

Complaints received

The table below shows the figures for the overall complaints received in 2024/25 and the previous 2023/24 figures are shown in brackets for comparison.

	Total	Chief Executive	Deputy Chief Executive	Executive Director	Monitoring Officer	Liberty Leisure Ltd
Number of Stage 1 complaints	429 (407)	326	28	73	2	0
No. of complaints investigated under Stage 2	81 (73)	74	3	4	0	0
No. of complaints determined by the Ombudsman	7 (9)	5	1	0	1	0

The Council has registered a total of 429 stage 1 complaints in the year 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025, compared to 407 in the year 2023/24. The number of complaints concluded under stage 2 of the complaints procedure is 81, compared to 73 in 2023/24, and seven complaints, compared to nine in 2023/24 have been determined by the Local Government Ombudsman and the Housing Ombudsman Service.

The Housing Ombudsman created a new Complaint Handling Code that required all social landlords to adopt from 1 April 2024. The Council adopted this Code on 1 April 2024 and all employees have been train on the purpose of the Code and effective complaint handling.

The Complaints Team continues to monitor the Council's complaint handling and regular meetings with Assistant Directors and Heads of Service are undertaken. Where issues have been identified, such as Housing Repairs, the Complaints Team works with the Assistant Director to implement improvements in areas that are required. This is further reviewed by the Housing Improvement Board (HIB). The role of the HIB is to ensure that the Housing stock and practises are fit for purpose. The Complaints Team reports to the HIB on its findings regarding complaints and the learning outcomes that have been and require implementation.

Time taken to acknowledge receipt of stage one complaints (5 working day target)

	Total	Chief Executive	Deputy Chief Executive	Executive Director	Monitoring Officer	Liberty Leisure Ltd
Number of complaints acknowledged within 5 working days	429	326	28	73	2	0
Number of complaints acknowledged over 5 working days	0	0	0	0	0	0

429 stage 1 complaints (100%) were acknowledged within the 5-day deadline.

The Council has seen an improvement in the time taken to acknowledge complaints, through continued use of electronic facilities in order to keep complainants updated as to the progress of their complaint.

Time taken to respond to stage 1 Complaints (10 working day target)

	Total	Chief Executive	Deputy Chief Executive	Executive Director	Monitoring Officer	Liberty Leisure Ltd
Less than 10 working days	407	304	28	73	2	0
Over 10 working days	22	22	0	0	0	0

407 stage 1 complaints (95%) were responded to in 10 working days. 22 (5%) took longer than 10 working days to provide a response. In these cases, the Assistant Directors and the Heads of Service/Assistant Directors are asked to write to complainants to advise that a response will take longer and to provide the complainant with an estimated timescale for completion.

Reasons for delays could include:

- Further information being required from the complainant.
- Complexity of the complaint including in-depth research required.
- Resource issues.

There has been a significant rise in damp and mould complaints being received which coincides with increased media coverage. The Housing Repairs Team reports that this increase in complaints has had a significant impact on the service being able to respond to complaints within the 10 working days.

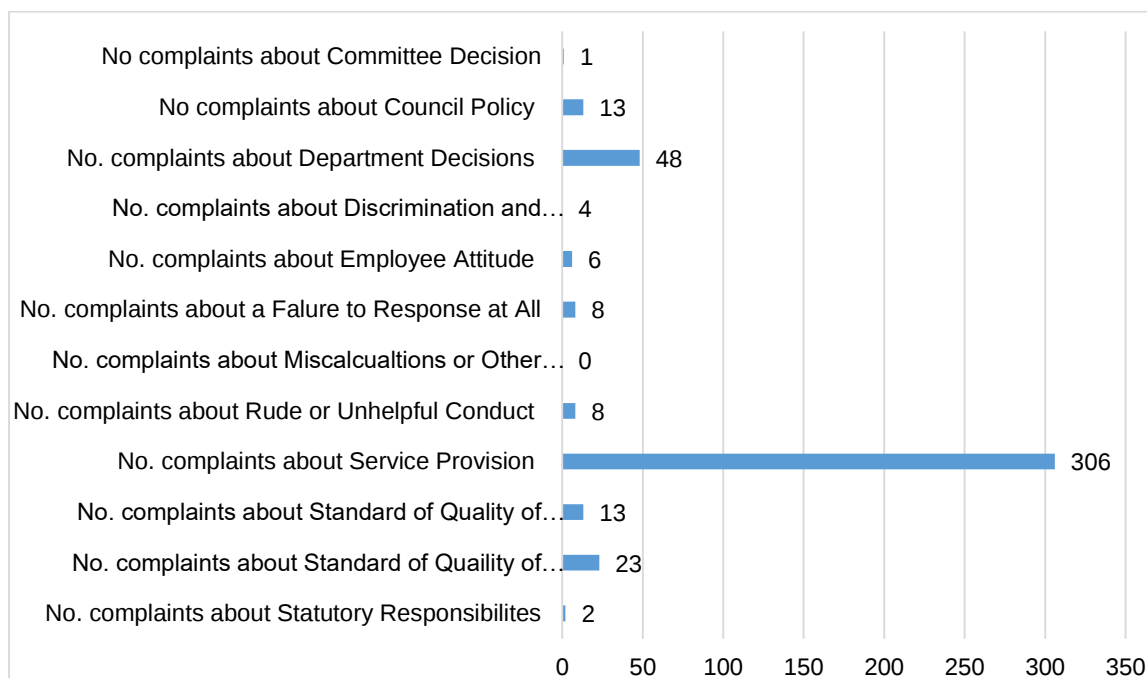
The Housing Repairs Team has been reminded by the Complaints Team of the need to contact complainants where the initial deadlines cannot be met. Furthermore, the Housing Repairs Team is provided a reminder to respond to the complainant with the full response or an extension by the Complaints Team when the 10 working day deadline is triggered.

It should be noted that the current responsiveness for stage 1 complaints within the Housing Repairs Team has improved for 2024/25 with the additional resources within the Housing Team and monitoring undertaking by the Complaints Team.

The Complaints Team pro-actively monitor the Housing Repairs Team stage 1 complaint responsiveness in order to these deadlines to be met.

Furthermore, all extensions are now approved by the relevant Heads of Service/Assistant Directors and reported to GMT bi-weekly.

What the complaints were about

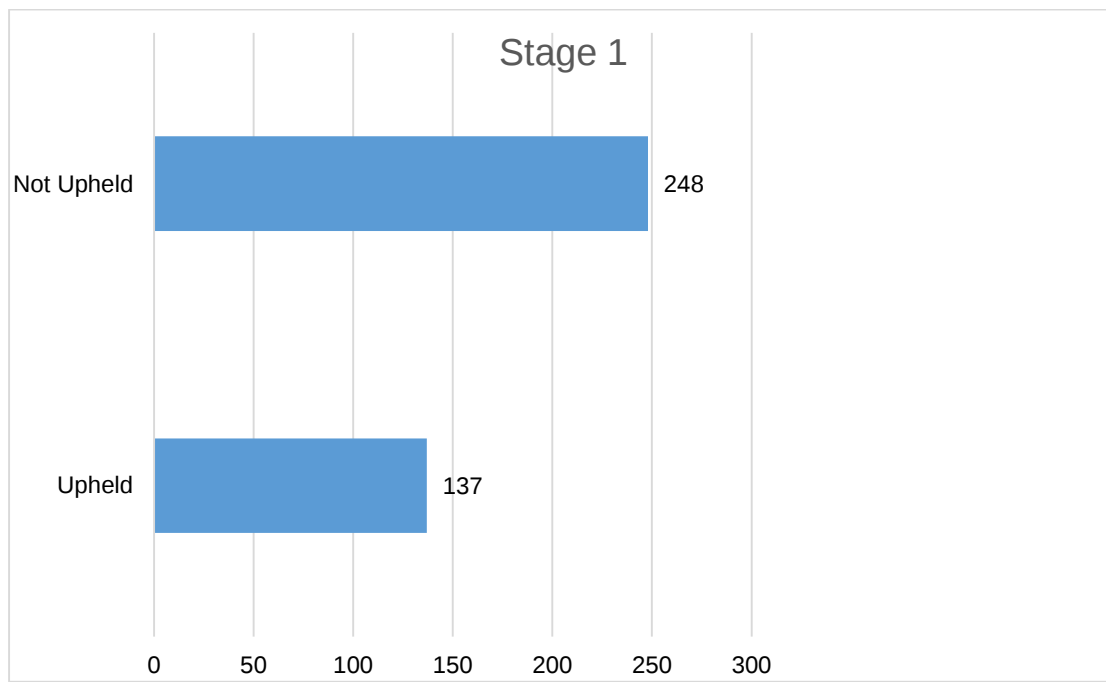


Complaints upheld

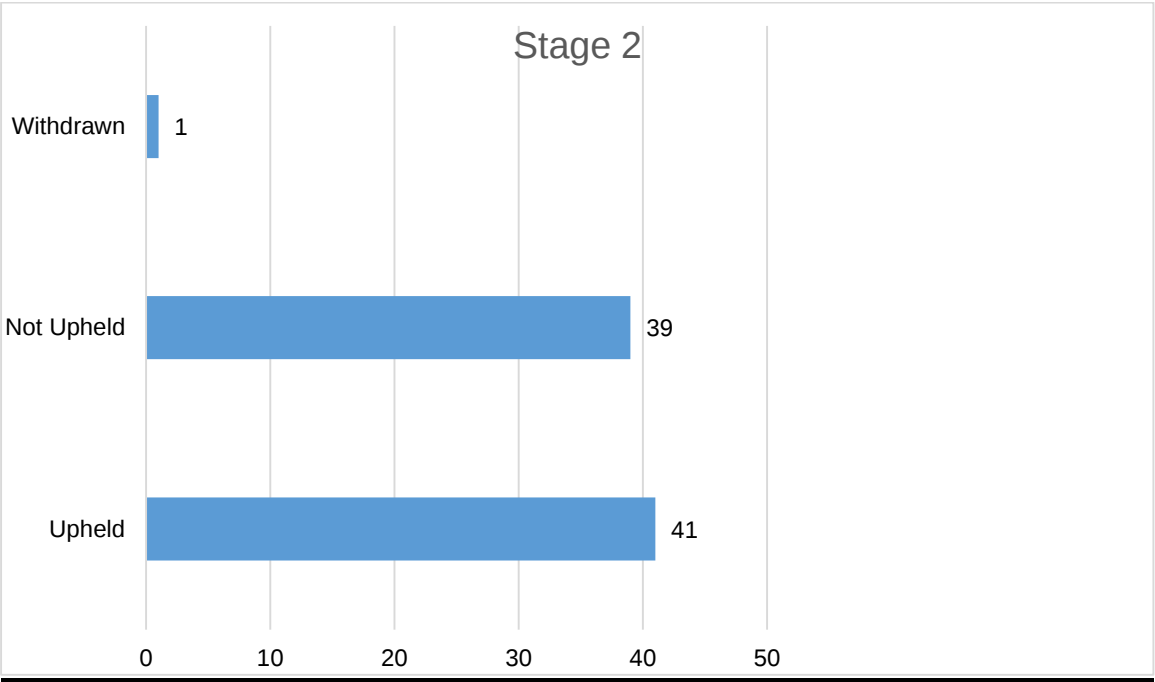
Of the 429 complaints received at stage 1, 248 were not upheld and 181 were upheld.

Stage 2 complaints saw 41 complaints being not upheld, 39 upheld and 1 withdrawn during the course of the investigation.

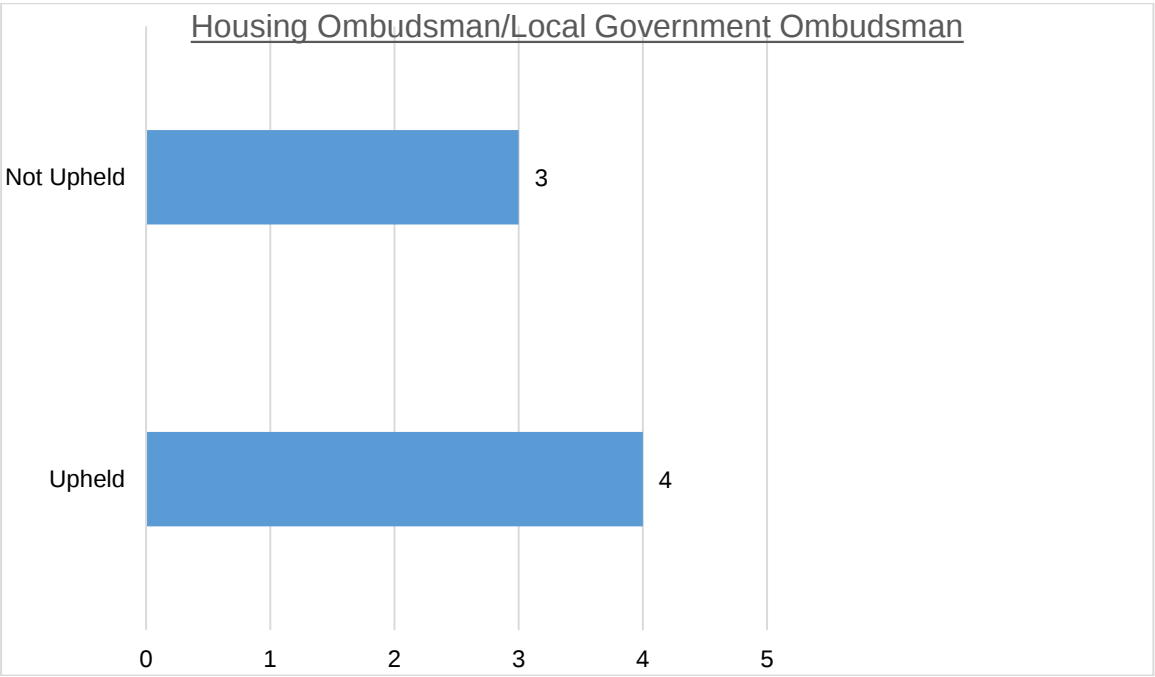
The Local Government Ombudsman and Housing Ombudsman determined that three complaint were not upheld and four upheld.

