

Welcome to the

Member Responsible for Complaints Conference 2025



Overview

- 10.00 Welcome
- 10.15 Reality of the role: Panel discussion
- 11.00 Effective oversight and how scrutiny can make meaningful change
- 11.30 Say hello to your peers
- 11.45 Coffee break
- 12.15 Centre for Learning sessions with landlord speakers
- 13.15 Lunch
- 14.15 Findings from the Annual Complaints Review with Q&A
- 15.15 Thanks and closing



The reality of the role of MRC

Panel discussion

Chair: Gill Bull MRC for the
Housing Ombudsman Service



Chris Grose

Member Responsible
for Complaints
Ocean Housing



Dewbien Plummer

Member Responsible
for Complaints
East End Homes Ltd



**Camilla de
Bernhardt Lane**

Director of Practice
Centre for Governance
and Scrutiny

Share your experience from today with us on LinkedIn using the hashtag #HOSMRC

Effective oversight: How scrutiny can make meaningful change

Presentation with Q&A



Verity Richards

Head of Duty to Monitor
Housing Ombudsman
Service

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Housing
Ombudsman Service

Aims of the session

To share:

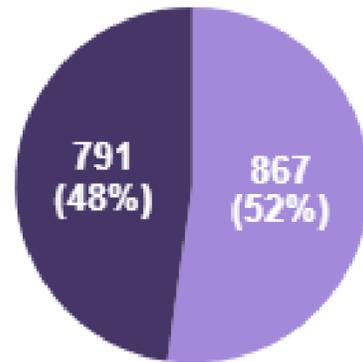
- themes from our first year of submissions
- initial findings from policy reviews and further investigations
- key takeaways for MRCs to consider

Annual submissions

- Should be used by Boards to assure operational delivery.
- Online form and key documents provided.
- Ensures landlords evidence how they meet the Code.
- Are an opportunity to demonstrate transparency and accountability to residents.
- Each submission is tracked and monitored.
- All documents are reviewed for completeness.
- Missing submissions or documents are actioned with support.
- Complaint Handling Failure Notices are issued as a last resort.

Annual submissions: Findings

Submission Timeliness

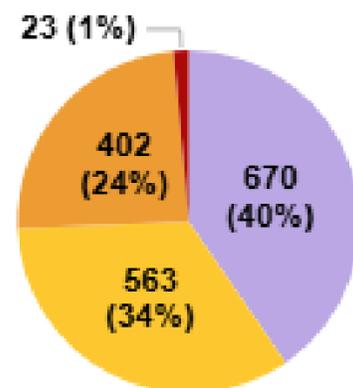


● Within Timescale ● Out of Timescale

52% received on time.

Around 60% required intervention due to:

