



ANNUAL COMPLAINTS, PERFORMANCE AND SERVICE IMPROVEMENT REPORT

2026/27



1 FOREWORD



An introduction from Ruth Kettle,
CEO at Inspire North

I am delighted to present our third Annual Complaints, Performance and Service Improvement Report for the financial year 2025/26.

This year has been a landmark year as we completed our first full year as one united Community Benefit Society, Inspire North. We also welcomed Women's Counselling and Therapy Service to our team and are proud to have them join Bridging the Gap as one of our subsidiaries.

Our commitment to improving how we handle complaints remains a top priority. This year, we have expanded the scope of this report to provide a fully transparent overview of all complaints received, not just those under the jurisdiction of the Housing Ombudsman. This broader approach allows us to be more open and accountable to our clients, tenants, and stakeholders.

We have also made significant strides in aligning with the latest Housing Ombudsman and Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman policies, refreshing our training, and enhancing guidance for our teams to improve our complaints handling process.

Additionally, our well established governance structure ensures that we respond effectively to all complaints, concerns, compliments, and overall tenant and client engagement feedback.

We have completed our third Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSM) report, reinforcing our compliance with the Regulator of Social Housing and our dedication to transparency and accountability. While we celebrate our progress, we recognise that improvement is an ongoing journey. Our focus remains on enhancing our services and ensuring that we continue to exceed the expectations of our clients and tenants.

I would like to thank our team for their dedication and effort during this period of transformation. Their contributions have been essential in supporting our progress.

Warm regards,

Ruth Kettle
CEO, Inspire North

2 MEET OUR MEMBER RESPONSIBLE FOR COMPLAINTS (MRC)



A welcome from Dean Andrew Cooper,
Board Member and MRC

As a Board Member and Member Responsible for Complaints (MRC) for Inspire North, I am pleased to introduce the Annual Complaints Performance and Service Improvement Report for the financial year 2025/26.

I am encouraged by the measurable progress made over the past year in how Inspire North handles and learns from complaints. Performance has strengthened year-on-year, with complaint volumes remaining stable while timeliness has improved significantly.

Complaints acknowledged within 5 working days increased from 75% to 94%, and response-time compliance has improved across both housing and non-housing complaints. We have also sustained strong early resolution, with the vast majority of complaints resolved at Stage 1, and fewer cases escalating unnecessarily.

What I am most proud of is the way learning from complaints is now more consistently embedded within governance, training and service improvement activity. Compared with last year, there is clearer evidence that feedback is being translated into organisational learning rather than isolated fixes. I remain, however, clear that response times, particularly in complex cases, require continued focus.

I am committed to maintaining robust oversight, strengthening consistency, and ensuring our complaints process remains fair, timely, transparent and firmly centred on the experiences of tenants and clients. I will continue to champion all of this by bringing the topic up at board.

Dean Andrew Cooper
Independent Board Member and MRC

3 ABOUT US

We are Inspire North, a leading provider of health, housing and care services across the North of England, dedicated to empowering people and strengthening communities. We are proud to have completed our first full year as one unified Community Benefit Society (CBS), in which we brought together Inspire North, Community Links, and Foundation into one stronger, more resilient organisation. This transformation has enabled us to enhance the quality and impact of our services, delivering them in a more coordinated and innovative way to clients and tenants.

We provide a vast array of supported accommodation for people living with complex needs. Whether it's helping individuals manage a tenancy, improve budgeting and living skills, or access recovery-focused rehabilitation, we are committed to supporting people at every stage of their journey. Our resettlement services assist individuals who are homeless or at risk of homelessness due to factors such as offending history, family breakdown, domestic abuse, addiction, or mental health challenges.

We offer comprehensive domestic abuse services across the North of England, aiming to support victims, perpetrators, and families affected by domestic abuse.

Additionally, we provide specialist dementia services across Leeds, Calderdale, Bradford, and Kirklees, ensuring tailored support for individuals and their families.

Our services also include specialist mental health support for individuals experiencing anxiety and depression, psychosis, alcohol and substance misuse, complex needs, and personality disorders. Through our person-centred approach, we promote recovery, independence, and long-term stability.



4 INTRODUCTION



At Inspire North, feedback from our clients and tenants is central to how we deliver, assure and improve our services. Listening to people's experiences helps us understand what is working well and where we need to improve. We are committed to handling concerns and complaints fairly, consistently and in a person-centred way, viewing every piece of feedback as an opportunity to learn and strengthen service quality. Where things go wrong, we take responsibility and act to put matters right; where services are delivered well, we recognise and build on good practice.

