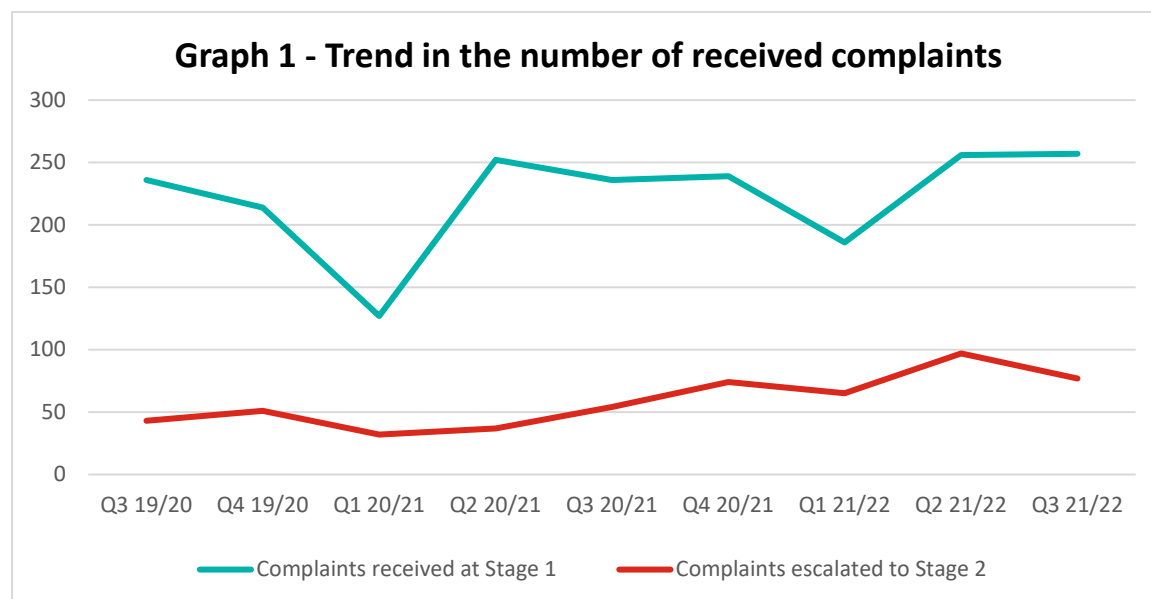
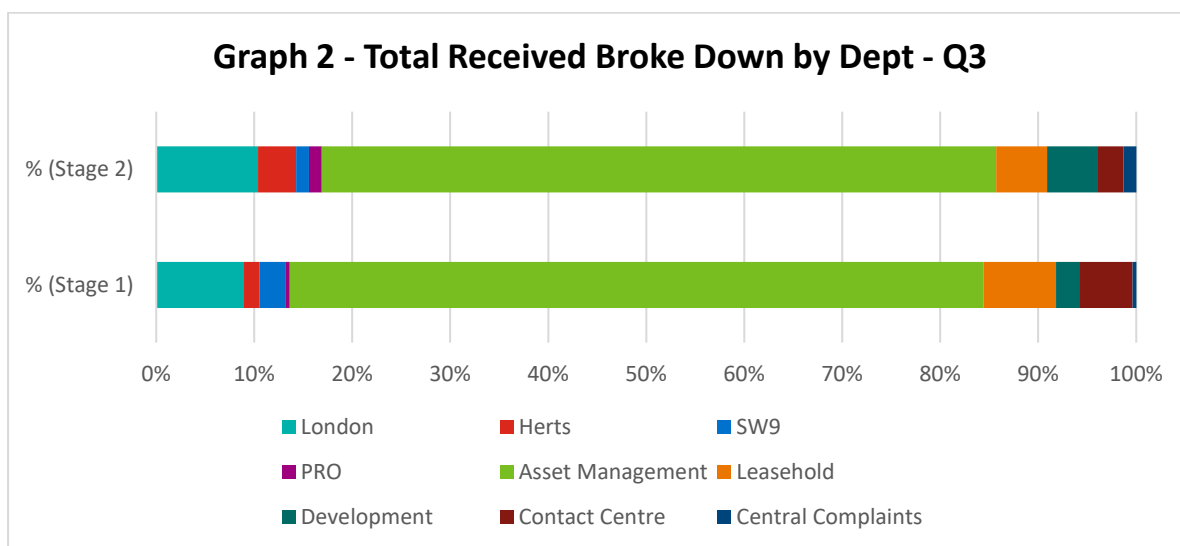


