

Annual Complaints Report 2021



Executive Summary

This annual report details the level of complaints received in relation to services delivered by the Council for the last financial year 1st April 2021 to 31st March 2022. The council received 803 complaints in the 2021/2022 financial year, as well as managing 149,996 customer transactions over the same period. Council Services have agreed to share the lessons learned from complaints at meetings of our senior management.

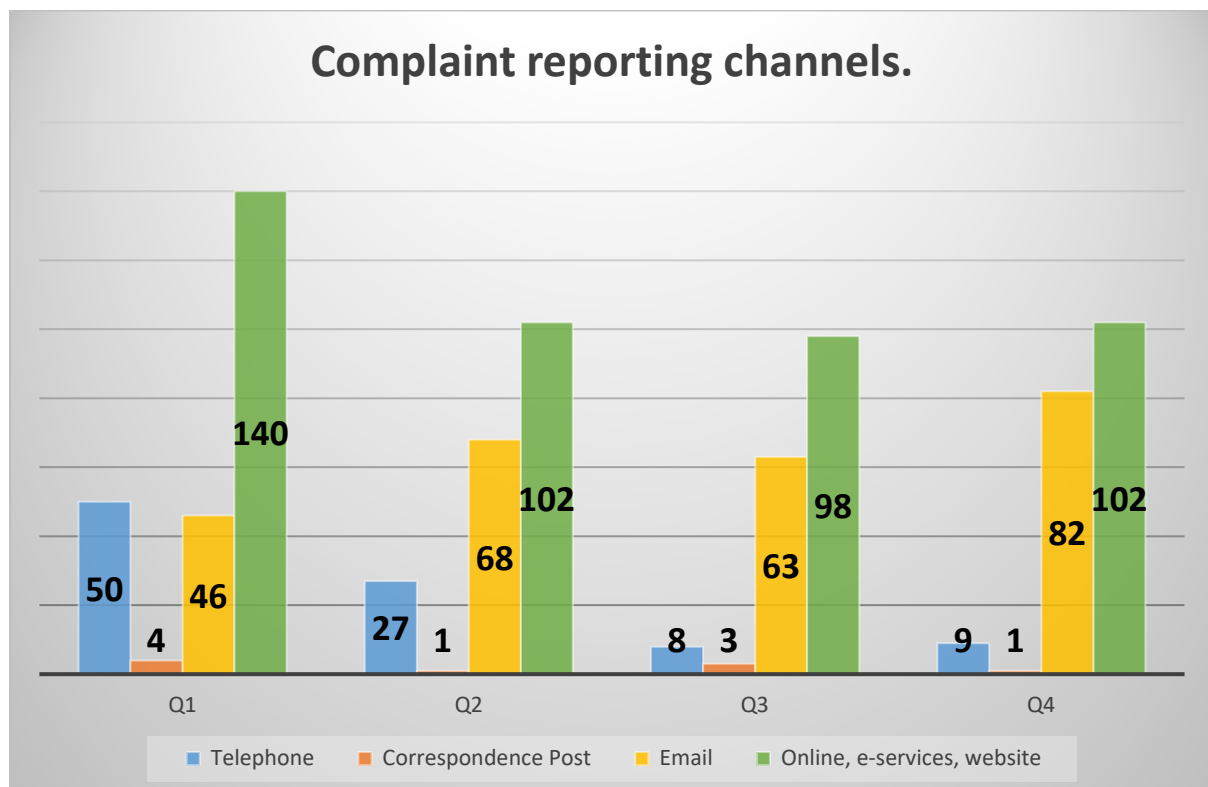
Background

The council has a Three-Stage Complaints Management Process as set out in the Complaints, Comments and Compliments Policy. This approach enables the authority to do everything it can to resolve complaints in line with agreed policies and procedures prior to any referral to the Local Government Ombudsman.