Submission Received by Intervention



● None ● 1st ● 2nd ● CHFN

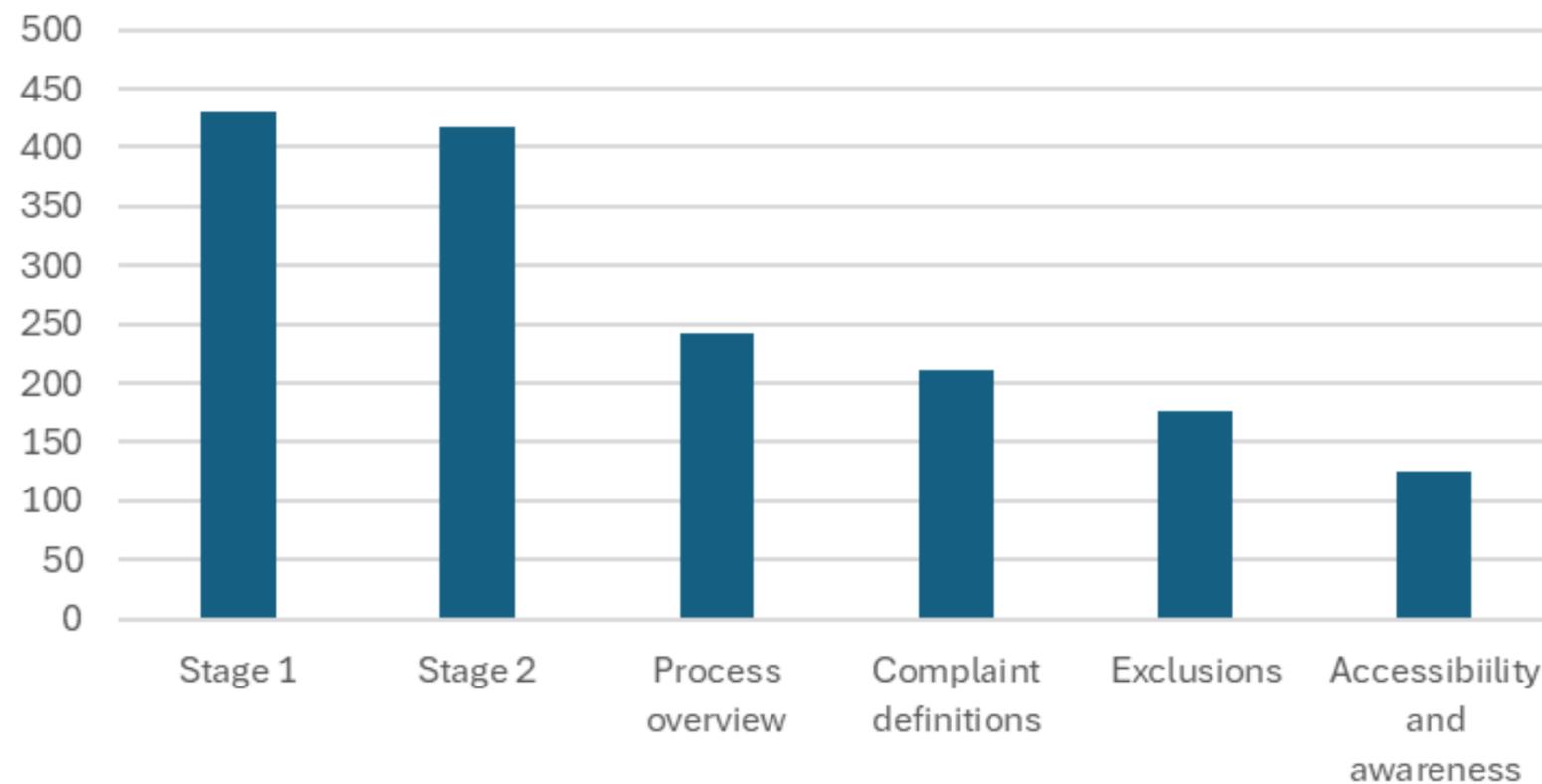
- lack of awareness
- delays to approvals
- pre-election period
- missing documents

Policy reviews

- Impartial review of policies to ensure Code expectations are met, focusing on key provisions (but not all).
- Views through the lens of ensuring residents are informed about how their complaint will be handled.
- Aim to ensure awareness, consistency, and fairness for all residents.

Policy reviews: Headline findings

Recommendations by Code Section



Themes from recommendations:

- ensure acknowledgements are clear and well defined
- ensure extensions beyond standard timescales are reasonable
- clarify service requests will proceed where a complaint is made
- ensure any outstanding actions are tracked and monitored to completion

Wider observations – the good

- Positive use of the annual process to set out the journey the landlord is on, supported by action plans and oversight.
- Extension of the annual process to include third parties who handle complaints, to demonstrate monitoring and oversight.
- Examples of ongoing scrutiny arrangements, involving residents to demonstrate continuous monitoring and engagement.
- Open and honest board statements, taking accountability, and assuring ongoing change.

Wider observations – the bad

- Incomplete and inaccurate self-assessments, indicating weakness in scrutiny mechanisms.
- Out of date policies and procedures, indicating limited review and assessment frameworks.
- Poor knowledge of third-party arrangements for complaint handling, with limited oversight of performance.
- Limited governing body statements, not fully demonstrating how Boards have taken full accountability for services.

Our observations – the ugly

- Very out of date policies, or a lack of policies in place.
- Informal stages and practices that prevent access to the complaints process.
- Limited channels to make complaints, such as in writing only, requiring in person meetings or online portals.
- Unreasonable exclusions; residents' behaviour, legal processes, and incorrect signposting to other agencies such as the First Tier Tribunal.

Role of the MRC

- Ensure effective scrutiny of the self-assessment and report.
- Support the Board to set out how they assure reports.
- Act as a critical friend to support and embed positive practice.

To do this, they need to:

- look through the lens of the resident
- ask the 'difficult' questions
- look beyond 'compliance' and build a positive culture

Case study 1: Scrutiny leading to transparency

- A council provided evidence that it has put in place effective mechanisms to oversee all complaints relating to the Tenant Management Organisation (TMO).
- It recorded complaints on its own systems to maintain oversight and worked with the TMO to ensure each has its own self-assessment and annual report.
- The council explained in its self-assessment and governing body statement that this decision was taken to ensure full visibility of complaints, and to support proactive monitoring of TMO activities.

