

**Karibu**



Community Homes



# COMPLAINTS PERFORMANCE & SERVICE IMPROVEMENT REPORT

---

Q2

2024-2025

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

- 01.** Introduction
- 02.** Housing Ombudsman cases
- 03.** Karibu Complaint Response Performance 2024/25
- 04.** Common Themes in Q1 & Q2
- 05.** Outcomes and focus for Q3
- 06.** Current activity to improve our response to complaints
- 07.** Lessons learned





# INTRODUCTION

The aim of handling complaints is to make sure customers are listened to, questions answered, or issues resolved. Wherever possible our key focus is taking early intervention and having a proactive approach to resolve the issues. It is also important as an organisation that we identify any learning outcomes and service improvements and embed these into the culture and processes quickly, to prevent further dissatisfaction.

We continue to learn from feedback, seek to improve communication throughout the complaints process and keep customers informed about the actions and outcomes of complaints.

We are also making sure we have relevant and up to date information around the needs and requirements of our customers. This, along with effective record keeping, will make sure we are equipped to provide a robust complaint handling service and one where customers feel listened to and valued.



# HOUSING OMBUDSMAN SERVICE COMPLAINT CASES

We have only had 1 complaint determined by the housing ombudsman during this year to date. This is a significant reduction on the number of determinations compared with the same period last year. 2023/24 and reflects the additional focus this area has had over the last 12 months.

The determination can be summarised as follows.

Case no	Date determined	Outcome	Actions
1	September 2024	Complaint handling failure	Compensation Review process Staff training

## Cases recorded with the Housing Ombudsman as at end of Q2

As of 30th September 2024, there were a total of 25 cases currently registered with the Housing Ombudsman that occupy various stages of their internal processes.

The Housing Ombudsman has 10 stages for the complaints that they receive.

1. **Case Under Initial Assessment** – a case is being assessed
2. **Within Landlord's Internal Complaint Procedure** – complaint with Landlord.
3. **Referral assessment** – assessing a case post landlord's complaint process.
4. **Evidence gathering** – providing information to help review a case.
5. **Awaiting investigation** – awaiting allocation.
6. **Under investigation** – Dispute Resolution team is assessing the case.
7. **Determined** – Provided a determination on a case without orders or recommendations.
8. **Determined – awaiting LL action** – waiting for landlord to confirm compliance with orders or to give feedback.
9. **Review** – formal review request from a landlord or resident.
10. **Case Closed** – this status will show when we close the case.



The following table outlines the current case load with the HOS and their stages.

<b>STAGE WITH HO</b>	<b>No</b>
<b>CASE UNDER ASSESSMENT</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>WITHIN LANDLORDS INTERNAL COMPLAINT PROCEDURE</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>REFERRAL ASSESSMENT</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>EVIDENCE GATHERING</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>UNDER INVESTIGATION</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>AWAITING INVESTIGATION</b>	<b>2</b>
	<b>25</b>

We have conducted some analysis of the residents with cases still lodged with the Ombudsman to ascertain if there are any vulnerabilities present that we need to have considered and none of the current cases identified resident attributes that would require special attention.

Several of these cases have not been progressed by the ombudsman since being registered and a number have only recently been looked at after an extended period and they span in date between 22nd November 2022 to 17th September 2024.

We continue to stay in touch with residents whose cases are in the ombudsman cases to ascertain whether it is possible to resolve them before any determinations are made.

It is also our aim to conduct some home visits in order to meet face to face to further understand and resolve any outstanding or new issues that may exist.

