

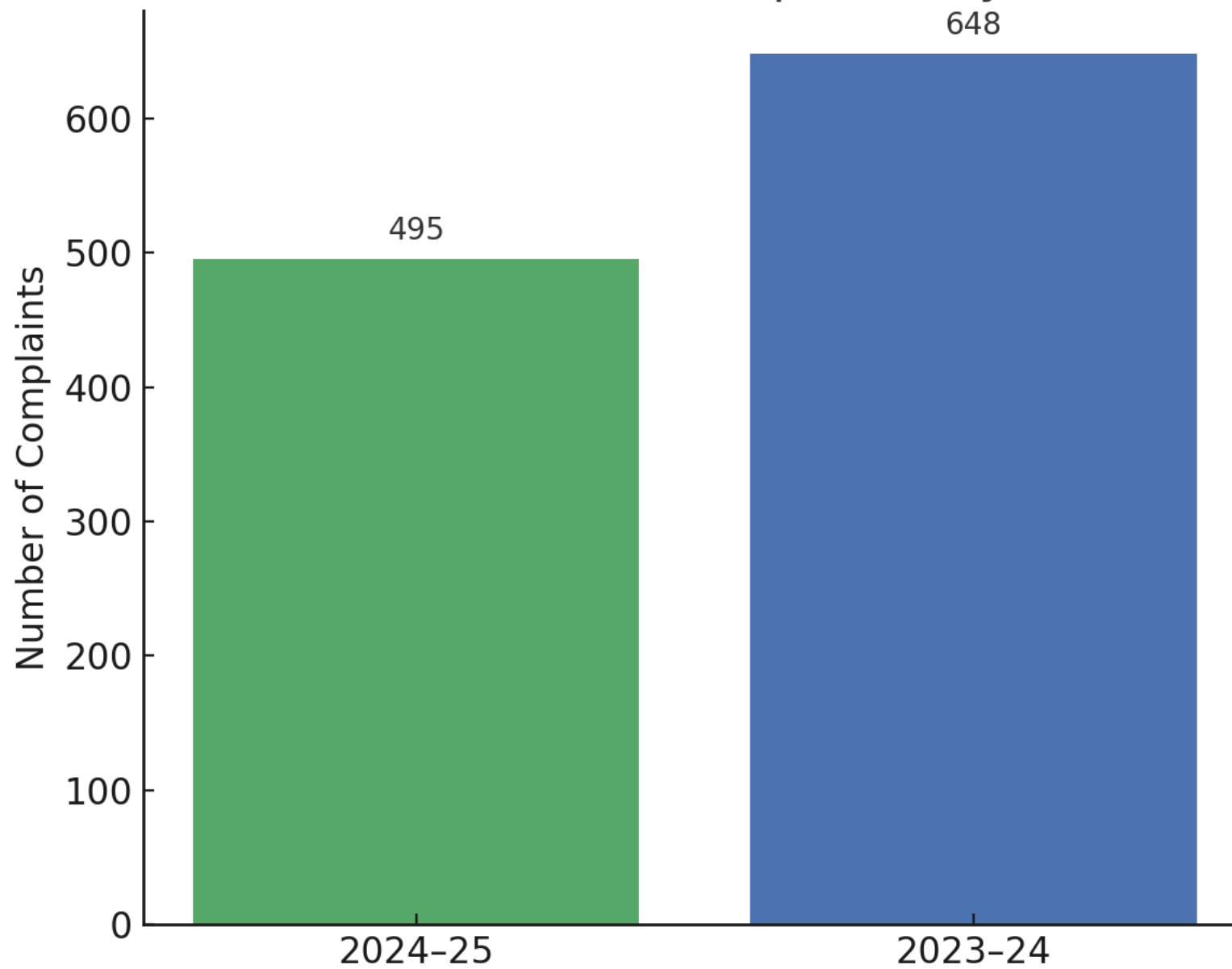
Annual Complaints Report

01 April 2024 – 31 March 2025



Daniela Costa
Head of Safety and Quality Assurance

Total Number of Complaints by Year



- In 2024–25, we received 495 complaints, a 24% decrease from 648 in the previous year. This reduction may reflect improvements in service delivery, faster resolution of issues, or more effective internal processes, all of which are welcome developments. This might also reflect staff using ASB logs rather than complaints, and service requests rather than informal complaints.
- At the same time, we continue to promote a healthy complaints culture, in line with the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code. We encourage residents to raise concerns and see complaints as a valuable source of insight. While a reduction in volume can be a positive sign, higher complaint levels are not necessarily negative - they can also indicate trust in the process and a willingness to engage. Our aim is to ensure that the complaints process remains accessible, visible, and responsive, regardless of overall numbers.

