



North Wales Housing

Annual Complaints Report 2016-2017

Contents

1. Executive summary	3
2. The complaints process at NWH	3
3. What is a complaint and how complaints are made	3
4. Number of complaints	4
5. Complaints by service	5
6. How the complaints were made	5
7. Complaints escalation	6
8. Type of complaints	7
9. Managing complaints	8
10. Lessons learnt and difference made	10
11. Conclusion	11

1. Executive summary

Effective complaint management is an important part of maintaining North Wales Housing's (NWH) reputation. Complaints are also a valuable tool in helping to understand the residents' and customers' expectations of service delivery and should be an essential part of identifying service improvement across the organisation.

Information on complaints received has been extracted from our contact management system on IBS. Records are also kept on the z-drive.

2. The complaints process at NWH

Our complaints procedure has two stages with the following timescales:

- Stage 1 – Acknowledge within 2 working days, and respond within 10 working days
- Stage 2 – Acknowledge within 2 working days, and respond within 20 working days

If we are unable to resolve the complaint, the complainant may complain to the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales.

Our complaints procedure is based on guidance provided to public bodies by the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales.

3. What is a complaint and how complaints are made

A complaint is where a customer is unhappy with the service they have received from NWH or any of our contractors. This includes occasions where you believe that:

- We have done something we should not have done
- We have not done something we should have done
- an employee of NWH's (or any of our contractors) behaviour has been inappropriate
- A service we provided has not been delivered to the quality, safety, frequency or cost expected
- Our decision making process has been flawed
- NWH have worked outside policy or protocol

What is not covered by our complaints procedure?

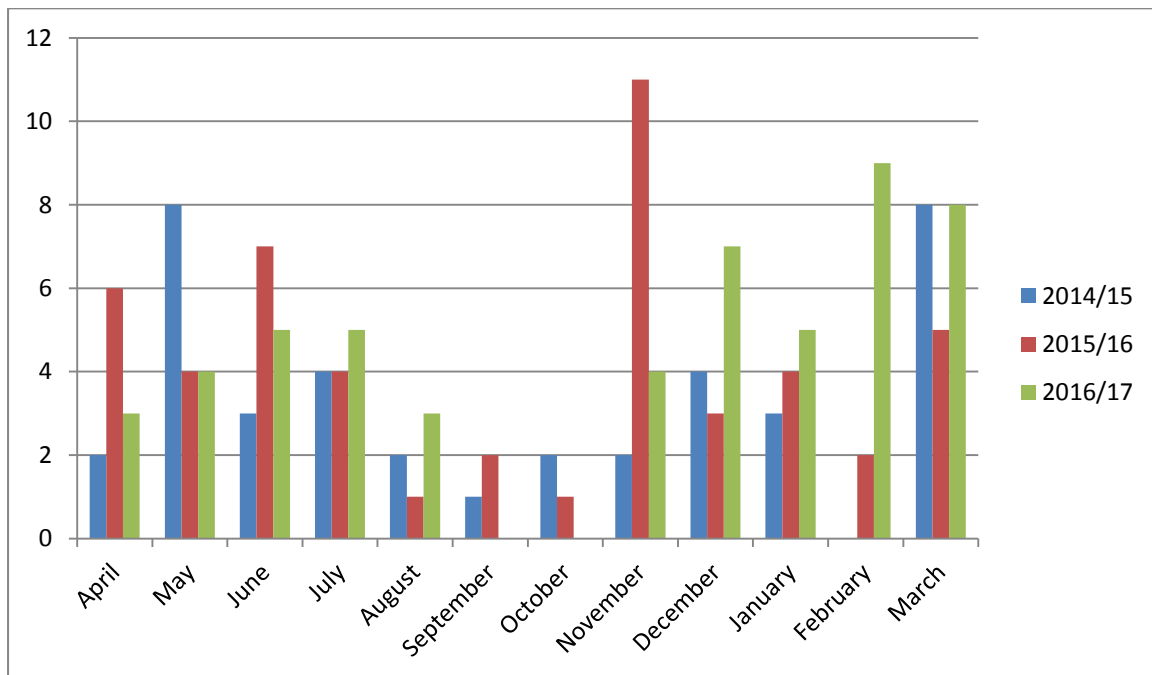
- This is the first contact regarding the issue
- The correct department has not had the opportunity to address the issue
- Issues regarding anti-social behaviour

A complaint may be made by letter, digitally, verbally in person, or verbally over the phone.