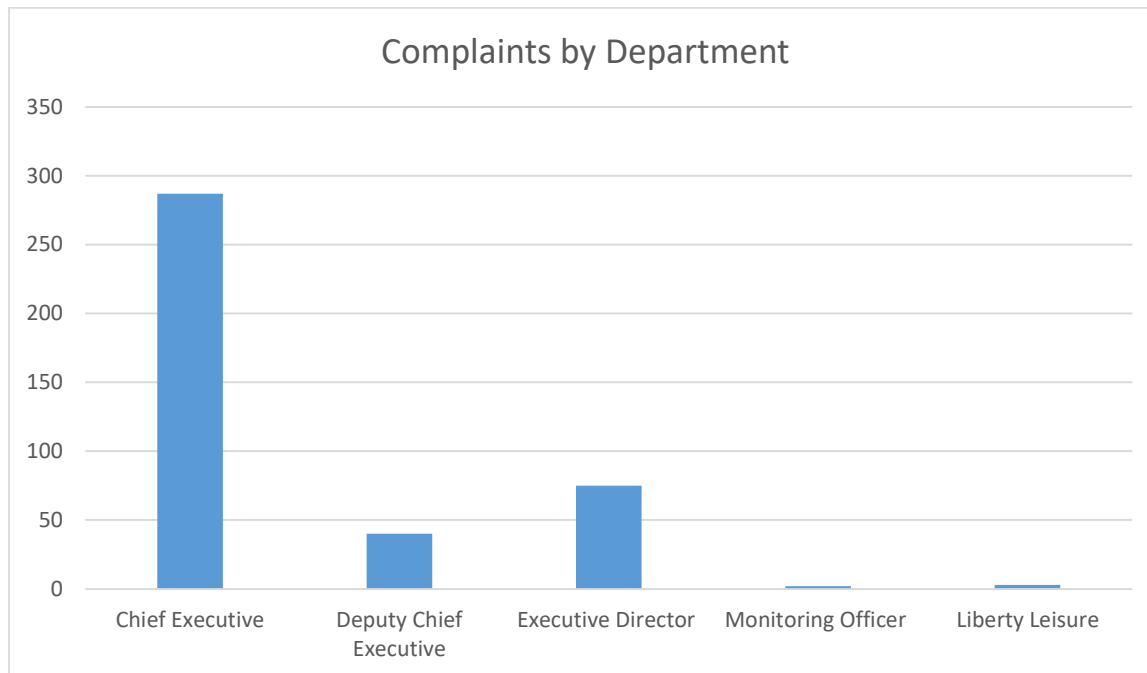
Stage 1

Stage 2



Housing Ombudsman/Local Government Ombudsman



Complaints by Department**Number of stage 2 complaints**

	Total	Chief Executive	Deputy Chief Executive	Executive Director	Monitoring Officer	Liberty Leisure
Number of Stage 2 complaints	81 (73)	74	3	4	0	0

Time taken to acknowledge to stage 2 complaints (5 working day target)

	Total	Chief Executive	Deputy Chief Executive	Executive Director	Monitoring Officer	Liberty Leisure
Acknowledged within 5 working days	81	74	3	4	0	0

Time taken to respond to stage 2 complaints (20 working day target)

	Total
Responded in 20 working days	78
Responded in more than 20 working days	3

78 complaints were investigated and responded to under stage 2 of the formal complaint procedure. 100% were acknowledged within five working days and 78 (96%) were responded to within the 20 working day timescale. All the complainants who received their responses after 20 working days were informed that there would be a delay and the reason for the delay.

Reasons for the delays include:

- Further information being required from the complainant.
- Further information being required from the Department complained about.
- Complexity of the complaint including in-depth research required.
- Resource issues.

(This list is not exhaustive)

As with stage one extensions being approved by the relevant Heads of Service/Assistant Directors, stage two extensions are now approved by the Head of Democratic Services and reported to GMT bi-weekly.

Equalities Monitoring

Of the 429 stage 1 complaints recorded, 302 were completed with some the monitoring data partially supplied.

Gender

Male – 175
Female – 254

Age groups

<17 – 1	45–59 – 87
18–24 – 25	60–64 – 36
25–29 – 34	65+ – 75
30–44 – 102	Not stated – 144

Ethnic Groups

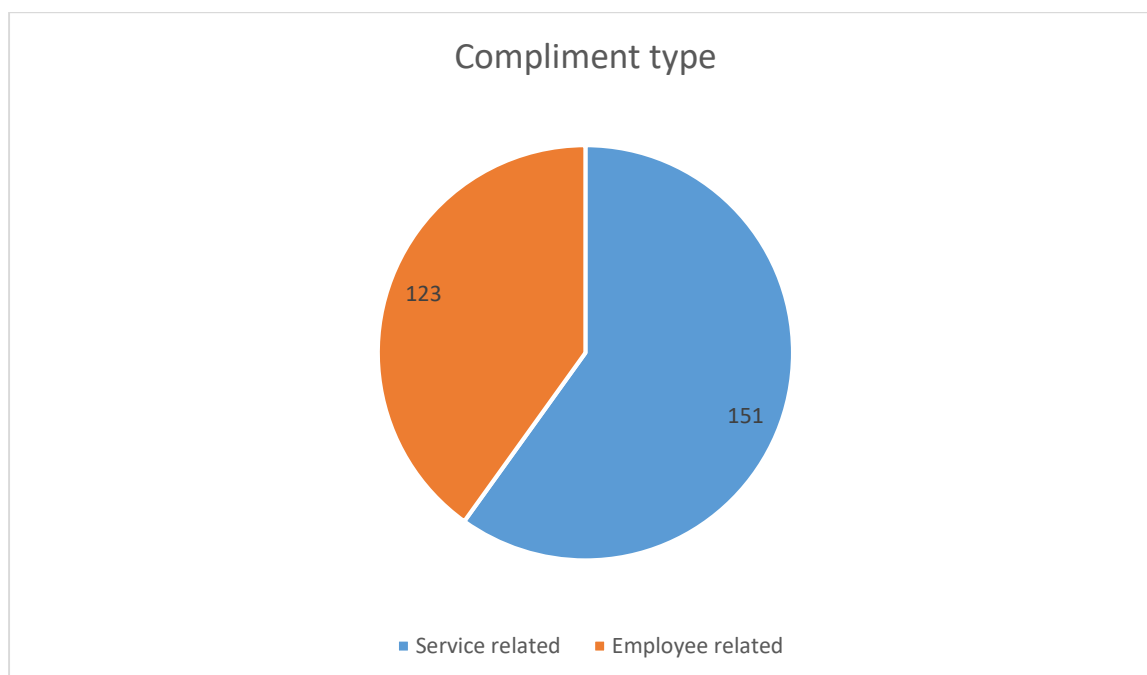
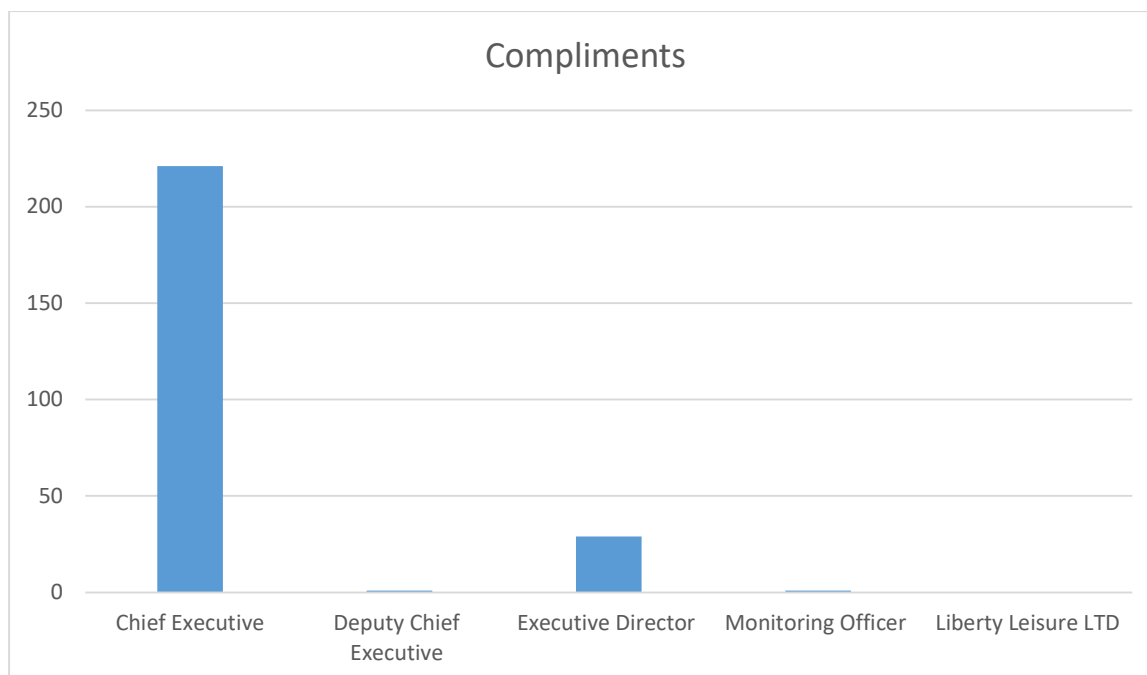
African - 3
British – 342
Caribbean - 1
Chinese - 0
Gypsy or Irish Traveller - 0
Indian – 3
Irish – 4
Other - 3
Not stated – 67
Pakistani - 6

Long term health problem that limits daily activity?

Yes – 136
No – 203
Not stated - 90

Compliments

There have been a total of 252 compliments registered in the period, 101 of which were in relation to specific employees and 151 were related to the service received.



Compliments are valuable, welcomed, and important in enabling the Council to understand that the services provided meet customers' satisfaction, provide positive feedback to employees, influence the organisational and service development and inform the Council's quality assurance.

Breakdown of Complaints and Compliments by Department and Section**Chief Executive's Department**

Service Areas	Stage 1 Complaints	Stage 2 Complaints	Ombudsman Complaints	Compliments
Communities	1	1	0	0
Development Control	34	12	2	0
Environmental Health	2	0	0	1
Housing and Income	24	3	0	81
Housing Operations	97	26	1	91
Housing Repairs	140	28	2	38
Housing Strategy	28	4	0	10
Total	326	74	5	221

Deputy Chief Executive's Department

Service Areas	Stage 1 Complaints	Stage 2 Complaints	Ombudsman Complaints	Compliments
Capital Works	13	0	0	1
Customer Services	1	1	0	0
Revenues	14	2	1	0
Total	28	3	1	1

Executive Director's Department

Service Areas	Stage 1 Complaints	Stage 2 Complaints	Ombudsman Complaints	Compliments
Administration	3	0	0	0
Bereavement	1	2	0	5
Waste and Recycling	54	2	0	13
Environment	13	0	0	11
Data Protection	2	0	0	0
Total	73	4	0	29

Monitoring Officer's Department

Service Areas	Stage 1 Complaints	Stage 2 Complaints	Ombudsman Complaints	Compliments
Democratic Services	1	0	0	1
Elections	1	0	0	0
Legal Services	0	0	1	0
Total	2	0	1	1

Liberty Leisure Ltd

Service Area	Stage 1 Complaints	Stage 2 Complaints	Ombudsman Complaints	Compliments
Bramcote Leisure Centre	0	0	0	0
Chilwell Leisure Centre	0	0	0	0
Total	0	0	0	0

Financial Settlements

	Total	Chief Execs	Deputy Chief Execs	Executive Director	Monitoring Officer	Liberty Leisure
Stage 1	3	£3,100	0	0	0	0
Stage 2	20	£22,756	£314	0	0	0
Ombudsman	5	£4,400	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	28	£30,256	£314	0	0	0

Stage 2 – Formal Complaints

The complaints provided below have been summarised in order to prevent identification of individuals.

Planning

1. Complaint against Planning

Response – 20 working days

Complaint not upheld

Complaint

The complainant contacted the Council and complained that their planning application was inappropriately refused permission.

Council's response

It was concluded that an appropriate level of service was received as the Planning Team had considered the application in line with the relevant policies.

The Planning Team has responded to the complainant's enquiries in a timely manner and had provided them with the necessary information in how to progress the application.

As concerns were raised by the Highways Authority, the Planning Team were unable to support the application until the concerns were addressed. The Planning Team had provided the complainant with these concerns and the details required to address these.

Head of Service Comments

The correct action was undertaken in line with legislation to ensure that the planning application met the standards set by the Council.

2. Complaint against Planning

Response – 20 working days

Complaint not upheld

Complaint

The complainant contacted the Council and complained that the Planning Team had approved an application that was not appropriate for the area or the covenant of the area.

Council's response

It was concluded that an appropriate level of service was received as the Planning Team had considered the developments in line with the Council's Planning Policies and national legislation.

Covenants are a civil matter and are not the responsibility of the Council to enforce.

Assistant Director Comments

The correct action was undertaken in line with legislation to ensure that the planning application met the standards set by the Council. The Council is not responsible for covenants and these are not a material planning considerations.

3. Complaint against Planning (this complaint relates to the one but was submitted by another neighbour in the area of the development)

Response – 20 working days

Complaint not upheld

Complaint

The complainant contacted the Council and complained that the Planning Team had approved an application that was not appropriate for the area or the covenant of the area.

Council's response

It was concluded that an appropriate level of service was received as the Planning Team had considered the developments in line with the Council's Planning Policies and national legislation.

Covenants are a civil matter and are not the responsibility of the Council to enforce.

Assistant Director Comments

The correct action was undertaken in line with legislation to ensure that the planning application met the standards set by the Council. The Council are not responsible for covenants and these are not a material planning considerations.

4. Complaint against Planning

Response – 20 working days

Complaint upheld

Complaint

The complainant contacted the Council and complained that there had been a lack of action to investigate an issue of boundary encroachment and there had been a lack of communication from the Planning Team.

Council's response

It was concluded that the complainant had not received an appropriate level of service due to a delay in correspondence being issued from the Planning Team.

An apology was offered to the complainant.

The Planning Team had determined that the boundary encroachment was a civil matter and that action cannot be taken by the Council. It was recommended that the complainant

seek independent legal advice which can be obtained from the Citizens Advice Bureau or from a solicitor that specialises in land dispute cases.

