

Local Government & Social Care OMBUDSMAN

9 July 2025

By email

Ms Holdsworth
Chief Executive
Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea

Dear Ms Holdsworth

Annual Review letter 2024-25

I wrote to you in May with your annual summary of complaint statistics from the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman for the year ending 31 March 2025. In that letter I explained that where we had concerns about your organisation's complaint handling or to highlight exceptional performance I would write again, and I have set out our experience of your organisation's complaint handling below.

As a reminder, [your annual statistics are available here](#).

In addition, you can find the detail of the decisions we have made about your Council, read the public reports we have issued, and view the service improvements your Council has agreed to make as a result of our investigations, as well as previous annual review letters.

This letter will be published on our website on 16 July 2025.

Your organisation's performance

In a similar position to last year, four-fifths of the enquiries we made of your Council during the year related to housing complaints. In many of these cases your officers waited until our deadlines had passed before asking for extensions. I reported these concerns last year so it is disappointing there has not been any improvement.

The Council agreed to, and carried out, the recommendations we made in 21 cases during the year. However, it is disappointing that in ten of those cases the recommendations were not completed within the agreed timescales. Again, most related to housing cases. There were delays in making agreed payments to complainants. Such actions should be simple to administer and delay further frustrates complainants.

I, again, urge you act to both improve response times to our enquiries and ensure our recommendations are implemented within agreed timescales. It is important we are provided with the information we have asked for promptly, and that, where you anticipate delays, you communicate with us as soon as possible, setting out the actions for delivery, and keeping us informed throughout. If there is any support my office can provide to help improve the situation, please do let me know.

Supporting complaint and service improvement

In February we published [good practice guides](#) to support councils to adopt our [Complaint Handling Code](#). The guides were developed in consultation with councils that have been piloting the Code and are based on the real-life, front-line experience of people handling complaints day-to-day, including their

experience of reporting to senior leaders and elected members. We issued the guides alongside free [training resources](#) councils can use to make sure front line staff understand what to do when someone raises a complaint. We will be applying the Code in our casework from April 2026 and we know a large number of councils have already adopted it into their local policies with positive results.

This year we relaunched our popular [complaint handling training](#) programme. The training is now more interactive than ever, providing delegates with an opportunity to consider a complaint from receipt to resolution. Early feedback has been extremely positive with delegates reporting an increase in confidence in handling complaints after completing the training. To find out more contact training@lgo.org.uk.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Amerdeep Somal', followed by a short horizontal line.

Amerdeep Somal
Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman
Chair, Commission for Local Administration in England