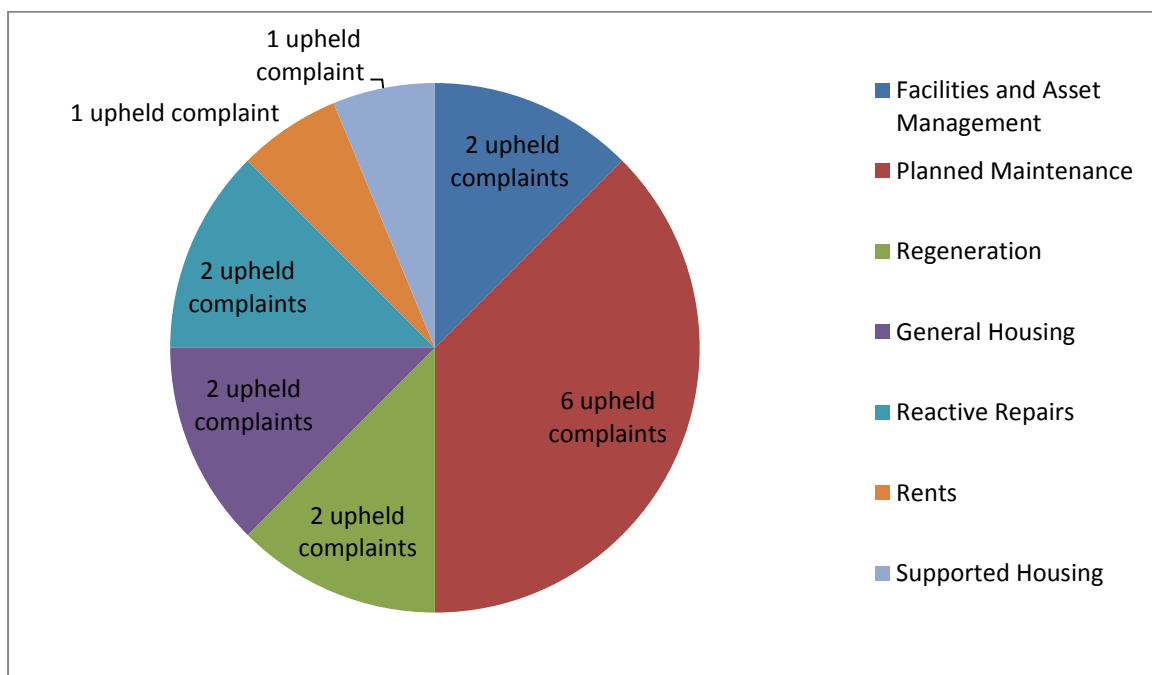
4. Number of complaints

	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17
Number of complaints	39	50	55
Number of complaints upheld	9	16	16

A total of 55 complaints were received during the 2016-2017 period, 16 of which were upheld.

