

Annual Complaints Performance and Service Improvement Report 2024–2025



Board and Member Responsible for Complaints Response

The Board and Member Responsible for Complaints acknowledge the report, the self-assessment and the improvements that will continue to enhance complaint handling for our customers. The report provides assurance that we are listening, care, take accountability and act.

At Gentoo, we are committed to listening, learning, and improving—and our Annual Complaints Report for 2024/5 reflects that ongoing journey. As the Member Responsible for overseeing our complaints process, I welcome the opportunity to reflect on both what we've achieved and where we know we need to do better.

Over the past year, we've seen a rise in formal complaints, many of which centred around communication, repairs, and delays. These are issues we take seriously, and we know that behind every complaint is a customer who feels let down. While it's never easy to hear this feedback, it's vital to helping us understand where systems, processes, or behaviours may be falling short.

In response, we've taken clear steps to drive change. We've strengthened our internal Repairs resources to tackle service quality issues head-on, enhanced our complaints training group wide providing over 7000 hours of training across the Group, and invested in improving our record-keeping and complaint tracking. We've also continued to align our process with the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code, ensuring fairness, consistency, and accountability. We've also involved our customer Committee and broader customers to give feedback and hold us to account.

I want to thank every customer who took the time to raise a concern or make a complaint. Your voice directly shapes the way we improve our services. We don't view complaints as a sign of failure—they're opportunities to learn, act, and do better.

We know there's more to do, and we are fully committed to building a culture of openness, responsiveness, and continuous improvement. This report is a key part of that journey, and we'll continue to listen closely to our customers every step of the way.



Morven Smith
Member Responsible for
Complaints

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Morven Smith'.



Emily Cox MBE
Group Chair

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Emily Cox'.

Introduction

Complaints are very important to us. They help us to learn when things go wrong and to improve our services. If something does go wrong, we apologise, investigate what happened and work with the customer to make it right.

At Gentoo we understand that we must improve on how we listen and respond to customer complaints. It is only through improving how we receive and act on feedback that we will improve customer satisfaction and the overall customer experience. We understand that complaint handling is a part of our culture and not a separate activity, seeking to align at every opportunity.

Gentoo is committed to developing a positive complaint handling culture and learning from the insight gained through effective complaint resolution. The aim of this report is to review our performance for complaint handling during 2024-25 and outline the ways in which we will improve by:

- Learning from any mistakes so that we can continually improve customer experience and outcomes
- Encouraging a culture of feedback, collaboration and insight to support service improvement, evaluating and improving effectiveness
- Being transparent about the complaints we receive and what has been done as a result
- Working with our Member Responsible for Complaints (MRC) who also attended the Housing Ombudsman MRC Conference in Manchester to share and hear best practice
- Demonstrating our annual self-assessment against the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code



Annual self-assessment for 2025-26

Gentoo’s self-assessment against the Statutory Handling Code has been reviewed by our involved customers as part of a Customer Strategy Day. The self-assessment has also been reviewed and approved by the Customer Committee and the Member Responsible for Complaints.

The self-assessment is available on our website.

Analysis of Complaint Handling Performance in 2024-25

This table shows a breakdown of complaints received in 2024/25 and those extended with customer agreement.

Stage 1		485
Complaints extended (in agreement with customer)		103
All stage 1 complaints handled within timescale		97.7%
Stage 2		140
Complaints extended (in agreement with customer)		11
All stage 2 complaints handled within timescale		99.2%

The figures above demonstrate the work that’s been undertaken over the last financial year delivering our complaints service improvement plan in full and in conjunction with investing in colleagues with over 7000 + hours of face-to-face customer excellence training. In addition, we also invested in our complaints team by delivering advanced complaints training.

Key complaint themes throughout the last financial year have centred around repairs timescales, delays to having work completed and damp and mould.

As an organisation Gentoo continues to improve the culture of accountability using customer feedback and the insight captured, investing in colleagues so they can be the best they can be to deliver customer excellence.

We have seen a significant reduction in the percentage of Stage 1 complaints progressing to stage 2. This demonstrates how the training has been embedded and put into practice.

Types of complaints refused

Gentoo's complaints and compliments policy sets out the exclusion criteria for complaints which may be refused. Gentoo provides a copy of the complaints policy to customers when a stage 1 complaint is acknowledged.

If a complaint is not accepted, the customer will be given an explanation setting out the reasons why.

