



# Feedback Performance Report



**2016/17**





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# 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Victory Housing Trust recognises that there will be occasions when things go wrong and complaints are made. Complaints are an important source of information to help Victory understand where and why changes need to be made to avoid problems being repeated and to improve the service we deliver to our customers.

This report sets out the areas which our customers have complained about in the financial year of 2016/17, and our performance in dealing with these complaints.

- 1.2 The analysis contained within this report is based on data relating to complaints for the period 1<sup>st</sup> April 2016 – 31<sup>st</sup> March 2017. Please note that for ease of reference, all percentages have been rounded up or down, and may not always total 100%.

# 2. STAGES OF A COMPLAINT

- 2.1. We will always try to resolve complaints at the first point of contact. Where this isn't possible, we have a three-stage complaints process. This allows our customers to escalate their case to the next stage if they are not satisfied with our response.

- **Local Resolution** – This is the initial complaint made by the customer. We will acknowledge these and aim to respond to all local resolution complaints within 10 working days.
- **Review** – A customer, who remains dissatisfied, can request their complaint to be reviewed by a more senior member of staff. We will acknowledge all requests for a Review and aim to provide the Review response within 15 working days.
- **Appeal** – If the customer remains dissatisfied after the Review stage, they can request their complaint to be escalated to the Appeal stage. Appeals are undertaken by a Complaints Panel including at least one Board Member, one resident and one member of the Executive Team. Requests for complaints to be escalated to Appeal will be acknowledged and we aim to hold a Complaint Panel hearing within one month of receipt of the request to appeal. The Complaints Panel will aim to respond to the complaint within 20 working days of completion of the Appeal hearing.

### 3. OVERVIEW

#### 3.1. Feedback Overview of 2016-17

3.1.1. The table below shows how many complaints, discretionary payment requests and compliments Victory received this year against previous years:

2016-17					
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Total
Complaints	33	36	41	66	176
Discretionary Payments	14	13	9	6	42
Compliments	25	26	28	33	112

2015-16					
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Total
Complaints	40	27	44	54	165
Discretionary Payments	13	17	11	6	47
Compliments	30	41	28	35	134

2014-15					
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Total
Complaints	28	21	45	51	145
Discretionary Payments	16	9	22	38	85
Compliments	20	41	23	24	108

2013-14					
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Total
Complaints	33	39	49	36	157
Discretionary Payments	13	4	20	45	82
Compliments	1	0	5	16	22

*NB: Compliments not reported on until 1st March 2014*

2012-13					
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Total
Complaints	43	29	24	46	142
Discretionary Payments					0
Compliments	0	0	0	0	0

## 4. COMPLAINTS

### 4.1. Complaints Received

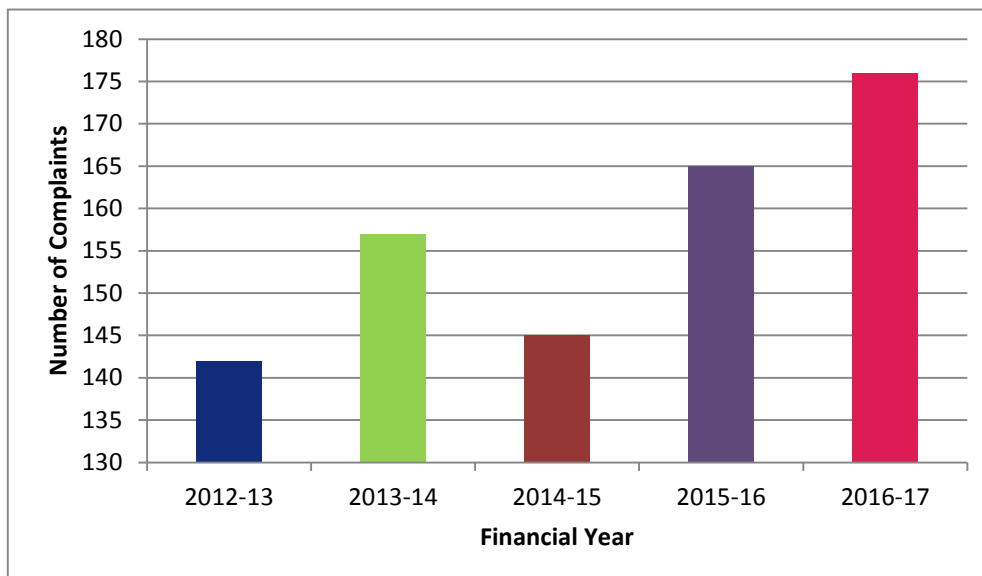
4.1.1. Between 1<sup>st</sup> April 2016 and 31<sup>st</sup> March 2017, Victory Housing Trust received **176** new Local Resolution complaints. **11** complaints were escalated to Review and **2** were escalated to Appeal.

