

Annual Complaints Report

Corporate Complaints

1 April 2023 - 31 March 2024

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Summary of complaints received

Environment, Sustainability and Leisure

2535 Stage One Complaints Received
170 Stage Two Investigations Received
20 Ombudsman Cases Received

Resources

1971 Stage One Complaints Received
155 Stage Two Investigations Received
13 Ombudsman Cases Received

Housing

8012 Stage One Complaints Received
1363 Stage Two Investigations Received
106 Ombudsman Cases Received

Children and Adults

346 Stage One Complaints Received
66 Stage Two Investigations Received
3 Ombudsman Cases Received

Governance and Assurance

21 Stage One Complaints Received
2 Stage Two Investigations Received
0 Ombudsman Cases Received

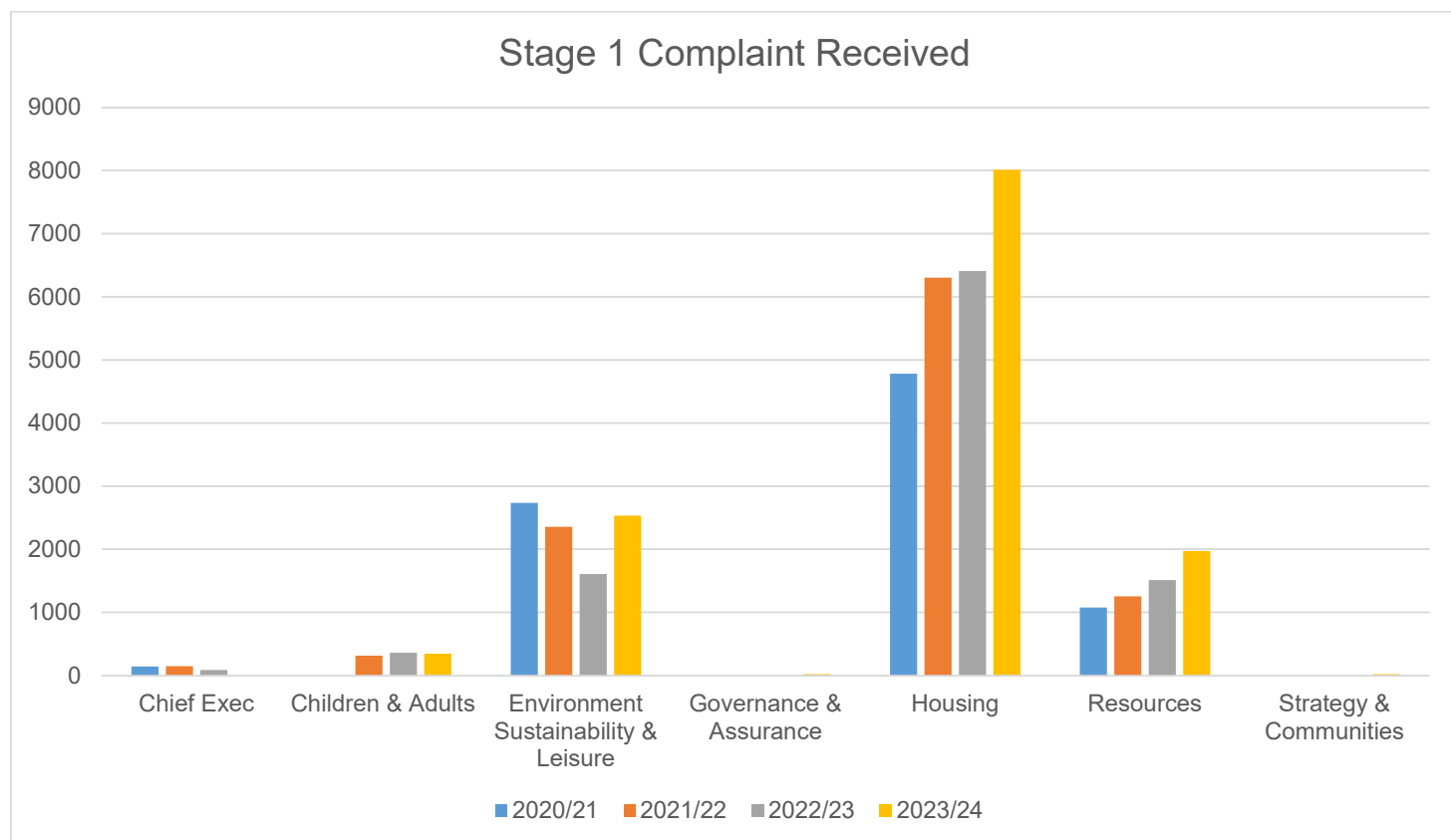
Strategy and Communities

5 Stage Once Complaints Received
0 Stage Two Investigations Received
