



Complaints & Compliments

Annual Report 2023-2024



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01 | WHY WE REPORT ON OUR COMPLAINTS

Section 18 of The Local Authority Social Services and National Health Service Complaints (England) Regulations 2009 places a duty on the Council to prepare an annual report each year. That legislation is primarily aimed at complaints relating to adult and children social care but the London Borough of Bromley goes further and publishes greater detail about its overall performance. This report provides an overview of complaints and our interaction with the Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman between 1st April 2023 and 31st March 2024.

The Council has an ethos of continuous improvement and is committed to using the feedback it receives from a variety of sources to learn, understand and take action to improve services. Our Performance Management Frameworks recognise customer complaints as a valuable source of qualitative feedback on the performance of our services. We know that high-performing services use feedback to help managers and staff understand where they are doing well and where improvements can be made.

We use our complaints data and analysis to:

- ➔ Collaboratively prompt, challenge and deepen the understanding of service performance amongst the leadership group; this enables and promotes a shared understanding of the strengths and areas for development within the service
- ➔ Inform prioritisation in service improvement plans
- ➔ Commission improvement activities and training where appropriate
- ➔ Encourage individual managers to take the initiative at service/team level or with individual staff members to address areas for development and manage local improvements

Terminology used in this report

A **complaint** is the whole of someone's approach to the Council expressing dissatisfaction. One or more services or teams may be referenced in that complaint, and each of those is referred to as a **mention**. Each complaint may identify one or more individual grievances and each of those is referred to as an **aspect**.

For instance...

Mrs Jones raises a complaint with the Council alleging that the Council Tax department have both delayed processing her application for support and disclosed her personal information when they should not have done. She also complains that the Housing Benefit team have wrongly decided she is not eligible for support.

In this example, this one complaint has given rise to three mentions (two for Council Tax and one for Housing Benefit) and three aspects – delay, data breach and a disputed decision.

02 | LAW & PROCEDURES

Legislation

The main legislation we are governed by is the Local Authority Social Services and National Health Service Complaints (England) Regulations 2009. This duty is delivered through the Corporate Complaints Procedure. The majority of Adult Social Care complaints are considered on a statutory basis and are managed through the Corporate Complaints Procedure.

Where the matter directly involves a child (or an authorised person on their behalf) complaining about the care and support provided to that child by Children's Social Care, the relevant rules are found in the Children Act 1989 Representations Procedure (England) Regulations 2006) and this duty is delivered through the Children's Complaints Procedure.

Timescales

Under the Corporate Complaints Procedure, complaints should be acknowledged within three working days and formally responded to within 20 working days.

Complaints are managed through the Children's Complaints Procedure as follows :-

- ➔ Stage 1 initial response within 10 (up to 20) working days
- ➔ Stage 2 investigation within 25 (up to 65) working days
- ➔ Stage 3 Review Panel within 30 working days

Where a complaint may not be responded to within the usual timescales, for whatever reason, CE&CS will keep in touch with the complainant to explain the reasons for the delay and wherever possible provide a best estimate as to when the response will be available.

The Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman

The Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman (LG&SCO) acts as the final stage for complaints about local authorities, adult social care providers (including care homes and home care agencies) and some other organisations providing public services. When the Council responds to a complaint, we are required to signpost the complainant to the Ombudsman if they remain dissatisfied. The Ombudsman analyses each referral to determine whether it meets their criteria and, if so, whether it merits a full investigation.

Data sources

The Customer Engagement & Complaints Service (CE&CS) currently oversees complaint handling for the entire Council save for the Environment & Public Protection division (E&PP). All E&PP corporate statistics are provided by that division themselves and do not follow the same taxonomy as the rest of the Council. CE&CS manage all Ombudsman interactions for the Council.

03 | COUNCIL OVERVIEW

Complaints received

By type and division

Representations	Adult	Children	Housing	P&R	Education	EPP	CED	Public Health	Total
Corporate	0	85	82	32	135	205	104	0	643
Statutory	90	5	-	-	-	-	-	-	95
Total	90	90	82	32	135	205	104	0	738

Five year comparison

Division	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	% change
Adult Social Care	117	57	54	73	90	23.3%
Children's Social Care	105	77	74	75	90	20.0%
Housing	90	78	94	92	82	-10.9%
Planning & Regeneration	-	25	35	30	32	6.7%
Education	38	23	50	97	135	39.2%
Chief Executive's Dept.	95	75	80	98	104	6.1%
Public Health	0	0	0	0	0	n/a
Total	445	335	387	465	533	14.6%
Environment & Public Protection	211	207	485	171	205	19.9%

A commentary on Environment & Public Protection (E&PP) figures is on page 41. Excluding E&PP figures, the total number of complaints against the Council rose by just under 15% compared to the previous year.

How complaints were received

	Adult	Children	Housing	P&R	Education	EPP	CED	Public Health	Total	% of total
Email	50	46	39	17	66	86	57	0	361	48.9%
Form	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0%
In person	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0.1%
Letter	3	2	3	0	0	11	8	0	27	3.7%
Telephone	11	4	6	1	4	11	16	0	53	7.2%
Website	26	38	33	14	65	97	23	0	296	40.1%
Total	90	90	82	32	135	205	104	0	738	

89% of complaints were received by email or through the website, a noteworthy drop on the 93.3% proportion received through our digital channels the previous year. Letter and telephone complaints both increased unexpectedly.

Proportion upheld

	Aspects	Upheld / Partially Upheld	% 2023/24	2022/23
Adult Social Care	154	82	53%	53%
Children's Social Care	197	64	32%	29%
Housing	122	48	39%	44%
Planning & Regeneration	51	10	20%	40%
Education	231	128	55%	53%
Chief Executive's Dept.	182	89	49%	52%
Public Health	0	0	N/A	N/A
TOTAL	937	421	45%	46%
Environment & Public Protection	<i>Data not collected</i>			82%

45% of complaints were at least partially upheld, a 1% decrease on the previous year. That upheld rate reflects our approach to acknowledge fault where appropriate and seek to put things right as far as can be achieved. The largely static rate should reflect the continued emphasis placed on an open and honest approach, tempered with realism about the obstacles created by pressure on resources.

Causes for complaint

The most frequent cause for complaint (aspect) was a lack of action (33.8%), with 40% of those upheld. Quality of service issues (31.5%) were the next most prevalent aspect, albeit with an upheld rate nearly half that of lack of action. Complaints about service delay were the most likely to be upheld at 67.9%.

Complaints about staff conduct can sometimes refer to staff of third-party providers contracted by the Council. However, there were no such complaints received during this business year.

