TEACHERS HOUSING ASSOCIATION

ANNUAL COMPLAINTS PERFORMANCE AND SERVICE IMPROVEMENT REPORT 2025-2026

Board and Member Responsible for Complaints statement:

The Board and the Member Responsible for Complaints have reviewed this report and the accompanying self-assessment against the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code.

THA is committed to maintaining a positive complaint-handling culture, where complaints are recognised as an important part of our core service offer and as a valuable opportunity to listen, learn and improve. We expect colleagues to feel able to acknowledge when something has gone wrong and to take appropriate action to put things right.

Complaint-handling performance improved significantly during 2025/26. The Board is pleased that all complaint response timescales met the requirements of the Ombudsman's Code, and that fewer complaints escalated to Stage 2. This indicates that more issues were being resolved effectively at Stage 1.

The Board also recognises, however, that tenant satisfaction with complaint handling remains low in the most recent Tenant Satisfaction Measures perception survey. This feedback is important and shows that further work is needed to improve tenants' experience of the complaints process, including how well they feel listened to, kept informed and treated fairly.

The Member Responsible for Complaints and the Board will continue to provide oversight and scrutiny of complaint handling, complaint themes and the underlying causes of dissatisfaction. This will support THA's commitment to continuous improvement and to delivering a more responsive, transparent and tenant-focused service.

Introduction:

Teachers' Housing Association (THA) is a small, specialist housing association with a clear social purpose. Founded in 1967 to address the shortage of affordable housing for teachers, we now own and manage around 600 homes. These include general needs housing in London and sheltered housing for older people across England. While our offer has expanded to include other key workers, our connection to education remains central to who we are.

We accept that things do sometimes go wrong and we actively encourage residents to tell us when that is the case. We also use the feedback we get from complaints to highlight areas for improvement and learn lessons. We aim to use complaints as a means to achieve a positive outcome for our tenants and a learning opportunity for us.

Annual Self-Assessment:

We complete a self-assessment to measure compliance against the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code. For the period from April 2025 to March 2026, we are reporting compliance against the code.

A copy of our Self-Assessment can be found on our website.

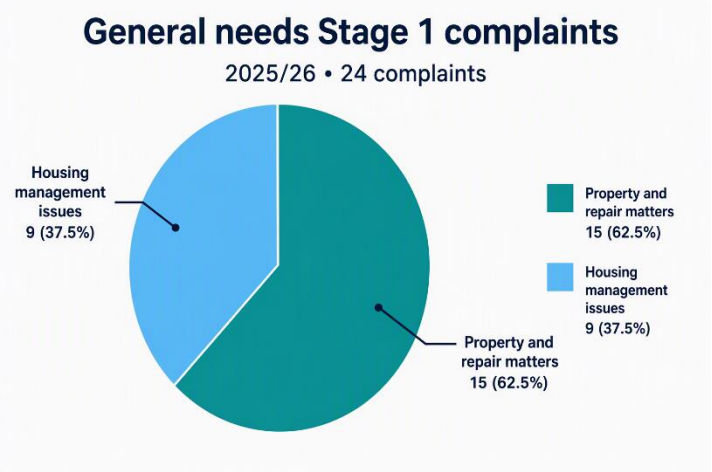
Complaint handling performance in 2025/2026

For the year from April 2025 to the end of March 2026 there were:

Stage 1 complaints

Complaints received at Stage 1 of our complaints process	**36**
Complaints responded to within required timescales	**100%**
Complaints upheld or partially upheld at Stage 1	**83%**

24 of the complaints made at Stage 1 were from tenants living in our general needs accommodation, 15 of those with the main area of complaint related to property and repair matters, with 9 relating to housing management issues.



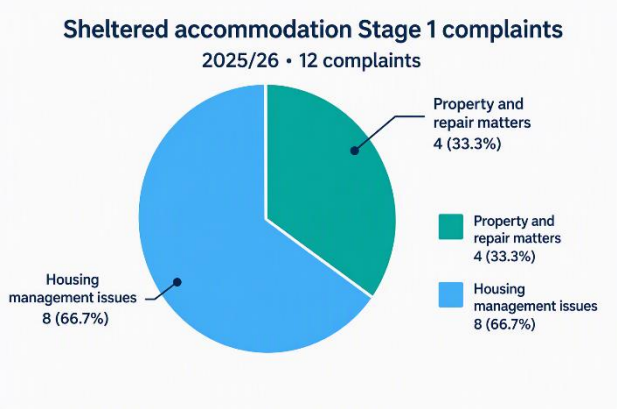
Themes from the property and repair matters included:

- A lack of timely communication, keeping tenants updated with progress and scope of planned repairs.
- Contractor failures to keep pre-booked appointments.
- Out of hours contractors not attending or not explaining follow on works

Themes from housing management issues included:

- Pest control responsibilities
- A lack of timely communication by staff in response to queries raised by tenants.
- Cleaning of communal areas below expected standards
- Delay in payment of expenses to tenants when temporarily rehoused elsewhere whilst work undertaken in their home.

