

BRIGHTER FUTURES HOUSING ASSOCIATION LTD

Annual Feedback Performance and Service Improvement Report 2024-2025



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Introduction.

Welcome to our second annual feedback performance and service improvement report. Brighter Futures Housing Association Ltd takes all feedback seriously and we want to learn from them in order to continuously improve the services we offer to our customers. The purpose of this report is to provide a summary of our feedback handling performance and how we have learnt from the issues raised and made the necessary changes to improve the experience for our customers.

Background to the report: Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code.

Brighter Futures is a member of the Housing Ombudsman Service which is the body that investigates social tenants' complaints when they are not resolved internally. The Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023 introduced several changes to complaint handling for social landlords like Brighter Futures, aiming to enhance how we manage feedback. This new legislation strengthened the Housing Ombudsman's role, enabling it to publish and monitor a mandatory code of practice for complaint handling from 1 April 2024.

The Report sets out how we've scrutinised and challenged our compliance against the Housing Ombudsman Service Complaints Handling Code (Code) by reviewing:

1. Our annual self-assessment against the Code to ensure our Feedback Policy and Complaints Procedure meets the requirement.
2. Analysis of our complaint handling performance. The analysis includes statistics showing the volume of complaints, types of complaints, well as other details.
3. The service improvements made because of our learning from complaints
4. Any findings of non-compliance with the Code by the Ombudsman.
5. Actions following any annual report about our performance from the Ombudsman and any other relevant reports or publications produced by the Ombudsman in relation to our work
6. Our Boards scrutiny, challenge and response to the report.

Our Feedback Policy and Complaints Procedure are available at www.brighter-futures.org.uk/contact-us/complaints-and-compliments/

The annual complaints and service improvement report 2024-2025.

The report looks at our complaint handling performance over the period from 1st April 2024 to 31st March 2025. In this this period there were sixteen stage 1 complaints and only one complaint required a stage 2 investigation. This report can be found under our **Getting in Touch – Complaints and Compliments** page on our website www.brighter-futures.org.uk/contact-us/complaints-and-compliments/

Complaint handling code self-assessment.

The Housing Ombudsman requires social housing providers to re-assess annually against the code to demonstrate how we follow the code and ideas to be improved upon. We have carried out this re-assessment and the latest self-assessment is published on our website for full transparency. This can be found on our website under our **Getting in Touch – Complaints and Compliments** page on our website www.brighter-futures.org.uk/contact-us/complaints-and-compliments/

Findings and publications by the Housing Ombudsman Service.

In 2024-2025 we:

- ✓ Have not been the subject of any Housing Ombudsman complaint investigations.
- ✓ Did not receive any findings of non-compliance by the Housing Ombudsman Service.
- ✓ Did not receive any Complaint Handling Failure Orders (CHFO).
- ✓ Did not receive any findings of maladministration in complaint handling.
- ✓ Have not been the subject of a Housing Ombudsman Service annual report as a landlord.
- ✓ Have not been the subject of any other relevant reports by the Housing Ombudsman Service.

Our performance and learning from complaints.

By recording and analysing complaint data we can identify and address the root cause of complaints, identify any training opportunities and service improvements. This report will show how we have learned from the complaints we have received and how we have addressed issues raised through our complaints process.

Board's response to our annual complaints and service improvement report 2024-2025.

The Board and the Jeff Moore, the Member Responsible for Complaints (MRC) must acknowledge the Housing Ombudsman's complaint handling self-assessment and the contents of this report.

The Board acknowledges its responsibility for establishing a positive feedback handling culture ensuring that all feedback is listened too and acted upon and that our customers voice is strengthened at all levels across the organisation.