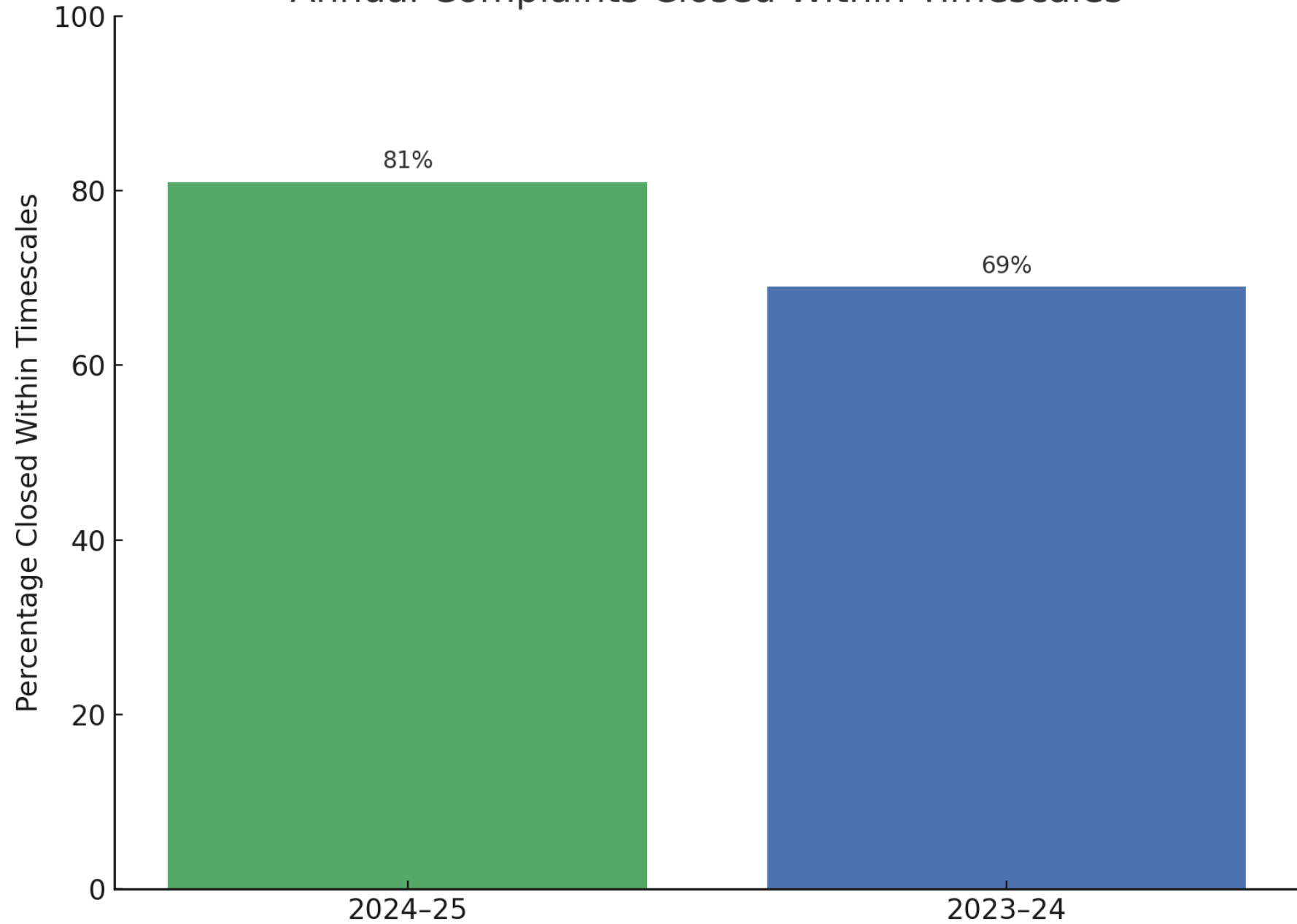
Total
complaints
received: 495



- Across the year, the total number of complaints remained relatively stable quarter to quarter, with minor fluctuations.
- The distribution of complaints across project types and directorates also showed consistency, with Hostels, and Semi-Independent Housing consistently among the most reported areas.
- Stage 2 complaint requests remained consistent throughout the year, ranging between 15 and 17 per quarter, except for a notable drop to 4 in Q1.
- The profile of complainants remained largely consistent across the year:
 - ❖ Clients were the primary source of complaints (ranging from 61% to 76%).
 - ❖ Neighbours consistently accounted for 11–15%.
 - ❖ Other sources included ex-clients, family/friends, external agencies, and advocates, each contributing smaller proportions.

