

## **Annual Complaints Performance and Service Improvement Report 2023-2024**

Approved by Red Kite Board, June 2024

### **Board Foreword**

***Provided by Derek Cash, Board Member Responsible for Complaints***

This report provides an accurate overview of the performance of Red Kite's complaint handling in the financial year 2023-2024, as confirmed by scrutiny of the underlying data.

Red Kite has experienced high demand for its complaints service this year, driven by factors including government campaigns such as the 'Make things right' campaign which Red Kite supported and promoted, highlighting to our tenants how they can let us know if there is a problem with our services and how we can resolve issues quickly.

In response to these trends, the organisation has adapted, with capacity being added to the Feedback team, in a new structure which reflects the growing significance of complaints, learning and the Housing Ombudsman within the sector, as well as the Ombudsman's increased powers and stronger relationship with the regulator.

Complaint performance is also a key component of the Tenant Satisfaction Measures, collected for the first time in 2023-2024. Whilst sector data from the first submission will be published by the regulator in Autumn 2024, early benchmarking data available provides reassurance that our performance and tenant satisfaction with the service remains competitive in the sector, this despite significant resource difficulties experienced during the period. This, along with our maladministration rate of 0% in Housing Ombudsman case determinations for the financial year 2023-2024, compared to a sector rate of circa 70%, shows a good basis for further complaint service improvements in the new, dedicated structure.

Our Self-assessment against the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code for 2024-2025 shows full compliance with no outstanding actions.

We have particularly developed our learning from complaints during the past year which should help improve service outcomes in key areas for our current and future tenants. During the coming year, we need to ensure that this learning, along with that from other feedback, is further consolidated and integrated regularly into our policies and service delivery practises in order to ensure this crucial strand of continuous improvement is maintained. With the additional capacity, now greater corporate awareness and focus, plus the added benefits which will arise from agreed new technology improvement tools within a modernised ICT system, Red Kite are in a good place to achieve this.

## Introduction

This report provides an overview of our complaints' performance and service improvement activities for the period from April 2023 to March 2024. The report is prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Housing Ombudsman and includes our self-assessment against the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code, which sets out the expectations and good practice for effective complaint handling by landlords.

The report covers the following aspects:

- analysis of our complaint handling performance including a summary of the types of complaints we have refused to accept
- any findings of non-compliance with the Code by the Ombudsman
- the service improvements made as a result of the learning from complaints
- our actions following any annual report about the landlord's performance from the Ombudsman (most recent available is for 2022-2023 – the Housing Ombudsman's reports currently aren't published until October 2024 but this is something that they are reviewing going forward)
- our actions following any other relevant reports or publications produced by the Ombudsman in relation to the work of the landlord
- our self-assessment against the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code for 2024-2025

We are committed to providing high-quality services to our residents and stakeholders, and we welcome complaints as a valuable source of feedback and learning. We aim to resolve complaints as quickly and effectively as possible, and to ensure that complainants are treated fairly and respectfully throughout the process. We also seek to identify and address the root causes of complaints and to implement service improvements that benefit all our tenants and reduce recurrence.

