



Annual Complaints Performance and Service Improvement Report

2025-2026

Joint introduction

From Kevin Bolt, Group Chief Executive, and Heena Prajapat, Board Member Responsible for Complaints

At Platform, complaints are an important source of insight. They help us understand where customers have not received the standard of service they should expect, where communication or ownership has broken down, and where we need to improve. Complaints also help us identify wider themes and recurring issues, ensuring that learning is used to strengthen services and improve outcomes for all customers.

During 2025/26, we continued to strengthen the foundations of our complaints and learning approach. This included clarifying responsibilities, developing a new Customer Experience operating model, introducing Customer Champions, progressing an independent Final Review Team and improving how learning is shared across the organisation. These changes have helped strengthen accountability, increase the visibility of customer feedback and improve our ability to identify opportunities for service improvement.

We recognise that stronger processes do not, by themselves, demonstrate better outcomes. While complaint volumes remained broadly stable during the year, the proportion of complaints upheld and escalated increased, and response time performance declined.

The focus for 2026/27 is therefore to continue improving processes to demonstrate more clearly whether learning is reducing repeat failures, improving customer experience and delivering measurable improvements in services.

This report provides an honest assessment of our performance, the themes emerging from customer feedback, the improvements made as a result of complaints and the priorities for the year ahead. The Board and Board Member Responsible for Complaints (BMRC) will continue to maintain oversight of complaint performance and organisational learning, ensuring that customer feedback remains central to how Platform improves services and delivers better outcomes for customers.

Our position in one sentence

We strengthened accountability and the infrastructure for learning during 2025/26, but we must now demonstrate that learning is consistently preventing repeat failure, improving customer outcomes and giving Board clear assurance that customers are safe, heard and responded to.



Kevin Bolt

Heena Prajapat

1. Executive summary

Complaint volumes and sector comparison

Platform received **3,392** Stage 1 complaints in 2025/26, a slight reduction from **3,459** in 2024/25. Complaint rates remain above Housemark's whole-sector median but closer to the large housing association peer group, indicating that demand is high but not unusual for an organisation of Platform's scale and complexity. The recurring themes remain communication, delays, ownership, repeat visits, contractor coordination and inconsistent process application.

Stage 1 and Stage 2 response times

Timeliness remains a priority for improvement. In 2025/26, **75.8%** of Stage 1 complaints were answered within 10 working days, rising to **95.1%** when responses completed within the first permitted extension were included. Final-stage performance was also below target, with **62.2%** completed within 20 working days and **88.3%** within the first permitted extension. The 2026/27 focus is to improve core response times, reduce reliance on extensions and strengthen ownership, investigation quality and oversight of overdue or high-risk cases.

Upheld complaints and escalation

Platform completed **915** final-stage reviews, compared with **869** in 2024/25, and escalation increased from **25%** to **27%**. The uphold rate was **72%**, showing that service failures are being recognised, but also that too many customers continue to require remediation. Customer Champions and the independent Final Review Team will support earlier resolution, more consistent learning and stronger assurance from escalated cases.

Ombudsman investigations and determinations

The Housing Ombudsman issued **56** determinations relating to Platform, containing **135** findings. There were no severe maladministration findings and no Complaint Handling Failure Orders, which provides assurance that complaint handling arrangements remain broadly effective. Ombudsman findings will continue to inform thematic reviews, service-area accountability and Board assurance against the Complaint Handling Code.

Compliments

Alongside complaints, Platform received **544** compliments during the year, an increase from **514** in 2024/25. These were mainly associated with the professionalism, commitment and support provided by colleagues, particularly where colleagues showed empathy, kept customers informed or helped resolve complex issues. This feedback provides important balance to the complaints narrative and reinforces the positive impact colleagues continue to have on customers and communities.

Initiatives during the year to support performance improvements

During 2025/26, Platform strengthened its complaints and learning approach across Customer Experience, the Hub, Property and Housing Operations. Key changes included clearer roles and responsibilities, the introduction of Customer Champions, development of the independent Final Review Team, complaint-handling and compensation training, improved templates and targeted operational learning. The next phase must demonstrate that this activity is reducing repeat failure, improving timeliness and delivering better outcomes for customers.

This work forms part of the wider Customer Change Programme, which is strengthening the way customer feedback, insight,

complaints learning, service ownership and improvement activity are connected across Platform, and will pick up some of the more strategic recommendations from the external Customer Experience review 2024/25 that remain outstanding such as the integration of AI into our complaints handling process alongside the on-going development of our insight capabilities.

This will also align with our new corporate Back to Basics programme, which is focused on improving the reliability and consistency of core services that matter most to customers. In practice, this means ensuring colleagues take clear ownership, communicate proactively, follow up when promised, resolve issues as early as possible and get the basics right first time. This will help translate the strategic improvements identified through complaints, customer insight and the external Customer Experience review into practical changes in day-to-day service delivery.

Our focus for the year ahead

Our focus for the year ahead is to move from strengthening complaint-handling foundations to demonstrating clearer impact for customers. The Platform Feedback Framework will provide a consistent route for capturing, reviewing and acting on complaints, surveys, engagement activity, contact demand and operational performance. It will support thematic reviews and service-area deep dives, with clearer actions, owners, milestones and evidence of impact.

