

ANNUAL COMPLAINT & SERVICE MONITORING REPORT FOR 1 APRIL 2024 TO 31 MARCH 2025

Committee name	Corporate Resources & Infrastructure Select Committee
Officer reporting	Ian Anderson - Business Manager, Complaints and Enquiries
Papers with report	Appendix A, B, C, D, E, F, G and H
Ward	All

HEADLINES

To provide information to the Committee on key complaints and related service monitoring data.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. That the Committee note the contents of the report and provide any comments to officers as appropriate.
2. A copy of this report be shared with the other Select Committees

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

This report provides information and analysis of complaints and Members' Enquiries received between 1 April 2024 and 31 March 2025 and satisfies the requirement to publish annual information. The report includes:

- Appendix A: Background to the complaints process
- Appendix B: Complaints, Compliments, and Members' Enquiries trends for 2024/25 including service improvements and learnings from complaints
- Appendix C: Complaint and Compliment report for Housing Services for 2024/25
- Appendix D: Complaint and Compliment report for Adult Social Care for 2024/25
- Appendix E: Complaint and Compliment report for Children and Young People Services for 2024/25
- Appendix F: Complaint and Compliment report for Education Services for 2024/25
- Appendix G: Complaint and Compliment report for Finance Directorate for 2024/25
- Appendix H: Complaint and Compliments for Place Directorate for 2024/25

Implications on related Council policies

A key role of Select Committees is to monitor the performance of Council services within their remit. Select Committees may also make recommendations on service changes and improvements to the Cabinet who are responsible for the Council's policy and direction.

How this report benefits Hillingdon residents

This report seeks to provide assurance that complaints and Members' Enquiries are being processed in accordance with the Council's published policies and in line with the Complaint Handling Codes issued by the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman and Housing Ombudsman Service.

Financial Implications

There are no direct financial implications associated with this report.

Legal Implications

Legal Services confirm that there are no specific legal implications arising from this report.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Nil

APPENDIX A

BACKGROUND TO THE COMPLAINT PROCESS

1. The Council's Vision

The Council's vision is about 'putting our residents first'. Feedback in the form of complaints and compliments is seen as a very important source of information from residents about the quality of services and care provided by the Council. In cases where something has gone wrong, we are committed to putting it right and ensuring that it does not happen again.

2. What is a Complaint?

In general terms a complaint can be considered as:

"an expression of dissatisfaction, however made, about the standard of service, actions or lack of action by the council, its own staff, or those acting on its behalf, affecting an individual or group of individuals"

3. What is a Service Requests?

A Service Request is defined as a *request from a resident/people to the Council requiring us to take action to put something right.*

Whilst Service Requests are not complaints, they may contain expressions of dissatisfaction, and the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman advise that we should have the opportunity to deal with a Service Request before a complaint is made.

4. Accessibility and Awareness

Complaints can be made quickly and easily 24 hours a day, seven days a week via our website at www.hillingdon.gov.uk/complaints or by post or telephone. If an adjustment is needed, people are asked to call the Complaint and Enquiries Team.

5. What can people complain about to the Council?

People can complain about any services that the Council provides or contracts out.

6. Exclusions

- while complaints about Council policy can be submitted, it should be noted that Council policy cannot be overturned through the complaint process as this can only be done through the statutory decision-making procedure;
- the complaint procedure does not cover matters already claimed in court such as a disrepair claim; and/or
- issues relating to employment or application for employment with the Council cannot be addressed through the complaint procedure.

7. Complaint handling Staff

All staff within the team are experienced and fully trained to deal with complaints, including any reasonable adjustments required by vulnerable residents. They have also been provided with

additional training by a member of staff from the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman on 16 May 2024.

All staff dealing with complaints within the Council have within their job description a complaint handling objective.

8. Putting things right

When a complaint investigation reveals that the Council has made an error, it's important to consider appropriate redress. The purpose of redress is to remedy the injustice or hardship suffered and, where possible, to return a complainant to the position they would have been before the situation went wrong. Types of redress include:

- an apology;
- providing the service that should have been received in the first place;
- taking action or making a decision that the Council should have done before;
- reconsidering an incorrect decision;
- improving procedures so that similar problems do not happen again; and
- payment in recognition of any loss or distress that has occurred as a result of maladministration, particularly where actions cannot be taken to put matters right.

9. Mediation

Sometimes, resolving a complaint through the usual process may be unsuitable or unfeasible, especially if the relationship between the service provider and user is strained or emotions are heightened. In these cases, the Business Manager of Complaints and Enquiries will evaluate if mediation could be a viable alternative. Should both parties consent, an independent mediator can facilitate a meeting where they attempt to negotiate a resolution through discussion.

10. Complaint Handling Codes

The Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO) and the Housing Ombudsman Service (HOS) introduced their Complaint Handling Codes in February 2024, which this Council has fully implemented. Our procedure:

- allows managers to address issues of unsatisfactory service and seek improvements in service delivery;
- ensures that customers are treated fairly and consistently;
- ensures that a proper and adequate investigation takes place before any action is taken;
- requests for reasonable adjustments will be considered in line with the Equality Act 2010 and appropriate training is provided for staff; and
- safeguards the integrity and good reputation of the Council

11. Unreasonable or Unreasonably Persistent complaints

If we consider that a complainant is unreasonable or unreasonably persistent, we will refer the matter to a senior manager, who will consider whether restrictions should be placed on their contact with the Council.

APPENDIX B

COMPLAINTS, COMPLIMENTS AND MEMBERS' ENQUIRIES FOR 2024/25

1. Total number of complaints/compliments recorded for 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025

Directorate	Service Requests	Stage 1 complaints	Stage 2 Complaints	Stage 3 complaints	Ombudsman Investigations	Compliments
Finance Directorate	148	178	32	0	10	1
Adult Social Care	46	32	N/A	N/A	8	11
Digital and Intelligence	75	8	0	0	1	2
Children and Young People Services	73	99	14	0	1	47
Education Services	92	8	1	0	0	0
Central Services	582	255	84	0	18	5
Place Directorate	2,192	836	206	0	39	44
Total for 2024/25	3,208	1,416	337	0	77	110
Total for 2023/24	3,729	681	180	0	65	216

- The Council strives to resolve complaints in a reasonable manner and to the satisfaction of the residents. The figures above indicate that this is achieved, as the number of complaints decreases at each stage of the escalation process. For example, only 44% of Service Requests (3,208) progressed to a Stage 1 complaint (1,416) and only 24% of Stage 1 complaints advanced to Stage 2 (337).
- The number of compliments received of 110 for 2024/25 is lower than the figure for 2023/24 of 216.
- Place accounts for 68% of all Service Requests, 59% of all Stage 1 complaints, 61% of all Stage 2 complaints and 55% of all Ombudsman complaints investigated.

2. Total number of complaints/compliments recorded for 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2025

Year	Service Requests	Stage 1 complaints	Stage 2 Complaints	Stage 3 complaints	Ombudsman Investigations	Compliments
2020/21	2,587	789	42	0	34	502
2021/22	4,473	802	102	0	75	349
2022/23	5,176	816	121	0	46	245
2023/24	3,729	681	180	0	65	216
2024/25	3,208	1,416	337	0	77	110

- The significant rise in formal Stage 1 and 2 complaints was expected as the Council has fully implemented the Complaint Handling Codes introduced by the Housing Ombudsman Service and Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman in February 2024.

3. Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman and Housing Service Ombudsman investigations completed for 2024/25

The table below provides the outcome of all investigations concluded by the Ombudsman.

Service Area	Upheld	Partially Upheld	Not Upheld	Did not investigate	Total
Finance	1	0	0	9	10
Adult Social Care	1	1	2	4	8
Children and Young People's	0	0	0	1	1
Education	0	0	0	0	0
Housing	14	0	1	16	31
Waste	1	0	0	1	2
ASBET	1	1	1	6	9
Planning and Building Control	0	0	0	4	4
Green Spaces	0	0	0	4	4
Parking	0	0	0	1	1
Highways	0	0	0	5	5
Libraries	0	0	0	1	1
Digital and Intelligence	0	0	0	1	1
Total	18	2	4	53	77

4. Members Enquiries (MEs)

Number of MEs recorded

Period	Place Directorate	Adult Services	Children Services	Finance Directorate	Central Services	Digital and Intelligence	Total
2020/21	9,533	145	54	228	-	-	9,960
2021/22	9,432	112	58	167	-	-	9,769
2022/23	7,417	150	56	182	-	-	7,805
2023/24	4,467	67	85	98	1,517	2	6,236
2024/25	2,346	46	32	75	827	3	3,329

- The handling of Members Enquiries (ME) was reviewed and a new system using the GOSS platform was introduced on 1 January 2023. A key part of that change was to re define what an ME is i.e. '*a clear question has been asked that now requires investigation by Council Officers, or the supply of information from a Council department*'. At the same time, we introduced the term "service request" which we have defined as '*a request for a one-off action to be taken, that requires action by an Officer and not investigative activities or supply of information*'.
- The effect of this change is that the volume of MEs fell by 46% (2,907) when comparing the 2023/24 figure of 6,236 with the 2024/25 figure of 3,329 as those more straightforward enquires are treated as "service requests".