Appendix 1 – Quarterly report for Quarter 3 (01 October 2021 – 31 December 2021)


Quarter	Complaints received at Stage 1	Complaints escalated to Stage 2	Proportion of escalated complaints	Target
Q3 19/20	236	43	18.22%	10%
Q4 19/20	214	51	23.83%	10%
Q1 20/21	127	32	25.20%	10%
Q2 20/21	252	37	14.68%	10%
Q3 20/21	236	54	22.88%	10%
Q4 20/21	239	74	30.96%	10%
Q1 21/22	186	65	34.95%	10%
Q2 21/22	256	97	37.89%	25%
Q3 21/22	257	77	29.96%	25%

Graph 1 and the accompanying table shows stage 1 and 2 complaints received covering the period 01 October 2019 to 31 December 2021. Between 01 January 2020 and 31 December 2021, a total of 829 stage 1 complaints were received, this compares with 938 received for the equivalent period 12 months earlier.

We received 21 more Stage 1 complaints in the most recent Q3 2021/22 quarter compared to the previous Q2 quarter in 2020/21. There was a considerable decrease in Stage 2 complaints received in the last quarter, compared to Q2.



Total Received Broke Down by Dept - Q3	Stage 1	Stage 2	% (Stage 1)	% (Stage 2)
London	23	8	8.95%	10.39%
Herts	4	3	1.56%	3.90%
SW9	7	1	2.72%	1.30%
PRO	1	1	0.39%	1.30%
Asset Management	182	53	70.82%	68.83%
Leasehold	19	4	7.39%	5.19%
Development	6	4	2.33%	5.19%
Contact Centre	14	2	5.45%	2.60%
Central Complaints	1	1	0.39%	1.30%
Total	257	77		

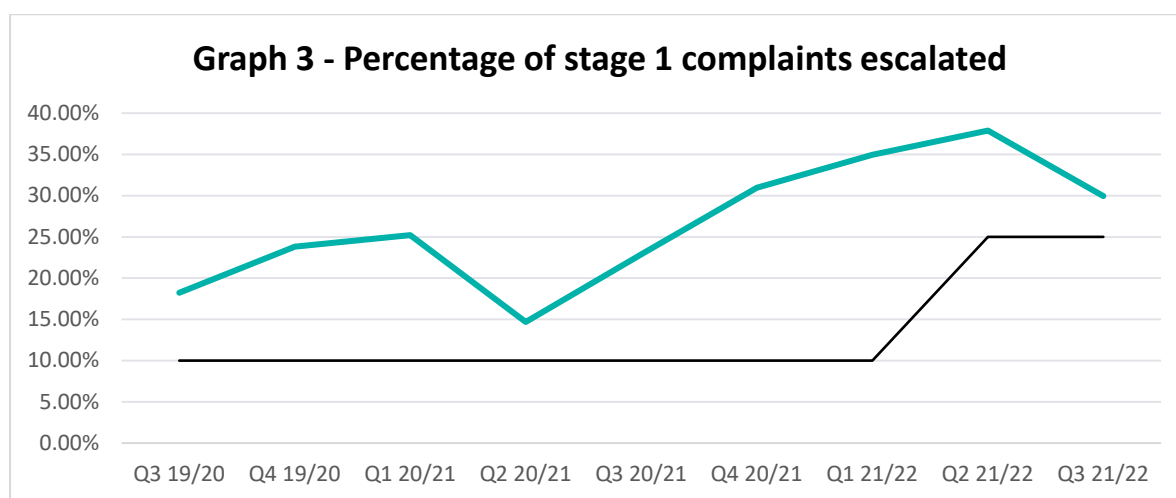
A departmental breakdown of complaints received in the quarter is set out in graph 2 together with the accompanying table. Because of the nature of the work, they are involved in Asset Management accounts for 70% of the total complaints received at stage 1. This is an increase of 6% on the previous quarter Q2 21/22.