Complaint	Adult	Children	Housing	P&R	Educ'n	EPP	CED	Public Health	Total	% of total	% upheld
Staff conduct	16	52	12	2	9	26	7	0	124	11.2%	15.3%
Disputed Decision	13	15	7	14	15	16	9	0	89	8.0%	10.1%
Information	17	30	6	4	8	0	20	0	85	7.7%	31.8%
Lack of Action	41	53	37	18	151	19	56	0	375	33.8%	40.0%
Quality of Service	55	38	52	12	30	110	52	0	349	31.5%	21.2%
Service Delay	8	9	8	1	18	-	12	0	56	5.1%	67.9%
Behaviour of another	0	0	0	0	0	-	-	-	0	0.0%	0.0%
Billing / Charging	4	-	-	-	-	-	26	-	30	2.7%	3.3%
Total	154	197	122	51	231	171	182	0	1,108		

Responding on time

66% of all complaints were responded to within 20 working days, as the Council continues to build on its improved performance over recent years. Complaints involving contracted services can take longer to address as the Council is ultimately responsible for the quality of their services - this primarily affects adult social care complaints.

Division	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
Adult Social Care	35%	37%	30%	36%	44%
Children's Social Care	43%	58%	61%	67%	50%
Housing	63%	72%	60%	53%	66%
Planning & Regeneration	-	48%	50%	57%	69%
Education	45%	48%	92%	55%	57%
Chief Executive's Dept.	54%	52%	56%	49%	56%
Public Health	-	-	-	-	-
OVERALL	47%	59%	59%	62%	66%
Environment & Public Protection	0%	-	98%	100%	91%

Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman cases

2023-2024 Annual Review letter

Every year the Ombudsman publishes an annual review letter for each Council, accompanied by the statistics they hold, subsequently publishing national data for comparison. The table below shows the Council consolidating its recent progress in its dealings with the Ombudsman. The number of referrals increased but that is not something the Council can control. The number of resulting investigations increased, as did the number of investigations upheld, but the upheld rate itself was nevertheless better than the London average. The Council has again maintained its position in the top half of London boroughs against most measures.

For the year 2023-24 their figures disclose the following :-

	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	% change
Referrals	149	103	122	123	154	+25%
Resulting investigations	43	38	26	38	48	+26%
Proportion investigated	29%	37%	21%	31%	31%	-
Number upheld	28	26	18	29	40	+38%
Upheld rate	65%	69%	69%	76%	83%	+7%
London average	70%	73%	71%	77%	85%	+8%
London ranking	Joint 7 th	Joint 11 th	13 th	Joint 14 th	13 th	+1

Fewer complaints were upheld against the Council than the London average of 85%, therefore placing Bromley 13th out of the 32 London boroughs, an improved performance compared to last year. 154 referrals equate to 0.47 referrals per 1,000 residents, a little higher than last year and a little over the London average of 0.32. A total of 40 Ombudsman complaints upheld equates to 0.12 complaints upheld per 1000 residents, similarly over the London average of 0.08.

Financial consequences of complaints

		Adults	Children's	Housing	P&R	Education	EPP	CED	TOTALS
Ombudsman	Compensation & Backdating	£1,600.00	£1,000.00	£6,550.00	£0.00	£29,020.00	£200.00	£0.00	£38,370.00
	Written off	£392.89	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£2,022.94	£2,415.83
	Time & trouble	£100.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£700.00	£0.00	£500.00	£1,300.00
Stage 1	Compensation & Backdating	£0.00	£1,105.00	£2,880.46	£0.00	£849.00	£0.00	£400.00	£5,234.46
	Written off	£3,729.70	£0.00	£0.00	£335.00	£180.00	£0.00	£2,886.43	£7,131.13
	Time & trouble	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
	Expert fees	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
Total		£5,822.59	£2,105.00	£9,430.46	£335.00	£30,749.00	£200.00	£5,809.37	£54,451.42

Compensation figures include any cases where it was determined the Council should backdate support or allowances.

Five year comparison

		2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
Ombudsman	Compensation & Backdating	£10,057.76	£8,700.00	£11,847.40	£48,981.56	£38,370.00
	Written off	£11,171.52	£9,291.50	£0.00	£0.00	£2,415.83
	Time & trouble	£8,000.00	£1,250.00	£0.00	£550.00	£1,300.00
Stage 1	Compensation & Backdating	£5,932.00	£7,071.00	£4,075.00	£600.00	£5,234.46
	Written off	£1,454.39	£5,645.07	£4,908.82	£7,209.09	£7,131.13
	Time & trouble	£480.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
	Expert fees	£0.00	£3,504.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
Total		£37,095.67	£35,461.57	£20,831.22	£57,340.65	£54,451.42

The total of £54,451.42 is a 5% decrease over last year's total. This year's total particularly reflects the enormous pressures on SEN services which are acknowledged to affect the sector nationwide.

Compliments

Division	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	% change
Adult Social Care	35	33	27	33	28	-15%
Children's Social Care	47	47	45	57	75	32%
Housing	264	108	60	99	43	-57%
Planning & Regeneration	-	1	0	2	0	-100%
Education	5	22	21	14	10	-29%
Chief Executive's Dept.	3	12	14	2	2	0%
Environment & Public Protection	56	59	66	105	105	0%
Total	410	282	233	312	263	-16%

04 | ADULT SOCIAL CARE

Under the Local Authority Social Services and National Health Service Complaints (England) Regulations 2009 the majority of Adult Social Care complaints are considered on a statutory basis and handled through the Council's corporate complaints procedure.

At a glance

	2019/20	2020/21	2021 - 22	2022 - 23	2023 - 24	% on prev. year
Complaints	142	57	54	73	90	23%
Percentage responded to on time	37%	38%	30%	36%	44%	9%
Percentage fully upheld	37%	28%	35%	42%	49%	7%
Percentage partially upheld	18%	28%	10%	11%	5%	-7%
New Ombudsman cases	15	1	3	9	7	-22%
Ombudsman cases upheld	3	6	3	5	4	-20%
Financial consequences	£10,057.16	£23,540.57	£1,800.07	£5,237.18	£5,822.59	
Compliments	28	33	27	27	28	4%

Complaints received

The Adult Social Care division was the subject of 90 complaints during 2023-24, an increase from 73 last year. 42% of individual complaint aspects were responded to on time, contributing to an overall figure of 42% of all complaint responses involving Adult Social Care (some of which may also involve other areas) being responded to in a timely way. 54% of complaints were fully or partially upheld.

'Contracted Services' refers to those third-party providers of residential and domiciliary care whom the Council engages to provide care to its service users, for which the Council usually remains ultimately responsible. As noted on page 6, complaints involving third party providers can often take longer to resolve and as this year Contracted Services were involved in 22% of complaint aspects, this will have contributed to the timeliness figure.

The table below sets out the individual complaint aspects for the different services and teams within Adult Social Care.