0 Ombudsman Cases Received

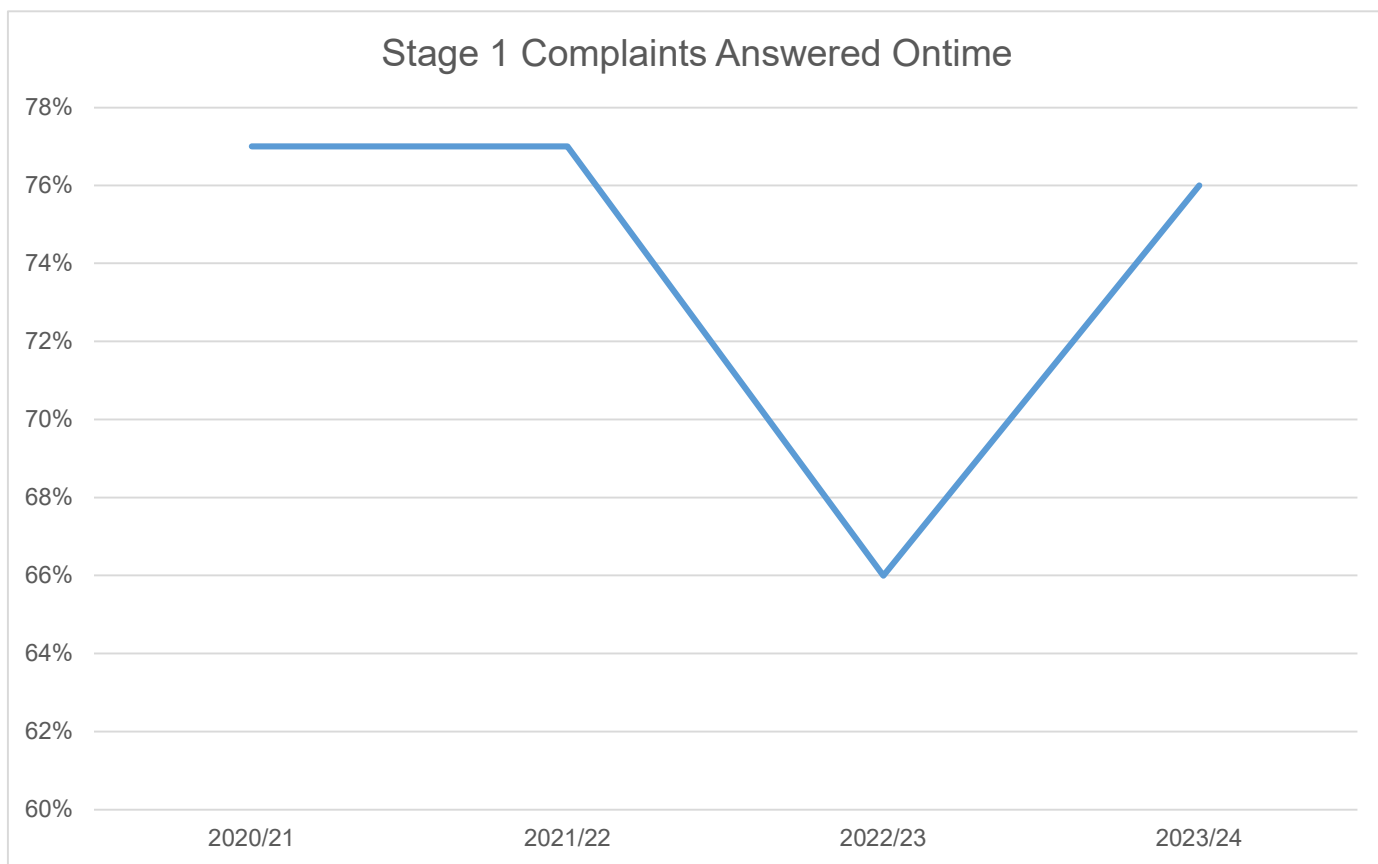
Preface

This report covers the three Directorates receiving the most Corporate Complaints for which the Corporate Complaints Policy applies. Governance and Assurance, and Strategy and Communities are comprised mainly of internal services, therefore the Corporate Complaints Policy does not apply to those services, they are therefore not discussed in great detail in this report. Children and Adults Services are reported separately, and this can be found here [Children and Adults Services Complaints Annual Report 2023-2024 \(1\).pdf](#)

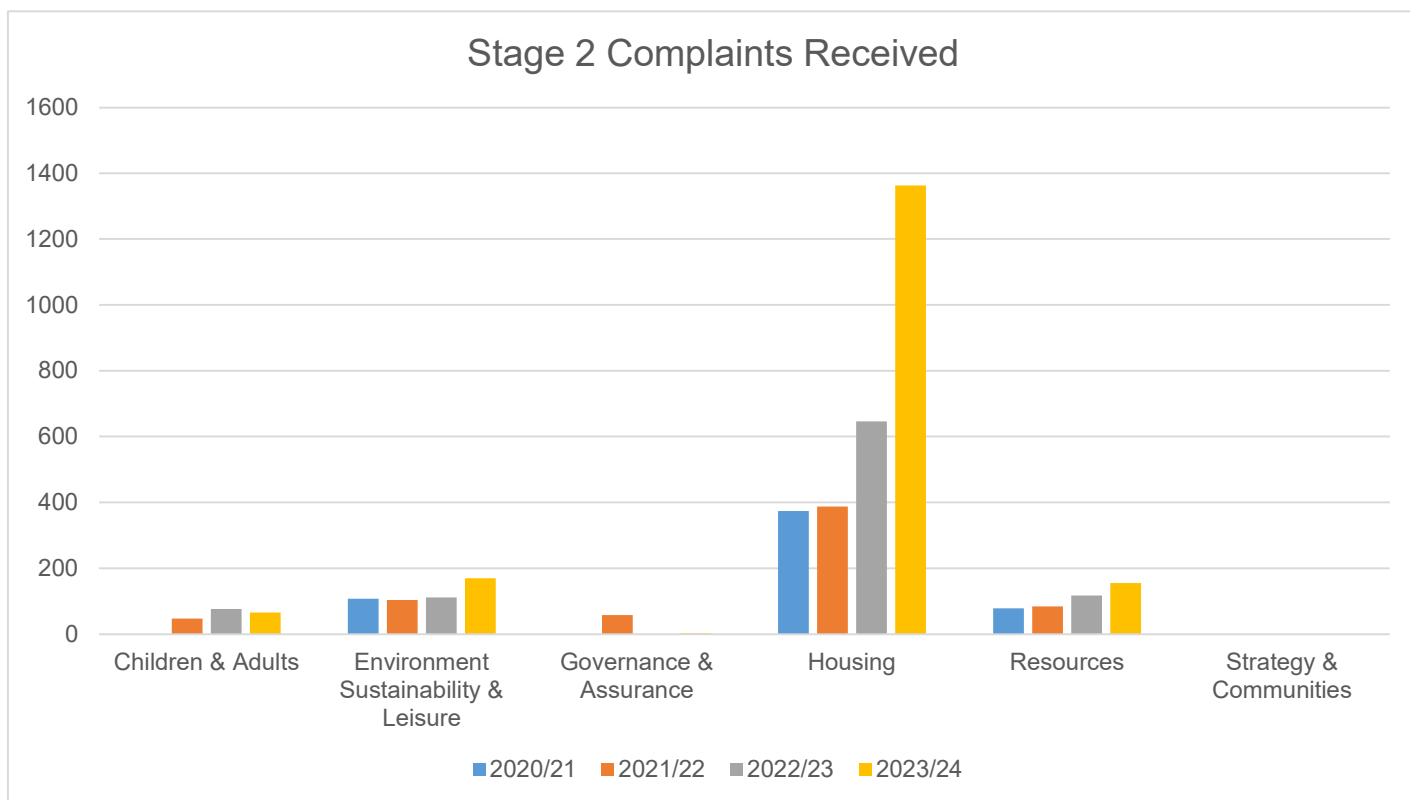
Council Wide Performance



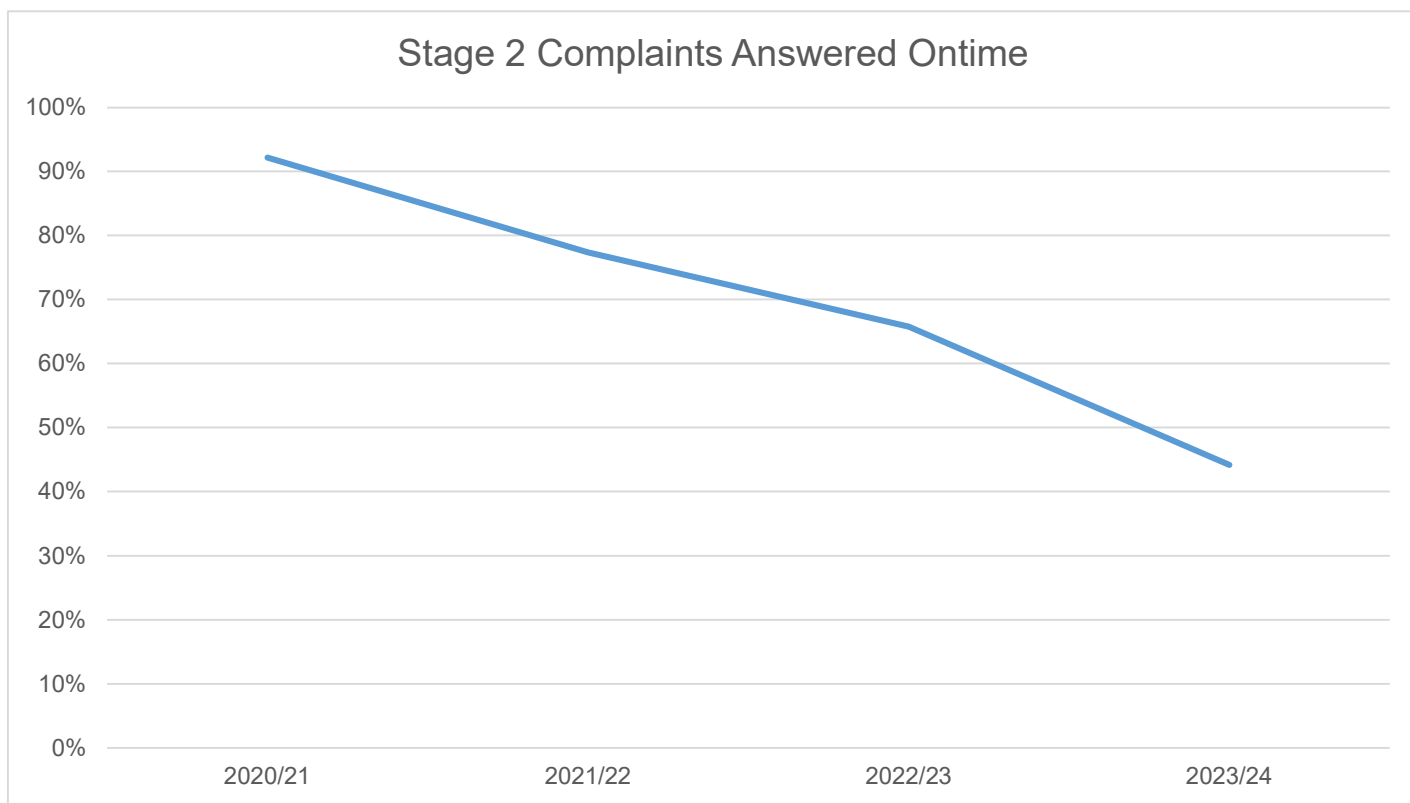
The Council received 12,599 complaints in 2023/2 compared to 9,616 in 2022/23, this is a 31% increase. All Directorates experienced an increase in complaints received.