Service areas that have the highest number of MEs recorded

Service Area	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
Waste	4,964	3,934	2,003	749	401
Housing	1,269	976	1,021	1,375	733
Anti-Social Behaviour	1,176	1,258	761	589	410
Green Spaces	863	1,043	705	400	210
Planning	827	1,255	361	325	204
Highways	-	-	744	709	329

- Housing (733), Anti-social behaviour (410), Waste (401), Highways (329), Green Spaces (210) and Planning (204) accounted for 69% of all enquiries submitted by Members for 2024/25. Housing enquiries (733) alone accounted for 22% of all enquiries submitted by Members.

Service Requests recorded

Period	1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024	1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025
Number	5,555	7,102

- The number of Service Requests submitted by Members rose from 5,555 for 2023/24 to 7,102 for 2024/25.
- Members submitted a total of 10,431 Members Enquiries and Service requests for the period 2024/25.

Top 5 Service Requests submitted by Members for 2024/25

Service Area	2024/25
Fly tipping	2,589
Items on the Highway or footpath need removing	1,871
Litter pick requests	363
Graffiti	302
Potholes	283

- Fly tipping (2,589) and Items on the Highway or footpath need removing (previously Street Cleansing) (1,871) accounted for 63% all Service Requests submitted by Members.

5. Complaints about a Councillor

Complaints about the conduct of a councillor have a separate complaint process that people are required to follow and these complaints are dealt with by the Head of Democratic Services and Monitoring Officer, Lloyd White. More information on this process can be found on the following web pages: www.hillingdon.gov.uk/complaint-councillor

6. Service Improvements

Continuous improvement is seen as a cornerstone of how we operate at Hillingdon Council and learning from complaints is a central part of this. The receipt of any complaint provides Hillingdon with valuable feedback and opportunities to learn from what has happened and make adjustments to avoid future problems and improve the service we provide our residents. To this end, we paid for a bespoke training course delivered by the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman in May of 2024 on investigating complaints and the processes to follow, along with mechanisms they use to identify issues and make recommendations for change/service improvement. Officers found this course extremely helpful. Listed below are the main service improvements we made:

Housing

- All Housing Officers were reminded of the importance of notifying homelessness applicants of the correct homelessness duty and in ensuring that the correct duties are followed at relevant times.
- We reviewed our procedures around how we deal with homelessness applicants who have been issued with a Section 21 eviction notice to ensure that our approach is in line with the Homelessness Code of Guidance and that the correct homelessness duty is considered at the time.
- The complaint team reviewed our procedures around the handling of requests for reasonable adjustments and as a result we now record all requests made and the action we took as a result.
- We reviewed the form used by a medical assessor which now prompts them to include their justification on the decisions they make.
- Homeless staff were all reminded that interim accommodation should always be suitable, and that they need to take into account the individual circumstances and needs of the household.
- All Housing staff were reminded of their statutory duties to ensure that the main housing duty decisions are made within 56 days and if an extra 15 working days is required, this must be properly documented.

- A reminder was issued to all Officers that they must send a formal offer letter explaining how to request a suitability review of accommodation and that they should carry out a suitability review when requested.

Children and Young People Services

- All Complaint staff were reminded that they should consider if a complaint related to adoptions comes under the children's statutory complaints procedure. If it does, the Council must use the procedure to investigate the complaint.
- The SEND team reviewed how it carried out its due diligence for children and young people with Education, Health and Care (EHC) Plans who for whatever reason cannot attend their named placement. This ensures that we have fully considered our duty to provide the education outlined in the EHC Plans to prevent gaps in education.
- Updated instructions were issued to staff involved in Special Educational Needs and Disability transport decisions, to remind them of the importance of ensuring decision letters and meeting minutes record the correct details of the applicant being considered.

Adult Social Care

- Procedures were revised to ensure that applicants are provided with written meaningful costs information about adult care services at the outset, and unless there is a good reason, before any costs are incurred.
- Guidance was provided for staff to ensure that when a Council tenant need works to address disrepair and disabled adaptations, services work in a joined-up way to coordinate works, minimise disruption, and avoid unnecessary expense.

7. Learning from complaints

Learning captured	Impact of change
Dissatisfaction with levels of communication associated with planned works	Residents more engaged and informed in relation to the delivery of planned works contracts
Concerns associated with 'drift' linked to the need for 'recall works'.	Target introduced to on recall works orders for contractor to attend within 10 days.
Challenge associated with the keeping of pets.	Review of Pets Policy to make outcomes clearer and fairer.
Dissatisfaction with complaints handling / responses.	<p>Template letter introduced requiring the understanding of the complaint to be clearly set out and the associated resolution to project consistent communication.</p> <p>Mandatory requirement for all complainants to be contacted as an integral part of compliant handling.</p> <p>All responses to include what action has been taken rather than what the Council will do, based upon feedback regarding failures to deliver agreed actions.</p>

Recurrent theme associated with 'delays' in progressing service requests leading to complaints.	Q4 workshops arranged with tenant representatives and Services to document core service standards. Housing Management business case restructure approved to result in smaller patch sizes and a more personal and responsive service to residents once implemented.
Dissatisfaction with ASB case handling.	Joint training undertaken with Tenancy Management and ASB Localities Team staff.
Concerns regarding 'drift' in completing repairs.	Monthly toolbox talks with Repairs Operatives include a clear focus on service improvement including reminders on arranging return visits to tenants whilst still on site.
Disconnection between learning from complaints and service delivery by contractors.	Learning outcomes and complaint issues incorporated into monthly contractor review meetings to ensure outcomes are embedded into their service provision.
Poor / delayed response to concerns raised by tenants occupying the two HRA temporary accommodation sites.	Service review resulting in ending our management out-sourcing arrangements / management brought in-house to improve responsiveness of service provision and response to concerns raised.
Concerns regarding the management of 'low level' ASB.	Production of a good neighbour guide and an associated toolkit to support staff and residents in better managing neighbour related issues.
Rent payments being assigned to the wrong rent account when paying 'over the phone'.	All payment references are now confirmed to the tenant before taking payment to avoid mis-posting of rent monies.
Tenants entering into rent arrears repayment arrangements which are not sustainable.	Income and expenditure forms are now completed as an integral part of entering into repayment arrangements.
Re-occurring issue within the responsive Repairs Service regarding 'house-keeping issues'	Issues associated with a lack of notes on job histories and outdated telephone numbers on job orders addressed with the team via toolbox talks and 'spot checks' introduced.
Resident concerns regarding ongoing ASB presenting in a number of tower blocks including rough-sleeping, drug taking and damage to property.	Initiative rolled out culminating in a number of Closure Orders secured which have secured a positive impact on presenting issues and positive feedback from residents.

APPENDIX C

COMPLAINT AND COMPLIMENT REPORT FOR HOUSING SERVICES FOR 2024/25

SUMMARY OF ANALYSIS

I have set out below the data and outcomes of service requests, complaints and compliments for Housing Services in the period of 2020/21 to 2024/25.

THE COMPLAINT PROCEDURE

Housing complaints are managed in line with the Council's Corporate complaints procedure. This procedure operates as follows:

- Service Requests
- Stage 1 – response from a manager or Team Leader or specialist complaint officer.
- Stage 2 – response from the Head of Service or a Director or Corporate Director of Place
- Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman or Housing Ombudsman Service

DETAILED COMPLAINT REPORT

A detailed report of all complaints and compliments for Housing Services is set out below.

a. SERVICE REQUESTS

Resident feedback suggests a preference for immediate resolution of issues through direct dialogue with an officer/manager, rather than submitting formal complaints. When feasible, we aim to address concerns directly in this way but we have to be mindful of the definition of a Service Request which *“a request from a resident/people to the Council requiring us to take action to put something right.”* This has been fully applied by this Council and limits the scope of officers to progress expressions of dissatisfaction in this way.

Table 1 - Service Requests

Year	Total
2020/21	568
2021/22	1,039
2022/23	1,389
2023/24	1,122
2024/25	1,009

- There were 10% (112) fewer reduction Service Requests when comparing the 2023/24 figure of 1,122 with the 2024/25 figure of 1,009. This was expected as the introduction of the new Complaint Handling Codes by the Ombudsmen in February 2024, require that expressions of dissatisfaction are treated as formal complaints. This requirement has been applied by Officers across the Council.

b. STAGE 1 COMPLAINTS

A manager or Team Leader or specialist complaint officer will aim to respond within 10 working days.

Table 2 - Total number of Stage 1 complaints

Period	Total
2020/21	231
2021/22	227
2022/23	259
2023/24	240
2024/25	743

- As expected, the number of Stage 1 complaints has risen by 210% (503) when comparing the 2023/24 figure of 240 to the 2024/25 figure of 743. This was expected and will continue to rise as the Council applies the definition of a complaint as set out in the Complaint Handling Codes.

Table 3 - Outcome of complaints

Period	Upheld	Partially upheld	Not upheld	Withdrawn	Total
2020/21	39	52	127	13	231
2021/22	17	40	160	10	227
2022/23	24	68	154	13	259
2023/24	20	43	169	8	240
2024/25	118	195	415	15	743

- Of the 743 Stage 1 complaints, 118 (16%) were upheld, 195 (26%) were partially upheld, 415 (56%) were not upheld and the remaining 15 complaints were either cancelled or withdrawn.
- The main areas of complaint were delays in providing a service (558), dissatisfaction with our application of the Social Housing Allocation Policy (118) and the communication(s) that was received (58).

c. STAGE 2 COMPLAINTS

The Head of Service or Director or Corporate Director for Place will aim to respond to Stage 2 complaints within 20 working days.

