

Complaints performance

2023-24

Complaints to NCHA in 2023-24 show an increase on the previous year. The number of complaints has been affected by poor performance on repairs. NCHA has now brought its repairs service in-house, and performance is expected to improve.

The complaints we've received

Our website explains the [stages of complaints](#).

Complaints by type

Type	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Total 2023-24	Total 2022-23
Stage 1	209	253	295	270	1027	862
Stage 2	29	33	36	53	151	84
Councillor & MP	11	14	15	15	55	57
TOTAL	249	300	346	338	1233	1003

Complaints by stage

Category	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Total 2023-24	Total 2022-23
Colleague conduct	13	35	35	29	112	69
Service delivery	213	244	295	279	1031	757
Policy	10	5	-	12	27	26
Other	2	2	1	3	8	10
Total	238	286	331	323	1178*	862

*There is a difference of 55 reported complaints in the tables shown above. This is because we have now started to report on MP-related complaints.

Complaints related to our care and support services

Care and Support	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Total 2023-24	Total 2022-23
Project staff	4	9	4	6	22	17
Project	1	5	3	3	15	8
Service user	-	3	-	-	3	7
Other	1	1	1	1	5	3
Total	6	17	8	10	41	35

Complaint escalation

There was an increase in the number of Stage 1 complaints which were escalated to Stage 2. This was largely due to failed repairs appointments.

Escalations	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Total 2023-24	Total 2022-23
Total stage 1 complaints	209	253	296	270	1027	862
% Escalated to stage 2	9%	11.4%	15.5%	19.6%	13.7%	8.2%

Response times

The table below shows the average number of days to respond to a complaint (when the complaint was not extended). This has slightly decreased in line with the updated Ombudsman Code of 1 October 2022, which requires complaints to be responded to in 10 days.

Average days to close	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	2023-24	2022-23
Stage 1	11.8	10.3	13.5	9.8	11.35	12.7
Stage 2	5.7	12.3	15	13.3	11.5	10.0

319 Complaints slipped at Stage 1 (exceeding 10 days to respond and not extended) with a significant majority relating to responsive repairs, followed by rents and services.

Complaint outcomes

The table below shows the outcomes of complaints for Stage 1 and Stage 2.

Outcomes	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	2023-24	2022-23
Upheld	95	137	213	151	596	495
Partially Warranted	39	47	58	94	238	199
Not Upheld	36	50	58	62	206	207
Withdrawn	16	26	19	19	80	32
Total	186	260	348	326	1120	93

Complaint satisfaction

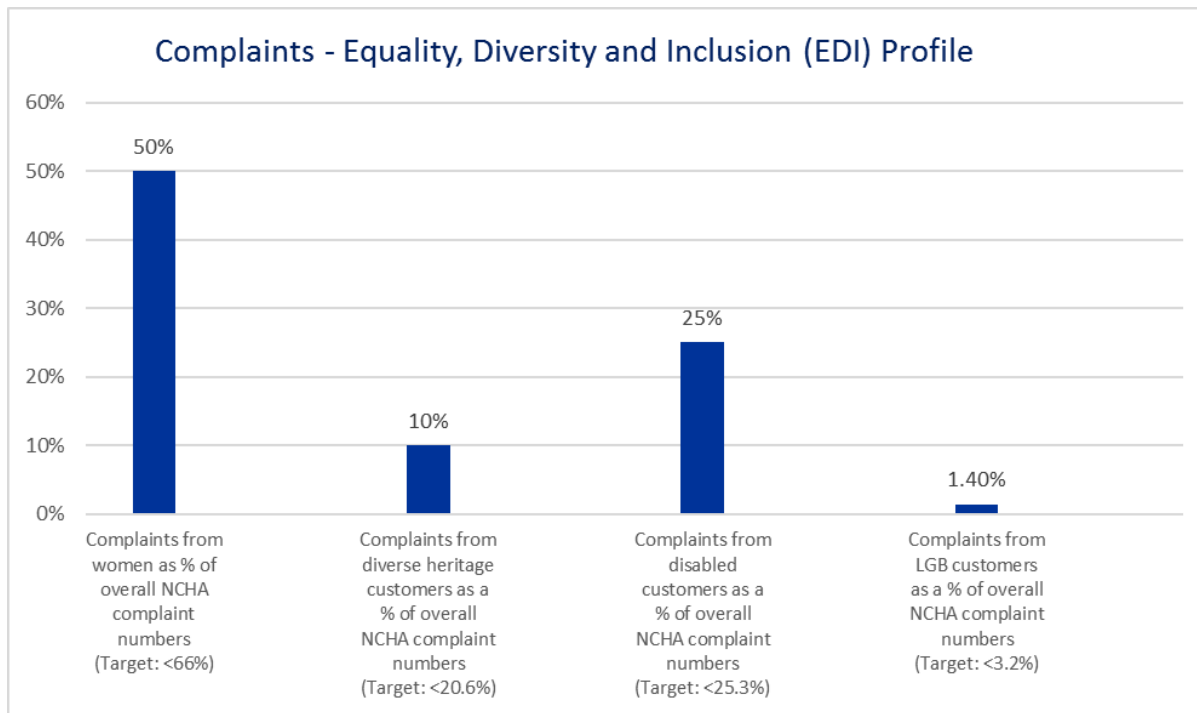
The table below shows complaint satisfaction for 2023-24. This data was gathered from telephone surveys, where customers were asked whether they were satisfied with the complaints process and its outcome.