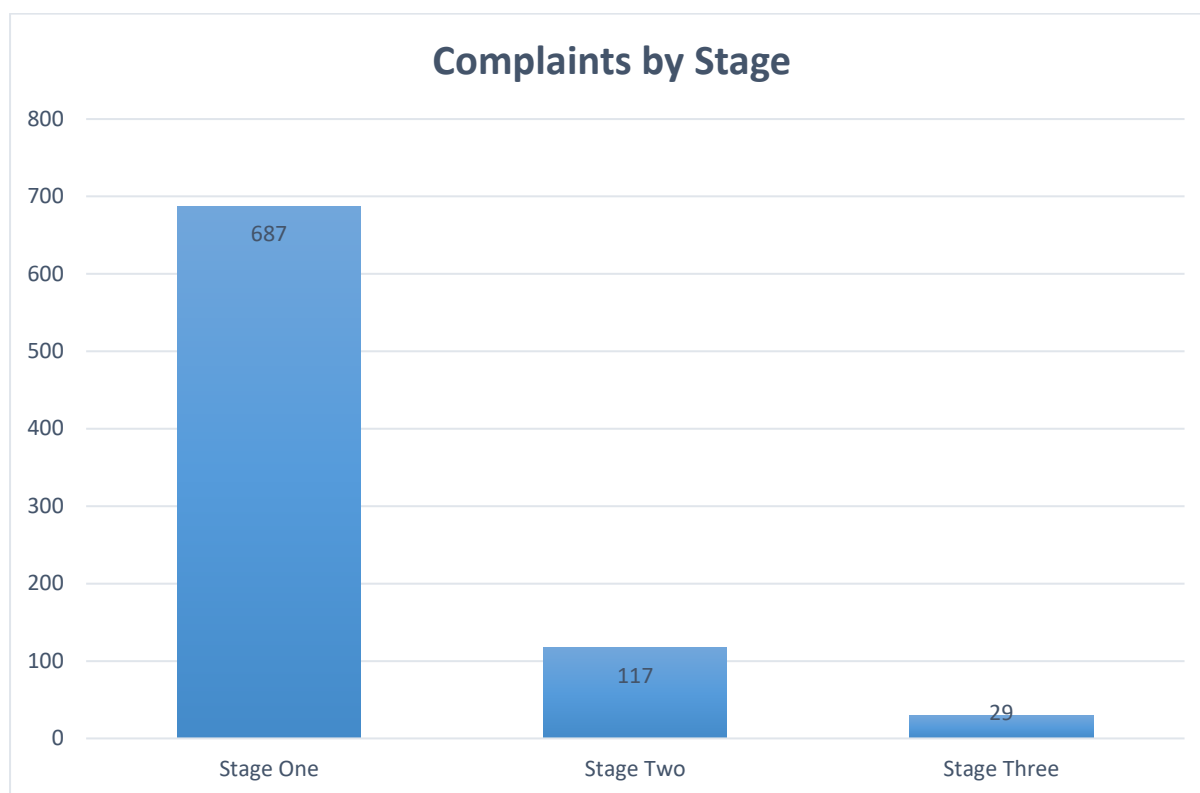
We use a Customer Relationship Management System (CRM) to record all complaints to the organisation, enabling greater categorisation of complaints and segmentation per service area. This helps with detailed analysis, enabling us to learn from complaints received.

Complaints in Context

The customer transactions regarding complaints over the financial year include contact by telephone, email, correspondence and online forms. It is broken down as follows.



Number of new complaints



Out of the total of 803 complaints, 117 were escalated from stage 1 to stage 2, and 29 were escalated from stage 2 to stage 3 over the course of the year.