12 of the complaints made at Stage 1 were from tenants living in our sheltered accommodation, 4 had the main categorisation related to property and repair matters, with 8 relating to housing management issues.



Themes from the property and repair matters included:

- Delays in completion of repairs in particular relating to heating and hot water
- Reoccurring repairs relating to the same issue

Themes from the housing management matters included:

- Delays in actioning direct debits, particularly around rent increases
- On site parking
- Staffing roles and responsibilities

Of the 36 complaints logged at Stage 1, seven complainants were not satisfied with Teachers' Housing Association's response and asked for their complaint to be escalated to Stage 2 of our complaints process.

Stage 2 complaint escalations

For the year from April 2025 to the end of March 2026 there were:

Complaints escalated to Stage 2	**7**
Complaints responded to within required timescales	**100%**
Complaints upheld or partially upheld at Stage 2	**57%**

Of these, three complaints were from tenants living in our general needs accommodation and four were from tenants living in our sheltered accommodation.

The themes of the complaints escalated to Stage 2 included:

- damp, mould and condensation work completion
- parking on sites
- staffing roles and responsibilities

We refused one complaint for this period which related to property matters for which were not being requested by or on behalf of the tenant.

In the year to April 2025 to March 2026, we received and submitted 4 case information requests to the Ombudsman and provided information for a further 2 cases following inquiries.

The 4 case requests have, so far, resulted in one case determination. We were found to have severe maladministration in our handling of damp and mould, and we had made an offer of redress prior to investigation which in the Ombudsman opinion, resolved the handing of the complaint satisfactorily.

Improvements and Learning from complaints

Learning from complaints is central to improving our services. Actions taken during the year have included:

- Developing a new website with revised and updated content, including repairs and housing management information, web-based forms for reporting repairs, compliments and complaints, and a form for submitting general enquiries.
- Introducing a standard approach for the information displayed on noticeboards within our properties.
- Creating tenant information on pest control, with a particular focus on bed bugs.
- Developing a contractor code of conduct in partnership with our Tenant Influence Panel.
- Reviewing and updating our damp and mould policy and procedures.

- Documenting our direct debit processes and increasing the number of available collection date options to reduce the time needed to amend direct debits.
- Reviewing our compensation and complaint policy.
- Delivering staff training on key topics, including complaints, equality, diversity and inclusion, damp, mould and condensation, repairs, anti-social behaviour, customer service and professional boundaries, with further training due to be delivered in August and September 2026.
- Sharing complaint information with our newly formed Tenant Influence Panel.
- Developing a knowledge and information management strategy.

Our focus for 2026/27 includes:

- Improving the recording, monitoring and reviewing of sensitive data, including resident vulnerabilities, so that residents' individual needs are considered when responding to complaints and do not create barriers for complainants.
- Improving the use of our Housing Management IT system and exploring additional functionality, including the option for a tenant portal to support greater self-service.
- Reviewing the use and content of the new website.
- Improving satisfaction with the handling of complaints.
- Reviewing our repairs services and use of contractors.

Conclusion

During 2025/26, THA made clear progress in the way complaints were handled. We responded to complaints within the required timescales, complied with the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code, reduced the number of complaints escalating to Stage 2, and used learning from complaints to make practical service improvements. These included improving information for tenants, updating policies and procedures, strengthening staff training, reviewing contractor standards, improving direct debit processes and increasing tenant involvement through the Tenant Influence Panel.

However, the report also shows that there is more to do. The recurring themes from complaints, particularly around communication, repairs, contractor performance, damp and mould, and clarity of roles and responsibilities, show where we need to focus our attention. We also recognise that satisfaction with complaint handling remains an area for improvement, and that tenants need to feel listened to, kept informed and treated fairly throughout the complaints process.

Our priorities for 2026/27 will therefore be to improve how we record and respond to residents' individual needs, make better use of our housing management system, review the effectiveness of the new website, strengthen oversight of repairs and contractors, and continue improving the quality and consistency of complaint handling. By continuing to learn from complaints and act on tenant feedback, THA will work to provide a more responsive, transparent and tenant-focused service.