The Board's response to the Annual Feedback and Performance Report 2024/2025 can be found on our website under the **Complaints and Compliments** page www.brighter-futures.org.uk/contact-us/complaints-and-compliments/

Negative Feedback - Complaints:**The volume of complaints received in 2024/2025 (quantitative indicator).**

- ✓ Throughout 2024/2025 we received 16 complaints.
- ✓ We closed 15 formal complaints during this period.
- ✓ 1 complaint is still ongoing .
- ✓ Only 1 complaint was progressed to stage 2 of our internal complaints process.
- ✓ We did not refuse any complaints during this period.
- ✓ We had no complaints reviewed externally by the Housing Ombudsman Service.

The volume of complaints received by quarter (quantitative indicator).

The table below details the volume of complaints per quarter over the reporting year 2024/2025.

Quarter 1 April – June 2024	Quarter 2 July – September 2024	Quarter 3 October – December 2024	Quarter 4 January – March 2025
4	4	3 *	5

**This denotes where the figure includes a stage 2 escalation request.*

The volume of complaints that were not accepted in 2024/2025 (quantitative indicator).

In the reporting year 2024/2025 there were no complaints that we did not accept. However, we do recognise that some issues are best dealt with outside of the complaints process, for, example, our anti-social behaviour policy (ASB) and these are directed to the Housing Management Team. Our Feedback Policy: complaints, comments and compliments provides examples of some situations, and circumstances, where we will deal with a complaint differently and our complaint handling awareness training supports staff to recognise the difference between a service request e.g. a first-time repair, a complaint and an ASB service request.

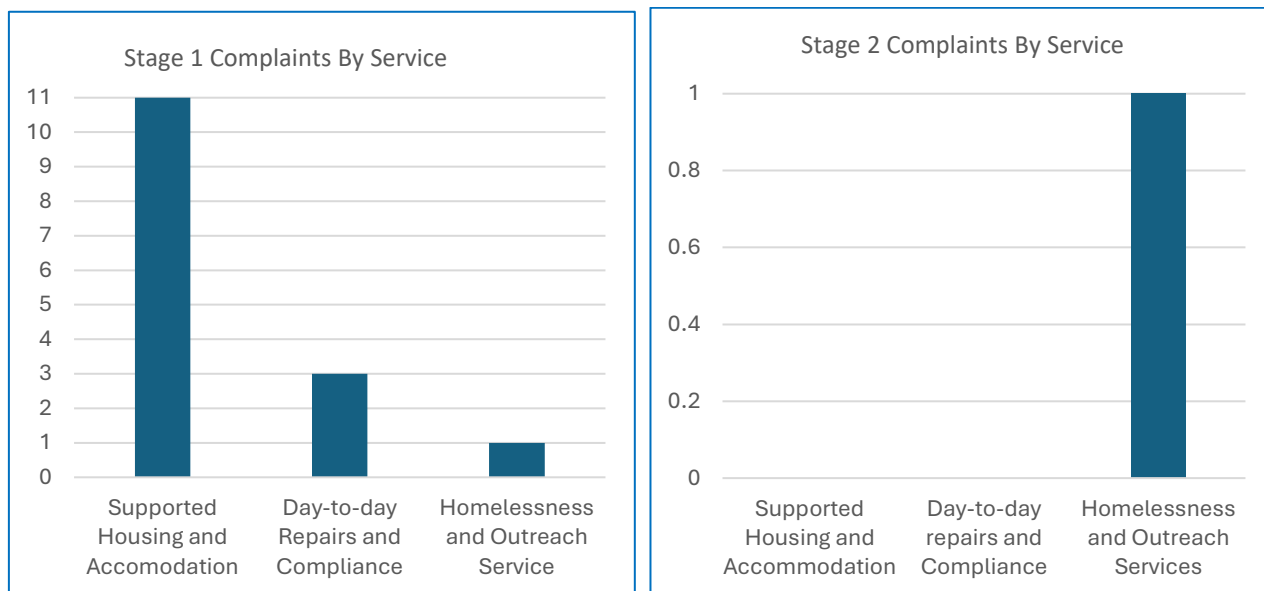
How were the complaints received for 2024/2025 (quantitative indicator).