This year 7 complaints have been refused for the reasons below:

- Non-Gentoo customers raising concerns - individuals were signposted to alternative services
- Gentoo customers had exhausted the complaints procedure - customers were advised to seek assistance from The Housing Ombudsman Service
- Complaints made where the incident date was outside of a 12-month period

Housing Ombudsman determinations 2024-25

Gentoo received 15 Housing Ombudsman determinations in 2024-25.

There were 12 findings of maladministration summarised as follows:

- 11 findings of service failure
- 12 findings of maladministration
- 10 cases where there were no findings of maladministration or service failure.
- 0 rulings of severe maladministration

The main themes of the determinations were Property Maintenance, Housing Management and Leasehold Management. The main issues were lack of communication, damp and mould concerns and repair timescales.

Upon receipt of a determination, Gentoo schedules a meeting with the relevant Directors and Heads of Service to ensure the complaint and determination can be discussed thoroughly, with any actions mutually agreed and allocated to the Head of Service responsible to implement. All actions are held centrally and monitored by the Complaints Team. This ensures a joint approach to learning effectively from complaints and Housing Ombudsman determinations. With the aim of delivering noticeable improvements in service for our customers.

Key learnings taken from determinations include:

- Introduction of new Stage 2 response letter signed off by an Executive Director following review made by relevant Director or Head of Service prior to being issued to the customer.
- Customer survey issued during October 2024 to capture customer data around vulnerabilities
- New customer liaison role introduced in the Repairs and Maintenance Teams, working proactively with customers to ensure follow on works and completed jobs are completed withing timescale
- Using insights and data captured we have commissioned a mobile 'bus' taking Gentoo out on the road to reach those customers who don't interact with us often.



Improvements made in 2024-25

We take learning and continuous improvement seriously and this is a key element of our culture and our Values. We made significant investment in working with our customers, investing in colleague learning and using our data to develop insight into action. As a result of learning the following significant changes were made to improve complaint handling and customer experience during 2024/25:

- The Customer Voice Team undertook advanced complaints handling training to improve their skills, the customer experience they provide and complaint outcomes
- Complaints, lessons learned, and improvements are discussed at quarterly Customer Committee meetings and reported to the Board
- We began to use insights and data to identify customers 'seldom heard' who may need support, taking action to deliver fair and equitable outcomes for customers through effective scrutiny by customers of the delivery of Gentoo's services
- Quarterly deep dives took place with the Customer Voice Team and Member Responsible for Complaints
- We launched pilot complaint handling 'drop-in sessions' in our communities
- We developed a new SharePoint site linking in with the Housing Ombudsman Spotlight Reports and learning and carrying out our own case studies to improve best practice and to learn and enhance service
- A review of all complaint letter templates was undertaken and observed by The Regulator of Social Housing during the Regulatory Inspection. This was completed during April 2024 with our Customer Committee and Involved Customers
- The Customer Committee worked with us to review our approach to Engagement and Scrutiny. We have enhanced the approach to allow more customers to take part and to increase the number of scrutiny exercises undertaken. The Customer Committee has approved the Scrutiny Framework for the financial year 2025 / 2026
- Customer Insight and Power Bi reporting has been introduced where business areas can self-serve real-time reporting, read what customers are telling us and taking action to improve service offers. Provided greater reporting to Senior Leaders which enhanced collaboration delivering better outcomes for customers

- Delivering over 7000 hours of customer excellence and complaints handling training during the last financial year has helped colleagues to get it right first time, identify what a service request is and what a complaint is and develop skills in customer service. We can see the increase in stage one complaints is evidence the training has been embedded and we are able to be more transparent than ever before
- We introduced two new roles with the Complaints Team; a Customer Insight Adviser and Customer Complaints Lead role. These new roles demonstrate our commitment to serving and listening to our customers. Enabling us to triangulate our insight data, complaints feedback and our engagement feedback, so we have one version of the truth, delivering insight into action across Gentoo and improving customer excellence
- We introduced a new quality check framework for complaints which includes an opportunity for continuous learning and improving what we do
- All Stage one complaint responses are reviewed by the Customer Complaints Lead before being issued
- All Stage 2 responses to complaints are reviewed by the Director or Head of Service for the relevant business area and then signed off by an Executive Director before being issued
- Reporting was also improved in external communications with customers and stakeholders by sharing 'you said, we did' examples and publishing quarterly insight reports online and on social media. This ensures we provide customers with more awareness on how we are taking their valuable feedback and turning their insight into action.