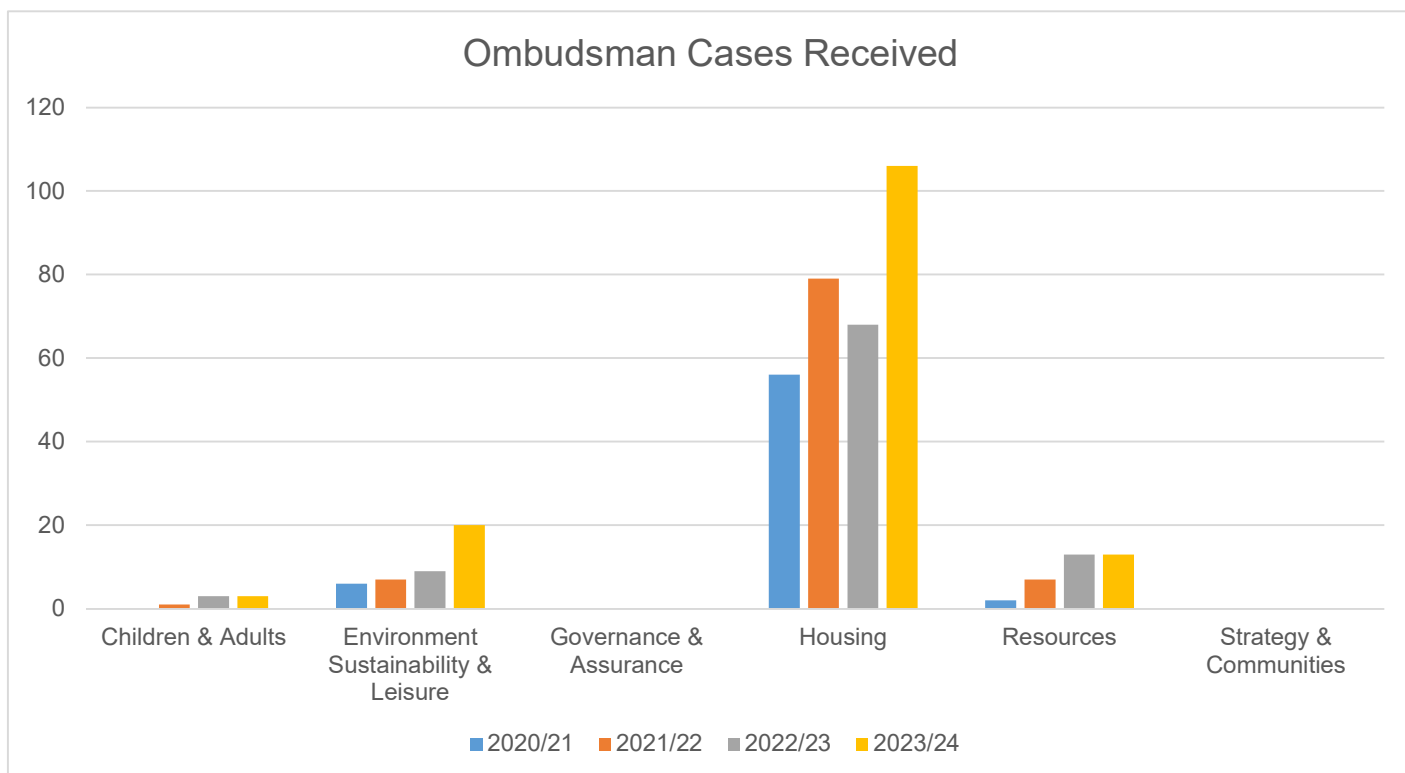
Performance of stage 1 complaints responded to on time improved from 2022/23 with a 10% increase in performance.



There has been a significant increase in the number of complaints received at Stage 2, the council received over 800 more complaints at stage 2 in 2023/24 (1734) than in 2022/23 (909). Housing, Resources and Environment Sustainability and Leisure all had increased escalations.

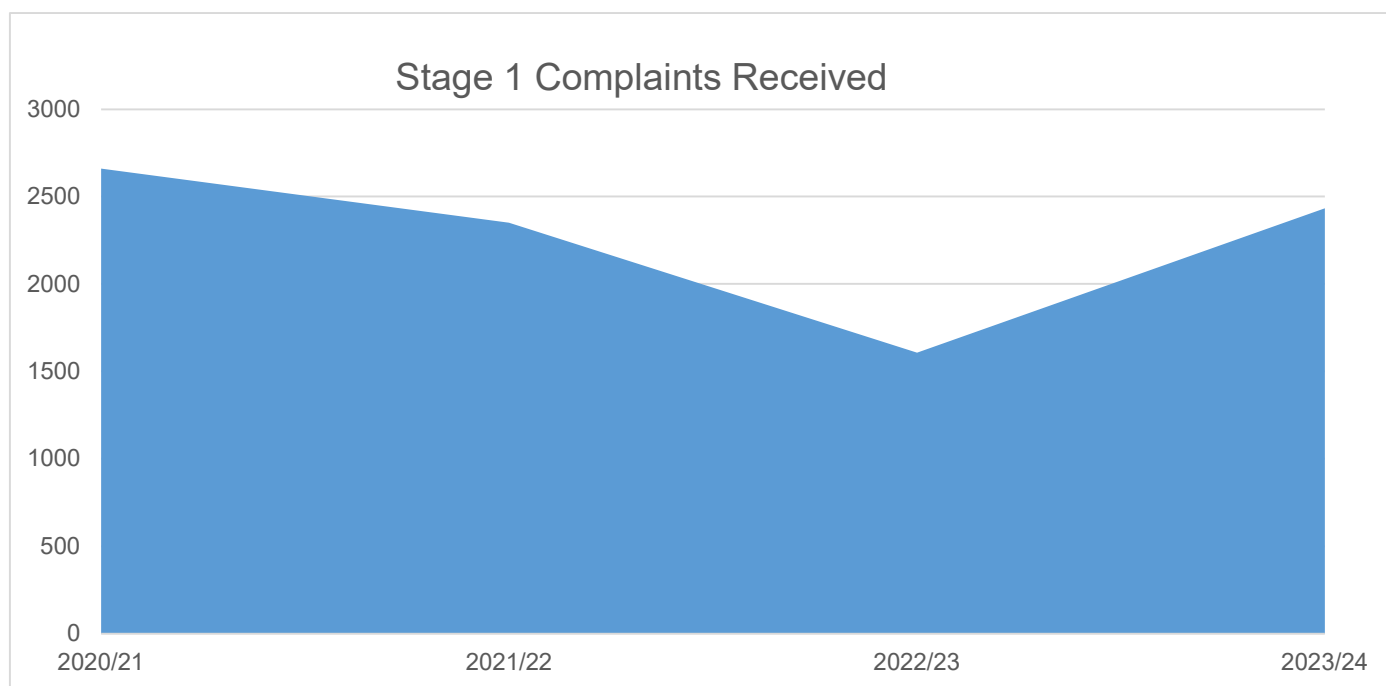


With a significant increase in caseload the performance of stage 2 complaints closed on time fell from 66% in 2022/23 to 44% in 2023/24.



