1. INTRODUCTION

This report will analyse complaint performance for the 2025/26 financial year. It will also discuss the service improvements Trident have implemented as a direct result of complaints across the business.

During 2025/26, we strengthened complaint governance, quality assurance and organisational learning. This included revised response templates, clearer investigation requirements, improved oversight of Housing Ombudsman cases and the introduction of live compensation and learning trackers.

2. BACKGROUND

An effective complaints handling process is essential for providing valuable feedback and identifying areas for improvement across the organisation. At Trident we place a high value on feedback and comments from our residents and customers, recognising that these insights play a crucial role in shaping service delivery, driving improvements, and ensuring that lessons learned lead to meaningful 'You Said, We Will' actions.

Our Complaints Policy and supporting procedures were reviewed during 2025/26 against the Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code. Amendments made following the Ombudsman's earlier review have been embedded, including clearer complaint definitions and exclusions, escalation rights, response times, extension limits and information about access to the Ombudsman. The full complaints process remains available on Trident's website.

The Customer Experience Team coordinates and oversees complaint handling and completed the 2025/26 Complaint Handling Code self-assessment. Complaints are logged and acknowledged within five working days. Acknowledgements confirm the complaint definition and desired outcomes, the complaint reference, the investigating officer, response times and the availability of reasonable adjustments.

- The complaint reference number.
- The name and contact details of the Responding Officer assigned to investigate.
- Timescales for the response.
- An invitation to request any reasonable adjustments if needed.

In line with Group policy, formal complaints are resolved within ten working days of acknowledgement, although extensions may be granted where necessary for example, when information or actions are required from external parties who may not be able to meet the initial timeframe.

If a complainant remains dissatisfied with the Stage 1 response, they have the right to escalate their complaint to Stage 2. This will be allocated to a senior officer within five working days, with a final response issued within 20 working days. All letter templates used are based on best practice guidance from the Housing Ombudsman Service and have been reviewed through compliance checks and internal audits.

3. PERFORMANCE 2025/26

3.1. Performance – Data Analysis of Complaints April 2025 - March 2026

During 2025/26, we recorded 212 cases, comprising 146 Stage 1 complaints, 54 Stage 2 complaints and 12 Housing Ombudsman cases. The Stage 1 complaint rate was 48.7 per 1,000 homes, placing Trident around the 60th percentile and within the medium benchmarking quartile, while the Stage 2 complaint rate was 18 per 1,000 homes. Compliance was strong, with 95.7% of Stage 1 complaints and 92.3% of Stage 2 complaints responded to within the required timescales. Complaint-handling satisfaction also increased to 32.3%, an improvement of 6.9 percentage points; however, it remained the lowest-scoring Tenant Satisfaction Measure area and continues to require focused improvement.

