

September 2026

Introduction

This report provides an update on Luton Community Housing Limited's (T/A Squared) complaint handling performance during the 2025-26 financial year.

It is linked to our annual self-assessment against the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code and highlights our performance, learning from complaints and actions to inform service improvement.

Squared's purpose is to improve the lives of our customers by providing good quality, affordable accommodation for those in need in our local community. Our mission is to place our customers at the heart of everything we do. We view complaints and other feedback as an opportunity to learn, improve service delivery and support team member development. Complaints give us an opportunity to put things right for customers in a fair and reasonable way.

The content of this report includes:

- An introduction to the Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code.
- Our self-assessment against the Code.
- A summary of complaint volumes and complaint-handling performance.
- An overview of Housing Ombudsman findings and compliance.
- A summary of learning and service improvements.

1 The Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code

The Complaint Handling Code sets expectations for how landlords define, receive, investigate and respond to complaints, and how they ensure effective oversight and learning. The Code became statutory on 1 April 2024.

Squared has an established complaints framework aligned with the Code. Our GEN04 Complaints Policy sets out our two-stage procedure, and customers can make a complaint through a range of channels, including telephone, email, website, Tenant Portal, letter, in person, social media, or through a representative or third party.

2 Self-assessment against the Code

Our annual self-assessment has been completed against the Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code. It confirms that our policy framework, customer access routes, two-stage procedure, governance arrangements and escalation processes are in place.

The self-assessment also highlights opportunities to further embed consistent complaint-handling practices. These include supporting the consistent recognition and logging of complaints, timely acknowledgements, clear retention of investigation evidence and correspondence, effective tracking of remedies and outstanding actions, and closer alignment between customer feedback from Tenant Satisfaction Measures and formal complaint records.

Key developments during 2025-26 include:

- Continued delivery of Housing Ombudsman e-learning and internal effective complaints handling training.
- Further embed use of Complaints Workflow tools to support monitoring of timescales.
- Continued use of the Complaints Toolkit to support team members.
- Quality assurance checks of written responses, remedies and outstanding actions.
- Internal audit activity, with management actions to strengthen recording, assurance, thematic analysis and learning.
- Quarterly complaints analysis reporting to the Board of Management and the Member Responsible for Complaints.

3 A summary of the number and types of complaints we handled

During 2025-26, **20 complaints** were recorded. **19** were handled at stage 1 and **1** progressed to stage 2.

Complaint-handling measure	2025-26 position
Complaints recorded	20
Stage 1 complaints	19
Stage 2 complaints	1
Stage 1 complaints acknowledged outside five working days	3
Complaints receiving a full response within ten working days of acknowledgement	17 of 20

The low number of escalations indicates that most complaints were resolved at the first stage. However, the self-assessment identifies that acknowledgement, and response performance should be more consistent. Three complaints were not acknowledged within five working days. Management action is in place to improve logging and acknowledgement processes, supported by a Complaints Workflow tool.

The self-assessment also confirms the importance of looking beyond individual cases. Complaint outcomes, customer feedback and survey results are used to identify themes, risks and opportunities for service improvement.

4 Housing Ombudsman findings and compliance

Squared continues to complete the annual self-assessment to assure compliance, identify actions and support continuous improvement.

The Board of Management delegates scrutiny of the annual report and self-assessment to the Member Responsible for Complaints. The governing body response is published alongside the report and the self-assessment.

5 Learning and service improvements

Opportunities have been identified or are being implemented to further embed consistent complaint-handling practices and service delivery:

- **Strengthen complaint recognition and consistent logging** — clarify team member guidance so that expressions of dissatisfaction, service-request concerns and relevant survey feedback are consistently identified and considered.
- **Support timely acknowledgements** — use the Complaints Workflow tool and management oversight to support acknowledgement within five working days.
- **Support timely responses** — strengthen monitoring of stage 1 and stage 2 response times, including the recording and communication of any agreed extensions.
- **Ensure consistent complaint case records** — ensure investigation evidence, correspondence, decisions, remedies and outstanding actions are retained consistently on MRI Housing Enterprise.
- **Improve quality assurance** — Complaints Officer to continue checks of response letters, complaint definitions, remedies, Ombudsman signposting and action follow-through. Develop a complaints learnings and actions tracker.
- **Further strengthen thematic analysis and learning** — continue to use complaints, Tenant Satisfaction Measures and customer feedback to identify trends, systemic risks and service improvements.
- **Strengthen links between customer feedback and complaints** — reconcile dissatisfaction reported through surveys with formal complaint records and evidence follow-up activity. Develop a customer 'post-complaint' form to capture customer feedback on the complaint-handling process.
- **Continue staff development** — maintain annual internal training and Housing Ombudsman learning for relevant team members.
- **Maintain focus on customer outcomes by providing ongoing governance assurance on complaint handling** — continue quarterly reporting to the Member Responsible for Complaints and Board of Management, including progress against audit and improvement actions.

Squared is committed to a positive complaints culture in which customers are heard, learning is recorded and acted upon, and services are improved as a result.

6 Publication and scrutiny

This report should be read alongside the 2025-26 Complaints Handling Code Self-Assessment and the governing body's response. These documents will be made available in the complaints section of the Squared website.