Assistant Director Comments

The Council recognises the inconvenience caused by not correctly corresponding with the complainant. Officers were reminded of their responsibility to correctly communicate with individuals.

Complaint Team Recommendations/actions

- The Planning Team had been reminded of its responsibility to return correspondence in a timely manner.

5. Complaint against Planning

Response – 20 working days

Complaint not upheld

Complaint

The complainant contacted the Council and complained that the Planning Department did not make reasonable adjustment to assist them when requesting information.

Council's response

The Council had provided the complainant with detailed explanations, as requested, as part of the complainant's neuro divergence. The correspondence was polite and factual and adjustments were made when the complainant notified the Council of their neuro divergence.

Assistant Director Comments

The Planning Department had correctly supported the complainant during their correspondence.

6. Complaint against Planning

Response – 20 working days

Complaint upheld

Complaint

The complainant contacted the Council and complained that they had not been notified of an amendment to a planning application.

Council's response

It was concluded that the Planning Team had correctly notified the neighbouring properties of the development and its subsequent amended plans with the correct time frames.

The Officers had determined that the amended planning application did not require a full resubmitted application as the amendment was not a large departure from the original application.

Statutory timeframes for the consultation for the original application had been provided correctly. Furthermore, when receiving the amended application, the Planning Team provided an additional consultation for the neighbouring properties. The Council is only required to consult on the first occasion. Amended plans do not have a statutory requirement for the Council to re-consult. However, the Council undertook this process.

As no objections were received during either consultation periods, the Council deemed the application to be acceptable.

Assistant Director Comments

The Planning Department had correctly assessed the planning application.

7. Complaint against Planning

Response – 20 working days

Complaint not upheld

Complaint

The complainant contacted the Council and complained that the Planning Teams online notification system was not working correctly, the site notices for a planning application were not correctly advertised and incorrect information was being used in the Planning Committee reports for HMOs.

Council's response

It was found that the Council had acted appropriately when displaying the site notice and notifying the statutory consultees adjacent to the site.

Furthermore, the Planning Team had correctly applied the Houses in Multiple Occupation Supplementary Planning Document to the Planning Committee report. The Planning Committee report had included the percentage of Houses in Multiple Occupation as required.

The Council recognises that the website was not clear in the functionality of the notification system, in that it does not clearly explain that a notification would only be sent when an application had changed status and not when a document has been uploaded.

The Planning Team were currently exploring the option to update the wording with the supplier in order to make this clear.

Assistant Director Comments

The Planning Department had correctly displayed the site notice in line with statutory guidance and were correctly using the HMO information as stipulated by the Multiple Occupation Supplementary Planning Document.

8. Complaint against Planning

Response – 20 working days

Complaint not upheld

Complaint

The complainant contacted the Council and complained that there had been a lack of action to undertaken enforcement measure against a neighbouring property.

Council's response

The Council had actively investigated the issues that had been raised and had provided the complainant with the correct advice.

As the development, for which complainant had raised the enforcement issue against does not have enforceable conditions attached to it, the Council was unable to take action.

Furthermore, the Environmental Health Team have been in regular contact with the complainant regarding the noise issues and had provided the correct advice by requesting that diary sheets are filled in and returned in order to monitor the noise. As the complainant did not provide the diary sheets, the Environmental Health Team were unable to take any further action.

Assistant Director Comments

The Council correctly investigated the reported breach of planning conditions.

9. Complaint against Planning

Response – 20 working days

Complaint not upheld

Complaint

The complainant contacted the Council and complained that there had been a lack of action to undertake enforcement measures against a neighbouring property.

Council's response

The Council had actively investigated the issues raised and had provided the correct advice. The Council had determined that no further action was required as the development would likely have been approved if the correct application had been submitted. Furthermore, it was determined that the structure did not affect the complainant's amenity and the complainant's local Councillors did not wish to pursue this matter following consultation.

The Council had taken the correct action while investigating this issue.

Assistant Director Comments

The Council correctly investigated the reported breach of planning conditions.

10. Complaint against Planning

Response – 20 working days

Complaint not upheld

Complaint

The complainant contacted the Council and complained that the Council had altered a planning method statement resulting in the change of delivery times permitted at a development site.

Council's response

There was no information to suggest that the Council had altered the planning method statement. The revised statement had been provided by the applicant with the revised wording. The Planning Team had considered this application and statement and had concluded with their professional judgement that the statement is acceptable. The wording was created or changed by the Council.

Assistant Director Comments

The Planning Team appropriately considered the revised statement. These statements are not altered by the Planning Team but are considered when they are submitted by an applicant.

11. Complaint against Planning

Response – 20 working days

Complaint not upheld

Complaint

The complainant contacted the Council and complained that the Planning Team had failed to achieve full compliance with regards to conditions 7, 8 and 12 prior to the sale and occupation of the dwellings.

Council's response

The responsibility for the discharge of the planning conditions rests with the developer. It is the responsibility of the Council to undertake action to ensure compliance with these conditions. On this occasion, the Council are currently undertaking works to ensure the developers comply with these conditions through its Planning Enforcement Team.

The exact nature of the works could not be confirmed to the complainant as there is a potential for this information to be used as part of a legal case.

Assistant Director Comments

The Planning Enforcement Team had correctly started the investigation into the failure to achieve compliance into the conditions when this was reported. This issue requires thorough investigation and the details cannot be confirmed due their legal nature.

12. Complaint against Planning

Response – 20 working days

Complaint not upheld

Complaint

The complainant contacted the Council and complained that the Planning Team had failed to make reasonable adjustments toward their neuro divergence and deliberately delayed issuing responses toward their enquiries.

Council's response

The Council had provided detailed explanations, as requested, as part of the complainant's neuro divergence. The correspondence had been polite and factual and adjustments were made when notification was provided to the Council regarding the neuro divergence.

There was no information to suggest that the Council have purposefully delayed any of the correspondence being sent. All correspondence was issued within one to two days.

Assistant Director Comments

The Planning Team had correctly made adjustments to support the complainant's neuro divergence upon being alerted to this. All correspondence was issued in a timely manner.

Housing Repairs**1. Complaint against Housing Repairs**

Response – 30 working days

Complaint upheld

Complaint

The complainant contacted the Council and complained that the Council had left them with a gas leak.

Council's response

It was concluded that an appropriate level of service was not received as the Council's telephone systems did not allow the complainant to report the occurrence of a gas leak at the property in a timely manner.

While they were able to report the gas leak through their Independent Living Coordinator, the initial contact with the Council failed due to the Out of Hours Service not connecting the telephone call and the Housing Repairs phone lines being busy.

The Council recognised that this caused distress and uncertainty during a stressful period of the gas leak.

While a gas leak occurred at the property, and the boiler was subsequently isolated by Cadent, the two following checks undertaken by the Housing Repairs Team did not find any faults with the boiler or that a leak had occurred from it.

Due to the conflicting information from Cadent and the Housing Repairs Team, the Council were unable to verify the exact source of the gas leak. However, subsequent checks have confirmed that there was no longer a gas leak at the property.

The Council offered the complainant £250 for the failure to connect to the Out of Hours service. **This was not accepted.**

Assistant Director Comments

The Council recognises the inconvenience caused by not being able to connect to the Out-of-Hour's service. Several inspections were undertaken to the boiler following the report of the leak, but no evidence could be found that the boiler was leaking or faulty.

2. Complaint against Housing Repairs

Response – 20 working days

Complaint upheld

Complaint

The complainant contacted the Council and complained that their garage was in a state of disrepair and had not been repaired despite being reported.

Council's response

It was concluded that an appropriate level of service was not received as the Council did not take a proactive approach towards offering an alternative garage and the communication from the Housing Repairs Team regarding the repairs had been substandard.

The Council's records indicate that the garage was left in a state of good repair when the tenancy began, upon reporting issues of water ingress, the Housing Repairs Team attended the garage in timely manner to inspect and repair the issues that were reported.

However, while the Housing Repairs Team attended the garage in a timely manner, there was a failure to identify that the walls and mortar required repair in the first visit, which resulted in delays in the correct repairs being undertaken.

Furthermore, while the complainant had been offered a temporary garage, the Home Ownership Team should have identified sooner that a temporary transfer of the garage was necessary due to the water ingress and the difficulties encountered in undertaking the

full repair of the garage due to the private homeowner's shed backing up to the wall that required repairing.

A fund of £120.18 was issued to the complainant for their garage rent while the garage was unusable, and an additional £180 compensation was offered and accepted.

Assistant Director Comments

The Council recognises the inconvenience caused by not correctly identifying the repairs in the first instance and not identifying the need to undertake a temporary transfer of the garage sooner.

3. Complaint against Housing Repairs

Response – 20 working days

Complaint upheld

Complaint

The complainant contacted the Council and complained that the Housing Repairs Team did not attend a scheduled appointment.

Council's response

It was concluded that an appropriate level of service was not received as the Housing Repairs Team did not attend the property for a scheduled appointment. Furthermore, the Housing Repairs Team did not correctly notify the complainant that they were unable to attend this repair.

Assistant Director Comments

The Council recognises the inconvenience caused by not correctly attending the appointment in the first instance. The repair was rescheduled and undertaken correctly following this notification.

Complaint Team Recommendations/actions

- The Housing Repairs Team has been reminded to provide correspondence to individuals where delays in works arise.
- The Housing Repairs Team has been reminded to attend appointments when these have been scheduled.

4. Complaint against Housing Repairs

Response – 20 working days

Complaint upheld

Complaint

The complainant contacted the Council and complained that there had been a delay to repair an issue of damp and mould at their property.

Council's response

It was concluded that an appropriate level of service was not received as there were delays in the Housing Repairs Team undertaking repairs to the property's soffits and fascias.

While it was identified by the Council's contractor, Baggaley and Jenkins, that it would be beneficial to repair the soffits and fascias, this was not correctly booked by the Housing Repairs Team.

A further delay occurred in repairing the soffits and fascias when an asbestos survey was delayed.

The complainant was offered £500 compensation and an apology. However, **this was not accepted.**

Assistant Director Comments

The Council recognises the inconvenience caused by delaying the repairs to the soffits and fascias.

Complaint Team Recommendations/actions

- The Housing Repairs Team has been reminded of their responsibility to ensure that works identified by external contractors are promptly undertaken.
- The Housing Repairs Team has been reminded of their responsibility to undertake actions identified during the complaint process.
- Managers have been reminded of the importance of ensuring that employees undertake actions identified during the complaint process, and that they should be monitoring this.
- The Housing Repairs Team has been reminded to provide correspondence to individuals where delays in works arise.

5. Complaint against Housing Repairs

Response – 20 working days

Complaint not upheld

Complaint

The complainant contacted the Council and complained that the Housing Repairs Team had not repaired an issue of cracked plaster at their property.

Council's response

It was concluded that an appropriate level of service was received as the Council records indicate that the plastering in the rear bedroom was sound and had not de-bonded.

As the plaster had not de-bonded, no work was required to repair the plaster. Furthermore, as the Right to Buy process had been started, the Council is no longer responsible for routine repairs at the property.

Assistant Director Comments

The Housing Repairs Team attended the property promptly and identified that the plaster did not require any work as it was sound. Individuals that start the Right to Buy process become responsible for the repairs of the property and the complainant was correctly informed of this.

6. Complaint against Housing Repairs

Response – 20 working days

Complaint upheldComplaint

The complainant contacted the Council and complained that an issue of decorating an area affected by damp and mould was not undertaken correctly.

Council's response

It was concluded that the complainant had not received an appropriate level of service as the Housing Repairs Team incorrectly informed them that maintenance of the works to the paint in their bathroom was their responsibility.

While the work to repaint the bathroom following the plaster repairs was carried out by the Council's contractor, this was not undertaken correctly as a mist coat was not applied. By not applying a mist coat, this has caused the paint applied to bubble and peel.

Furthermore, the Housing Repairs Team had incorrectly informed the complainant that the painting was their responsibility to rectify despite being undertaken on behalf of the Council.

An apology was offered and works were undertaken to correctly paint the bathroom.

The complainant was offered and accepted £500 compensation for the issues highlighted above.

Assistant Director Comments

The Council recognises the inconvenience caused by not correctly undertaking the works in the first instance. The Housing Repairs Team were reminded of their responsibility to correct assess and book works undertaken by contractors.

Complaint Team Recommendations/actions

- The Housing Repairs Team has been reminded of their responsibility to correctly identify repairs in the first instance. This includes inspecting any records of previous repairs undertaken by the Council or on behalf of the Council.
- The Council's contractors have been reminded of their responsibility to undertake works correctly in the first instance.
- The Housing Repairs Team has been instructed to attend your property to remedy the painting works.

7. Complaint against Housing Repairs

Response – 30 working days. An extension was required to a stage 2 complaint due to the extensive information relating an individual's health issues.

Complaint upheld

Complaint

The complainant contacted the Council and complained that an issue of damp and mould was not correctly prioritised despite their disability. Furthermore, the offer of a decant property while the damp works were undertaken was not appropriate for their needs.

Council's response

It was concluded that the complainant had not received an appropriate level of service as the Housing Repairs Team had delayed several repairs to the damp and mould at the property.

While inspections and works were undertaken, there were delays in works being booked and subsequently completed. Furthermore, despite six separate reports of damp and mould at the property from 2021, the Housing Repairs Team failed to identify that the damp proof course had failed until 2024.

The Council recognised that having to report damp and mould on several occasions is not acceptable service delivery. A stock condition survey was being undertaken to review all Council properties for damp and mould, and this programme has been expedited. Any issues of damp and mould are then reported to the Housing Repairs Team and works are booked in to be completed in a timely manner.

Furthermore, the Council's Change Delivery Manager was reviewing the Housing Repairs Team's damp and mould processes to ensure that these are fit for purpose and align with the anticipated "Awaab's Law".

The Housing Repairs Team had correctly followed the decant process to enable the major works to be undertaken at the property, and booked a disabled access room and agreed to pay for any expenses towards the complainant's food cost during the decant. However, the complainant remained unhappy with the quality of the accommodation provided. This resulted in the complainant booking an alternative hotel while the works were undertaken.