This will be aligned with the Communication deep dive, Locality Operating Model, Locality Action Plans, five-year TSM targets, refreshed Platform Pledges (our service commitments), Customer Champions and the independent Final Review Team, ensuring customer feedback is translated into visible commitments and measurable service improvement.

Board will receive regular assurance at each meeting on complaints performance, learning, compliance with the Ombudsman Code and progress in ensuring customers feel safe, heard and confident that we act.

Complaints satisfaction

Tenant satisfaction with complaints handling remains a sector-wide challenge. Housemark reports a 2025/26 sector median of **37.0%** for complaints handling satisfaction, while Platform's 2025/26 result is **40.2%**, placing Platform slightly above the sector median but still within a low-performing area for the sector overall. We are confident that this metric will improve over the coming year as the customer champions and final review team embed further into the process.

Conclusion

Overall, the report sets out a clear and honest assessment of Platform's progress, recognising where stronger foundations have been put in place and where further improvement is still required. It reinforces the need to move beyond activity and compliance towards clearer evidence of impact, with a stronger line of sight from customer feedback to service change, measurable benefit and improved outcomes for customers.



2. Purpose and scope

This report describes Platform Housing Group's complaints performance from 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026. It covers complaint volumes and timeliness, escalation and upheld rates, Housing Ombudsman findings, the principal themes arising from complaints, service improvements delivered or underway, and the priorities for 2026/27.

This report will be considered through Platform's governance arrangements, including review by the Board Member Responsible for Complaints and Board approval. Board will continue to receive regular reporting at each meeting on complaints performance, learning, service improvement actions and assurance against the Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code. The final report, self-assessment and governing body response will be published in line with Code requirements.

3. Complaints performance

The table below summarises complaints performance for 2025/26, together with the previous year and future targets. Additional 2026/27 measures have been introduced to sharpen oversight, support improved customer outcomes and align performance ambitions more closely with sector medians.

Measure	2024/25 (achieved)	2025/26 (achieved)	Direction	2026/27 (target)	2027/28 (target)	2028/29 (target)
Stage 1 complaints received	3,459	3,392	Improvement	-	-	-
Stage 1 complaints per 1,000 properties	66	65	Stable	60	55	50
Formal complaints investigated	3,410	3,310	Improvement	-	-	-
Final-stage responses completed	869	915	Improvement Needed	-	-	-
Stage 2 complaints per 1,000 properties	16	18	Improvement Needed	15	12	10
Stage 1 answered within 10 working days	82.8%	75.8%	Improvement Needed	80%	85%	90%
Stage 1 answered within first permitted extension	98.12%	95.1%	Improvement Needed	-	-	-
Escalated to final review	25%	27%	Improvement Needed	25	23	20
Complaints upheld	70%	72%	Improvement Needed	60	55	50
Complaints not upheld	30%	28%	Improvement Needed	40	45	50

When viewed alongside the sector, Platform's position is mixed. Housemark's 2025/26 sector analysis shows that recorded complaints have increased across social housing, with the median Stage 1 complaint rate rising to 54 per 1,000 homes and the median Stage 2 rate rising to 10.6 per 1,000 homes. Platform's equivalent position of 65 Stage 1 complaints and 18 Stage 2 complaints per 1,000 properties is above those sector medians, suggesting higher complaint demand and escalation than the wider benchmark.

The Housemark comparison report for Platform also shows that, within the large housing association peer group, the median Stage 1 complaint rate was 70 per 1,000 homes and the Stage 2 rate was 20 per 1,000 homes. Against this closer peer group, Platform's complaint volumes are slightly below median, which suggests that its level of demand is not unusual for an organisation of similar scale and complexity.

Measure	Platform	Comparator	Visual position	What this shows
Stage 1 complaints per 1,000 properties	65	Sector median: 54	Improvement Needed	11 per 1,000 above sector median.
Stage 1 complaints per 1,000 properties	65	Large HA peer median: 70	Exceeding	5 per 1,000 below peer median.
Stage 2 complaints per 1,000 properties	18	Sector median: 10.6.	Improvement Needed	7.4 per 1,000 above sector median.
Stage 2 complaints per 1,000 properties	18	Large HA peer median: 20	Exceeding	2 per 1,000 below peer median.
Stage 1 responses within Code timescale	75.8%	Large HA peer median: 94.9%.	Improvement Needed	19.1 percentage points below peer median.
Stage 1 responses within first permitted extension	95.1%	Sector and peer expectation: high compliance.	Broadly aligned	Strong when permitted extensions are included.
Complaints handling satisfaction	40.2%	Sector: 37.0%; peer: 37.2%.	Slightly above	Around 3 percentage points above median, but still low overall.
Overall LCRA satisfaction	69.5%	Large HA peer median: 72.1%.	Improvement Needed	2.6 percentage points below peer median, but improved year on year.

Complaint demand remained broadly stable during 2025/26. While volumes are above whole-sector medians, they are closer to the large housing association peer group. The main concern is timeliness, with core response performance below peer median despite stronger compliance when permitted extensions are included.

Final-stage activity also increased, alongside a higher upheld rate and reduced response-time performance, showing that we have not yet translated improvement activity into consistent, demonstrable performance improvement. This reinforces the need for a sharper focus in 2026/27 on early ownership, timely resolution, investigation quality and service-area responsiveness, so that fewer cases escalate and customers experience resolution sooner.