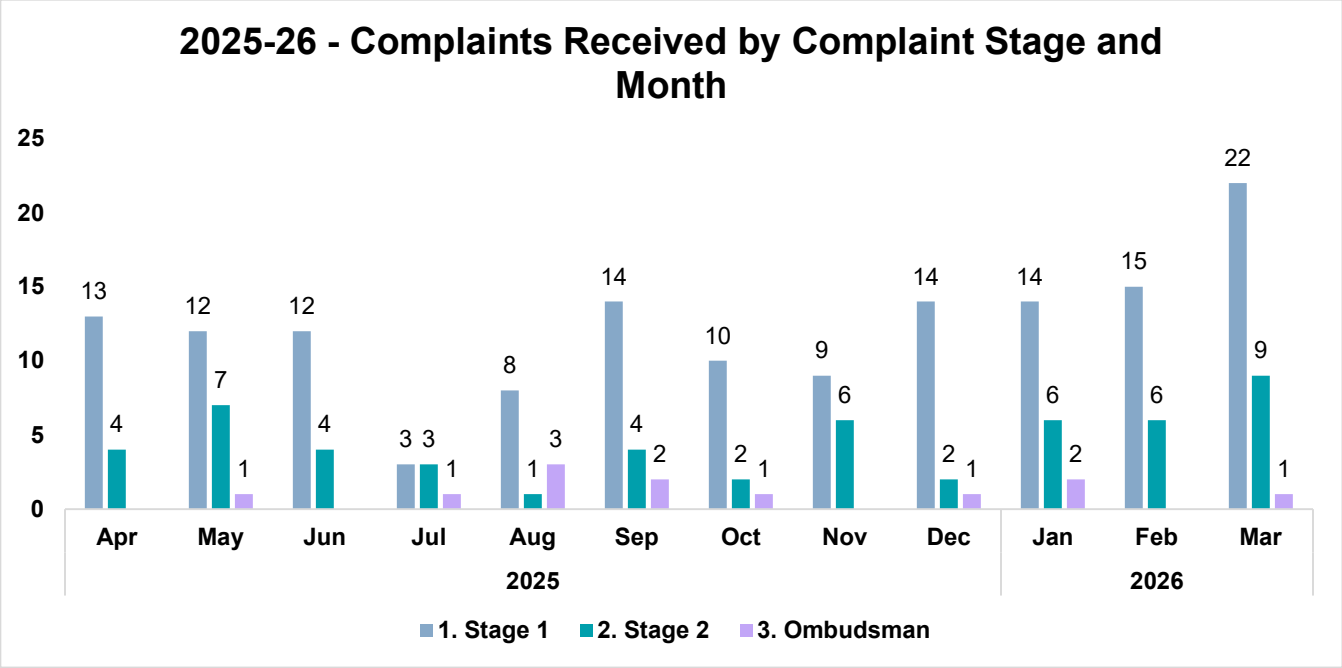

Chart 1

Chart 1 shows a marked shift in complaint demand over the year rather than a consistent monthly pattern. Volumes were comparatively lower through the middle of 2025, before increasing during the final quarter, with both Stage 1 and Stage 2 complaints reaching their highest levels in March 2026. The simultaneous rise at both stages suggests that the year-end pressure was not solely driven by new complaints, but also by a greater number of customers

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remaining dissatisfied after the initial response. This reinforces the need to identify the operational issues behind the increase, ensure sufficient capacity during periods of higher demand and strengthen the quality of Stage 1 investigations, communication and remedies so that more concerns are resolved at the earliest opportunity.