This is our 2026/27 report covering the 2025/26 reporting year. During 2025/26, we continued to actively promote our feedback and complaints routes and to embed learning across the organisation. Our complaints handling arrangements remain fully aligned with the Housing Ombudsman's Complaints Handling Code and the Regulator of Social Housing's Consumer Standards. This report provides a comprehensive overview of all complaints received across Inspire North during the year, including those within the Housing Ombudsman's jurisdiction and those relating to our wider support and clinical services, reflecting our commitment to openness and transparency across all areas of our work.

Complaint volumes remained stable year-on-year, with the majority relating to frontline services and often involving individuals with complex needs. Despite this complexity, most complaints were resolved at Stage 1, demonstrating effective early resolution and limited escalation. While some investigations reasonably took longer to complete, we achieved a significant improvement in compliance with complaint response times compared to the previous year, reflecting strengthened oversight and improved complaint management practice.

Throughout the year, we have continued to use complaints as a key source of organisational learning. Our Complaints Policy and procedures were further enhanced in line with learning and recommendations from recent Housing Ombudsman Spotlight and learning reports, including the Learning from Severe Maladministration – February 2026 report, which focuses on the importance of timely, empathetic and meaningful apologies. This has strengthened our approach to acknowledging impact, rebuilding trust and delivering appropriate remedies alongside service improvements.

By analysing themes, identifying service risks and tracking actions to completion, we use complaint outcomes to drive continuous improvement across housing, support and clinical services. This report sets out how tenant and client feedback has informed our work during 2025/26 and how we will continue to use the complaints process to support accountability, learning and service quality in the year ahead.

"I feel genuinely valued as a tenant my voice is heard, and my wellbeing matters."

-Beacon Tenant



5 SELF-ASSESSMENT

As part of our ongoing commitment to maintaining high standards of service and transparency, Inspire North is pleased to present our self-assessment against the most recent Complaints Handling Code, which took effect on 1st April 2024.



We have conducted an in-depth review of our policy and procedures, ensuring that they meet the required standards. Our self-assessment was reviewed and updated in April 2026 as part of our annual process and we are happy to confirm that we are fully compliant with the latest Complaints Handling Code.

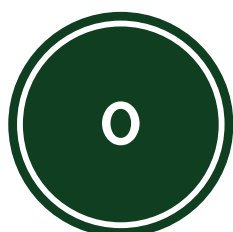
This marks an important step in our ongoing commitment to continuous improvement and regulatory compliance. We will continue to refine our practices, ensuring they remain in line with the Code and best practices for delivering exceptional service to our clients and tenants.

Alongside this, we continue to strengthen our assurance arrangements in relation to the Regulator of Social Housing's revised Consumer and Economic Standards, which came into effect on 1 April 2024.

While we are not currently subject to routine regulatory inspection due to the size of our housing portfolio, we are embedding these standards into our governance, policy review, and performance monitoring frameworks to ensure consistency with regulatory expectations. Our approach focuses on transparency, accountability and learning from tenant feedback, including complaints, service requests and engagement activity.

This enables us to identify themes, address service risks early, and drive continuous improvement across our housing services. We will continue to monitor regulatory developments and assess our readiness, ensuring that our practices remain proportionate, robust and focused on delivering safe, responsive and high-quality services for our tenants and communities.

Findings of Non-Compliance with the Code by the Ombudsman



We are proud to once again report that no instances of non-compliance with the Code have been identified by the Ombudsman, further demonstrating our commitment to maintaining the highest standards and meeting the needs of our clients, tenants, and stakeholders.

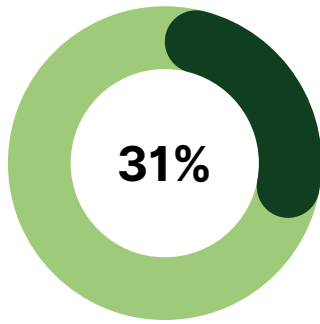
A copy of our self-assessment is available on our website, and we continue to seek opportunities for improvement.