Recovery will focus on stronger triage, clearer operational ownership, improved response quality, Customer Champions to unblock delays and active oversight of overdue or high-risk cases. Progress will be reviewed through regular performance reporting, thematic deep dives and clearer tracking of actions, owners, milestones and evidence of impact. While complaints handling satisfaction remains below the level we expect, these initiatives are designed to address the key drivers of dissatisfaction and support sustained improvement.

4. What complaints told us

Theme	What customers experienced	What this tells us	What are we doing about it?
Communication	Missed callbacks, inconsistent updates and uncertainty about progress.	Communication failures are not limited to complaint handling; they reflect wider issues around repeat contact, unclear ownership, inconsistent updates and limited visibility across customer journeys. Poor communication creates avoidable contact, complaint risk, compensation exposure and lower customer trust.	The Communication Reset work is addressing this through clearer communication standards, stronger callback and update expectations, Hub quality monitoring, telephony improvements, active-case reviews and better use of contact data to identify where customers are chasing progress or receiving inconsistent information.
Ownership	Customers were passed between teams or were unclear who was responsible.	Customers lose confidence when they have to chase, repeat their story or coordinate across teams themselves. Complex cases need earlier named ownership, clearer escalation routes and stronger coordination between Customer Experience, the Hub, service areas and partners.	Customer Champions, Customer Liaison Officers, complex case activity and locality-based case reviews are being used to improve early ownership, unblock service-area delays, strengthen follow-up and ensure actions agreed through complaints or survey feedback are completed. Locality Action plans will also ensure clearer ownership at a local level.
Repairs diagnosis	Customers experienced repeat visits before leaks, drainage issues or complex repairs were correctly diagnosed.	Repeat visits and unresolved repairs suggest that some cases are still being managed as individual repair tasks rather than end-to-end customer journeys. This increases disruption, repeat contact and escalation risk, particularly where hazards, damp and mould or complex repairs are involved.	Awaab's Law readiness, repairs insight and service-area deep dives are strengthening triage, diagnosis, escalation and case tracking. This includes improving use of property history, repeat-case monitoring, hazard identification, system prompts and clearer routes for escalating cases where the same issue is reported repeatedly.

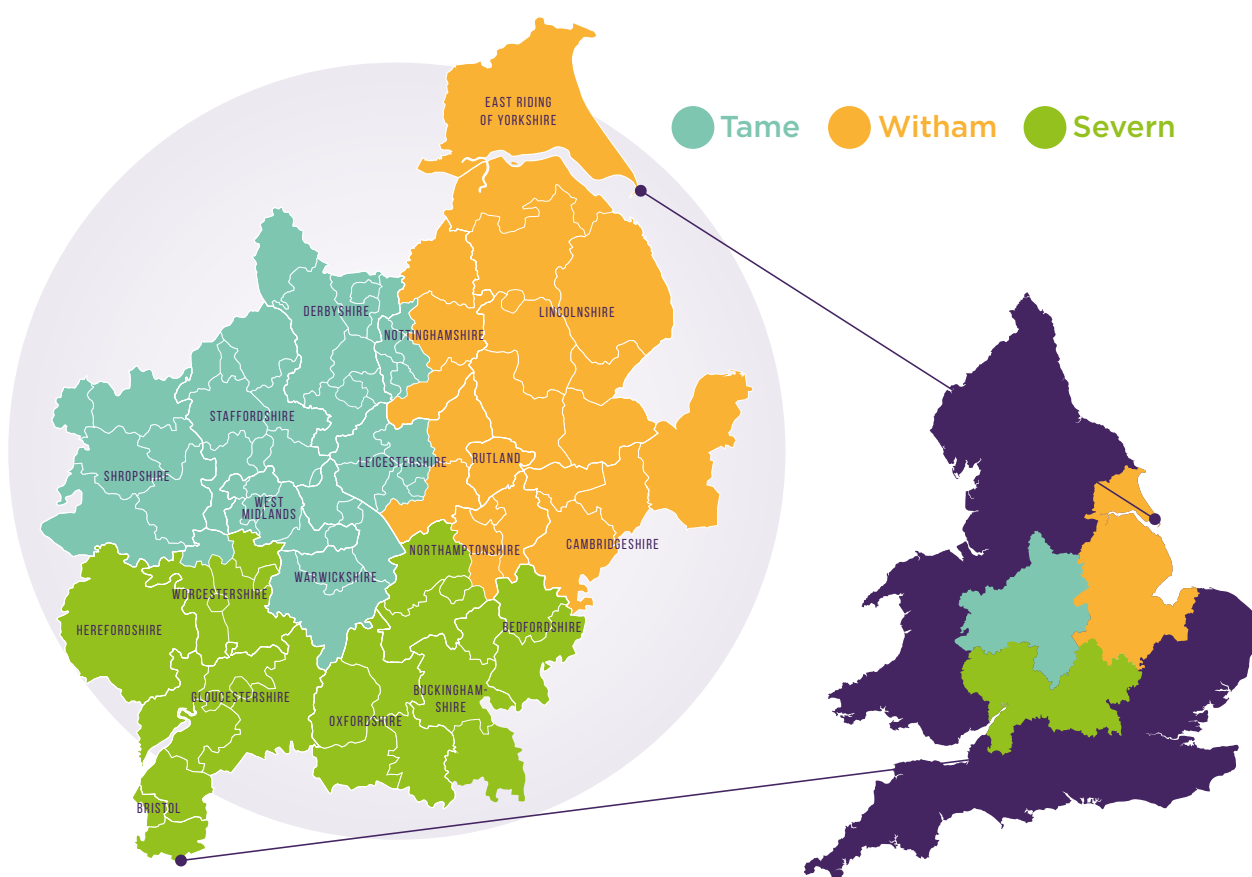
Theme	What customers experienced	What this tells us	What are we doing about it?
Contractors and partners	Experiences varied where contractors, developers or several agencies were involved.	Customers judge Platform on the whole service journey, regardless of whether work is delivered directly or by a contractor. Variable contractor performance, fragmented supplier arrangements and unclear updates can weaken trust and accountability.	The Asset Strategic Procurement project is simplifying and strengthening contractor arrangements, improving contract management and aligning delivery to the locality model. Planned technology improvements, including contractor portal functionality, should also improve visibility of work in progress, updates, completions and accountability. Accountability for actions will be confirmed, recorded and followed up on.
Process consistency	Emergency repairs, damp and mould, ASB and bidding processes were not always recorded, triaged or applied consistently.	Inconsistent recording, triage or application of processes can create customer detriment and regulatory risk, especially in areas such as emergency repairs, damp and mould, ASB and lettings. Consistency at first contact is critical to getting the right response first time.	Process consistency is being strengthened through updated guidance, targeted training, improved Hub prompts, quality assurance checks, Awaab's Law training, registers and clearer evidence requirements so colleagues apply the right process and escalation route consistently.
Learning visibility	Repeated themes (such as communication and ownership) continued to appear and customers could not always see what had changed.	Repeated themes show that learning is not yet being applied consistently enough to prevent the same issues reappearing. The gap is not only in identifying learning, but in demonstrating what changed as a result, who owned the action, whether it was completed and whether it improved the customer experience. This limits the assurance we can give to customers, colleagues and Board that feedback is consistently leading to visible and measurable improvement.	A new Platform Feedback Framework is currently under development and will be implemented by Q4 26/27. It will provide a more structured improvement cycle, capturing themes, root causes, actions, owners, timescales, status and evidence of impact. This will support stronger "You Said, We Did, The Difference" updates for customers and better feedback to colleagues through team meetings, toolbox talks and assurance reporting.