Table 4 - Total number of Stage 2 complaints

Period	Total
2020/21	22
2021/22	42
2022/23	55
2023/24	93
2024/25	192

- The number of Stage 2 complaints increased by 99 (106%) when comparing the 2023/24 figure of 93 with the 2024/25 figure of 192. This was expected as the Council applies the changes in the Complaint Handling Codes introduced by the Ombudsman in February 2024.

d. INVESTIGATIONS BY THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND SOCIAL CARE OMBUDSMAN OR HOUSING OMBUDSMAN SERVICE

Where it appears that a Council's own investigations have not resolved the complaint, the complainant is entitled to refer their complaint to the relevant Ombudsman at any stage of the complaint process.

Table 5 - Total number of Ombudsman investigations

Period	Total number
2020/21	5
2021/22	19
2022/23	15
2023/24	20
2024/25	31

- 31 investigations were concluded by the Ombudsman during this period. A brief note of all 31 complaint investigations completed by the Ombudsmen for 2024/25 and the outcomes is set out below:

Complaint details	Outcome of complaint
202324088 The complaint is about: a. The landlord's management of the kitchen works. b. The landlord's record keeping. c. The landlord's handling of the resident's complaint	Upheld The Council is to apologise in writing for the delays in kitchen renewal and pay the resident a sum of money for the distress caused by the delays, plus an additional sum for mishandling her complaint
202225990 The complaint is about the landlord's response to a request for assistance to repair the damage caused to the interior doors in her home	Upheld The Ombudsman found that the Council's approach in this case was insensitive and lacked empathy and failed to recognise that the resident and her young family were vulnerable and required some flexibility in the way the landlord applied its policies. There was maladministration in our response to the request for the doors to be repaired or replaced.
202334242 The complaint is about the way the landlord responded to the resident's reports that it had sold land belonging to her property.	Upheld The Ombudsman noted the Council's attempts to put things right by offering a sum in compensation, make a direct offer of like for like accommodation when a suitable property becomes available, pay for the resident's removal costs, pay the resident for the cost of the driveway she had installed and meeting the cost of installing a driveway if it could

	not find a suitable property with a parking space. There was a finding of maladministration as it did not go far enough to restore the position for the resident.
202310021 The complaint is about the landlord's handling of the resident's reported damp and mould in his flat.	Upheld The Ombudsman determined that the Council should apologise, offer a sum of money in compensation, ask the complainant whether they wish to make a public liability claim, contact the resident whether they wish us to record the health conditions on their records and compile an action plan to complete a self-assessment against the Ombudsman's Knowledge and Information Management report.
202310109 The complaint is about the landlord's handling of repairs to the heating system	Upheld The Ombudsman determined that the Council apologise, pay an amount in compensation and undertake a review of its record keeping system and takes steps to establish a system of record keeping that ensures all contact from a resident (including service requests and complaints) is recorded and retained so that it can be provided to this Service upon request, in response to a complaint.
202346988 Ms R complained about the Council's handling of repairs required in her home.	Upheld The Ombudsman found failing in the Council's handling of repairs in relation to the window Sills and kitchen cupboards and that proper records were not kept when telephone contact was received. The Council agreed to apologise, update its procedure and pay a sum of money in compensation.
202402457 Ms B complained about the Council's handling of outstanding repairs and damp and mould in her property.	Upheld The Ombudsman found delays in completing outstanding repairs and in our handling of damp and mould. The Council agreed to apologise and make a payment in compensation.
202341070 Ms J complained about the Council's handling of repairs to her roof, the car driveway, damp and mould in her property and our handling of her complaint.	Upheld The Ombudsman found maladministration in our handling of the repairs to Ms J's property, not providing information on how to make an insurance claim and that we did not respond to all the issues in the complaint response. The Council agreed to complete all the work, apologise and make a payment in compensation.
0163-9130-8504-6199 Ms X complained that there were failings in the way the Council dealt with her homelessness application and offered her unsuitable interim accommodation. Ms X says this has	Upheld The Ombudsman found that the Council delayed accepting a relief duty towards Ms X and as a result she remained in unsuitable interim accommodation. The Council has agreed a suitable remedy for the injustice caused.

<p>caused her and her family distress and impacted on their health.</p>	
<p>3232-1160-5597-0470 Miss X complained that the Council failed to take steps to move her to alternative accommodation to prevent her becoming homeless after her landlord issued her with a Section 21 eviction notice in June 2024. 2. Miss X said her eviction date was set for March 2025 and the lack of help from the Council caused her distress and uncertainty</p>	<p>Upheld The Ombudsman found fault that the Council had failed to take steps to alleviate her risk of homelessness and delayed moving her to interim accommodation. The Council agreed to apologise and make a payment to Miss X to recognise the distress and uncertainty this caused.</p>
<p>6741-7924-6923-0863 Miss B complained that the Council failed to consider whether the interim accommodation it offered her family was suitable and wrongly ended its duty to her when she refused this accommodation. Miss B says that as a result of the Council's failings her family were forced to separate into different households. This caused them distress and impacted on their existing physical and mental illness.</p>	<p>Upheld The Ombudsman found that the Council failed to take proper account of the health needs of Miss B's son, when it offered her interim accommodation that was too far away from his school and involved him making a long journey on public transport. The Council agreed to take action to remedy the injustice it caused Miss B and her family.</p>
<p>3349-4560-1726-4578 Ms X complained that the Council had failed to provide suitable temporary accommodation for her son Mr Y despite accepting a homelessness duty.</p>	<p>Upheld The Ombudsman found that the delays in dealing with Mr Y's homelessness application and the failure to provide suitable interim or temporary accommodation was fault. That these faults had caused Mr Y and Ms X an injustice. The Council agreed to apologise and agree to the recommendations of the Ombudsman.</p>
<p>2680-7098-9849-9957 Ms X complained: a) The Council failed to make reasonable adjustments to its homelessness procedures. This significantly affected Ms X's wellbeing, exacerbating the impact of her health conditions and causing avoidable distress. b) The Council communicated poorly throughout, compounding the avoidable distress Ms X experienced and causing avoidable uncertainty. c) The Council failed to offer Ms X any support or advice to help her resolve her housing situation, despite accepting the prevention duty towards her.</p>	<p>Upheld The Ombudsman found that Council failed to have regard for its duty to consider and make reasonable adjustments in Ms X's case. They also found that the Council's communication and for how it managed Ms X's homelessness approach. The Council agreed to apologise to Ms X and pay a financial remedy in recognition of her avoidable distress, frustration and uncertainty. The Council has also agreed to provide guidance to officers and review ways it can improve its procedures.</p>
<p>7913-1965-2780-3162 Miss X complained about the Council's decision on her banding level in her housing application. She says the</p>	<p>Upheld The Ombudsman found that the decision on Miss X's housing application was flawed. The Council</p>

Council has not properly considered her medical needs.	agreed to resolve the complaint early by providing a proportionate remedy for the injustice caused.
202209354 The landlord's handling of: a. The reports of anti-social behaviour (ASB). b. the request for permission to erect a fence. c. The subsequent complaint	Not Upheld There was no maladministration by the landlord in its handling of the resident's reports of antisocial behaviour and in its response to permission regarding a fence. There was a service failure by the landlord in relation to its complaint Handling (time taken to respond to complaint).
24012834 The complaint is that the Council failure to take enforcement action against one of its tenants for erecting a building which is not in accordance with the associated planning permission.	Did not investigate The Ombudsman did not investigate this complaint as there was not enough evidence of fault by the planning enforcement team, and they have no power to look at the actions of the Council in its role as a social housing provider.
9182-6181-7550-3796 Ms X complained that the Council failed to award band A priority on its housing register, which she considers she is entitled to. She says that, as a result of the Council's failings, she will be living in severely overcrowded housing with her children for longer than she should.	Did not investigate The Ombudsman did not investigate this complaint because they felt that there was insufficient evidence of fault causing sufficient injustice to justify their involvement. In any case, the Council has since awarded band A priority
0658-8909-0920-0753 Ms X complained that the Council failed to properly consider her application for the housing register. She says it failed to correctly consider her medical evidence and her living conditions. Ms X says the impact of this refusal is impacting her mental health.	Did not Investigate The Ombudsman did not investigate this complaint because the Council agreed to resolve the complaint early by providing a proportionate remedy for the injustice caused.
4869-1415-4621-0984 Mrs X complained that the Council had not given her social housing application high enough priority, and she has been waiting too long for rehousing. She states this means she and her family remain in overcrowded and unsafe conditions.	Did not investigate The Ombudsman decided not to investigate because the investigation is unlikely to find fault by the Council.
4135-7958-4044-0650 Ms X wanted the Council to move her to a larger home. She is living in overcrowded conditions in a property with disrepair.	Did not investigate The Ombudsman did not investigate this complaint because there is insufficient evidence of fault by the Council. They added that they could not investigate the complaint of disrepair because they had no power to investigate a council when it is acting as a landlord.
6669-8079-8049-3905 Ms X complained about the Council's handling of her housing application and her subsequent complaint. She says the Council has discriminated against her	Did not investigate The Ombudsman did not investigate this complaint because there was insufficient evidence of fault to warrant an investigation.