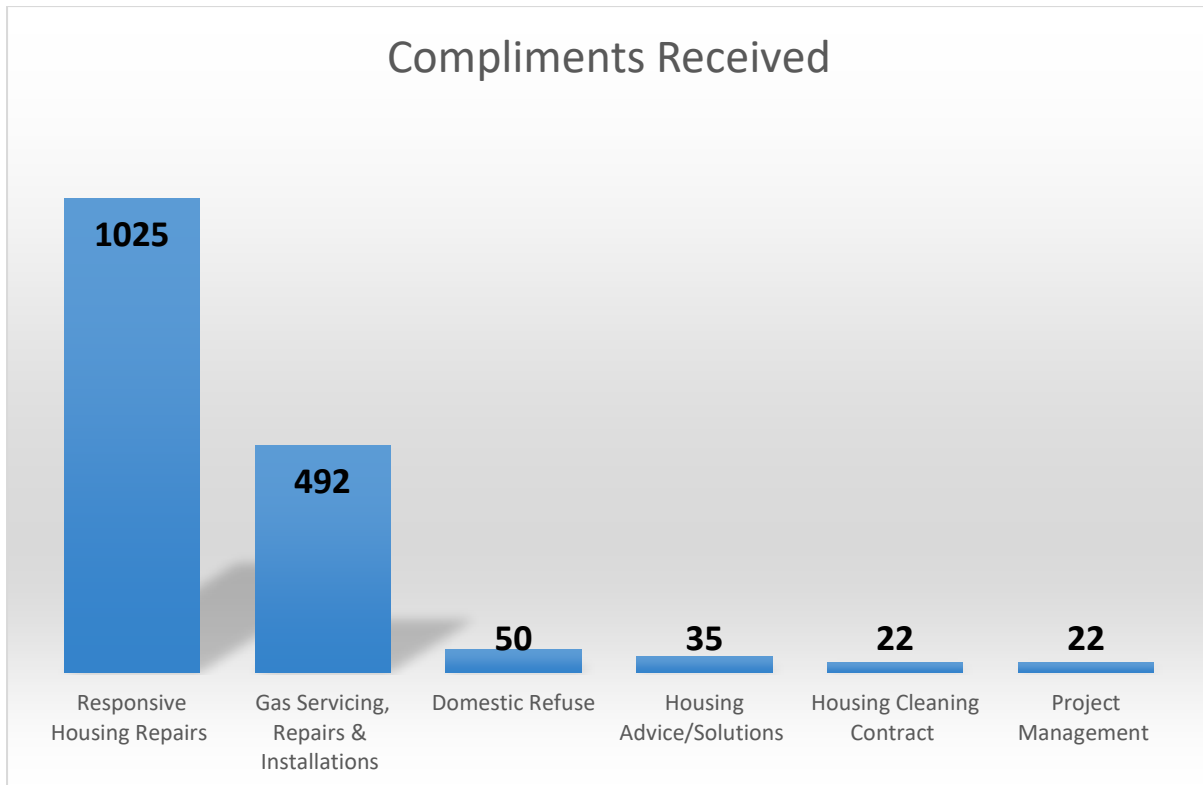
Top 5 Complaint Categories

Category	Number of Complaints	As a percentage of total complaints received
Domestic Refuse	264	32.87%
Responsive Repairs	160	19.92%
Arboriculture Support	58	7.22%
Parking and Enforcement	38	4.73%
Housing Advice	26	3.23%

The above table shows the top 5 services receiving complaints. These are also the service areas carrying out very high volumes of customer transactions.

Compliments

A total number of 1761 compliments were received in the financial year 2021/2022.

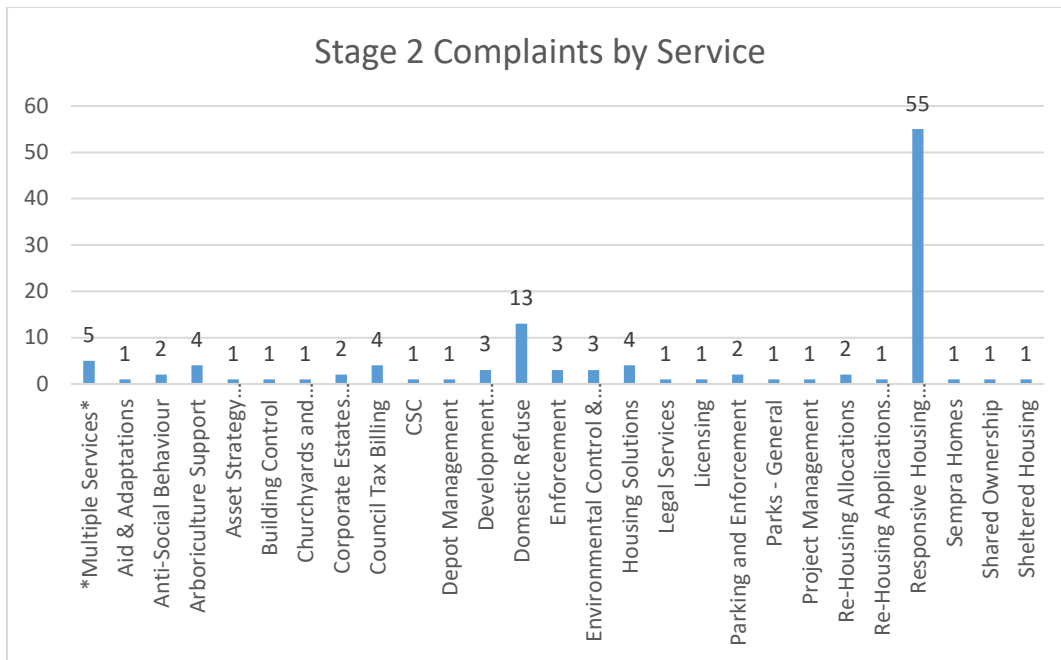


The above graph shows the top services receiving compliments. Housing Repairs appear in both the most complimented and the most complained about categories.