The council received 142 ombudsman cases from both the Housing and Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman in 2023/24, this is an increase of 52% from 2022/23 (93). All areas received an increase in ombudsman cases in 2023/24. A further breakdown of the outcome of these cases can be found under the departments in the following report.

Environment, Sustainability and Leisure Stage One Complaints

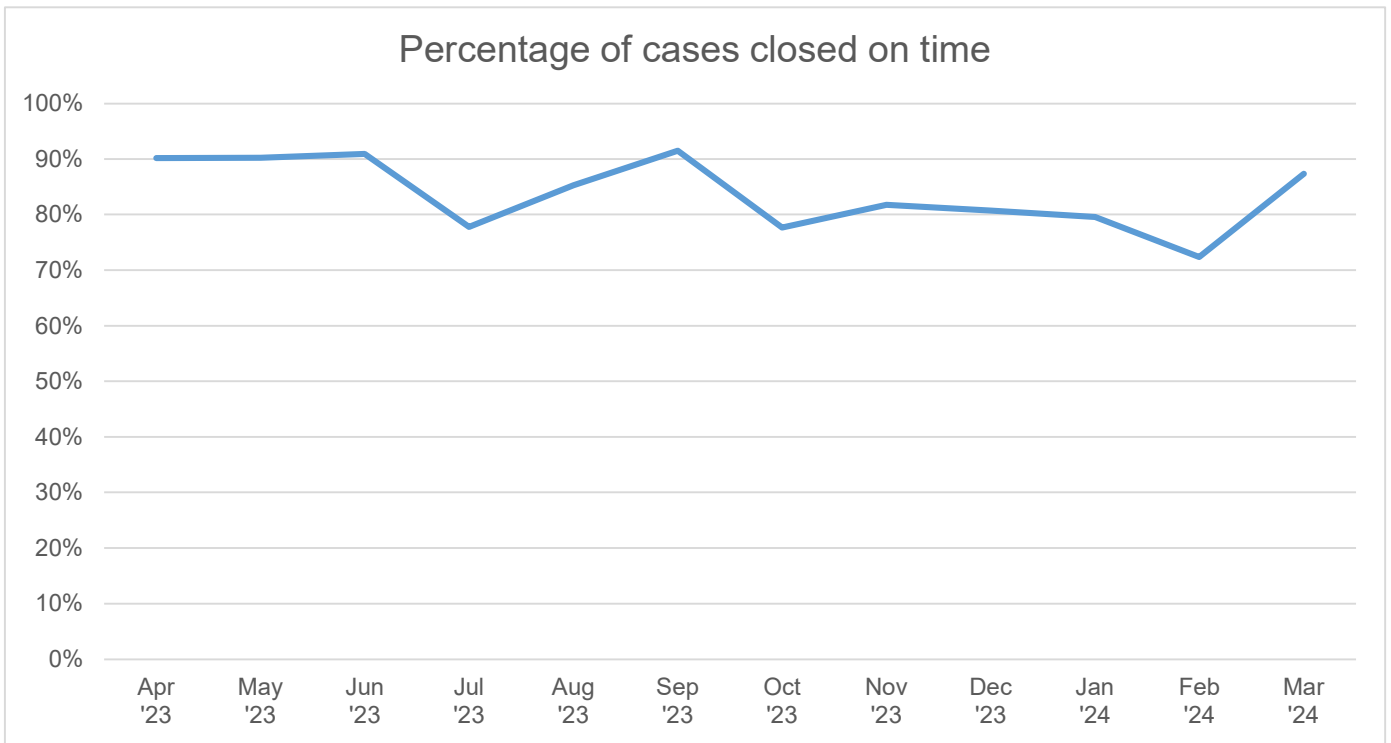


ESL received over 50% more complaints in 2023/24 than in 2022/23.

Stage 1 complaints received by Division

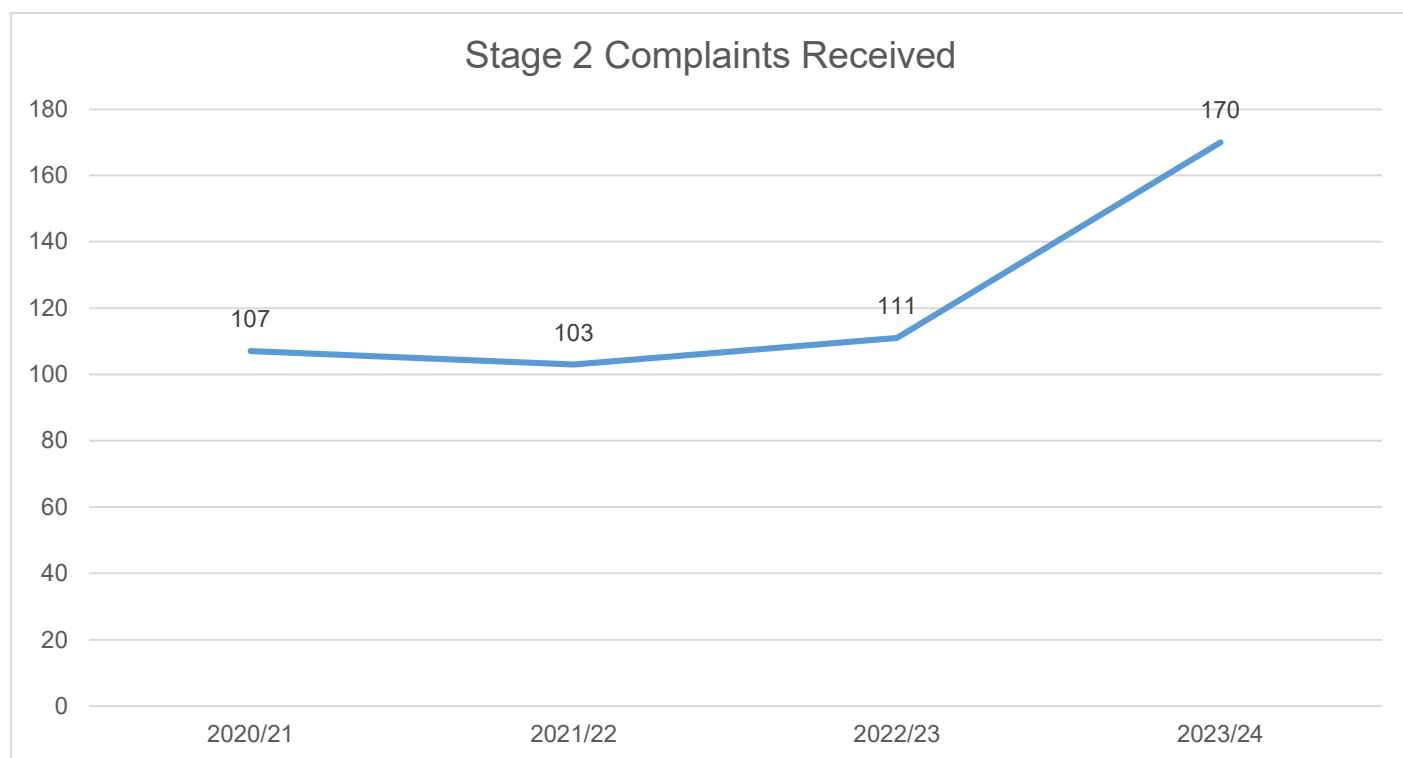
Division / Business Unit	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
Climate Change		13	7	0
Highways	248	206	297	524
Leisure	197	213	179	319
Parking & Network Management	623	470	210	421
Regulatory Services	214	226	145	202
Stronger Neighbourhoods	41	34	3	17
Traded Services	186	208	156	157
Waste and Cleaning	1193	981	609	792
Total	2661	2351	1606	2432

Parking and Network Management has the highest increase in stage 1 complaints from 2022/23 to 2023/24. This was due to Controlled Parking Zones (CPZ) and an increase in PCNs (Parking Charge Notice) issued.