We provide a variety of different communication channels for customers to submit complaints. In 2024/2025 we received complaints in the following ways:

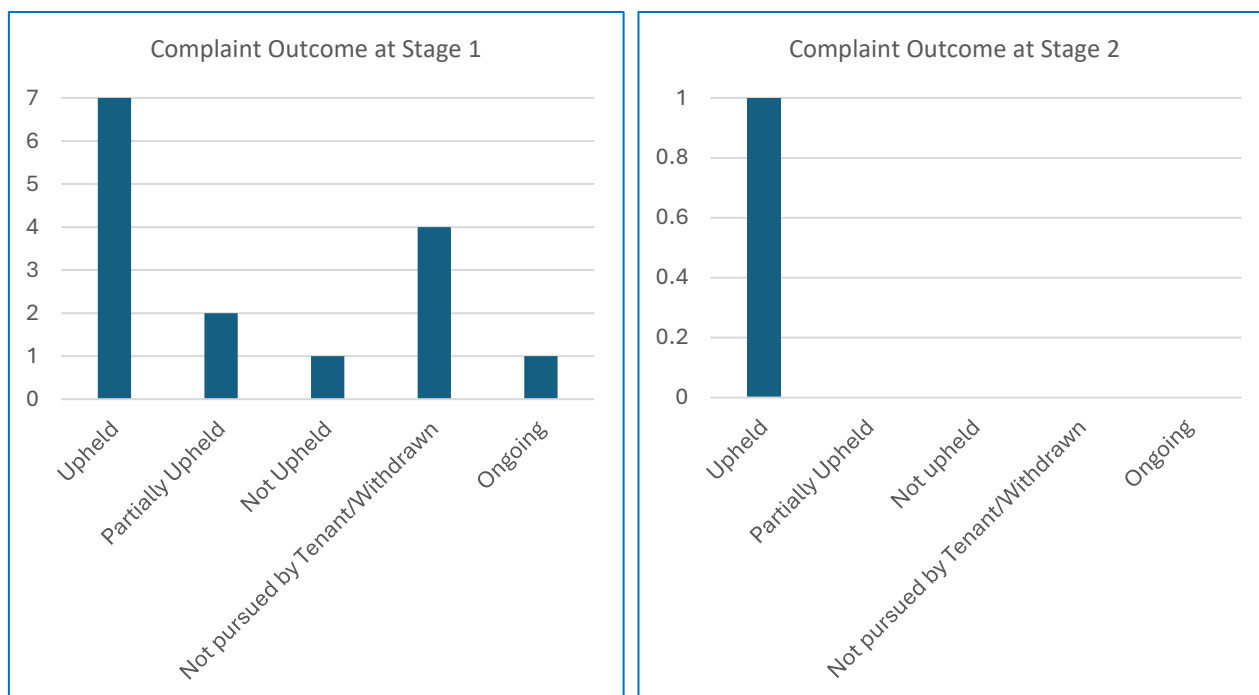
Way Complaint Was Submitted	Number
Complaints inbox	6
Over the telephone	5
Customers services email address	1
Complaint/feedback form	1
Letter	2
Central inbox	1

Complaints by Service for 2024/2025 (quantitative indicator).

This section shows the number of stage 1 and stage 2 complaints received by service.



Complaints outcomes for 2024/2025 (quantitative indicator).



Complaints outcomes per quarter (quantitative indicator).

This section shows the outcomes of the complaints we handled during 2024/2025. Once a complaint has been investigated the outcome of the complaint is categorised as upheld, partially upheld or not upheld.

