

Complaint and Compliment Report

Property & Asset – Ian Williams

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Introduction and Timetable

East Devon District Council is committed to being an organisation that listens to customers and work closely with our Main Contractor, Ian Williams, to provide a quick responsive solution. Therefore, both customer feedback and the way that the Property & Asset respond to this feedback, whether negative or positive, are vital indicators of the overall performance of the Ian Williams contract, impacting KPI's.

Property & Asset aim to maintain a high level of performance and improve the quality of service offered to customers, who fee that they have not received a high standard. This includes providing timely responses to complaints whilst continuing to learn and improved.

Property & Asset strive to ensure we respond to customer concerns in an open and transparent way within defined timescales that has been agreed with both ourselves and Ian Williams. The purpose of this report is to outline the complaints and compliments that our Housing and Customer Business Improvement Manager has received 1st July 2019 – 31st December 2020, highlighting key themes and trends. Our report also explains how Property & Asset working hand in hand with Ian Williams have performed and includes case studies demonstrating how we have learnt from complaints received. This is the most important aspect of the complaints process.

It should also be noted that the format and overall presentation of the report is based over a year and a half of the contract, moving forward these reports will be produced on a quarterly basis to be presented at the Core group meetings, alongside our Monthly PDF reviews.

Whilst customer feedback provides a valuable insight into how Ian Williams are and have been performing, complaints and compliments figures do not reflect the full picture. This report should therefore, be understood within the context of the number of customers interacting with our repairs service, averaging all repairs to 4200+ properties.

Furthermore, building on the key developments and lessons learnt in 2019/2020, priority areas of focus for 2021 will include:

- Increasing the number of compliments recorded. Our Housing and Business Customer Improvement Manager will promote the procedure for reporting compliments via our social media platforms and website to ensure that tenants are having an opportunity to relay positive feedback.
- Addressing current and upcoming issues, using complaints as direct customer feedback to make immediate service improvements, working alongside Ian Williams CLO, Business Manager and our Contract Manager.
- Reviewing the way that the Property & Asset highlight and considers learning from complaints to ensure that each complaint enquiry is fully considered and used to positively grow our service and improve customer relationships.

Key Headlines

32 (AV 1.7 PM)
Formal Complaints Received.
Managed via Corporate complaints
alongside Sophie

106 (AV 5.88PM)
Informal Complaints Received.
Managed by Sophie

24
Compliments received

12
Direct Councillor Involvement

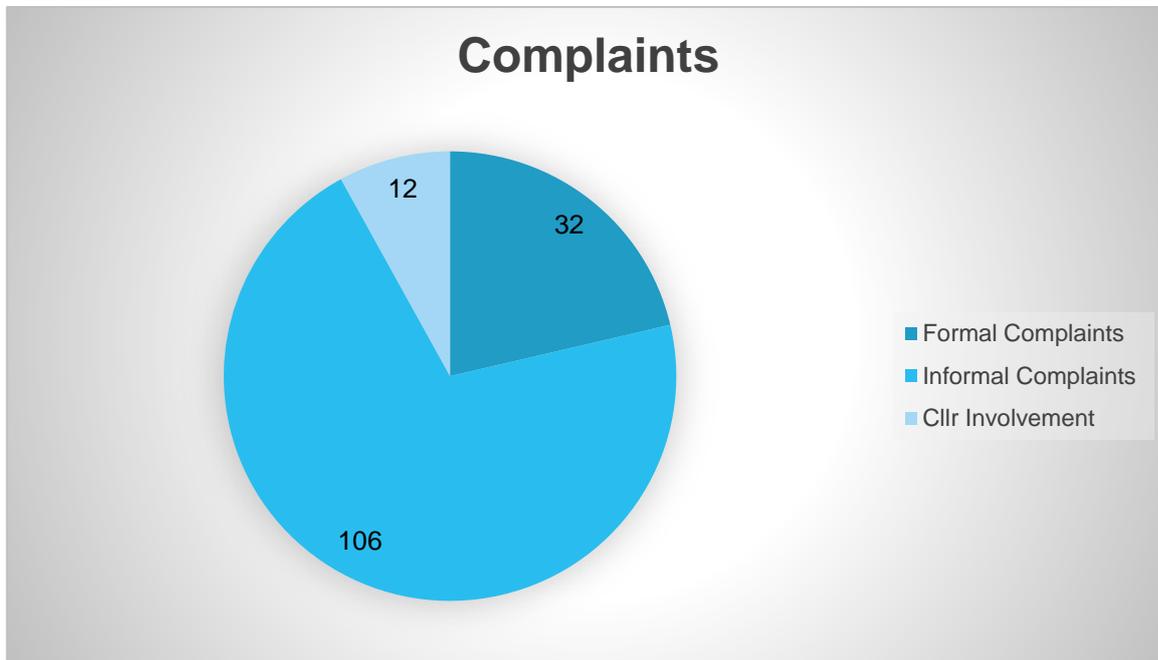
87%
Informal Complains responded to
within 3 days.