The Council considered this aspect of the complaint, particularly the complainant's vulnerabilities and the length of time the Council took to identify the correct repairs to their property, and agreed to reimburse them for reasonable expenses toward their food, travel costs and the alternative stay at the Travelodge they had booked.

An apology was offered and the complainant was offered and accepted £4,776.98 compensation for the issues highlighted above.

Assistant Director Comments

The Council recognises the inconvenience caused by not correctly identifying the extent of the works in the first instance. Reminders and additional systems have been introduced to mitigate this issue.

Complaint Team Recommendations/actions

- The Housing Repairs Team has been reminded of the responsibility to correctly and promptly identify and diagnose repairs in the first instance. This includes inspecting any records of previous repairs undertaken by the Council or on behalf of the Council.
- The Housing Repairs Team has been reminded of the responsibility to undertake works correctly and promptly in the first instance.
- The Housing Repairs Team has been reminded of the responsibility to prioritise repairs where an individual has vulnerabilities that are directly affected by the necessary works.
- The Housing Repairs Team has been instructed to include any vulnerabilities in complaint responses that have a direct effect on an individual's complaint during the stage 1 complaint process.
- The Housing Repairs Team has been instructed to continue and expedite stock condition surveys at all Council properties to determine if damp and mould is present.
- The Change Delivery Manager has been instructed to conduct a review the Council's Damp and Mould policies to ensure that they are fit for purpose and align with the anticipated "Awaab's Law".
- The Housing Repairs Team has been reminded of their responsibility to follow the repair timeframes as stated in the Housing Repairs Policy and the Damp and Mould Policy.

8. Complaint against Housing Repairs

Response – 20 working days

Complaint not upheld**Complaint**

The complainant contacted the Council and complained that there had been a lack of action to investigate an of property subsidence.

Council's response

It was concluded that the complainant had received an appropriate level of service as the Housing Repairs Teams had correctly attended the property review the issues of subsidence in a timely manner.

The Council had routinely inspected the property when the issues had been raised with its potential subsidence. A survey was undertaken by a chartered surveyor and it was noted that the subsidence was minimal. As a result, the Council undertook further investigative works through a soil sample and an arboriculture assessment.

Further assessments were carried out by the Housing Repairs Team using Tell Tales and no further subsidence was reported.

Assistant Director Comments

The Housing Repairs Team had correctly investigated the issue of subsidence in a timely manner.

9. Complaint against Housing Repairs

Response – 20 working days

Complaint not upheld

Complaint

The complainant contacted the Council and complained that there had been a lack of action to investigate a leak at their property.

Council's response

It was concluded that the complainant had received an appropriate level of service as the Housing Repairs Team repaired their boiler leak in timely manner when it was reported.

While the leak had been initially reported, the appointment to review the leak was cancelled by the complainant. This was reorganised and repaired correctly in the follow up appointment.

Assistant Director Comments

The Housing Repairs Team had correctly investigated the issue of the boiler leak in a timely manner.

10. Complaint against Housing Repairs

Response – 20 working days

Complaint not upheld

Complaint

The complainant contacted the Council and complained that there had been a lack of action to stop their gutters becoming blocked.

Council's response

It was concluded that the complainant had received an appropriate level of service as the Housing Repairs Team had attended the property in a timely manner to clear the gutters when these have been reported.

The Housing Repairs Team had undertaken works to mitigate the leaves entering the guttering by maintaining the tree and by altering the gutter height to allow the water to flow freely.

Assistant Director Comments

The Housing Repairs Team had correctly investigated the issue of the blocked gutters in a timely manner.

11. Complaint against Housing Repairs

Response – 20 working days

Complaint not upheld

Complaint

The complainant contacted the Council and complained that there had been a lack of action to investigate an issue of cracking plaster.

Council's response

It was concluded that the complainant had received an appropriate level of service as the Housing Repairs Team had attended their property in a timely manner to review the cracks in their wall.

The Housing Repairs Team had undertaken two separate investigations and had found that the plaster was sound with no signs of de-bonding. The Council's records indicate that there were no signs of damage to the wall to suggest that this was moving.

Assistant Director Comments

The Housing Repairs Team promptly investigated the issues of the cracked plaster and no further works were identified.

12. Complaint against Housing Repairs

Response – 20 working days

Complaint not upheld

Complaint

The complainant contacted the Council and complained that there had been a lack of action to investigate an issue of damaged flooring and that they had been treated in a discriminatory way due to their sexuality.

Council's response

It was concluded that the complainant had received an appropriate level of service as the Housing Repairs Team visited the property promptly when it was reported and that further works were required by Council's contractor.

Upon receiving the report that the flooring required additional works, the Housing Repairs Team visited the property on the same day and confirmed that a decant was required in order for the works to be completed.

There was no evidence to suggest that the complainant was treated in a discriminatory way.

Assistant Director Comments

The Housing Repairs Team promptly investigated the issues with the complainant's flooring. The Council takes its responsibilities toward discrimination seriously and employees were required to complete training to ensure that individuals were treated fairly and with respect.

13. Complaint against Housing Repairs

Response – 20 working days

Complaint not upheld

Complaint

The complainant contacted the Council and complained that their neighbour had recently had their kitchen and bathroom upgraded but they did not.

Council's response

It was concluded that the complainant had received an appropriate level of service as the Housing Repairs Team had attended their property and determined that the kitchen and bathroom were in a serviceable and good condition. The Housing Repairs Team had confirmed that these do not require replacement at this time.

Assistant Director Comments

The Housing Repairs Team had correctly assessed that the kitchen and bathroom did not require replacement and informed the complainant of this.

14. Complaint against Housing Repairs

Response – 20 working days

Complaint upheld

Complaint

The complainant contacted the Council to report that a lamp post was not working. The repair took more than eight weeks to expedite and there was a lack of response from the Repairs Team.

Council's response

It was concluded that the tenant did not receive an appropriate level of service as the Housing Repairs Team unreasonably delayed the repairing of the lamp post.

While the Housing Repairs Team correctly received the reports of the lamp post requiring repairing, delays occurred due to several of the appointments being missed by the Housing Repairs Team and the subsequent electrical contractor.

The Housing Repairs Team did not inform the tenant of these delays, nor did they inform them of rearranged appointments.

An apology for this was issued along with compensation of £250.

Assistant Director Comments

The Council recognises the inconvenience caused by not correctly undertaking the works in the first instance. The Housing Repairs Team were reminded of their responsibility to correct assess and book works undertaken by contractors.

Complaint Team Recommendations/actions

- The Housing Repairs Team has been reminded of their responsibility to ensure that external contractors promptly undertake actions requested.
- The Housing Repairs Team has been reminded of their responsibility to return correspondence in a timely manner.
- The Housing Repairs Team has been reminded of their responsibility to undertake actions identified during the complaint process.
- Managers have been reminded of the importance of ensuring that employees undertake actions identified during the complaint process, and that they should be monitoring this.
- The Housing Repairs Team has been reminded to provide correspondence to individuals where delays in works arise.

15. Complaint against Housing Repairs

Response – 20 working days

Complaint upheld

Complaint

The complainant contacted the Council and complained that there had been a lack of action to repair a roof leak at a block flats.

Council's response

It was noted that there had been unreasonable delays in the Capital Works and Housing Repairs Teams undertaking and completing the necessary works and keeping the complainant updated on their completion.

These delays occurred due to the Council not progressing the works or monitoring their completion to ensure that they were undertaken in a timely manner. Furthermore, works that were identified as part of the complaint were not undertaken.

During the stage 2 complaint process, the Council had since procured a contractor to repair the flat roof. As part of the complaint, the Council had agreed to prioritise the complainant's block and repair this first as it is the most affected by the leaking flat roof. The Council would continue to monitor the progress of the repair by undertaking weekly site visits to the block.

The Council would further ensure that the complainant was communicated to in a timely manner should there be any developments or updates. The Head of Housing and the Modernisation Manager had agreed to be the complainant's points of contact for these updates.

Furthermore, the complainant was offered and accepted £2,000 compensation.

Assistant Director Comments

The Council recognises the inconvenience caused by agreeing to undertake the works and then delaying them. The Housing Repairs and Capital Works Team had been reminded of their responsibility in booking and completing works in a timely manner.

Complaint Team Recommendations/actions

- The responsibility to appropriately communicate with tenants/complainants.
- To accurately log necessary works in a reasonable period and to prioritise repairs where necessary.
- To monitor all works to ensure that they completed in a reasonable timeframe whether being completed by the Council or referred to our Contractors.
- To keep the tenant/complainant updated of any issue that would delay the completion of the works.
- To action and monitor complaints, within agreed timeframes until they are satisfactorily concluded.

16. Complaint against Housing Repairs

Response – 30 working days

Complaint upheld

Complaint

The complainant contacted the Council and complained that there had been a lack of action to repair a garden that had been reallocated to them.

Council's response

It was found that delays had occurred due to the Council delaying the inputting of the works on to the Housing Repairs system and incorrectly passing the works to an incorrect contractor to complete repairs.

This was further exacerbated by the Housing Repairs Team not following up on the completion of these repairs despite them being registered as part of the complainant's stage 1 complaint. The Housing Repairs Team acknowledged that the repairs were not entered on the system for an extended period of time or monitored to ensure their completion. Furthermore, the full requirements of the inspection that took place at the complainant's property were not correctly undertaken. This resulted in a further delay in the Housing Repairs Team undertaking the necessary works.

A full inspection of the complainant's property was subsequently undertaken to identify the full extent of the work needed to be complete the issues raised.

The complainant was offered and accepted £1,750 compensation.

Assistant Director Comments

The Council recognises the inconvenience caused by agreeing to undertake the works and then delaying them. The Housing Repairs had been reminded of their responsibility in booking and completing works in a timely manner.

Complaint Team Recommendations/actions

- The responsibility to appropriately communicate with tenants/complainants.
- To accurately log necessary works in a reasonable period and to prioritise repairs where necessary.
- To monitor all works to ensure that they completed in a reasonable timeframe whether being completed by the Council or referred to our Contractors.
- To keep the tenant/complainant updated of any issue that would delay the completion of the works.
- To action and monitor complaints, within agreed timeframes until they are satisfactorily concluded.
- Increase checks, by an appropriate manager, on actions identified as part of the complaints process to ensure that these are completed in a timely manner.
- The Housing Department have undertaken a self-assessment against the Housing Ombudsman's Record Keeping Guidance. The Council has implement actions to ensure that records are regularly monitored and updated.

17. Complaint against Housing Repairs

Response – 20 working days

Complaint upheld

Complaint

The complainant contacted the Council and complained that the damp proofing previously undertaken by the Council had been ineffective.

Council's response

The Council had undertaken inspections to the complainant's property in a timely manner to review the effectiveness of the damp proof works. However, there was a delay in completing the works to the door may have potentially exacerbated the damp issue.

Despite the recommendation provided by the Council's contractor, Baggaley and Jenkins, to ensure that the front door is water tight, the Council had failed to undertake this work. While the Housing Repairs Team attempted to remedy the issue but access could not be made to the property, there were no records to suggest that this was followed up or a return visit was arranged.

This has caused a 9-month delay in the door being repaired.

The complainant was offered and accepted £1,974 compensation.

Assistant Director Comments

The Council recognises the inconvenience caused by agreeing to undertake the works and then delaying them. The Housing Repairs had been reminded of their responsibility in booking and completing works in a timely manner.

Complaint Team Recommendations/actions

- The responsibility to effectively communicate with tenants/complainants, especially where delays are anticipated or have occurred.
- To accurately log necessary works in a reasonable period and to prioritise repairs where necessary.
- To monitor all works to ensure that they completed in a reasonable timeframe whether being completed by the Council or referred to our Contractors.
- To keep the tenant/complainant updated of any issue that would delay the completion of the works.

18. Complaint against Housing Repairs

Response – 20 working days

Complaint upheld**Complaint**

The complainant contacted the Council and complained that the Housing Repairs Team had failed to repair a leak at a neighbouring property which had caused damage to their property.

Council's response

It was found that there had been delays in the Council inspecting, and procuring, the necessary works from a contractor to repair the leak at the neighbour's property and also repairing the damage caused at complainant's property.

These delays occurred due to the Council not attending an inspection despite it being correctly scheduled. This resulted in the Council delaying the works necessary to repair the leak at the neighbouring property and repairing the damage caused by the leak.

Furthermore, the Housing Repairs Team delayed procuring a contractor to repair the bathroom leak at the neighbour's property. Part of the planned works were also to repair the damage caused to complainant's property by the leak, and as a consequence these were also delayed.

This delay occurred due the Housing Repairs Team not approving the quote for the works in a timely manner. This further delayed the repairs to the properties.

The complainant was offered and accepted £1,000 compensation.

Assistant Director Comments

The Council recognises the inconvenience caused by agreeing to undertake the works and then delaying them. The Housing Repairs had been reminded of their responsibility in booking and completing works in a timely manner.

Complaint Team Recommendations/actions

- The responsibility to effectively communicate with complainants, especially where delays are anticipated or have occurred.
- To accurately log necessary works in a reasonable period and to prioritise repairs where necessary.
- To monitor all works to ensure that they are completed in a reasonable timeframe, whether being completed by the Council, or referred to Contractors.
- Additional training has been provided to the Housing Department regarding record keeping, complaint handling and monitoring the outcome of complaints. The Housing Repairs Team are required to actively monitor any repairs scheduled as part of complaints to ensure their completion following this training
- The Housing Department has undertaken a self-assessment against the Housing Ombudsman's Record Keeping Guidance. The Council has implemented actions to ensure that records are regularly monitored and updated.
- The Housing Repairs Team has since updated its process for logging repairs. This includes, giving Housing Repairs Inspectors allocated times for logging works to ensure that these are done promptly.

19. Complaint against Housing Repairs

Response – 20 working days

Complaint not upheld

Complaint

The complainant contacted the Council and complained that the Housing Repairs Team had not repaired a roof tile at a neighbouring property which was causing their property to become damp.

Council's response

It was found that the Council has actively investigated the roof and the damp at the complainant's property.

The Council had attended the property on multiple occasions to inspect the damp and mould.