6 HOUSING COMPLAINTS: HOW WE PERFORMED

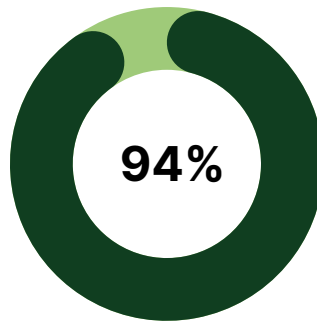
The information below outlines our complaints performance for the 2025/26 financial year for housing-related complaints that fall under the jurisdiction of the Housing Ombudsman. These complaints typically relate to property condition, maintenance, repairs, and tenancy management.



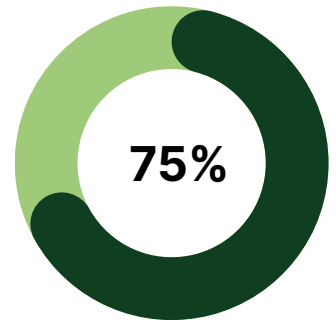
**housing related
complaints received**



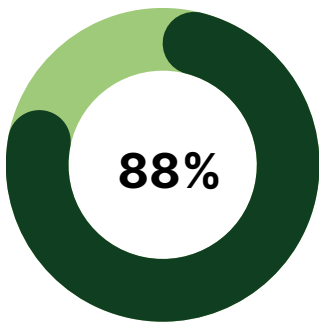
**of total
complaints received**



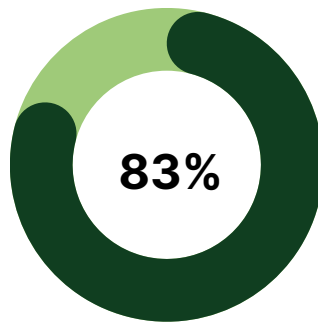
**acknowledged within
5 working days
(KPI 1)**



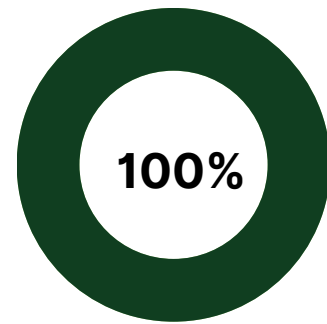
**responded to within
10/20 working days
(KPI 2)**



**of complaints
resolved at stage 1**



**complaints up-held or
partly up-held**



**increase in housing
complaints compared to 2024/25**



Housing-related complaints accounted for 31% of all complaints in 2025/26, representing an increase from 100% in the previous year. While this reflects a higher proportion of complaints, performance in complaint resolution remains strong. 88% of housing complaints were resolved at Stage 1, and 83% were upheld or partly upheld, compared with 100% in the previous year. This indicates continued openness in recognising service shortcomings and addressing them appropriately.

All housing complaints are routinely reviewed through our Housing Governance process, where each concern is examined to identify root causes, possible service failings, and the actions required to prevent recurrence. Insights and actions arising from this process are shared with all employees on a quarterly basis, supporting organisational learning and continuous improvement.

To strengthen oversight and drive service improvement further, we have established our Housing Governance Sub-Group. This group provides focused scrutiny of housing-related issues and reports directly into the main Housing Governance Group, ensuring clear accountability, effective escalation, and alignment with our strategic priorities and regulatory responsibilities.



Overall, housing complaints remain relatively low. Issues relating to property condition or anti-social behaviour are typically resolved at an early stage and do not progress to the formal complaints process. This reflects the effectiveness of our responsive repairs procedures, robust anti-social behaviour policy, and our commitment to delivering an efficient, timely, and customer-focused repairs service that maintains properties to a good standard.

These arrangements support our legal obligations under tenancy, licence, and management agreements. It remains our policy to ensure that all properties we own or manage are safe, well-maintained, and legally compliant. This includes meeting the Decent Homes Standard, ensuring homes are fit for human habitation, and complying with the Regulator of Social Housing's 2024 Consumer Standards, particularly those relating to quality and safety.

We undertake regular property surveys, prioritise and triage repair requests based on urgency, and work closely with partners to deliver responsive repairs, planned maintenance programmes, and necessary adaptations. These activities underpin our compliance with the Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs), through which we report annually on landlord performance and conduct tenant perception surveys every two years. This ensures transparency, accountability, and a strong focus on service quality from the tenant's perspective.

Taken together, our approach to service delivery, governance, compliance, and tenant engagement plays a critical role in minimising property-related and anti-social behaviour complaints while supporting positive outcomes for tenants.



