

Tenant feedback continues to drive improvement across housing services

Significant progress is continuing to be made in strengthening housing services across West Northamptonshire, with new figures showing fewer complaints from tenants, faster response times and ongoing improvements driven by resident feedback.

A report considered by West Northamptonshire Council's (WNC) Cabinet yesterday (15 September) highlights the positive impact of measures introduced over the past year to improve complaint handling and customer experience across council housing services managed by Northamptonshire Partnership Homes (NPH).

The report demonstrates continued progress during 2025/26, with complaint volumes reducing by almost 6% and compliance with Housing Ombudsman response times increasing from 70.8% to 81.9%. Stage 1 complaints also reduced, exceeding performance targets, while all recommendations from the Housing Ombudsman's previous review were successfully implemented.

These improvements have been supported by the introduction of a centralised complaints service, dedicated complaint case handlers and strengthened oversight arrangements, helping ensure residents receive a more consistent service and quicker resolutions when concerns are raised.

Feedback from tenants has also played an important role in shaping service improvements. Lessons learned through complaints have informed enhancements across several key areas, including repairs services, damp and mould management, staff training, customer communications and complaint quality assurance processes.

The report also confirms that NPH is fully compliant with the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code, providing assurance that robust arrangements are in place to manage complaints effectively while embedding learning and continuous improvement across housing services.

Cllr Charlie Hastie, Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Housing and Communities, said: "We welcome the positive progress made over the past year in improving complaint handling and ensuring tenant feedback continues to shape and strengthen our housing services.

"It is encouraging to see overall complaint numbers reduce and response times improve significantly, reflecting the impact of the measures introduced to provide a more responsive and consistent service for residents. Stronger governance and oversight arrangements are also helping to ensure that lessons are identified, shared and acted upon.

"While progress is being made, we know there is more to do. Our focus is not only on responding more quickly, but on ensuring residents feel listened to and supported, with every complaint providing an opportunity to learn and improve.

"As the transition to bring housing services back into the Council progresses, we have a real opportunity to build on this momentum, strengthen accountability and deliver the high-quality, joined-up services that our tenants rightly expect and deserve."

The Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code requires all social housing landlords to publish an annual report detailing complaint handling performance, learning from complaints

and progress made in improving services. WNC remains responsible for ensuring compliance with the Code as the registered provider of around 11,500 council homes.

The report forms part of the wider programme of housing improvement activity being delivered by the Council and NPH as preparations continue for housing services to transfer back into the Council ahead of April 2027.

Following Cabinet's consideration, the annual complaints report and self-assessment will be submitted to the Housing Ombudsman and published in line with statutory requirements.