Satisfaction	Q3 2022	Q4 2023	Q1 2023	Q2 2023	Q3 2023
Process	93%	76%	85%	88%	69%
Outcome	60%	51%	63%	77%	64%
Overall	43%	29%	44%	31%	53%

Equality and diversity

Complaints are reviewed against protected characteristics on an annual basis by NCHA’s equality, diversity and inclusion panel.

The graph below shows that our complaints performance is in line with our targets.



Lessons learned

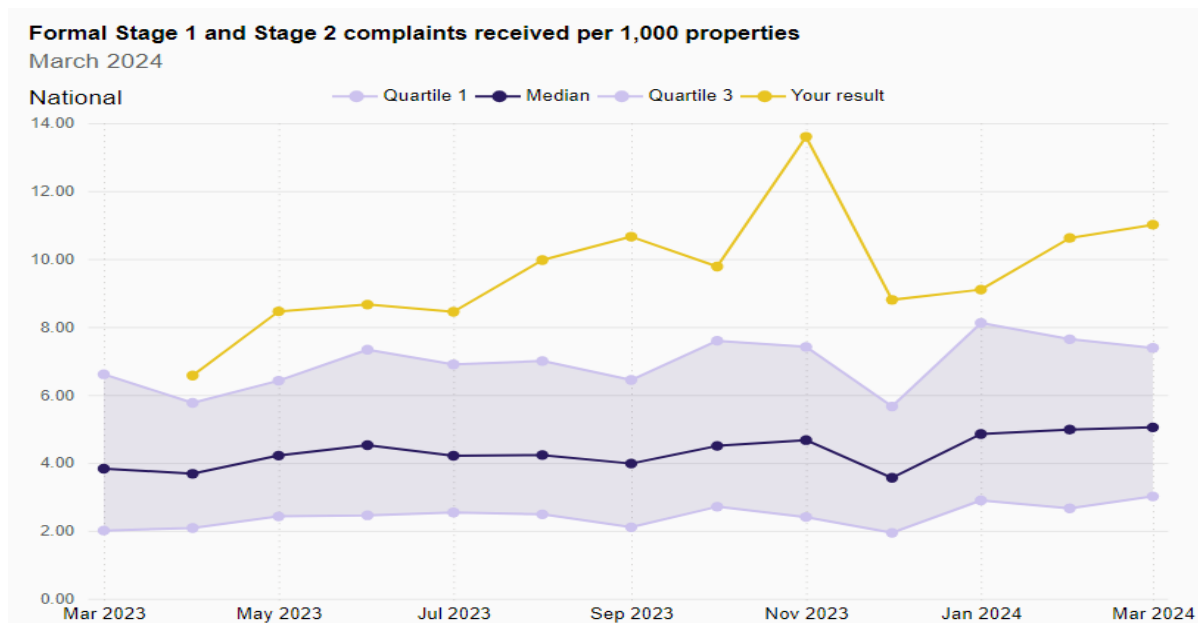
We act on the lessons we learn from the complaints we receive. When we investigate a complaint, we record our findings and work with managers around the business to make the required improvements.