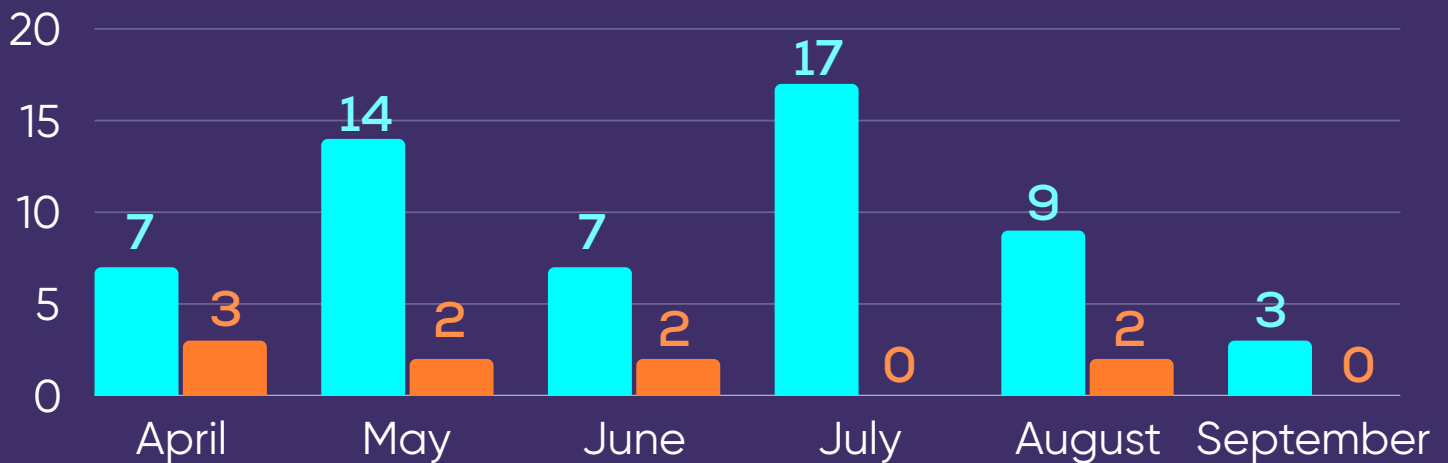


# KARIBU COMPLAINT RESPONSE PERFORMANCE 2024/25

Complaint Statistics – At A Glance



## STAGE 1 & STAGE 2 – COMPLAINTS CONCLUDED BY MONTH AND STAGE



The number of formal complaints average around 9 a month. A peak identified in July was driven by asset maintenance, Training of new staff members to identify service requests and triage complaints in line with our policy, along with seeking to resolve issues immediately before becoming a complaint has been completed. Following the training the numbers have reduced month on month during quarter 2.

This good practice ensures that our service teams are focused on issue resolution rather than adding cases to the formal complaints caseload always ensuring residents still have the right to make a formal complaint.



# SUMMARY OF QUARTER 2 COMPLAINTS AND RESPONSE TIMES – % THAT MEET TARGET

COMPLAINTS RECEIVED JULY TO SEPTEMBER	37
CONCLUDED AT STAGE 1	31
ESCALATED TO STAGE 2	6
JULY TO SEPTEMBER 24 ACKNOWLEDGE STAGE 1	100%
JULY TO SEPTEMBER 24 RESPOND TO STAGE 1	93.55%
JULY TO SEPTEMBER 24 ACKNOWLEDGE STAGE 2	100%
JULY TO SEPTEMBER 24 RESPOND TO STAGE 2	83.33%

Of the complaints **closed** between July and September Q2,

In Q2 29 Stage 1 complaints were closed and four stage 2 complaints of these:

- **Stage 1 complaints:** six complaints throughout quarter two did not meet acknowledgment target and six complaints exceeded the response date target
- **Stage 2 complaints:** Two of four complaints closed did not meet acknowledgement target and two of four complaints in quarter two exceeded extensions targets

There are cases where verbal extensions have been discussed with the resident, however these should have been made in writing and logged on the CRM system and are not counted.

Further training has taken place with the Customer Service Advisers to ensure that residents are informed of extensions in writing for audit purposes.





# COMMON THEMES IN Q1 & Q2

From the stage 1 complaints we have received during Quarter 1 and quarter 2 we are able to look at what areas are driving dissatisfaction which are broken down as below:

*To note information for the below analysis is extracted from our CRM system reflecting Kew Office data, during the process of merging the legacy Kensal data. The data from legacy Kensal rise whilst a small amount it is reflective of Kew data and all data will be available from the system for the Q3 report.*

We know that the top three areas in Q1 and Q2 are asset responsive repairs, which is an area of high communication for residents with their landlord, and this has been followed by Finance and Housing



LACK OF ACTION	TOTAL
ASSET ELECTRIC	1
ASSET GAS	4
ASSET PLANNED	1
ASSET RESPONSIVE	29
COMPLIANCE	1
FINANCE	8
HOUSING	6
LEASEHOLD	1
<b>POLICY</b>	
ASSET PLANNED	1
ASSET RESPONSIVE	1
<b>QUALITY OF WORKS</b>	
ASSET RESPONSIVE	2
CUSTOMER SERVICES	1
<b>STAFF</b>	
ASSET RESPONSIVE	1

