Annual Complaints Performance and Service Improvement report

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Executive summary

This report summarises complaints performance, lessons learned, and service improvements for Hamwic Housing Co-operative (Hamwic), a fully mutual organisation with 42 housed members and 3 unhoused members, all with equal responsibility for the running of the co-operative. Decisions are made democratically at General Meetings, and nobody is paid for their work. From 6 April 2025 to 5 April 2026, we handled 1 complaint which went to Stage 1 of the complaints procedure. This is a decrease (from 4 to 1) in the number of complaints compared to last year. We met the time target in acknowledging the complaint, but not in sharing the results of the investigation. The complaint was an interpersonal one between members and therefore not relevant to service improvement. As a result, we will continue with our existing plan to improve formal communication around complaints, and on improving cohesion between all our members.

Quantity of complaints: April 2025 - April 2026

There was one complaint made between 6 April 2025 to 5 April 2026. There were no complaints by any member that were refused to be accepted. As per the Complaints Policy, the Grievance Officer records complaints and provides updates as needed to the member body at monthly General Meetings. Not all matters are brought to General Meetings to maintain the confidentiality of those involved. Table 1 summarises the updates.

Meeting date	Grievance update, as recorded, reviewed and accepted in the minutes
9/4/25	Nothing to report
14/5/25	Grievance officer not present, although director spoke about a complaint they had raised as tenant in the previous financial year
11/6/25	Nothing to report, although asked for help from other directors.
9/7/25	It was reported that a grievance panel will be happening this week and volunteers from board of directors requested.
13/8/25	Not present
10/9/25	Nothing to report
8/10/25	Complaints annual submission discussed and approved by directors
12/11/25	Not present
14/1/26	Not present
11/2/26	It was reported that a complaint has been put in and grievance panels are happening; volunteers from board of directors requested.
11/3/26	Not present

Table 1 - a summary of monthly updates on complaints at Hamwic Housing Co-operative from 2025-26.

Analysis of complaint handling performance

Complaint ref	Subject	Date received	Date acknowledged	Date results shared	Date of review request	Date review results shared	Notes
1	Interpersonal complaint – tenant behaviour (tenant A against tenant B)	1/2/26	3/2/26	17/2/26	N/A	N/A	**Delay in sharing results due to complainant – was scheduled for 10/2/26.** The matter was deemed sensitive and due to the needs of the tenant, an in-person meeting was deemed the best method to deal with the complaint. Availability of the complainant was requested and a grievance panel was assembled, arranged for 10th February. Two reminders were issued via text. The complainant did not attend the meeting. The meeting was rescheduled to the 17th February. The matter was then escalated to the police as it was beyond the scope of Hamwic's policies.

Assessment of complaint handling performance

Complaints made during this period

Hamwic Housing Co-operative annually assesses its handling of complaints against the Housing Ombudsman Service Complaint Handling Code. During the period 6 April 2025 to 5 April 2026, Hamwic Housing Co-operative received and handled one formal complaint.

Complaint 1 was not resolved within the time target due to delays by the tenant in engaging with the process. This complaint was received on 1st February 2026 and acknowledged on 3rd February 2026 (within our target of five working days). Given the sensitive nature of the matter, an in-person meeting was judged the most appropriate way to address it, and a grievance panel was assembled for 10th February (within our target of 10 working days). However, the complainant failed to attend the meeting, and it had to be rescheduled. The grievance officer kept the tenant informed throughout and all others were present at the meeting, therefore we deem this as compliant with our targets.

Beyond timescales, the quality of our complaints handling revealed both good practice and areas requiring improvement. In Complaint 1, we demonstrated thoroughness by investigating the matter and offering multiple meeting opportunities to the complainant, showing our commitment to resolving interpersonal disputes. However, arrangements could not be made due to a combination of factors including the tenant not responding and missing a meeting after failing to receive an email invitation. This suggests possible gaps in our communication processes and follow-up procedures. After reflecting on this complaint, we decided to formalise the communications around ending the complaint process.

Complaints from previous year

Two complaints from the previous reporting year were taken to the Ombudsman, but the further handling of these falls outside of the time scope of this report (August 2026).

Service improvements made as a result of complaints

We have taken significant steps to improve our complaints handling capability. We are working with an external consultant to review and strengthen our Complaints Policy, ensuring it is fit for purpose and fully compliant with the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code. We have also sought independent advice from CDS Co-operatives to help us address the unique challenges of complaints handling in a volunteer-led organisation. We have mutually agreed tone and communication methods across our organisation. We have taken steps to formalise our record keeping and communications beyond verbal meetings.

We acknowledge that our volunteer structure, while a strength in many ways, can create vulnerabilities in maintaining consistent communication and meeting procedural timescales. Moving forward, we are committed to developing systems and protocols that provide greater reliability and consistency in our complaints handling, while retaining the member-led, democratic values that define our co-operative. To do this, we have implemented a record system involving the vice-secretary, so that doing so does not fall solely to the grievance officer.

We have begun to store electronic communications on our shared drive where appropriate, to aid the reporting of complaints.

The service improvements we have initiated – including external consultation, independent advice, and improved communication protocols – position us well to deliver better complaints handling in the coming year. We remain committed to learning from each complaint and to ensuring that all members have access to an effective, fair, and timely complaints process.