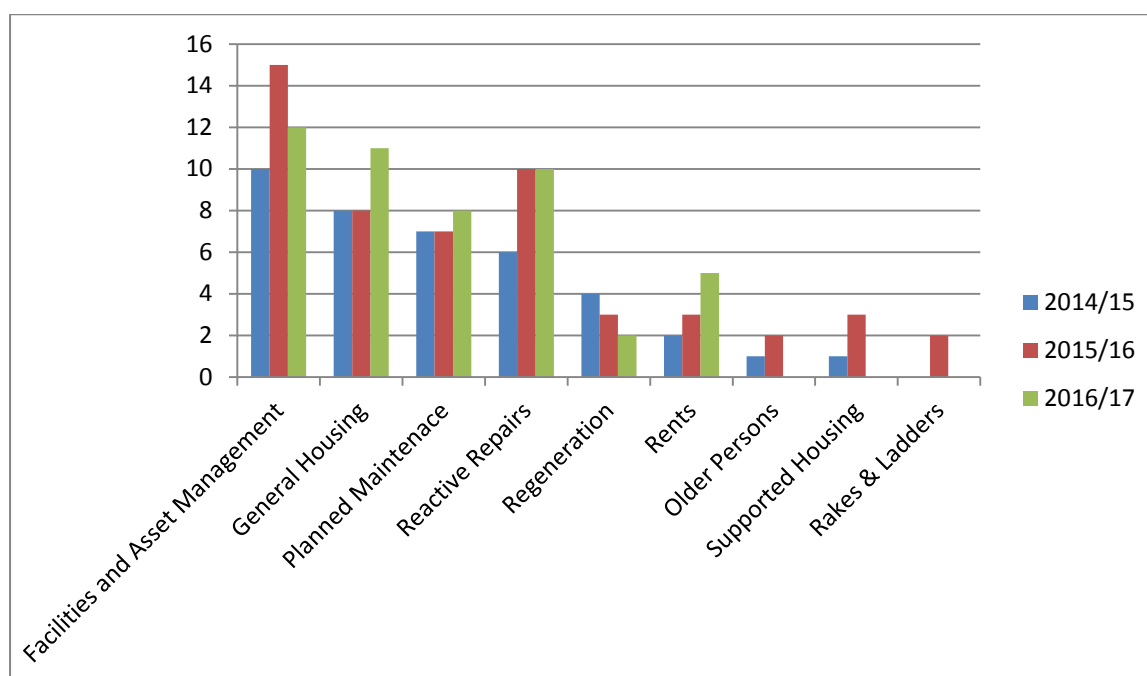


Upheld Complaints by Service Area 2016/17



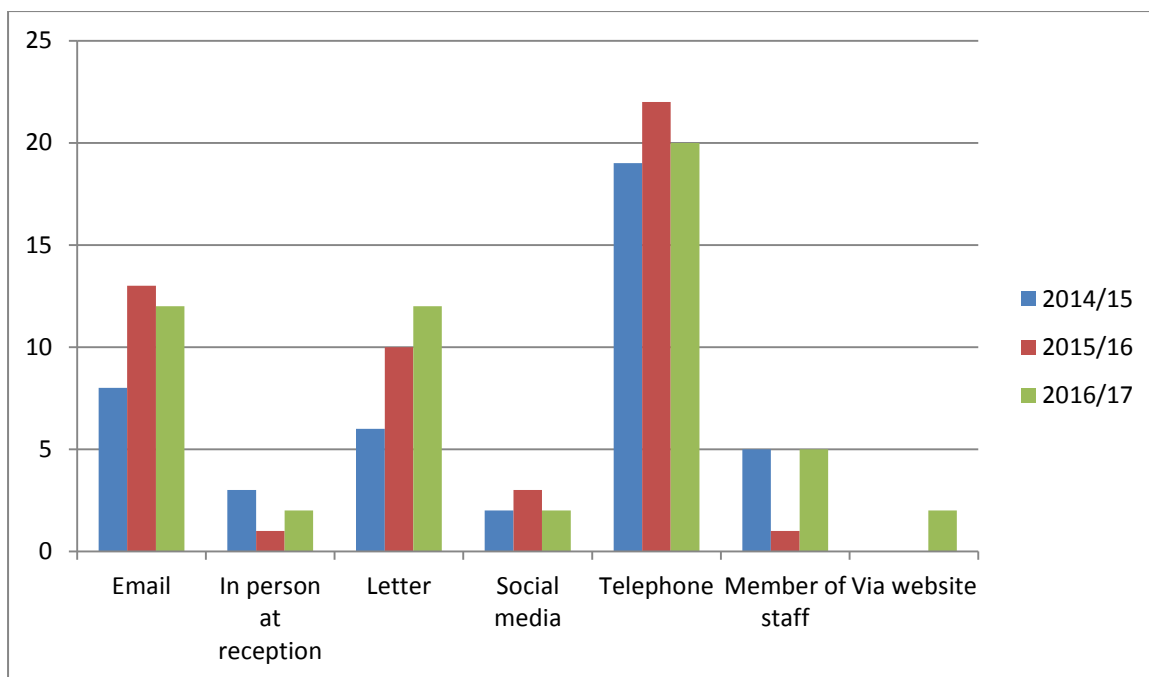
5. Complaints by service area

	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17
Facilities and Asset Management	10	15	12
General Housing	8	8	11
Planned Maintenance	7	7	8
Reactive Repairs	6	10	10
Regeneration	4	3	2
Rents	2	3	5
Older Persons	1	2	1
Supported Housing	1	3	3
Rakes & Ladders	0	2	3