It had been identified that the damp and mould at the property was not being caused by the missing roof tile and this may be linked to the guttering. It was noted during a visit to the property that the complainant's guttering had vegetation within it and this might be the source of the damp and mould. As a private home owner, the clearance of the guttering would be their responsibility.

Assistant Director Comments

The Housing Repairs Team had correctly investigated and notified the complainant of the necessary works to rectify the damp at their property. As a private homeowner, it remains their responsibility to maintain their property.

20. Complaint against Housing Repairs

Response – 20 working days

Complaint upheld**Complaint**

The complainant contacted the Council and complained that there had been a lack of action to remove damp and mould from their property.

Council's response

There had been unreasonable delays in the Housing Repairs Team logging and completing the necessary works and keeping the complainant updated.

These delays occurred due to the Council not attending an inspection/or recording the result of the inspection. Due to the Council records being incomplete, this resulted in the Council delaying the works necessary to remove the damp and mould.

Furthermore, the Housing Repairs Team delayed procuring a contractor to repair the bathroom leak that may have been contributing the damp and mould at the property. Part of these works were to apply anti-fungal mould wash that were also delayed.

This delay occurred due the Housing Repairs Team not approving the quote for the works in a timely manner. This further delayed the repairs to the property.

This resulted in a 6-month delay in the Council initially undertaking the repairs to the bath and mould treatment.

The complainant was offered £2,000 compensation. This was broken down in to:

- £500 for the delays and inconvenience caused by the repairs not being booked in a timely manner in the first instance.
- £500 compensation for the distress and/or hardship caused by the poor communication provided by the Housing Repairs Team and for the delays that occurred in repairs being booked.
- £1,000 toward the items that have been damaged by the damp and mould.

Assistant Director Comments

The Council recognises the inconvenience caused by agreeing to undertake the works and then delaying them. The Housing Repairs Team has been reminded of their responsibility in booking works in a timely manner.

21. Complaint against Housing Repairs

Response – 20 working days

Complaint upheld**Complaint**

The complainant contacted the Council and complained that there had been a lack of action to repair a storage heater at their property and to make secure a roof that was letting pests in. This took place during the complainant's pregnancy.

Council's response

There had been unreasonable delays in the Housing Repairs Team logging and completing the necessary works and keeping the complainant updated.

These delays have occurred due to the Council not correctly logging and undertaking the repairs. This was further exacerbated by the Housing Repairs Team not following up on the completion of these repairs following their logging and cancelling them incorrectly.

Furthermore, when the repair was initially undertaken, the Housing Repairs Team did not have the correct part which further delayed the repair to the heater.

While the heater in the hallway had failed, the heating for the rest of the property was functioning correctly.

The Council recognises that the complainant had experienced an issue with pests at the property due to the coving not being sealed correctly. The Council attended to this issue when reported but it is recognised that this has caused further distress.

The complainant was offered £1,180 compensation. This was broken down in to:

- £500 for the inconvenience, delays, distress and/or hardship caused by Council delaying the repair of the heater in the winter months and during your pregnancy.
- £500 compensation is for the inconvenience, distress and/or hardship caused by the poor communication provided by the Housing Repairs Team.
- £180 for a pest control service.

Assistant Director Comments

The Council recognises the inconvenience caused by agreeing to undertake the works and then delaying them. The Housing Repairs Team has been reminded of their responsibility in booking works in a timely manner.

Complaint Team Recommendations/actions

- To monitor all works to ensure that they completed in a reasonable timeframe whether being completed by the Council or referred to our Contractors.
- To keep the tenant/complainant updated of any issue that would delay the completion of the works.
- Additional training has been provided to the Housing Department in March 2024 regarding record keeping, complaint handling and monitoring the outcome of

complaints. The Housing Repairs are required to actively monitor any repairs scheduled as part of complaints to ensure their completion following this training.

- The Housing Department have undertaken a self-assessment against the Housing Ombudsman's Record Keeping Guidance. The Council has implemented actions to ensure that records are regularly monitored and updated.
- The Housing Repairs Team have changed the process for how jobs are abandoned on the logging system to ensure that repairs are being abandoned correctly and not in error. This involves checking the repairs to ensure that the appropriate action has been undertaken before it is closed.

22. Complaint against Housing Repairs

Response – 20 working days

Complaint not upheld

Complaint

The complainant contacted the Council and complained that there had been delays in the Council repairing the floor at their property. Due to the extensive works, temporary accommodation was offered to the complainant. The temporary accommodation offered to the complainant was poor due to other guest staying at the location.

Council's response

The Housing Repairs Team undertook the appropriate action to repair the flooring and sourcing an alternative accommodation while the repairs took place.

In recognition of the complainant's items being removed from the lounge to the bedroom to facilitate the repair, the Council sourced the complainant alternative accommodation.

The Council expressed sympathy that the complainant did not feel comfortable at the temporary accommodation. However, there was no information to suggest that the Council acted inappropriately when sourcing this accommodation.

Furthermore, the Council undertook the repairs to the floor in a timely manner with works commencing on 2 April 2024 and being fully completed on 4 April 2024.

Assistant Director Comments

The Council had taken the appropriate action by inspecting and advising the complainant in a timely manner.

23. Complaint against Housing Repairs

Response – 20 working days

Complaint upheld

Complaint

The complainant contacted the Council and complained that there had been difficulties in contacting the out of hours' service and operatives did not wear overshoes when entering their property.

Council's response

There was an issue with the complainant contacting the out of hours' service in the first instance and the out of hours' operative who initially attended the property did not have overshoes. As the operative did not have overshoes, the complainant did not let them into the house and this caused an initial delay in the boiler being repaired.

The Council attended the repairs to the boiler when they were reported and the correct action was undertaken in undertaking surveys to determine the fault. Each repair was completed over bank holiday periods without the need for the complainant to wait until normal office hours to receive the service. However, a delay occurred when the out of hours' operative did not check the condensate pipe in the first instance. This was identified in follow up visit and was repaired.

A technical issue arose which meant that the calls were not being correctly transferred to the out of hours' service. The Council are continuing to monitor this to ensure that the systems are working as intended.

The complainant was offered £250 compensation. This was broken down in to:

- £250 for the inconvenience, delays, distress and/or hardship caused by Council delaying the repair in the first instance due to the fault in the telephone service and for the operative not having overshoes.

Assistant Director Comments

The Council recognises the inconvenience caused the technical difficult in reporting the repair in the first instance and for the operative not having overshoes.

Complaint Team Recommendations/actions

- Ensure the Housing Repairs Team and out of hours' operatives are reviewing the condensate pipes in the first instance to ensure this is not the cause of the fault when attending to boiler repairs.
- Monitor the out of hours' service phone lines to ensure these are working correctly. This is being monitored by the Council's Tenant Panel and by the Housing Repairs Team.
- Remind the out of hours' operatives to always carry overshoes with them and not to be taking shoes off during repairs.
- Remind the out of hours' service to correctly manage the expectations of individuals.

24. Complaint against Housing Repairs

Response – 20 working days

Complaint upheld

Complaint

The complainant contacted the Council and complained that there were delays in repairing the guttering at their aunt's property despite being reported on several occasions.

Council's response

There had been unreasonable delays in the Housing Repairs Team identifying the necessary repairs in the guttering at the complainant's aunt's property.

While the Housing Repairs Team had attended the aunt's property in a timely manner and undertook works to remove blockages from the guttering, there was a failure to identify that the guttering required repairing to fix the leak on a permanent basis.

This resulted in the Council not permanently repairing the gutter for 2 years and caused an issue with damp and mould at the property.

The complainant and their aunt were offered £250 and £1965 compensation. This was broken down in to:

- £250 compensation is for the inconvenience, distress and/or hardship caused by the poor communication provided by the Housing Repairs Team and for the complainant having to repeatedly register the repair to the guttering on behalf of their aunt.
- £1,695 for the replacement of the decorating and carpet that have become damaged by the leak.
- £250 compensation for the inconvenience, delays, distress and/or hardship caused by Council not identifying the leak and permanent repair to the guttering in the first instance.

Assistant Director Comments

The Council recognises the inconvenience caused by agreeing to undertake the works and then delaying them. The Housing Repairs Team has been reminded of their responsibility in booking works in a timely manner.

Complaint Team Recommendations/actions

- Ensure that all repairs are fully investigated to ensure they are fully completed in the first instance.
- Ensure that tenants and their representatives are provided updates and communication in a timely manner and as requested.
- Specific training relating to complaint remedies and compensation has been provided to all complaint handlers at the Council on 31 January 2024 and 7 February 2024.

25. Complaint against Housing Repairs

Response – 20 working days

Complaint upheld

Complaint

The complainant contacted the Council and complained that there were delays in repairing a back door at their property.

Council's response

There had been unreasonable delays in the Council repairing the back door of the property and not providing communication to ensure that the complainant was informed of the repairs progress.

These delays occurred due to a contractor not returning to the property following the initial visit and not providing an update to the issue in acquiring the necessary parts to complete the works.

The Council failed to monitor the progress of the repair and only picked this up following the registration of the stage 1 complaint.

The complainant was offered £250 compensation. This was broken down in to:

- £150 compensation is for the inconvenience, distress and/or hardship caused by the delays in the repair being undertaken and in recognition of the added inconvenience of not having access to the back door.
- £100 is for the inconvenience, delays, distress and/or hardship caused by Council not effectively communicating with you regarding the repairs and their progress.

Assistant Director Comments

The Council recognises the inconvenience caused by agreeing to undertake the works and then delaying them. The Housing Repairs Team has been reminded of their responsibility in booking works in a timely manner.

Complaint Team Recommendations/actions

- Ensure that all repairs are fully monitored through to completion.
- Ensure that tenants and their representatives are provided updates and communication in a timely manner, especially where delays are expected to occur.

26. Complaint against Housing Repairs

Response – 30 working days

Complaint upheld**Complaint**

The complainant contacted the Council and complained that there were delays in the Council removing damp and mould at their property and not correctly replacing skirting board.

Council's response

As the Council's records do not indicate that the full replacement of skirting board had been completed and that it had been report that the original skirting board had been used again, the complaint was upheld. The Housing Repairs Team attended the property to undertaken the full replacement of the skirting boards as per the original works quoted.

There was no information to suggest that the Council has acted inappropriately when dealing with the mould in the upstairs areas of the property. The Council had attended the property in a timely manner and determined that mould washes and repairing the bathroom walls are appropriate. In this instance, the Council had determined that while the moisture in the bathroom is caused by atmospheric condensation and it would be beneficial to replace the plasterboard with a thermal plasterboard to help reduce the moisture. The quote to undertake this work had been approved and the Council were due to make the necessary arrangements to complete the repairs.

Assistant Director Comments

The Council recognises the inconvenience caused by not undertaking the full repair as originally quoted. The Housing Repairs Team attended the property to ensure that this was done correctly.

Complaint Team Recommendations/actions

- An instruction has been issued to monitor all works to ensure that they are completed in a reasonable timeframe whether being completed by the Council or referred to our Contractors.
- An instruction has been issued to record completion of works and ensure that they are completed as exactly as required.

27. Complaint against Housing Repairs

Response – 20 working days

Complaint upheld**Complaint**

The complainant contacted the Council and complained that the Housing Repairs Team had not repaired an issue with a hot water cylinder which resulted in the property only having 10 minutes of hot water at a time.

Council's response

The Housing Repairs Team had attended the property on each occasion the complainant had reported that they were unable to access hot water after 9/10 minutes of use. The Council had been unable to locate any faults with the hot water cylinder. The hot water cylinder only provides hot water for 9/10 minutes before it is required to re-charge the element that provides hot water.

The Housing Repairs Team had confirmed that this is working correctly.

While the Council was unable to locate any information to suggest that the hot water cylinder is not working correctly, the Council recognises that its record keeping and communication were not to a satisfactory standard.

The complainant and their aunt was offered £250 compensation. This was broken down in to:

- £250 compensation is for the inconvenience, distress and/or hardship caused by the lack of record keeping, the failure to return a telephone call and that advice/explanation surrounding the use of the hot water cylinder not being clear.

Assistant Director Comments

While the correct action had taken place regarding the inspection of the hot water cylinder, the record keeping and communication surrounding the work and operation of the water cylinder could have been better as to not increase the complainant's distress.

Complaint Team Recommendations/actions

- An instruction has been issued that all records are to be correctly recorded and updated so repairs can be investigated fully and promptly.
- An instruction has been issued that all communication and telephone calls are to be undertaken promptly to avoid confusion or distress.
- An instruction has been issued that advice provided regarding the use of the hot water cylinder is clear and consistent.
-

28. Complaint against Housing Repairs

Response – 20 working days

Complaint upheld**Complaint**

The complainant contacted the Council and complained that the Housing Repairs Team had not undertaken the appropriate repairs to their property before the commencement of their tenancy.

Council's response

There had been unreasonable delays in the Housing Repairs Team undertaking and completing the necessary works and keeping the complainant updated.

These delays had occurred due to the Council not progressing the works or monitoring their completion to ensure that they were undertaken in a timely manner. Furthermore, works that should have been identified and undertaken were only raised when a complaint was made to the Council.

This was further exacerbated by the Housing Repairs Team not following up on the completion of these repairs despite them being registered as part of the complaint made to the Council. While the Housing Repairs Team had acknowledged and logged the repairs, these were not monitored to ensure their completion.

While the works would not have stopped the complainant moving into the property, the Council recognises that due to the extent of works, further consideration should have been given as whether the property was ready to let.

The complainant and their aunt was offered £1,500 compensation. This was broken down in to:

- £1,000 for the inconvenience, delays, distress and/or hardship caused in the works being undertaken despite being investigated as an official complaint.
- £500 compensation is for the inconvenience, distress and/or hardship caused by the poor communication provided by the Housing Repairs Team.

Assistant Director Comments

The Council recognises the inconvenience caused by agreeing to undertake the works and then delaying them. The Housing Repairs Team has been reminded of their responsibility in booking works in a timely manner.