Number of Complaints	Quarter 1 April – June 2024	Quarter 1 April – June 2024
Received	Number of Complaints received at Stage 1	Number of Complaints received at Stage 2
Total	4	0
Upheld	2	0
Partially Upheld	1	0
Not Upheld	1	0

Number of Complaints	Quarter 2 July – September 2024	Quarter 2 July – September 2024
Received	Number of Complaints received at Stage 1	Number of Complaints received at Stage 2
Total	4	0
Upheld	3	0
Partially Upheld	1	0
Not Upheld	0	0

Number of Complaints	Quarter 3 October – December 2024	Quarter 3 October – December 2024
Received	Number of Complaints received at Stage 1	Number of Complaints received at Stage 2
Total	2	1
Upheld	1	1
Partially Upheld	0	0
Not Upheld	0	0
Not Pursued/Withdrawn	1	0

Number of Complaints	Quarter 4 January – March 2025	Quarter 4 January – March 2025
Received	Number of Complaints received at Stage 1	Number of Complaints received at Stage 2
Total	5	0
Upheld	1	0
Partially Upheld	0	0
Not Upheld	0	0
Not Pursued/Withdrawn	3	0
Ongoing	1	0

Complaint Timescales.

Stage 1

The Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code states:

- ✓ A stage 1 complaint must be logged and acknowledged within **5** working days of receipt.
- ✓ A stage 1 full response must be issued within **10** working days of being acknowledged.
- ✓ This timescale can be extended up to a further **10** working days due to complexity of case and any further extension must be only with good reason.

Stage 2

The Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code states:

- ✓ A stage 2 complaint must be logged and acknowledged within **5** working days of escalation request.
- ✓ A final response at Stage 2 must be issued within **20** working days of being acknowledged.
- ✓ Any further extension must be only with good reason.

Our Response Timescales

The tables below show how we complied to the timescales set out in the Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code. We continue to make complaints a main priority to ensure that are customers are receiving a high-quality service from ourselves.

Acknowledged at Stage 1

	Quarter 1 April – June 2024	Quarter 2 July – September 2024	Quarter 3 October – December 2024	Quarter 4 January – March 2025
No of days	2.5	3.75	3	1

Stage 1 Response

	Quarter 1 April – June 2024	Quarter 2 July – September 2024	Quarter 3 October – December 2024	Quarter 4 January – March 2025
No of days	6.5*	7	8	9

**1 complaint was issued within an extension of 10 working days.*

Acknowledged at Stage 2

	Quarter 1 April – June 2024	Quarter 2 July – September 2024	Quarter 3 October – December 2024	Quarter 4 January – March 2025
No of days	0	0	3	0

Stage 2 Response

	Quarter 1 April – June 2024	Quarter 2 July – September 2024	Quarter 3 October – December 2024	Quarter 4 January – March 2025
No of days	0	0	20	0

Learning and Improvement from complaints for 2024/2025 (qualitative indicator).

Complaints are a valuable source of information about our services. Once we have dealt with complaints it is important that we review them as this help us to identify underlying or reoccurring issues and where potential improvements can be made. We also monitor complaints to identify any trends; this applies to whether the complaint was upheld or not. The following 'Customer said ... We did' identifies some of the lessons learnt and changes made from complaints in the last 12 months.

