

## Governing Body response to Complaints Performance & Service Improvement Report 2023/24

Our Corporate Plan sets out how we will enable people to be their best, in homes they love, and places they are proud of. Over the course of the last year, we have listened carefully to the feedback from our engaged customers groups, as well as by using the learning obtained from the complaints and compliments, we have received.

We have continued to learn from the Ombudsman's Spotlight Reports and published case reviews and in response, we have implemented several transformational changes to the way we deliver our services.

We have expanded our inhouse repairs service into Greater Manchester and brought our grounds maintenance and cleaning services inhouse. We have also invested significantly in delivering a corporate customer service training programme to all colleagues. By adopting good practice and the learning obtained during the Self-Assessment process, in 2023/24 we have:

- Introduced a weekly Customer Complaints Steering Group. A cross functional group led by our Member Responsible for Complaints (MRC) and attended by Directors and Heads of Service.
- Continued to develop and actively manage our complaints service improvement plan.
- Improved our complaints procedures and responded more effectively at the first point of contact and throughout the complaints process. As a direct result we have reduced the number of complaints escalating to Stage 2 by 22%.
- Used the learning from our Customer Complaints Steering Group and our Customer Complaints Forum to improve complaint handling at stage 2, resulting in an 18% reduction in cases referred to the Housing Ombudsman.
- Reviewed our Complaint Resolution policy by making it easier for customers to understand how to complain and what happens when they submit a complaint.

In accordance with the Complaint Handling Code, the progress and performance of our complaints service are reported to the business monthly, and our Board and Customer Committee receive updates from our MRC regularly. The annual Self-Assessment and the Complaints Performance & Service Improvement Report have also been reviewed by our Board, Customer Committee and Customer Complaints Forum.

Learning from complaints has become an important part of Onward's culture and the Board and MRC are committed to continuing to play an active role in building on the progress of the last year.

Whilst we do not underestimate the size of the challenge ahead, we are confident that the significant changes made over the previous year have laid the foundations for us to build upon our achievements and further strengthen services for customers.

You can find out more about our complaints performance and our plans for the coming year [here](#).