

June 2024

Torus's Board of Management statement

Torus Group Board considered the Self-Assessment against the Housing Ombudsman Code 2024, the Review of Torus's Complaints Performance 2023-24 and the Service Improvement Plan 2024-25 at its meeting on 27 June 2024.

These documents have been submitted as approved to the Housing Ombudsman Service and provide a thorough assessment both of compliance and performance in complaints handling.

Complaints in the social housing sector are at a record high, the Ombudsman points out in its current business plan that in 2023-24 the Service found maladministration in 73% of the cases investigated (it was 59% in 2022-23), and that compensation remedies totalled over £6 million (compared to £1.1m in 2022-23). This in the wake of the tenfold increase in the sector for Severe Maladministration findings in 2021-22.

Torus strives to provide homes and services of the highest quality, but there are occasions when we do not meet our own standards and we fall short of our residents expectations. In common with other providers, we have seen complaints numbers grow sharply. In 2023-24 formal complaints to Torus doubled from the previous year to over 3,000 for the year, and formal investigations by the Housing Ombudsman tripled. This together with our performance in responding to these complaints within stated timescales at 84.5% is a concern to the Board of Management.

During the 2023-24-year, Torus invested in the creation of a central complaints handling team to help address complaint volumes, improve responses to residents and promote learning and service improvement. The Review of Performance shows early signs of improvement in these areas alongside improved engagement of involved customers and strengthened oversight at the Landlord Operations Committee and Board.

The Service Improvement Plan for 2024-25 is comprehensive and ambitious. It will be reported to Torus's Scrutiny Group and supported by tenant inspection where they see fit.

Overall, the Board is satisfied that the improvements are well-targeted and will contribute to an improved experience for Torus customers.