Asset Management complaints are in respect of Responsive Repairs 116, followed by 49 from Planned Works and M+E with the remainder from Estate Services and Voids and Lettings.

In this quarter there were 9,199 repairs raised for our two primary responsive repair contractors Wates and MCP. There were 116 complaints in the quarter for these contractors, meaning that approximately 1.26% of repairs attended by Wates/MCP lead to a complaint being logged.

In the London region of the 23 Stage 1 complaints received which is 3 less than the previous quarter, 20 complaints were for Neighbourhood and the rest were for Older Persons, Income and Resident Engagement.

Complaints that escalated from Stage 1 to stage 2



A total of 77 Stage 2 complaints were received in Q3 2021/22, 23 more than Q3 2020/21 (54) and 34 more than the Q3 quarter in 2019/20 (43). There was however, a considerable decrease from 97 in Q2 21/22 to 77 Stage 2 complaints in Q3 21/22.

It is hard to review previous quarters when the amount of stage 1 and 2 complaints fluctuate. But in perspective of how many properties are within our stock and the number of repairs raised in a percentage of how many complaints we receive is relatively low. However, we are aware there is more work that can be done to reduce these numbers further.

The continued roll out of the Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code and guidance and greater focus on complaint handling, means we have continued to see more Ombudsman involvement and intervention by way of attempted mediation.

There has also been a more prescriptive approach to how complaint escalations have been reviewed the bar for rejecting stage 2 escalations being set very high. It is worth noting that although we have seen an increase in stage 1 to stage 2 escalations in recent quarters, we are still seeing an increase in satisfaction at stage 2, with proportionately less referrals to the Ombudsman Service and we are resolving more complaints at stage 2 than before.

Given the changing environment, we have considered a more achievable target for stage 1 to stage 2 escalations, which is now set at 25%, from 10%. Though 25% has still been surpassed this quarter it shows that this new figure did represent a more reasonable target to aim for moving forwards, as we were within 5% of reaching it.

Performance - complaints responded to on time

Performance increased by 2% to 92% for Stage 1, and Stage 2 continued at 100%.

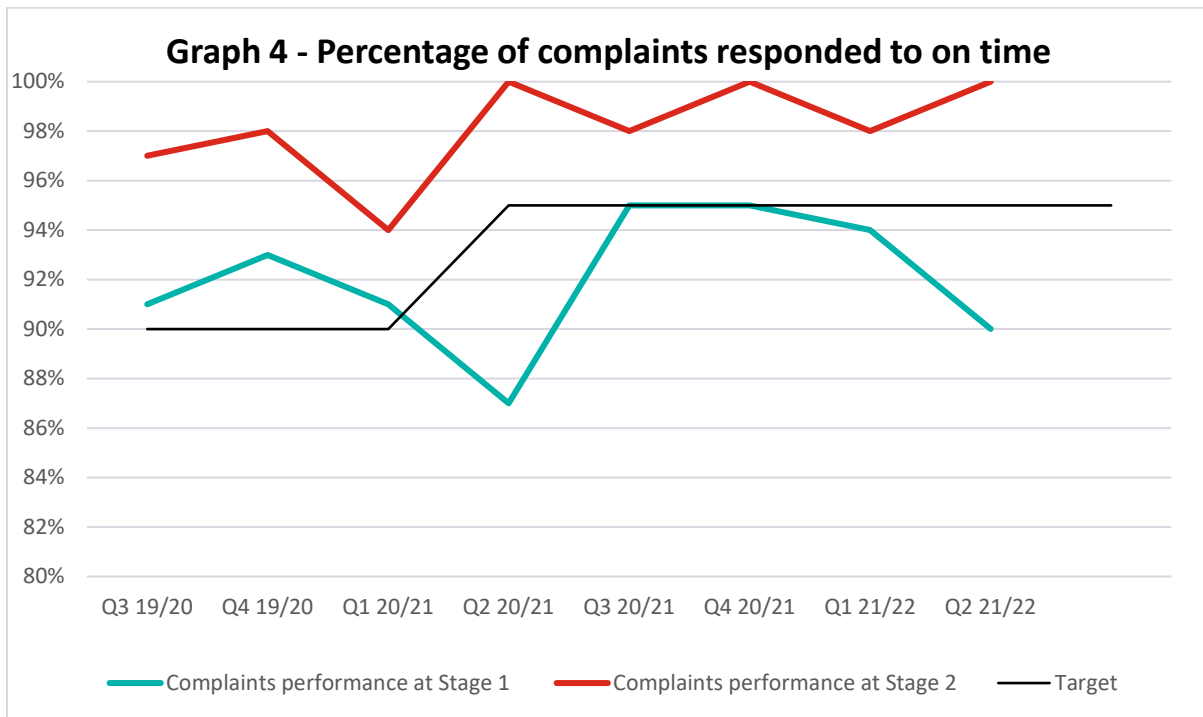
Overall, 94% of combined Stage 1 and Stage 2 complaints were issued on time, meaning the overall target of 95% was not quite achieved.