family and its actions are unlawful. She wants the Council to make her a direct offer of a suitable property.	
1263-2092-3604-9460 Mrs X complained that the temporary accommodation the Council provided did not meet her family's medical needs and was too far from their support network and her child's school.	Did not investigate The Ombudsman did not investigate this complaint as they felt that it was reasonable for Mrs X to request a review of its suitability and to provide relevant medical evidence to support that request.
7402-9814-8558-1984 Mr X complained that the Council will not award medical priority even though he lives in overcrowded accommodation which affects his family's health.	Did not investigate The Ombudsman did not investigate this complaint because there is insufficient evidence of fault by the Council.
1921-6022-2858-1281 Miss X complained about the Council's failure to offer her more suitable housing. She says she is overcrowded and that her social rented flat is in a poor location in the block, near bin storage and lacking in natural light. She wants to be relocated to a larger property with a better situation.	Did not investigate The Ombudsman did not investigate this complaint as there is insufficient evidence of fault which would warrant an investigation.
0476-6246-4304-6536 Mr X complained on behalf of Mr Y, that the Council caused Mr Y suffering that should be remedied by paying him financial compensation. Mr X also says the Council breached multiples statutory duties such as delaying on confirming the main housing duty when the relief homelessness duty ended. And also delaying in carrying out the review of the suitability of the accommodation. Mr X says Mr Y had to take judicial review action against the Council for suitable accommodation to be provided in July 2024. 3. Mr X would like the Council to compensate Mr Y for his suffering in unsuitable accommodation from January 2023 – January 2024 as a person with several health conditions.	Did not investigate The Ombudsman did not investigate this complaint because the complaint is caught by the time bar on the Ombudsman's remit and there are no good reasons to exercise discretion to investigate. Some of these complaint issues have already been raised in court, and, where not, would have been reasonable for the complainant to raise in court.
7315-4283-3970-5056 Mr X complained about the Council's failure to disclose the background of a tenant recommended to him in 2021. He says the tenant subsequently stopped paying rent and restricted access of the landlord to view their own property. He says she owes in excess of £7,000 in rent arrears.	Did not investigate The Ombudsman did not investigate this complaint because it was received outside the normal 12-month period for investigating complaints. There is no evidence to suggest that Mr X could not have complained to the Ombudsman sooner.

<p>9900-9788-0591-2975</p> <p>Mr X complained about the Council's handling of his homeless case. He says the Council did not assess his case properly as it ignored his medical evidence that showed he was in priority need.</p>	<p>Did not investigate</p> <p>The Ombudsman did not investigate this complaint because it was reasonable for him to have appealed to the county court.</p>
<p>5272-1385-5078-6399</p> <p>Miss X complained about the Council's failure to rehouse her from her existing council home. She says she needs an additional bedroom for one child who has autism, and her other child cannot access the upstairs in her home, including the bathroom due to his medical needs.</p>	<p>Did not investigate</p> <p>The Ombudsman did not investigate this complaint because there was insufficient evidence of fault which would warrant an investigation.</p>
<p>7982-3851-6970-7131</p> <p>Miss X complained that she has had poor service from the Council when applying for social housing. She complained about significant delay in the Council's response and the time taken to process her application. Miss X said she could have missed an opportunity to bid for housing. She said this has caused additional stress at a time when her and her child are living in severely overcrowded housing.</p>	<p>Did not investigate</p> <p>The Ombudsman did not investigate this complaint because the Council had already apologised about its communication and that any injustice to Miss X is not significant enough to warrant investigation.</p>
<p>9889-7170-3206-4073</p> <p>Ms X said she was unhappy that the Council declined to sell her a portion of land it owned, which was adjacent to her property. Ms X was also unhappy the Council had neglected the land, meaning overgrown trees and bushes had damaged her fence. Ms X wants the Council to maintain the land or sell it to her.</p>	<p>Did not investigate</p> <p>The Ombudsman did not investigate this complaint because there is no worthwhile outcome achievable by them in investigating this complaint.</p>
<p>202307805</p> <p>The complaint is about the resident's Right to Buy application, including the landlord refusing to communicate with the resident's representative. □ The representative's subject access request and request for a copy of the tenancy agreement.</p>	<p>Outside of Jurisdiction</p> <p>The Ombudsman advised the complainant that his complaint is outside the jurisdiction of the Housing Ombudsman and is not one they can investigate</p>

e. COMPLIMENTS

Table 6 – Number of compliments recorded

Period	Total number
2020/21	132
2021/22	167
2022/23	81
2023/24	93
2024/25	32

- The number of compliments fell significantly from 93 in 2023/24 to 32 in 2024/25.

Here's what some people said about Housing Services:

"I hope you are doing well. Yesterday I was emotional and couldn't thank you properly. I just wanted to take a moment to express my heartfelt gratitude for all your support during my difficult time. Your kindness, understanding, and help have meant so much to me, and I truly appreciate everything you have done. Your support has made a real difference, and I will always be grateful."

Verbal compliment received "saying that everybody that has done repairs in her nephew's flat has been professional, kind and understanding of his mental issues."

"Please can you pass on our thanks to xx who kindly updated us on and delayed job today. The kind gent YY was amazing (had him before he did our toilet) he was friendly give us some advice and was tidy and very professional. He also had a look at the plumbing under our kitchen sink and sorted that as well. amazing guys 2 plumbers bb who did work under our sink before new kitchen got fitted, YY who came today did great amazing job of shower rail thing? and GG who kindly did window hinges and shed lock while back ago. Don't take much to also thank the people on the other side who puts these jobs through. XX is a very helpful lady as well and she give us the reassurance. As XX explained how all works its nice when we receive texts when operative on their way that's nice for the residents to know. Thank you housing repairs team@hillingdon council."

"Today your plumber who's name was Sean from housing repairs attended my property. Sean was absolutely star. He was polite, courteous, respectful and explained exactly what needed to be done. Sean is a credit to LBH repairs."

APPENDIX D

COMPLAINT AND COMPLIMENT REPORT FOR ADULT SOCIAL CARE FOR 2024/25

SUMMARY OF ANALYSIS

A comprehensive analysis is provided covering the period from 2020/21 to 2024/25. The report provides information on service requests, Stage 1 complaints, Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman investigations, and compliments with key findings or comments. The report also incorporates some feedback from people who expressed their satisfaction with Adult Social Care Services.

THE COMPLAINT PROCEDURE

The procedure for dealing with Adult Social Care complaints is regulated by the 'The Local Authority Social Services and National Health Service Complaints (England) Regulations 2009'.

This procedure is far less prescriptive and allows for early escalation to the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman should the complainant be dissatisfied with the response from the Local Authority. The intention of this procedure is to achieve resolution at the first attempt, to remove bureaucracy and is designed to empower complainants in shaping the approach to resolving the complaint from the outset.

- Service Request
- Stage 1 – response from the appropriate Manager, or a Senior Manager from the area complained about.
- Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman.

DETAILED COMPLAINT REPORT

A detailed explanation of all complaints and compliments for Adult Social Care is set out below.

a. SERVICE REQUESTS

Resident feedback suggests a preference for immediate resolution of issues through direct dialogue with an officer/manager, rather than submitting formal complaints. When feasible, we aim to address concerns directly and will continue this method moving forward.

Table 7 – Service Requests

Year	Total
2020/21	52
2021/22	80
2022/23	72
2023/24	72
2024/25	46

- The number of Service Requests received for 2023/24 was 72 and for 2024/25 it was 46, which is a fall of 36 in Service Requests registered.
- 30 (65%) of the Service Requests registered were for the Localities Service.

b. STAGE 1 COMPLAINT - LOCAL RESOLUTION

At Stage 1 of the complaint process the appropriate manager or a senior manager will carry out an investigation and aim to respond within 20 working days.

Table 8 - Total number of Stage 1 complaints recorded

Period	Total number
2020/21	48
2021/22	50
2022/23	37
2023/24	31
2024/25	32

- The number of Stage 1 complaints for 2023/24 of 31 is broadly the same when comparing the 2024/25 figure of 32.
- The Service areas with the highest number of Stage 1 complaints was the Immediate Response Service with 16 (50%) and the Localities Team with 13 (40%).

c. LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND SOCIAL CARE OMBUDSMAN INVESTIGATIONS (LGO)

Where it appears that a Council's own investigation has not resolved the complaint, the complainant is entitled to refer their complaint to the LGO and at any stage of the complaint process.

Table 9 - Total number of LGO investigations

Period	Total Number
2020/21	4
2021/22	7
2022/23	6
2023/24	8
2024/25	8

- The number of investigations undertaken by the Ombudsman remains broadly similar when comparing figures from 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2025. A brief note of all 8 complaint investigations completed by the Ombudsmen for 2024/25 and the outcome is set out below:

Complaint details	Outcome of complaint
8425-4317-3023-0029 Mr B complained that the Council stopped his care suddenly and that the Council did not take account of safeguarding concerns. Mr B also complains that the Social Worker shouted at him and called him a fraudster. Mr B went without care for 3 months and says he cannot cook his dinner and has to have takeaways.	Upheled The Ombudsman found that the Council did not meet Mr B's needs and this was fault. This meant Mr B did not have the care he needed. The Council apologised to Mr B and made a small payment to recognise the distress and inconvenience caused.
4784-6847-3007-5509 Miss Y complained about the Council's actions in respect of her care and support needs. Miss Y says: a) The care provider commissioned by the Council did not complete a risk assessment	Partially Upheld The Ombudsman found that the Council upheld some parts of the complaint and Miss Y has received a remedy which they consider to be appropriate. The Ombudsman do not find fault in the other parts of Miss Y's complaint.