Service	Mentions this year	Aspects this year	Fully upheld	Partially upheld	Not upheld	Ongoing	Answered on time
Blue Badges	3	13	0	0	13	0	11
%	3%	8%	0%	0%	100%	0%	85%
Penge & Beckenham	7	13	10	0	3	0	0
%	7%	8%	77%	0%	23%	0%	0%
Hayes & Five Elms	5	9	6	0	3	0	8
%	5%	6%	67%	0%	33%	0%	89%
Bromley MDC	9	12	5	3	4	0	3
%	10%	8%	42%	25%	33%	0%	25%
Orpington & The Crays	7	9	3	1	5	0	2
%	7%	6%	33%	11%	56%	0%	22%
Integrated Team	2	4	0	0	4	0	4
%	2%	3%	0%	0%	100%	0%	100%
Coordination & Review	1	1	1	0	0	0	0
%	1%	1%	100%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Hospital Team	6	11	5	0	6	0	2
%	6%	7%	45%	0%	55%	0%	18%
Initial Response	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Reablement & Rehab	3	4	2	1	1	0	1
%	3%	3%	50%	25%	25%	0%	25%
Occupational Therapy	5	8	2	0	6	0	3
%	5%	5%	25%	0%	75%	0%	38%
Learning Disability	10	16	8	1	7	0	7
%	11%	10%	50%	6%	44%	0%	44%
CMHT Oxleas	1	2	1	0	1	0	0
%	1%	1%	50%	0%	50%	0%	0%
DoLS	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Safeguarding	1	1	0	0	1	0	0
%	1%	1%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%
Care Link	0	7	4	0	3	0	5
%	0%	5%	57%	0%	43%	0%	71%
Brokerage	8	10	3	1	6	0	5
%	9%	6%	30%	10%	60%	0%	50%
Contracted Services	26	34	25	0	9	0	13
%	28%	22%	74%	0%	26%	0%	38%
OVERALL	94	154	75	7	72	0	64
			49%	5%	47%	0%	42%

SUMMARY	Mentions this year	Aspects this year	Fully upheld	Partially upheld	Not upheld	Ongoing	Answered on time
Care Management	58	100	42	6	52	0	41
%	62%	65%	42%	6%	52%	0%	41%
Other ASC	10	20	8	1	11	0	10
%	11%	13%	40%	5%	55%	0%	50%
Contracted Services	26	34	25	0	9	0	13
%	28%	22%	74%	0%	26%	0%	38%
OVERALL	94	154	75	7	72	0	64
			49%	5%	47%	0%	42%

Nature of complaint and outcome

The majority of complaints (33%) were in relation to the quality of service received, of which 66% were at least partially upheld.

Subject	Aspects this year	Fully upheld	Partially upheld	Not upheld	Ongoing	Answered on time	
Staff conduct	16	3	1	12	0	8	
%	10%	19%	6%	75%	0%	50%	
Disputed decision	13	3	0	10	0	5	
%	8%	23%	0%	77%	0%	38%	
Information	17	7	2	8	0	2	
%	11%	41%	12%	47%	0%	12%	
Lack of action	41	25	2	14	0	19	
%	27%	61%	5%	34%	0%	46%	
Quality of service	55	29	2	24	0	27	
%	36%	53%	4%	44%	0%	49%	
Service Delay	8	7	0	1	0	3	
%	5%	88%	0%	13%	0%	38%	
Billing & Charging	4	1	0	3	0	0	
%	3%	25%	0%	75%	0%	0%	
Behaviour of another service user	0	0	0	0	0	0	
%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	
OVERALL	154	75	7	72	0	64	
			49%	5%	47%	0%	42%

Compliments

As much as we like to learn from complaints, we like to learn from compliments too. The following are examples of the 28 compliments recorded this year :-

I cannot thank you enough for your exceptional care not only towards E but to me and my family as well. We are eternally grateful to have been 'listened' to and supported so very well.

I wanted to express my gratitude for the outstanding support provided to me by T. She assisted me in the transition to Direct Payments, which enabled me to find more suitable carers for my mother. Since then, my family and I have felt a sense of relief, and we are much happier with the care that is currently being provided. More so, I am now able to return to work with confidence, knowing that my mother is receiving the appropriate care suited to her. T's assistance has been invaluable, and I appreciate her consistently excellent service. I appreciate her always being available to answer my questions.

The team were fantastic from the start, at ensuring my parents were well looked after, following her fall. The carers visited twice a day & went above and beyond their duties. It was peace of mind for me. Also the management team bent over backwards to ensure everything ran smoothly, including calming me down, when I was distressed. Nothing was too much trouble. The out of hours & weekend team were marvellous, ensuring I was informed & passing on my requests to the carers.

I just wanted to say that I have been working alongside an amazing social worker, who has been superefficient, kind, caring and professional. She has made the process from visit to approval of placement a positive and rewarding experience for all concerned.

I wanted to contact you again to reiterate what fantastic service and support we are still receiving 6 months on from when I last contacted. A has supported my sisters, mum and myself through an extremely difficult and tricky year being there to assist us all the way through especially as I know he is extremely busy. His dedication and continued hard work has made such a difference to us all.

I've had a brilliant experience with Bromley Adult Social Care. I've always been treated with compassion, respect and dignity. The carer I have – I totally trust, she's been amazing and has transformed my life. I can function – with this help and spend better quality time with my children. This is so important with having terminal cancer.

I wanted to drop a note to say how very grateful I am for your input. J, thank you for the meeting, and for really hearing what I was saying about Mum's remarkable improvement over the past 3 weeks, and my request to get her re-assessed by Moving and Handling... and for then acting on that request so quickly and contacting M immediately. M, thank you for taking the call from J and reacting just as quickly, and arriving at the Home while I was still there...and for agreeing to re-assess Mum there and then, and instantly putting new procedures in place for her...I have the best people working for her. Thank you so so much.

Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman cases

The Ombudsman recorded 13 new Adult Social Care referrals during 2023-24. Of the 11 decisions made during the year, four produced upheld complaints.

Ombudsman outcomes	CLOSED			NOT UPHELD		UPHELD				TOTAL	Ongoing
	NFA	No jurisdiction	Premature	NFA	No maladmin'h	NFA	Maladmin & Injustice	Maladmin, no injustice	Already remedied		
Blue Badges	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0
Penge & Beckenham	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	2	0
Hayes & Five Elms	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Bromley MDC	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Orpington & The Crays	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0
Integrated Team	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Coordination & Review	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Hospital Team	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Initial Response	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Reablement & Rehab	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Occupational Therapy	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Learning Disability	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	2	1
CMHT Oxleas	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
DoLS	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Safeguarding	2	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	1
Carelink	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Brokerage	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Contracted Services	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
OVERALL	5	0	1	0	1	0	4	0	0	11	2

Financial consequences of complaints

	2021 - 22	2022 - 23	2023 - 24
Ombudsman cases			
Compensation / backdated payments	£350.00	£500.00	£1,600.00
Charges written off	£0.00	£0.00	£392.89
Time & trouble payments	£0.00	£350.00	£100.00
Stage 1 complaints			
Compensation / backdated payments	£50.00	£0.00	£0.00
Charges written off	£1,400.07	£4,387.18	£3,729.70
Time & trouble payments	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
Expert fees	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
TOTALS	£1,800.07	£5,237.18	£5,822.59

05 | CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE

The Council's experience is that only a small proportion of Children's Social Care complaints it receives are actually from young people or those acting on their behalf, which therefore fall to be processed under the three-stage procedure set out in The Children Act 1989 Representations Procedure (England) Regulations 2006. These are referred to as statutory complaints, the timescales for which are :-

- Stage 1 : Initial response within 10 (up to 20) working days
- Stage 2 : Investigation within 25 (up to 65) working days
- Stage 3 : Review Panel within 30 working days

All other complaints from parents, family or friends raising issues that do not directly relate to the quality of the care and support the child in question receives are managed through the corporate complaints procedure. We carefully consider each complaint on its own merits and determine through which procedure it should be processed.

