



**Response from Barnsley Council Member Responsible for Complaints, Cllr Franklin, Cabinet Spokesperson for Regeneration and Culture to:**

**Barneslai Homes Annual Complaint and Learning Report and Self-Assessment against the Housing Ombudsman Code (HOS) 2025**

I am pleased to respond to Barneslai Homes' second Annual Self-Assessment against the Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code; a transparent and honest self-assessment which demonstrates full and strengthened compliance with the code.

Over the last year, I have received detailed complaint handling reports and met regularly with Barneslai Homes' Board Complaint Champion and officers from the complaint handling team. These meetings have ensured my ongoing oversight, scrutiny and assurance for Barnsley Council, as we work together with Barneslai Homes to deliver the social housing service for Barnsley and continually improve our complaint handling service.

As Cabinet Spokesperson for Barnsley Council, on 25<sup>th</sup> June 2025, I gave confidence to my Cabinet colleagues that Barneslai Homes (our ALMO) have an accessible and positive complaint handling culture, and despite a significant increase in complaints, an increase that is being seen across the social housing sector, they have continued to make it easy for residents to complain, to put things right for them and identify learning from complaints.

Barneslai Homes, in their self-assessment and their Annual Complaint Handling and Learning Report are transparent about their challenges in addressing the root cause of complaints. But, along with the Council's £8.5million investment to reduce the long wait times for planned repairs and replacements (the highest cause of tenant complaint), and our review of repairs service delivery partnership (PRIP), I am confident that Barneslai Homes' have good operational improvement plans which will ensure that they continually improve not just the service they deliver to tenants, but the already strong complaint handling service.

Councillor Robin Franklin

Cabinet Spokesperson for Regeneration and Culture

**27 June 2025**



**Response from Berneslai Homes Board Complaints Champion, Rebecca Mather to:**

**Berneslai Homes Annual Complaint and Learning Report and Self-Assessment against the Housing Ombudsman Code (HOS) 2025**

As Board Complaint Champion I am pleased to endorse Berneslai Homes' 2025 self-assessment against the Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code. I give my full assurance to Board, BMBC and most importantly to tenants and residents, that despite the significant increase in complaints in 2024/2025, we have continued to handle complaints positively, put things right for individuals and identify learning to improve services.

On 27<sup>th</sup> May 2025, Berneslai Homes Board received and considered both the Annual Self-Assessment against the HOS Complaint Handling Code and the Annual Complaint and Learning Report.

Board was assured of the positive progress in improving our complaint handling service - responding to more complaints within timescale and strengthening governance oversight of complaint handling and learning. They also noted that whilst action continues to be taken to improve both the complaint handling service and address the root cause of complaints, there are still several residual risks which challenge our compliance with the HOS code:

- The resources to deliver early, consistent and clear communication to manage tenants expectations and to fulfil promises.
- The funding of temporary resources to investigate and respond to complaints.
- The resources to deliver service improvements.

As a Board, we will continue to provide oversight and challenge of complaint handling performance through Committee and Board meetings and will support officers in managing these ongoing and emerging concerns.

We must focus collectively on getting more things right first time, if we are to see a reduction in complaints.

I will personally continue to take a proactive role in fulfilling my role as Board Complaint Champion so that I understand more about the cause of complaints, our response to them and our learning.

Rebecca Mather, Berneslai Homes Board Complaint Handling Champion

**28<sup>th</sup> May 2025**