Performance from ESL on stage 1 complaints answered on time has remained above 70% for the whole of 2023/24, with a YTD performance of 83%

Environment, Sustainability and Leisure Stage Two Complaints Received



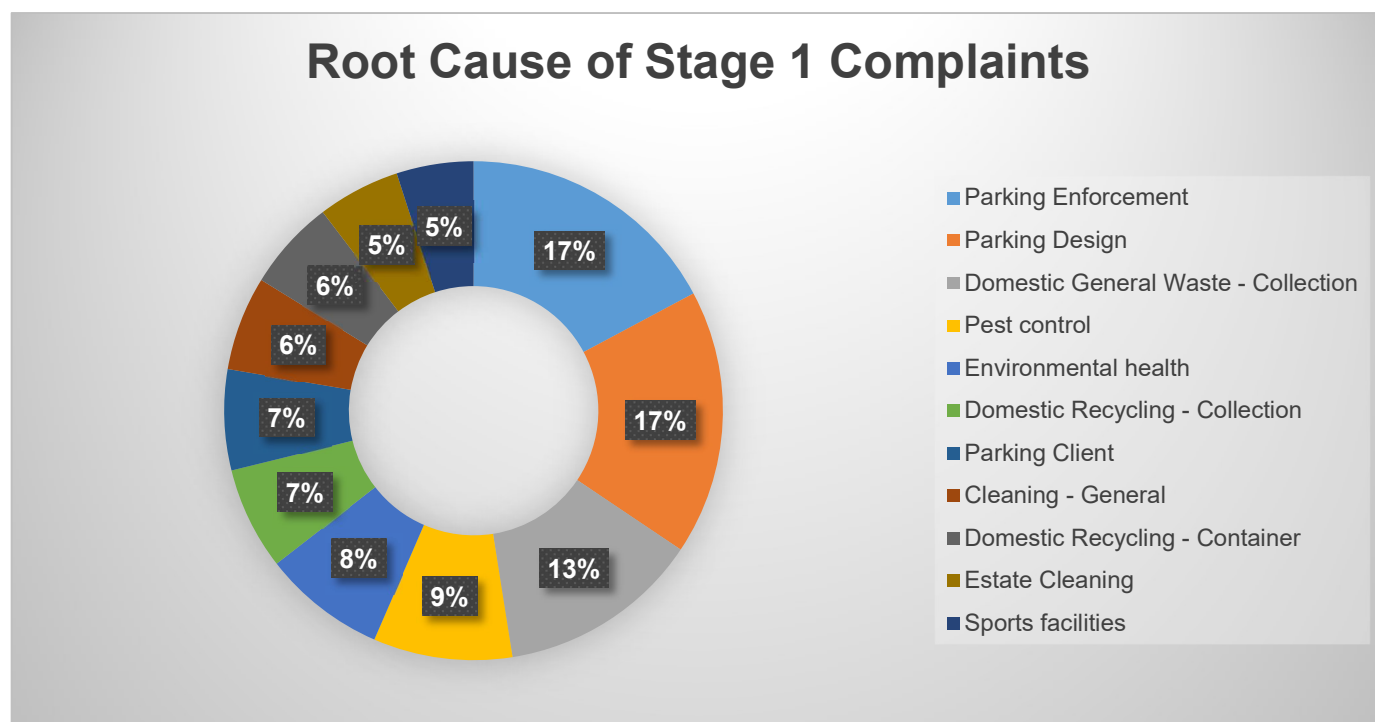
The number of stage 2 complaints received for ESL increased by 50% in 2023/24.

Environment, Sustainability and Leisure Ombudsman

	Closed after initial enquiries - invalid	Closed after initial enquiries - no injustice	Closed after initial enquiries - out of jurisdiction	Referred back for local resolution	Upheld: Maladministration and Injustice	Grand Total
Communities			1			1
Environment	1	6	3	1		11
Highways		1	1			2
Regulatory Services			2			2
Traded Services					1	1
Waste and Cleaning		1				1
Total	1	8	7	1	1	18

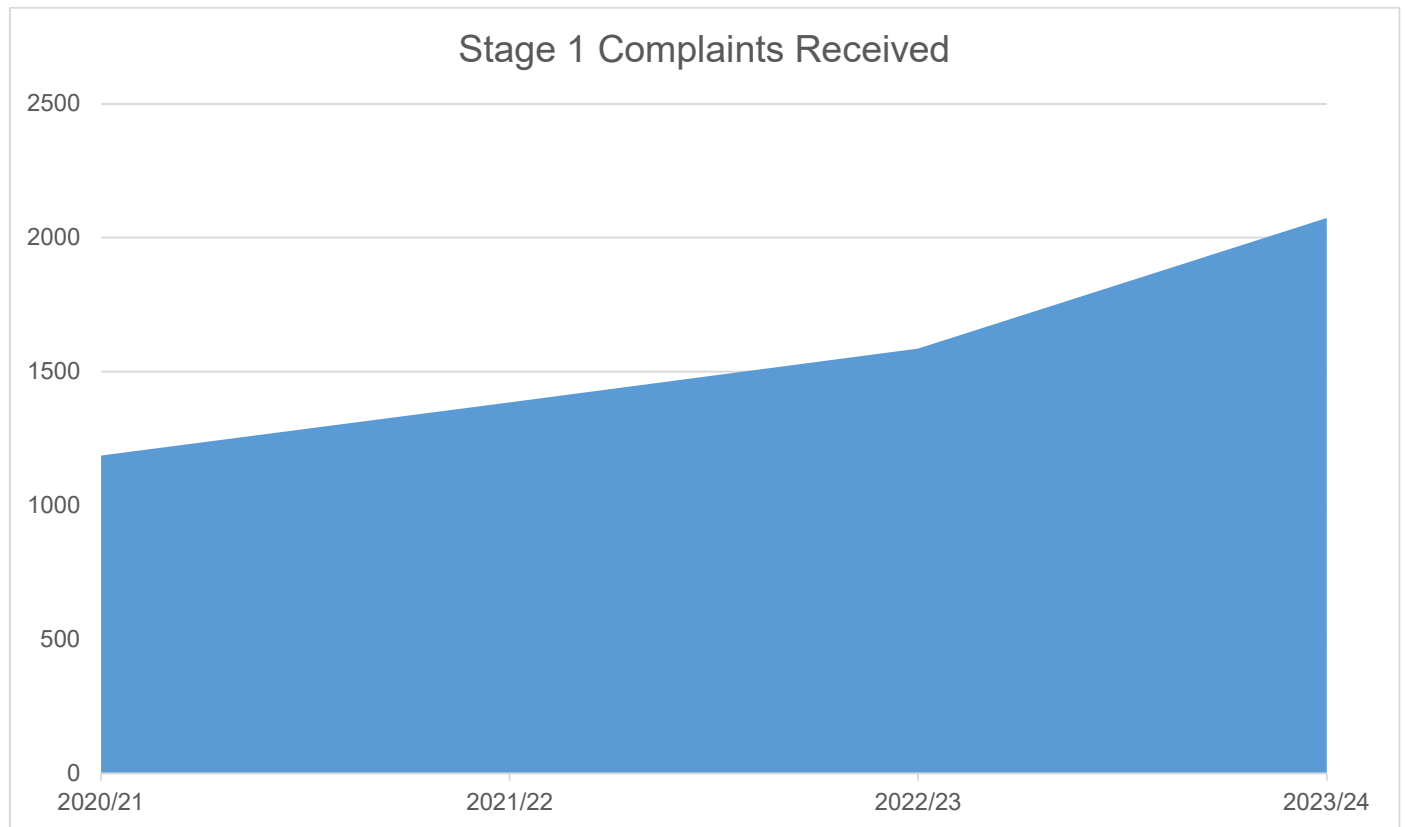
ESL has received 1 finding of maladministration from the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman, an upheld rate of 5%.