Children and young people making a complaint have a legal entitlement to advocacy services to support them in making a complaint or expressing their views. Where the child involved has not already been referred, CE&CS will refer complaints made by or on behalf of children in relation to Children Social Care to the independently commissioned Advocacy service.

At a glance

	2019/20	2020/21	2021 - 22	2022 - 23	2023 - 24	% on prev. year
Complaints	99	74	68	65	85	31%
Statutory complaints	6	5	6	10	5	-50%
Percentage responded to on time	45%	65%	61%	61%	61%	0%
Percentage fully upheld	27%	19%	16%	18%	21%	3%
Percentage partially upheld	17%	25%	18%	11%	12%	0%
New Ombudsman cases	22	10	18	10	14	40%
Ombudsman cases upheld	2	5	5	6	4	-33%
Financial consequences	£11,171.52	£1,000.00	£1,797.40	£41,681.56	£2,105.00	
Compliments	48	47	45	45	74	64%

Complaints under the 1989 Representations Procedure

The number of statutory complaints increased although numbers remain low, with the number of stage 2 investigations remaining stable.

	2019 - 20	2020 - 21	2021 - 22	2022 - 23	2023 - 24
Stage 1	6	3	6	10	5
Stage 2	1	2	2	2	2
Stage 3	0	0	0	0	1
Total	7	5	7	12	8

Complaints under the Council's Corporate Complaints Procedure

Service	Mentions this year	Aspects this year	Fully upheld	Partially upheld	Not upheld	Ongoing	Answered on time
Early Intervention & Family Support	5	8	1	0	6	1	7
%	5%	4%	13%	0%	75%	13%	88%
Referral & Assessment, incl. MASH, Atlas & ECT	29	65	20	11	33	1	36
%	28%	33%	31%	17%	51%	2%	55%
SG&CP East incl. Court Team	17	31	4	1	24	2	27
%	17%	16%	13%	3%	77%	6%	87%
SG&CP West	13	31	4	3	24	0	10
%	13%	16%	13%	10%	77%	0%	32%
Children Looked After and Care Leavers	5	6	0	0	6	0	2
%	5%	3%	0%	0%	100%	0%	33%
Fostering, Adoption and Resources	18	6	0	2	4	0	5
%	18%	3%	0%	33%	67%	0%	83%
Disabled Children's Team	15	27	6	4	14	3	8
%	15%	14%	22%	15%	52%	11%	30%
Quality Assurance	14	23	6	2	15	0	9
%	14%	12%	26%	9%	65%	0%	39%
Youth Justice Service	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
OVERALL	102	197	41	23	126	7	104
			21%	12%	64%	4%	53%

The table above sets out the individual complaint aspects for the different services and teams within Children’s Social Care.

The Children’s Social Care division was the subject of 85 corporate complaints during 2023-24, a 31% increase on last year. 53% of individual complaint aspects were responded to on time, contributing to an overall figure of 50% of all complaint responses involving Children’s Social Care (some of which may also involve other areas) being responded to in a timely way. 33% were fully or partially upheld, a slight improvement on last year’s 34%.

Nature of complaint and outcome

The most prevalent complaints were in relation to lack of action (27%), 26% of which were at least partially upheld, closely followed by staff conduct issues (26%) of which 22% were at least partially upheld.

Subject	Aspects this year	Fully upheld	Partially upheld	Not upheld	Ongoing	Answered on time
Staff conduct	52	6	5	41	0	31
%	26%	12%	10%	79%	0%	60%
Disputed decision	15	1	1	13	0	7
%	8%	7%	7%	87%	0%	47%
Information	30	9	2	18	1	14
%	15%	30%	7%	60%	3%	47%
Lack of action	53	9	5	33	6	26
%	27%	17%	9%	62%	11%	49%
Quality of service	38	8	9	21	0	21
%	19%	21%	24%	55%	0%	55%
Service Delay	9	8	1	0	0	5
%	5%	89%	11%	0%	0%	56%
Behaviour of another service user	0	0	0	0	0	0
%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
OVERALL	197	41	23	126	7	104
		21%	12%	64%	4%	53%

Compliments

As much as we like to learn from complaints we like to learn from compliments too. The following are examples of the 74 compliments received this year :-

I understand the reluctance of professionals such as yourself in taking credit for doing their job and doing their job effectively. But as a service user, you have no idea of how much of a positive impact you doing you job effectively have in lightening an already heavy burden such as caring 24/7 for a disabled child. In my opinion, without you being at the forefront and pushing forward our case, who knows. You are marvellous at your job and I would shout it from the rooftops. This is just to say thank you ever so much for everything. I will be forever grateful.

From my point of view...you have played an integral part in the support that we have been able to provide L. It's clear that you go above and beyond to support the children in your caseload and this hasn't gone unnoticed. Whether this is just simply being at the end of the phone, or accompanying L to contact, college interviews, regular check-ins etc – it has been refreshing to work with you, knowing that you were just at the end of the phone if we had any concerns or wanted to simply share good news.

I just wanted to send an email thanking all of you for your involvement in my family life in the recent months...The help and support I have received from all of you and continue to receive has been paramount to my mental health and the general well being of my family. My Talktogether therapy sessions have started and hopefully will help me resolve some emotional and mental issues I've battled in the last few years. I am hopeful, more organised and have a greater sense of direction than I did this time last year...and I have you to thank for that.

You have played an integral part in the support that we have been able to provide L. It's clear that you go above and beyond to support the children in your caseload and this hasn't gone unnoticed. Whether this is just simply being at the end of the phone, or accompanying L to contact, College interviews, regular check-ins etc – it has been refreshing to work with you, knowing that you were just at the end of the phone if we had any concerns or wanted to simply share good news.

I have actually lost count of the times the judge indicated the LB Bromley had been “exceptional “ in its practical and financial support of L in this case. All parties used the words “We commend the LA for their efforts and support in this case” including the solicitor for the child on behalf of the Guardian. The judge stated “It is very rare for a social work team to be praised and commended by all parties in a case and it is important that you bask in that”. The judge was appreciative as to the attitude of senior management in taking the view to support L in this way and the social worker was praised by all concerned for her interactions with L by the judge and counsel for the parents and Mr B.