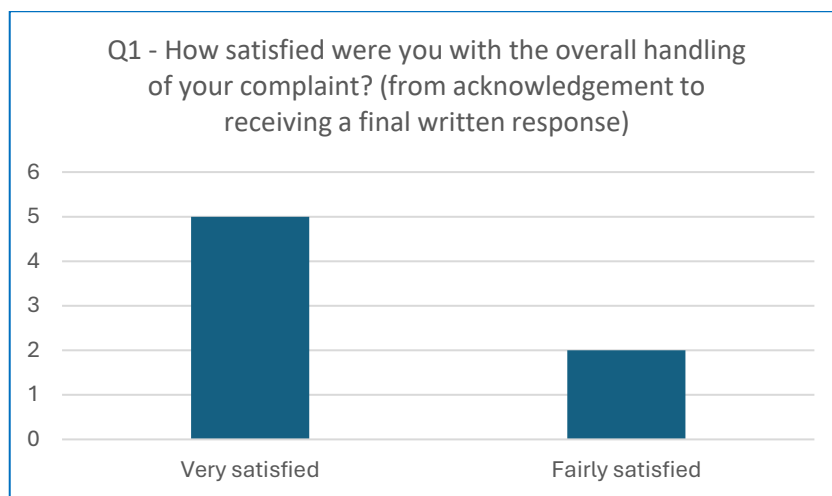
Customer Said..	Root Cause of Complaint	We Did...
✓ The customer reported that they did not hear the intercom buzzer although they were in the property to allow access to the property services operative to enter the building to repair the faulty washing machine. ✓ No phone call was made by the property services operative to check if the customer was in when they could get no answer from the intercom system.	✓ The Intercom system not working so repair appointment was missed.	✓ Property services operatives to be issued with a key to the communal access at the customers location. ✓ Intercom was fixed ✓ Property services operatives have been instructed to call the customer if they are unable to obtain access to their individual property before leaving, to minimise missed repair appointments.
✓ Customer had to contact property services near the end of the day to find out if someone would still be visiting as no one had arrived to carry out the repair as arranged.	✓ Poor communication between Property services team and customer.	✓ Customer should have been contacted by property services team as soon it was identified that they would not be able to visit as arranged. ✓ Property services team have been instructed to contact tenants as soon it is identified that an operative is not able to visit as arranged.
✓ Customer did not like the perceived tone that support workers used when speaking with them during a support visit.	✓ Faulty telephone line, broken intercom system hindering repair work to be carried and appointments conflicting with other appointments may have exacerbated the complainants behaviour.	✓ Support workers not to make appointments with residents which do not conflict with other appointments or plans they may have.

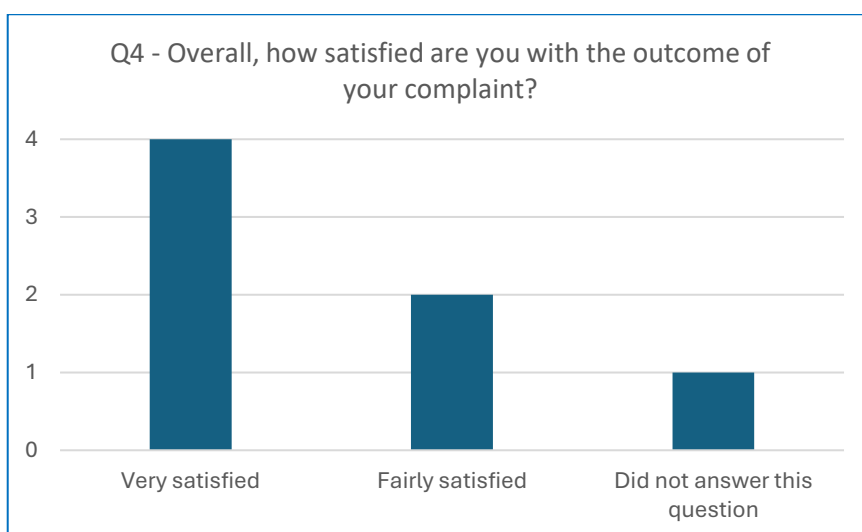
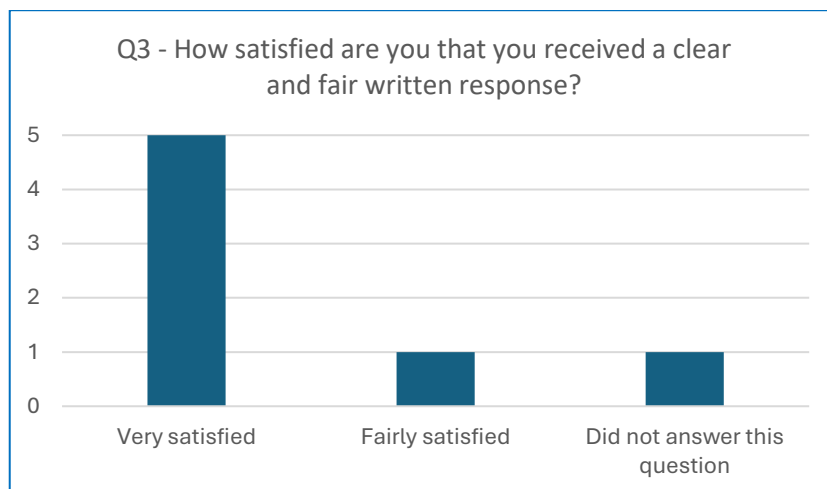
✓ A customer reported that that they were unhappy with the hedges at their property as they are overgrown and require cutting back. ✓ The grass is also overgrown at the sides of the path to the extent that it is now covering the path hindering the path to be used safely.	✓ Service failure due to the lack of gardening carried out at the customer's property.	✓ Property services team to regularly monitoring the performance of its gardening contractors to ensure it delivers a minimum service standard to meet customers' expectations. ✓ Regular inspections are carried on contractors work in the interim period whilst we look to take on a new contractor.
✓ A customer reported that they have not been notified in advance when a contractor would be attending the property to assess the faulty wiring i.e. lack appointment for repair.	✓ The customer reported that they have previously asked to be notified in advance of appointments. ✓ No appointment was issued for our repairs team to attend to the property. ✓ A property services operative took the opportunity whilst in the local area to call at the customer's home.	✓ It is our policy to arrange appointments in advance with our customers. ✓ However, where Brighter Futures do not hold repairs responsibility we will signpost the customer to the appropriate third party.
✓ A customer texted with their housing sustainment worker that there was a fault with the downstairs light switch. ✓ Housing sustainment worker texted back to confirm that they had reported the job to the property services. ✓ The customer replied to ask for the date and time when an engineer would be attending. ✓ The housing sustainment worker responded the following morning with the same information.	✓ Vagueness of communication between the customer and their Housing sustainment worker. ✓ The status of the request had not been clearly communicated with the customer but simply when asked for a date and time the housing sustainment worker repeated the initial text communication that the job had been reported.	✓ Housing sustainment manager to speak with the housing sustainment worker and encourage verbal communication where possible as this is the best means of ensuring clear understanding between the customer their housing sustainment worker. ✓ If text messages are sent, they should answer the question posed to the best of the knowledge of the housing support worker. ✓ The housing sustainment worker to be more forthcoming in providing