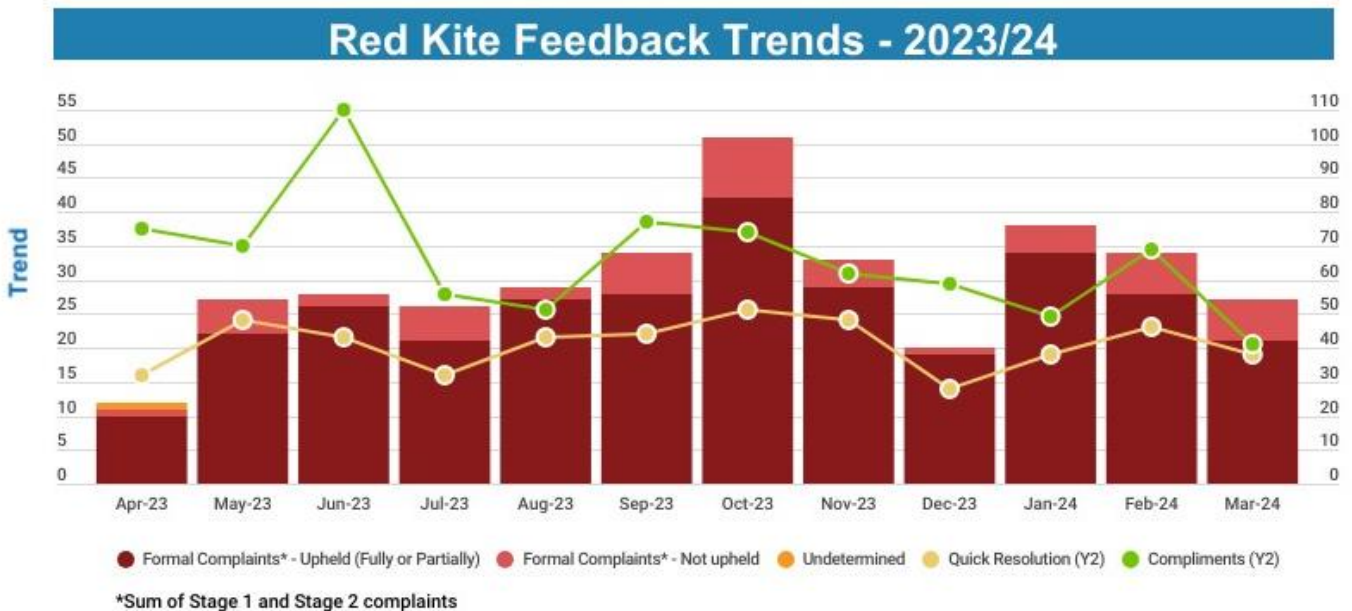
We hope that this report demonstrates our progress and achievements in complaint handling and service improvement.

## Complaint Handling Performance

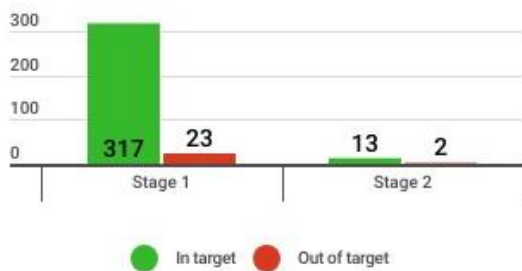
Our complaint handling performance for complaints raised during the financial year 2023-2024 is shown below.

We have increased capacity in the Feedback team in order to meet demand and maintain and improve service delivery. In addition, we have restructured to enable a dedicated Head of Feedback to oversee this increasingly demanding and important area.

The most common root causes include ownership, communication and workmanship, with the majority of complaints arising from responsive repairs. Regarding refused complaint requests, we refused a complaint on one occasion. This was an appeal which was declined due to no new evidence being provided as per our policy.



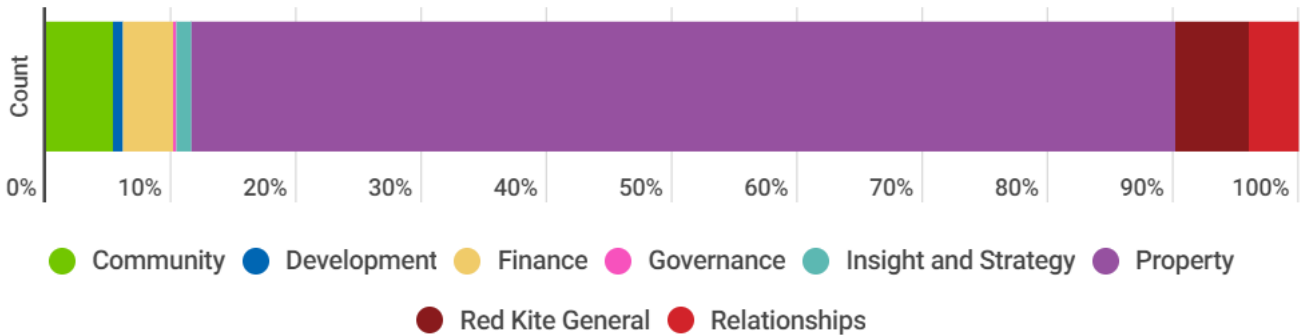
### Timeliness of response Housing Ombudsman 20-day timescale