Learning Through Accountability: Acting on Missed KPIs to Improve Complaint Handling

While we did not achieve our complaints KPI target of 100% for this year, compliance with this acknowledgement KPI has improved significantly, increasing from 75% in 2024/25 to 94% in 2025/26. This shortfall relates to a single complaint that missed the five-working-day acknowledgement deadline. This oversight highlighted a knowledge gap for the Investigating Officer, which has now been mitigated through targeted training and ongoing coaching.

This improvement reflects the collective efforts of operational services and the Quality & Compliance Team in strengthening complaints management processes and ensuring that we respond promptly and appropriately to clients and tenants.



KPI 2 (Response time) delays related to four complaints managed by two Investigating Officers. For the first Investigating Officer, two complaints fell outside the response timescale. One complaint exceeded the deadline by one day, while the second was four weeks overdue. In addition, this Investigating Officer also missed an acknowledgement deadline in one case. A review identified a need to strengthen understanding of complaints handling requirements, and this has been addressed through additional targeted training to reinforce compliance with Inspire North's Complaints Handling Policy and Procedures.



The remaining two delayed complaints related to a second Investigating Officer. Of these, one complaint was one day late and one was ten days late, both arising in the context of a complex property-related issue. This Investigating Officer has also received additional training and coaching, with a specific focus on complaint response times, escalation points, and managing complexity alongside procedural compliance. Ongoing support is in place to ensure sustained improvement.

Importantly, 88% of all complaints were resolved at Stage 1, with only two complaints escalating to Stage 2, demonstrating generally effective early resolution. One Stage 2 complaint related to an incident in which a tenant's belongings were mistakenly removed due to a misunderstanding around the property address. The second Stage 2 complaint involved a complex investigation concerning multiple and ongoing property-related concerns raised by a client's advocate.



These Stage 2 cases demonstrate the value of a robust complaints process in enabling escalation where appropriate, ensuring thorough investigation, and providing assurance that tenants' concerns are taken seriously and addressed transparently.

While a small number of cases did not meet target timescales, each has generated meaningful learning and has directly informed improvements to employee knowledge, oversight, and complaints handling practice. This learning continues to shape enhancements to our systems, processes, and approach to complaints management, supporting continuous improvement and greater consistency in future performance.

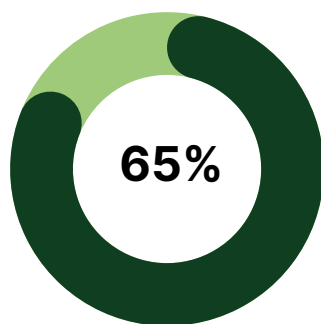


7 NON-HOUSING COMPLAINTS: HOW WE PERFORMED

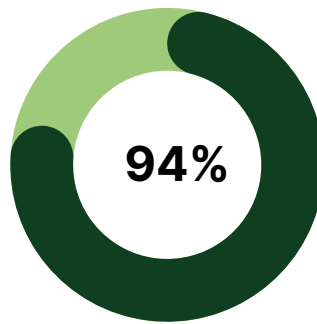
The information below outlines our complaints performance for the 2025/26 financial year across all other areas of our work, including housing service's complaints unrelated to property. This includes concerns raised about the support we provide in our housing services, as well as complaints related to other areas of Inspire North's work:



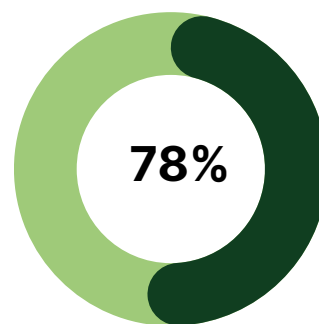
non-property complaints received



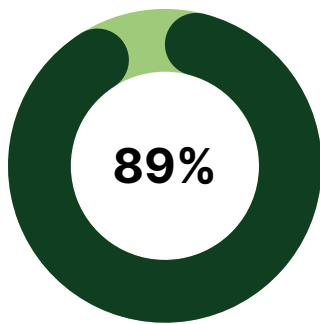
of all complaints received



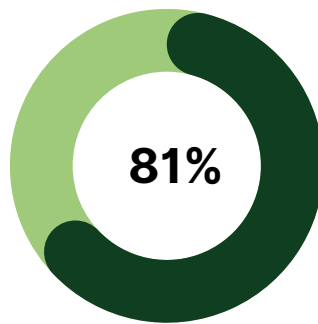
acknowledged within 5 working days



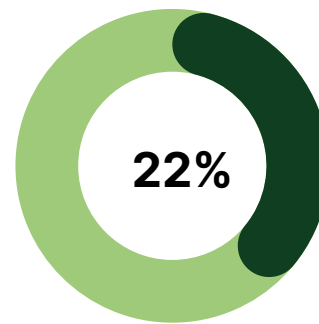
responded to within 10/20 working days (KPI 2)