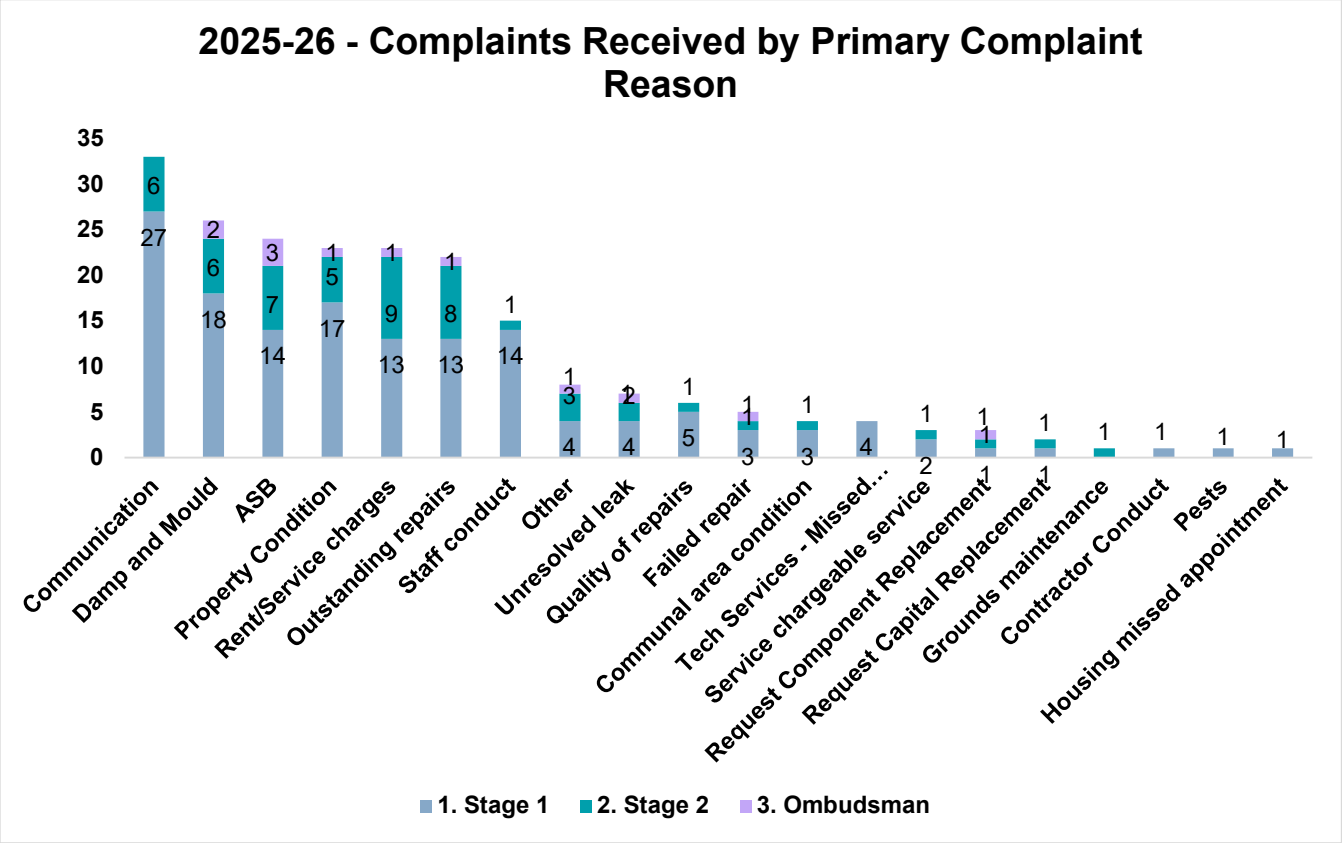

Chart 2

Chart 2 shows that complaint demand is concentrated to issues with communication, damp and mould, property conditions, rent and service charges, and outstanding repairs accounting for the largest share. Communication is the leading reason and appears at both Stage 1 and Stage 2, indicating that the way customers are kept informed can influence whether an operational issue escalates as much as the issue itself. The higher-level escalation visible across damp and mould, repairs and service-charge concerns also suggests that complex or longer-running cases require stronger ownership, coordinated investigation and clearer explanations at the first response. The pattern supports targeted improvement in proactive updates, repair follow-through, accurate records and early resolution, rather than relying on general complaint-handling changes alone.

In response to the recurring themes shown in Chart 2, weekly and bi-weekly cross-departmental reviews support earlier escalation of high-risk repairs and complex cases. Property Services, Homes and Communities, Legal and the Customer Experience Team use these forums to confirm ownership, unblock actions and improve the quality and frequency of customer updates.