Some lessons can be learned quickly, with improvements put into place. For more complex concerns, it can take a long time to make the changes that are required to better serve customers. Many of our recent complaints related to the performance of our repairs contractor – customers were, quite reasonably, unhappy at having to wait a long time for a repair to be carried out. We have worked to end the contract with our external repairs partner and bring repairs back in-house, meaning that repairs are carried out by NCHA’s own employees. Because of the backlog that had built up, this will take a while to get our response times back to where they should be, but things are already improving. We have also established a centralised complaints team so that we have a clear view of where customers need more from us.

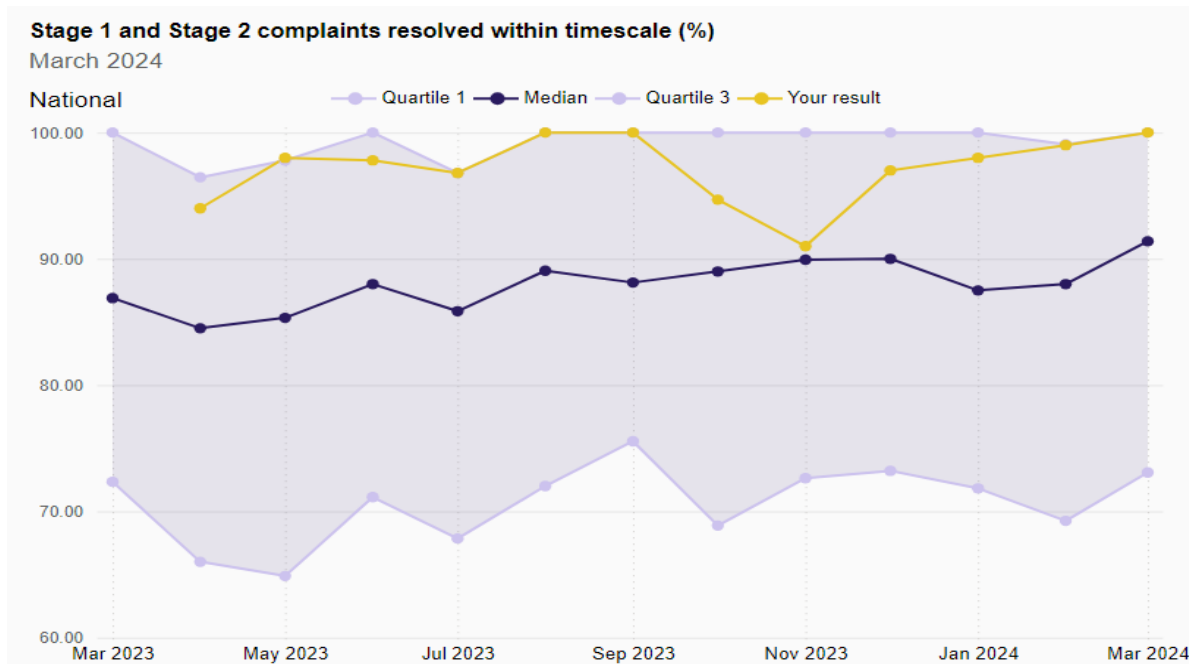
NCHA and its peers

HouseMark use data gathered from NCHA and its peers to compare performance between similar organisations. For the chart below, the data presented covers March 2023 to March 2024.

NCHA reports a higher-than-average number of complaints received. This can likely be attributed to a combination of both service pressures and improved accessibility for customers to report their complaint(s) compared with our peer group.



The table below demonstrates that NCHA had a higher-than-average performance in terms of complaints resolved within timescales.



Ombudsman

In the year 2023-24, we received 37 Ombudsman enquiries:

Of these enquiries, there were five cases that resulted in maladministration. We track these findings and ensure that managers and their teams take ownership of the recommended actions. This work is overseen by our senior leadership team.

Our response

The annual complaints report has been shared with our governing bodies. We highlighted the headlines of the report: complaints increased with respect to delays in repairs, compensation increased in year, and additional costs for decants incurred in year. Board members were keen to know when complaint numbers would start to decrease. They were also keen to see more examples of lessons learned and how these have become service improvements. This is an area of development for this year and we will have more detail on this in our next annual report. Board members were interested in whether forecasting and trends can be used to assess risk. They also wanted to see more information about the link between customers with protected characteristics and complaints.