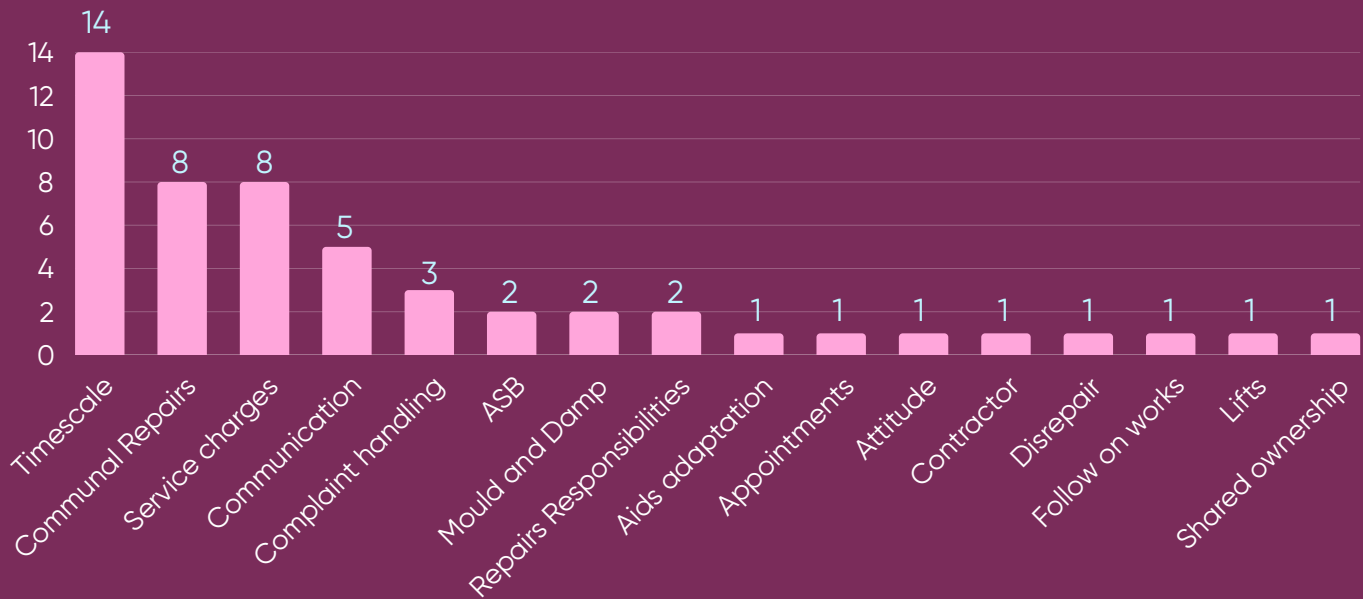




As we drill down further at the key themes, you can see from the chart below the three top drivers:

- Timescale
- Communal repairs
- Service charges

## LACK OF ACTION BREAKDOWN



### Timescale Breakdown:

- Delays in repairs being undertaken.
- Residents contacting regarding historical repair issues.
- Multiple visits to resolve repair.
- Communication links into timescale with residents having to chase for information.

### Communal Repairs Breakdown:

- Door entry system repairs
- General communal repairs and delays with managing agents
- Along with issues with Pests

### Service Charges Breakdown:

- General queries about charges and increases in rents and service charge information along with delays in communication.



# OUTCOMES AND FOCUS FOR Q3:

Understanding the drivers of complaints allows us to look at the root cause and how we can improve our services for residents. Following our review we identified three key areas.

- Customer service training for all staff building on our Karibu values and ensuring all staff can identify and resolve resident issues and understand impact when we get it wrong.
- Rent increase and service charge review and communication strategy.
- Training with our solicitors to understand communal repairs and leaks in mixed tenure blocks and managing repair responsibilities with managing agents for our residents.

The main area for complaints in Q1 and Q2 (72%) has been with our Repairs service. Since April 2024 we have been using a new main contractor. During this time, they have sent a high volume of quotes to our admin team. Due in part to accepting additional repairs on site which customers have requested whilst the operative has completed a scheduled repair in their home.

Whilst in most cases we understand that these additional repairs are required, we realise the need to manage the expectations of our customers.

We have asked the operatives to carry out the original repairs quoted and send an additional quote for us to authorise. Operatives are being encouraged to provide the customer with realistic timescales as to when the quotes will be reviewed and the outcome communicated back to residents.

Overall, 89% of our complaints have been due to a perceived lack of action in Q1 and Q2, which correlates with the delays experienced by residents in having their repairs completed.

## RESIDENT VOICE

Receiving and dealing with a complaint offers us the opportunity to assess what has gone wrong and what we have done to correct it. For every upheld complaint where our customer had a legitimate reason to challenge us, affords us the opportunity to learn and change.

In addition to the TSM (Tenant Satisfaction Measures), we conduct additional questionnaires around the key service areas. These provide extra insight, and the results are reported every quarter to our resident committees and board.



# CURRENT ACTIVITY TO IMPROVE OUR RESPONSE TO COMPLAINTS

There continues to be a strong focus on complaint handling. This quarter there continues to be a variety of activities undertaken and plans to improve the residents experience in 2024/25.

- Strengthened the management and operational resource overseeing complaints.
- Developing complaint Customer Relationship Management (CRM) module to merge all complaint data on to one system
- Key staff completed the Housing Ombudsman dispute resolution training.
- Further new online e-coaching modules are being rolled out.
- Completed staff training and a review of our Complaints Policy and Procedure
- Transactional surveys are undertaken in key service areas.
- We have regular weekly meetings to progress live complaint cases.

The HOS has also launched their new e-Learning platform in February 2024 via its e-coaching platform. This forms part of our onward complaints and service training programme which consists of modules including.

- Attitude, respect, and rights.
- Complaint handling code.
- Damp and mould.
- Dispute resolution.
- Knowledge and information management.
- Other training as and when added.

At the time of writing all relevant staff have completed the above modules as part of their personal training plans.

## FURTHER INSIGHT

To support the main report, we have compiled some further insight. As we learn more about our residents, we are developing our capability to report on complaints and customer attributes to ensure equity in our service.

Our capability will be further enhanced when our systems are developed, and automatic reporting is in place. We anticipate that an automated report to collate the incoming complaints will be ready to go live in time for the next quarter results.