6. How the complaints were made

	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17
Email	8	13	12
In person at reception	3	1	2
Letter	6	10	12
Social media	2	3	2
Telephone	19	22	20
Member of staff	5	1	5
Via website			2



7. Complaints escalation

2016-2017

Service Area	Escalated from stage 1 to 2	Escalated to the Ombudsman
Facilities & Asset Management	2	
General Housing		1
Rents	1	
Rakes & Ladders	2	

One complaint has been escalated to the Ombudsman during this reporting period (2 in 2015/16). This tenant complained directly to the Ombudsman and was advised they would need to pursue our complaints procedure first. The complaint was investigated and not upheld. The complainant pursued the matter again with the Ombudsman. The Ombudsman responded to the complainant confirming they were satisfied with the investigation and response carried out by North Wales Housing.

Complaints are advised of the complaints procedure and how to escalate to the Ombudsman at every stage.

Leaflets are available in the reception areas at Plas Blodwel and the Bangor Office. The information is also available on the North Wales Housing website.

Following a recommendation made by the Residents' Advisory Panel an article regarding the complaints procedure was included in the last tenant's newsletter and posted on the North Wales Housing Facebook page.

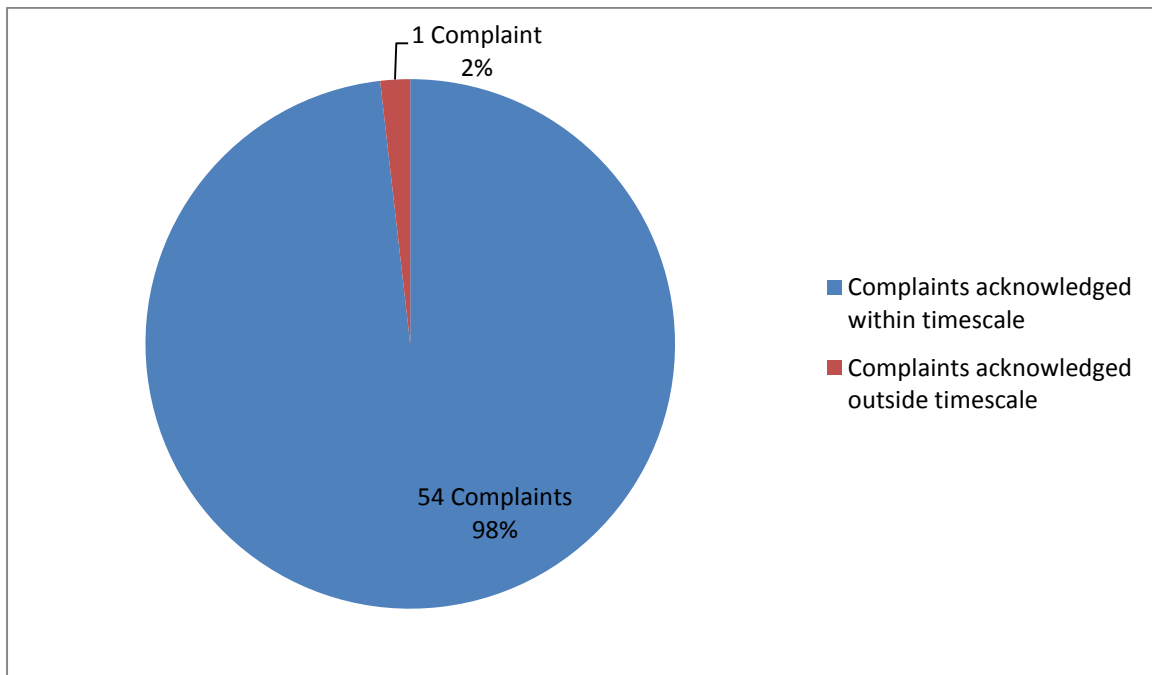
8. Type/theme of complaints

The following details the types of complaints received during 2016/17

	Type/theme of complaints	Total complaints
Facilities and Asset Management	Lack of response/communication Work not being carried out	12
General Housing	Lack of response/communication Not returning phone calls/emails	11
Reactive Repairs	Lack of response/communication Keep informed of when work is to be carried out	10
Planned Maintenance	Staff conduct Lack of response/communication Keep informed of when work is to be carried out	8
Rents	Disputing a decision Dissatisfied with how communication was made	5
Supported Housing	Incorrect advice/information given	3
Rakes & Ladders	Standard of work being carried out Questioning grounds maintenance service charge	3
Regeneration	Standard of service Lack of response/communication	2
Older Persons	Standard of catering	1

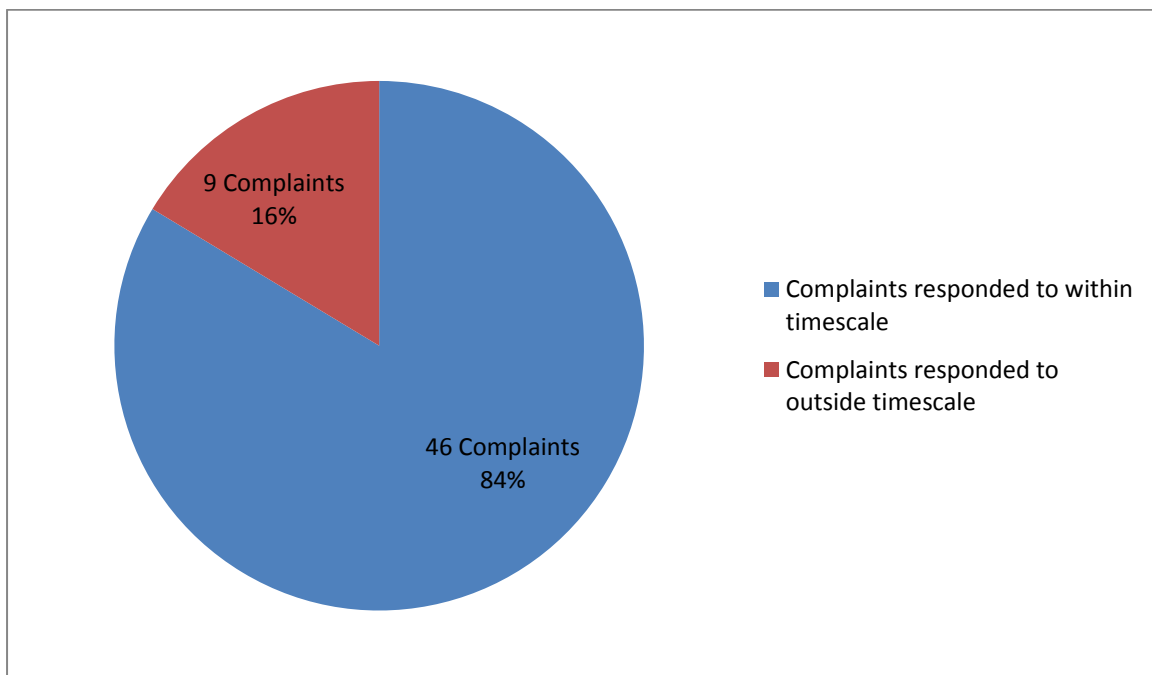
9. Managing complaints

Stage 1



98% (54/55) Stage 1 complaints were acknowledged within 2 working days (Same rate as 2015/16)