	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Total
Local Resolution	33	36	41	66	176
Review	4	4	1	2	11
Appeal	1	1	0	0	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>68</b>	

4.1.2. Please note it is not possible to make a direct comparison between the numbers of complaints received in a quarter to the number of complaints escalated as requests to escalate may relate to complaints received in the previous quarter.

### 4.2. Comparison

4.2.1. The graph below shows the number of complaints received in 2016/17 against previous years:



### 4.3. Breakdown

4.3.1. Every complaint received at Local Resolution is logged against a service area. The following table shows a breakdown of the 176 complaints received this year:

	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Total
Allocations and Lettings	0	0	0	0	0
ASB	0	4	1	0	5
Enquiry Response Times	0	0	1	1	2
Estate Management	3	1	0	5	9
Housing	5	3	2	5	15
Invoice	1	1	1	1	4
New Builds/Development	0	1	0	4	5
Planned Maintenance	4	6	5	9	24
Policy	0	3	1	1	5
Repairs	15	13	23	33	84
Resident Involvement	0	0	0	0	0
Victory Staff	5	4	7	7	23
<b>Total</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>66</b>	

4.3.2. 'Repairs' is usually the most common category of complaints. To put this high number in perspective; in 2016/17, Victory's contractors completed **14,883** repairs. 84 complaints received in this area only represents **one complaint for every 177 repairs completed (or 0.56%)**.

### 4.4. Outcomes

1.4.1. Victory aims to resolve all complaints at first contact. This reduces costs and is also an indicator of the success of the complaints process in resolving the complaint.

1.4.2. There are three possible outcomes for a complaint following the completion of the investigation or review:

- **Upheld** – Victory has agreed with our customer's complaint and recognises that it was a fault.
- **Partially Upheld** – Victory has agreed with some of our customer's complaint and recognises that it was partially at fault.
- **Not Upheld** – Victory does not agree with our customer's complaint and does not recognise that it was at fault.

1.4.3. In 2016-17, **37 (22%)** of complaints were upheld, **23 (13%)** were partially upheld, and **112 (65%)** were not upheld:

Overall Complaint Outcomes					
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Total
<b>Upheld</b>	14	8	11	4	37
<b>Partially Upheld</b>	5	4	6	8	23
<b>Not Upheld</b>	14	24	23	51	112
<b>Total</b>	33	36	40	63	

## 4.5. Learning Outcomes

4.5.1. Effective and positive complaint handling provides an insight into the services provided by Victory and how they are perceived and received by tenants. The lessons learned from a complaint or complaints can improve the quality and focus of services provided to tenants.