5. What changed during 2025/26

5.1 A strengthened Locality Operating Model

During 2025/26, Platform Property Care continued to align its operating model with the Housing Operations locality structure, organised around three geographic areas: Severn, Tame and Witham. The model brings repairs, maintenance and housing teams closer to the homes, neighbourhoods and communities they serve, helping teams build stronger local knowledge, improve coordination, and take clearer ownership of customer outcomes.

By working in smaller operating areas and neighbourhood patches, colleagues are better placed to identify recurring issues earlier, review complex cases together and agree local actions. In 2026/27, this approach will be strengthened further through Locality Action Plans, using complaints, TSMs, repairs data and customer feedback to target service failures and track whether local actions are improving outcomes for customers.



The wider Property Unification programme strengthens this direction of travel by bringing repairs, assets, safety, commercial, planning and customer coordination activity into a single, connected operating model. The intention is to move away from fragmented service responses and towards clearer accountability across the end-to-end property journey — from identifying need through data and local insight, to planning, delivery, communication and completion.

This includes stronger handover governance between responsive repairs, complex works and asset delivery, improved integration of repairs, housing and asset data, and a more proactive approach to identifying failing assets, targeting investment and reducing repeat demand. As these changes embed, they are expected to improve repairs delivery, strengthen asset planning, reduce duplication, support earlier resolution and give customers clearer, more consistent communication about work to their homes.

5.2 Clearer accountability and closer operational ownership

Following the external Customer Experience review in 2024/25, roles and responsibilities across the complaints process were clarified, supported by ways-of-working sessions with service areas. Customer Champions were introduced in Property and Housing Operations in January 2026 to act as a liaison point for customers who had raised concerns but did not necessarily wish to progress them as a formal complaint. They support investigations, follow up survey feedback and aftercare actions where complaints have been raised, and help remove barriers to resolution.

As these roles embed, Customer Champions are expected to provide a stronger bridge between Customer Experience and operational teams by helping to resolve issues earlier, improve hand-offs between services and ensure that agreed actions are followed through. Their role will also support better use of customer feedback by identifying recurring barriers to resolution, escalating service-area delays and helping to turn individual complaint learning into practical operational improvement.

5.3 A strengthened Customer Experience operating model

A new operating model was developed to align Customer Experience more closely with service areas. Additional resource was secured and the operating model and resourcing for a dedicated independent Final Review Team were developed and progressed during 2025/26. The team was established in June 2026 and will be embedded during 2026/27 to handle complex final-stage complaints, Ombudsman referrals and high-profile cases.

