

Karbon Homes annual complaints performance & service improvement report 2023/2024

Karbon Board response
June 2024

Dear Customers, Colleagues and Partners,

Karbon's Member Responsible for Complaints (MRC)

As Karbon's Member Responsible for Complaints (MRC) I have lead responsibility for complaints, which includes fostering a positive complaint handling culture. This year we introduced Ian Johnson, Executive Director of Customer Services as Executive MRC, to oversee the operational side of complaints. Here we're presenting the response from Karbon's Board to our annual complaints performance and service improvement report, including our annual self-assessment against the Complaint Handling Code.

Scrutiny of the annual report

We reviewed the annual Complaints, Compliments and Suggestions 2023-2024 Report to understand the approach, as well as scrutinise the data and performance information. In our scrutiny we requested work on the correlation of compensation and complaints upheld. We also asked for future reporting to include more analysis on customer demographics, so we can understand if we have any customer groups not accessing the complaint service. We also sought assurance on how the commentary and context were critically evaluated, to ensure that it is a fair and reasonable assessment. With involvement of multiple colleagues in the development of the report and the scrutiny from ourselves, Karbon's Management Team and Group Executive team, we can confirm it is accurate, reliable and consistent with that reported on a quarterly basis throughout the year.

Scrutiny of the self-assessment

We reviewed the evidence cited in the self-assessment, ensuring it's complete and accessible to readers including colleagues and customers. We found assurance in the report being produced by multiple members of the Customer Experience Team, alongside scrutiny and support by members of the Resident Committee, Karbon's Management Team and Group Executive team. Additionally, we requested a copy of the Complaints, Compliments and Suggestions Procedure and found that the self-assessment aligns with the procedure. We also requested copies of the letter templates and were satisfied they are well-written and display care and empathy for customers, whilst also allowing for a fair and full investigation. We concluded the evidence in the self-assessment to be thorough and satisfactory, with no further queries or challenge needed.

Risks identified

Alongside our assessment and that of the Resident Committee, Karbon's Management Team and Group Executive team, we identified risks within the report and self-assessment. To address these risks a complaint forward plan has been developed to address areas we want to maintain performance or to improve on. The plan includes, but is not limited to:

- Maintaining our focus on reducing repair timescales.
- Maintaining our performance on percentage of complaints resolved within timescale.
- Achieving sector average for complaint volumes.

- Identifying underrepresented customer groups and improving their access to the complaint service.
- Encouraging customers to be more confident in complaining.
- Sharing more complaint led service improvements with colleagues and customers.
- Setting up a complaint forum with customers.

Lessons Learned through the self-assessment process

We explored lessons through the self-assessment process and found:

- Customer input was extremely helpful and we would like to continue this.
- The breadth of leadership involvement was reassuring. Next year we would like to consider colleague input.
- The introduction of a second Executive MRC strengthened our approach.
- Next year we plan to compare our approach with peers, to improve this process.

Areas of achievement and challenges in the annual report

We would like to highlight some areas of achievement and challenges through the year:

- The challenge of our performance of complaints volumes relative to homes being below median, led to greater focus on capturing complaints. A report to Group Customer Committee provided reassurance and assurance on the work to address this. We were pleased with the subsequent and consistent improvement in the volume of complaints captured across the year.
- It was positive to note the challenge of supporting an increase in complaint volumes and the successful continued performance.
- In our scrutiny of complaint handling timescales, we found we were not consistently meeting standards in the first quarter. The subsequent improvement in response timescales was pleasing to see, with significant improvement by the end of the year.
- The breadth of service improvements, not least regarding timescales for repairs, showed many positive achievements, which we believe will lead to improving our customer's experiences. We were pleased to see this remains in the forward plan.
- We also were pleased to see the increase in volume of compliments received, not least for Property services, which mostly celebrated customers' experience with colleagues.
- We also found value in the quarterly reports, which enable timely action, as well as the aggregation in this annual report.

In conclusion

On behalf of Karbon Group Board we were pleased to see improvements in our complaint performance and focus remaining on areas we need to improve on. Seeing the many service improvements was also reassuring, as we aim to use learning to improve all our customer's experiences. We also found assurance in the focus on the forward plan, as we continue to strive to deliver a positive complaint experience and ultimately the service our customers deserve across all our services.

Hanif Malik

Karbon Board Member Responsible for Complaints