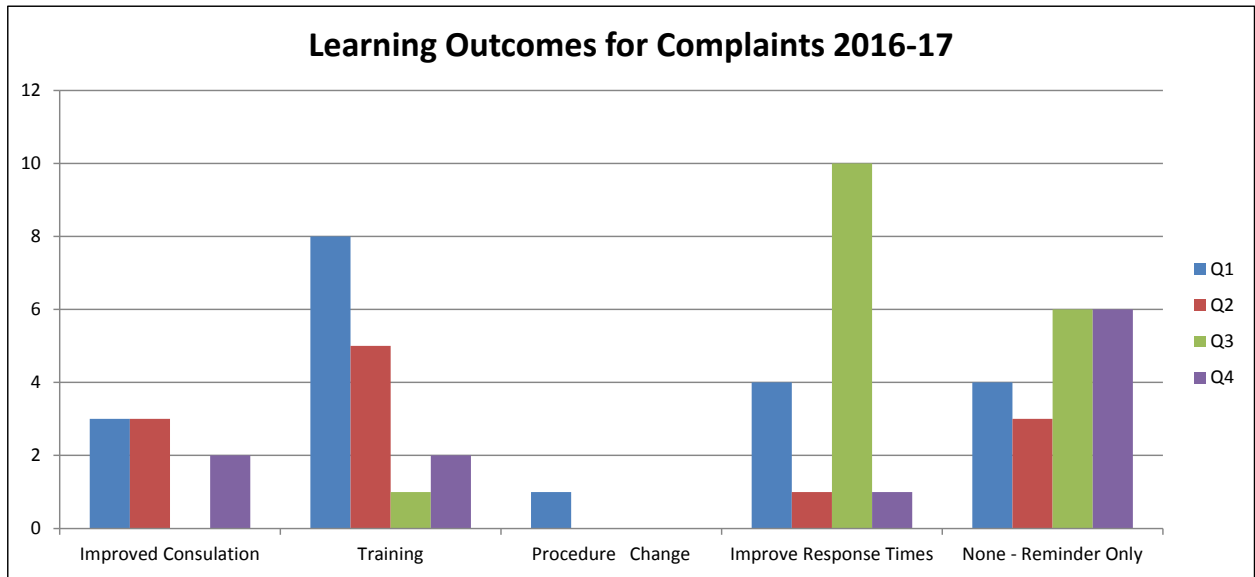
4.5.2. Please note learning outcomes are usually only recorded when Victory recognises that a fault has occurred (i.e. when a complaint is upheld or partially upheld).

4.5.3. The learning outcomes are grouped into five categories:

- **Improved Consultation** – Victory need to improve the communication between themselves and contractors, themselves and customers, or both.
- **Training** – A training need has been identified for a member of staff, team of staff, or operatives.
- **Procedure Change** – A procedure has failed to work, or an improvement has been identified which requires the procedure to change.
- **Improve Response Times** – Either Victory or one of its contractors has failed to respond within the set target timescales.
- **None – Reminder Only** – A “one-off” error whereby effective procedures and processes are in place, but there was an instance of human error, computer error or similar. A reminder is issued of Victory’s standard practices to ensure this doesn’t happen again.