In the previous report Asset Management's overall performance was 91% which has increased to 94% this quarter. Responsive repairs who deal with complaints about our two primary contractors Wates and MCP, resolved 140 out of 143 stage 1 complaints on time meaning 98% of their responses were issued on time, which was 1% more than last quarter. This is compared to Planned Works, Compliance and M & E who resolved 48 complaints with 44 on time at a percentage of 92%, which is 3% increase on the last quarter.

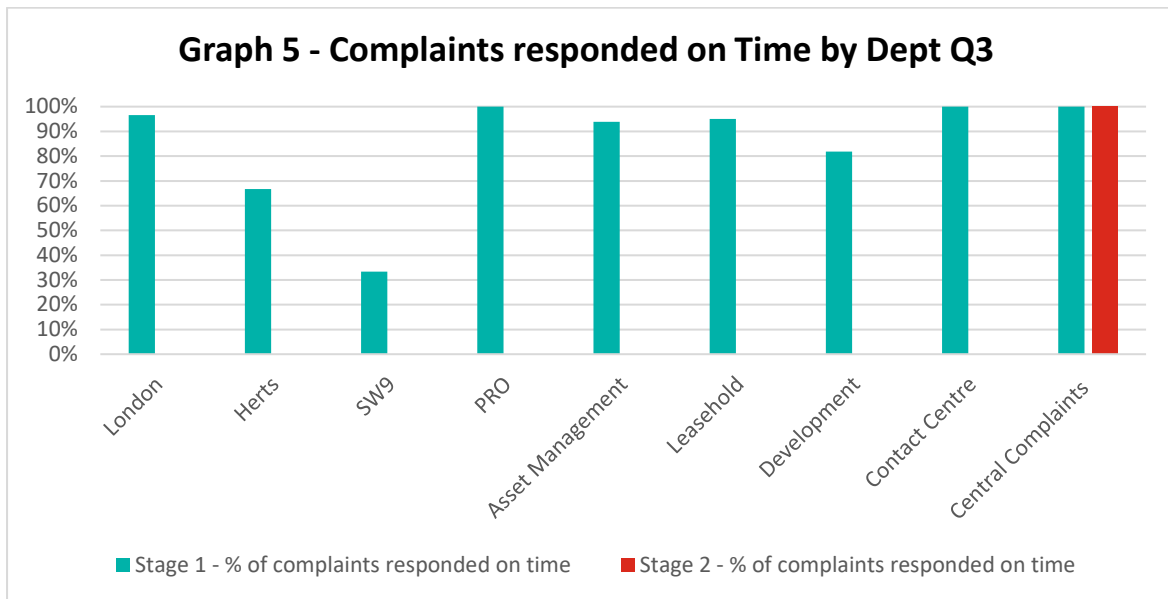
As you will see in the table below there has been a significant drop in the SW9 Stage 1 responses being issued on time. This has dropped to 33%, from 44% in the last quarter and 80% in Q1. This is largely due to changes in management structure and staff. We are in the process of assisting and supporting our SW9 colleagues to bring this back up to the level expected.