of complaints resolved at stage 1



complaints up-held or partly up-held



decrease in non-housing complaints compared to 2024/25

65% of complaints related to support services, which often involve complex needs and require more detailed investigation. Coordinating interviews and engaging all relevant parties can be challenging, meaning some investigations reasonably take longer to ensure outcomes are fair, accurate and person-centred.

Despite this, compliance with KPI 2 (response times) improved significantly from 53% in 2024/25 to 78% in 2025/26, demonstrating stronger oversight and improved complaints management.

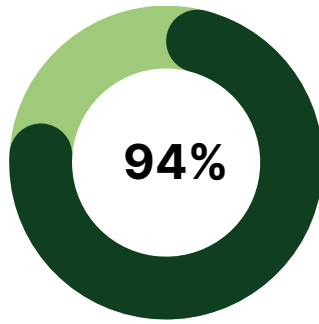
Where additional time is needed, we follow our complaints procedure and issue a formal extension letter, limited to 10 or 20 working days depending on the stage, ensuring transparency and procedural compliance.

8 TOTAL COMPLAINTS: HOW WE PERFORMED

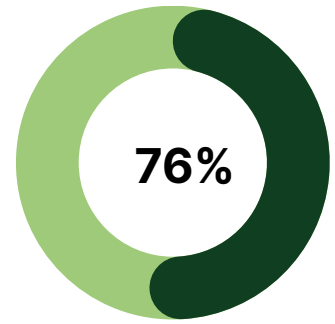
The information below outlines our overall complaints performance for the 2025/26 financial year across all areas of our work. This includes housing complaints, clinical & support related complaints as well as any complaints received in relation to our Head Office.



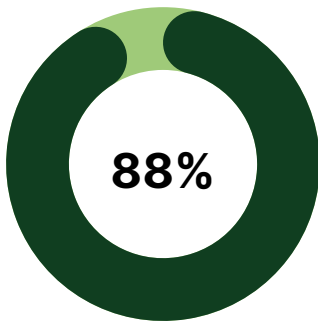
**total
complaints received**



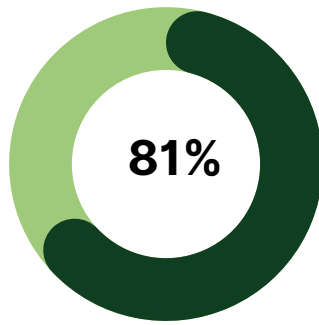
**acknowledged within
5 working days**



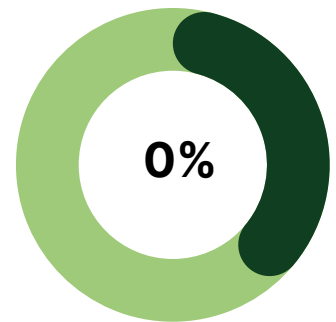
**responded to
(completed) within 10/20
working days**



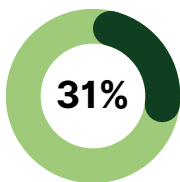
**of complaints
resolved at stage 1**



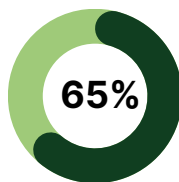
**complaints up-held or
partly up-held**



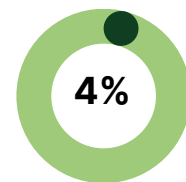
**increase/decrease in complaints
compared to 2025/26**



16 - Housing Complaints



34 - Clinical Complaints



2 - Head Office Complaints

During 2025/26, 52 complaints were received, with strong performance in early-stage handling. 94% were acknowledged within five working days and 76% were responded to within the 10/20-day target, reflecting generally good compliance, though response times remain a focus area.

