

ANNUAL COMPLAINTS PERFORMANCE AND SERVICE IMPROVEMENT  
REPORT 2024/25

A REVIEW OF COMPLAINTS AT **DUCHESS OF SOMERSET'S HOSPITAL** IN  
2024/25

During 2024 to 2025 we received **4** complaints from **2** residents living in the **49** homes owned by Charity name.

- **4** complaints related to our repairs and maintenance service.
- **0** complaints related to how we dealt with anti-social behaviour issues.
- complaint related to rents and utility supplies after moving into a new home.
- **0** complaint additionally related to how we dealt with rent.

In **0%** of the cases, the complainant was not satisfied with the Duchess of Somerset's Hospital reply at Stage 1 of the Complaints Policy and they asked for their complaint to be escalated to Stage 2.

Outcomes at Stage 2

None of our complaints were referred to or investigated by the Housing Ombudsman Service in 2023/24.

**Learning from complaints to improve services**

Issue	Learning point
The complaints related to smells in the atmosphere caused by the biomass boiler emitting excessive smoke.	The issues were resolved after calls to the contractors.
Anti-social behaviour (ASB) is excluded from our complaints policy as we deal with it under a separate ASB policy	We have had no ASB issues during the 2023/24 period.

--	--

## Conclusions:

Any complaints received will always be responded to, and resolved within the time scales required in the Complaints Code

We should be easy to contact via telephone on 01488 684408 or 01488 682137 and always reply to an email within 24 hours. We're keen to know if we fall short and we're grateful for any feedback on our complaints process.

Please let us know at [steward@duchessofsomerset.co.uk](mailto:steward@duchessofsomerset.co.uk) or 01488 684408

## BOARD'S RESPONSE TO THE ANNUAL COMPLAINTS PERFORMANCE AND SERVICE IMPROVEMENT REPORT

On **12/4/25** the Board received:

- the 2023/24 annual complaints performance and service improvement report for residents living in homes owned and managed by **the Landlord, The Duchess of Somerset's Hospital**.
- An update to the complaints policy for residents living in homes owned and managed by **The Duchess of Somerset's Hospital** to meet the requirements of the new Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code 2024
- A self-assessment against the new Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code 2024

The Board has a Member Responsible for Complaints (MRC) who provides additional assurance to the Board on the effectiveness of **The Duchess of Somerset's Hospital** complaints system. The MRC and the Board have considered and approved the self-assessment that the Charity complies with all aspects of the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code 2024.

Throughout the year the Board has challenged the data and information provided to the Board. **The Duchess of Somerset's Hospital** adopts the Housing Ombudsman's definition of a complaint as any expression of dissatisfaction. This gives the Board assurance that **The Duchess of Somerset's Hospital** are recording an accurate volume of complaints, as the Board does not believe that a low volume of complaints would be a positive sign. A new complaints management system has been in place throughout 23/24. This has provided the Board with additional assurance on the accuracy of data on complaint handling.

One of **The Duchess of Somerset's Hospital** values is 'we learn'. As a small provider owning and managing 49 homes, the Board considers a summary of each complaint and the lessons learned from individual complaints. Given our size, **The Duchess of Somerset's Hospital** does not have enough complaints to learn from

trends. But our learning from individual complaints shows that communication is a key factor across complaints. Training, expectations, and systems have all been improved during 23/24. The Board will monitor the feedback on communication through the individual complaints reported to the Board during 2023/2024.

## DUCHESS OF SOMERSET'S HOSPITAL

### ANNUAL COMPLAINTS PERFORMANCE AND SERVICE IMPROVEMENT REPORT – 2024/25

#### 1. Introduction

This is our first annual complaints report for the period 30/4/24 to the 30/4/2025.

It provides our residents with information on the complaints we have received, what they were about and what we did to resolve them.

We strive hard to deliver high quality services, but we accept that we may not always get it right and when we do not, we will acknowledge this and attempt to correct it.