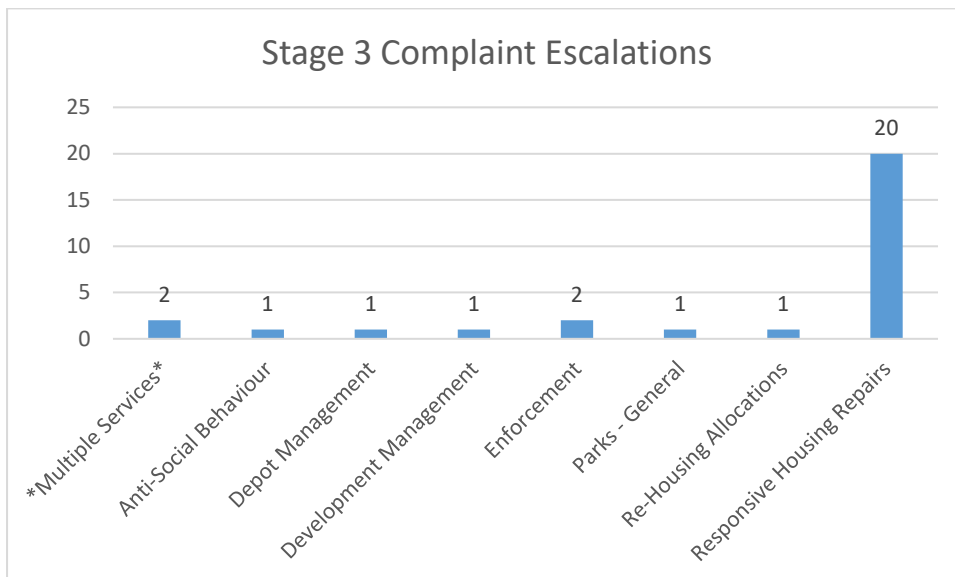
Reasons for the escalation of Complaints.

Of the total 803 Complaints logged in 2022-2022 Financial Year 18% of matters were escalated beyond Stage One, to either Stage Two or Three.

When we look at the Stage Two escalations we can see that the greatest proportion of these rest with Responsive Housing Repairs with 55. Upon examining the reasons for escalation the most frequent reason given by complainants was that works promised to take place in the response to the Stage One Complaint were not undertaken on the appointment date, that our contractor Morgan Sindall did not adequately communicate with the complainants to arrange follow-on works or that the customer was not satisfied with the quality of workmanship on the completed repairs.



The second greatest number of escalations to Stage Two were for Domestic Refuse who received 13 complaints at Stage Two. The reasons given for these escalations are predominantly complainants disputing information provided in the response at Stage One.



When we look at the complaints escalated to Stage Three we again see that Responsive Housing Repairs received the greatest number with 20 in total.

The reasons provided by complainants for escalation were that information given in the response at Stage Two was incorrect or continued delays and poor communications when arranging repairs.

Our Enforcement Team received two Stage Three complaints, the reasons provided were disputes regarding an Officers decision.

Lessons learned from complaints – You Said, We Did

We welcome and recognise the importance of complaints and all customer feedback. We use this in discussion at our leadership and partners meetings and to help drive our services forward and deliver improvements.

Our complaints processes and procedures have been audited and while found to be compliant a small number of improvements have been highlighted that we continue to take forward. This includes the centralisation of the complaint's management processes and a review / upgrade of the current complaints monitoring system. This will ensure a consistent methodology to the reporting, investigation and response to all complaints made to the council. We also anticipate the realisation of further efficiencies in terms of performance monitoring and the ability to react earlier to patterns and trends highlighted within the complaints reported. These improvements have been committed to and scheduled for 2022.

End of Report