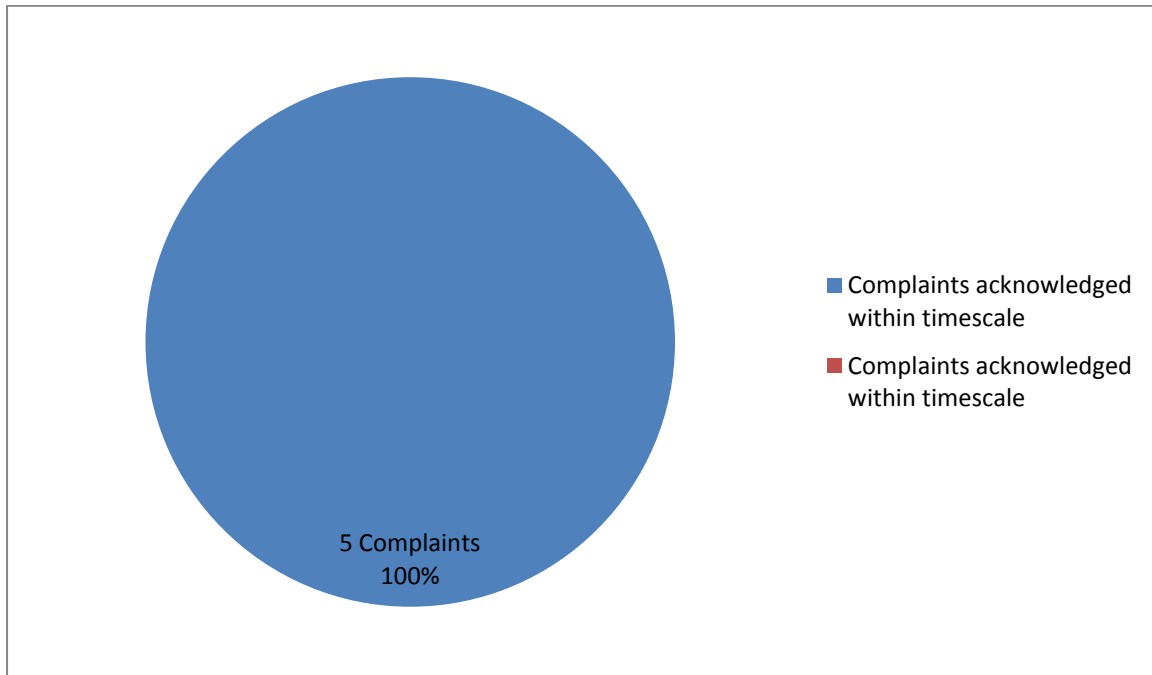
The complaint not acknowledged within the timescale was sent by letter and addressed to another member of staff. That staff member was on leave and the letter was not opened.



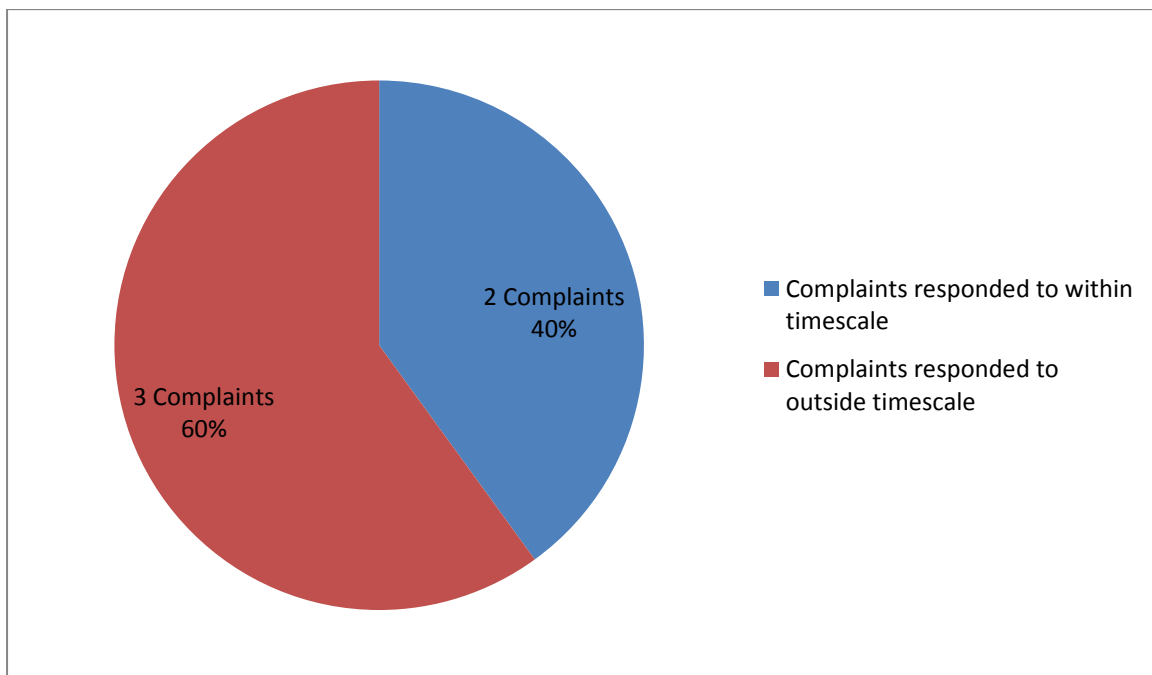
84% (46/55) Stage 1 complaints were responded to within 10 working days. The 9 complaints which did not receive a response within the 10 working days received notification that further time was required to investigate.