Our resident views and perceptions are important to us, and we will continually take feedback to Board to improve our services to residents.

#### 2. Management Committee's Response

**The Duchess of Somerset's Hospital** Board of Trustees have reviewed and approved this years' Annual Complaints Report.

The Board regularly receives reports on any complaints received and ensure that we are proactively acting within the remit of the Code. We appoint Complaints Officers to investigate complaints to ensure that we are in touch with our resident's needs.

When complaints are received, we follow our policy and procedure and when outcomes are agreed, we will consider the findings and make sure that we act on any actions required. We learn from them and use them in a positive way to deliver future service improvements.

#### 3. Annual Self-Assessment

A copy of our latest self-assessment is attached for information.

#### 4. Complaints Handling Performance

Period	Stage 1 complaints	Stage 2 complaints
30/4/2024- 30/4/ 2025	0	0

For this year, we are pleased to confirm that we received no formal complaints, meaning we have nothing to report on.

However, this does not mean that we are complacent. Instead, we will continue to ensure that all residents know how to access our Complaints Policy and Procedure and we have provided more information about this in Section 10.

## 5. Types of Complaints Received

We refused to accept complaints regarding Anti-social Behaviour (ASB). This is because we have a separate ASB Policy and Procedure which deals with this. Copies of which are available from our office, or by contacting the clerk or complaints officer by phone or by email.

If we refuse to accept a complaint, we will always write to you and explain the reasons why in line with the Complaints Handling Code.

## 6. Complaints Escalated to the Housing Ombudsman Service

During this period **30/4/24** – **30/4/25**, we had no complaints cases escalated or referred to the Housing Ombudsman Service.

## 7. Compliance with the Code

We complied with the complaint handling code and had no Ombudsman intervention.

## 8. Learning & Service Improvements

Whilst we received no formal complaints, we do not take this for granted.

We recently completed our tenant perception surveys and have used the feedback from these surveys to ensure that our Complaints Policy and Procedure is easily accessible for all tenant members and that they know how to access it.

We have provided some more detailed information in Section 10 of this report.

## 9. The Housing Ombudsman Service

We include the Housing Ombudsman Service's contact information in all our correspondence relating to services, to actively encourage tenants to use the service or access the Ombudsman service for assistance.

Residents should be aware that you do not have to have a formal complaint ongoing to seek advice and support from the Ombudsman service.

The Housing Ombudsman can be contacted in the following ways:

Web: [www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk](http://www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk)

Email: [info@housingombudsman.org.uk](mailto:info@housingombudsman.org.uk)

Post: Housing Ombudsman Service  
PO Box 1484

Unit D  
Preston  
PR2 0ET

Tel: 0300 111 3000

## 10. Access to our Complaints Policy and Procedure

We try to ensure that complaints are resolved at the first point of contact, via **the Steward**. If you remain dissatisfied, a formal complaint can be made.

Residents can access our Complaints Policy and Procedure and self-assessment against the Code in the following ways:

(a) The **Complaints Officer** :

Name: Mrs. Jo Cowley

Telephone number: 01488 684408

Address: c/o The Bungalow, The College, SN8 3LA

Email address:

(b) The **Appeals Officer** is:

Name: Mrs. S. Cranstone

Telephone number: 01488 684408

Address: c/o The Bungalow, The College, SN8 3LA

Email address:

Assistance can be obtained by visiting our office or calling us on **01488 684408**

On receipt of a formal complaint, the Complaints Procedure will apply.

We also provide a copy of our Complaints Policy and Procedure to all new residents.

Each year when our Annual Meeting takes place, we send a copy of our current self-assessment against the Complaints Handling Code to all residents. We also provide information within our Annual Report regarding complaints.

We also include information within any services correspondence so that residents know how they can complain.

In addition, the publication of this report and our Board of Trustee's response will demonstrate to residents that we value their perceptions of the services we deliver.