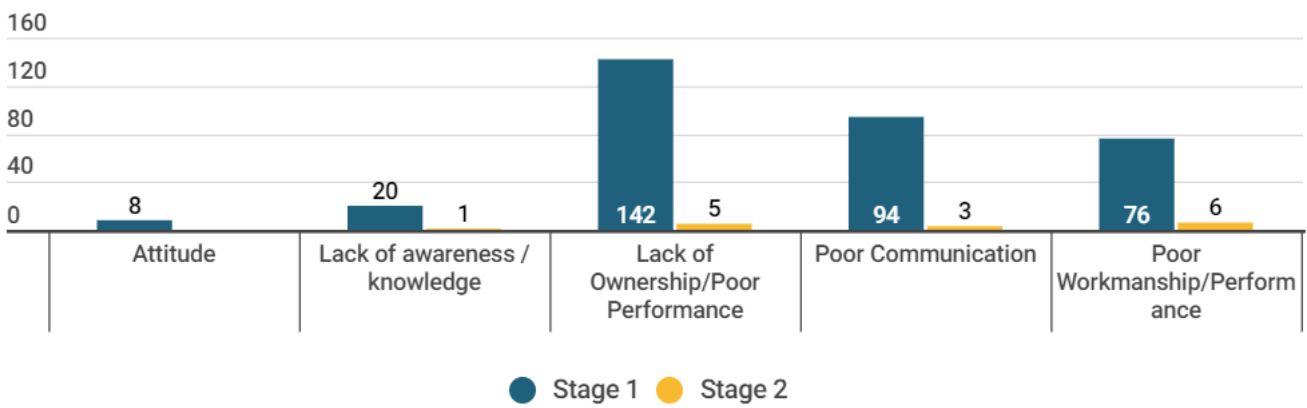
### Learning identified from formal complaints



### Complaint Ownership



### Primary root cause



## Findings of non-compliance with the Code by the Ombudsman

We have received no findings of non-compliance with the Complaint Handling Code from the Housing Ombudsman.

## Service Improvements and Learning

During the last financial year, we've continued to value tenant feedback as a crucial part of how we shape our services for the future. Complaints and feedback provide the opportunity for learning and our teams regularly review tenant experiences to identify service failures and take appropriate action to improve our service and increase tenant satisfaction. We supported the Government's ['Make things Right'](#) campaign, highlighting to our tenants how they can let us know if there is a problem with our services and how we can resolve issues quickly.

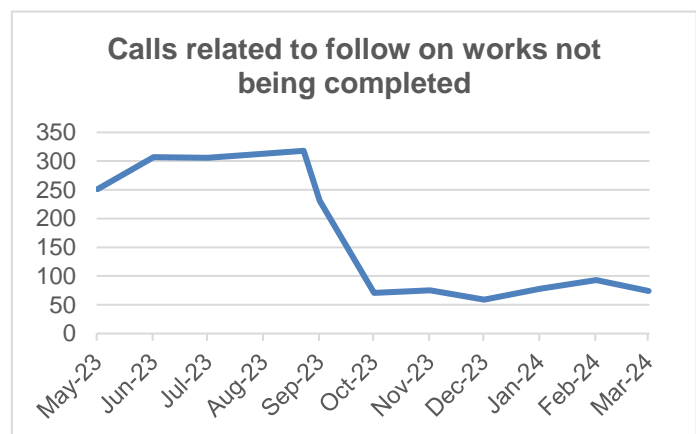
In the last year we've scrutinised our learnings thoroughly to ensure that we:

