

**Complaints Performance and Service Improvement Annual Report
April 2023 – March 2024**

Date: 21 June 2024, revised 9 July 2024 following review by Board

1 Liversage Trust self-assessment in line with Housing Ombudsman’s Complaint Handling Code

- 1.1 The Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023 introduced a range of measures that Registered Social Landlords (RSL’s) must adhere to and was aimed at improving the management of social housing, particularly focusing on new social housing standards that aim to avoid dangerous hazards impacting on tenants. The act also gave the Housing Ombudsman new powers and duties from 1 April 2024, including a new statutory code for handling complaints, and a duty to monitor whether landlords comply.
- 1.2 While the Liversage Trust is not a Registered Social Landlord (RSL), having de-registered several years ago, we remain a mandatory member of the Housing Ombudsman scheme. It is a condition of our membership that we meet all requirements, including having a complaint policy for our 163 almshouse properties that is compliant with the new Statutory Complaint Handling Code, irrespective of the small size of the organisation.
- 1.3 To assess compliance, the Liversage Trust must complete an annual self-assessment, against the Complaint Handling Code to ensure our complaint handling remains in-line with code requirements. Landlords must also carry out a self-assessment following a significant restructure and/or change in procedures.
- 1.4 For the Liversage Trust, the self-assessment must be completed and submitted within 12 weeks of our year end. As our year end is the 31 March each year, we must complete our submission by 30 June 2024. In addition, we must report annually our performance on complaint handling and publish relevant information on our webpage.
- 1.5 Our self-assessment for 2023/24 was completed on 21 June 2024 and was reported and approved by the Liversage Trust Board of Management on 8 July 2024. While our approach broadly matches new code requirements, it was identified that a number of revisions are required to our existing policy, which will be completed by the end of October 2024, at which point a new self-assessment will be completed.
- 1.6 Trustees noted the annual report and overall complaints performance, agreeing that identified changes to the existing policy be made and that this be reconsidered by Board in October 2024.

2 Over-view of complaint handling performance

2.1	Total no of complaints received:	3
	Percentage of overall almshouse properties	1.8%
	Number of Stage One complaints	3
	Percentage of Stage One complaints responded to within timescales	100%
	Number of stage two complaints	2
	Percentage of stage two complaints responded to within timescales	100%
	Number of Stage Three appeals	1
	Percentage of Stage Three appeals responded to within timescales	100%

2.2 As this is the first year of reporting information in an annual report, and generally there are few complaints made to the Liversage Trust, there are no previous reports with which to compare performance.

2.3 Based on figures above however, it can be concluded that all complaints have been dealt with in line with our existing policy, procedures and timescales.

3 Complaint outcomes

3.1 All three complaints were investigated thoroughly, and in each case the Liversage Trust was found not to be at fault.

4 Learning and Service Improvements

4.1 The Housing Ombudsman complaint handling code focusses on learning from complaints and the Liversage Trust is committed to this principle.

4.2 During 2023/24, there were no clear lessons to be learned, with each case being looked at on its own merit, and in each case the Trust being found not to be at fault. Cases covered the following areas:

- appointment to a property and subsequent WMC charges following vacation of the property
- repair to drains
- WMC / Care Home charges and communication

4.3 Each of the cases were responded to within timescales, and while there was some overlap in two cases relating to WMC charges, circumstances in both cases were very different and charges applied correctly, in line with the requirement to give 4 weeks' notice. There were no correlations between cases.

5 Housing Ombudsman determinations

5.1 One complaint has been referred to the Housing Ombudsman during 2023/24 and is currently waiting for an assessment to be completed.

5.2 There have been no determinations of non-compliance by the Liversage Trust made from the Housing Ombudsman, during 2023/24.