It is important for us that there are not any defined groups that appear to receive a lesser service than others and so we will measure complaints by certain attributes to ensure we are aware of any outliers and conduct appropriate deeper an analysis should there be any



The following pages show a further breakdown of.

- Complaints by month and summary feedback
- Complaint escalation rates by month
- Complaints by ethnicity
- Complaints by area aligned to stock numbers.
- Complaints by lead resident age

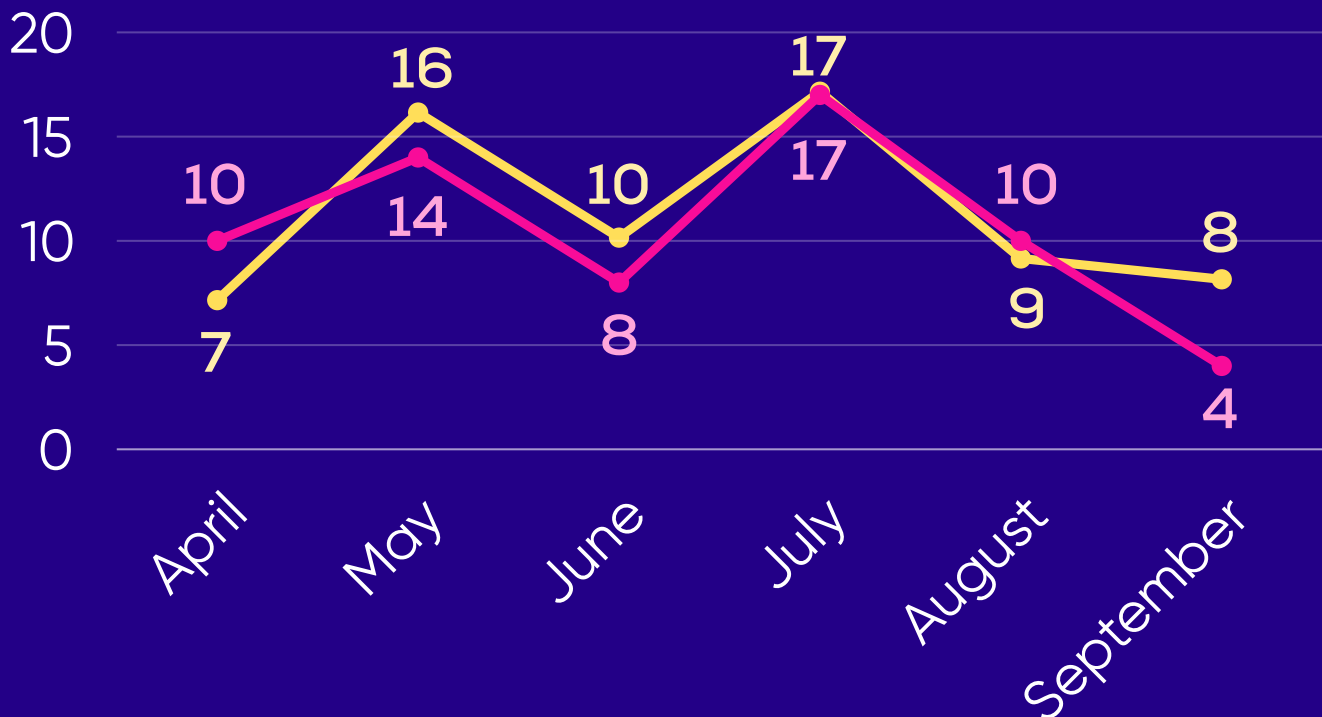
## COMPLAINTS BY MONTH AND SUMMARY FEEDBACK

The chart below provides an overview of the total Stage 1 complaints received this year, with the equivalent 2023/24 figures as added to provide a comparison.

There seems to be a familiar seasonal pattern to peaks and troughs by month, but the overall trend is positive in terms of the numbers of complaints received.



### STAGE 1 - CASES FROM APRIL TO SEPTEMBER (2023 vs 2024)



From our analysis, we can breakdown each area of complaint, the biggest driver is residents feel there is a lack of action within our repairs service, and this is clear trend when analysing the complaints being raised by our residents.

Improvements can still be made to “Getting the Basic’s Right” to improve our services. Having addressed the challenges, we have faced regarding the large number of quotes we have received.

It is anticipated that the number of repairs complaints will reduce over the coming months as historical repairs are identified and completed, we also have a process and timetable for responding to separate quotations.

Chigwell have been given clear advice from the Director of Assets about how the repair operatives should approach on site conversations with residents in order to better manage expectations.

We are also including other contractors ensure we have comparable quotes that represent the best value for money and that enables additional jobs to be appointed where appropriate.

We have seen a big reduction in complaints in September 2024, as opposed to last year. Training has been given to our customer service advisers, with the emphasis on identifying service requests, rather than what had previously been deemed as complaints.

We have identified several situations which fall under the ASB process cases, this has also helped to reduce the number of complaints we have received.