Complaint Team Recommendations/actions

- The responsibility to appropriately communicate with tenants/complainants.
- To accurately log necessary works in a reasonable period and to prioritise repairs where necessary.
- To monitor all works to ensure that they completed in a reasonable timeframe whether being completed by the Council or referred to our Contractors.
- To keep the tenant/complainant updated of any issue that would delay the completion of the works.
- To action and monitor complaints, within agreed timeframes until they are satisfactorily concluded.
- The Housing letting team have been advised to thoroughly check before releasing a property that it is in a condition to be let or if works are required that this is properly communicated and works are addressed in a timely manner.
- Additional training has been provided to the Housing Department in March 2024 regarding record keeping, complaint handling and monitoring the outcome of complaints. The Housing Repairs are required to actively monitor any repairs scheduled as part of complaints to ensure their completion following this training.
- The Housing Department have undertaken a self-assessment against the Housing Ombudsman's Record Keeping Guidance. The Council has implement actions to ensure that records are regularly monitored and updated.

Housing Operations

1. Complaint against Housing Operations

Response – 20 working days

Complaint upheld

Complaint

The complainant contacted the Council and complained that the Housing Operations Team had not correctly dealt with an issue of drains being blocked by another tenant.

Council's response

It was concluded that an appropriate level of service was not received as the Tenancy Services Team had not proactively monitored the issues of food waste being disposed of via a drain.

The Council recognises that by not actively monitoring the issue, this had resulted in the complainant having to report the blocked drains on three separate occasions.

While the drains had been cleared on the same day that they had been reported as being blocked, by not monitoring the issue this had reoccurred.

It was requested that the Tenancy Services Team write to all residents to remind them that food waste should not be put in the drain.

Furthermore, it was requested that regular site visits are undertaken to the flats to monitor the situation. Additionally, the Tenancy Services Team would visit each of the residents at the block to remind them that food waste should not be disposed of via the drain.

Assistant Director Comments

The Council recognises the inconvenience caused by not correctly monitoring the issue of the drains proactively which allowed it to re-occur.

Complaint Team Recommendations/actions

- The Tenancy Services Team has been reminded of their responsibility to proactively investigate issues when they are raised.
- It was requested that the Tenancy Services Team write to all residents to remind them that food waste should not be put in the drain.

2. Complaint against Housing Operations

Response – 20 working days

Complaint upheld

Complaint

The complainant contacted the Council and complained that they had been left with a standing charge on the electricity meter when they moved into their new property.

Council's response

It was concluded that an appropriate level of service was not received, as the property the complainant had recently moved in to already had a standing charge of £31 on the electricity meter.

The complainant was refunded the £31 and an apology was offered.

Assistant Director Comments

The Council recognises the inconvenience caused by not clearing the standing charge on the electricity meter in the first instance.

3. Complaint against Housing Operations

Response – 20 working days

Complaint not upheld

Complaint

The complainant contacted the Council and complained that the Housing Operations Team had inappropriately provided personal details to a safeguarding board.

Council's response

It was concluded that an appropriate level of service was received as the Council is required to attend multi-agency meetings when invited regarding safeguarding issues.

The Housing Operations Team had appropriately attended these meetings when invited and shared information as appropriate.

Assistant Director Comments

The Council is required to share information regarding safeguarding when requested. This action was undertaken appropriately.

4. Complaint against Housing Operations

Response – 20 working days

Complaint upheld

Complaint

The complainant contacted the Council and complained that there had been a delay in the Housing Operations Team repairing a fence.

Council's response

It was concluded that an appropriate level of service was not received as there had been extended delays in the Housing Department undertaking repairs to the fence.

While reports of the need to repair fence had been received, through various Teams and the complaint process, there has been approximately a 12-month delay in completing the repairs.

The Housing Department correctly identified the fence as needing repair but could not undertake the repair until the garden of the Tenant had been cleared. Delays occurred in the fence being repaired when the Tenancy Services Team incorrectly identified the tenant whose garden required clearing.

A further delay occurred when the Housing Repairs Team identified that the boundary was not the responsibility of the Council and cancelled the repair.

The full repair was correctly undertaken a part of the stage 2 complaint process.

£500 compensation was offered and accepted.

Assistant Director Comments

The Council recognises the inconvenience of not repairing the fence correctly in the first instance.

Complaint Team Recommendations/actions

- The Housing Repairs Team has been reminded of their responsibility to undertake actions identified during the complaint process.
- Managers have been reminded of the importance of ensuring that employees undertake actions identified during the complaint process, and that they should be monitoring this.
- The Housing Repairs Team and Tenancy Services Team have been reminded to provide correspondence to individuals where delays in works arise.
- The Housing Department has been reminded of their responsibility to monitor complaint action that involve multiple Teams.

5. Complaint against Housing Operations

Response – 20 working days

Outcome upheld

Complaint

The complainant contacted the Council and complained that their homelessness application was not appropriately handled.

Council's response

While the Housing Options Team had communicated with the complainant promptly, the content of the communication had lacked empathy toward the complainant's current situation. The complainant was unable to provide identification to assist with their application. However, the Housing Option Team did not provide advice as to the alternative options for identification were not provided to them during their initial contact.

The complainant was offered and accepted £150 compensation for the issues highlighted above

Assistant Director Comments

The Council recognises the inconvenience caused by not correctly corresponding with the complainant. Officers were reminded of their responsibility to correctly communicate with individuals.

Complaint Team Recommendations/actions

- The Housing Options Team has been reminded of their responsibility to provide all the necessary information regarding homelessness applications, specifically identification, in the first instance.
- The Housing Options Team has been reminded of their responsibility to provide communication in an empathic way.

6. Complaint against Housing Operations

Response – 20 working days

Complaint upheld

Complaint

The complainant contacted the Council and complained that there had been a lack of action to investigate an issue of noise nuisance.

Council's response

The Housing Tenancy Team has assessed the complaint regarding Anti-Social Behaviour. However, by not responding to the complainant's correspondence in a timely manner and not acknowledging the complainant's complaint of Anti-Social Behaviour correctly, the Council recognises that this had caused additional confusion and distress.

An apology was provided for this and for any additional distress or confusion caused.

The Housing Tenancy Team had determined that issues that had been raised were not considered Anti-Social Behaviour and the noise monitoring confirmed that this is everyday living noise.

The complainant was offered and accepted £250 compensation for the issues highlighted above.

Assistant Director Comments

The Council recognises the inconvenience caused by not correctly corresponding with the complainant. Officers were reminded of their responsibility to correctly communicate with individuals.

Complaint Team Recommendations/actions

- The Housing Tenancy Team has been reminded of their responsibility to return correspondence in a timely manner.
- The Housing Tenancy Team has been reminded of their responsibility to appropriately acknowledge and manage complaints of Anti-Social Behaviour when they are received.
- The Housing Tenancy Team has been instructed to provide you with correspondence by 1 November 2024 to discuss any further concerns you have.
- A reminder has been provided to the Council's Customer Services Team to ensure that they correctly direct telephone calls regarding tenant noise nuisance to the Housing Tenancy Team.

7. Complaint against Housing Operations

Response – 20 working days

Complaint upheld**Complaint**

The complainant contacted the Council and complained that the correct advice had not been provided regarding the storage of mobility scooters.

Council's response

It was concluded that the Housing Tenancy Team had failed to respond to the complainant's specific enquires regarding mobility scooters in a timely manner. Furthermore, during the complainant's initial correspondence with the Housing Tenancy Team, they should have been issued with the Council's Mobility Scooters Guidance for Tenants to assist with any enquiries or permissions they were seeking. The Council recognises that this was not done.

A copy of this guidance had been included with the stage 2 letter. The guidance document provides further details on how to apply for the use and storage of a mobility scooter within Council properties.

Assistant Director Comments

The Council recognises the inconvenience caused by not correctly corresponding with the complainant. Officers were reminded of their responsibility to correctly communicate with individuals.

Complaint Team Recommendations/actions

- The Housing Tenancy Team has been reminded of their responsibility to return correspondence in a timely manner.
- The Housing Tenancy Team has been reminded of their responsibility to refer individuals to the Mobility Scooters Guidance for Tenants document.

8. Complaint against Housing Operations

Response – 20 working days

Complaint upheld

Complaint

The complainant contacted the Council and complained that there had been a lack of action to investigate an issue of noise nuisance.

Council's response

It was concluded that the complainant had not received an appropriate level of service as the Tenancy Services Team had not provided communication in a timely manner or proactively investigated the concerns of Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB).

While the Council had correctly assessed the ASB issues based on the evidence that had provided, the Tenancy Services Team did not proactively investigate the concerns which resulted in the complainant having to contact the Council on multiple occasion and visit the Council Offices.

An apology was offered and the complainant was offered and accepted £500 compensation for the issues highlighted above.

Assistant Director Comments

The Council recognises the inconvenience caused by not correctly corresponding with the complainant. Officers were reminded of their responsibility to correctly communicate with individuals.

Complaint Team Recommendations/actions

- The Housing Services Team has been reminded of the responsibility to proactively investigate ASB complaints.
- The Housing Services Team has been reminded of the responsibility to provide correspondence to individuals in a timely manner.

9. Complaint against Housing Operations

Response – 20 working days

Complaint upheld

Complaint

The complainant contacted the Council and complained that there had been a lack of action to activate their Homesearch account.

Council's response

It was concluded that the complainant had not received an appropriate level of service as the Housing Operations Team incorrectly did not activate their Homesearch account when they had registered this.

While the complainant had submitted a Homesearch application, due to an administrative error, the Housing Operations Team did not activate the account which meant they were unable to bid on properties for several months.

Furthermore, it was identified that the complainant was not contacted by the Housing Operations Team despite a specific instruction to do so as part of the stage 1 complaint response.

An apology was offered and the complainant was offered but did not accept £150 compensation for the issues highlighted above.

Assistant Director Comments

The Council recognises the inconvenience caused by not activating the account correctly. Upon being alerted to this, the account was correctly activated.

Complaint Team Recommendations/actions

- The Housing Operations Team has been reminded of their responsibility to return correspondence in a timely manner.
- The Housing Operations Team has been reminded of their responsibility to undertake actions identified during the complaint process.
- Managers has been reminded of the importance of ensuring that employees undertake actions identified during the complaint process, and that they should be monitoring this.
- The Housing Operations Team has been reminded to correctly process housing allocations in the first instance.

10. Complaint against Housing Operations

Response – 20 working days

Complaint not upheld

Complaint

The complainant contacted the Council and complained that there had been a lack of action to investigate an issue of noise nuisance.

Council's response

It was concluded that the complainant had received an appropriate level of service as Environmental Health and Housing Tenancy had correctly investigated their complaints of noise nuisance.

The Council had correctly installed noise monitoring equipment at the property, and the complainant's neighbour's property, in order to investigate the alleged issues.

The Council had installed noise monitoring equipment over a period of two years and no evidence of noise nuisance has been recorded during this time.

Assistant Director Comments

The Housing Operations Team had correctly investigated the issue of noise nuisance in a timely manner.

11. Complaint against Housing Operations

Response – 20 working days

Complaint not upheld

Complaint

The complainant contacted the Council and complained that there had been a lack of action to investigate an issue their ceiling collapsing due to a leak.

Council's response

It was concluded that the complainant had received an appropriate level of service as the Housing Repairs Team repaired the roof leak in a timely manner when it was reported.

The Housing Repairs Team was only able to attend to repairs when they are reported. On this occasion, as previous reports of a leak had not been reported before to the Housing Repairs Team, they were unable to attend before the ceiling collapsed.

The Housing Repairs Team undertook the correct action in attending the complainant's property the following day to repair the leak and making their living room safe. The repair could not be undertaken on the same day as this would have required works to the roof during the evening. Due to health and safety, the Housing Repairs Team was unable to perform this work on the same day.

Assistant Director Comments

The Housing Repairs Team are only able to attend to repairs when they are reported. As no leak had been reported until the point of the ceiling collapse, the Housing Repairs Team was unable to attend promptly.

12. Complaint against Housing Operations

Response – 20 working days

Complaint not upheld

Complaint

The complainant contacted the Council and complained that there had been a lack of action to investigate an issue of noise nuisance.

Council's response

It was concluded that the complainant had received an appropriate level of service as the Housing Services Team had correctly investigated the complaints of noise nuisance.

The Council had correctly installed noise monitoring equipment at the complainant's property and no evidence of noise nuisance had been recorded during this time. Furthermore, no evidence of noise nuisance was captured while the complainant was using the noise monitoring app.

Assistant Director Comments

The Housing Operations Team had correctly investigated the issue of noise nuisance in a timely manner.

13. Complaint against Housing Operations

Response – 20 working days

Complaint not upheld

Complaint

The complainant contacted the Council to complain about a number of issues, including anti-social behaviour from a neighbour, the behaviour of a Housing Officer, that their mental health was suffering because of the Council's lack of action, and that the accommodation they have been offered was inappropriate and had no heating.

Council's response

The complainant received an appropriate level of service as the Housing Services Team had correctly assessed their complaints of anti-social behaviour.

There was no evidence to support the accusations the complainant made against the neighbour. A visit from the Housing Officer resulted in the complainant's arrest and there was no independent evidence to corroborate the allegations made against the Housing Officer.

Further to this, there was no evidence that the repairs to the heating had not been actioned. The Housing Repairs Team attended the property the day after a report of the heating not working and this was repaired on the same day.

Assistant Director Comments

The Housing Operations Team correctly investigated the concerns raised by the complainant. No evidence was gathered to support their allegations and their own actions caused the Council to take action against them.

14. Complaint against Housing Operations

Response – 20 working days

Complaint upheld

Complaint

A tenant reported a communal door key as lost in July 2024 and ordered a new key which never arrived. A second key was ordered in October 2024, but it was incorrect. Another key was ordered and did not arrive. Being unable to access the property caused significant disruption to the tenant and their neighbours, who had to continually let them in.

Council's response

It was concluded that the tenant did not received an appropriate level of service as the Tenancy Services Team did not promptly obtain the key to the communal door in a timely manner.

Reports regarding the key were made on 12 July 2024 and again on 8 October 2024. Due to a delay in the supplier providing the key and the Tenancy Services Team not proactively chasing the manufacture, the tenant was left without a key to the communal area for over a month.