Thank you so much for putting myself and my Grandson at ease as soon as we met you! You are a warm and kind social worker...My Grandson is such a pure soul he can suss people out a mile away i.e. whether the person is good hearted or not and he really liked you as I asked him and he said a big "YES" and I told him I liked you too! You are very down to earth , humble and humane...You are the very best social worker we have EVER had as you made us BOTH feel so comfortable and relaxed. So I am so glad you did come to see us as it is lovely to put faces to names and every family and child is different and has different needs.

Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman cases

The Ombudsman recorded 52 new referrals across Children’s Social Care and Education combined during 2023-24. Of the 12 decisions made during this business year on Children’s Social Care cases, 4 were upheld, with 2 of those not requiring remedial action as the Council had already resolved the case appropriately.

Ombudsman outcomes	CLOSED			NOT UPHELD		UPHELD				TOTAL	Ongoing
	NFA	No jurisdiction	Premature	NFA	No maladmin/h	NFA	Maladmin & Injustice	Maladmin, no injustice	Already remedied		
Early Intervention & Family Support	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Referral & Assessment	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	4	0
Safeguarding & Care Planning East	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	2	0
Safeguarding & Care Planning West	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	2	0
Children Looked After & Care Leavers	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
Fostering Adoption & Resources	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Disabled Children's Team	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Quality Assurance	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	3	0
OVERALL	5	3	0	0	0	0	2	0	2	12	1

Financial consequences of complaints

	2021 - 22	2022 - 23	2023 - 24
Ombudsman cases			
Compensation / backdated payments	£1,797.40	£41,681.56	£1,000.00
Charges written off	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
Time & trouble payments	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
Stage 1 complaints			
Compensation / backdated payments	£0.00	£0.00	£1,105.00
Charges written off	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
Time & trouble payments	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
Expert fees	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
TOTALS	£1,797.40	£41,681.56	£2,105.00

06 | HOUSING

Complaints in relation to Housing are managed through the corporate complaints procedure.

Housing at a glance

	2019 - 20	2020 - 21	2021 - 2022	2022 - 23	2023 - 24	% on prev. year
Complaints	90	78	94	92	82	-11%
Percentage responded to on time	65%	72%	60%	53%	61%	8%
Percentage fully upheld	18%	24%	29%	36%	30%	-6%
Percentage partially upheld	11%	12%	8%	8%	10%	2%
New Ombudsman cases	7	6	10	14	11	-21%
Ombudsman cases upheld	3	4	2	10	6	-40%
Financial consequences	£8,000.00	£6,500.00	£6,000.00	£1,900.00	£9,430.46	
Compliments	284	108	60	60	43	-28%

Housing Complaints under the Council's Corporate Complaints Procedure

The Housing division was the subject of 82 corporate complaints during 2023-24. 61% of individual complaint aspects were responded to on time, contributing to an overall figure of 66% of all complaint responses involving Housing (some of which may also involve other areas) being responded to in a timely way. 40% were fully or partially upheld.

The table below sets out the individual complaint aspects for the different services within Housing.

Service	Mentions this year	Aspects this year	Fully upheld	Partially upheld	Not upheld	Ongoing	Answered on time
Housing Allocations	52	81	21	8	51	1	50
%	62%	66%	26%	10%	63%	1%	62%
Housing Options	12	14	5	3	6	0	11
%	14%	11%	36%	21%	43%	0%	79%
Housing Register	3	3	2	0	1	0	3
%	4%	2%	67%	0%	33%	0%	100%
Compliance & Strategy	6	7	3	0	4	0	5
%	7%	6%	43%	0%	57%	0%	71%
Management & Acquisitions	9	14	4	0	10	0	5
%	11%	11%	29%	0%	71%	0%	36%
Support & Resettlement	2	3	1	1	1	0	1
%	2%	2%	33%	33%	33%	0%	33%
OVERALL	84	122	36	12	73	1	75
			30%	10%	60%	1%	61%

Nature of complaint

The largest proportion of complaints (30%) were concerns about lack of action, of which 57% were fully or partially upheld, followed by issues of quality of service (25%).

Subject	Aspects this year	Fully upheld	Partially upheld	Not upheld	Ongoing	Answered on time
Staff conduct	12	1	1	10	0	7
%	10%	8%	8%	83%	0%	58%
Disputed decision	7	0	0	7	0	5
%	6%	0%	0%	100%	0%	71%
Information	6	2	0	4	0	4
%	5%	33%	0%	67%	0%	67%
Lack of action	37	15	6	16	0	20
%	30%	41%	16%	43%	0%	54%
Quality of service	31	10	3	18	0	24
%	25%	32%	10%	58%	0%	77%
Service Delay	8	5	1	2	0	6
%	7%	63%	13%	25%	0%	75%
Temporary accommodation	21	3	1	16	1	9
%	17%	14%	5%	76%	5%	43%
Behaviour of another service user	0	0	0	0	0	0
%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
OVERALL	122	36	12	73	1	75
		30%	10%	60%	1%	61%

Compliments

As much as we like to learn from complaints we like to learn from compliments too. The following are examples of the compliments received by Housing this year :-

A year ago I came to Bromley with my children. I would like to express my sincere gratitude to you for your care and help. Thanks to you, a huge challenge turned into a rewarding learning experience in Britain for my family.

Your kindness and understanding and patience with me have been invaluable. There is so much of the process that has blown my mind but you have been amazing in your support and guidance through the process. Until I spoke to you I had all but given up and was ready to accept that I could do nothing about my situation. You have been informative and supremely professional in the way you have helped me and given me hope that there can be a way forward for women even at my age. You have been brilliant. You are a credit to your profession and I hope your employers are aware of the fact that you help and guide people at their most vulnerable in these difficult times."

Many many thanks for everything you have done for me. I want you to know I really do appreciate all what you've done for me. I know your job is hectic, but you went the extra mile to make sure I was able to get through. Many many thanks for your hard work and dedication towards helping me. I am grateful and will forever be. Keep up the great work!

I am very very pleased with all the help and support C has given me over the past few months. She is a very conscientious and professional worker and has made me feel at ease with my financial difficulties. C went above and beyond her role into making me feel secure and happy and gave me piece of mind for my future. She has a very friendly and calm disposition and was very knowledgeable about my situation. I'd like too extend my many thanks too her and your Department for all your help and support throughout this difficult process. I really do appreciate the service I have received.

Right from the start of the application to Bromley council till now, I had a warm reception from you since you have been my housing officer. You have been nice to me since I spoke to you months ago and you still are. Thank you for your help so far.

I'm just sending this to say thank you & all the staff for all your help at this difficult time seriously can't thank you all enough please let them know how much I appreciate everything you've all done for me, thx again

Thank you all for all your help and support in helping me with everything such as housing accommodation until I was able to transition into permanent housing. Thank you all for your care kindness and compassion and for everything you guys have done and continue to do. Thank you for the start pack and the Bromley council for all your help and support. I am entirely thankful to everyone.

Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman cases

The Ombudsman recorded 24 new Housing referrals during 2023-24. Of the 14 decisions made during the year, 10 were upheld.