Lessons learnt from complaints

The aim is to have a culture of continuous improvement, keeping the customer at the heart of what we do. The Customer Voice Team identified that improvements were required to logging day-to-day job tickets. The team identified that it would be beneficial to include photographs for record-keeping purposes and to ensure feedback is offered should the customer require any further information. The recommendations are currently being rolled out with trade operatives via 'Toolbox Talks', team meetings and 121 reviews with managers.

The Customer Voice Team also fed back that the guidance available on compensation did not offer enough assistance to support them in redressing Stage 1 complaints. Guidance is taken from The Housing Ombudsman Service and Gentoo's existing compensation policy. Gentoo is reviewing its compensation policy with the complaints team working more closely with other business areas to manage compensation in line with the complaint nature.

A review of the website material was carried out along with consideration around processing complaints received on social media, to ensure a consistent approach.

Additionally, customers who have completed the TSM survey are contacted to discuss their dissatisfaction in further detail. If they have not already exhausted the complaints process, they are offered the opportunity to do so.

Supported by learning, insight and triangulating our data into action we ran a pilot to reach out to our seldom heard customers. This involved holding complaints drop-in sessions in local community centres during daytime and evenings. In addition, we analysed the data to identify areas within our communities where we have low complaint numbers and those areas where we have high complaint numbers. Working across departments we shared the customer insights to improve services and continue to meet the needs and aspirations of our customers



Tenant Satisfaction Measures

Gentoo's annual TSM score for complaints handling is currently 36% with complaint handling in Q4 41%

To further understand the low satisfaction scores, Gentoo has been analysing customer feedback in more detail and working collectively across business areas to work on improving services.

Gentoo carried out engagement activity around complaint handling on the digital engagement platform 'Your Gentoo Voice'. Customers were asked for feedback on how they had submitted a complaint, how easy it was to make a complaint, who dealt with their complaint and the subject of their complaint.

Customer feedback demonstrated that although customers felt it was easy to make a complaint to Gentoo, more clarity was needed when issues were handled as a service request. A new system for recording service requests was introduced to ensure issues are followed up to improve customer satisfaction.

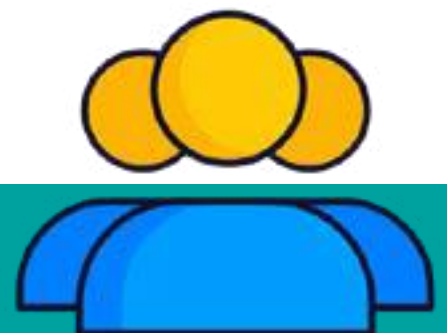
Member Responsible for Complaints

In April 2024, Gentoo appointed a Member Responsible for Complaints (MRC).

The MRC has ensured that complaint handling drives service improvement for customers and learning and business improvement for the organisation.

They champion a positive complaint handling culture, seek assurance that complaints are being managed, change is happening and that our customers are being heard throughout the process.

Our MRC has spent time throughout the last financial year with the Complaints Team and has attended the Housing Ombudsman Conference for MRCs



Our Service Improvement Plan for 2025–26

Priorities for the year ahead are based on what our customers are telling us, the learnings and the culture of continuous improvement. Key areas of focus are as follows:

- Data and insight – Use of AI to analyse comments, the ‘why’ behind the results
- Embedding the skills and training
- Early complaint resolution
- Knowing our customers
- Building on our culture of learning and continuous improvement from complaints
- Working more collaboratively across the group to identify root causes and trends to enable solutions



The following plan summarises the key actions:

Service Improvement Plan 2025-26

Priority area	Actions	By when
Data, Insight and Reporting	Working with partners / third parties to enhance the data and insight available to deliver quicker actions outcomes to improve	Ongoing
Insight and Continuous Improvement	Use insight, together with TSM data and engagement to identify improvements Research ombudsman reports, best practice to learn and enhance service Senior Leader review and improvement sessions	Ongoing Quarterly
Customer Engagement and Scrutiny	Use insights and data to identify customers 'seldom heard' who may need support. Take action to deliver fair and equitable outcomes through effective scrutiny by customers of the delivery of Gentoo's services.	Ongoing
Service Themes	Continue to work with service functions reviewing complaints trends to improve service performance and measured through KPIs and TSM results	Ongoing
Introduce an MP & Executive Complaints Lead role	Introduction of a new role to act as point of contact and liaise with the Executive Team, Members of Parliament and Councilors	Q1

www.gentoogroup.com/complaints



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