## COMPLAINTS BY MONTH AND SUMMARY FEEDBACK

Whilst every effort is made to resolve the complaint at Stage 1 (84%) and provide an early resolution for our residents, the chart below reflects the monthly breakdowns of escalations.

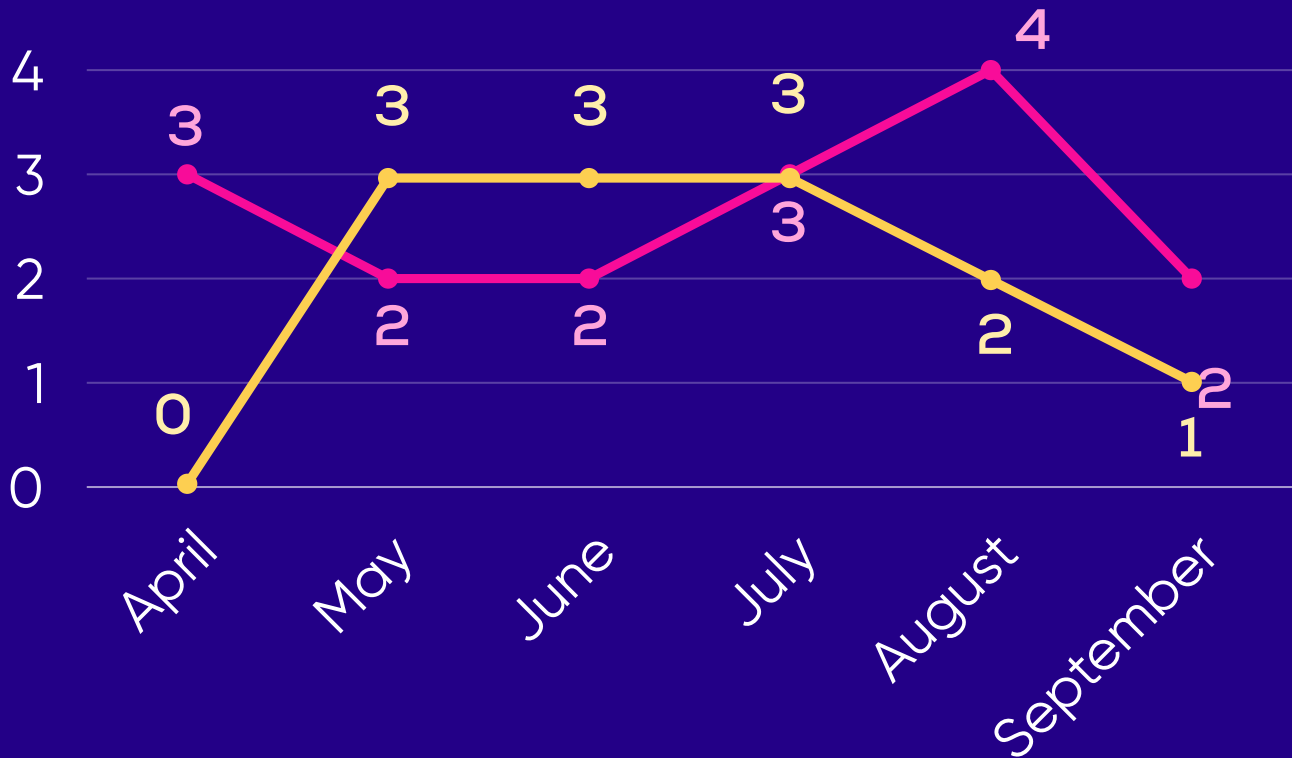
By communicating with the customer at all stages of the complaint process, we have been able to keep the cases escalated to Stage 2 to a minimum.

For September, one case was escalated to Stage 2 which is an indication of the progress we are making in this area.



2

## STAGE 2 - CASES FROM APRIL TO SEPTEMBER (2023 vs 2024)



It's important that we resolve issues as early as possible starting from a service or information request. The guidance to our colleagues is that should we receive a formal complaint, this is a primary opportunity to ensure all efforts lead to a satisfactory and reasonable resolution.