Please note that all Stage 2 complaint responses are all completed by the Central Complaints Team and 100% were responded to on time.

Quarter	Complaints performance at Stage 1	Complaints performance at Stage 2	Target
Q3 19/20	91%	97%	90.00%
Q4 19/20	93%	98%	90.00%
Q1 20/21	91%	94%	90.00%
Q2 20/21	87%	100%	95.00%
Q3 20/21	95%	98%	95.00%
Q4 20/21	95%	100%	95.00%
Q1 21/22	94%	98%	95.00%
Q2 21/22	90%	100%	95.00%
Q3 21/22	92%	100%	95.00%



Total Received Broke Down by Dept – Q3	Stage 1			Stage 2		
	No. on Time	No. Closed	Stage 1 - % of complaints responded on time	No. on Time	No. Closed	Stage 2 - % of complaints responded on time
London	28	29	97%			/
Herts	2	3	67%			/
SW9	3	9	33%			/
PRO	2	2	100%			/
Asset Management	201	214	94%			/
Leasehold	19	20	95%			/
Development	9	11	82%			/
Contact Centre	11	11	100%			/
Central Complaints	2	2	100%	90	90	100%



Please note that all Stage 2 complaint responses are all completed by the Central Complaints Team.

Compensation

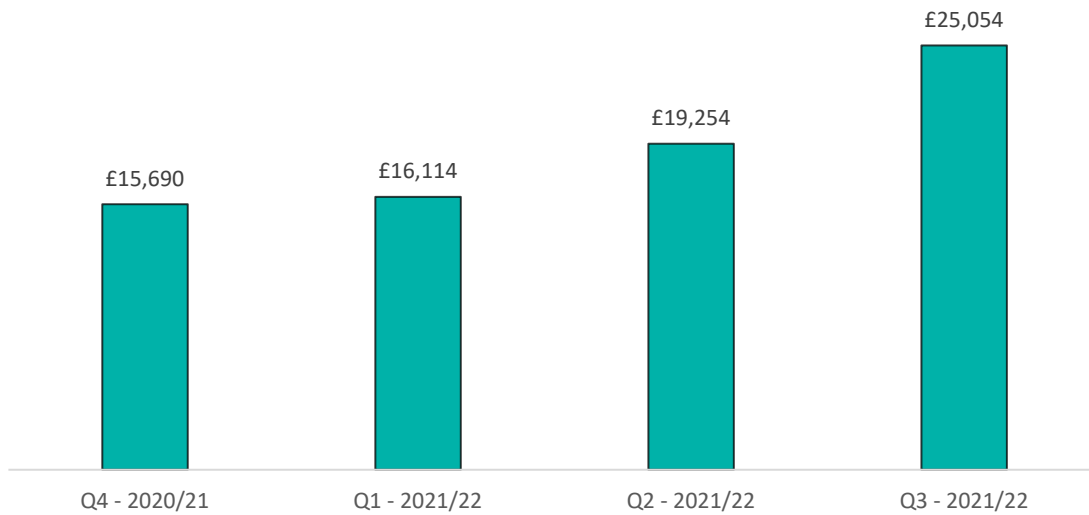
Compensation can be awarded where, following an investigation, it is identified that our actions or lack of action had a significantly adverse effect on the resident. Compensation was awarded at Stage 1 in respect of 277 complaints closed at a total cost of £25,054 shown in graph 6 with a comparison to previous quarters. This is an increase of £6000 on the last quarter, but this can be to do with the weather conditions for the period, meaning more roofing repairs and heating and hot water.

Once again delay was the highest payment with £11,205 compensation paid out although it accounted for less than half of the total amount this quarter at 45% which was the same as the last quarter. This is shown in graph 7 along with the rest of the breakdown of categories.