Case study 2: Weak oversight leading to unclear approaches to complaints

- A housing association reported full compliance with key policy provisions but noted delays in publishing its annual report.
- Our review found that while the policy complied, published procedures contradicted its own policy in several areas, including compliant channels, timescales, and definitions.
- Procedures also included reference to 'how staff could encourage residents to accept informal resolution' without recording a 'formal' complaint.

Annual publications and submissions

This is your opportunity to take stock, reflect internally, and report externally:

- use the self-assessment as the tool to support this
- asks landlords to set out how the Code has been met
- evidence should cover both policy and practice
- publication supports landlords to demonstrate transparency and supports residents to scrutinise performance and actions taken

Questions to ask

1. Are the policies and procedures in place to meet the provisions?
2. How do operational teams ensure this is applied in practice?
3. If the policy is flexed, how are decisions taken and recorded?
4. What evidence has been provided and is this accessible?
5. Are publications complete, concise, and correct?
6. Are supporting tools, guidance, and information for residents?

Support from the Compliance team

Email us at compliance@housing-ombudsman.org.uk

Information about the Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code and guidance on self-assessment and annual submissions is available on our website.



Time for your questions



Verity Richards

Head of Duty to Monitor
Housing Ombudsman
Service

Say hello to your peers

Start a conversation using the prompts on your table.



Time for a break

Hot drinks are available in the foyer.



Centre for Learning session

With landlord guest speaker.



Polly Cox

Sector Development
Manager
Housing Ombudsman Service



Ralph Facey

Chief Operating Officer
and MRC
Abri Homes

Lunch time

Food is served in the foyer. Please feel free to use both floors.



Findings from the Annual Complaints Review 2024-25

Presentation with Q&A



Richard Blakeway

Housing Ombudsman

Share your experience from today with us on LinkedIn using the hashtag #HOSMRC

Annual Complaints Review (ACR)

The purpose of the Annual Complaints Review is to:

- show how member landlords are managing complaints
- analyse casework data at several levels for themes and trends
- can act as an early warning sign of challenges arising in the sector
- consider the impact our work has and can have in future

Headlines



7,082 cases determined, comprising of 14,420 individual findings.

Landlord performance

- 25% of members received determinations.
- Those landlords own and manage 80% of England's social housing.
- 120 landlords have maladministration rate of 75% or higher.
- 281 landlords received individual performance reports.