- Understand the true root cause of tenant dissatisfaction
- Understand the impact of our service failures on tenants
- Prioritise improvements based on impact on tenants, prevalence and sector trends
- Review our improvements to ensure they have had the desired impact, and if not, review again and look for other possible solutions

We include examples of service improvements we have made based on tenant feedback below.

### Follow on Works

Between May and September 2023 we saw an increase in the number of inbound tenant contact enquiring when an operative would be returning to finish off outstanding work from their repair, a frustration with our service which was reflected in the complaints we received. After investigating the root cause of this increase in calls and related complaints, we identified a flaw in our process whereby jobs were being closed down when there were still follow on works that needed to be addressed. For example, with a leak there may have been redecoration works which needed to be resolved related to the initial repair works. As a result of this we instructed our repairs contractor to add all remedial works under the same job number, preventing works being closed down prematurely and leaving tenants inconvenienced for longer than necessary. Following the change in process we saw a decrease in related complaints and an improvement in the volume of tenant contact which has been sustained since, as shown in the below graph.



### Damp, Mould and Condensation

Complaint learnings related to the repairs service Red Kite tenants have received, including concerns about Damp, Mould and Condensation (DMC) and the time this can take to resolve, are significant both in proportion and in importance to our tenants. Earlier in the year we made significant improvements to how we manage DMC cases, setting up a dedicated internal dashboard to track reported cases and actions as well as introducing a proactive monitoring

system to get back in touch with tenants at regular intervals, providing assurance that the interventions we made have had the desired effect.

### Compensation

Red Kite always strives to uphold high standards of customer service, but we know that unfortunately at times our tenants can feel let down by us as a landlord. As part of our learning, we identified that our compensation process was occasionally causing further tenant dissatisfaction rather than being the catalyst for rebuilding trust as we hope it should be. In some circumstances tenants were having to wait an extended period of time to be compensated, further adding to their frustration from their initial complaint.

As a result of this learning, we have since undertaken a deep review of which internal procedures were causing significant delays in the processing of payments and made the following improvements which allow for a more streamlined and timely process:

- Provided clarity on internal forms to state when payments are due
- Increased the number of staff who can authorise compensation payments
- Increased the visibility of pending payments

This project involved many areas of the business and was a positive example of different teams working together for the good of our tenants. We understand these details matter to our tenants and we are fully committed to regularly analysing what we can do better and what difference it could make.

### **Actions following any Annual Report about the Landlord's Performance or any other relevant reports or publications produced by the Ombudsman in relation to the work of the landlord**

The most recent year for which Housing Ombudsman Landlord Performance Reports are available is 2022-2023. The Housing Ombudsman's reports on the year 2023-2024 aren't due to be published by them until October 2024, but this reporting lag is something that they are reviewing going forward.

As we received fewer than five determinations on Housing Ombudsman cases in 2022-2023, no individual landlord performance report was published for Red Kite by the Ombudsman, however we are pleased to report that no findings of maladministration were found during the year.

During 2023-2024 we received three determinations, all of which found no maladministration.

It is also worthy of note that the Ombudsman featured one of our cases which received a determination during the year in a video on good landlord practice, a really positive reflection on our approach: [Good Landlord Practice - Red Kite Community Housing](#)

## **Self-assessment against the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code for 2024-2025**

We aligned our Feedback Policy and procedures with the Complaint Handling Code in 2021, ahead of it becoming a statutory requirement in April 2024.

Board have appointed a Member Responsible for Complaints and recent updates to our policy have maintained compliance with the code.

We fully comply with the code, and our self-assessment can be found in *Appendix 1*.