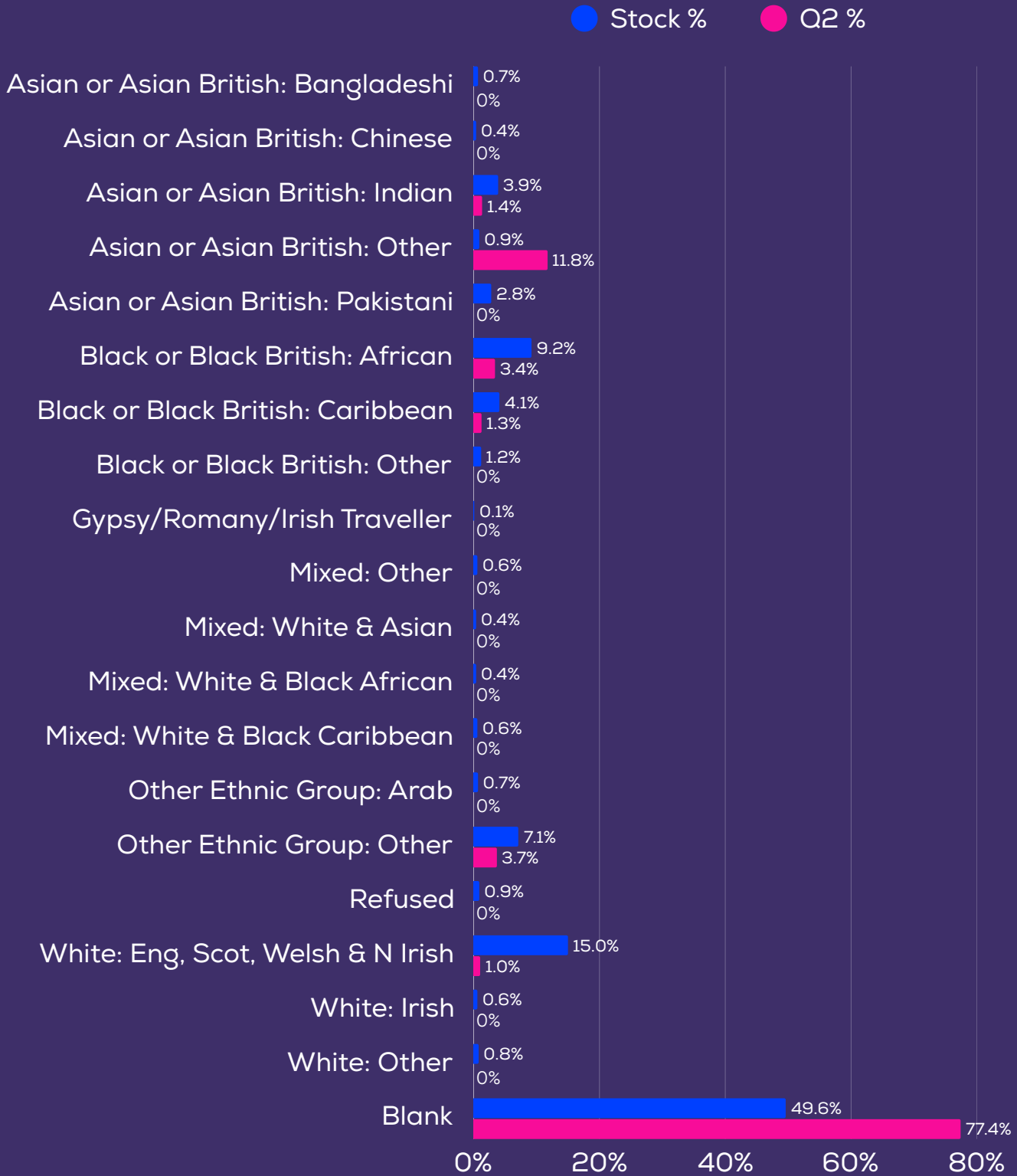
Should a complaint escalate the case is allocated to a more senior member of staff unrelated to the original case and extra effort is invested in order to conclude matters.

Sometimes there will be cases where compensation is the goal or a starting a formal complaint may be aligned to strengthening a disrepair claim. In the majority of cases however a service failure has occurred that requires resolution and appropriate other remedies offered.