Substantial improvements in 2024-25

Anchor Hanover Group

Aster Group

Bromford Housing Association

Bury Metropolitan Borough Council

Flagship Housing Group

GreenSquareAccord

Housing 21

LiveWest Homes

Livv Housing Group

Magenta Living

One Manchester

Raven Housing Trust

Stockport Homes

Thirteen Housing Group

Watford Community Housing Trust

West Kent Housing Association

Landlords with 0% maladministration

North Devon Homes

Pickering and Ferens Homes

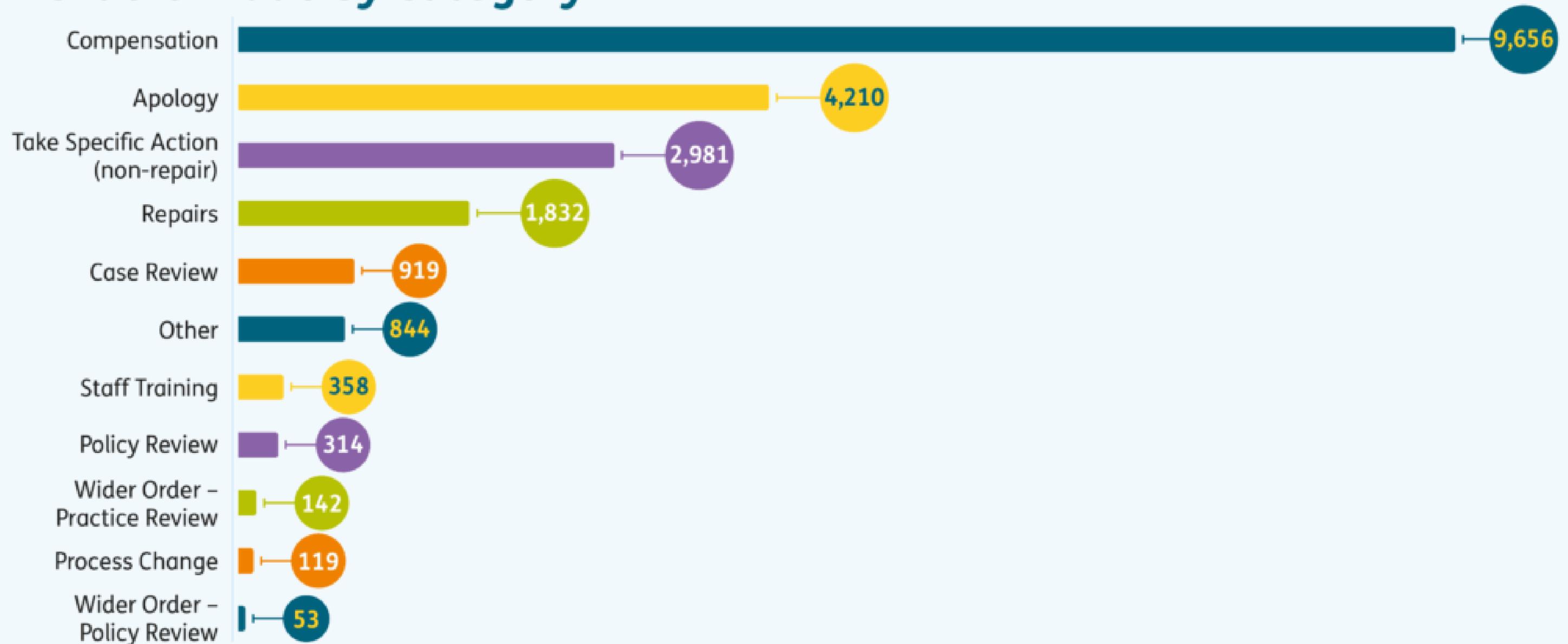


Remedies



Orders made by category

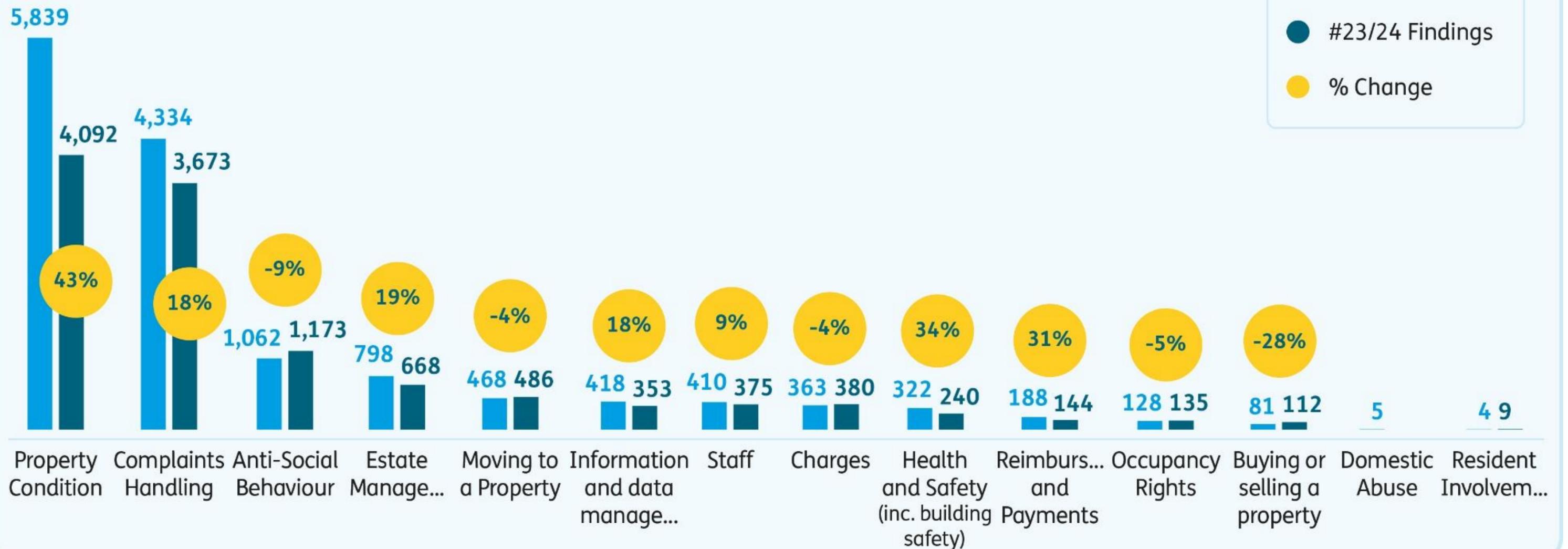
Orders made by category



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Key finding: Rising repairs complaints