88% of complaints were resolved at Stage 1, demonstrating effective early resolution and limited escalation. Of all complaints, 81% were upheld or partly upheld, showing openness in acknowledging service failings and using complaints to drive learning and improvement. Complaint volumes were unchanged year-on-year.

9 SERVICE IMPROVEMENT AND LEARNING

During 2025/26, we focused on strengthening how we learn from complaints, concerns, compliments and wider feedback, and on evidencing how this learning leads to tangible service improvement. Building on the frameworks, policies and governance arrangements already in place, we concentrated on embedding good practice, improving consistency, and strengthening assurance.

Throughout the year, feedback from clients and tenants has continued to shape service improvements, inform decision-making and influence how we develop our systems, training and processes. This section outlines the practical steps we have taken to improve complaint handling, enhance transparency and accessibility, and ensure learning is shared and acted upon across the organisation.

Strengthening Policy and Regulatory Alignment

We continued to refine our Compliments, Concerns and Complaints (Feedback) Policy throughout the year to ensure it remains clear, accessible and aligned with evolving regulatory and legislative expectations. A key development was the introduction of a dedicated section on data protection complaints, clarifying how these are identified, recorded and managed. This change reflects Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) guidance, now recognised as good practice, and anticipates the Data (Use and Access) Act 2025, which is expected to introduce a legal requirement for this approach from 19 June 2026. By acting early, we have improved clarity for complainants and employees alike, while strengthening compliance and transparency.



Investing in Better Systems and Learning Capture

Recognising that effective learning relies on robust systems, we invested funding from our Innovation Fund to commission Datix to further improve our compliments, concerns and complaints system. This investment focused on:

- Making the overall complaints process clearer and easier to follow for investigating officers
- Improving how actions, remedies and learning outcomes are captured and tracked
- Strengthening organisational oversight of recurring themes and service risks

These improvements will be implemented during 2026/27 and will support both operational effectiveness and strategic learning, ensuring insights from complaints are consistently recorded and acted upon.

A Culture of Continuous Improvement

Throughout 2025/26, we have continued to embed a culture where complaints are recognised as an opportunity to learn, improve and rebuild trust.

By strengthening policy, systems, training, governance and assurance, we have improved our ability to listen, respond and act on feedback effectively. This positions us strongly to meet future regulatory requirements and to deliver services that are equitable, transparent and responsive to the needs of our clients and tenants.



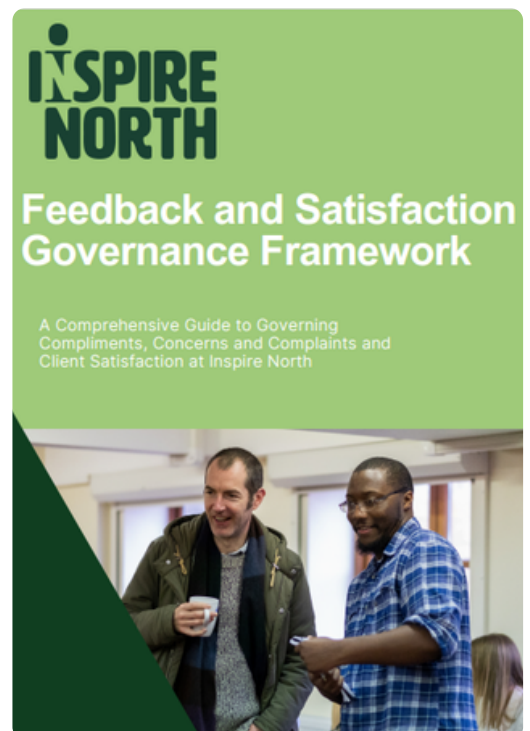
Embedding Learning Through Practical Tools and Guidance

Complaints were consistently reviewed through established governance arrangements, ensuring robust oversight, constructive challenge, and clear accountability. All housing-related complaints are reviewed by the Housing Governance Group, with insight also shared with our Client and Tenant Voice Panel. Themes, learning and agreed actions are communicated across the organisation, ensuring feedback leads to service improvement beyond individual cases.

As committed to in our previous report, we also completed a full internal audit of complaints handling during 2025/26. The audit provided independent assurance on our compliance with regulatory standards, policies, procedures, training and governance arrangements. The audit concluded positively, identifying only minor recommendations, all of which have now been fully implemented. These improvements included:

- Adding a dedicated section on reasonable adjustments for complainants
- Introducing prompts within acknowledgement letter templates to ensure adjustments are considered and recorded early
- Updating the complaints tracking system to clearly identify and monitor any agreed adjustments.
- Strengthening guidance in the Complaints Playbook on KPI calculation and performance monitoring.