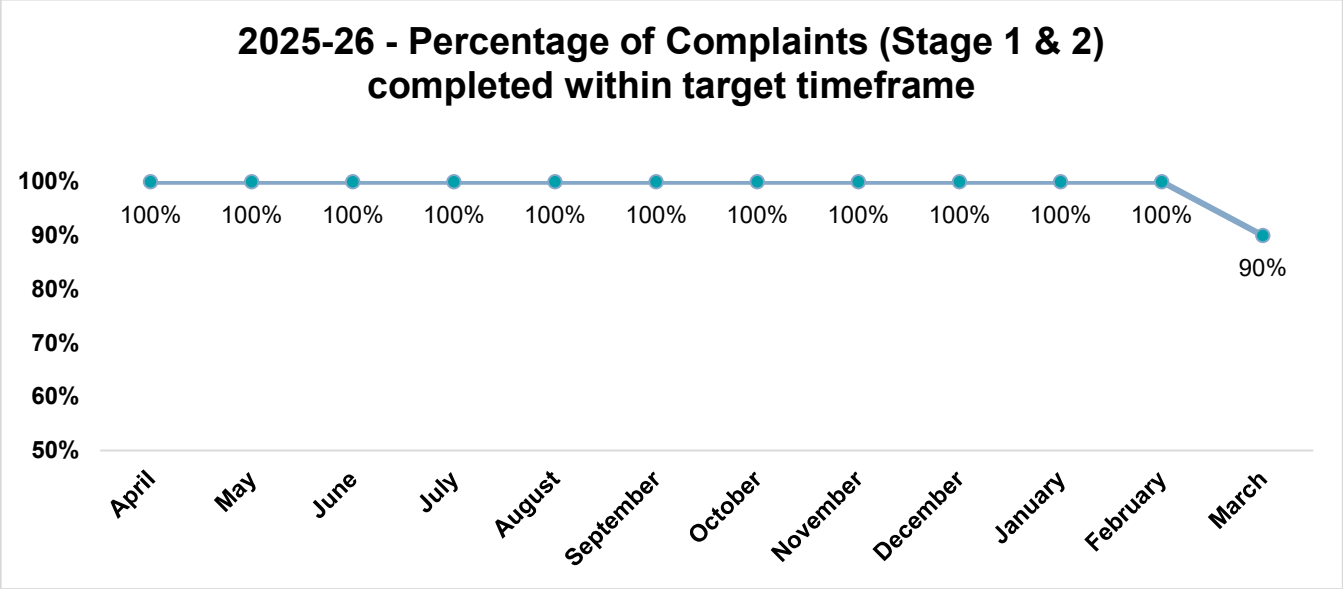

Chart 3

Chart 3 demonstrates that complaint-response timeliness was consistently well controlled for most of 2025/26, indicating that monitoring, case management and escalation arrangements were generally effective. The reduction in March coincides with the year's highest complaint volumes shown in Chart 1, suggesting that increased demand placed pressure on the organisation's ability to maintain full compliance. Although year-end performance remained high overall, the change highlights the importance of matching resources to demand, identifying potential delays earlier and maintaining regular customer communication where extensions are necessary. The priority is therefore not only to restore full compliance, but to ensure that response quality and agreed actions are not compromised when workloads increase.

The strong timeliness performance shown in Chart 3 was supported by monitoring of compliance with the Housing Ombudsman's timescales, the quality of investigations and communication with customers where an extension was required. Revised templates and stronger management oversight were introduced to improve consistency and identify potential delays earlier