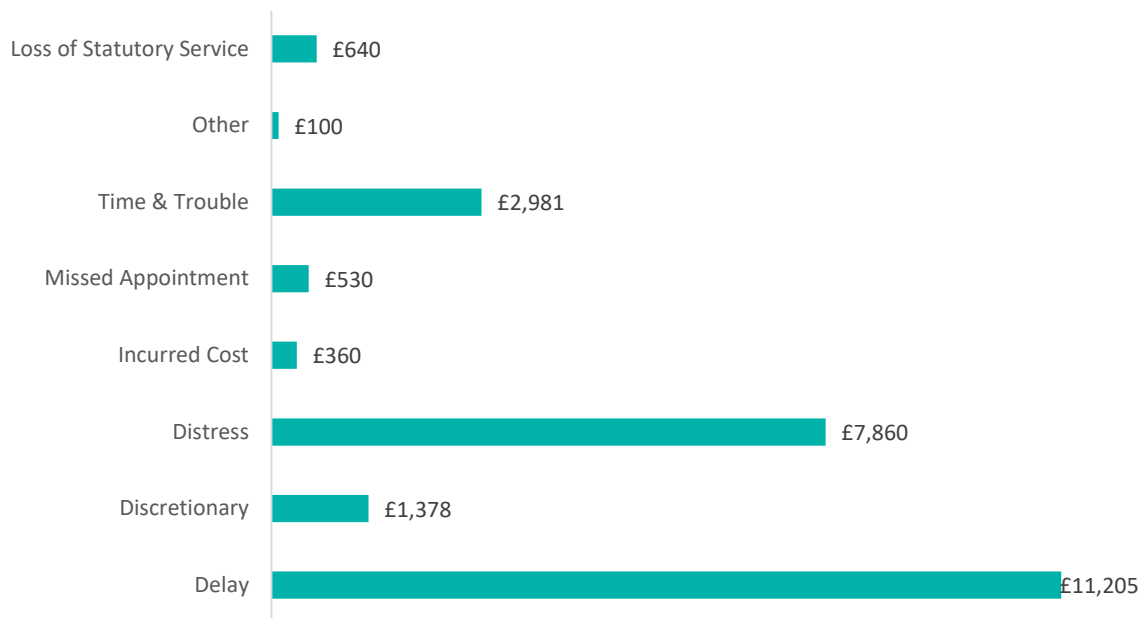
Each month our repairs team track the amount awarded for delays and request this money back from Wates and MCP. In this quarter (01 October 2021 – 31 December 2021) we are claiming back £TBC worth of compensation so far. Full breakdown below. This figure accounts for both complaints and non-complaints related compensation recharged to a contractor.

<u>Wates</u>	<u>MCP</u>
October £2,237	October £2,359
November £3,909	November £2,718
December TBC on 27/01/2022	December TBC 27/01/2022
Total for Q3 - TBC	Total for Q3 - TBC

Graph 6 - Q3 Compensation Comparison



Graph 7 - Q3 Stage 1 Compensation



MP and Cllr Enquiries

Total Received Broke Down by Dept - Q3	Enquiries Received	% (Enquiries)	No. on Time	No. Closed	% of enquiries responded on time
London	13	25.49%	13	13	100%
Herts	0	0.00%	0	0	N/A
PRO	1	1.96%	1	1	100%
Development	2	3.92%	2	2	100%
Leasehold + Finance	0	0.00%	0	0	N/A
Repairs, estates and fire safety	18	35.29%	15	16	94%
Planned + M&E	2	3.92%	1	3	33%
Voids and Lettings	9	17.65%	10	10	100%
Building Safety	1	1.96%	1	1	100%
Complaints	5	9.80%	4	5	80%
SW9	0	0.00%	0	0	N/A
Total	51	100.00%	47	51	92.16%

51 MP and Councillor enquiries were received in this quarter, compared to 56 received in Q2 2020/21. Of the 51 cases received, 51 were closed with 47 responded to on time meaning the percentage of enquiries being responded to on time was 92% which is 8% lower than Q2.

Housing Ombudsman activity and Decisions

10 information requests for formal investigations were received in the last quarter (Q3 2021/2022). This is 5 more than the last quarter (Q2 2021/2022).