Complaint Volumes and Trends

Annual Complaints Closed Within Timescales



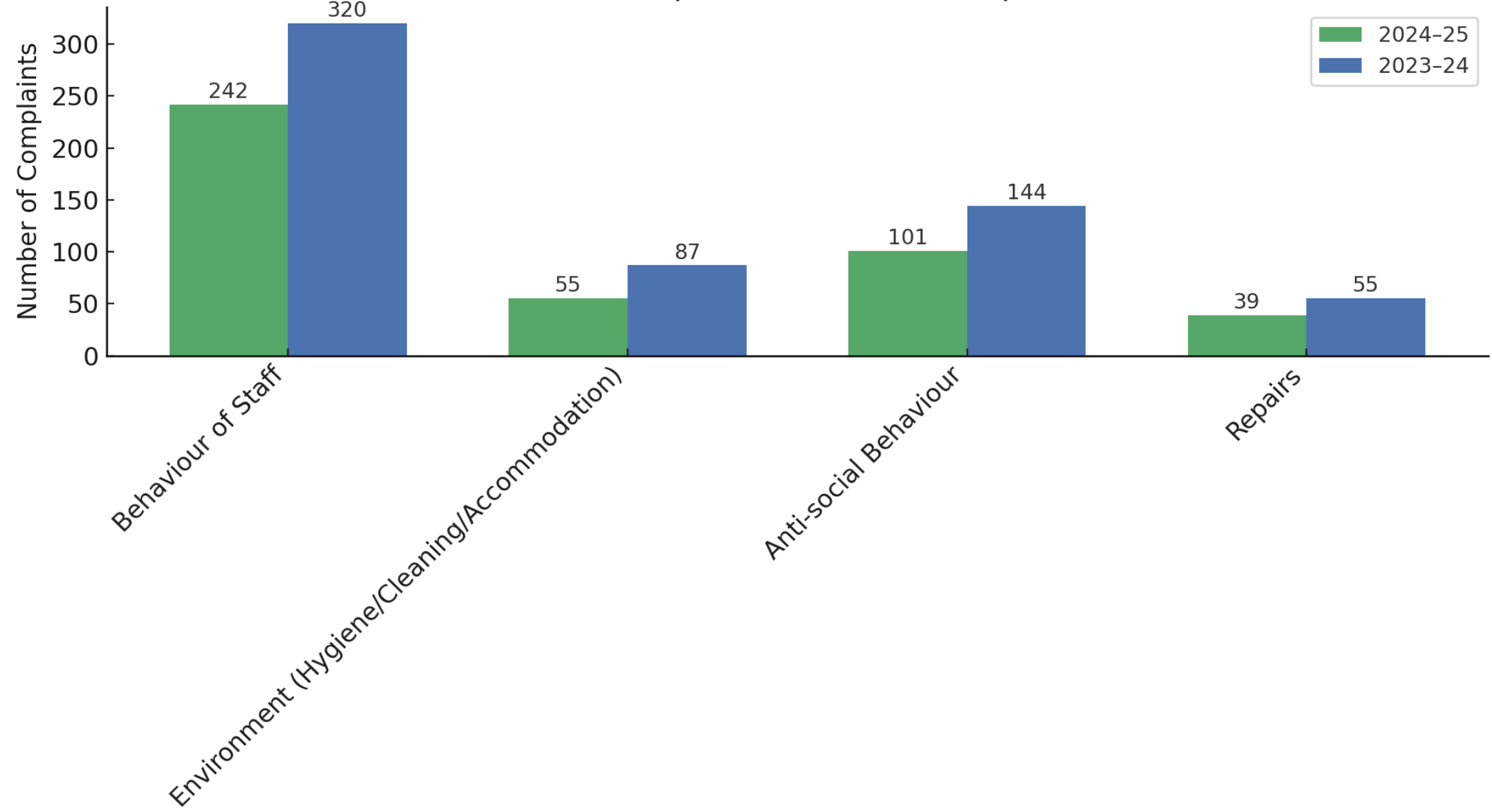
Responding within timescales as set by the Housing Ombudsman

- The percentage of complaints closed within timescales increased from 69% in 2023–24 to 81% in 2024–25, representing a positive improvement of 12 percentage points.
- This reflects progress in how complaints are managed, including improved processes, and greater accountability in meeting deadlines.
- However, the target remains 100%, and further efforts are required to ensure all complaints are consistently closed within the required timeframe. Continued focus on timely investigations, better communication with complainants, and early escalation where delays are likely will be essential to reaching this goal.
- The annual average percentage of complaints acknowledged within five working days for the current year is 41.2%. This is below the previous year's average of 51%, although it's important to note that the reported quarterly figures were found to be inaccurate and actual performance was likely higher.