Top trend of reactive complaint
received was in relation to
communication

18
Complaints needing assistance from
Estate Management

Top trend of void complaint received
is in relation to managing tenants
expectations

Complaint Statistics



Formal Complaint Process and Statistics

Our Housing Business and Customer Improvement Manager works closely alongside East Devon District Council's formal complaints team managing the complaint as quickly and effectively as possible. Sophie will collate all the information required, discuss the complaint with Ian Williams and agree on a resolution and action plan, this is then fed back to the complaints team alongside a timeline.

Between July 2019 and December 2020;

- 32 Complaints received
- 28 in relation to Reactive Repairs
- 4 in relation to the Void

The top 3 trends of complaint;

- Mould and Damp issues
- Heating issues

- Lack of communication / cancelled appointments / no shows

Informal Complaint Process and Statistics

Our Housing Business and Customer Improvement Manager will receive complaints directly from tenants. We aim to acknowledge within 2 days and respond with an action plan within 8 days.

Sophie will liaise directly with Ian Williams via weekly and monthly meetings, as well as daily interaction to resolve the issue and ensure that the matter is dealt with promptly.

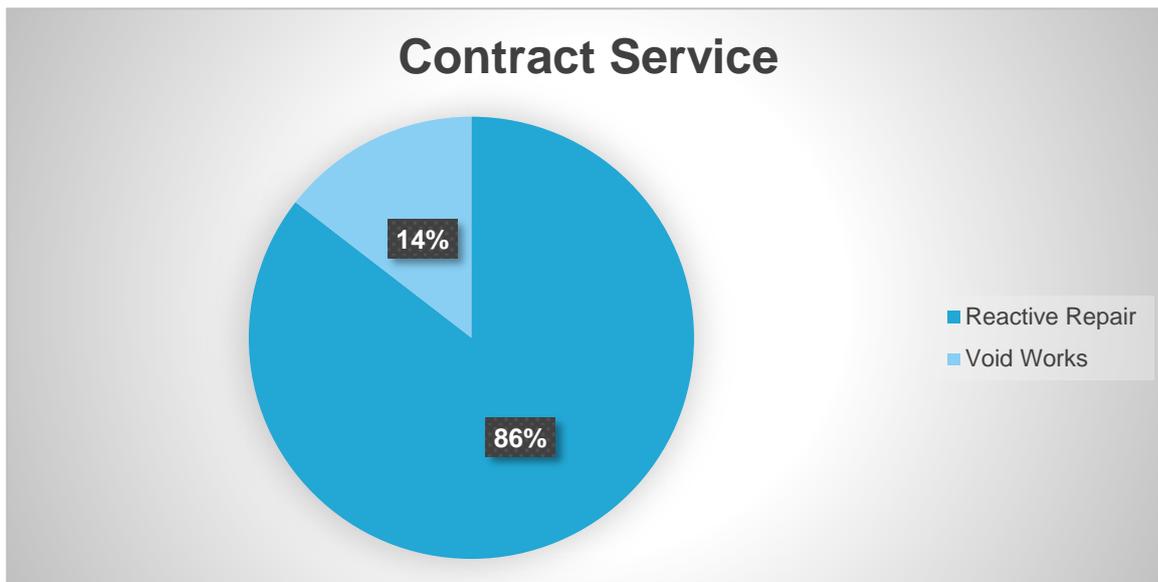
Understanding the complaint and the history may involve further discussions with our Contract Manager and our Surveying team.

Between July 2019 and December 2020;

- 106 Complaints received
- 88 in relation to Reactive Repairs
- 18 in relation to the Void

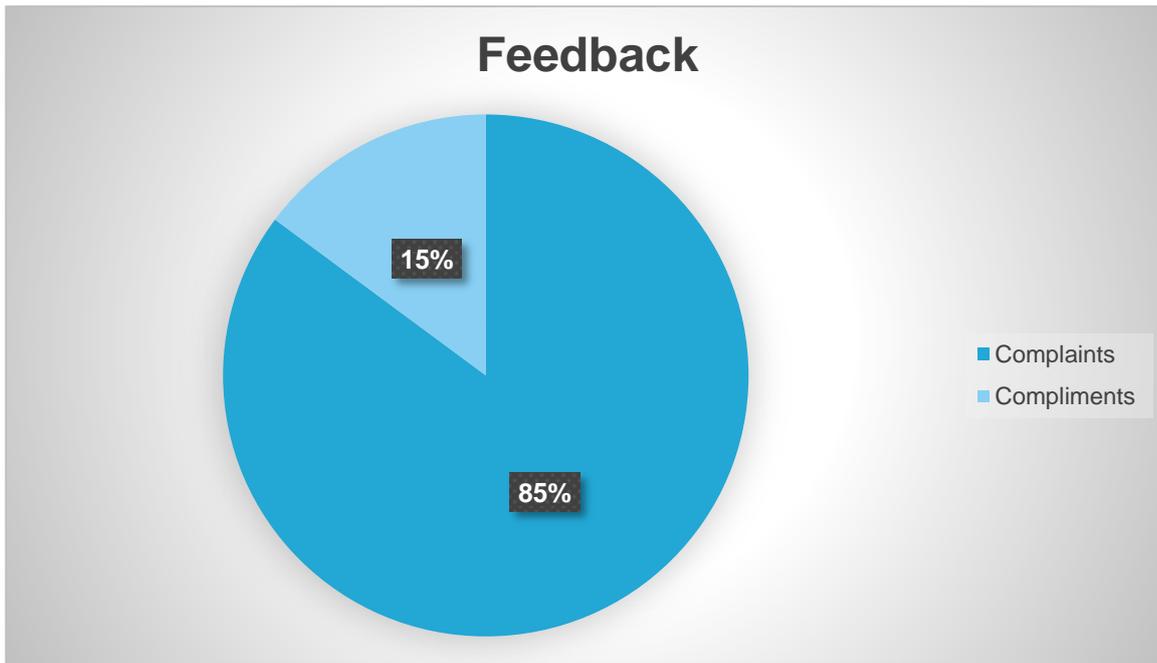
The top 3 trends of complaint;