6 determinations were received in the quarter, a summary of each is overleaf. There was 1 outright maladministration determinations and 2 Service Failures, which is classified as a lower form of maladministration and therefore further improvements are required. The rest were either reasonable redress or no maladministration determinations. The full breakdown on each determination is below.

Ombudsman Decision: Reasonable Redress

This complaint was about our response to the resident's report of a noise nuisance.

The Ombudsman determined we acknowledged our significant delays and that this raised the resident's expectations. We also provided misleading information and our communication was sporadic. However, the evidence showed that we took the reported noise nuisance seriously. We communicated with the neighbour, liaised

with the neighbour's support worker, we agreed to offer the neighbour a move, and we offered the parties mediation. We considered sound insulation and our reason for declining to install any was reasonable. Our offer to review that decision was reasonable. We also stated that we had changed our processes. There was little else that was open to us, given the circumstances. While the resident reported that the impact of the noise on their household was significant, in the Ombudsman's opinion our offer of compensation in recognition of our failings in this case was reasonable redress.

Ombudsman Decision: Maladministration and Service Failure

This complaint was about how the resident claimed we had failed to carry out cyclical repairs and decorations since 2010 which resulted in extensive disrepair to the windows, garden boundaries, fencing, pathways, gates, facades, and other communal areas throughout the property.

They found maladministration in respect of our management and communication around, the cyclical works and associated maintenance and repairs.

The Ombudsman has stated our response that the cyclical works would be carried out within a ten-year window was inappropriate, as was our failure to acknowledge the resident's reference to previously unmet expectations around timescale for cyclical repairs and reference too, to disrepair.

The Ombudsman further added that our response and actions were inappropriate because we did not consider our legal and tenancy obligations. Further, we failed to manage the resident's expectations or communicate with any clarity as to what had happened previously with the cyclical works and what the resident could expect in the future. Whilst cyclical works – and major works – cannot always have exact timescales due to the nature of the scale of works and necessity of repair and maintenance at the point of inspection, there was no attempt to respond fully and with transparency and clarity, which in turn, gave rise to a formal complaint. Additionally, we took an unreasonably lengthy time to respond to the resident's query and there was further delay at the point of recognition of the formal complaint, with an internal delay in passing the complaint between teams.

This led to a service failure in complaint handling as essentially, the complaint took too long to be investigated and responded to. This was because we were waiting on a legal view on the issue of cyclical works and when our final response was issued it focused on the view provided by the 3rd party legal team and not the specific issues raised by resident. The response was purposely driven by the legal view and not wanting to be drawn into a lengthy discussion on a topic the legal view had been considered – that the resident considered that we were in breach of our tenancy agreement by not completing cyclical works.

Ombudsman Decision: Outside of jurisdiction and Service Failure

The complaint was about the lack of repairs to the communal areas, the resident's faulty boiler. At the time the outstanding issues explained by the resident were, that although the leak in the communal area had been resolved, repairs were still outstanding. The resident felt the damage in the communal areas had created safety hazards. And the boiler continued to fail regularly, meaning the resident had to rely on an expensive immersion heater to get hot water.

The Ombudsman states after carefully considering all the evidence, in accordance with the following aspect of the complaint is outside of the Ombudsman's jurisdiction, which was how we handled the resident's reports of repairs needed to the communal hallway between August 2017 and December 2019. The Ombudsman will not investigate complaints which, in the Ombudsman's opinion, were not brought to the attention of the member as a formal complaint within a reasonable period which would normally be within 6 months of the matters arising.

There was a service failure though in relation to how we handled the reports of repairs needed to the communal hallway outside the property (from December 2019 onwards).

Ombudsman Decision: Reasonable Redress

The complaint was about our handling of repairs to the communal drainage pipe at the property. The resident has explained that the outstanding issues were:

- They remained unhappy with our response to their concerns and queries.
- Our delays to action the repair reports.
- That no apology had been provided.
- The lack of communication from us during the affected period.
- The disruption caused, along with the impact caused to their health and wellbeing.
- They are awaiting reimbursement for plumbing costs they incurred.
- The amount of compensation.