Ombudsman outcomes	CLOSED			NOT UPHELD		UPHELD				TOTAL	Ongoing
	NFA	No jurisdiction	Premature	NFA	No maladmin'h	NFA	Maladmin & Injustice	Maladmin, no injustice	Already remedied		
Housing Allocations	2	1	0	0	0	0	5	0	0	8	1
Housing Options	2	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	3	1
Housing Register	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	2	1
Housing Compliance & Strategy	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Housing Management & Acquisitions	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
Housing Support & Resettlement	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
OVERALL	5	1	1	0	1	0	6	0	0	14	3

Financial consequences of complaints

	2021 - 22	2022 - 23	2023 - 24
Ombudsman cases			
Compensation / backdated payments	£6,000.00	£1,300.00	£6,550.00
Charges written off	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
Time & trouble payments	£0.00	£100.00	£0.00
Stage 1 complaints			
Compensation / backdated payments	£0.00	£500.00	£2,880.46
Charges written off	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
Time & trouble payments	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
Expert fees	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
TOTALS	£6,000.00	£1,900.00	£9,430.46

07 | PLANNING & REGENERATION

Complaints in relation to Planning & Regeneration are managed through the corporate complaints procedure.

Planning & Regeneration at a glance

	2019 - 20	2020 - 21	2021 - 2022	2022 - 23	2023 - 24	% on prev. year
Complaints	-	25	35	30	32	7%
Percentage responded to on time	-	55%	58%	57%	69%	12%
Percentage fully upheld	-	15%	16%	28%	20%	-8%
Percentage partially upheld	-	12%	4%	12%	0%	-12%
New Ombudsman cases	-	11	7	4	4	0%
Ombudsman cases upheld	-	1	1	3	1	-67%
Financial consequences	-	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	
Compliments	-	0	0	0	0	n/a

Complaints under the Council's Corporate Complaints Procedure

Planning & Regeneration services were the subject of 32 corporate complaints during 2023-24. 69% of individual complaint aspects were responded to on time, contributing to an overall figure of 69% of complaint responses involving Planning & Regeneration (some of which may also involve other areas) being responded to in a timely way. 20% were fully or partially upheld.

Service	Mentions this year	Aspects this year	Fully upheld	Partially upheld	Not upheld	Ongoing	Answered on time
Development Management	13	23	7	0	16	0	10
%	41%	45%	30%	0%	70%	0%	43%
Planning Policy & Strategy	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Building Control	9	12	1	0	11	0	11
%	28%	24%	8%	0%	92%	0%	92%
Planning & Development Support	9	15	2	0	13	0	13
%	28%	29%	13%	0%	87%	0%	87%
Facilities & Support	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Property	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Energy	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Libraries	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Town Centre Renewal	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Regeneration	1	1	0	0	1	0	1
%	3%	2%	0%	0%	100%	0%	100%
OVERALL	32	51	10	0	41	0	35
			20%	0%	80%	0%	69%

Nature of complaint

The largest proportion of complaints (35%) related to a lack of action, 33% of which were upheld.

Subject	Aspects this year	Fully upheld	Partially upheld	Not upheld	Ongoing	Answered on time
Staff conduct	2	0	0	2	0	1
%	4%	0%	0%	100%	0%	50%
Disputed decision	14	0	0	14	0	8
%	27%	0%	0%	100%	0%	57%
Information	4	1	0	3	0	2
%	8%	25%	0%	75%	0%	50%
Lack of action	18	6	0	12	0	14
%	35%	33%	0%	67%	0%	78%
Quality of service	12	2	0	10	0	9
%	24%	17%	0%	83%	0%	75%
Service Delay	1	1	0	0	0	1
%	2%	100%	0%	0%	0%	100%
Behaviour of another service user	0	0	0	0	0	0
%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
OVERALL	51	10	0	41	0	35
		20%	0%	80%	0%	69%

Compliments

One compliment was reported to CE&CS for Planning & Regeneration this year :-

The case officer S has been most patient and informative answering my questions. She has always managed to return my calls very promptly and dealt with me in the most professional and understanding way.

Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman cases

The Ombudsman recorded 14 new Planning & Regeneration referrals during 2023-24. Of the 10 decisions made during the year, 1 was upheld.

Ombudsman outcomes	CLOSED			NOT UPHELD		UPHELD				TOTAL	Ongoing
	NFA	No jurisdiction	Premature	NFA	No maladmin'n	NFA	Maladmin & Injustice	Maladmin, no injustice	Already remedied		
Development Management	4	2	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	7	0
Planning Policy & Strategy	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Building Control	2	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	3	0
Facilities & Support	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Property	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Energy	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Libraries	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Town Centre Renewal	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Regeneration	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
OVERALL	6	2	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	10	0

Financial consequences of complaints

	2021 - 22	2022 - 23	2023 - 24
Ombudsman cases			
Compensation / backdated payments	£0.00	£400.00	£0.00
Charges written off	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
Time & trouble payments	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
Stage 1 complaints			
Compensation / backdated payments	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
Charges written off	£104.40	£0.00	£0.00
Time & trouble payments	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
Expert fees	£0.00	£0.00	£335.00
TOTALS	£104.40	£400.00	£335.00

08 | EDUCATION

Complaints in relation to Education services are managed through the corporate complaints procedure.

At a glance

	2019 - 20	2020 - 21	2021 - 2022	2022 - 23	2023 - 24	% on prev. year
Complaints	38	23	50	97	135	39%
Percentage responded to on time	51%	48%	92%	55%	57%	2%
Percentage fully upheld	23%	15%	24%	35%	46%	11%
Percentage partially upheld	35%	24%	15%	18%	9%	-9%
New Ombudsman cases	8	8	5	15	21	40%
Ombudsman cases upheld	4	3	3	6	29	383%
Financial consequences	£10,604.60	£4,300.00	£6,675.00	£4,600.00	£30,749.00	
Compliments	38	23	21	21	21	0%

Complaints under the Council's Corporate Complaints Procedure

The Education division was the subject of 135 corporate complaints during 2023-24. 53% of individual complaint aspects were responded to on time, contributing to an overall figure of 57% of complaint responses involving Education (some of which may also involve other areas) being responded to in a timely way. 35% were fully or partially upheld, level with last year.

The table below sets out the individual complaint aspects for the different services within Education.

Service	Mentions this year	Aspects this year	Fully upheld	Partially upheld	Not upheld	Ongoing	Answered on time
Admissions	4	3	0	0	3	0	2
%	3%	1%	0%	0%	100%	0%	67%
Early Years	1	1	0	0	1	0	1
%	1%	0%	0%	0%	100%	0%	100%
Education Welfare	6	9	0	1	8	0	3
%	4%	4%	0%	11%	89%	0%	33%
School Standards Team	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
SEN	114	196	94	19	82	0	103
%	83%	85%	48%	10%	42%	0%	53%
SEN Transport	12	22	13	1	6	0	13
%	9%	10%	59%	5%	27%	0%	59%
OVERALL	137	231	107	21	100	0	122
			46%	9%	43%	0%	53%

Nature of complaint

The most prevalent complaints (55%) were in relation to a lack of action, of which 48% were either fully or partially upheld.