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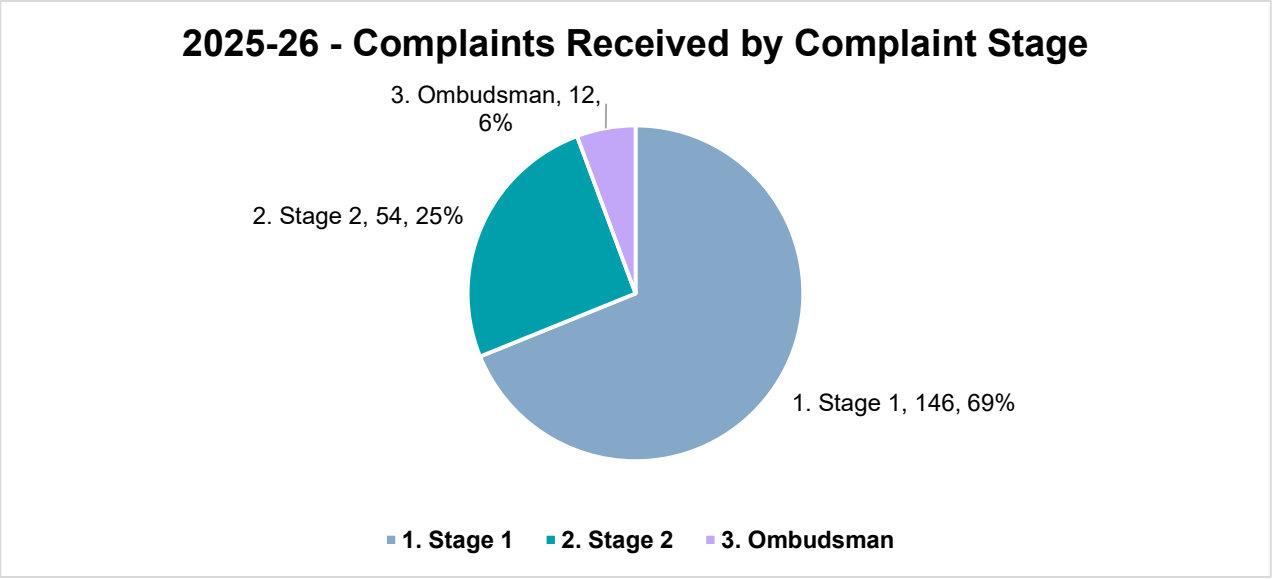

Chart 4

Chart 4 shows that most complaints were concluded within Trident's internal process, but almost one third progressed beyond Stage 1. This indicates that, while the first stage remains the main route for resolution, a significant proportion of customers required further review or external involvement before their concerns were settled. The pattern reinforces the importance of stronger first-stage investigations, clear explanations, proportionate remedies and assurance that promised actions are completed. The comparatively small Ombudsman share should not be viewed only as a measure of volume; these cases provide important insight into more complex or persistent service failures and should continue to inform targeted learning, senior oversight and preventative improvement.

The year-end position in Chart 4 shows that most complaints were handled at Stage 1. However, the 54 Stage 2 complaints reinforce the need to continue improving first-stage investigation, remedy planning and communication so that concerns are fully addressed at the earliest opportunity. The 12 Ombudsman cases received enhanced oversight through regular Executive review.

