

Legal & General Affordable Homes' Board response to its Annual Complaints Performance and Service Improvement Report, and the annual self-assessment against the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code

Legal & General Affordable Homes' (LGAH) Board thanks the complaints officer for the production of the annual complaints performance and service improvement report, as well as the annual self-assessment against the Housing Ombudsman's code. The Board is pleased to note that LGAH is fully compliant with the Housing Ombudsman's code. It expects to see further improvement in the delivery of complaint management services through the improvements that are summarised in the performance and service improvement report.

Effective complaint management is of great importance, not only as an opportunity to resolve dissatisfaction, but also as an opportunity to understand where services can be enhanced as part of our commitment to continuous improvement. On this basis, the complaints report is an essential part of the information we receive as a Board to inform our understanding of the effectiveness of a customer-oriented business.

The Board accepts the report and the self-assessment as a true and accurate reflection of Legal & General Affordable Homes' complaint handling. In particular, the Board notes the following in relation to the complaint performance and service improvement report:

- The volume and type of complaints received is consistent with the performance reporting received by the Board throughout the year.
- The key areas of complaints addressed in the report are consistent with the areas of least satisfaction which customers have reported via independently gathered satisfaction surveying. Such feedback is routinely gathered and reported to the Board as part of the Board's approved customer engagement plan.
- The average time taken to respond to complaints regrettably fell outside the target timescales contained within the business's own complaint handling policy. The Board is determined to see this improve in the coming year, along with improvements in overall customer satisfaction with complaint handling.

- The Board has met with customers who have experienced poor service and had reason to complain during the past year as part of the customer engagement plan. The learnings identified in the report in regard to improving the speed and quality of response to complaints are consistent with the feedback from customers.
- The Board is therefore pleased to see that the improvements in service targeted for 2024 are intended to address both the quality and speed of responses to complaints. The Board is also pleased to see a strong focus on the prevention of complaints in the defect management service, which currently generates the most complaints and dissatisfaction for customers.

In relation to the Housing Ombudsman self-assessment:

- The complaint policy that LGAH operates is consistent with the requirements of the Ombudsman's Code and is fully compliant with the self-assessment.
- The organisation proactively monitors the potential for customers to experience poor service and not report their experience as a complaint. The Board feels it is extremely important that access to the complaint service is well publicised and that customers are encouraged to use the service when experiencing a poor service through the use of our online customer portal Brolly.
- There is evidence of regular training and supporting materials available to staff who are providing a service to customers.
- A member responsible for complaints has been appointed on the Board as required under the revised Complaints Handling Code. The member will conduct their role over the next twelve months to challenge and improve the performance of the complaints service.