**Annual Complaints Performance Improvement Report**

Abbeyfield Dulwich Society

Report Period: 2024

Date: 17 January 2025

1. Introduction

This report provides an overview of the Abbeyfield Dulwich Society’s complaints management performance for the year 2024, in compliance with the Housing Ombudsman’s requirements. It aims to highlight key complaints trends, actions taken to resolve issues, and continuous improvement efforts in our complaints handling process.

2. Organisational Overview

Abbeyfield Dulwich Society provides high-quality, affordable housing and support for elderly people in the Dulwich area. Our primary objective is to maintain a high standard of care and satisfaction for our residents. We value feedback, and complaints are an essential tool for improving our services.

3. Complaint Handling Overview

3.1 Complaint Management Process

• Step 1: Receipt of complaint—Complaints are received through multiple channels including phone, email, and WhatsApp.

• Step 2: Acknowledgment—Complaints are acknowledged within 2 working days.

• Step 3: Investigation—Complaints are investigated thoroughly by the relevant team member.

• Step 4: Resolution—We aim to resolve all complaints within 10 working days, depending on the complexity of the issue.

• Step 5: Follow-up - After resolution, feedback is sought to ensure the complainant is satisfied with the outcome.

3.2 Complaint Categories

Complaints have been categorised as follows:

• Repairs and Maintenance

• Customer Service

• Resident Welfare

• Communication Issues

• Policy/Procedure Concerns

4. Complaint Data Summary

4.1 Total Number of Complaints

• Total Complaints Received: 1

• Complaints Resolved within Target (10 days): 1

• Complaints Escalated to Stage 2: 0

• Complaints Upheld: 0

• Complaints Not Upheld: 0

4.2 Complaint Categories Breakdown

• Repairs and Maintenance: 1

• Customer Service: 0

• Resident Welfare: 0

• Communication Issues: 0

• Policy/Procedure Concerns: 0

4.3 Trends and Insights

• During the second quarter, we received our first complaint regarding repair and maintenance issues, primarily attributed to the aging infrastructure of our property.

• A small rise in complaints concerning communication breakdowns, particularly regarding updates on repairs and general queries.

5. Complaint Outcomes and Action Taken

* 1. **Improvement Actions in Response to Complaints**

• Repairs and Maintenance: We have partnered with a more reliable plumbing and heating provider. We have had numerous upgrades to our heating and hot water supply including removal of old cold water storage tanks, installation of a new hot water tank, replacement of some radiators, new boiler pressure regulator tank. We also have a new handyman for small repair work.

• The maintenance team now have a maintenance report log so that work can be assigned and followed up with the necessary trades.

• Strengthened out of hours escalation procedure so that staff can seek additional support for incidents that happen overnight.

• Customer Service: Additional training sessions and procedures have been scheduled for our frontline staff to enhance communication skills and professionalism.

• Resident Welfare: A new resident feedback loop has been created to ensure ongoing welfare checks for residents.

**5.2 Learning from Complaints**

• We have developed clearer guidelines for staff on managing complaint expectations, particularly around timescales and communication.

• A resident feedback group has been formed to allow direct feedback on service delivery, which will inform policy decisions.

**6. Performance against Ombudsman’s Complaints Handling Code**

6.1 Complaints Process Review

• Timely Acknowledgment: 100% of complaints were acknowledged within 2 working days.

• Clear Information: All complaints received included clear information about our complaints process. These are also posted in various locations within the property.

• Resolution Timescales: 100% of complaints were resolved within our 10-day target.

• Complaints Handling Transparency: 100% of complainants reported satisfaction with the transparency of the investigation and response process.

6.2 Complaints Outcome Analysis

• Our complaints upholding rate is 100%, reflecting the fairness and integrity of our investigation processes.

• Our overall satisfaction rate for resolved complaints stands at 100%.

**7. Staff Training and Development**

We have implemented a training portal with the following training aims:

• Complaint Handling: Regular training for all relevant staff on effective complaint resolution, emphasising empathy and transparency.

• Conflict Resolution: Specific training to improve handling of difficult or complex complaints, especially related to vulnerable residents.

• Customer Service: General customer service training with a focus on active listening, communication, and problem-solving.

**8. Resident Engagement and Satisfaction**

To ensure that our residents feel heard and valued:

• Resident Feedback Meetings: Conducted quarterly to measure satisfaction with complaints handling.

• Committee Feedback: We hold monthly committee meetings and any resident complaints are shared here. Resolutions are sought to avoid escalation.

• Resident Advisors: We have Committee members who feed back any issues to the Committee and provide a resident-led perspective.

**9. Challenges and Areas for Improvement**

Despite progress, we have identified several areas for improvement:

• Timeliness of Repairs: Longer-than-expected response times in certain maintenance tasks. We are focusing on increasing contractor efficiency.

• Communication Gaps: While we’ve made strides, further improvements are needed to ensure residents feel consistently informed and given enough notice.

• Escalated Complaints: Although we have not had any escalated complaints, more training is required for staff to handle any escalated complaints.

**10. Looking Forward: Next Steps for Continuous Improvement**

In the upcoming year, we plan to:

• Encourage attendance at resident feedback meetings: Give plenty of notice for meetings.

• Broaden Staff Training: Implement more in-depth training, particularly for managers dealing with complex or escalating complaints. Online training available from Abbeyfield England or the Noodle Now training portal.

• Resident Engagement: Increase the frequency of resident forums and include them in the early stages of service development to prevent issues before they arise.

11. Conclusion

Abbeyfield Dulwich Society remains committed to improving our complaint handling processes to enhance resident satisfaction and ensure that all complaints are treated fairly and promptly. We value the feedback from residents and the Housing Ombudsman, which plays an essential role in helping us improve our services. The actions outlined in this report are part of our continuous effort to provide the best possible living experience for our residents.

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