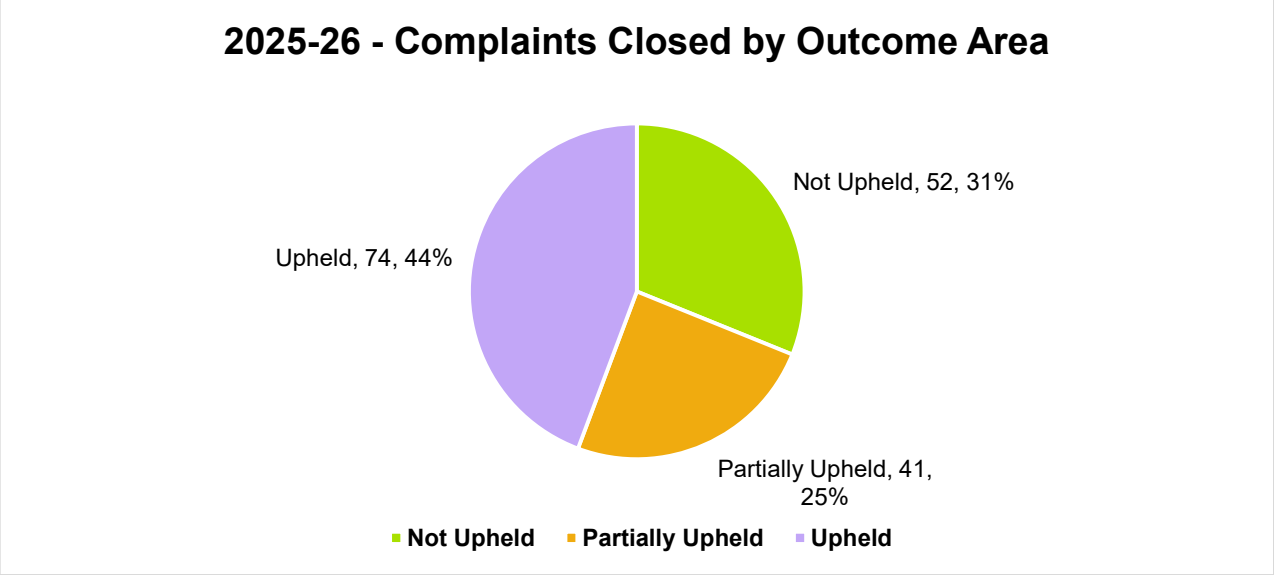

Chart 5

Chart 5 shows that more than two thirds of closed complaints were either upheld or partially upheld, indicating that most investigations identified some element of service failure or an opportunity to improve the customer experience. The proportion of partially upheld cases also suggests that complaints are often multi-faceted, with some aspects of service delivery supported by the evidence while others require acknowledgement and remedy. This underlines the importance of analysing individual complaint elements rather than applying a single overall conclusion, and of using upheld findings to address recurring weaknesses in communication, repairs follow-through, record keeping and ownership. The lower proportion of not upheld cases further demonstrates the value of complaints as an evidence base for targeted service improvement and prevention.

The outcome pattern shown in Chart 5 informs Trident's approach to organisational learning. Complaint outcomes and service failures are recorded through a live learning tracker, which identifies the affected service, root cause, agreed action, owner and completion date. This enables trends to be reviewed through governance reports and the Operational Learning Forum.

4. SERVICE IMPROVEMENTS

Learning from complaints has been translated into practical changes during 2025/26. The principal improvements are set out below and are monitored through HCC, CVG, Executive oversight and the Operational Learning Forum.

4.1. Void and Repairs

The Voids and Repairs team has introduced a series of targeted improvements aimed at enhancing the quality and reliability of repair services. As repairs remain a frequent source of complaints, these enhancements are expected to address common pain points and improve overall resident satisfaction.

- **New Repairs and Voids Contractor:** During 2025/26, Trident began the procurement of a new long-term repairs and voids partner, with residents helping to shape the service specification, performance measures and contractor assessment. Ian Williams was subsequently selected following a detailed evaluation, demonstrating strong arrangements for customer service, repairs delivery, safeguarding, resident engagement, damp and mould, performance management and social value. The new contract is intended to provide a more reliable, responsive and accountable service, with clearer appointment management and customer updates, improved first-time fixes, stronger contractor oversight and performance monitoring, and continued emergency and out-of-hours cover. Mobilisation took place after the 2025/26 reporting period, with the new service scheduled to commence towards the end of 2026.

- **Improved Contact Centre Call Performance:** The call abandonment rate reduced from 19% in April 2025 to an average of 15% across 2025/26, demonstrating improved accessibility and responsiveness. Average call handling time also remained below one minute and 30 seconds throughout the year, supporting quicker and more efficient customer contact.

- **Repairs Service Improvement Group:** Trident has launched a new resident-led Repairs Service Improvement Group to help improve the quality, reliability and customer experience of the repairs service. The group reviews repairs performance, appointment keeping, completion times, first-time fixes, communication and resident satisfaction, using direct feedback from customers who have recently experienced the service. Members identify where the repairs journey can be improved, recommend practical changes and monitor whether agreed actions are delivering better outcomes. This provides residents with a direct role in shaping the service and supports improved accountability, clearer customer updates and higher satisfaction with repairs.