4.5.4. The graph below highlights the learning outcomes identified from complaints received in 2016-17.



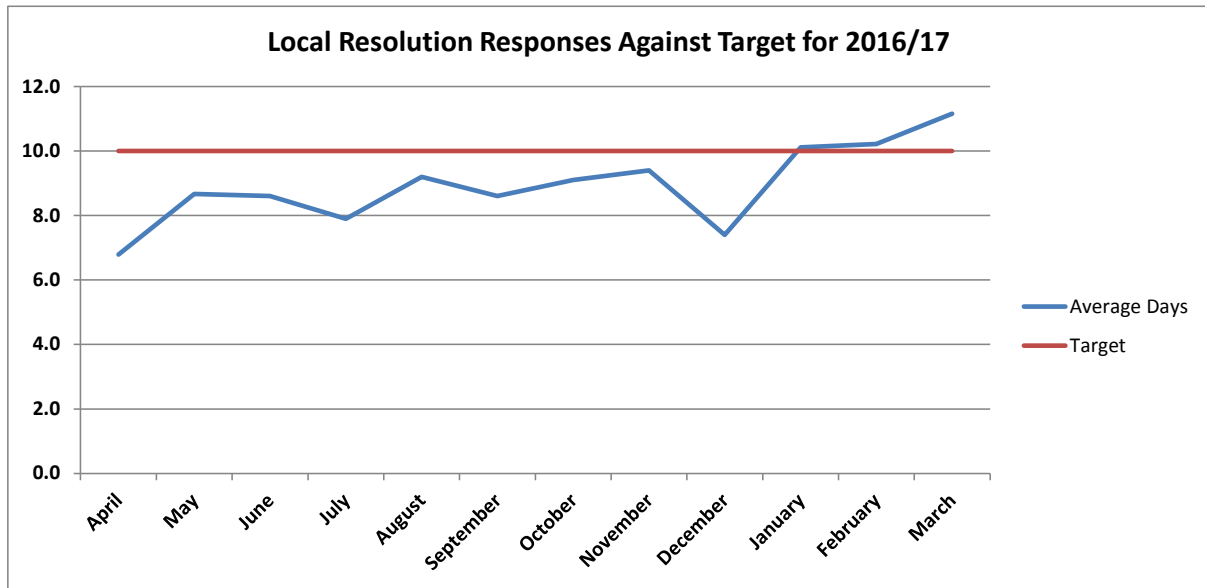
## 4.6. Responding

4.6.1. At each stage of our complaints process, we aim to respond promptly with our findings and within the agreed service standard. Occasionally, we may need more time to investigate or clarify with the complainant what the problem is and what action they would like us to take. Should more time be required, we provide an estimate of how long it will take before we can respond.

4.6.2. The following table shows the average response times for Local Resolution responses against averages for previous years (target is **10 working days**) and the percentage of cases that were within target:

Local Resolution								
	2012/2013	2013/2014	2014/2015	2015/2016	2016/2017			
					Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
<b>Average Days</b>	8	8	8	8	7.6	8.5	8.8	10.9
<b>Within Target (%)</b>	81%	92%	88%	99%	100%	100%	100%	83%

4.6.3. The following graph shows the average monthly response time for Local Resolution responses against the target of **10 working days**:



4.6.4. The following table shows the average response times for Review responses against averages for the previous year (target is **15 working days**):

Review Response								
	2012/2013	2013/2014	2014/2015	2015/2016	2016/2017			
					Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
<b>Average Days</b>	11	11	11	13	9.6	14	10	11.5
<b>Within Target (%)</b>	78%	94%	100%	92%	100%	100%	100%	100%

## 4.7. Summary

4.7.1. Overall for the financial year, **176** complaints were received in total. This is the highest number received in the last 5 years. Out of the 176 complaints, only **11 (6.25%)** were escalated to Review, and **2 (1.13%)** escalated to Appeal. The two cases escalated to the Appeal Stage were done so by the same tenant in relation to two separate concerns.

The figures show the effectiveness of the complaints process as the majority of complaints are handled at the Local Resolution stage.

4.7.2. Looking at the figures for the entire financial year, '**Repairs**' received **84** out of **176** complaints (**47.73%**). It is unsurprising that 'repairs' generate the highest number of complaints due to the high number of repairs completed in a year (14,883).

4.7.3. The majority of complaints received this financial year were not upheld **65% (112)**.

4.7.4. The learning outcomes varied with the top area as '**None – Reminder Only**'. This shows that a large number of complaints resulted from one-off errors whereby effective policies and processes are in place, but an unexpected error occurred.

## 5. DISCRETIONARY PAYMENTS

### 5.1. Payments Made

5.1.1. Victory's priority when a problem or service failure has occurred is to apologise, put right the problem (where possible) and apply any lessons learnt to improve services to try and avoid a reoccurrence of the problem. However, in exceptional circumstances, we recognise that a discretionary payment may be payable.

Victory's Discretionary Payment Policy provides guidance on the likely maximum values which would be awarded to a resident based on the extent of Victory's responsibility and the level of impact on the resident. The "likely maximum" award is £250 for issues where Victory is deemed fully responsible and the impact is major.

