

Report Title: Quarterly Complaints / Compliments Overview – 2020/21 Quarter 4

We hope that the services you receive from us are of the quality you would expect. However, we realise there will be times when you may want to complain, tell us how we can improve our services, or perhaps compliment us on something we have done well.

Your complaints, comments and compliments are important to us as they help us improve our services – this short report details the nature of the complaints and compliments we have received and the actions we are taking as a result of them.

1. Overview

During the fourth quarter of the 2020/2021 year we have logged 52 early stage resolutions, 16 complaints and 36 compliments, which compares with 29 early stage resolutions, 19 complaints and 50 compliments in the fourth quarter of the 2019/2020 year.

	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	YTD
Complaints	05	06	12	16	39
Early Stage Resolutions	14	29	48	52	143
Compliments	29	27	36	36	128

As of the 31st March, of the 16 complaints raised 11 had been closed having been upheld and 1 had been closed having not been upheld. The remaining complaints were still ongoing at various stages of the process.

Of the 52 early stage resolutions received in the fourth quarter:

- 84% of the early stage resolutions were issued with a response within the three-day target, and
- six early stage resolutions were escalated to stage 1 complaints.

Of the 16 complaints received in the fourth quarter:

- 100% of the complaints received were issued with a written confirmation of their complaint within the three-day target, and
- 94% of the complaints received were issued with a formal response to their complaint within the ten-day target.

2. Key Themes

Total Figures 2020/21	Staff Attitude	State of Property	Customer Service	Policy	Totals
Complaints	00	19	17	03	39
Early Stage Resolutions	08	68	58	09	143
Compliments	57	00	71	00	128

3. Learning Outcomes

Learning outcomes recorded in the last quarter include:

Contractors should adhere to the same standards of customer service as we expect our own operatives to. Any delays or missed appointments should be communicated to tenants (and their point of contact at Freebridge) as promptly as possible. Contractors represent Freebridge when attending repairs and it is essential that our expectations are reinforced with the contractor to prevent any miscommunications.

A review has been completed of procedures regarding port-a-loos. Changes should be implemented to ensure regular empties are completed when port-a-loos are in use at a property.

Replacement parts must be ordered promptly to avoid delays in completing follow on repairs to our properties. If Stores are unable to source parts then the relevant Team Leader should be informed so that alternative arrangements can be made. If this causes delays in completing repairs then the tenants must be updated.

Operatives & Team Leaders should have clear, open means for communication and should not rely solely on emails to ensure that updates regarding work are received promptly.

It is important that we correctly manage our tenant's expectations by offering appropriate timeframes for works to be completed in. If a timeframe that has been given cannot be met then the tenant should be contacted promptly and offered a full update to reduce their frustration. At no point should tenants feel they need to call contractors directly for information.

As a socially minded landlord, consideration should be made to offer additional support to our more vulnerable tenants with regards to decoration following repairs. Each case should be considered by its own merits and tenants own vulnerabilities/circumstances taken into account before making a decision.

Please note: The figures in this report relating to previous quarters may differ to those in the original quarter reports because complaints logged are sometimes withdrawn during the complaints process.

All routine repairs should be completed within 28 days. Additional resources should be employed to ensure this service standard is met.
Responsibility for non-standard repairs should be agreed and documented prior to completing a mutual exchange. Clear communication is needed to ensure incoming tenants are fully aware of any repairs that they are responsible for before completion.
Held jobs should be passed to the Scheduling Manager to release so that they can be appointed promptly at the point of raising to avoid unnecessary delays.
The working relationship between Development & Property Assets teams should be reviewed to ensure that they could work closely to check and enforce warranties. Additional information should be taken at the point of installation to ensure that we are fully aware of what is and isn't covered by warranties, so that any disputes can be resolved quickly and with as little inconvenience to the tenant as possible. Considerations should be made regarding whether work can be completed in-house and the costs claimed against warranties to reduce any potential delays that may be experienced by the tenant.
The process for follow-on works should be reviewed to ensure all jobs that cannot be completed during the initial visit have a follow on appointment booked. Jobs should be reviewed on a regular basis through the property services dashboard. Additional training should be given to Team Leaders regarding the importance of contacting tenants to offer progress reports as well as what is considered appropriate communication and appropriate means of communication, to ensure an improved service moving forward.
Freebridge to consider what works are essential during lockdowns (or similar situations). It may be prudent to offer the tenants the opportunity to opt out of appointments if they are particularly vulnerable. Our expectations regarding maintaining the safety of our tenants should be reiterated to all contractors to ensure all procedures, including wearing full and correct PPE, are followed.
Freebridge should not make assumptions leading to the cancellation of appointments. Instead, tenants should be contacted to discuss any options before decisions are made. Abandoning jobs without communicating correctly with the tenant leads to delays in completing repairs, as well as undue stress and inconvenience for the tenant.
It should always be made clear whether to customers whether they have raised a request for service or a complaint. There should be no ambiguity when communicating with tenants; we cannot effectively manage customer expectations if it isn't clear what action has been taken.

4. Our Complaints Process

Details of our Complaints process can be found within our leaflet called Compliments, Comments and Complaints which you can get a copy of from our office at Juniper House in King's Lynn or from our website at www.freebridge.org.uk/complaint.html

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