<p>before it commenced the package of care and support. b) The care provider commissioned by the Council committed a data breach when it sent her a confidential document relating to the care and support needs of another service user. c) The support plan completed by the care provider contained fabrications and factually incorrect information. d) The Council did not arrange advocacy support for her until September 2023, despite making a request in August 2022. e) The Council took too long to respond to her request for direct payments. f) The Council has not completed the actions it agreed when it responded to her complaint in November 2022</p>	
<p>7783-7791-8230-0818 Mr X complained of the Council's handling of the Care Home placement for his mother (Mrs Y). He says the Council has refused to pay the Care Home fee amount it had previously agreed to with the home, so Mrs Y is at risk of losing her placement. Mr X also complained that the failed to consider how Mrs Y's health and wellbeing would be affected when it decided to move her to a new Care Home which has caused her distress, frustration and uncertainty.</p>	<p>Not Upheld The Ombudsman found that the Council did not formally agree to a weekly figure with the Care Home, so it was not at fault for this. The Council also considered Mrs Y's wellbeing when deciding to move her to a new Home in line with the relevant guidance and without fault.</p>
<p>2354-6691-1971-9320 Ms X complained about the delay in carrying out a financial assessment and this meant that her mother (Mrs M) was not aware there would be charges for the care she received. Ms X also complained that the Council did not provide free reablement care for Mrs M when she was discharged from hospital. Ms X says that the family has been caused distress and financial stress. Ms X asked for all charges to be waived.</p>	<p>Not Upheld The Ombudsman did not find any evidence of fault and that there was no evidence that Ms X's mother was eligible for reablement care when she was discharged from hospital.</p>
<p>0126-6693-6277-0729 Ms X complained that the Council had failed to provide her child with an education, including failing to provide home to school transport.</p>	<p>Did not investigate We cannot investigate Mrs X's complaint about her child's lack of education. The reasons her child is not attending school is integral to her Tribunal appeal.</p>
<p>6706-3369-1251-6495 Mr X complained about the Council's three-month delay in carrying out a</p>	<p>Did not investigate</p>

financial reassessment for his mother, Mrs Y, after her husband died. He said the delay in telling her what she had to pay towards the cost of her care meant she accrued back-dated charges, which caused her stress and worry. He also said she lost the chance to reduce the care package earlier	The Ombudsman did not investigate this complaint as there is insufficient evidence of fault to justify our involvement.
0115-3645-7482-3680 Miss X says the Council provided poor domiciliary care to her relative Mrs Y. Miss X says that this placed Mrs Y at risk and caused her to suffer stress/anxiety.	Did not investigate The Ombudsman did not investigate this complaint because the complaint was submitted late and there are no good reasons to exercise their discretion and investigate the issues complained of.
5091-0467-0001-9659 Ms B says the Council is charging her for care which it did not provide to her relative, Mr C. Ms B says the Council is sending invoices for care she thought the NHS was paying for. This is causing distress and uncertainty for the family.	Did not investigate The Ombudsman did not investigate this complaint as the Council followed the correct process to assess needs and explained about the ability to pay, charges for care, and charge for care it arranged. It was unlikely an Ombudsman investigation would find evidence of fault or lead to a different outcome.

d. COMPLIMENTS

Table 10 - Number of compliments recorded

Period	Total number
2020/21	92
2021/22	33
2022/23	23
2023/24	21
2024/25	11

Here's what some people said about Adult Social Care Services

Mr XX wanted me to pass on his thanks and appreciation for the way he was dealt with by the Brokerage Team re placements, payments and general interaction.

"My aunties social worker she had previous was XX, she is amazing and has been so helpful."

"I wanted to extend my sincere thanks for the incredibly informative and valuable session you delivered on caring for patients with dementia. Your expertise, clarity, and compassionate approach made the session both engaging and enlightening. You provided practical insights and strategies that will be immensely helpful in our day-to-day care for our mother, and your emphasis on empathy and person-centered care truly resonated with all of us. It's clear that you're deeply passionate about improving the lives of those living with dementia, and that passion came through in every aspect of your presentation. Thank you once again for sharing your time and knowledge with us—it was truly appreciated. Please do add me to your mailing list for all future events."

"I wanted to share with you all, cards I received from XX's family, thanking the team for their care & support of ZZ when he went to hospital. They also left chocolates for the team last Friday."

APPENDIX E

COMPLAINT REPORT FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SERVICE'S FOR 2024/25

SUMMARY OF ANALYSIS

I have provided an analysis of the complaints and compliments received by the Children and Young People Service from 2020/21 to 2024/25. It provides information on the number and outcome of service requests, Stage 1, Stage 2, Stage 3, and LGO investigations, as well as the number of compliments recorded. It also includes some quotes from people who praised the service.

THE COMPLAINT PROCEDURE

Complaints made by children or on their behalf are governed by the Children's Act 1989, Representations Procedure (England) Regulations 2006 (Statutory Instrument 2006 No. 1738). This sets out the statutory three-stage complaint procedure that Local Authorities are required to follow when dealing with complaints made by for example any child or young person, any local authority foster carer, a child or young person leaving care, etc. Hillingdon's procedure operates as follows:

- Service Request
- Stage 1 – Local Resolution - response from a manager and/or Senior Manager.
- Stage 2 – Independent Investigation by two people (Investigating Officer and Independent Person).
- Stage 3 – Review Panel comprising of three independent people
- Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman.

DETAILED COMPLAINT REPORT

A detailed report of all complaints and compliments for Children and Young People Service's is set out below.

a. SERVICE REQUESTS

Resident feedback suggests a preference for immediate resolution of issues through direct dialogue with an officer/manager, rather than submitting formal complaints. When feasible, we aim to address concerns directly and will continue using this method moving forward.

Table 11 – Service Requests

Year	Total
2020/21	86
2021/22	106
2022/23	62
2023/24	85
2024/25	73

- 12 (14%) fewer Service Requests for 2024/25 of 73 when compared with 2023/24 of 85.
- The areas with the highest number of Service requests were, First Response and out of Hours Service, SEND and Children in Need with 15 each.

b. STAGE 1 – LOCAL RESOLUTION

An Assistant Director or Head of Service will investigate and aim to respond to complaints within 10 working days.

Table 12 - Total number of complaints recorded

Period	Total number
2020/21	87
2021/22	69
2022/23	76
2023/24	46
2024/25	99

- 53 (115%) more Stage 1 complaints registered when comparing 2023/24 figure of 46 with the 2024/25 figure of 99.
- Of the 99 Stage 1 complaints, SEND accounted for 44% (44) of all Stage 1 complaints with First Response and the Out of Hours Service next highest with 15 and Children in need accounting for 13.

c. STAGE 2 INVESTIGATIONS

A Stage 2 investigation is conducted by an Investigating Officer (IO) and Independent Person (IP) with specialist skills and knowledge of the Children's Act. The timescale to conclude such an investigation is set by statute at 25 working days but this may be extended to a maximum of 65 working days.

Table 13 – Total number of Stage 2 complaints recorded

Period	Total number
2020/21	0
2021/22	0
2022/23	0
2023/24	6
2024/25	14

- There was 1 one Stage 2 investigations undertaken under the Children Act 1989 Representations Procedure (England) Regulations 2006. This complaint was not upheld.
- The remaining 13 Stage 2 complaints related to the SEND service and these complaints are processed in accordance with the Council's Corporate complaints procedure. This is because the children's statutory complaints procedure is for specific sections of the Children Act 1989 and it does not include the Council's duties with regards to Special Education Needs, which come under the Children and Families Act 2014.

d. STAGE 3 INVESTIGATIONS

At Stage 3 of the statutory complaint process, three people independent of the Council, will consider the complaint and wherever possible work towards a resolution. The timescale to conclude such an investigation is 45 working days.

- There were no Stage 3 investigations commissioned during this period.

e. INVESTIGATION BY THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND SOCIAL CARE OMBUDSMAN (LGO)

Where it appears that a Council's own investigations have not resolved the complaint, the complainant is entitled to refer their complaint to the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman and at any stage of the complaint process.

Table 14 – Total number of LGO investigations

Period	Total number
2020/21	1
2021/22	3
2022/23	2
2023/24	4
2024/25	1

- The Ombudsman completed one investigation in the year 2024/25. A brief note of the complaint investigations completed by the Ombudsmen for 2024/25 and the outcome is set out below:

Complaint details	Outcome of complaint
1873-2405-5479-8515 Mr X complained that the Council had failed to provide him with appropriate education and has unreasonably ceased to maintain his Education Health and Care (EHC) plan.	Did not investigate The Ombudsman did not investigate this complaint because it would have been reasonable for his representative to use the right to appeal to the First-tier Tribunal (Special Educational Needs and Disability).

f. COMPLIMENTS

Table 15 – Number of compliments recorded

Period	Total number
2020/21	132
2021/22	77
2022/23	64
2023/24	55
2024/25	47

Here's what some people said about Children Services:

"This morning's Coffee Morning was a great success, with over 60 parents, guardians, and carers attending. I want to take a moment to sincerely thank you for your support in making this event possible. You engaged brilliantly with our parents, offering professional advice that was greatly appreciated. Your warmth, expertise, and enthusiasm made a real impact, and we felt truly privileged to have you with us. Given how well it went, I will certainly be inviting you and Debbie back in the future to engage with our parent body again. Your contribution was invaluable, and I look forward to working with you both again."