(During 2015/16 the rate was 96% (48/50))

Stage 2



100% (5) complainants wishing to enter Stage 2 of the complaints procedure were acknowledged within 2 working days (Same rate as 2015/16)



40% (2/5) complaints at Stage 2 received a response within 20 working days. (During 2015/16 the rate was 80% 8/10)

The 3 complaints which didn't receive responses received notification that further time was required to investigate.

10. Lessons learnt and difference made

The following are the key lessons learnt this year:

- A number of complaints are about keeping tenants informed and returning phone calls
- Communication needs to be improved with our tenants
- Customer care needs to be improved across the organisation
- Communication and customer care were identified as issues in last year's report
- CRM has come into use after this reporting period (2016/17). This may have a positive impact
- The RAP has developed a Customer Care Charter. This could also have a positive impact
- The numbers of complaints have increased again this year. This may be due to the training/raising awareness of our complaints sessions.
- It will be good practice to continue raising awareness of our complaints procedure among staff and tenants
- Complaints are now part of staff inductions
- The RAP have begun to monitor complaints performance indicators
- The RAP recommended the raising awareness of our complaints procedure with a newsletter article, website news story, and Facebook post
- During this reporting period we reviewed our complaints satisfaction form; however return rate is still poor
- Ways in which to increase return rates need to be explored
- The availability of text messaging could improve return rates

We use our complaints to improve service delivery. Each service area reviews the complaints received as part of the self evaluation process.

The following are examples of the difference made:

Facilities and Asset Management –

- Discuss and attend to properties with AD Homes when required
- Looking at trends and complaints analysis
- Addressing complaints received during staff one to one meetings

Reactive repairs –

- The importance of communication has been discussed within the team.
- It's expected that CRM will have a positive impact
- Staffing levels and increased workloads have been challenging

Planned Maintenance -

- Implemented a central Planned Maintenance phone number and email address to prevent calls being missed when staff are not at their desk or on leave
- Meetings and training have been undertaken to discuss acceptable behaviour and NWH's core values
- Implemented a cut off deadline for receiving asbestos and kitchen surveys before a start date

General Needs -

- Call backs done to ensure tenants are satisfied with service
- No longer holding skip days raised concerns among some tenants. Partnered with Local Authorities in visiting tenants to promote re-cycling

Older Persons –

- Invited officers from other departments to team meetings, e.g. Repairs
- Regular tenant meetings

11. Conclusions

The number of complaints has increased again during this reporting period –

2014/15 – 39

2015/16 – 50

2016/17 – 55

There are no new issues arising which could explain the increase year on year; however it is likely the complaints training and raising awareness of our complaints procedure with staff, undertaken during the last two reporting periods, has played a significant role.

It may be the case that staff are more aware of our complaints procedure and the importance of consistent recording.

Customer care and communication continue to be a recurring trend in the complaints received.

These issues have also been noted during the customer care and corporate plan consultations with tenants.

Complaints are now monitored on a more regular basis using Sycle. Performance is measured on a monthly and quarterly basis which is reported to the Landlord Services Committee and the Residents' Advisory Panel.