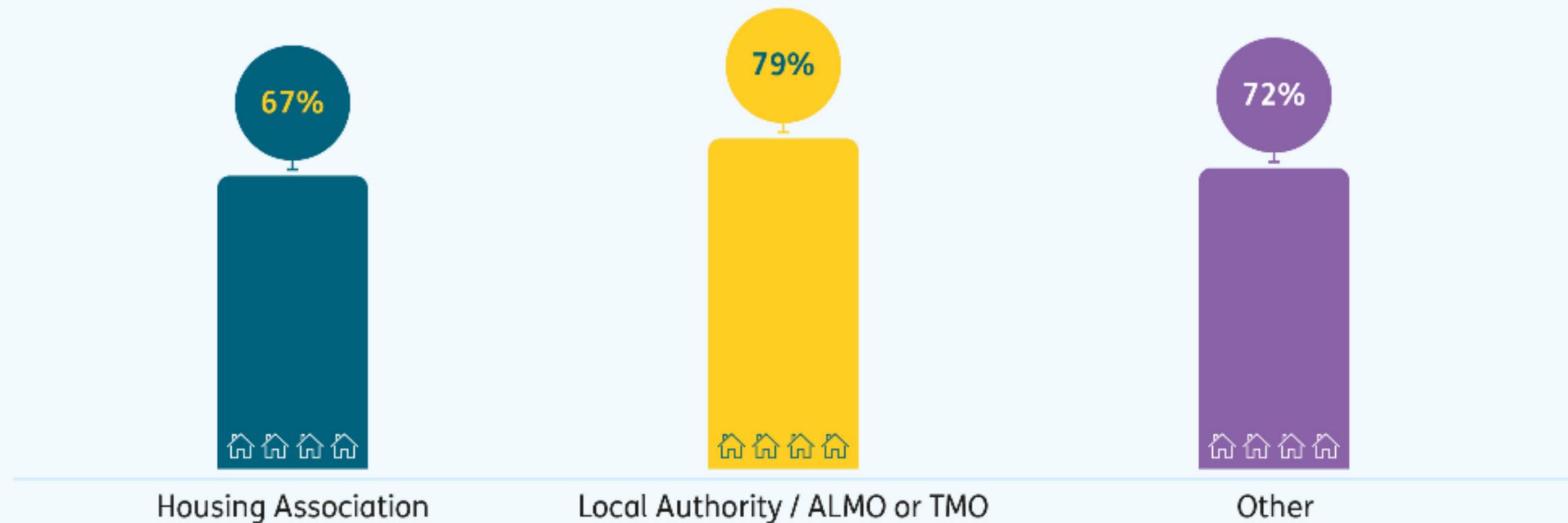
Findings by category



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Key finding: Struggling landlords

Maladministration rate by type



Key finding: Improved complaint handling

- Lower rate of maladministration.
- 2,007 findings of reasonable redress (up from 1,202).
- Static volume of Complaint Handling Failure Orders (CHFOs).
- Lower average compensation order.



Working with Housemark

- C1 landlords perform better in Ombudsman complaints.
- Larger landlords pay more compensation and report lower Tenant Satisfaction Measure (TSM) scores.
- Complaint Handling Failure Orders (CHFOS) may indicate deeper issues.
- The ‘London Effect’.

Housemark

Key questions for MRCs

Questions to ask yourself.

1. Are you confident that your organisation is learning from complaints?
2. Are you confident that your organisation is meeting the Complaint Handling Code?
3. Are you curious and testing your organisation?



Be prepared

- Awaab's Law
- Decent Homes Standard 2
- Competence and Conduct Standard
- Artificial Intelligence (AI)
- Revised P49 process
- Social Tenant Access to Information Request Scheme (STAIRS)

Contact us



Telephone 0300 111 3000



Email insight@housing-ombudsman.org.uk



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www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk

Time for your questions

We will now answer any final questions.



Justin Crittall

Director of Dispute Support
and Resolution



Richard Blakeway

Housing Ombudsman

Thank you for coming today

We'd love to hear how you found it –
take part in the feedback survey via this
QR code. You can also scan the code on
your name badge.

