



ANNUAL COMPLAINTS PERFORMANCE & SERVICE IMPROVEMENT REPORT 2025-2026

This annual report sets out the complaints that Cossington Housing Co-op has received between April 2025 and March 2026 and what actions we have taken in response to them.

To find out more about what our tenant members should expect from the co-op when you make a complaints, please go to <https://cossingtoncoop.org.uk/customer-information/>

Response from the management committee

Cossington Housing Co-op's Management Committee considered this report at a special committee meeting held on 1 September 2026. The Committee also considered the co-op's self-assessment against the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code.

The Management Committee approves both this report and the self-assessment. The Committee notes that the co-op needs to do further work to identify complaints that may require longer or more detailed investigation. This is the only area where the co-op is not currently fully compliant with the Code. This reflects the very low number of complaints received, which makes it more difficult to identify patterns or predict which complaints may require additional investigation time. The Committee will ensure that further work is carried out in this area during the next year.

Cossington Housing Co-op is a small Registered Provider landlord, and the volume of complaints from our members remains very low. During 2025/2026, the co-op received two complaints. Although one complaint related to governance and conduct matters outside the Housing Ombudsman's formal definition of a service complaint, both matters were considered carefully and led to learning and service improvements for the co-op.

These improvements include strengthening reflective practice and staff development, and introducing a new Tenant Code of Conduct to help manage unacceptable behaviour by tenant members.

We have introduced new internal processes to identify and support tenants with vulnerabilities, and to manage these matters effectively and sensitively.

We will continue to review our internal policies so that tenant engagement is more inclusive and barriers are removed wherever possible.

The Committee and housing team will focus on achieving complaint response target timescales in respect of any complaints considered in the coming year.

We aim to continue our proactive learning approach and to respond to complaints in accordance with the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code.

Our approach to complaints

Cossington Housing Co-op aims to provide the best service it can to our tenant members. We encourage our members to tell us if there is a problem with something we have done. We consider complaints and comments to be valuable feedback. It gives us a chance to learn and improve services.

Our general approach incorporates the following features:

- a two stage complaints process in accordance with the Housing Ombudsman's Code
- an approach where we welcome and value complaints
- seeing complaints as an opportunity to put things right where we have not got things right

- learning from complaints
- providing simple information about how to make complaints on our website and through other methods
- complaints are reviewed by our Chief Officer and our Chairperson (the Member Responsible for Complaints) who consider opportunities to learn from complaints
- we will seek to continually improve how we manage complaints

Our complaint stages

We aim to find a resolution to dissatisfaction at the first point of contact. Where this is not possible, the complaint progresses as follows:

Stage One – investigating the complaint (target 10 working days)

An investigation of the complaint takes place, including interviews with the complainant and other relevant parties, and a formal written communication to the complainant regarding the outcomes of the investigation within 10 working days.

Stage Two – independent review (target 20 working days)

If the complainant is not happy with some or all the outcome of their complaint, they may request a review. The co-op will form an independent review panel consisting of two people and both of whom will be independent of the complaint and the previous investigation.

The Review Panel will offer a final written response seeking to resolve the problem within 20 working days of a review request being received.

If the complainant is still unhappy with the outcome, they may refer the complaint to the Housing Ombudsman Service.

Cossington Housing Co-op complaints and how we responded

During the reporting year, Cossington Housing Co-operative received two formal complaints. Of these, none progressed to Stage 2 of our internal complaint's procedure.

Overview of Complaints

Complaint 1

Governance and Conduct Complaint

This complaint related to the conduct of the Management Committee and the Chief Executive Officer during the Annual General Meeting. The issue raised was not related to the delivery of housing services and therefore fell outside the Housing Ombudsman's definition of a service complaint. Instead, it was considered a matter relating to governance and employee conduct.

Notwithstanding this, Cossington Housing Co-operative commissioned an independent investigation to ensure the concerns raised were considered fairly and transparently. The investigation resulted in a number of recommendations, all of which have been considered and actioned by the Co-operative. This demonstrates our commitment to openness, accountability, and continuous improvement, even where matters fall outside the formal complaints process.

Complaint 2

Housing Related issues

This complaint related to three housing management issues and one issue concerning contractor conduct. The complaint was investigated through our formal complaints process. Following the investigation, two of the four issues were upheld, and gaps were identified within our processes. As a result, we have implemented new ways of working to address these shortcomings and improve service delivery.

The complainant was informed of their right to escalate the matter to Stage 2 of the complaints procedure and to refer the complaint to the Housing Ombudsman. However, neither option was pursued by the complainant, and the matter was therefore closed.

Complaint Response Performance

Due to the complexity of both complaints, the investigations required additional time and could not be concluded within the standard Stage 1 response timescale. In both cases, extensions were necessary to allow for a full and thorough investigation.

In accordance with the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code, the complainants were informed of the extensions, provided with reasons for the delays, and kept fully updated throughout the investigation process. Both complaints were concluded within the agreed extended timescales.

Lessons Learned and Service Improvements

Following the resolution of these complaints, we undertook the following actions to improve our service:

- **Staff and Committee Conduct**

Following the outcomes on the above matter, we have reviewed and strengthened our internal processes and policies to better address staff and Management Committee conduct. This has included attendance at a Management Committee induction session, which covered roles, responsibilities, standards of conduct, and the principles of good governance.

We have also introduced a Tenant Code of Conduct to promote respectful and constructive engagement when tenants raise concerns or communicate with staff, committee members, and contractors.

- **Housing related issues**

Following this complaint, we reviewed our internal practices and procedures and introduced improved methods of identifying and flagging vulnerable tenants within our housing management systems. This will help ensure that vulnerabilities are recognised at an

early stage and that tenants receive a coordinated and holistic service.

We also recognised the need to further develop staff knowledge and skills in supporting vulnerable tenants. Consequently, staff have attended training and professional forums on adult safeguarding to enhance their ability to identify risks and provide appropriate support.

Our plans to improve complaints handling

The co-op will action the following points in the next year to improve complaints handling:

- we will continue to publicise our complaints procedure to our tenant members, ensuring that all members know that we welcome complaints
- we will continue to embed a positive culture around complaints amongst staff and committee members
- we will analyse satisfaction with our complaints handling with our members
- we will continue to track complaints through to completion to ensure we are achieving timescale targets
- we will ensure that staff involved in complaints handling take an approach where they identify how our policies, procedures and systems could be improved as a result of complaints
- we will develop policies and procedures to manage unacceptable behaviour from our members
- we will analyse complaints we receive in order to develop a matrix of complaints that may take longer to investigate.
- We will continuously review and enhance our internal systems and processes to ensure they deliver a customer-focused

service, support effective complaint handling, and comply with applicable housing standards requirements.

The Housing Ombudsman and our self-assessment

Each year, we publish a self-assessment of how we perform against criteria for complaints handling set out by the Housing Ombudsman. To view our 2026 self-assessment, please click here. <https://cossingtoncoop.org.uk/customer-information/>

It has been particularly identified in the self-assessment that:

- a) the co-op needs to develop policies and procedures to manage both staff and tenants conduct and behaviours
- b) there is a need to identify types of complaints that may take longer to investigate due to the complexity in nature specifically if we are dealing with vulnerable tenants. We also recognise that the low number of complaints has made this difficult to identify the length of time a complaint may be addressed, however moving forward the co-op aims to meet the timescale set out in the Codes.

No complaints cases have been referred to the Ombudsman during April 2025-March 2026 and the Ombudsman has published no reports in this period regarding Cossington Housing Co-op's performance.