# ETHNICITY ANALYSIS

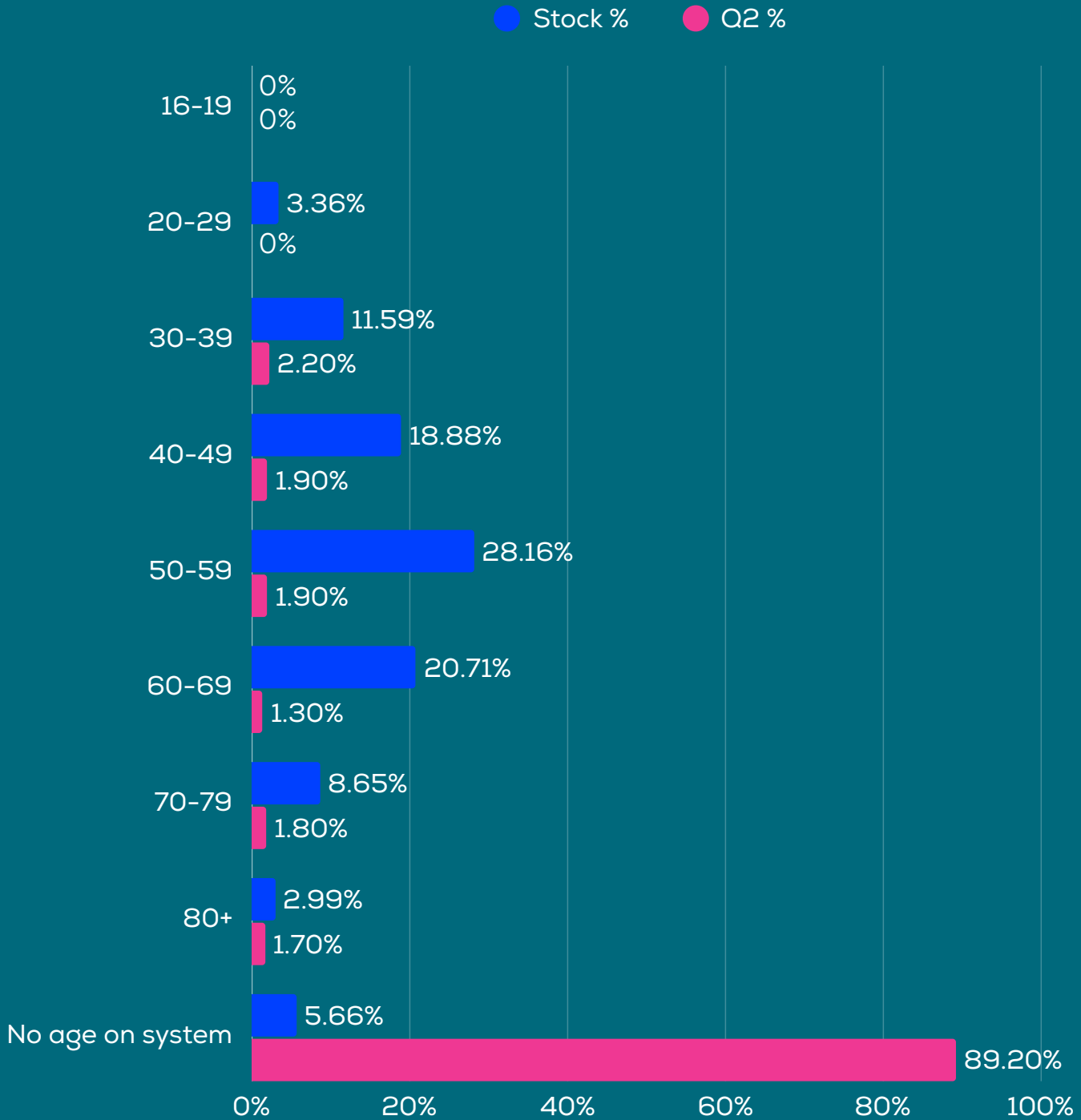
This graph measures complaint by ethnic group vs our resident profile%. This helps indicate whether there could be issues around equality in terms of customer service. Overall, the complaints by ethnicity broadly represent our demographic profile. Black/Black British, Asian/Asian British groups indicate a marginal increase in complaints relative to the ethnic %of our resident base. Complaints are reviewed to see whether there are any common traits or trends emerging that we need to address.