The establishment of the independent Final Review Team provides a more dedicated and consistent approach to complex final-stage complaints, Ombudsman referrals and high-profile cases. Bringing this work into a specialist team will support more

robust case review, greater consistency in decision-making, clearer identification of learning themes and stronger assurance that escalation outcomes are used to improve services. As the team embeds during 2026/27, it is expected to strengthen the quality of final-stage responses, reduce avoidable escalation over time and provide clearer insight into where earlier resolution could have been achieved.

In May 2026, the Customer Experience team also moved into the Housing Operations directorate, bringing the team closer to customers and frontline service delivery. This change, alongside closer alignment with the Hub, is intended to improve visibility of customer contact, strengthen the connection between complaints, insight and operational response, and support faster identification and resolution of emerging service issues.

These changes form part of the wider Customer Change Programme, which is bringing together improvements across Customer Experience, the Hub, Customer Insight and Intelligence, customer voice, complaints learning and service-area ownership. The programme is intended to strengthen how customer feedback is captured, understood and acted on, so that insight from complaints, TSMs, contact demand and engagement activity is translated into clearer priorities, better service design and measurable improvements in customer experience.

5.4 Training, quality and consistency

Complaint-handling training was delivered within the Platform Hub, with a focus on complaint recognition, ownership, communication and the Complaint Handling Code. Compensation workshops were also provided to improve consistency in remedies and redress. Operational examples included refreshed ASB learning, Hub prompts, process notes, templates and targeted training.

Work through the Hub also strengthened quality monitoring of customer contact, callbacks and communication standards, supported by improved telephony and digital access. This provides better visibility of customer demand and helps teams identify where customers are chasing progress, receiving inconsistent updates or experiencing avoidable repeat contact.

5.5 Turning customer feedback into visible learning and improvement

Teams produced 67 complaint case studies and shared them across Platform. Learning was also reflected through “You Said, We Did” activity, customer panels, service reviews and improvement actions. These mechanisms improved the visibility of individual learning examples, although impact measures were not consistently attached.

Customer voice and scrutiny routes, including customer panels, Platform Voices and service reviews, will continue to provide challenge and assurance on whether improvement actions are addressing the issues customers have raised. This will help test whether changes are meaningful, visible and improving the customer experience.

We have previously held an annual customer conference as a key route for customers to engage directly with Board members, the Executive Team and colleagues on the issues that matter most to them. From 2026, this will evolve into a locality-based approach, with customer conferences held across each locality rather than as a single organisation-wide event. This will create more meaningful opportunities for customers to discuss the priorities, challenges and lived experience of the areas in which they live, and to influence the local actions that follow.

By bringing customers, Board members, Executive colleagues and local teams together in the communities we serve, the conferences will provide a stronger feedback loop between customer voice, Locality Action Plans and service improvement, helping ensure that learning is grounded in local insight and translated into visible change.

Customer Experience Business Partners will continue to build practical working relationships with teams across the business, using complaints, customer feedback, TSM results, contact data and Ombudsman learning to identify recurring themes and areas where service responses need to improve. They will work with service areas to review what is driving complaints, agree clear actions, identify owners and timescales, and follow up progress through regular conversations, performance reviews and learning forums. This will help ensure that learning is not only reported, but translated into practical changes in day-to-day service delivery, with clearer evidence of what has changed, whether actions have been completed and whether customers are seeing an improved experience.



6. Has the learning made a difference?

The alignment of Platform Property Care to Platform's locality delivery model provides early evidence of how structural change can support service improvement. By organising Property Care delivery around Severn, Tame and Witham localities, aligned with Housing Operations, teams are better placed to understand local issues, respond to recurring themes and take shared ownership of customer outcomes. Early improvements in LCRA (low-cost rental accommodation) TSMs and transactional satisfaction suggest that bringing teams closer to local communities can support a more responsive and customer-focused service.

There are examples where learning led to a clear process or service change. These include changes to the Home Options bidding process, revised complaint correspondence and compensation practice, new Customer Champion roles, improved coordination in the localities model, and numerous operational changes set out in the accompanying "You Said, We Did" report.

There is also evidence that service improvement activity is beginning to support better customer experience in some areas. Improvements across (LCRA) Tenant Satisfaction Measures, alongside a five-percentage point increase in overall transactional satisfaction following greater locality alignment in Property Care, indicate that more locally focused and responsive service delivery can have a positive impact on customer outcomes.

For low-cost home ownership (LCHO) customers, improvement activity will focus on clearer communication, stronger ownership and better visibility of recurring issues. This includes using customer engagement, webinars, settling-in contact, scheme visits, clearer responsibility guidance and quarterly insight to link

TSM results, customer comments, contact responsiveness, complaints, service charges, repairs and estate performance. Platform also leads a newly formed LCHO Working Group with peer organisations, developed following discussions through the NHF, to share good practice and learning and to target areas of lower performance.

Nevertheless, we cannot yet consistently demonstrate that complaint learning has reduced repeat contact, prevented recurrence, reduced complaint volumes or improved satisfaction across every service area. Actions have often been recorded without an agreed baseline, outcome measure or post-implementation review. This is the most important gap to address.

To strengthen this further, Platform will introduce a clearer impact lens during 2026/27 by reporting the proportion of complaint themes, customers or cases affected by the most common issues wherever the data allows. This will help show not only what customers are telling us, but the scale of impact, which customers or services are most affected, and whether improvement actions are reducing recurrence over time.