"I wanted to end the week on a positive note and give the biggest shoutout and well done to XX for the work she has been doing being YY. YY recently came into care and XX supported him and advocated for him throughout the whole process. YY delivered walking in our shoes training yesterday to 25 professionals including XX and shared his good news story. YY said (whilst almost getting teary), 'My social worker is always there, whenever I need her. She is just brilliant, I could never thank her enough. She has helped me through court, my exams, my living situation. She is so good at her job, she is brilliant.' He shared that she has helped him get into college, to food shop, to clean and learn about life. YY also shared he has had 9 social workers (as his file reflects but he wasn't aware) and explained to the group of professionals that he will only ever remember XX because she is the one who has made the biggest impact. He said he doesn't know where or who he would be without her. YY is a remarkable young person and it is a pleasure to work with him. We have seen him go from strength to strength over the past few months and he feels this is down to the support he has received from XX. Well done XX! We can all see how important you are to YY and how your support, going above and beyond is so valued and so impactful."

APPENDIX F

COMPLAINT AND COMPLIMENT REPORT FOR EDUCATION SERVICES FOR 2024/25

SUMMARY OF ANALYSIS

I have set out below a detailed complaint report which provides statistical data and analysis for each stage of the complaint process, from service requests to LGO investigations, as well as the number of compliments received. It covers the period from 2020/21 to 2024/25 and highlights any significant changes or trends in the data.

THE COMPLAINT PROCEDURE

Complaints about education and schools are governed by the Education Act 2002. The Local Authority will only deal with complaints that are education related such as the provision of the national curriculum, school admission appeals, exclusions, special educational needs assessments, child protection issues, allegations of child abuse, etc.

Complaints about the internal management of a school must initially be made in writing to the Headteacher of the school. If this fails to resolve the issue, concerns should then be raised with the chair of governors. If a complainant remains dissatisfied, they can then escalate their complaint to the Department for Education and beyond that to the Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman via a Member of Parliament.

For those complaints where this Local Authority has a statutory duty to investigate, we will deal

with these complaints under the Council's Corporate complaints procedure as follows:

- Service Requests
- Stage 1 – response from a manager, team leader or specialist complaint officer.
- Stage 2 – response from a Head of Service or Director
- Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman.

DETAILED COMPLAINT REPORT

A more detailed explanation of how the complaint procedure operates the main complaint themes and statistical data for each stage of the complaint process is provided below.

a. SERVICE REQUESTS

Resident feedback suggests a preference for immediate resolution of issues through direct dialogue is preferred. When feasible, we aim to address concerns directly and will maintain this method moving forward.

Table 16 – Service Requests

Year	Total
2020/21	22
2021/22	20
2022/23	74
2023/24	55
2024/25	92

- When looking at the 2024/25 figure of 92 Service Requests, Ofsted was responsible for 74 of these. These were primarily enquiries from parents forwarded by Ofsted to the Council about schools, predominantly concerning complaints about how schools are run, which should be handled through the school's own complaint process.

b. STAGE 1 – LOCAL RESOLUTION

Complaints will be investigated and responded to by the appropriate manager who will aim to respond within 10 working days at Stage 1.

Table 17 - Total number of complaints recorded

Period	Total number
2020/21	3
2021/22	6
2022/23	7
2023/24	5
2024/25	8

- The overall volume of Stage 1 complaints has stayed relatively consistent when comparing 2023/24 figure of 5 with the 2024/25 figure of 8. Of the 8 Stage 1 complaints, 6 related to school admission issues, one complaint related to a parent complaining about mould in

some parts of a school building and the remaining complaint was about the lift not operating effectively when attending the Learning Hillingdon at the Civic Centre.

c. STAGE 2 COMPLAINTS

The Head of Service or Director will aim to respond to Stage 2 complaints within 20 working days.

Table 18 – Total number of Stage 2 complaints recorded

Period	Total number
2020/21	0
2021/22	0
2022/23	2
2023/24	2
2024/25	1

- One Stage 2 investigation was carried out during 2024/25, and this complaint was in relation to a student's dissatisfaction that the lift was not working when attending Learning Hillingdon at the Civic Centre. This complaint was not upheld.

d. LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND SOCIAL CARE OMBUDSMAN (LGO) INVESTIGATIONS

Where it appears that a Council's own investigations have not resolved the complaint, the complainant is entitled to refer their complaint to the LGO and at any stage of the complaint process.

Table 19 - Total number of LGO investigation

Period	Total number
2020/21	0
2021/22	0
2022/23	0
2023/24	1
2024/25	0

- There were no investigations undertaken by the Ombudsman during this period.

e. COMPLIMENTS

Table 20 - Compliments recorded

Period	Total number
2020/21	4
2021/22	2
2022/23	2
2023/24	0
2024/25	0

- No compliments were received for this period.

APPENDIX G

COMPLAINT AND COMPLIMENT REPORT FOR FINANCE DIRECTORATE FOR 2024/25

SUMMARY OF ANALYSIS

I have provided below statistical data on the number and outcome of complaints at each complaint stage, as well as the number of investigations by the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGO) and the number of compliments received.

THE COMPLAINT PROCEDURE

Finance Directorate complaints are managed in line with the Council's Corporate complaints procedure. The procedure operates as follows:

- Service Requests
- Stage 1 – response from a senior officer from the Appeals and Complaints Team.
- Stage 2 – response from a Head of Service or a Director
- Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman.

DETAILED COMPLAINT REPORT

A more detailed explanation of how the complaint procedure operates the main complaint themes and statistical data for each stage of the complaint process is provided below.

a. SERVICE REQUEST

Resident feedback suggests a preference for immediate resolution of issues through direct dialogue with an officer/manager, rather than submitting formal complaints. When feasible, we aim to address concerns directly and will maintain this method moving forward.

Table 21 – Service Requests

Year	Total
2020/21	121
2021/22	350
2022/23	558
2023/24	149
2024/25	148

- When examining the data, the figures for 2023/24 and 2024/25 are roughly the same. The surge in figures for 2022/23 was largely due to the central government's initiative, which provided up to five payments as a cost-of-living aid for some residents who received certain benefits or tax credits. Consequently, this led to an increased number of inquiries from residents checking their eligibility for these payments.

b. STAGE 1 COMPLAINTS

An experienced officer from the Appeals and Complaints Team investigates the complaint and

aims to respond within 10 working days.

Table 22 - Total number of Stage 1 complaints

Period	Total
2020/21	171
2021/22	167
2022/23	191
2023/24	97
2024/25	178

- Changes to the Complaint Handling Code has resulted in a significant increase in the number of Stage 1 complaints recorded when comparing the 2023/24 figure of 97 with the 2024/25 figure of 178. The number will continue to grow over the next few years as the Council fully applies the changes to the Complaint Handling Codes.

c. STAGE 2 COMPLAINTS

A senior manager, Director or Corporate Director for Finance will investigate and aim to respond within 20 working days.

Table 23 - Total number of Stage 2 complaints

Period	Total
2020/21	15
2021/22	19
2022/23	25
2023/24	18
2024/25	32

- The number of Stage 2 complaints has also increased from 18 for 2023/24 to 32 for 2024/25. This is as a result of the impact of the changes to the Complaint Handling Codes.

d. LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND SOCIAL CARE OMBUDSMAN INVESTIGATION (LGO)

Where it appears that a Council's own investigations have not resolved the complaint, the complainant is entitled to refer their complaint to the LGO and at any stage of the complaint process.

Table 24 - Total number of LGO investigations

Period	Total number
2020/21	6
2021/22	10
2022/23	7
2023/24	3
2024/25	10

The Ombudsman concluded 10 investigations during this period. A brief note of the 10 investigations completed by the Ombudsmen for 2024/25 and the outcome is set out below:

