



# Annual Customer Complaints Report 2020/21

## **Together with Tenants**

Rosebery was an early adopter of this National Housing Federation (NHF) initiative to create a stronger relationship between housing associations and residents. Housing associations that adopt the Together with Tenants charter sign up to six commitments, including the following.

- When things go wrong.  
The focus of this commitment is that 'Residents will have simple and accessible routes for raising issues, making complaints and seeking redress. Residents will receive timely advice and support when things go wrong.'

Rosebery is fully aligned with Together with Tenants and supports this core commitment to provide accessible routes for residents to raise issues and complaints. This commitment is the basis of our complaints procedure and is reinforced in this report.

## **Measuring customer complaints**

This report provides the key statistics about our customer complaints recorded by Rosebery from **1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021**.

Rosebery views complaints as an important way of capturing feedback from our customers about the services we provide. Complaints provide valuable information about how we are performing and what customers think about our services.

## **What is a complaint?**

At Rosebery, we define a complaint as:

*'An expression of dissatisfaction, however made, about the standard of service, actions or lack of action by the organisation, its own staff or those acting on its behalf, affecting an individual resident or group of residents'.*

## **Complaints received**

During 2020/21, complaints received went up by **171.42%**. Compared to 2019/20, this represents a substantial increase. On review, the main reason for this increase was the range of challenges we faced throughout the year, as we strove to provide services to our residents during the lockdowns which the Government imposed in order to try and prevent the spread of COVID-19. The key themes that led to the increase in numbers related to the implementation of our anti-social behaviour policy, delays in responding to tenancy management service requests, call-backs and non-essential responsive repairs.

## **Dealing with the pandemic**

Like all organisations, we had to make significant and rapid changes to how we operated and delivered services in response to COVID-19. Our top priority at all times is the safety and well-being of our residents and staff. Due to the restrictions we were required to close our office and, in the early stages, we had to limit our services to essential and emergency works only. This limited our ability to provide our usual standards of service and it was a challenging time for all of our customer-facing teams. As a result, this led to more complaints being received, compared to previous years.

## **Summary of complaints recorded**

This report highlights the cumulative performance achieved by Rosebery, as measured in the following areas:

- Number of complaints/Early Resolutions (ERs) recorded;
- Number of complaints/ERs handled at each stage of the process;
- Complaints by type/service area;
- Reasons for complaints;
- Complaints/ERs performance;

## **Compliments**

We receive many positive comments about our staff and the services we provide. Knowing when things are working well and are appreciated is just as important as knowing when things are not working as well as we would like. We therefore keep a record of the compliments we receive as well as

any complaints. Good practice and learning can then be circulated across the organisation.

During 2020/21, we received a total of 50 recorded compliments, which is an increase of 16.27% compared to the previous year, when 43 compliments were recorded.

### Resident complaints

| <b>Complaints received</b> | 2020/21 |
|----------------------------|---------|
| Total complaints           | 95      |

| <b>Complaints logged by stages</b>             | 2020/21 |
|--|---------|
| Early Resolutions (ERs)                        | 19      |
| Stage 1  | 95      |
| Stage 2  | 11      |
| Cases escalated to The Housing Ombudsman       | 1       |
| *Informal enquiries from The Housing Ombudsman | 2       |

\*We received two correspondences from the Housing Ombudsman Service (HOS) regarding residents who had approached them directly. Neither of these residents had previously raised a complaint directly with Rosebery. Both cases were not subject to an HOS investigation but we were required to investigate and provide the HOS with updates.

| <b>Complaints received by type/service areas</b> | 2020/21 |
|--|---------|
| Repairs  | 15      |
| Gas  | 9       |
| Estate services                                  | 6       |
| Rent & service charge                            | 5       |
| Mutual exchange                                  | 1       |
| Anti-social behaviour                            | 7       |
| Communications                                   | 34      |
| Staff conduct/attitude/performance               | 15      |
| Development/New build                            | 3       |

| <b>Reasons for complaint</b>   | <b>2020/21 data</b> | <b>2020/21 %</b> |
|--|---------------------|------------------|
| Delays with repairs (responsive/asset management)  | 7                   | 7.4              |
| Failure or refusal to agree to something a resident wants us to do                           | 2                   | 2.1              |
| Delay in responding to service requests/enquiries  | 17                  | 17.9             |
| Dissatisfaction with the quality of communal repairs   | 1                   | 1                |
| Tenancy management/dissatisfaction with level of service provided                            | 24                  | 25.3             |
| Dissatisfied with how anti-social behaviour case was managed                                 | 7                   | 7.4              |
| Dissatisfaction with the quality of repair (gas and responsive repairs)                      | 8                   | 8.4              |
| Dissatisfaction with service provided by contractors (e.g. gas, estate services and repairs) | 8                   | 8.4              |
| Unhappy with slow progress of housing transfer   | 1                   | 1                |
| Staff conduct/performance  | 15                  | 15.8             |
| Miscellaneous  | 5                   | 5.3              |

## **Our performance**

| <b>Number of complaints answered on time (stages 1 &amp; 2)</b> |        |
|---|--------|
| Target (within 10 working days)                                 | 90%    |
| Performance – Stage 1   | 87.7%* |
| Performance – Stage 2   | 90.9%* |

\* This figure represents the performance for our final responses. However, in all cases a holding response was sent out within ten working days indicating that either more time would be required to complete the investigation or there would be unfinished actions that could not be completed within our target time, i.e. repairs before the complaint could be closed.

| <b>Number of ERs answered on time</b> |       |
|---------------------------------------|-------|
| Target (within 5 working days)        | 90%   |
| Performance                           | 89.5% |
| ERs escalated to a formal complaint   | 1     |

| <b>Complaints</b>  | <b>Target</b>   | <b>Performance</b> |
|--|-----------------|--------------------|
| % of complaints resolved and closed at stage 1             | 90%             | 88.4%              |
| % of all complaints escalated to stage 2                   | N/A             | 11.6%              |
| % of complaints closed at stage 2                          | 90%             | 100%               |
| Complaints acknowledged within timescales (2 working days) | 90%             | 95.3%              |
| Average response time for stage 1                          | 10 working days | 10.2 days          |
| Average response time for stage 2                          | 10 working days | 9.6 days           |

| <b>Complaints - outcomes</b>   | <b>Stage 1</b> | <b>Stage 2</b> |
|--------------------------------|----------------|----------------|
| Upheld                         | 44             | 2              |
| Partially upheld               | 32             | 3              |
| Not upheld                     | 19             | 5              |
| Open (response to be provided) | 0              | 1              |
| Total                          | 95             | 11             |

### **What have we learnt?**

A key objective for Rosebery, and one we need to do better at, is to learn, change, improve and evolve in response to complaints. Historically, Rosebery has always received a relatively low level of complaints, making it difficult to note any significant trends and root causes.

During 2020/21, this significantly changed and we were able to identify a number of trends and consistent themes for improvement. This source of information, along with a number of other activities, has allowed us to identify key priorities for improvement and the actions planned to address these are set out below.

- **Customer Insight**

Improve the way we utilise lessons learnt from complaints, in order to transform our services and improve customer experience.

- **Staff training and development**

Ensure ongoing complaints training opportunities are provided for all customer-facing staff so that they feel empowered to reduce the number of complaints and encourage early resolution.

- **Performance Management**

Embed the consistent use of our system for recording contact with residents across the organisation so it is a robust tool to support the monitoring of staff activities, to achieve consistent performance in meeting our service standards and to maintain our high performance culture.