Sector evidence reinforces why this remains a key priority. Housemark's 2025/26 analysis shows that complaints handling satisfaction is one of the lowest-scoring tenant perception measures, with a sector median of **37.0%**. Wider TSM insight also shows that customers judge complaint handling not only by speed of response, but by the quality of resolution, fairness, communication and whether the issue is genuinely put right.

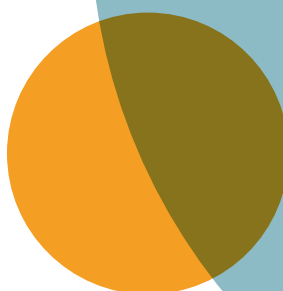
This reinforces our focus for 2026/27: moving beyond recording learning activity to evidencing whether complaint learning is reducing repeat failure and improving customers' experience of services.

What we can say with confidence

The organisation made identifiable changes and strengthened accountability. We should not claim that these changes have delivered organisation-wide improvement until benefits are measured and sustained.

7. Learning and service improvement priorities

Priority	2026/27 action	Expected customer outcome	Status
Communication	Complete a cross-organisation communication deep dive; review priority customer letters with customers; strengthen callback and update standards.	Clearer updates, fewer avoidable escalations and improved confidence.	In progress
Ownership	Embed Customer Champions, the Customer Experience operating model and independent Final Review Team.	Fewer hand-offs and clearer accountability.	In progress
Repairs diagnosis	Strengthen escalation for repeat repairs; build Hub diagnostic capability; use available stock information to support diagnosis.	Fewer repeat visits and quicker resolution.	Planned
Contractor oversight	Strengthen monitoring and contract management; improve visibility of work in progress.	More consistent service and clearer accountability.	In progress
Insight and prevention	Introduce thematic reviews and service-area deep dives using complaints, surveys and operational data.	Earlier identification of recurring or systemic issues.	Planned
Feedback Framework	Implement a consistent route for recording learning, owners, actions, status, evidence and outcomes.	Clearer assurance that feedback has led to measurable change.	In development
Customer Insight and Intelligence	Bring complaints, satisfaction, engagement feedback and operational performance into a joined-up insight model.	Better prioritisation and stronger evidence of impact.	In development



8. Housing Ombudsman findings

During 2025/26, Platform received **56** determinations from the Housing Ombudsman Service, comprising **135** findings.

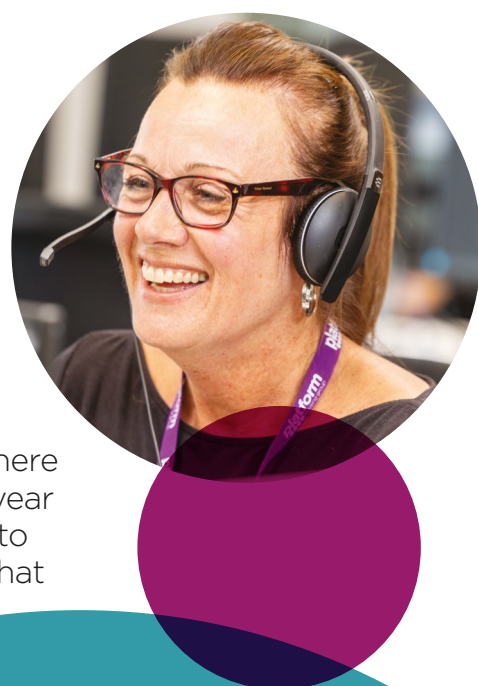
Finding	Number
Outside jurisdiction	2
No maladministration	40
Reasonable redress	42
Service failure	25
Maladministration	26
Severe maladministration	0
Complaint Handling Failure Order	0

Platform's absence of severe maladministration findings and Complaint Handling Failure Orders provides positive assurance, however the continued presence of service failure and maladministration findings, reinforces the need to use our learning more systematically to improve consistency, communication, ownership and service recovery.

Platform's Housing Ombudsman outcomes compare favourably with national benchmarks. The organisation's maladministration rate reduced from **53%** in 2024/25 to **38%** in 2025/26, representing a 15 percentage point year-on-year improvement. Platform's 2025/26 rate is materially lower than both the overall sector uphold rate of **62%** and the housing association average of **59%**, placing Platform significantly ahead of both sector and housing association averages. Coupled with the absence of any severe maladministration findings and Complaint Handling Failure Orders during 2025/26, this provides evidence that the improvements implemented in complaint handling, service recovery and learning are having a positive impact. The Board nevertheless recognises that every maladministration finding reflects a customer experience that fell short of expectations and remains committed to using Ombudsman learning to drive further service improvement.

9. Refused complaints and exclusions

During 2025/26, Platform continued to apply the Complaint Handling Code when considering whether a complaint should be accepted. Where matters were not progressed through the complaints process, this was because they fell outside the scope of the complaints policy or were more appropriately managed through another route. In 2025/26, there were 19 cases that were not accepted as a complaint. In the year ahead reporting on refused complaints will be strengthened to provide clearer oversight of volume, reasons and assurance that exclusions are being applied consistently and fairly.