At the end of the financial year:

- The percentage of complaints completed within timescales is 81%.
- The percentage of complaints acknowledged within the timeframe is 41%.

Annual Complaint Themes Comparison



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Key Themes

Anti-social behaviour

2023–24: 144 complaints

2024–25: 101 complaints

This theme also saw a reduction of 30%, though still featured prominently in every quarter. The majority of cases were related to noise and rubbish, with some serious incidents involving threats. This area continues to require close monitoring and preventative measures.

Environment (hygiene, tidiness, accommodation)

2023–24: 87 complaints

2024–25: 55 complaints

A 37% decrease, despite data quality issues affecting part of the year. Pest control, cleanliness, and furnishings were key sub-themes. Continued oversight is needed to ensure environmental standards remain high.

As St Mungo's works with clients with complex needs suggests a potential correlation between the recurring themes and the specific challenges clients face.

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Key Themes

Repairs

2023–24: 55 complaints

2024–25: 39 complaints

A 29% decrease, though many of the complaints in 2024–25 referenced significant issues such as leaks, heating failures, and damp/mould, including two complaints that resulted in major property damage. While the volume dropped, the severity of impact has increased in some cases.

Conclusions

Across all key complaint themes, there has been a reduction in volume compared to the previous year. However, continued focus is needed on:

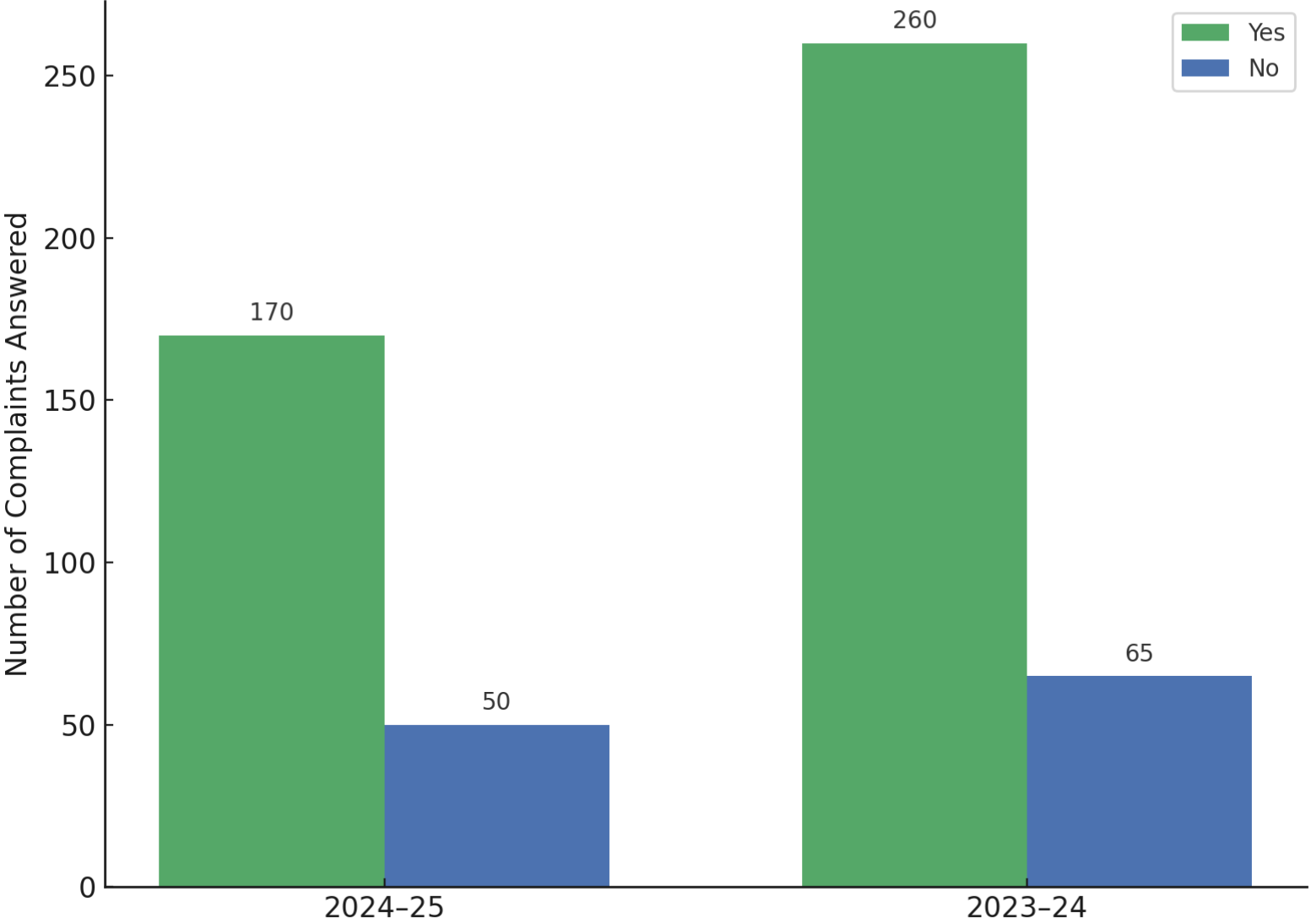
- Improving staff responsiveness and professionalism.
- Addressing repeat property issues and pest/environmental complaints.
- Strengthening the response to anti-social behaviour, especially where safety is at risk.