Subject	Aspects this year	Fully upheld	Partially upheld	Not upheld	Ongoing	Answered on time
Staff conduct	9	2	0	7	0	6
%	4%	22%	0%	78%	0%	67%
Disputed decision	15	3	1	9	0	8
%	6%	20%	7%	60%	0%	53%
Information	8	4	1	3	0	6
%	3%	50%	13%	38%	0%	75%
Lack of action	151	70	18	62	0	75
%	65%	46%	12%	41%	0%	50%
Quality of service	30	12	1	17	0	16
%	13%	40%	3%	57%	0%	53%
Service Delay	18	16	0	2	0	11
%	8%	89%	0%	11%	0%	61%
Behaviour of another service user	0	0	0	0	0	0
%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
OVERALL	231	107	21	100	0	122
		46%	9%	43%	0%	53%

Compliments

As much as we like to learn from complaints we like to learn from compliments too. The following are examples of the compliments received by Education this year :-

I just wanted to check in & say L & I are over the moon with his maths and English tutors! They have met L & have given more advice & support in the last week than we have ever received from a provision. L is so motivated & ready to start his tutoring tomorrow. S mentioned mentoring Leo & I believe this could be the making of L. He is looking forward to working with all the staff...They truly are a wonderful service & I'm grateful to you for this opportunity for L.

Can I thank you for your time and input yesterday, for me it was extremely helpful as you explained so many things, especially the preparing for adulthood as that has been one of my biggest worries of all for R through all of this. I am so grateful for your help and I look forward to R's fresh start and hopefully watching her really grow and flourish in a new environment the best she can.

Thank you so much to all the EHC assessment, admin teams and London Borough of Bromley. Thank You for assessing H all these months and to issue him with a dedicated EHC plan to make him an independent boy. Please offer our "Heartfelt Thank YOU" to All Concerned especially for [the school] on such short notice. We are feeling amazing and could not find right words to express our gratitude and thanks in words for the amazing support.

One of the best starts of transport I've known. Thanks so much R and everyone working so hard each year to make this all work. D is N's driver giving him the music he loves. S is his PA, who is also so lovely and kind and interacting with N. She clearly knows what she is doing! Have to hold on to this team! N came home yesterday, glowing and super happy! A good start of the day and school makes all the difference.

I just wanted to say that S's helper L has been absolutely fantastic and has really made [her] first few hard days a lot more enjoyable. She's happy, patient and always puts a positive spin on any concerns that S has. Both L and the driver have really given S a positive happy start to her school day. Thank you so much for finding a great firm for her transport.

Immediately as I began speaking to him he listened, didn't speak over me and answered all my questions thoroughly and politely. He put me at ease and made the whole process a happy one... This man genuinely cares about the young people he is serving. He sent emails as we were talking in an effort to rectify my problem and received replies! He is super efficient. If there is such an award or employee of the month, give it to this man!!! I am super impressed and will only be dealing with him going forward and recommending him to others.

Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman cases

The Ombudsman recorded 52 new referrals across Education and Children’s Social Care combined during 2023-24. Of the 39 decisions made during this business year on Education cases, 29 were upheld.

Ombudsman outcomes	CLOSED			NOT UPHELD		UPHELD				TOTAL	Ongoing
	NFA	No jurisdiction	Premature	NFA	No maladmin'n	NFA	Maladmin & Injustice	Maladmin, no injustice	Already remedied		
Admissions	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Early Years	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Education Welfare	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
School Standards Team	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SEN	4	3	2	0	0	0	25	0	0	34	4
SEN Transport	1	0	0	0	0	0	4	0	0	5	1
OVERALL	5	3	2	0	0	0	29	0	0	39	5

Financial consequences of complaints

	2021 - 22	2022 - 23	2023 - 24
Ombudsman cases			
Compensation / backdated payments	£2,950.00	£4,500.00	£29,020.00
Charges written off	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
Time & trouble payments	£0.00	£100.00	£700.00
Stage 1 complaints			
Compensation / backdated payments	£3,725.00	£0.00	£849.00
Charges written off	£0.00	£0.00	£180.00
Time & trouble payments	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
Expert fees	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
TOTALS	£6,675.00	£4,600.00	£30,749.00

09 | CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S DEPARTMENT

Complaints in relation to the Chief Executive's Department are managed through the corporate complaints procedure. This division covers areas such as Finance, Legal, Electoral, Democratic and Registrar services.

At a glance

	2019 - 20	2020 - 21	2021 - 2022	2022 - 23	2023 - 24	% on prev. year
Complaints	95	75	80	98	104	6%
Percentage responded to on time	59%	52%	688%	50%	50%	0%
Percentage fully upheld	25%	39%	28%	40%	42%	3%
Percentage partially upheld	17%	10%	20%	13%	7%	-6%
New Ombudsman cases	20	9	16	10	19	90%
Ombudsman cases upheld	3	2	2	2	4	100%
Financial consequences	£1,454.39	£121.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	
Compliments	0	12	14	2	4	100%

Complaints under the Council's Corporate Complaints Procedure

The Chief Executive's Department was the subject of 104 complaints during 2023-24. 50% of individual complaint aspects were responded to on time, contributing to an overall figure of 56% of complaint responses involving the department (some of which may also involve other areas) being responded to in a timely way. 49% of complaints were fully or partially upheld, a 4% decrease on last year.

The table below sets out the individual complaint aspects for the different services within the Chief Executive's Department.

Service	Mentions this year	Aspects this year	Fully upheld	Partially upheld	Not upheld	Ongoing	Answered on time
Electoral Services	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Registrar Services	6	8	1	0	7	0	8
%	6%	4%	13%	0%	88%	0%	100%
Democratic Services	1	1	0	0	1	0	0
%	1%	1%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%
Customer Services	3	3	3	0	0	0	2
%	3%	2%	100%	0%	0%	0%	67%
Communications	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Information Management	0	1	0	0	1	0	0
%	0%	1%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%
Appointeeship	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Blue Badges	8	9	4	0	5	0	9
%	8%	5%	44%	0%	56%	0%	100%
Business Rates	1	1	0	0	1	0	1
%	1%	1%	0%	0%	100%	0%	100%
Care Home Fees	13	23	10	2	11	0	5
%	12%	13%	43%	9%	48%	0%	22%
Council Tax	20	36	11	2	22	0	28
%	19%	20%	31%	6%	61%	0%	78%
Direct Payments	4	7	3	1	3	0	0
%	4%	4%	43%	14%	43%	0%	0%
Domiciliary Care fees	20	35	19	3	13	0	7
%	19%	19%	54%	9%	37%	0%	20%
Carelink	0	5	2	0	3	0	1
%	0%	3%	40%	0%	60%	0%	20%
Housing Benefit	12	21	13	3	5	0	16
%	11%	12%	62%	14%	24%	0%	76%
Income & Recovery	14	26	11	1	14	0	8
%	13%	14%	42%	4%	54%	0%	31%
Freedom Pass	4	6	0	0	6	0	6
%	4%	3%	0%	0%	100%	0%	100%
Legal	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
OVERALL	106	182	77	12	92	0	91
			42%	7%	51%	0%	50%

Nature of complaint

The majority of complaints were in relation to a perceived lack of action (31%), of which 66% were either fully or partially upheld, closely followed by quality of service issues (29%), 47% of which were at least partially upheld.