Implementing these recommendations has further strengthened fairness, accessibility and compliance within our complaints process.



To support consistent and high-quality complaint handling, we continued to enhance the practical tools available to employees. Our Complaint Handling Playbook, which provides step-by-step guidance for investigating officers, was updated several times during the year to reflect regulatory insight, assurance activity and organisational learning. Following publication of the Housing Ombudsman's February 2026 report, Learning from Severe Maladministration – Apologies as a Remedy, we strengthened the playbook with detailed guidance on apologies. This includes when apologies are required, what constitutes a meaningful apology, and how apologies should form part of effective remedy rather than a procedural response. This supports a compassionate, accountable and learning-led approach to complaint resolution.



The playbook was also updated to include clear guidance on how complaint handling KPIs are calculated, improving consistency, transparency and confidence in reporting and performance oversight and guidance on data protection related complaints.

Developing Capability Through Expert-Led Training



During the year, we reviewed how complaints-handling training was delivered to ensure it remained practical, relevant and effective. As a result, complaints-handling training for our leaders is now delivered by Quality and Compliance managers, rather than the central training team. This ensures training is provided by subject-matter experts with direct experience of complaint investigation, regulatory expectations and Ombudsman learning.

The approach strengthens ownership, improves confidence in complaint handling, and embeds learning from real cases and themes across services. Mandatory annual complaints training for all employees continues to underpin consistent standards and expectations.



Insight and Actions

As part of our continuous improvement process, we have identified and communicated key insights from feedback from complaints and concerns to help us improve how we deliver our services, these include:



Ensuring clients receive the most appropriate support:

We are proud to have:



Strengthened signposting processes to direct clients to services best suited to their needs.



Enhanced employee awareness of available internal and external support services.



Reinforced a client-centred approach, prioritising client well-being and holding regular check-ins with clients to ensure their goals are being met.

Embedded repairs and maintenance feedback:

We are proud to have:



Introduced a structured repairs and maintenance satisfaction feedback process to support continuous service improvement.



Clients and tenants can provide feedback at any stage regarding repairs or maintenance work completed within their property.



Feedback is reviewed immediately and considered in collaboration with the relevant service and tenant, with appropriate actions taken to resolve any issues in a timely and effective manner.



Developed better trauma informed communication, professional judgement, and sensitivity in our interactions

We are proud to have:



Reinforced trauma informed communication principles across services, with a focus on empathy, timing, and sensitivity.



Encouraged staff to consider how and when sensitive information is discussed, particularly where a client may be emotionally affected.



Used reflective learning and supervision to support staff development and continuous improvement in communication practice.



Conducting effective complaint investigations for anonymous complainants:

We are proud to have:



Developed a consistent investigation process for both named and anonymous complaints.



Implemented system enhancements to ensure that all anonymous complaints are assigned a formal outcome following investigation.



Strengthened compliance checks for the handling of anonymous complaints to ensure consistency and procedural compliance.

Strengthened our complaints system and communicated this with our clients & tenants

We are proud to have:



Introduced an additional question within the client and tenant engagement survey to understand awareness of the complaints process and to inform targeted actions where gaps are identified.



Produced client and tenant leaflets and posters to provide clear information on how to share feedback, including compliments, concerns, complaints, and general feedback.



Introduced open and transparent complaint discussions at our quarterly Client and Tenant Voice meetings and incorporated findings from client and tenant engagement surveys into our quarterly Insights & Actions, with outcomes communicated to all employees to support learning and improvement.



Maintaining strong hygiene standards in communal areas

We are proud to have:



Established a regular schedule for employees to check in on the cleanliness and maintenance of both individual and shared accommodations.



Provided resources and education to ensure clients have access to basic cleaning supplies and short workshops or visual guides on maintaining a hygienic space.



Fostered communal responsibility and trust through encouragement of shared responsibility in communal areas through client-led initiatives like cleaning rotas or “community care” groups.



As we reflect on the progress made, we remain committed to building on these accomplishments and driving continuous improvement.

The year ahead presents opportunities to deepen our impact and continue prioritising the needs and voices of those we support.

For more information about the amazing work we do at Inspire North and our complaints and feedback handling processes:

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