Lessons Learned

The review of complaints received across the organisation has highlighted several recurring themes that reflect key opportunities for learning and service improvement:

- **Staff conduct and communication:** Lessons learned include the need for consistent professionalism, clearer explanations of policy, and a more trauma-informed approach to managing challenging interactions.
- **Delays in repairs and property services:** particularly around pest control, heating, and damp have shown the need for stronger contractor oversight, quicker internal escalation routes, and better communication with clients regarding progress. Our Head of Assets conducts monthly performance reviews with contractors to track complaint themes and resolution timelines regarding complaints.
- **Complaint handling:** delays were often caused by unclear processes when complainants disengaged, and by variability in investigation quality. This underscored the need for standardised templates, clear escalation protocols, and more active case monitoring.
- **Supporting vulnerable clients:** Gaps were identified in recognising and addressing vulnerabilities, particularly in general needs accommodation.
- A number of complaints involved personal injury or loss of property, highlighting the need for clearer processes around insurance referrals and legal claim signposting.

Complaint Satisfaction (Yes vs No)



- The data reflects a positive trend in client satisfaction and a reduction in dissatisfaction. Yet, the decrease in the number of answered complaints highlights an opportunity to strengthen engagement and ensure more consistent feedback collection. Maintaining high satisfaction while improving response rates could further enhance service quality and transparency.
- Despite the launch of an automated complaints survey in March 2024, no responses have been received to date. Efforts were made in Q4 to contact complainants directly to understand barriers to participation, but no insights were gained. This remains an area for improvement in engagement and feedback collection.

Complaints Satisfaction

Maladministration and Service Failures

Over the past two financial years, we have received a small number of Ombudsman findings concerning maladministration and service failure. These findings have provided important learning opportunities and prompted changes to our internal procedures, communication, and staff training.

In 2023–24, there were 2 maladministration findings and 4 service failures across 3 Ombudsman cases, with a total of £4,570 compensation paid and approximately £16,000 spent on related damp and mould works.

In 2024–25, the Ombudsman issued:

- 4 severe maladministration findings

- 1 maladministration finding

- 2 service failures related to the same case

This case involved failings in both the Repairs and General Needs teams and highlighted:

- Poor handling of repair reports and pest control (mice infestation)
- Inadequate consideration of tenant vulnerabilities
- Deficient record-keeping and communication

Outcome:

- A total of £5,721 in compensation was paid
- An apology was issued by the Executive team
- A new complaint was opened to address concerns around discrimination

Maladministrations and Service Failures

The improvement plan included:

- The pest control procedure was reviewed and updated.
- The Property Services team is now managing the pest control contract.
- The Property Services team has reviewed organisational training needs in relation to pest control.
- A vulnerability procedure was developed to provide guidance on how to support vulnerable clients in general needs accommodation, particularly in relation to repairs and arrears management.
- The Repairs team was provided with refresher training on responding to complaints.