Degree of our responsibility	No Impact	Low Impact	Medium Impact	Major Impact
None	£0	£0	£0	£0
Partial	£0	£25	£50	£75
Full	£0	£60	£125	£250

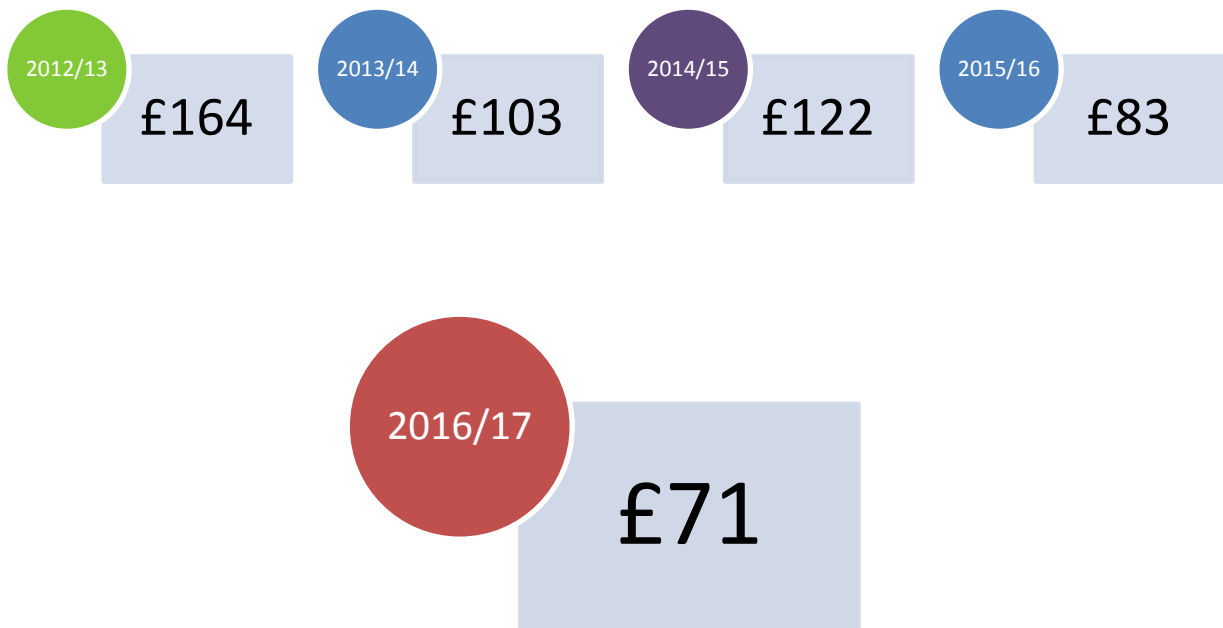
No impact	Customer has not suffered inconvenience as a result of the event.
Low impact	Customer has not suffered inconvenience as a result of the event. The circumstances are such that the service has not achieved the expected standard, but the impact is no greater than a reasonably tolerant person could be expected to accept and the discretionary payment constitutes a token in acknowledgement of the failure to perform.
Medium impact	Where the event is clearly an injustice to the customer and the service has markedly failed to meet the required standards.
High impact	This relates to a serious failure in service standards. It could either be the severity of an event; a persistent failure over a prolonged period of time; or an unacceptable number of attempts to resolve and address an issue.

5.1.2. In this year, a total of **£1,223.23** has been paid to residents over **17** cases equating to an average of **£71.95** per case.

	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Total
Cases Awarded a Payment	5	4	2	6	17
Total Amount Awarded	£403.23	£275.00	£150.00	£395.00	<b>£1,223.23</b>
Average Paid	<b>£80.65</b>	<b>£68.75</b>	<b>£75.00</b>	<b>£65.83</b>	

## 5.2. Comparison

5.2.1. Below shows the average amount paid per case in each of the previous financial years along with the average for this financial year.



### **5.3. Summary**

5.3.1. With **176** complaints and **42** discretionary payment requests received this quarter, there are a total of **218** cases which could potentially result in a discretionary payment. Out of these, **17** cases were awarded a discretionary payment, equating to just **8%** of cases.

5.3.2. The average amount of money paid in this financial year is **£71** which is the lowest average in the last 5 years.

5.3.3. From 1<sup>st</sup> April 2015, our Insurance Brokers changed from Zurich to Arthur J Gallagher Housing Ltd. (AJG).

AJG have provided us with very comprehensive advice surrounding discretionary payments and clearer guidelines as to what should be referred to insurance companies and what should be handled in accordance with our Discretionary Payment Policy.