- Lack of communication
- Cancelled appointments / No shows
- Repair timescales



Compliments Statistics

Our Housing and Business Improvement Manager is currently working on ways to better and clear our communication channels for tenants to be able to relay positive feedback as well as negative. Although it is easy to focus on the negatives and the complaints; it is as equally important to focus on the compliments received and trend report these too, by doing this, we can ensure that both East Devon District Council and Ian Williams are continuing to keep a high level of service.



Compliments received from July 2019 – December 2020

- 24 Compliments

The top 3 trends of compliment;

- Operatives work
- Operatives Manners
- Timescales

Although one of our top trends in the complaints is down to repair timeframes, this also sits under the compliment section too. This highlights that we need consistency with our reactive repair timeframes, we need to ensure that any larger jobs are dealt with as a project and the tenant is informed throughout the whole process.

Lessons Learnt

Improving the way that complaints are dealt with requires a whole 'one team' approach, with Property & Asset alongside Ian Williams prioritising complaints and making improvements based on the feedback from customers. Therefore, it is the responsibility of our Housing Business and Customer Improvement Manager to make responding to complaints and learning from customer feedback a priority, whilst continuing to highlight complaints and issues daily, weekly and monthly.

A number of reactive repair service improvements have been made over the year based on feedback from our customers.

Key themes of service improvements have included the training of internal staff to fully understand the requirements of the contract and the revision of communication materials, from our first point of contact, repair advisors, through to the Ian Williams scheduling hub.

Further work will be undertaken in 2021 to continue to improve the approach to dealing with complaints.

Examples of the most common complaint received against Ian Williams are as follows:

- Number 1 – Lack of Communication

We have now introduced the Repair Advisors managing issues with the communication with the Hub at Ian Williams on a bi – weekly basis, escalating any issues to the Housing Business and Customer Improvement Manager who holds a senior meeting monthly.

Our surveyors now have a dedicated 'Duty Surveyor' role, to pick up any enquiries immediately from on site with our operatives as well as technical issues that have arisen from the Repair Advisors.

- Number 2 - Repair timescale

Ian Williams have increased their operative numbers on both the reactive side and the void side, this helps create slots for repairs to be scheduled in a timely

manner. This has resulted in our Repair Advisors being able to book more appointments at the first point of contact with the tenant.

- Number 3 – Ian Williams missed appointments / no attendance

This has been escalated to the Business Manager at Ian Williams, this has reduced significantly. We now have weekly calls with the Contracts Manager at Ian Williams to ensure appointments are kept and that any overdue appointments are attended to and discussed

- Number 4 – Operatives attitude

The Contracts Manager hold Bi – Weekly toolbox talks with the reactive teams to ensure that treating our tenants with respect is a priority. Any complaints of this nature is discussed individually with the Operative in question and investigated.

Next Steps

Further steps will be taken in 2021 to ensure that the approach that Property & Asset take to dealing with complaints and responding to customer feedback continues to improve.

Our key actions will include:

- Continuing with monthly PDF reports highlighting ‘Lessons learnt’ and collating these into a quarterly report for Core Group to discuss.
- Comprehensive relook of all complaint guidance, including the policy, guide to officers, the internet pages and the intranet.
- Review of all customer interaction across Ian Williams, including a visit to the Hub to ensure all targets, requirements and policies are fully understood.
- Ensure that the annual complaints report/updates on complaints data are shared with the Housing Service Lead and the Housing Strategic Lead and that consideration of complaints is included in the Housing Review Board.

- Developing the 'customer interaction' training for internal officers and Ian Williams operatives. This will include the development of a simple e-learning training course for front line staff to allow them to understand the role and purpose of customer expectations and satisfaction.
- Focus more on the lessons learned from upheld complaints and how these can be addressed effectively.
- Work to improve performance within statutory timescales (within set days as highlighted above).
- Commence and continue the Repairs Tenant Group, ensuring this is held regularly