Environment, Sustainability and Leisure Root Cause Analyses



The above chart shows the top 10 classifications of stage 1 complaints for ESL.

Resources Stage One Complaints

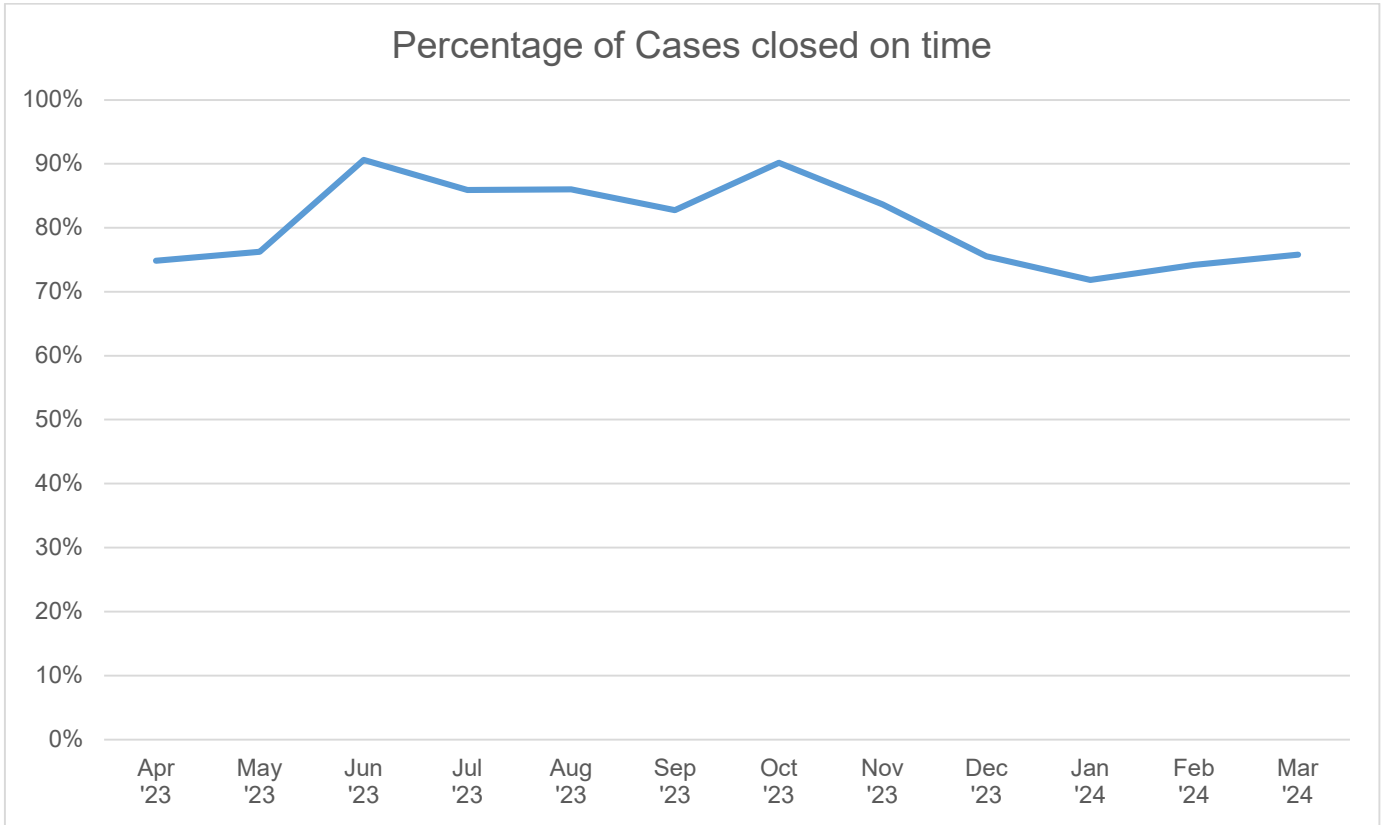


Resources received a 30% increase in stage 1 complaints received in 2023/24 (2074) compared to 2022/21 (1586).

Stage 1 Complaints received by Division

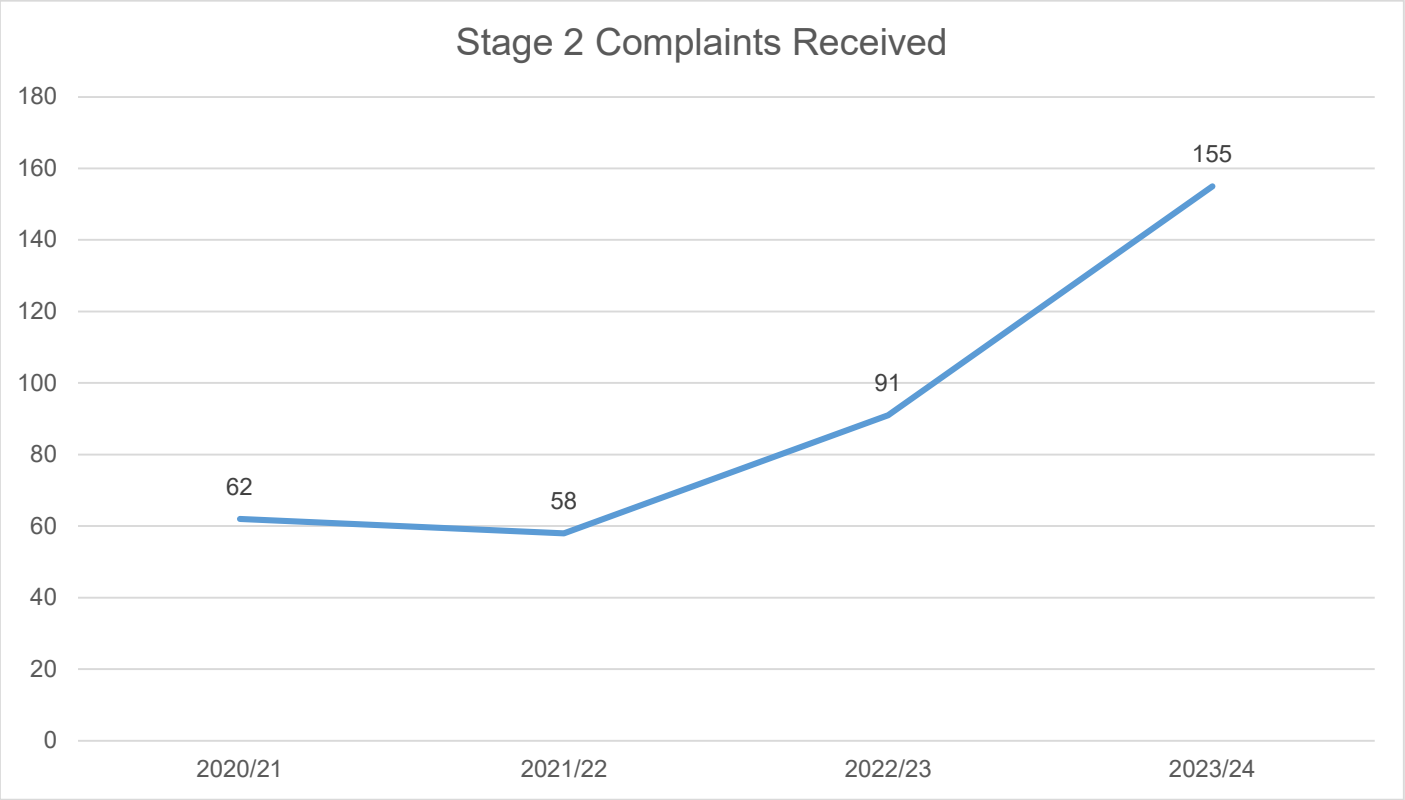
Division / Business Unit	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
Customer and Exchequer	1039	1217	1488	1949
Pension Services	25	19	11	13
Professional Finance Services	2	4	6	9
Planning and Growth	121	145	81	103
Total	1187	1385	1586	2074

All departments received an increase in stage 1 complaints received.