		updates on the progress of the customer's requests.
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What customers have said about their experience of how we handled their complaint and their satisfaction with the outcome.

- ✓ Seven customers completed the complaint completion telephone survey which comprises of four questions. The results are depicted in the graphs below.





Observations, themes and trends.

- ✓ The data shows that our customer submit complaints in a variety of ways. Therefore, it is important that we continue to provide different ways to complain allowing all our customers to access the complaints process.
- ✓ It is easy for customers to complain when they need to. We do not discourage complaints; we actively encourage them as a way of identifying issues and correcting them.
- ✓ Once an initial investigation has been completed and a outcome communicated to the customer in writing, a customer can escalate their complaint to stage 2 if they are unhappy with the initial outcome. The only stage 2 complaint that was received was progressed to stage 2 as the customer was not satisfied with the outcome of the stage 1 response.
- ✓ From the issues arising in the past 12 months, no re-occurring themes or trends have been identified.

- ✓ We will continue to monitor completion of the actions recorded on our lessons learned and outcomes tracker to ensure that service improvements continue to be implemented.

New for 2024/2025.

- ✓ We have introduced a new role, a customer experience team leader, whose responsibility is to oversee the activities of the customer service team; provide support and advice to team members, provide an excellent service to customers and evaluate customer feedback and identify ways to maximise customer satisfaction.
- ✓ We have set up a new customer experience committee overseeing customer experience and customer engagement: ensuring that customers have their voice heard; that the needs and safety of customers are at the heart of the Board's decision making; and that the Association's performance is monitored to strive for excellence across its services.
- ✓ On Thursday 27th March 2025 we launched our new website to improve communication <https://www.brighter-futures.org.uk/>

Positive Feedback - Compliments.