Subject	Aspects this year	Fully upheld	Partially upheld	Not upheld	Ongoing	Answered on time
Staff conduct	7	1	0	6	0	4
%	4%	14%	0%	86%	0%	57%
Disputed decision	9	2	0	7	0	5
%	5%	22%	0%	78%	0%	56%
Information	20	8	1	11	0	9
%	11%	40%	5%	55%	0%	45%
Lack of action	56	32	5	19	0	28
%	31%	57%	9%	34%	0%	50%
Quality of service	52	19	5	28	0	28
%	29%	37%	10%	54%	0%	54%
Service Delay	12	9	0	3	0	9
%	7%	75%	0%	25%	0%	75%
Billing & Charging	26	6	1	18	0	8
%	14%	23%	4%	69%	0%	31%
OVERALL	182	77	12	92	0	91
		42%	7%	51%	0%	50%

Compliments

As much as we like to learn from complaints, we like to learn from compliments too. The following are those received this year as notified to CE&CS :-

I have used this service for over the last 10 years. Following my last conversations over the last month... I realised that I had never given any feedback to LBB. I made a mistake in applying for my replacement Blue Badge 2 months after receiving all the necessary reminders by post. Despite my mistake the team helped me with all the necessary guidance, I was kept updated on its progress & duly received final letter regarding confirmation & payment process...a whole month in hand before issue of replacement Badge. WELL DONE EVERYONE. No improvements this Borough offers an EXCELLENT SERVICE .Clearly all procedures & processes could be used as a learning guide by other operators operating a Blue Badge scheme.

My family and I wanted to say a big thank you to you and your colleagues for going out of your way to help us in sorting out our mother's burial paperwork yesterday. Without your help we would not have been able to have our mother's burial yesterday, as required by our faith. Your help and kindness is and will forever be greatly appreciated.

Had it not been for the sheer professionalism, caring attitude, excellent listening skills and understanding of [your officers], we would NOT have been able to effect our beloved mother's funeral the following day as was required by our faith. Both went over and above their duty, and accommodated an appointment for my brother and I to attend the Bromley registry office early the following morning. J was exceptional during this appointment. She processed our mother's burial order and emailed it to the Funeral Director and asked us to wait with her in her office until the funeral director had verbally confirmed safe receipt of the document, which he duly did. We were thus able to effect my mother's funeral and burial later that very afternoon. The efforts and compassion from both were greatly appreciated and my family and I wish both of them and their respective families, a long and happy life, health and success.

I would just like to compliment the team member H who was very helpful a credit to the LLB she had great customer service skills and dealt with our query in a professional manner.

Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman cases

The Ombudsman recorded 19 new referrals concerning the Chief Executive's Department during 2023-24. Of the 24 decisions made during the year, 4 were upheld.

Ombudsman outcomes	CLOSED			NOT UPHELD		UPHELD				TOTAL	Ongoing
	NFA	No jurisdiction	Premature	NFA	No maladmin'n	NFA	Maladmin & Injustice	Maladmin, no injustice	Already remedied		
Electoral Services	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Registrar Services	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Democratic Services	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Customer Services	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Communications	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Information Management	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Appointeeship	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0
Blue Badges	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Business Rates	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
Care Home Fees	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
Council Tax	7	4	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	13	0
Direct Payments	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Domiciliary Care fees	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0
Housing Benefit	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	0	4	1
Appointeeship	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0
Freedom Pass	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Legal	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
OVERALL	9	7	4	0	0	0	2	1	1	24	1

Financial consequences of complaints

	2021 - 22	2022 - 23	2023 - 24
Ombudsman cases			
Compensation / backdated payments	£750.00	£0.00	£0.00
Charges written off	£0.00	£0.00	£2,022.94
Time & trouble payments	£0.00	£0.00	£500.00
Stage 1 complaints			
Compensation / backdated payments	£300.00	£100.00	£400.00
Charges written off	£3,404.35	£2,821.91	£2,886.43
Time & trouble payments	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
Expert fees	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
TOTALS	£4,454.35	£2,921.91	£5,809.37

10 | ENVIRONMENT & PUBLIC PROTECTION

Complaints under the Council's Corporate Complaints Procedure

E&PP recorded 205 cases as having been handled as corporate complaints during 2023-24, a 20% increase on the previous year.

Service	2020 – 21	2021 – 22	2022 – 23	2023 – 24	%age
Carbon Man'ement & Green Space	-	-	26	59	127%
Highways & Transport	19	16	5	12	140%
Neighbourhood Management	158	444	121	59	-51%
Public Protection	10	9	12	15	33%
Traffic, Road Safety & Parking	26	16	7	60	857%
OVERALL	207	485	171	205	20%

Nature of complaint

Environment & Public Protection allocate their complaints to one of five categories.

Service	On time	Information	Lack of action	Operational	LBB Staff conduct	3 rd P Staff Conduct	Policy	TOTAL	2022-23
Carbon M'tment & Green Space	100%	1	16	22	9	5	6	59	26
Highways & Transport	85%	0	5	3	0	1	3	12	5
N'bourhood Management	100%	0	9	26	1	20	3	59	121
Public Protection	74%	0	8	4	3	0	0	15	12
Traffic, Road Safety & Parking	94%	4	6	12	8	14	16	60	7
OVERALL	91%	5	44	67	21	40	28	205	171

Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman cases

The Ombudsman recorded 26 referrals for E&PP matters during 2023-24. Of the 24 formal decisions made during the year, one was upheld.

Ombudsman outcomes	CLOSED			NOT UPHELD		UPHELD				TOTAL	Ongoing
	NFA	No jurisdiction	Premature	NFA	No maladmin'n	NFA	Maladmin & Injustice	Maladmin, no injustice	Already remedied		
Carbon Management	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Highways	3	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	0
Traffic & Parking	7	2	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	11	0
Environment	3	2	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	7	0
Public Protection	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
OVERALL	14	4	2	0	3	0	1	0	0	24	0

Financial consequences of complaints

	2021 - 22	2022 - 23	2023 - 24
Ombudsman cases			
Compensation / backdated payments	£0.00	£600.00	£200.00
Charges written off	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
Time & trouble payments	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
Stage 1 complaints			
Compensation / backdated payments	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
Charges written off	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
Time & trouble payments	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
Expert fees	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
TOTALS	£0.00	£600.00	£200.00

11 | PUBLIC HEALTH

The Council received no complaints relating to its Public Health responsibilities this year.