An apology and an offer of £250 compensation was made in acknowledgement of the distress and hardship caused by the poor communication and the delays in obtaining the communal door key by the Tenancy Services Team.

Assistant Director Comments

The Council recognises the inconvenience of not proactively chasing the completion of the key order and not communicating correctly with the complainant. Reminders have been issued to the Housing Operations Team of the importance of this.

Complaint Team Recommendations/actions

- The Tenancy Services Team have been reminded of their responsibility to ensure that external suppliers promptly undertake actions requested.
- The Tenancy Services Team have been reminded of their responsibility to provide correspondence to individuals to ensure that delays are communicated correctly.
- The Tenancy Services Team have been reminded of their responsibility to keep accurate records.

15. Complaint against Housing Operations

Response – 20 working days

Complaint not upheld**Complaint**

The complainant contacted the Council and complained that there had been a lack of action to provide them housing within the borough as part for their homelessness application.

Council's response

It was concluded that as the complainant had not been living within the Borough for a minimum period of 6 months, the Council were unable to evidence a local connection. As

the complainant did not have a local connection to the area, the Council were unable to consider their request for homelessness duty.

Furthermore, the Council were unable to progress the application as the necessary information was not received to demonstrate the complainant's local connection.

As the complainant had been living in the Nottingham City area for the past three years, their location connection was with Nottingham City. The complainant had been informed of this.

Assistant Director Comments

The Council is required to follow process defined by the Allocations Policy. This ensures fair treatment of all tenants.

16. Complaint against Housing Operations

Response – 20 working days

Complaint upheld

Complaint

The complainant contacted the Council and complained that the Housing Allocations Team did not correctly register the death of their brother or issued a Notice to Quit correctly.

Council's response

It was found that the Housing Department had requested to that complainant contact a different Housing Team to inform them of their brother's passing. The Housing Department should not have requested this action from the complainant and should have been more proactive in registering the passing of the complainant's brother and requesting that the appropriate departments contact the complainant directly should they require any further information.

As this was not undertaken, this resulted in the complainant having to contact a different Housing Team to register the bereavement.

Furthermore, the Council did not provide the correct advice regarding the complainant's brothers passing by requesting that they notify individual Housing Departments of the bereavement.

Furthermore, it was found that the Housing Allocations Team did not issue the Notice to Quit correctly for the complainant's deceased brother which resulted in their rent account accruing arrears.

The complainant was offered and accepted £250 compensation.

Assistant Director Comments

The Council recognises the distress caused by requesting the complainant to contact the Council multiple different times to register their brother's death. The Housing Team have been reminded of their responsibility to register bereavements efficiently and sympathetically.

Complaint Team Recommendations/actions

- Refer or advise bereaved individuals to the “Tell us Once” offered by the Government to register deaths.
- Provide a more proactive approach to registering bereavements. Where all details cannot be taken in the first instance, arrange for telephone calls to be made from the appropriate departments to minimise the bereaved having to make this contact.
- Issue Notice to Quits in a timely manner when a death is reported.

17. Complaint against Housing Operations

Response – 20 working days

Complaint not upheld

Complaint

The complainant contacted the Council and complained that there had been a lack of action to provide them housing within the borough.

Council's response

The Housing Allocations Team had correctly assessed the complainant's current housing band in accordance with the information that they had supplied and in line with the Council's Allocations Policy.

The complainant had not provided the necessary information for the Council to consider their requests for a higher banding and to demonstrate that they were eligible to enter the Independent Living scheme.

Assistant Director Comments

The Council is required to follow process defined by the Allocations Policy. This ensures fair treatment of all tenants.

18. Complaint against Housing Operations

Response – 20 working days

Complaint not upheld

Complaint

The complainant contacted the Council and complained that there had been a lack of action to provide them housing within the borough as part for their homelessness application.

Council's response

The Council were unable to progress the complainant's application as the necessary information was not received to allow further consideration toward their application.

Assistant Director Comments

The Council is required to follow process defined by the Allocations Policy. This ensures fair treatment of all tenants.

19. Complaint against Housing Operations

Response – 20 working days

Complaint not upheld**Complaint**

The complainant contacted the Council and complained that the Housing Operations Team had not provided adequate car parking provision at a block of flats or are enforcing the car park.

Council's response

The Council was not obligated to provide car parking at this site and the car parking currently provided was not enforceable.

To assist with this situation, the Council would erect additional signage indicating that the car park was for residents only as a deterrent for non-residents parking on the site. Furthermore, the Council would install new bays and a disabled parking bay to assist with the provision currently offered.

Assistant Director Comments

The Council correctly manages the parking provision provided at the site.

20. Complaint against Housing Operations

Response – 20 working days

Complaint upheld**Complaint**

The complainant contacted the Council and complained that the Housing Operations Team had allowed them to bid on a property that they were not eligible for.

Council's response

It was found that the Council had allowed the complainant to bid on a property that they were not eligible for due to an administrative error.

While the Council had correctly advertised the property with the correct requirements, the administrative error allowed the complainant to bid on the property on multiple occasions.

The Council recognised that this has caused the complainant frustration and that their expectations were not correctly managed. The Housing Allocations Team have since rectified this issue and the complainant is now only shown properties on the Homechoice system that they are eligible for.

Head of Service Comments

The Council recognises the inconvenience caused by the administrative error. This has been identified and rectified.

21. Complaint against Housing Operations

Response – 20 working days

Complaint upheldComplaint

The complainant contacted the Council and complained that the Housing Operations Team did not correctly support them during a period of potential homelessness.

Council's response

It was found that the Housing Options Team did not respond to the complainant's correspondence in a timely manner.

While the Housing Options Team had correctly assessed the complainant's banding and Homelessness application, by not responding to their correspondence in a timely manner, the Council recognised that this had caused confusion and distress.

Furthermore, the Housing Options Team did not contact the complainant despite a specific action to do so as detailed in their stage 1 complaint response. The Housing Options Team had since contacted the complainant as part of the stage 2 complaint.

The Housing Options Team would continue to assist the complainant during their homelessness application and the prevention duty will be acted upon while that duty exists.

The Council encouraged the complainant to continue to bid on properties, inside and outside of their preferred area, and to explore the options provided by private rented and other social housing providers.

The complainant was subsequently housed with a social housing provider.

Assistant Director Comments

The Council recognises the inconvenience caused not responding to the complainant's correspondence and that this caused distress that during their period of potential homelessness.

Complaint Team Recommendations/actions

- The Housing Options Team have been reminded of their responsibility to return correspondence in a timely manner.
- The Housing Options Team have been reminded of their responsibility to undertake actions identified during the complaint process.

- Managers have been reminded of the importance of ensuring that employees undertake actions identified during the complaint process, and that they should be monitoring this.

Complaint Team Recommendations/actions

- The responsibility to effectively communicate with tenants/complainants, especially where delays are anticipated or have occurred.
- To accurately log necessary works in a reasonable period and to prioritise repairs where necessary.
- To monitor all works to ensure that they completed in a reasonable timeframe whether being completed by the Council or referred to our Contractors.
- To keep the tenant/complainant updated of any issue that would delay the completion of the works.
- Additional training has been provided to the Housing Department in March 2024 regarding record keeping, complaint handling and monitoring the outcome of complaints. The Housing Repairs are required to actively monitor any repairs scheduled as part of complaints to ensure their completion following this training.
- The Housing Department have undertaken a self-assessment against the Housing Ombudsman's Record Keeping Guidance. The Council has implement actions to ensure that records are regularly monitored and updated.
- The Housing Repairs Team have since updated their process for logging repairs. This includes, giving Housing Repairs Inspectors allocated times for logging works to ensure that these are done promptly.

22. Complaint against Housing Operations

Response – 20 working days

Complaint not upheld

Complaint

The complainant contacted the Council and complained that their neighbour had stolen part of their garden and the Council were not assisting in rectifying the issue.

Council's response

The Council had informed the complainant of which garden was allocated to their property in 2020. The entirety of the rear garden had been sold to the leaseholder in 2003 under the Right to Buy scheme. Therefore, this garden no longer belongs to the Council.

While the complainant had been granted access to the rear garden by the owner, this access has been removed.

The Council is unable to grant access to this garden as it no longer belongs to the Council and is owned legally by their neighbour.

The complainant had been informed of this and that the Council cannot return part of the rear garden.

Assistant Director Comments

The Council had undertaken the correct action by providing the complainant the details of which garden belonged to them.

23. Complaint against Housing Operations

Response – 20 working days

Complaint not upheld

Complaint

The complainant contacted the Council and complained that there were delays in the Council offering the complainant a property and not progressing the adaptation of the property offered.

Council's response

The Council processed the application on the housing register correctly and banded the complainant accordingly at band 1, high priority. However, the type of property required as recommended by their Occupational Therapist and within their chosen location were limited in number and currently were unavailable due to being occupied.

The Council is obligated to act upon the information provided by Occupational Therapists and therefore the Council were unable to offer alternative properties outside of that recommendation.

Furthermore, the Council correctly processed the application for adaptations. The delay occurred due to the requested information not being supplied by the complainant in a timely manner. The Council made regular contact with the complainant to provide updates and request the outstanding information.

Assistant Director Comments

The Council is required to follow process defined by the Allocations Policy. This ensures fair treatment of all tenants.

24. Complaint against Housing Operations

Response – 20 working days

Complaint not upheld

Complaint

The complainant contacted the Council and complained that the Housing Operations Team cause them distress when requesting that they vacate temporary accommodation provided during their homeless application. The Housing Operations had not considered their mental health when undertaking this action.

Council's response

The Council had assisted the complainant through the homelessness process by arranging temporary accommodation earlier than normal to assist with their mental health and the issues they were experiencing with their private rented accommodation.

The Council further supported the complainant through the period of them not vacating the temporary accommodation when requested. The Housing Options Team visited and met with the complainant on multiple occasions to explain the process and consequences of not leaving the property. Furthermore, the Council had worked with and signposted the complainant to support networks, such as Citizens Advice, to assist with their homelessness case.

Assistant Director Comments

The Council is required to follow process defined by the Allocations Policy. This ensures fair treatment of all tenants.

25. Complaint against Housing Operations

Response – 20 working days

Complaint not upheld

Complaint

The complainant contacted the Council and complained that the Council had not adequately dealt with an issue of dog fouling and unsupervised dogs in a communal area.

Council's response

The Council had actively investigated the concerns raised regarding the dog fouling and unsupervised dogs in the communal area.

The Council are required to work with the complainant's neighbour to ensure that the situation is resolved. The Council would not look to tenancy enforcement in the first instance but would look to assist and educate the complainant's neighbour regarding the concerns that have been raised.

The Council continue to do this through the Housing and Dog Warden Teams and improvements are currently being made.

Head of Service Comments

The Housing Operations Team are required to thoroughly investigate concerns regarding ASB to ensure any actions are appropriate and proportionate.

26. Complaint against Housing Operations

Response – 20 working days

Complaint not upheld

Complaint

The complainant contacted the Council and complained that the Council had not adequately dealt with an issue of cars being sold at a property and lack of action to cut an overgrown hedge.

Council's response

The Council had actively investigated the concerns raised regarding the sale of cars and the overgrown hedge.

On this occasion, the evidence submitted to support the concerns was not sufficient for the Council to demonstrate a breach of tenancy. The Council has promptly informed the complainant of this.

Action was undertaken to ensure that the overgrown hedge was cut in a timely manner.

Assistant Director Comments

The Housing Operations Team are required to thoroughly investigate concerns regarding ASB to ensure any actions are appropriate and proportionate.

Housing Strategy

1. Complaint against Housing Strategy

Response – 20 working days

Complaint not upheld

Complaint

The complainant contacted the Council and complained that their Right to Buy application was not subject to a greater discount.

Council's response

It was concluded that an appropriate level of service was received as the Council had correctly followed guidance provided by the Government regarding the Right to Buy scheme.

The Council is not responsible for the discount provided in the Right to Buy scheme.

Assistant Director Comments

The appropriate discounts were applied in line with the Government's Right to Buy scheme.

2. Complaint against Housing Strategy

Response – 20 working days

Complaint not upheld

Complaint

The complainant contacted the Council and complained that they had been requested to remove their CCTV cameras from their property.

Council's response

The Council is obligated to investigate complaints of Anti-Social Behaviour by tenants and leaseholders when they are received. In this case, as complaints about the complainant's conduct and the installation of CCTV had been received from the local residents and Nottinghamshire Police, the Council was obligated to investigate these issues.

The Council, having noted the breaches of the complainant's Leasehold Agreement by installing CCTV cameras without permission, were obligated to contact the complainant to ensure that the appropriate action was undertaken to remove these.

Assistant Director Comments

The Council correctly investigated the issues raised by local residents and were obligated to request that the complainant remove the CCTV as this was a breach of their Leasehold Agreement.

3. Complaint against Housing Strategy

Response – 20 working days

Complaint upheld

Complaint

The complainant contacted the Council and complained that the Housing Strategy Team had delayed in the acquisition of their property which caused them to lose money on their house sale. Furthermore, the Council Tax were inappropriately chasing the complainant for unpaid Council Tax.

Council's response

It was found that the Council incorrectly managed the complainant's expectations regarding the purchase of their property.

While the Home Ownership Team followed the correct process to undertake the potential purchase of your property, they had incorrectly informed the complainant that the Council were to purchase the property.

The Council recognised that Home Ownership Team may have influenced any decisions made regarding the sale of the property privately.

The Council Tax Team had acted appropriately when contacting the complainant or instructing solicitors to pursue the debt relating to their outstanding Council Tax.

Assistant Director Comments

The Council recognises the inconvenience caused by agreeing to purchase the property prematurely. The Housing Strategy Team did not have the authority to undertake this and they have been reminded of their responsibilities and to correctly manage expectations.

Complaint Team Recommendations/actions

- The Home Ownership Team will review and amend any correspondence sent to potential vendors regarding the timescales of the acquisition process to highlight the likely timeframes the process takes.
- The Home Ownership Team have been reminded of their responsibility to manage an individual's expectations correctly.
- The Home Ownership Team have been reminded that they should not give their opinion on a likely outcome, as this can cause confusion and upset.