Complaint details	Outcome of complaint
3706-9333-4976-3133 Ms X complained that the Council replaced free NHS carers for her father (Mr Y), with paid for care, without her agreement or any financial assessment. She says she cancelled the service as soon as she was able to, but the Council has continued to pursue payment for care which was not agreed to.	Upheld The Ombudsman found the Council at fault for failing to provide enough information about the care charges before the costs were incurred. The Council apologised and waived the fees to acknowledge the injustice it caused.
1143-0974-0079-6326 Mrs X complained the Council wrongly calculated her family's income, which meant it refused her application for council tax reduction	Did not investigate The Ombudsman did not investigate this as Mrs X could reasonably have used her right to appeal to the Valuation Tribunal.
5772-1781-5215-6104 Ms X disputes liability for Council tax on a property.	Did not investigate The Ombudsman did not investigate this complaint as Ms X had a right of appeal to a Valuation Tribunal.
6662-1797-8800-2289 Miss B says a Council error resulted in her being overpaid housing benefit. Miss B complains the Council delayed telling her about this overpayment and has wrongly decided it is recoverable.	Did not investigate The Ombudsman did not investigate this complaint Miss B has a right of appeal to the tribunal.
9113-8278-8533-4770 Mr X complains the Council has refused to backdate retail relief to the business rates he paid, even though he only became aware more recently that he may have been eligible for it.	Did not investigate The Ombudsman did not investigate this complaint because there is insufficient evidence of fault in the way the Council has considered the matter.
4387-4440-5860-6267 Mrs X complained about an overpayment of council tax reduction which the Council has asked her to repay.	Did not investigate The Ombudsman did not investigate this complaint as Mrs X appealed to the Valuation Tribunal.
6598-1894-6358-6592 Mr A complained that the Council harassed him for council tax he did not owe and that the Council will not accept the evidence submitted to show when their council tax liability ended.	Did not investigate The Ombudsman advised that they would not investigate this complaint about the end date for the complainant's council tax liability on a former home. This is because the complainant can appeal to the Valuation Tribunal.
9905-4546-6716-9392 Mr X complains he was impacted financially due to what he considers to be misleading information on the Council's website about council tax charges for long term empty properties. Mr X wants	Did not investigate The Ombudsman did not investigate this complaint about information on the Council's website about council tax on empty homes as there is insufficient evidence of fault or fault causing the complainant an injustice.

the Council to refund the payment he made to it in this regard and to change the wording on its website	
3495-9956-4202-8138 Mr H complains about the Council initiating court proceedings against him for unpaid business rates in respect of a property has never been liable to pay this to. Mr H says the Council acknowledges there was an error when initiating liability proceedings against him in the magistrates' court. Mr H says he has had to spend time rectifying this error when he could have been working which meant he suffered a loss of income for which he sought compensation.	Did not investigate The Ombudsman did not investigate this complaint because the complainant receiving a summons to attend court, marks the commencement of legal proceedings. The Ombudsman has no legal jurisdiction to investigate in such circumstances.
0044-8135-3953-7755 Ms X complains that the Council unreasonably decided to recover an overpayment of housing benefit and delays reviewing her entitlement.	Did not investigate The Ombudsman did not investigate this complaint as Ms X has a right of appeal to a tribunal and there is no evidence of fault by the Council causing significant injustice.

e. COMPLIMENTS

Table 25 - Number of compliments recorded

Period	Total number
2020/21	17
2021/22	6
2022/23	2
2023/24	1
2024/25	1

Here's what one person said about Finance Service:

"Although I do not agree with the conclusion made by your Appeals and Complaints Officer, XX, in her letter of 12/08/24 I would like to commend her for her high level of professionalism and civility shown therein - qualities all too rare at the council."

APPENDIX H – COMPLAINTS AND COMPLIMENTS FOR PLACE DIRECTORATE FOR 2024/25

SUMMARY OF ANALYSIS

I have provided an analysis of the complaints and compliments received by Highways, Parking, Waste, Street Scene Enforcement Team (formerly Anti-Social Behaviour and Environment Team), Green Spaces, and Planning and Building Control. The report provides data on the number, type, and outcome of service requests, Stage 1 and 2, and Ombudsman investigations. It also highlights some of the compliments received from residents for the services provided.

THE COMPLAINT PROCEDURE

Complaints are managed in line with the Council's Corporate complaints procedure. This procedure operates as follows:

- Service Request.
- Stage 1 – response from a manager or Team Leader or specialist complaint officer
- Stage 2 – response from the Head of Service or a Director or Corporate Director
- Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman

DETAILED COMPLAINT REPORT

A detailed report of all complaints and compliments for this Directorate is set out below.

a. SERVICE REQUESTS

Resident feedback suggests a preference for immediate resolution of issues through direct dialogue with an officer/manager, rather than submitting formal complaints. When feasible, we aim to address concerns directly and will maintain this method moving forward.

Table 26 – Service Requests

Year	2023/24	2024/25
Highways	131	212
Parking	185	181
Waste	1,000	1,268
Street Scene Enforcement Team (formerly Anti-Social Behaviour and Environment Team)	294	295
Green Spaces	123	165
Planning	113	105
Total	1,885	2,226

- The number of Service Requests has risen by 341, from 1,885 for 2023/24 to 2,226 for 2024/25. Over the next few years these volumes will decrease as the Council continues to apply the changes made to the Complaint Handling Codes introduced by the Ombudsmen in February 2024.
- Waste accounts for 57% (1,268) of all service requests submitted across the Council, followed by ASBET 13% (295), Highways 10% (212), Parking 8% (181), Green Spaces 7% (165) and Planning 5% (105).

b. STAGE 1 COMPLAINTS

A Head of Service aims to respond within 10 working days.

Table 27 - Total number of Stage 1 complaints

Service	2023/24	2024/25
Highways	19	122
Parking	97	78
Waste	43	195
Street Scene Enforcement Team (formerly Anti-Social Behaviour and Environment Team)	34	68
Green Spaces	37	53
Planning and Building Control	28	55
Total	261	571

- The Council has applied the Complaint Handling Codes introduced by the Housing Ombudsman Service and the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman in February 2024. This has resulted in more formal complaints being registered.
- The number of Stage 1 complaints have risen significantly by 218% (310) when comparing the 2023/24 figure of 261 with the 2024/25 figure of 571.
- Waste Services and Highways have been impacted most with a 287% (152) and 542% (103) increase in the number of Stage 1 complaints registered, respectively. All other areas have also seen an increase in Stage 1 complaints except Parking Services which showed a small decrease.

c. STAGE 2 COMPLAINTS

A Head of Service or Director or the Corporate Director for Place will aim to respond to Stage 2 complaints within 20 working days.

Table 28 - Total number of Stage 2 complaints

Service	2023/24	2024/25
Highways	3	23
Parking	7	16
Waste	10	51
Street Scene Enforcement Team (formerly Anti-Social Behaviour and Environment Team)	17	13
Green Spaces	16	13
Planning and Building Control	8	17
Total	61	133

- 118% rise in the number of Stage 2 complaints recorded when comparing the 2023/24 figure of 61 with the 2024/25 figure of 133.
- Of the 133 Stage 2 complaints, Waste Services accounted for 38% (51) of all Stage 2 complaints.

d. INVESTIGATIONS BY THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND SOCIAL CARE OMBUDSMAN

Where it appears that a Council's own investigations have not resolved the complaint, the complainant is entitled to refer their complaint to the relevant Ombudsman at any stage of the complaint process.

Table 29 - Total number of Ombudsman investigations

Service	2023/24	2024/25
Highways	3	5
Parking	7	1
Waste	1	2
Street Scene Enforcement Team (formerly Anti-Social Behaviour and Environment Team)	6	9
Green Spaces	9	4
Planning and Building Control	4	4
Libraries	0	1
Digital and Intelligence – Contact Centre	0	1
Total	30	27

- The number of complaints concluded by the Ombudsman in the above areas has fallen from 30 in 2023/24 to 27 for 2024/25. A brief note of all the investigations completed by the Ombudsmen for 2024/25 and the outcome is set out below.

Highways	Outcome of complaint
4731-7708-1351-2828 Mr X complained about the Council's failure to prevent traffic noise from the use of a metal bridge near his home. He says loose fittings and traffic exceeding the weight limit causes disturbance to his enjoyment of his home.	Did not investigate The Ombudsman did not investigate this complaint as there is insufficient evidence of fault which would warrant an investigation.
2567-5164-7128-5895 Ms X complained about the Council's decision to issue a scaffolding licence to a third-party company whom she says was not her choice of contractor. She says the company granted the licence was unsatisfactory and she was given the wrong advice about the procedure.	Did not investigate The Ombudsman did not investigate this complaint as there is insufficient evidence of fault which would warrant an investigation.
9889-7170-3206-4073 Ms X said she was unhappy that the Council declined to sell her a portion of land it owned, which was adjacent to her property. Ms X was also unhappy the Council had neglected the land, meaning overgrown trees and bushes had damaged her fence.	Did not investigate The Ombudsman did not investigate this complaint as there is no worthwhile outcome achievable by the Ombudsman in investigating this complaint.

Ms X wants the Council to maintain the land or sell it to her.	
0727-0378-7216-3011 Mr X was unhappy that the Council did not do enough to limit the impact of temporary road works in his local area, during August and September 2024. He wants the Council to do more in its role as a highway's authority.	Did not investigate The Ombudsman did not investigate this complaint because the complaint did not meet the tests in their Assessment Code on how they decide which complaints to investigate. There is also no worthwhile outcome achievable by the Ombudsman investigating this complaint
8884-3059-3434-8762 Mr Y complained the Council was in breach of its duty to maintain his road, under the Highways Act 1980. He said this was because of potholes and other structural deficiencies, and the road was a hazard to pedestrians and road users. He wanted the Council to re-surface his road.	Did not investigate The Ombudsman did not investigate this complaint as Mr Y has an alternative legal remedy to apply to the Magistrates Court for an order, requiring the Council to carry out the work, and it would be reasonable to expect him to use this alternative legal remedy.

Waste	Outcome of complaint
2878-8980-3601-1539 Mr X complained that the Council failed to quickly resolve his concerns about his bin collections and then failed to consider its responsibility under the Equality Act 2010 when he tried to log complaints about his bin collections and about a nearby planning development.	Upheld The Ombudsman found fault as there was a lack of clarity and consistency in how it managed Mr X's reasonable adjustments. The council agreed to the Ombudsman recommendation to remedy the injustice its actions caused Mr X
6140-4558-3711-8678 Ms X complained that the Council did not collect the bulky waste she paid £35 to have collected. Ms X wants a refund plus £15 to cover additional costs.	Did not investigate The Ombudsman did not investigate this complaint because there is insufficient evidence of fault causing injustice.

