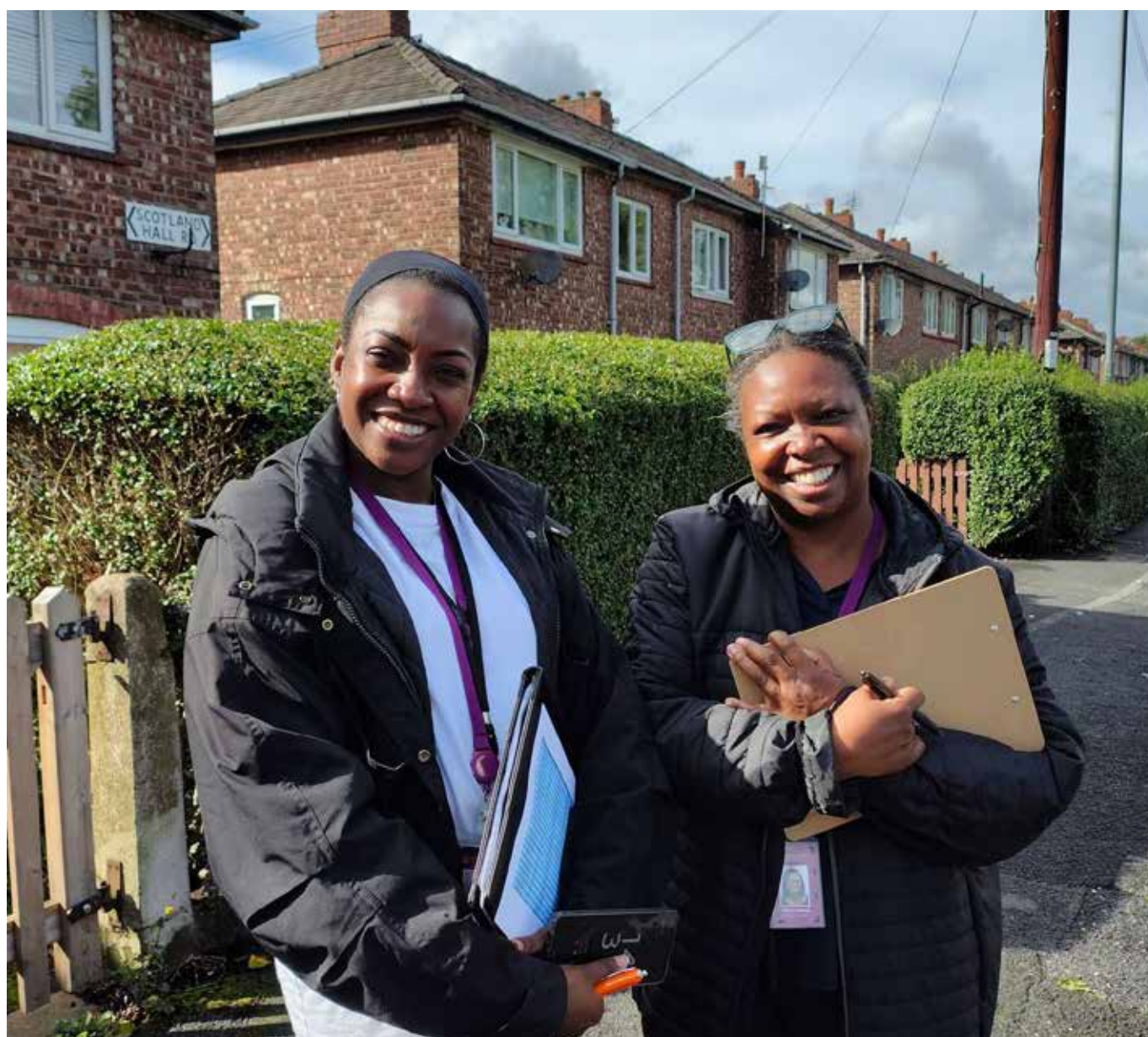
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Thank You





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