## 6. COMPLIMENTS

### 6.1. Compliments Received

6.1.1. Whilst Victory works hard to resolve service failures, we also recognise the things we do well by recording compliments.

Compliments are acknowledged by the Complaints and Service Improvement Officer either in writing, by email or by telephone. They are then passed on to the relevant Line Manager, Senior Manager and the Chief Executive if they relate to a member of staff, or to the Project Manager, Assistant Director of Assets and the Contractor Management Team if it relates to a contractor or specific operative.

Compliments are not only received from residents, but from external companies/partnership agencies too.

6.1.2. In this year, **112** compliments were received.

	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Total
Compliments Received	25	26	28	33	112

### 6.2. Breakdown

6.2.1. The table below shows which service areas received the compliments:

	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Total
Contractors	11	16	16	23	66
Assets Department	0	0	0	2	2
Specific member of staff	11	5	11	0	27
Development	0	0	0	0	0
Community Management	0	0	0	0	0
Housing Department	2	1	0	1	4
Customer Service	1	1	1	0	3
Staff Volunteer Days	0	1	0	7	8
Resident Involvement	0	2	0	0	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>33</b>	

## 7. MP ENQUIRIES

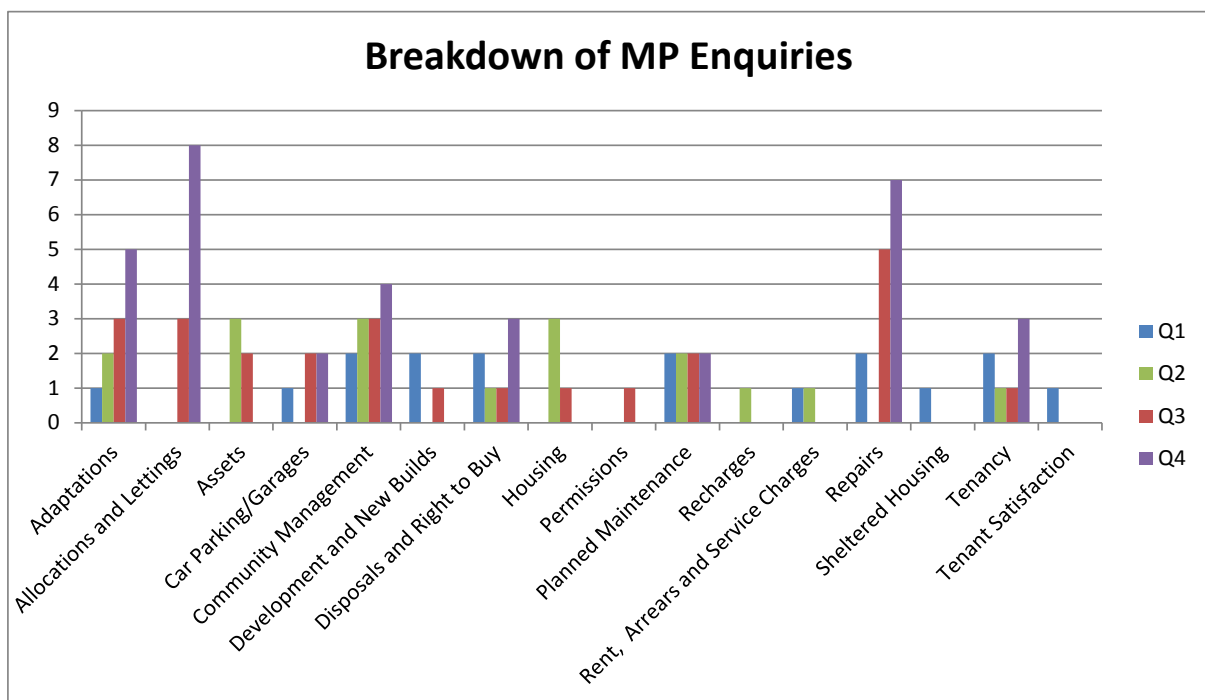
### 7.1. Received

7.1.1. Where a Councillor or MP is acting as the representative of a constituent who wishes to raise an issue, this is categorised as a Councillor/MP enquiry rather than a complaint. These will be dealt with outside of the Complaints Policy unless it is specifically requested by the Councillor/MP that the concern should be considered and responded to in accordance with this Complaints Policy. It may be necessary for Victory to be satisfied that the Councillor/MP has permission to act on an individual's behalf before we respond.

