



Report to: Audit & Governance Committee Meeting  
11 December 2024

Director or Business Manager Lead: Suzanne Shead – Director Housing Health and Wellbeing

Lead Officer: Jill Baker, Business Manager Customer Services, ext. 5810

<b>Report Summary</b>	
<b>Report Title</b>	Housing Ombudsman Annual Review Report 2023-24
<b>Purpose of Report</b>	To inform Members of the publication of Housing Ombudsman Annual Review report 2023-24
<b>Recommendations</b>	That Members note the report and the role of the Housing Ombudsman Service in dispute resolution and effective complaint handling.
<b>Reason for Recommendation</b>	It is an Ombudsman requirement that Annual Review Letters are shared with Members

## **1.0 Background Information**

- 1.1 As a landlord, the Council is required to sign up to the Housing Ombudsman Scheme. The purpose of the Housing Ombudsman Scheme is to enable tenants and other individuals to have complaints about members investigated by a Housing Ombudsman. The service can often act as an early warning system that a landlord has a larger issue as there is evidence that transactional issues correlate to strategic challenges for landlords.
- 1.2 The role of the Ombudsman is to resolve disputes involving members of the Scheme, including making awards of compensation or other remedies when appropriate, as well as to support effective landlord and tenant dispute resolution by others.
- 1.3 Complainants can contact the Housing Ombudsman at any time for advice, and usually consider complaints from tenants in instances where the complainant feels their complaint remains unresolved following the Council’s complaints procedure being

exhausted or where the complainant feels the Council has not dealt with a complaint appropriately.

1.4 The Council is required to complete an annual self-assessment against the Complaint Handling Code which is published on the Councils website. The role of the Housing Ombudsman is also promoted in the complaints policy and in all complaint responses so that complainants have appropriate signposting to other sources of support.

1.5 The Housing Ombudsman Service and Regulator of Social Housing work together with social housing landlords to identify areas of systemic failure. Failure to comply with the Complaint Handling Code or the scale of maladministration findings by the Housing Ombudsman Service can influence the timing of regulatory inspection for landlords by the Regulator

1.6 Each year the Housing Ombudsman undertakes an annual review of complaints. The 2023/24 annual review was published on 5 November 2024 and can be found on the following link.

[Annual Complaints Review 2023 to 24 | Housing Ombudsman](#)

1.7 The Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman annual review was published earlier this year, and this was shared with Members at the September 2024 committee.

## **2.0 Housing Ombudsman Annual Review April 2023 – March 2024**

2.1 The Housing Ombudsman generate reports for those landlords with five or more findings in the financial year to prevent misleading conclusions from small datasets.

2.2 As the Council hasn't had five or more cases determined by the Housing Ombudsman during this period, there isn't an individual report for us however, it is important that members are aware of the publication.

2.3 The Housing Ombudsman publishes anonymised decisions on its website, three months after the final decision date. [Decisions Archive - Housing Ombudsman \(housing-ombudsman.org.uk\)](#)

## **3.0 Implications**

In writing this report and in putting forward recommendation's officers have considered the following implications: Data Protection, Digital and Cyber Security, Equality and Diversity, Financial, Human Resources, Human Rights, Legal, Safeguarding and Sustainability and where appropriate they have made reference to these implications and added suitable expert comment where appropriate.

### **3.1 Financial Implications**

There are no financial implications arising from this report.

### **3.2 Equality and Diversity implications**

Whilst there are no implications resulting from this report, the Councils is committed to ensuring it considers the individual needs of tenants when investigating complaints.

## **Background Papers and Published Documents**

Nil.