StMungo's Review of our 24-25 Plan

Objective	Responsibility	Timescales
Analyse complaint data during Complaints meetings with Executive Directors to identify recurring issues and root causes. Addressing these underlying problems can help reduce the frequency of complaints and improve response times.	Quality, Safeguarding and Complaints Manager, Head of Safety and Quality Assurance, Executive Director of Client Services and Director of Assets and Compliance	Completed and ongoing.
The Executive Director of Client Services is now included in the automated reminder that is sent out three days before a complaint is due. This should trigger an email from the Executive Director of Client Services to the respective manager, serving as a prompt for compliance.	Executive Director of Client Services	Completed.
An analysis of the above action is going to be carried out, and the Executive Director of Client Services is going to follow up with any investigators that did not close the complaint on time, to understand reasons and establish the importance of compliance.	Executive Director of Client Services.	Completed.

StMungo's Review of our 24-25 Plan

Objective	Responsibility	Timescales
The complaints officer will continue to provide targeted training sessions for teams identified as needing this in the quarterly meetings.	Head of Quality, Safeguarding and Complaints	Completed.
The Executive Director of Client Services is tasked with discussing complaints with service heads to improve compliance.	Executive Director of Client Services	Completed.
Complete an annual self-assessment against the Complaints Handling Code.	Head of Quality, Safeguarding and Complaints	Completed.
The Quality Team is going to carry out two implementation sessions for all managers on the new complaints procedure.	Head of Quality, Safeguarding and Complaints	Completed.
Develop our relationship with the central government programme team focussed on encouraging access and engagement with the complaint process to gain access to resources and training.	Head of Quality, Safeguarding and Complaints	Completed.

StMungo's Review of our 24-25 Plan

Objective	Responsibility	Timescales
Complaints learnings and insights from the Ombudsman cases will be published on our intranet.	Head of Quality, Safeguarding and Complaints	Completed.
We will continue to analyse the Learning from Severe Maladministration report published by the Ombudsman and share the learning.	Head of Quality, Safeguarding and Complaints	Completed.
An annual complaints report and service improvement plan will be published on the website.	Communications team	Completed.
The trustee's response to the report must be published alongside this.	Communications team	Completed.

StMungo's 25-26 Complaints Improvement Plan

Objective	Responsibility	Timescales
Continue weekly reviews of all overdue complaints to reduce both volume and average age.	Quality, Safeguarding and Complaints Manager	Weekly and ongoing
Maintain participation in two regional meetings per quarter, using these forums to share case examples, good practice, and learning with operational teams.	Quality, Safeguarding and Complaints Manager	Quarterly and ongoing
Finalise decision with the Learning and Development team regarding mandatory complaints e-learning for relevant staff. If approved, implement organisation-wide.	Quality, Safeguarding and Complaints Manager and Head of Safety and Quality Assurance	
Share insights and key findings from this year's internal complaints audit.	Head of Safety and Quality Assurance	

StMungo's 25-26 Complaints Improvement Plan

Objective	Responsibility	Timescales
Maintain the practice of reviewing Stage 2 responses before issue, to ensure accuracy, tone, and compliance with policy.	Quality Advisors	As required and ongoing
The Head of Assets to implement a repairs quality assurance process, with a focus on complaints-related repairs (e.g. inspections linked to Stage 1 complaint issues), once finalised.	Head of Assets	03/07/2025 - Completed.
Progress against this plan will be reviewed quarterly and included in regular complaints performance reports. Key metrics will include: Volume and age of overdue complaints; Rates of maladministration or service failure and Satisfaction with complaint outcomes (Stage 2).	Quality, Safeguarding and Complaints Manager	Quarterly and ongoing
Launch the new Complaints Policy and Procedure, including compensation guidance that outlines when a complaint should be referred to insurers, and deliver two implementation sessions.	Quality, Safeguarding and Complaints Manager	22/08/2025

StMungo's 25-26 Complaints Improvement Plan

Objective	Responsibility	Timescales
Publish learning from complaints each quarter to support a culture of learning and compliance in complaint handling.	Quality, Safeguarding and Complaints Manager	Quarterly and ongoing
Explore how to reintroduce the training for working with clients.	Head of Safety and Quality Assurance and Head of Learning and Development	31/10/2025
Complete the review and rollout of revised policies on pest control, responsive repairs, and damp-related repairs.	Head of Assets	31/12/2025
Collaborate with our Transformation Team to explore improvements to the complaints survey, with the goal of increasing response rates.	Quality, Safeguarding and Complaints Manager	31/12/2025
Ensure the Vulnerability Procedure is being fully implemented across all non-social and/or general needs accommodation.	Head of Move On Housing Services	31/12/2025

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Thank you

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