4. Complaint against Housing Strategy

Response – 20 working days

Complaint upheld**Complaint**

The complainant contacted the Council and complained that the Housing Strategy and Repairs Team had agreed to undertake works to their garage but failed to action them.

Council's response

It was found that the Council has not correctly managed the complainant's expectations by not clarifying that only minor works would be undertaken to maintain the garage and that no major works would be completed before the results of a stock condition survey had been received.

While the stock condition survey was being undertaken, the Council was unable to undertake any major works to the garages as this may result in their demolition. The Council was required to effectively use resources and undertaking works to the garages that would be demolished would not be appropriate.

In this instance, the complainant's garage requires major works but is still in a usable condition. Therefore, the major works identified would not be undertaken.

Assistant Director Comments

The Housing Strategy Team have been reminded of their responsibilities and to correctly manage expectations.

Housing Income**1. Complaint against Housing Income**

Response – 20 working days

Complaint not upheld**Complaint**

The complainant contacted the Council and complained that they had been requested to remove their personal items from the communal area of an independent living scheme.

Council's response

It was concluded that the complainant had received an appropriate level of service as the Council had undertaken the correct action to request removal of personal items from the communal areas to ensure that residents are safe in the event of an emergency.

Following receipt of the Fire Safety Matters Notice following an inspection by the Nottinghamshire and City of Nottingham Fire and Rescue Service, the Council is obligated to undertake the actions contained within this Notice to ensure that residents are safe.

The Council had correctly informed residents of the need to remove personal items from the communal areas in order to comply with the Fire Safety Matters Notice.

Assistant Director Comments

The Housing Repairs Team had correctly requested that the complainant remove their personal items from the communal areas to ensure that all the residents are safe in event of an emergency.

2. Complaint against Housing Income

Response – 20 working days

Complaint not upheld

Complaint

The complainant contacted the Council and complained that the Housing Income Team had not investigated an issue of noise nuisance correctly.

Council's response

The Council had actively investigated the complainant's complaints of Anti-Social Behaviour when they had raised them.

On the occasions that the complainant had raised the complaints of Anti-Social Behaviour, the Independent Living Team had determined that the noise they were experiencing did not count as a nuisance and the case were subsequently closed.

Assistant Director Comments

The Council correctly investigated the issue of noise nuisance. As no evidence had been provided to substantiate the complaint, the case was correctly closed.

3. Complaint against Housing Income

Response – 20 working days

Complaint upheld

Complaint

The complainant contacted the Council and complained that the Housing Income mistakenly sent a text message intended for them to their neighbour.

Council's response

The Housing Income Team incorrectly sent a text message that was intended for the complainant to their neighbour. The text message requested that the complainant contact the Housing Income Team and did not disclose any further information.

While the text message did not disclose any personal details to the neighbour the Council recognises that this has caused distress.

Assistant Director Comments

It is recognised that the text message was incorrectly sent. A reminder of the importance of data protection was provided to the Housing Income Team.

Communities

1. Complaint against Communities

Response – 20 working days

Complaint not upheld

Complaint

The complainant contacted the Council and complained that the Senior Communities Officer had spoken disrespectfully to their daughter when issuing a Community Protection Warning by using the phrase “how would you feel”.

Council's response

There was no information to suggest that the Senior Communities Officer acted inappropriately or unprofessionally during a visit to issue a Community Protection Warning.

Furthermore, Nottinghamshire Police, who also attended the visit had confirmed that they did not witness any inappropriate behaviour by the Senior Communities Officer nor that the phrase “how would you feel” was used.

Assistant Director Comments

The Senior Communities Officer acted professionally and appropriately during the visit to issue the Community Protection Warning.

Customer Services

1. Complaint against Customer Services

Response – 20 working days

Complaint upheld

Complaint

A caller made a number of accusations against the Council, including that the Customer Services Team were rude to them during a telephone call, that the Council had stolen their number and breached their GDPR, that the Business Support Team had blocked their number when they were enquiring about jobs and that there should be a financial resolution with regards to the stealing of their telephone number and creating a profile on them.

Council's response

It was established that the complainant had not received an appropriate level of service as the Customer Services Team did not correctly handle a telephone call in which they told the complainant to "get a life." It was noted this was after numerous telephone calls in which the caller had repeatedly sworn at and provoked the employee.

Although it was recognised that the Customer Services Team response was not appropriate, there was no evidence to suggest that the employee had shouted or sworn.

Further to this, there was no evidence to suggest that the Council stole or otherwise misappropriated the caller's telephone number, created a profile or blocked their telephone number. A telephone number was retrieved from the Council's systems, following the calls in order to assist the caller with their complaint.

An apology for the response provided by the Customer Services Officer was issued.

Assistant Director Comments

The Customer Services Team were reminded of their responsibility to behave in a professional manner despite the conduct of individuals.

Revenues**1. Complaint against Revenues**

Response – 20 working days

Complaint not upheld

Complaint

The complainant contacted the Council and complained that they were being asked to pay toward an outstanding Council Tax bill.

Council's response

It was concluded that an appropriate level of service was received as the Council Tax Team has correctly obtained a Liability Order from the Magistrates Court on three separate occasions regarding the outstanding Council Tax payments.

Assistant Director Comments

The correct action was undertaken in line with legislation to ensure that the outstanding Council Tax payments were received.

2. Complaint against Revenues

Response – 20 working days

Complaint upheld

Complaint

The complainant contacted the Council and complained that their Council Tax account had been incorrectly closed which resulted in several missed payments.

Council's response

It was concluded that the complainant had not received an appropriate level of service as the Council Tax Team incorrectly closed their Council Tax account based on the incorrect information provided by the Customer Services Team.

Due the Customer Services Team providing the incorrect address to the Council Tax Team the account was incorrectly closed and a final bill was issued.

Upon being alerted to this error the Council Tax account was re-opened and a new bill was issued.

An apology and £314 compensation was offered and accepted.

Assistant Director Comments

The Council recognised the inconvenience caused by acting upon the account being incorrectly closed. The compensation amount reflected the payments missed by the complainant and returned them to the position before the account was closed.

Waste and Recycling

1. Complaint against Waste and Recycling

Response – N/A

Withdrawn

Complaint

The complainant contacted the Council and complained that their bin was repeatedly missed.

Council's response

The Complaint was withdrawn during the course of the investigation.

Assistant Director Comments

N/A.

2. Complaint against Waste and Recycling

Response – 20 working days

Complaint upheld

Complaint

The complainant contacted the Council and complained that the Refuse Team had repeatedly missed their bin collection.

Council's response

It was concluded that an appropriate level of service was not received as there has been a failure to collect the bins on the designated days and return them to the correct position.

However, it was noted that the bins are not always placed on the curtilage of the property. The bins were put in several different places on the front of the property waiting for collection. Whilst the bins had been collected from these positions for a period of time, this may be contributing to the missed collections, as the bins are not correctly in a position all the time to indicate that they required collection. This meant a member of the Refuse Team must enter the property to retrieve the bin.

Further monitoring of the bin collection would take place for a month to ensure that the bins are being collected correctly.

Assistant Director Comments

The Council recognises that making an arrangement to collect the bins from the inside of the property was not appropriate. Further action is being undertaken to ensure the bins are correctly placed without the need for the Refuse Team to enter the property.

Bereavement

1. Complaint against Bereavement Services

Response – 20 working days

Complaint not upheld

Complaint

The complainant contacted the Council and complained that they had been asked to remove items from a family member's grave plot.

Council's response

The Bramcote Bereavement Team had appropriately requested that the grave be returned to its original state as per the terms of the Notice of Internment and the Cemetery Rules and Regulations.

The Bramcote Bereavement Team had requested that the grave be returned to its original state in order for maintenance of the site to be completed correctly and to ensure that the cemetery is a safe environment for other visitors. This decision was informed by the guidance provided by the Institute of Cemetery and Crematorium Management.

The Notice of Internment, which was signed by the grave owner, states that Kerbing/Edging/Planting is not permitted on any grave.

Assistant Director Comments

The Council sympathised that being asked to remove the items was distressing. However, as the agreement had been signed to not install additional items around the grave the appropriate action was taken in requesting that they be removed.

2. Complaint against Bereavement Services

Response – 20 working days

Complaint not upheld

Complaint

The complainant contacted the Council and complained that the Bereavement Team advised that a dog could attend an ash scattering services. However, when attending the dog was refused access to the gardens where the ashes were scattered.

Council's response

The Council had correctly informed the complainant that dogs are not permitted into the area where ashes are scattered. This in line with the policy and procedures of the Crematorium. Furthermore, there was no information to suggest that prior notification was provided to the Crematorium Team that a dog was attending.

The complainant's correspondence and booking of the ash scattering service was undertaken through a funeral director. No direct correspondence had occurred between the complaint and the Bereavement Team.

As part of the complaint, the Council has reminded all funeral directors that use the Council's Services that dogs are not permitted to attend ash scattering services.

Assistant Director Comments

The Council is required to follow process defined by the Crematorium's policies and procedure. This ensures fair treatment of all users.

Appendix 3

Stage 3 - Ombudsman Complaint**1. Complaint against Revenues (this was investigated by the LGO directly without following the Council's Complaint Policy)****Complaint Upheld.**Complaint

The concern raised was that the Council had adequately dealt with the complainant's vulnerabilities when dealing with their Council Tax account.

Ombudsman's conclusion

The Housing Ombudsman determined that the Council had not adequately considered the complainant's vulnerabilities when issuing Council Tax reminders and summons. The complainant had notified the Council Tax of the need for assistance and information was provided to the complainant of what support could be offered. However, the LGO determined that the information was not sufficient to assist the complainant with their vulnerabilities to manage their Council Tax account.

The LGO ordered the Council to issue £250 compensation. The Complainant has yet to accept this offer despite several reminders being issued by the Council and the LGO.

2. Complaint against Housing Operations (complaint concluded in 2023/24)**Complaint Upheld.**Complaint

The concern raised was that the Council had adequately dealt with the complainant's homelessness application.

Ombudsman's conclusion

The LGO determined that the Council had not adequately considered the complainant's homelessness application. The LGO determined that the Council failed to use its discretion when assessing the complainant's homelessness. Furthermore, the LGO stated that the Council had failed to evidence its decision making and its communication with the complainant about her housing banding.

The LGO ordered the Council to issue £3,000 compensation and this was undertaken.

As part of the complaint, the Council had provided case law to the LGO to support its position. However, the LGO did not believe this to be relevant.

3. Complaint against Planning (complaint concluded in 2023/24)

Complaint not Upheld.

Complaint

The concern raised was that the Council had adequately dealt with the complainant's complaint regarding a Planning Enforcement issue.

Ombudsman's conclusion

The LGO determined that they would not investigate the complaint about how the Council dealt with breaches of planning control. This is because they were unlikely to find fault with the Council's handling of the issue.

4. Complaint against Legal Services (this was investigated by the LGO directly without following the Council's Complaint Policy)

Complaint not Upheld.

Complaint

The concern raised was that the Council had adequately dealt with the complainant's complaint regarding a member standards issue.

Ombudsman's conclusion

The LGO determined that they would not investigate the complaint about how the Council dealt with its member standards issue. This is because they were unlikely to find fault with the Council's handling of the issue.

The LGO does not provide an appeal against the Monitoring Officer's decisions.

Stage 3 - Ombudsman Complaint

5. Complaint against Housing Repairs (complaint concluded in 2023/24)

Complaint Upheld.

Complaint

The concern raised was that the Council had not adequately dealt an issue of damp and mould.

Ombudsman's conclusion

The Housing Ombudsman (HO) concluded that the resident experienced damp and mould in the property for a significant period (since November 2019) and spent considerable time and trouble pursuing a resolution. Within the Council's responses, the HO acknowledged that the Council had not disputed that the Council failed to identify and resolve the damp within the property over several years, and that the Council had not communicated effectively, meaning that the resident needed to continue to report the damp. It was

recognised that the Council also acknowledged that it had not scheduled or logged the required works correctly which exacerbated the issues and led to further delay and distress.

The HO acknowledged that the Council had taken steps to put things right for the resident by acknowledging the delay and disruption caused, and offering a total of £4,380 compensation within its complaint responses. This offer is significant and is within a range the Ombudsman considers proportionate in instances of severe maladministration where there has been a serious impact on a resident and the redress required to put things right is considerable.

The HO order the Council to pay an additional £250 in recognition of the distress caused to the complainant.

6. Complaint against Planning (complaint concluded in Q1)

Complaint not Upheld.

Complaint

The concern raised was that the Council had not adequately dealt with a planning application. The complainant also raised concerns that information was removed from the Council's website and the Council prepared misleading and incorrect reports.

Ombudsman's conclusion

The Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGO) noted that the complainant had raised many concerns about how the Council had dealt with a planning application for a development in the area where they live. The Council refused planning permission for the development. However, the developer used their right to appeal to the Planning Inspector. The complainant had complained about incorrect information included within the planning report and raised concerns about misleading information being provided to the Planning Inspector.

However, the acceptability of the development would now be determined by the Planning Inspector. The LGO cannot investigate decisions made by the Inspector. It was noted that the complainant also had the opportunity to comment on the appeal and raise their concerns about the application.

The LGO cannot investigate decisions made by the Planning Inspector and there was no evidence of fault by the Council.

7. Complaint against Housing Repairs (complaint concluded in 2023/24)**Complaint Upheld.**Complaint

The concern raised was that the Council had not adequately dealt an issue of a leak at the complainant's property.

Ombudsman's conclusion

The Housing Ombudsman (HO) concluded that the first leak of February 2021 was attended within the landlord's emergency timescale of 3 working days, which was reasonable, and the hole in the kitchen ceiling was repaired within 20 working days, which was also reasonable.

However, there remained outstanding remedial work to the kitchen ceiling between February 2021 and June 2023. This was an unreasonable period of approximately 18 months beyond the Council's Repair Policy timescale of 20 working days for routine repairs.

The HO recognised that the Council had not disputed its repairing responsibilities in this case. The Council acknowledged delays in its repair services and explained that this was due to the works not being passed on to its operatives after being logged by the resident and inspectors. The Council apologised and acknowledged that it had not provided a reasonable repair service.

The HO ordered the Council to pay £900 in recognition of the distress caused to the complainant.