

EKARRO HOUSING CO-OPERATIVE

2025/26 ANNUAL COMPLAINTS PERFORMANCE AND SERVICE IMPROVEMENT REPORT

Ekarro Housing Co-operative owns 58 homes, all of which are social housing. Ekarro HC outsources service delivery of housing management to a managing agent Co-op Homes (South) Limited (CHS) and other third parties.

Any member of the Co-op or other stakeholder who has a consumer complaint about the landlord service can make a complaint to CHS at homes@coophomes.coop or through alternative channels. CHS will investigate and respond to complaints about their service, and Ekarro HC's complaints officer will receive recommendations from Co-op Homes and respond to complaints about Management Committee (MC) actions.

This is the third annual complaints report in accordance with the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code, which became mandatory for all social landlords from 1 April 2024.

Ekarro HC received five Stage 1 complaints during the 2025/26 financial year between 1 April 2025 and 31 March 2026. This in line with the average number of complaints received by Private Registered Providers being equivalent to 86.2 Stage 1 complaints per 1,000 homes, compared with the reported average of 78.5 complaints per 1,000 homes for registered providers in London.

Three complaints were escalated to Stage 2.

Trends and Learning from Complaints

Three complaints received related to property condition, two complaints related to occupancy rights, one complaint concerned anti-social behaviour, and one complaint concerned staff conduct.

Stage 1 complaints were responded to within target timescales and one complaint required an extension of time.

Learning from the complaints highlighted the importance of clear communication with residents on occupancy rights, property-related responsibilities, complaint decisions and service expectations. Also effective monitoring of repairs, maintenance and resident communications.

Housing Ombudsman determination and learning

In 25/26 the Housing Ombudsman determined one case (ref 202335321). The complaint related to the handling of two transfer applications and the subsequent complaint handling process.

The Ombudsman made 1 finding of Reasonable Redress and 2 findings of Service Failure, with compensation of £150 ordered and lessons identified around allocations, communication, and complaint escalation processes.

Property 1 Application (Reasonable Redress) - Ekarro HC acknowledged failures in its allocations process, including not following parts of its allocations policy, poor management of the resident's expectations on property viewing, inadequate explanations for allocation decisions and weaknesses within the allocations policy itself. The Ombudsman found reasonable redress because Ekarro HC had recognised and accepted its failings, identified learning and policy improvements, apologised and offered £400 compensation, which the Ombudsman considered proportionate to the impact on the resident.

Property 2 Application (Service Failure) - The Ombudsman found service failure because Ekarro HC took over a month to respond to concerns about the property's condition while simultaneously seeking an urgent decision from the resident. There were delays in providing requested information, including a survey report. Concerns regarding an alarm were not fully addressed. Information about planned cyclical works to windows and associated timescales was not clearly communicated.

However, the Ombudsman found no evidence that the property was uninhabitable or not lettable and accepted that Ekarro was entitled to rely on its surveyor's assessment.

Complaint Handling (Service Failure) - The Ombudsman found service failure because Ekarro failed to escalate Complaint 1 when first requested. This delayed the resident's access to the Ombudsman.

Learning from this case, Ekarro and its managing agent, CHS, ensure allocations procedures are consistently followed, and avoid commencing allocations before properties are ready for viewing where possible. We recognise that communication is key to promptly respond to residents' enquiries, particularly where residents are being asked to make time-sensitive decisions; provide comprehensive responses to all concerns raised, including planned maintenance and timescales; share information to reduce avoidable frustration and repeat contact; and action complaint escalation requests promptly.

MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE RESPONSE TO 2025/26 ANNUAL COMPLAINTS PERFORMANCE AND SERVICE IMPROVEMENT REPORT

Ekarro Housing Co-operative updated its complaints policy, for consumer complaints from residents living in homes owned by Ekarro HC and managed by Co-op Homes, in November 2024 to meet the requirements of the Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code 2024.

The Management Committee has received:

- the 2025/26 annual complaints performance and service improvement report (reporting on complaints received between 1 April 2025 and 31 March 2026) for residents living in homes owned by Ekarro HC and managed by CHS.
- a self-assessment against the Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code 2024.

The Management Committee has a Member Responsible for Complaints (MRC), the Secretary or other nominated member, who provides assurance to the Committee on the effectiveness of complaints handling. The MRC and the Committee considered and approved the annual self-assessment that Ekarro HC complies with all aspects of the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code 2024.

Given our size, Ekarro HC will not receive enough complaints to learn from trends, but the Management Committee considers individual complaints received to learn lessons from them.