Performance within target has been above 70% for the year, with an average of 80% of complaints answered on time.

Resources Stage Two Complaints Received



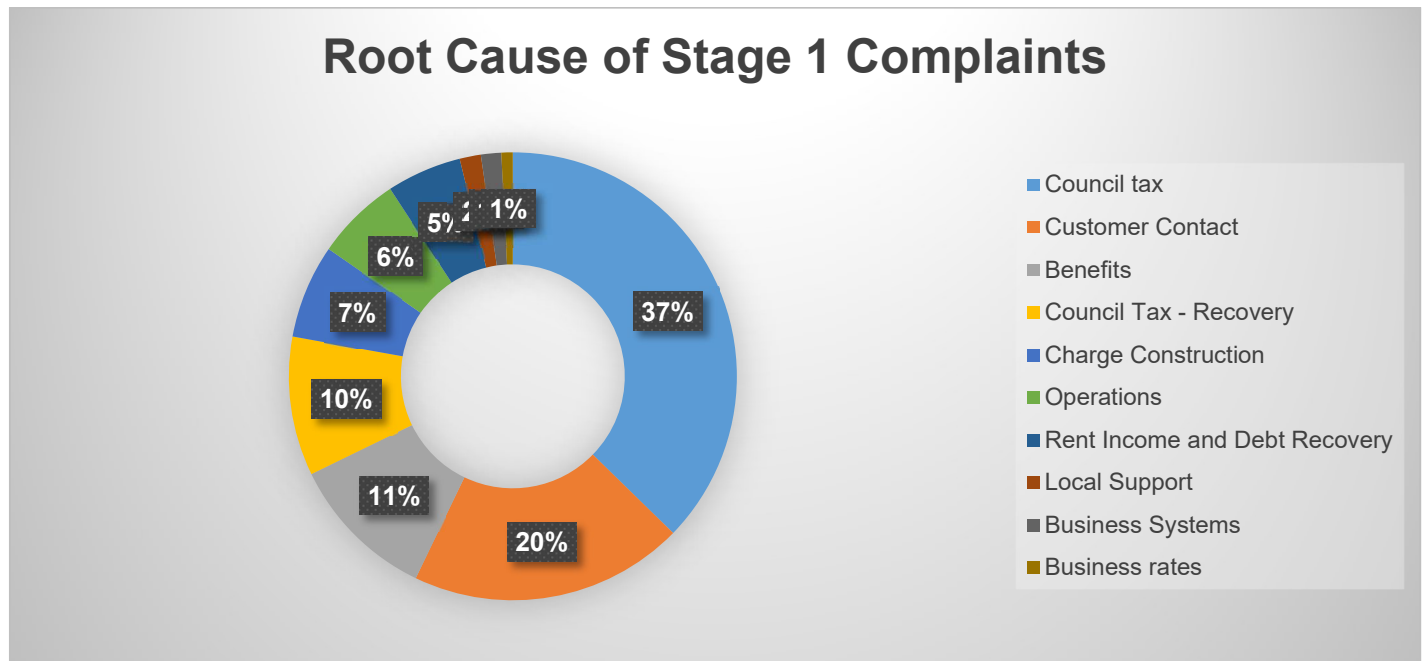
Resources had a 65% increase in stage 2 escalations.

Resources Ombudsman Final Decisions

	Closed after initial enquiries - no injustice	Closed after initial enquiries - out of jurisdiction	Not upheld: No further action	Service Failure	Grand Total
Customer & Exchequer	5	5	1	1	12
Grand Total	5	5	1	1	12

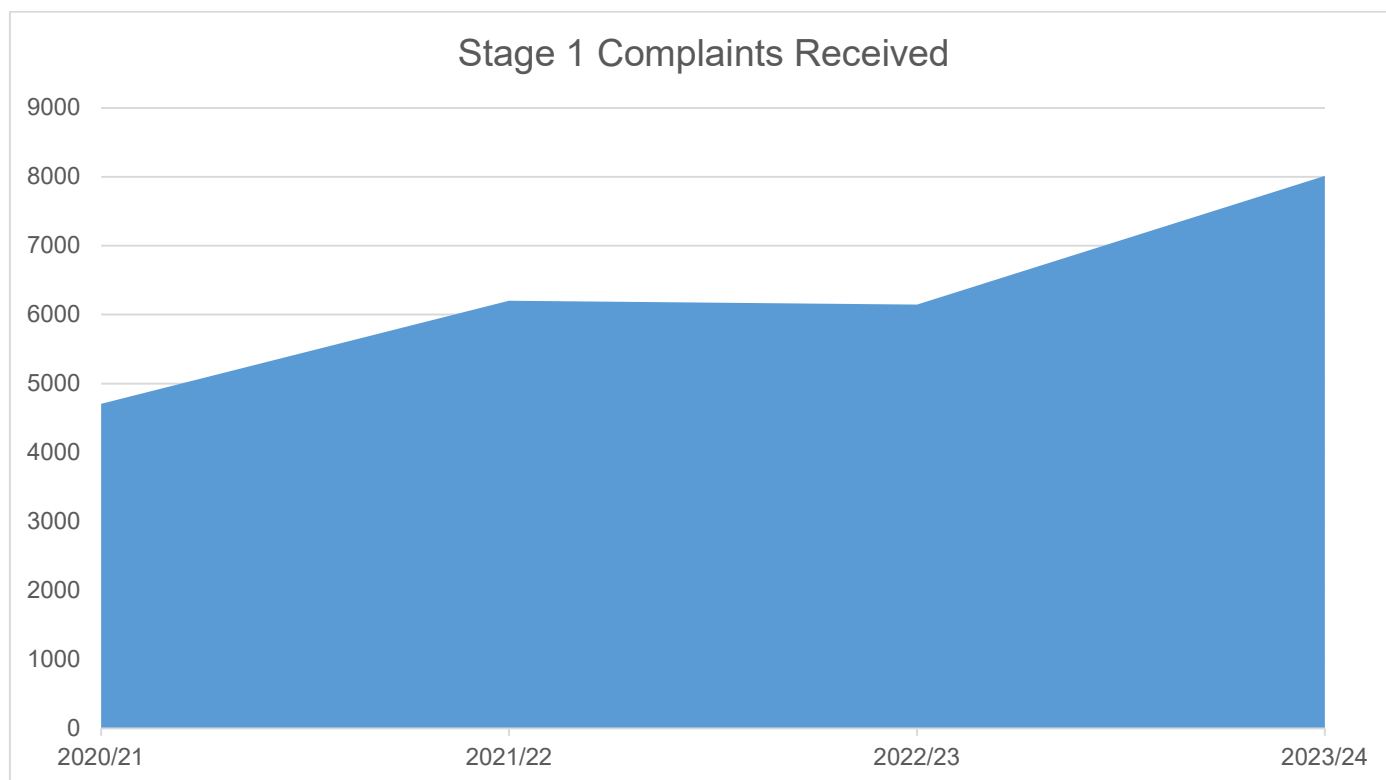
Of the 12 cases that have been determined by the Housing and Local Government and Social Government Ombudsman 1 was found to have had a service failure, an upheld rate of 8%.