Although all reporting requirements from the Regulator of Social Housing and the Housing Ombudsman are focused on complaints, we believe at Brighter Futures it is just as important to recognise the positive feedback that comes from our customers when we get things right.

Compliments are shared in the Complaints, Compliments and Lessons Learnt quarterly update. This gives staff throughout the organisation an idea of what we do well and the positive impact they can have on our customers lives. We wanted to let you know about some of the compliments received in 2024/2025.

Thank you card for Property Services Team received from customer - inside of card read 'to all at Brighter Futures thank you all for support - thanks for new settee and table'

Customer called to say that he is pleased with the new Tenancy Sustainment Worker that he has been allocated (this was the ideal resolution sought from his complaint) .

A customer called to report that the gas contractor was such a lovely gentleman and she would recommend him to anyone.

Customer called to say how quickly the Property Services team attended his property and whilst there arranged for an external contractor to attend to unblocked the outside drains as this was something they could not resolve.

Customer would like to thank the staff for a wonderful day to Chester Zoo - they really appreciated it.

Customer would like to thank you us for organising a trip to Chester Zoo they wrote 'this is therapeutic to myself as I have very little contact with others except professionals and parents

One of our partners said, I just wanted to say a big thank you to you and JN for your openness and creativity with a very difficult case where all doors have been shut for a customer, your approach has been superb and it has proved that pulling together and having open discussions works, thanks again

Another of our partners said: I just wanted to highlight the great work of AJ today on Sunday morning, showing that partnership working really does help make things happen. AJ's hard work has removed 5 people off the streets of Hanley today and provided the opportunity of a further 2 being housed...

Her efforts and communication have helped to co-ordinate locating people, verifying and then seeking the support of the council to get them off the streets during this cold spell. Her help and constant updates have provided information to be able to go out to the PCSO's and the street wardens to locate the people and enabling them to get housed. We have helped to facilitate transporting to accommodation knowing that they have a warm bed for the time being.

How to give Feedback.

If you want to give any feedback to us or find out more details about our complaints handling process, please visit our website at www.brighter-futures.org.uk

Alternatively, you can make a complaint to us by:

- ✓ Sending an email to: customerservices@brighter-futures.org.uk
- ✓ Writing to: Brighter Futures Housing Association Ltd, Three Counties House, Festival Way, Stoke-on-Trent, ST1 5PX
- ✓ Ringing 01782 406000 and speaking to our customer service team who will be able to take details of your complaint.
- ✓ Filling in the enquiry form under the **Getting in Touch - Complaints and Compliments** page <https://www.brighter-futures.org.uk/contact-us/complaints-and-compliments>
- ✓ Talking to a member of staff at any of our services
- ✓ Completing a complaints/feedback form available at any our services.

The Housing Ombudsman Service.

Housing
Ombudsman Service

In each stage of our complaints process, you can contact the Housing Ombudsman Service although they will not be able to investigate a complaint whilst it is going through our internal complaints process. However, they will be able to provide advice on the way that a complaint is being managed. If you are still dissatisfied with the outcome at the end of our two stage complaints process you can contact the Housing

Ombudsman Service to further escalate your complaint externally. This is an independent, impartial and free service. The Ombudsman will decide if the complaint is appropriate for them to consider.

Their contact details are:

1. Website, <https://www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk/contact-us/>
2. Email info@housing-ombudsman.org.uk
3. Write to: Housing Ombudsman Service, PO 1484, Preston, PR2 0ET.
4. Telephone number: 0300 111 3000.

Brighter Futures Housing Association Limited is registered with the Regulator of Social Housing (H4315); and is a Registered Society under the Co-operative and Community Benefit Societies Act 2014 (21244R) and is affiliated to The National Housing Federation. Brighter Futures Housing Association Limited's registered office is at 5 Whittle Court, Town Road, Hanley, Stoke-on-Trent, Staffordshire, ST1 2QE.

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