- **New Customer Portal:** In addition to implementing Rubixx, Trident is launching a new customer portal that will give residents easier access to services and information online. Residents will be able to report repairs, make payments, access tenancy and property information, view rent statements and safety certificates, and submit service requests, complaints, compliments and other feedback. The portal will provide residents with greater choice and convenience, improve access to accurate information and support a more efficient and responsive service.

5.2 Safety and Compliance

Safety-related complaints reinforced the need for prompt risk assessment, clear case ownership and effective communication. During 2025/26, staff capability, resident engagement and proactive site management remained central to preventing concerns from escalating and ensuring that actions were clearly recorded and followed through.

- **Improved Risk Assessment:** Risk assessment arrangements have been strengthened to support earlier identification of hazards, clearer ownership of actions and timely escalation where additional controls are required. This will help ensure that safety concerns are assessed consistently, recorded accurately and followed through to completion.

- **Strengthened Fire Safety Processes and CCTV:** Fire safety processes continue to be reviewed and reinforced, alongside the ongoing use of CCTV to support building security, deter anti-social behaviour and provide assurance where incidents or safety concerns are reported. The ongoing upgrade of fire alarm systems will improve the reliability of safety measures, support earlier warning and strengthen protection for residents and buildings.

- **Revised ASB Policies and Procedures:** New anti-social behaviour policies and procedures support a clearer and more consistent approach to managing cases. Working with residents, local authorities, the police and other partner agencies will strengthen prevention, information sharing and coordinated action to improve safety and confidence within communities.

5.3 Homes and Communities

Communication remained a recurring complaint theme in 2025/26. Homes and Communities improvements therefore focused on clearer ownership, accessible information, better support during disruption, stronger resident engagement and more proactive updates so that concerns can be resolved before they escalate.

- **Rubixx Housing Management System:** During 2025/26, preparations progressed for the introduction of Rubixx, Trident's new housing management system. It provides a clearer single view of resident information, vulnerabilities, contacts, open cases and service requests. Task management, service-level deadlines and escalation of overdue actions will support clearer ownership, stronger record keeping and more consistent follow-up, while the customer portal will provide more accessible information and self-service options.

- **Dialpad Call System:** Our new call management system went live and introduced call recording, real-time transcription, automated summaries, improved call routing and clearer management information on call volumes, waiting times and abandoned calls. This creates a stronger audit trail and supports more consistent follow-up.

- **ASB Service Improvement Group:** A new resident-led Anti-Social Behaviour Service Improvement Group has been established, with its first meeting bringing residents and colleagues together to understand residents' experiences of reporting ASB and identify where the service can be improved. The group will review communication, case updates, response times, partnership working and the support provided to residents throughout an ASB case. Residents will help shape practical improvements, challenge service performance and monitor whether agreed actions are delivering safer communities, clearer communication and greater confidence in Trident's response to ASB.

- **A More Joined-up, People-focused Housing Service:** The Customer Experience and Customer Engagement teams will move under Housing, bringing complaint insight, customer feedback and resident involvement closer to frontline service delivery. This will support better collaboration between teams, clearer ownership of customer issues and a more coordinated approach to resolving concerns. By placing residents' experiences at the centre of service planning and improvement, the new structure will help Trident respond more effectively, strengthen accountability and deliver more consistent, people-focused outcomes.

- **Operational Learning Forum:** The Operational Learning Forum brings colleagues from across the business together to review learning from complaints, identify recurring issues and agree practical actions to improve services. Engagement has been positive across all service areas, supporting shared ownership, stronger collaboration and a consistent focus on delivering better outcomes for customers. Going forward, residents who are members of the Customer Voice Group will be invited to join sessions, ensuring that customer experience and resident insight directly inform learning and service improvement.

- **Complaints Scrutiny Group:** The resident-led Complaints Scrutiny Group provides customers with a direct role in reviewing how complaints are handled and identifying opportunities to improve the customer experience. The first session has taken place, enabling residents to share their views on the accessibility of the complaints process, communication, response quality, remedies and how learning is acted upon. We will continue to build on this initial session by involving residents in future reviews, developing practical recommendations and monitoring whether agreed actions are delivering clearer, fairer and more customer-focused complaint handling.

