

Southway 2024/25 Performance Statement

A message from Southway: improving how we handle your complaints.

As Southway's Board member with responsibility for complaints, and as Chair of the People and Places Committee our shared priority is making sure you have the best possible experience of Southway's services. Over the past year, we've worked with colleagues to transform how we manage complaints, aiming to resolve issues quickly and learn from every case so we can keep improving our services.

Our self-assessment

At each committee meeting our People & Places Committee - appointed by the Board to focus specifically on customer service and experience- hold officers to account for complaints performance.

As part of this work, a detailed self-assessment using the Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code was carried out in July 2025, with a second review completed in November 2025. This Code sets the standard for how organisations like Southway should manage complaints.

This self-assessment helped us see where we are performing well, where improvements are needed, and what progress we have made over the past year. It has also helped us identify the main things we need to improve, so that we can continue to provide a better service for you. [If you would like to read the full self-assessment, you can find it here.](#)

Improving complaint handling

We realised in 2024/25 that we were responding too slowly to complaints and that this was affecting your experience of services. To put customers first, we set up a dedicated Customer Experience Team in November 2024. This team now has four full-time colleagues who guide and support you through the complaints process and help us make our services better.

Thanks to their work, we've seen clear improvements in how complaints are handled, and since November 2024, we have responded to every complaint within the Ombudsman's required timelines. This improvement is supporting an increase in satisfaction with complaints, which we've seen in our Quarter 2 2025/26 Tenant Satisfaction Measure reports. We'll share more information about this with you soon.

We received a Complaint Handling Failure Order in 2024/25, for which we are sorry. We have since fixed our reporting and now use real-time tracking for every complaint to make sure actions and deadlines are not missed.

Driving improvements

We know that the number of complaints that we receive has increased significantly this year. We're looking into the reasons for this happening and putting in place improvements to address your concerns. We have made our complaints process clearer, faster, and fairer, and have put in place a "fast fix" route for quick solutions, and robust case management for all complaints. We're targeting the team to improve performance over the next year, including reducing the number of severe maladministration findings and resolving more cases at Stage 1.

Most complaints relate to repairs and to how we communicate with you. To tackle this, our Customer Experience Team works closely with our Repairs managers, meeting weekly and carrying out joint visits to customers' homes when needed. If you make a complaint, you'll also receive regular updates, including at least three proactive calls during your case.

We've made our letters and messages easier to understand, provided customer-care and tone-of-voice training for colleagues, and now capture lessons from every upheld complaint. These lessons are reviewed monthly and turned into actions, with progress reported to People & Places Committee so we can ensure services continue to improve.

We're committed to making our services more accessible and fairer, offering reasonable adjustments, improving how we record individual circumstances, and involving tenants directly through our Customer Voice Panel and local drop-ins at Westcroft Community Centre.

Get involved!

Thank you to everyone who has shared feedback, whether positive or negative - it helps us improve. We'd also like to take this opportunity to encourage any of our tenants with a passion for improving services to get in touch.

We are currently recruiting members to join our Complaints Service Improvement group, and we'd welcome your support and assistance. This will include working with us to review and update our policy around how we work with customers to manage unacceptable behaviour, which we've identified as a priority in our self-assessment.

The Board will continue to monitor progress and keep you informed about what's changed and what's next. If we fall short, we will acknowledge it and put things right. Our approach is in line with the Ombudsman's expectations: strong oversight, learning from complaints, and open reporting to residents.

David Hampton the Board Member Responsible for Complaints and Shefali Kapoor Board Member and People and Places Committee Chair, October 2025