7.1.2. In this year, we received **93** MP Enquiries.

### 7.2. Breakdown

7.2.1. The following graph shows the breakdown of the service areas in relation to the above MP Enquiries:





## **8. CASES REFERRED TO A DESIGNATED PERSON**

- 8.1. From April 2013, the Localism Act 2011 amends the way in which a social housing tenant can make a complaint about their landlord in England with the introduction of a 'designated person' and the creation of a single mandatory Ombudsman for all social landlords.
- 8.2. For this financial year, there was only one complaint raised by a designated person.

On 16<sup>th</sup> October 2016, one complainant advised Victory that they wished for designated person (in this instance, Norman Lamb MP) to review their complaint.

On 1<sup>st</sup> November 2016, Norman Lamb's office confirmed that they will take on the case and would like information sent across to them electronically. This was provided the next working day.

To date, we have not received any further correspondence in relation to this matter.

## **9. CASES REFERRED TO THE OMBUDSMAN**

- 9.1. The Housing Ombudsman provides a free (to tenants), independent and impartial service that investigates complaints about registered housing providers. The Ombudsman will make a decision about whether they have found maladministration when investigating a provider. The Ombudsman has the power to make 'recommendations' or issue 'orders' which must be complied with.
- 9.2. The definition for maladministration is: "lack of care, judgement or honesty in the management of something".
- 9.1. On 27<sup>th</sup> July 2016, we received contact from the Housing Ombudsman confirming that a tenant has raised a case with them. This relates to the one case escalated to the Appeal stage in quarter 1 of 2016/17.

Victory responded with the information requested by the Ombudsman on 2<sup>nd</sup> August 2016, and we have received no further contact since.

On 8<sup>th</sup> February 2017 we received contact from the Housing Ombudsman advising that a previous tenant had raised a case with them. This related to a case which had been escalated to Appeal stage in quarter 2 of 2016/17.

The Housing Ombudsman asked whether Victory would be agreeable to seeking an early resolution to the case. Victory confirmed that we would be happy to consider this however we were then notified in March 2017 that the

complainant had declined the opportunity for an early resolution. The Housing Ombudsman requested further information from Victory regarding the case which was supplied within the given timescales and we were told that the case would be investigated in approximately 7 months. We have received no further contact since then.

9.2. Victory are unaware of any other cases currently with the Ombudsman.

## 10. PERSISTENT & UNREASONABLE BEHAVIOUR

- 10.1. Persistent or unreasonable complainants can disrupt the work of a department or an individual and divert time and attention from the delivery of services to all residents. The difficulty in handling such complaints can cause undue stress for staff and place a strain on time and resources. Where a complainant is deemed to be acting unacceptably in their pursuit of a complaint the Unacceptable Actions & Behaviour Policy may apply.
- 10.2. Victory's Unacceptable Actions & Behaviour Policy recognises that unacceptable behaviour may not just arise during a complaint. The policy allows a short term (up to three weeks) temporary imposition of restricted contact arrangements by an Assistant Director. This is to ensure the safety of staff immediately following an incident occurring and gives sufficient time for a longer term restriction of contact to be considered. There is a Right of Appeal to an Executive Team member for a short term restriction and to the Chairman of the Board (or Vice Chair) for longer term restrictions.
- 10.3. For this year, there were **two** occasions in which this policy was implemented.



# Find out more

Call us any time on **0330 123 1860\***

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**Write to Victory Housing Trust,  
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North Walsham, NR28 0NB**

**or visit us at Tom Moore House,  
Monday to Friday between  
8.30am and 5pm**

\*We record all phone calls that we make and receive,  
for quality and training purposes

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