- **Complaints Performance and Insight Dashboard:** A dashboard via our new Housing Management System (Rubixx) provides daily visibility of complaint volumes, stages, outcomes and overdue actions. Alongside the central learning and compensation trackers, this supports earlier intervention, clearer accountability and improved oversight of recurring themes and agreed service improvements.

Trident recorded 12 Housing Ombudsman cases during 2025/26. The table below summarises the formal determinations identified within the reporting-year records and the learning carried into service improvement activity.

Date	Case ID	Determination	Learning and action
30 May 2025	202407850	Severe maladministration in the handling of leaks and service failure in complaint handling. The Ombudsman ordered £1,300 compensation and further actions.	An independent review of the case and repairs handling was commissioned. We strengthened oversight of high-risk repairs, access arrangements, record keeping, action ownership and customer updates.
18 December 2025	202504166	Service-failure findings concerning ventilation and rehousing. The Ombudsman ordered £150 compensation and further actions.	Learning focused on timely investigation of property-condition concerns, clear evidence-based decisions, coordination between service areas and keeping customers informed about rehousing options and next steps.
20 February 2026	202525732	Maladministration in repairs, service failure in tenancy-related enquiries and reasonable redress for complaint handling. The Ombudsman ordered £1,100 compensation and further actions	Actions focused on stronger repair diagnosis and follow-through, clear ownership of tenancy queries, accurate records, proportionate remedies and assurance that commitments made in complaint responses are completed.

Table 1

Item 6.0 - 2025/26 Complaint Handling Code compliance and improvement actions

The 2025/26 self-assessment confirms that the recommendations arising from the Housing Ombudsman's earlier review have been incorporated into the Complaints Policy and supporting procedures. The revised approach clarifies the definition and scope of a complaint, escalation rights, statutory response times, extension limits, continued delivery of the underlying service request and access to the Ombudsman.

During 2025/26, we moved from policy amendment to operational embedding. Quality assurance, live tracking and strengthened governance were introduced to improve consistency, evidence completion of remedies and ensure learning is shared across services.

The actions below provide assurance on the principal improvements implemented during the year and the areas that will remain under review in 2026/27.

Table 2 summarises the principle Code-compliance and service-improvement actions embedded during 2025/26 and the areas that will remain under review in 2026/27.

Area	2025/26 action	Status and assurance
Policy and Code compliance	Complaint definitions, exclusions, escalation rights, response times, extension limits and Ombudsman contact information were clarified.	Embedded in policy and templates; reviewed through the annual self-assessment.
Response quality	Revised Stage 1 and Stage 2 templates and a fuller investigation process require clear timelines, evidence, findings, remedies and learning.	Implemented; quality and consistency remain subject to management assurance.

Area	2025/26 action	Status and assurance
Capability	Regular training for Contact Centre complaints and responding officers was introduced to improve recognition, ownership and early resolution.	Rolled out during the year, with refresher and targeted support continuing.
Governance	Bi-weekly Executive review of Ombudsman cases and stronger cross-departmental oversight of high-risk cases were established.	In operation and reported through HCC and CVG.
Learning and remedies	Live complaint-learning and compensation trackers were introduced, supported by the Operational Learning Forum.	Implemented; action owners and completion dates are monitored.
Customer voice	Complaint performance and learning were reported to CVG, with the Complaints Panel, scrutiny activity and Complaints Awareness Week supporting customer challenge and influence.	Embedded within the governance cycle and planned activity for 2026/27.
2026/27 focus	Improve Stage 1 resolution, complaint-handling satisfaction, proactive communication, repairs follow-through and evidence that agreed remedies are completed.	To be monitored through quarterly reporting, quality assurance and the Operational Learning Forum.

Table 2