10. Illustrative learning case studies

10.1 Home Options bidding process

An Ombudsman case highlighted an inconsistent understanding of the settings needed to enable eligible customers to bid for age-restricted accommodation. A joint review with the local authority identified the need for clearer alignment between property advertisements, customer applications and the Derbyshire Dales allocation policy.

As a result, enhanced validation, communication, training, and guidance were introduced. This has created a more consistent process, reduced the risk of eligible customers being unable to bid, and improved access to suitable rehousing options for all our customers who need ground-floor or level-access accommodation due to medical, disability or support needs.

10.2 Repairs communication, coordination and local ownership

A recurring theme from complaints and Ombudsman learning is the need to strengthen repairs communication, coordination and local ownership. Customers are most likely to experience poor outcomes where repairs are not diagnosed early enough, where handovers between teams are unclear, or where they have to chase for updates across different parts of the service.

This theme sits within the wider Property Unification programme and the Platform Property Care transformation roadmap. These programmes are intended to bring repairs delivery, complex works and asset functions closer together, with clearer local management, stronger handovers between responsive, complex and asset teams, better use of joined-up data to identify recurring property issues, and clearer ownership of customer communication and outcomes.

Early indicators suggest some positive movement, particularly the reduction in repairs-related compensation from **£717k** in 2024/25 to **£603k** in 2025/26. However, this should be treated with caution. Complaint volumes, final-stage reviews and upheld repair-related complaint issues remain significant, which means it is too early to conclude that structural changes have delivered sustained improvement.

During 2026/27, Locality Action Plans will provide a clearer mechanism for turning this learning into targeted action at local level. We will monitor repairs complaint volumes, escalation, upheld rates, compensation, repeat contact and customer satisfaction together, so that we can better understand whether improved local ownership and coordination are reducing repeat failure and improving customer outcomes.



Repairs complaint indicators: early movement following locality alignment				
Indicator	2024/25	2025/26	Movement	What this suggests
Formal complaints (Stage 1)	2,085	2,036	49 fewer	Slight reduction in complaint demand.
Final reviews (Stage 2)	513	525	12 more	Escalation remains an area to watch.
Formal complaints upheld	1,520	1,562	42 more	Service failures are still being identified and acknowledged.
Compensation awarded	£717k	£603k	£114k lower	Encouraging early indicator, but not yet confirmed impact.

Read with care: the reduction in compensation is a positive early signal, but should be considered alongside escalation, upheld complaints, repeat contact and customer satisfaction before concluding that the locality model has delivered sustained impact.

A more detailed review of upheld repairs complaint categories shows that the overall number of upheld repair-related complaint issues increased from 1,520 in 2024/25 to 1,606 in 2025/26, an increase of 5.7%. The largest driver remains delay in service, which increased from 747 to 777 cases, alongside increases in communication, missed appointments and condition of property. This reinforces why the 2026/27 locality action plans need to focus on earlier diagnosis, clearer ownership, stronger appointment management and more consistent updates to customers. There are also some encouraging movements, with reductions in quality of service, quality of work, standard of work and loss of services, suggesting that improvement is not uniform and needs to be understood at a more granular locality and theme level.

The increase in condition of property, delay, communication and missed appointment complaint issues also reinforces the importance of Awaab's Law readiness, particularly the need for timely diagnosis, clear escalation, effective tracking of hazards and proactive communication where customers report damp, mould or other risks to health and safety.

Note: the category total reflects upheld repair-related complaint issues rather than individual complaint cases, so it may differ from the separate upheld complaints figure shown above.				
Upheld repairs complaint categories: key movements to target through locality action plans				
Category	2024/25	2025/26	Movement	Why it matters
Delay in service	747	777	+30	Largest repair complaint driver.

10.3 Complaint handling and redress

Ombudsman learning informed revisions to response templates and standard letters, targeted Hub training and compensation workshops. These actions were designed to improve acknowledgement, apology, ownership and consistency of redress. More systematic impact evaluation is required during 2026/27.

11. Building stronger evidence of impact

The Platform Feedback Framework will provide a consistent record of the feedback source, theme, root cause, action, owner, target date, status, evidence and intended outcome. The Customer Insight and Intelligence capability will support triangulation of complaint data with Tenant Satisfaction Measures, transactional surveys, engagement feedback, contact demand and operational performance.

For every material improvement we will record	Minimum evidence
The issue and source	Complaint theme, Ombudsman finding, survey feedback, panel feedback or operational insight.
The baseline	Current performance, volume, satisfaction, repeat contact or qualitative evidence.
The change	Specific action, accountable owner, milestone and implementation status.
The outcome measure	What should improve, by how much where a baseline exists, and when it will be reviewed.
The evidence of impact	Post-change data, customer feedback, audit result or case review.
The feedback loop	How the outcome will be reported to customers, colleagues, the BMRC and Board, including assurance at each Board meeting on complaint performance, learning, Ombudsman Code compliance and whether customers can see that Platform listens and acts.

Peer and sector comparisons show that evidencing how complaints learning is used to prevent recurrence and improve outcomes is as important as complying with the Complaint Handling Code. The Feedback Framework and Customer Insight and Intelligence capability will support this by combining complaint themes, customer contact data and operational insight to identify recurring issues earlier, act before dissatisfaction escalates and provide clearer assurance to Board and customers.