Street Scene Enforcement Team (formerly Anti-Social Behaviour and Environment Team)	Outcome of complaint
4918-5046-7213-6478 Mr X complained about the Council's handling of the resident's reports of noise from the flat above.	Upheld The Ombudsman found fault with the Council's communication with Mr X and made recommendations that the Council agreed to meet.
3720-0525-5703-9070 Ms Y complained that the Council did not do enough to deal with her reports of anti-social behaviour.	Partially Upheld The Ombudsman did not find any maladministration in relation to the Council's handling of the resident's reports of anti-social behaviour but felt that the complaint of the resident could have been handled better.
4079-8654-2238-4259	Not Upheld

<p>Mr X complained the Council will not accept responsibility for an area of land where children play ball games and cause a nuisance. As a result, Mr X complains the Council are failing to investigate anti-social behaviour. 2. Mr X says the behaviour is causing a disturbance and prevents him from relaxing in his own home. 3. Mr X would like the Council to take responsibility for the land and change the landscape of the land to prevent it being used for ball games.</p>	<p>The Ombudsman found no evidence of fault with the Council.</p>
<p>6170-3858-9445-3568 Mr X lives with his family in a flat with a neighbour above. He complains the Council failed to properly investigate his complaint about noise from his neighbour and says the noise nuisance happens every day for six to eight hours and is severely affecting his family and their quality of life.</p>	<p>Did not investigate The Ombudsman did not investigate this complaint as there is not enough evidence of fault in the Council's decision-making process to warrant the Ombudsman investigating. The Ombudsman also felt that it would be reasonable Mr X to provide to the Council with new information he has about a different noise type he says he is experiencing.</p>
<p>5458-3115-7458-1830 Mrs X complained about the Council's decision not to plant up an area on her road which is subject to persistent fly tipping. She also complains about the Council's decision not to take enforcement action in relation to a neighbour's boundary wall which she says is unsafe and is too high.</p>	<p>Did not investigate The Ombudsman did not investigate this complaint because there is insufficient evidence of fault by the Council to warrant an investigation.</p>
<p>0373-2732-6818-0458 Mr X complained that the Council is failing to keep the footpath on the road where he lives free from litter. He says despite the Council taking enforcement action last year, waste still accumulates there due to inadequate action, ineffective monitoring and failure to hold repeat offenders accountable.</p>	<p>Did not investigate The Ombudsman did not investigate this complaint because there is insufficient evidence of fault by the Council to warrant an investigation.</p>
<p>7221-3210-5101-1113 Mr X complained that the Council wrongly issued him a Fixed Penalty Notice for littering and has not provided evidence of the alleged offence as requested.</p>	<p>Did not investigate The Ombudsman did not investigate this complaint because Mr X can raise a defence against the issuing of the notice in court.</p>
<p>9607-3378-7026-5048</p>	<p>Did not investigate</p>

Mr X complained that the Council failed to take suitable action in relation to a neighbour's waste system installation which damaged his property.	The Ombudsman did not investigate this complaint this is because the Party Wall Act 1996 applies and the Ombudsman cannot decide on liability for property damage, which is a matter for the civil courts.
0153-9302-0376-7031 Ms X complained about how the Council dealt with her reports of antisocial behaviour by a neighbour. Ms X complains that the Council failed to properly deal with her concerns about noise and rubbish	Did not investigate The Ombudsman did not investigate this complaint because there is either insufficient evidence of fault, or because an investigation would not lead to a different outcome.

Green Spaces	Outcome of complaint
2619-6712-3973-8646 Ms X complained about how the Council dealt with her application to carry out work to a protected tree. Ms X disagrees with the Council's decision to refuse permission for the work and says she is being penalised for making a mistake when completing the application form. Ms X says she has been caused significant stress by the matter and the Council should reverse its decision to refuse the application.	Did not investigate The Ombudsman did not investigate this complaint because Ms X has appealed to the Planning Inspector.
4080-5165-7425-6110 Mr X said the Council discriminated against him when it sent him a notice to quit (NTQ) his allotment, because he had not paid any rent for several years. Mr X said this decision was wrong and he now wants the Council to allow him to return to his allotment.	Did not investigate The Ombudsman did not investigate this complaint because there is no worthwhile outcome achievable by their investigation.
2534-7498-9696-6785 Mr X complained that the Council had only offered to partially settle his claim for damages to his fence/post caused by a tree it owns and said that the full costs of his claim should be reimbursed.	Did not Investigate The Ombudsman did not investigate this complaint because it would be reasonable to expect Mr X to proceed with his claim to the courts, to determine the extent of the Council's liability and any financial remedy. The Ombudsman could not also achieve the outcomes Mr X wants.
6316-0983-5759-3457 Miss X complained that the Council refused to replace the flooring at an outdoor gym after she fell over and hurt herself.	Did not investigate The Ombudsman did not investigate this complaint because an investigation would be unlikely to find fault with the Council's actions.

Planning	Outcome of complaint
2979-4813-6796-8329	Did not investigate

<p>Mr X complained about how the Council dealt with a breach of planning control and a retrospective planning application. Mr X says the development has a significant impact on his property.</p>	<p>The Ombudsman did not investigate this complaint because they are unlikely to find fault and because the complainant had not suffered significant injustice.</p>
<p>8340-5524-6133-07037 Mr X complained that the Council refuses to install a grill or gulley around the drain outside his home.</p>	<p>Did not investigate The Ombudsman did not investigate this complaint about the Council's refusal to install a grill or gulley around the drain in the highway outside the complainant's home because there is insufficient evidence of fault in the Council's actions to justify an investigation.</p>
<p>0198-1136-5786-7064 Ms X complained that the Council has failed to take planning enforcement action against landscaping works in her neighbour's rear garden, which she believes amount to a breach of planning control by reason of the change in ground levels. Ms X says the works have caused flooding and damage to her property.</p>	<p>Did not Investigate The Ombudsman did not investigate this complaint as well as an associated freedom of information (FoI) request as there is not enough evidence of fault in the way the Council determined the enforcement case and that it is reasonable to expect the complainant to refer any FoI concerns to the Information Commissioner.</p>
<p>8524-5606-9930-3722 Mr X complained that the Council has failed to take planning enforcement action against an outbuilding at a neighbouring property being used as living accommodation. He says the use of the building impacts on his privacy.</p>	<p>Did not investigate The Ombudsman did not investigate this complaint as there was not enough evidence of fault in the way the Council reached its decision</p>

Parking	Outcome of complaint
<p>7572-3332-7740-1495 Mrs Y complained the Council issues a Penalty Charge Notice (PCN) to her, which she then paid, after which she discovered signage which she feels was incorrectly displayed and insufficient. Mrs Y feels the PCN was therefore wrongly issued in the circumstances and is seeking a refund of the £65 she paid.</p>	<p>Did not investigate The Ombudsman did not investigate this complaint as there was not enough evidence of fault to justify investigating.</p>

Libraries	Outcome of complaint
<p>5185-4981-9839-7919 Miss X said the Council were at fault because it asked her to stop an online discussion she was having with a prospective employer, at one</p>	<p>Did not investigate The Ombudsman did not investigate this complaint because there is no worthwhile outcome they could achieve by investigating.</p>

of its libraries. Miss X said because of this she missed out on a job opportunity and now wants the Council to compensate her	
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Digital and Intelligence – Contact Centre	Outcome of complaint
0161-0544-8470-5711 Mr X complained that the Council had refused his application to renew his Blue Badge by ignoring the fact that his circumstances have not changed from his previous application and ignored medical information provided to support his application.	Did not investigate The Ombudsman did not investigate this complaint as they did not see enough evidence of fault to justify an investigation.

e. COMPLIMENTS

Number of compliments recorded

Table 30 – number of compliments recorded

Service	2023/24	2024/25
Highways	3	1
Parking	9	0
Waste	7	11
Green Spaces	6	2
Street Scene Enforcement Team (formerly Anti-Social Behaviour Team)	1	1
Planning and Building Control	4	0
Total	31	15

Here's what some people have said about these services:

Waste

“I live in Swakeleys Drive Ickenham. I would just like to say thank you to the refuse collectors that deal with all our waste and recycling every Tuesday. I don't think some of us in Hillingdon realise how lucky we are with the service we receive. The team on Tuesday are great and I'd like them to know we appreciate their service.”

“Last night I forgot to put all rubbish and recycling out. I am soooooo impressed - the refuse collectors could see my bin at the side with the dustbin bag handles hanging out (I do that as it's easier for them to grab) - they took my rubbish. The garden waste was also at the side although very near the front - they took that too. Your teams are excellent. You provide a fantastic weekly service and I have been meaning to thank you for ages, but today was 'off the chart' - absolutely fantastic. I do hope you can get my thanks to them all. I always thank them verbally if I see them. Great Council ☺”

Green Spaces

The resident from xxx, Northwood called today to pass her thanks and compliments to the team who cut the grass verges in her street. She advised they were very polite to her when she spoke with them and completed their work quickly and efficiently.