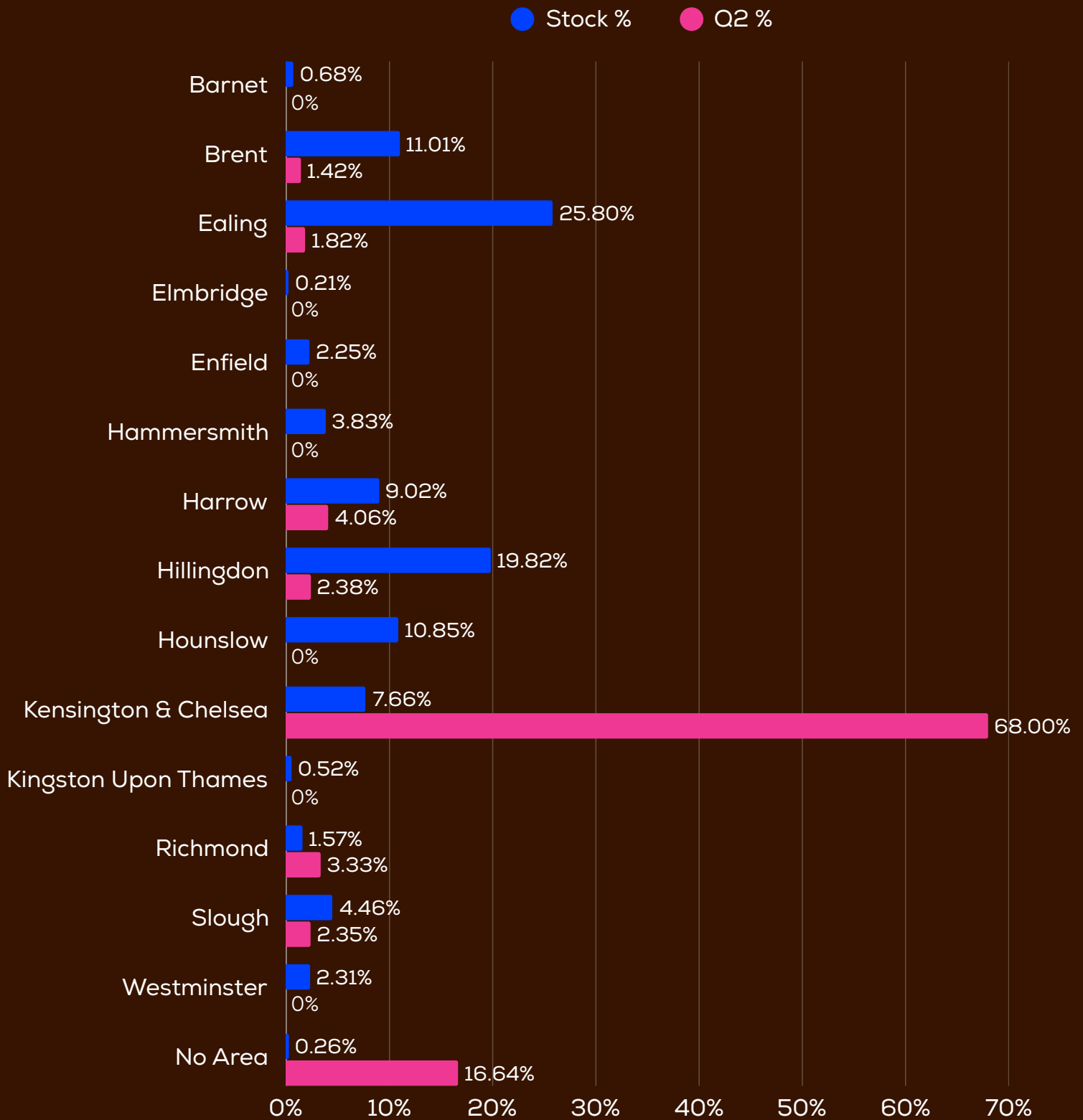
# AGE ANALYSIS

The below graph provides us with insight into our residents and our demographic makeup and allows us to track satisfaction with our services within our operating areas, age, and ethnicity. Overall, the graph above shows a representation across all age groups with slight increase in our 20's group reflecting slightly more dissatisfaction with our services as a %. We are also looking at these specific complaints to see whether there are any indicators that are relevant to age.



The complaints by area seem to be in keeping with our stock however there is some slight outliers in Ealing Harrow local authority and are driven by lack of action or quality of repairs driver for complaints in other areas.

# BOROUGH ANALYSIS



# COMMON THEMES

## 1. Delays in Repairs & Maintenance

- The most common cause of complaints (72%) was related to responsive repairs.
- Issues included delays in scheduling repairs, multiple visits to fix the same problem, and poor communication.
- Communal repairs, such as door entry systems and pest control, were also frequently raised.

## 2. Communication Issues

- Many residents reported having to repeatedly chase for updates on repairs and service requests.
- There was a need for clearer, more timely communication about service charges and rent increases.
- Some residents felt that their concerns were not being properly recorded or followed up.

## 3. Concerns Over Service Charges

- A significant number of complaints related to increases in service charges and a lack of transparency.
- Delays in responding to queries about charges further added to dissatisfaction.

## 4. Housing Ombudsman Cases

- Only one complaint has been upheld by the Housing Ombudsman this year, reflecting improvements in complaints handling.
- However, 25 cases are still active at various stages of the Ombudsman process, highlighting areas that require continued focus.

## 5. Complaint Resolution & Escalation Trends

- Most complaints (84%) were resolved at Stage 1, indicating effective early intervention.
- The number of complaints escalating to Stage 2 has reduced, showing improved resolution at the initial stage.
- Additional training for customer service staff has helped in distinguishing service requests from formal complaints, reducing unnecessary escalations.

## Equality & Demographics Considerations

- Complaint patterns broadly reflect the demographic profile of our residents.
- However, Black/Black British and Asian/Asian British residents had a slightly higher proportion of complaints.
- Younger residents, particularly those in their 20s, showed a slightly higher level of dissatisfaction, which is being reviewed.



## 1. Training & Policy Enhancements

- Customer service training for all staff, focusing on Karibu values and improving complaint resolution.
- Staff training on repairs and communal responsibilities, ensuring better coordination with managing agents.
- Housing Ombudsman Dispute Resolution training undertaken by key staff members.

## 2. Strengthening Complaint Handling Processes

- More senior oversight of complaints management.
- Introduction of weekly meetings to track and resolve live complaints.
- Development of a CRM system to consolidate all complaint data, improving case tracking and resolution speed.

## 3. Better Communication with Residents

- Service teams are focusing on resolving issues before they escalate into formal complaints.
- Customer service staff have been trained to ensure residents receive written confirmation of complaint extensions.
- More home visits planned to engage directly with residents on unresolved issues.

## 4. Addressing Repairs & Maintenance Challenges

- The new repairs contractor has been instructed to manage expectations better by providing realistic timelines.
- Operatives must now complete only pre-approved repairs, avoiding delays caused by additional on-site requests.
- A clearer process for prioritising and tracking repairs has been introduced to reduce backlogs.

## 5. Improving Service Charge & Rent Transparency

- A review of service charge communication has been initiated to improve clarity.
- A new communication strategy for rent increases has been implemented to ensure residents are well-informed.

## 6. Ensuring Fair & Inclusive Services

- Complaint trends are being analysed to ensure no specific resident group receives a lesser service.
- Demographic-based reporting will be automated to identify and address any inequalities.

