

The Hospital of St Mary the Virgin (Rye Hill and Benwell) Alms Houses Charity

Registered Charity 216275

Annual Complaint Performance and Service Improvement Report

Reviewed and approved by Trustees: December 2025

Next Review: not later December 2026

Prepared by: Ms PJ Embleton, the Manager

The Hospital of St Mary the Virgin (Rye Hill and Benwell), value our residents' feedback and the lessons we may learn from receiving complaints. When we do not get something right, we are committed to making the necessary changes to improve our services and increase resident satisfaction.

We are a small charitable organisation providing single-occupancy, independent-living social housing to 60 male residents aged over 50 from the Tyne and Wear area. We operate across two sites: St Mary's Hospital Lodge at Rye Hill and Thomas Horsley House in Benwell, Newcastle upon Tyne.

The Charity employs a part-time Manager and a part-time Finance Assistant, both based at Thomas Horsley House. The Manager acts as the delegated Complaints Officer. Due to the small size of the organisation and the absence of additional management staff to fulfil roles required by the Complaints Handling Code, the role of Appeals Officer has been delegated to the Chair of the Trustees, who serves in a voluntary capacity. Each site is additionally supported by one full-time Supervisor and one part-time Domestic Assistant, who provide daily resident contact and help residents maintain a community-based and personally independent lifestyle.

Many of our residents and staff have been part of the Trust community for many years. We also appoint a volunteer Responsible Resident at each site to provide out-of-hours contact, with both having direct access to the Manager when required. This proactive structure enables issues to be identified and addressed promptly, often at a very early stage. As a result, combined with the stability of our resident community, the quality of our housing, and consistent, considerate management, the need to use our formal Complaints Policy and Procedure has been rare.

Our Commitments

We are committed to:

- Ensuring residents have access to, and are aware of, our Complaints Policy, which complies with the Housing Ombudsman's requirements.
- Providing accessible and inclusive channels through which to make a complaint.
- Offering honest, transparent and fair responses to all complaints.

Actions Taken

We have:

- Published our Complaints Policy and Complaint Form on our website and in the *Information for Residents Handbook*. Printed copies are also available from either site office.
- Trained all staff in the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code as well as our internal Policy and Procedure, ensuring that complaints are taken seriously, recorded, investigated and responded to appropriately.
- Established a dedicated complaints folder on our encrypted cloud drive to support accurate recording and regular reporting to the Board of Trustees.
- Added "Complaints" as a standing agenda item for every Staffing and Pastoral Subcommittee meeting.

- Built strong and trusted relationships with residents, supported by our open-door approach to staff and management accessibility.

Complaints Data (April 2024 - March 2025)

No complaints meeting the definition of a formal complaint were refused. The Hospital of St Mary the Virgin (Rye Hill and Benwell) had **no cases referred to the Housing Ombudsman** during this period.

- **Stage 1 Complaints:** 0
- **Stage 2 Complaints:** 0

Complaints Process

- All complaints received are logged and recorded in a dedicated, secure folder on our encrypted cloud drive.
- Stage 1 complaints are assigned to and handled by the Complaints Officer (the Manager).
- The Complaints Officer ensures all complaints are accurately logged, acknowledged, investigated and responded to within published timeframes, in full compliance with the Complaints Handling Code and the Charity's Complaints Policy and Procedure. This ensures a consistent approach across all cases.
- The Complaints Officer is fully trained in complaint handling and regularly reviews their training, advising the Clerk and Trustees of any updates to the Housing Ombudsman's Code.
- Complaints data is reported by the Manager at each Pastoral and Staffing Subcommittee meeting (held at least three times per year).
- A designated Appeals Officer (Chair of Trustees) oversees any escalated concerns.
- A Trustee is appointed as the Member Responsible for Complaints (Deputy Chair of Trustees).
- We remain transparent in how residents can make a complaint and how our services can be held to account.

Lessons Learned

As no complaints were received during this reporting period, there were no lessons to record. However, had any complaints been submitted, the staff team would have reviewed them to identify opportunities for service improvements.

Identified Trends

None, as no complaints were received.

Service Improvements Made

No problems or issues were identified which required an improvement in service delivery

Action Plan

- Continue to comply fully and to the best of our ability with the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code and to make improvements required to address any issues which are identified.

Trustees' Response

The Trustees of the Hospital of St Mary the Virgin met on the 9th of December 2025 to consider the revised Complaints Policy and Procedures, the Annual Complaints Self-assessment, the Complaints Form and this report prepared by the Manager and have resolved to approve all the above documents, which will now duly be reported to the Housing Ombudsman and published on our website.

Signature

RJ Metcalfe

Position

CHAIR

Date

9/12/25