The Ombudsman made their decision as whilst we could have been more empathic as to the stressful situation the resident was confronted with, there was reasonable redress in respect of the complaint, insofar as we apologised for issues with communication (and later delay in issuing the refund for plumber charges) and paid compensation and reimbursement costs which we were not obliged to do.

Ombudsman Decision: Reasonable Redress and No Maladministration

The complaint was about our response to the resident subletting. The resident had detailed that we requested a fee to sublet the property. The resident stated that we also requested the information of the people whom the property was being let to. The resident does not consider that this was an appropriate cause of action and explained that he was not provided with information when it was requested.

The Ombudsman determined we made an offer of redress to the resident prior to investigation which, in the opinion of the Ombudsman, resolved the complaint satisfactorily concerning, communication with the resident about subletting his property, and us charging the resident a subletting admin fee.

Going further they say we acknowledged our failures in the handling of communication with the resident and offered compensation, which was reasonable, in accordance with our policy and was proportionate to the level of distress and inconvenience it caused him by our errors.

We recognised our historical failure to contact the resident about the subletting of his property and charge the subletting admin fee. We made a reasonable offer of redress to him by waiving this fee.

We acted appropriately by requesting information in accordance with our policy to register the sublet of the resident's property. As above, it was reasonable for us to waive the requirement for this information in view of the fact that it was not requested in 2016 when we were first made aware that the property was being sublet.

Ombudsman Decision: Reasonable Redress

The complaint was about the level of compensation offered by us following a blocked sink at the property. Resident said the situation affected them mentally and emotionally. On occasion they had to bath their children and wash the children's clothes at their friend's house so they could go to school. Taking time off work for the repair team, and had to throw some clothes away as was unable to open the washing machine, so spent money on trips to the laundrette. Resident was awarded £100 in their stage 2 response.

This came through as a mediation request from the Ombudsman where resident had requested £600-700 in compensation to resolve the complaint. It was agreed we would increase the award to £150. The Ombudsman discussed with the resident and £150 was accepted by the resident, and complaint closed by the Ombudsman as reasonable redress.

Examples of Service Improvements arising from complaints

1. We were receiving high volumes of complaints relating to delays regarding certain trades within Wates contract area, i.e. Carpentry and Groundworks. We identified a resource issue resulting in a lack of availability meaning residents were having to wait 8+ weeks for initial appointments.

As a result, we re-allocated in batches overdue works to other contractors with a better capacity to take them on.

In addition to help Wates maintain service delivery we helped to control incoming volumes by giving the instruction for any works raised by Asset Management to go straight to framework contractors instead (such as follow-on works) who are in a better position to resource.

2. Our Repairs team also identified that supply chain (SC) works are often the ones still leading to delays and dissatisfaction within the Wates contract area. We have instructed stricter measures when it comes to SC management requesting formal copies of regular meeting minutes to demonstrate a better control of their work in progress/workloads.
3. Emergency volumes have increased significantly meaning that both our term contractors (Wates and MCP) are often attending outside of the 4-hour expected timeframe. We are working closely with CSC giving feedback in real time for any orders that are identified to not be genuine emergencies, but we also rely on our residents reporting the issue accurately at first port of call.

The impact that a misreporting of an emergency situation has on the rest of the service delivery is significant, with volumes currently sitting between 30-35% daily, meaning that BC appointments get continuously pushed back. Many of the emergencies are resulting in no access after being attended to outside of timeframe. As an interim measure in order to make the best use of our resource we have asked that residents are made aware of the risk that the job may fall outside of the 4-hour window at the point of which it's raised, during peak volumes. This will A) help to set their expectations better in the first instance and B) help to avoid misreporting if they have no intention of waiting.

4. Six months on from our immediate response "on it" pledge we have completed several follow-on review meetings in which we have identified the areas which still need additional assistance, guidance, and work to align with the principles of the pledge. We are in the process of putting together a series of workshops to focus on how we can ensure those who need help receive it and build the pledge into their working way of life.

Report completed by

James Mahaffy, Complaints Manager and Adam Tolhurst, Complaints Officer