12. Expected trajectory of change

Period	What should change	Evidence we expect to see	Assurance route
Q1-Q2 2026/27	Clearer baselines and ownership for key complaint themes.	Thematic reporting in place for communication, ownership, delays and repeat failure, with named action owners and review dates.	Customer Experience performance review and BMRC update.
Q3 2026/27	Improved grip on overdue complaint actions and high-risk cases.	Reduction in overdue actions, clearer escalation of blocked cases and evidence of Customer Champions resolving service-area delays.	Quarterly complaints and learning assurance reporting.
Q4 2026/27	Measurable movement in timeliness, escalation and customer experience.	Improved Stage 1 timeliness, reduced reliance on extensions, fewer avoidable escalations and early evidence of improved complaints satisfaction or reduced repeat contact.	Annual report, self-assessment and Board assurance review.

13. Priorities and commitments for 2026/27

13.1 Improve ownership, resolution and timeliness

We will strengthen ownership, timeliness and resolution by embedding Customer Champions, the independent Final Review Team and locality-based action planning. This directly responds to the recurring themes of unclear ownership, repeat contact, escalation and delayed resolution identified through complaints. It will support earlier intervention, clearer accountability, fewer hand-offs, reduced avoidable escalation and improved response times at both Stage 1 and final-stage review.

13.2 Turn feedback into measurable improvement

We will launch and embed the Platform Feedback Framework so complaints, surveys, TSM results, customer engagement and operational performance are brought together into a single improvement cycle. This responds to the learning visibility gap identified in the report by ensuring material learning actions include clear owners, timescales, outcome measures, review dates and evidence of impact. This will help demonstrate whether feedback is reducing repeat failure, improving timeliness and delivering better outcomes for customers.

13.3 Strengthen communication and customer confidence

We will improve the consistency, clarity and timeliness of customer communication through the Communication deep dive, strengthened Hub quality monitoring, telephony and digital access improvements, clearer callback standards and better customer updates. This responds to the most consistent complaint theme in the report: customers not always knowing what is happening, who is responsible or when matters will be resolved. We will also publish clearer “You Said, We Did, The Difference” updates so customers can see how their feedback has led to action.

13.4 Improve accessibility, fairness and customer voice

We will strengthen how we use customer diversity, vulnerability and access-needs information so services are more accessible, inclusive and responsive. This aligns with the report’s emphasis on listening to customers, understanding individual needs and ensuring services are fair and tailored. Customer panels, scrutiny routes, Platform Voices, locality-based customer conferences and service reviews will be used to test whether improvement actions are meaningful, visible and addressing the issues customers have raised.

13.5 Align complaints learning with wider service transformation

We will align complaint learning, TSM insight and customer feedback with the Back to Basics programme, Locality Action Plans, five-year TSM targets, Property Unification, Awaab’s Law readiness and refreshed Platform Pledges. This ensures the commitments in this report are not standalone actions, but part of the wider service transformation needed to improve reliability, safety, communication and customer confidence. It will help translate learning into clear customer-facing commitments, practical service improvements and measurable outcomes.

Theme	Commitments grouped within this theme	What customers should experience
Ownership, resolution and timeliness	Customer Champions, Final Review Team, locality action planning, improved timeliness, reduced escalation and clearer ownership of complaint actions.	Clearer ownership, quicker resolution and fewer avoidable escalations.
Feedback into measurable improvement	Feedback Framework, thematic reviews, service-area deep dives, root-cause analysis, named owners, outcome measures, review dates and evidence of impact.	Feedback leads to visible, tracked and measurable service improvement.
Communication and confidence	Communication deep dive, Hub quality monitoring, callback standards, customer updates, priority letter reviews, telephony and digital access improvements and “You Said, We Did, The Difference”.	Clearer updates, fewer chases and improved confidence.
Accessibility, fairness and customer voice	Reasonable adjustments, access-needs information, customer diversity insight, Customer Voice Panel, Customer Scrutiny Panel, Platform Voices, service reviews and locality-based customer conferences.	More inclusive, responsive services shaped by customer voice.
Wider service transformation	Back to Basics, Locality Action Plans, five-year TSM targets, refreshed Platform Pledges, Property Unification, Awaab’s Law readiness and Customer Change Programme activity.	Complaint learning is connected to wider service improvement and customer-facing commitments.

14. Closing statement

The past year strengthened Platform's complaints infrastructure, service ownership and organisational focus on learning. The performance results also show that these foundations have not yet delivered the consistent improvement customers and Board should expect. The next phase is disciplined delivery and evidence: preventing repeat failure, improving response and resolution, assuring Board against the Ombudsman Code, and showing customers that they are safe, heard and that their feedback leads to action.

How to contact the Housing Ombudsman Service

The best way to get complaints resolved is to speak to us directly. We have a procedure in place to ensure that your complaint is dealt with effectively.

However, you are able to contact the Housing Ombudsman Service at any point for independent help and advice at any point.

If you have exhausted our Complaint Procedure and you remain dissatisfied, you are able to refer your complaint to the Housing Ombudsman Service.

The details for the Housing Ombudsman Service are as follows:



Please **[click here](#)** for the Housing Ombudsman's website.



You can call the Housing Ombudsman Service on: **0300 1113000**.