Resources Root Cause



Council tax is responsible for 37% of the complaints received by Resources

Housing Stage One Complaints



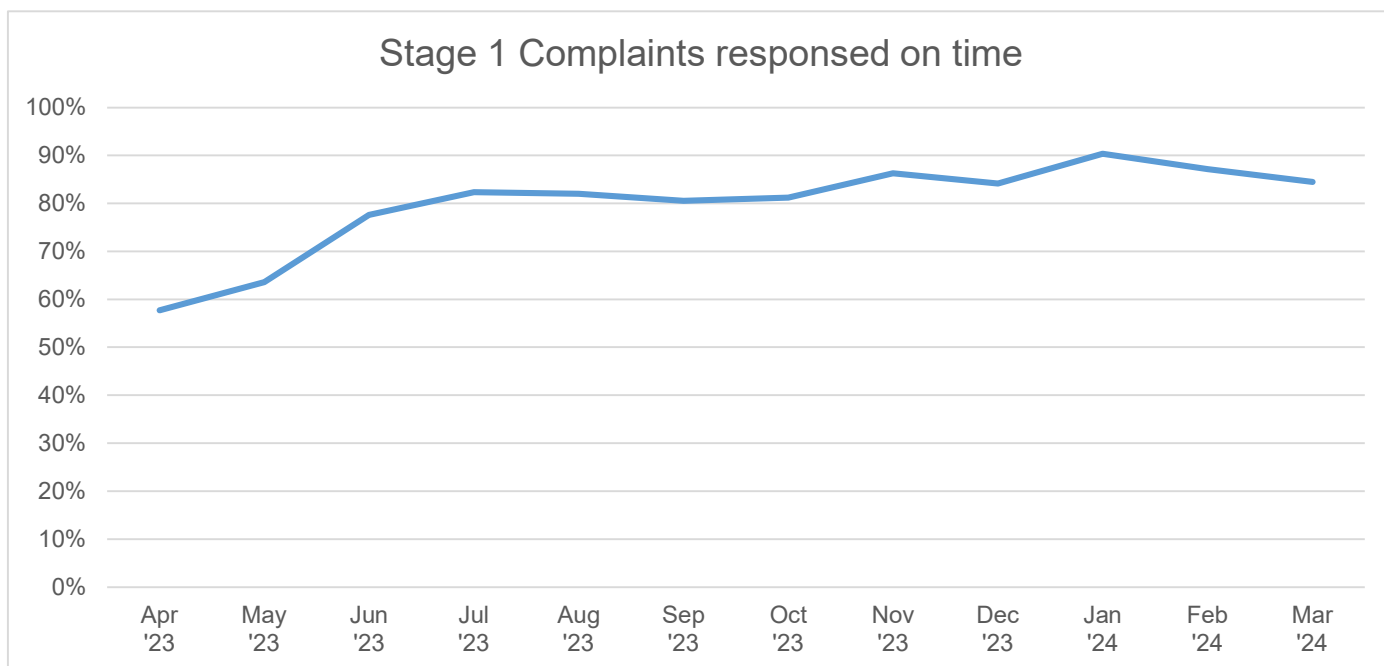
Housing had an increase of 30% stage 1 complaints received in 2023/24 (6143) compared to 2022/23 (8012).

Stage 1 complaints received by Division

Division / Business Unit	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
Asset Management	2821	3806	3832	4327
Customer Experience	1255	541	125	N/A
New Homes		12	19	19
Resident Services	632	1837	2165	3661
Strategy & Business Support		5	2	5
Total	4708	6201	6143	8012

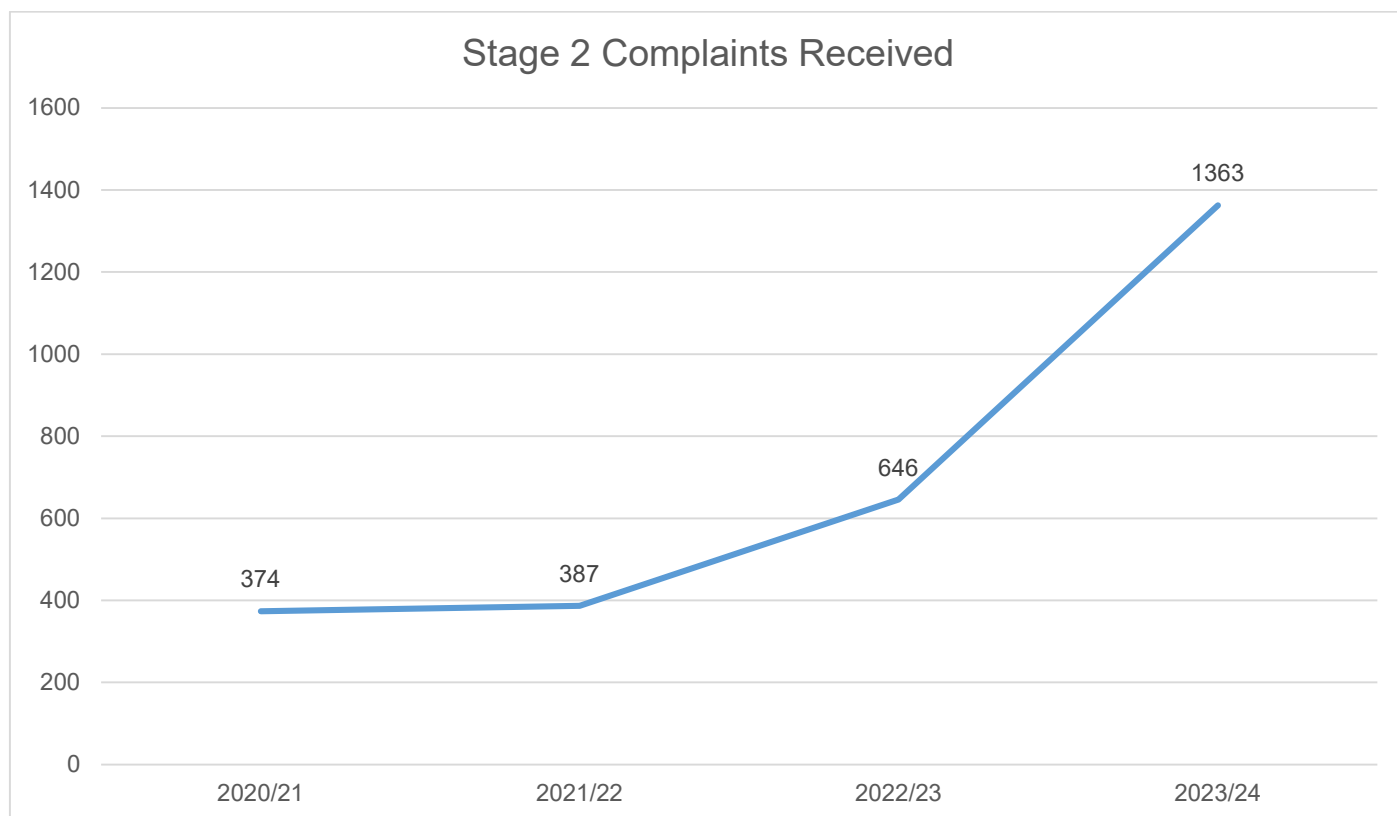
* Following a restructure in 2023 the Customer Experience department was dissolved, before this in 2021/22 it's Housing Solutions Unit moved to Resident Services

All areas except for New Homes received an increase in complaints received.



Performance at the beginning of the year fell below 60%, however the average of cases closed on time for 2023/24 was 73%

Housing Stage Two Complaints



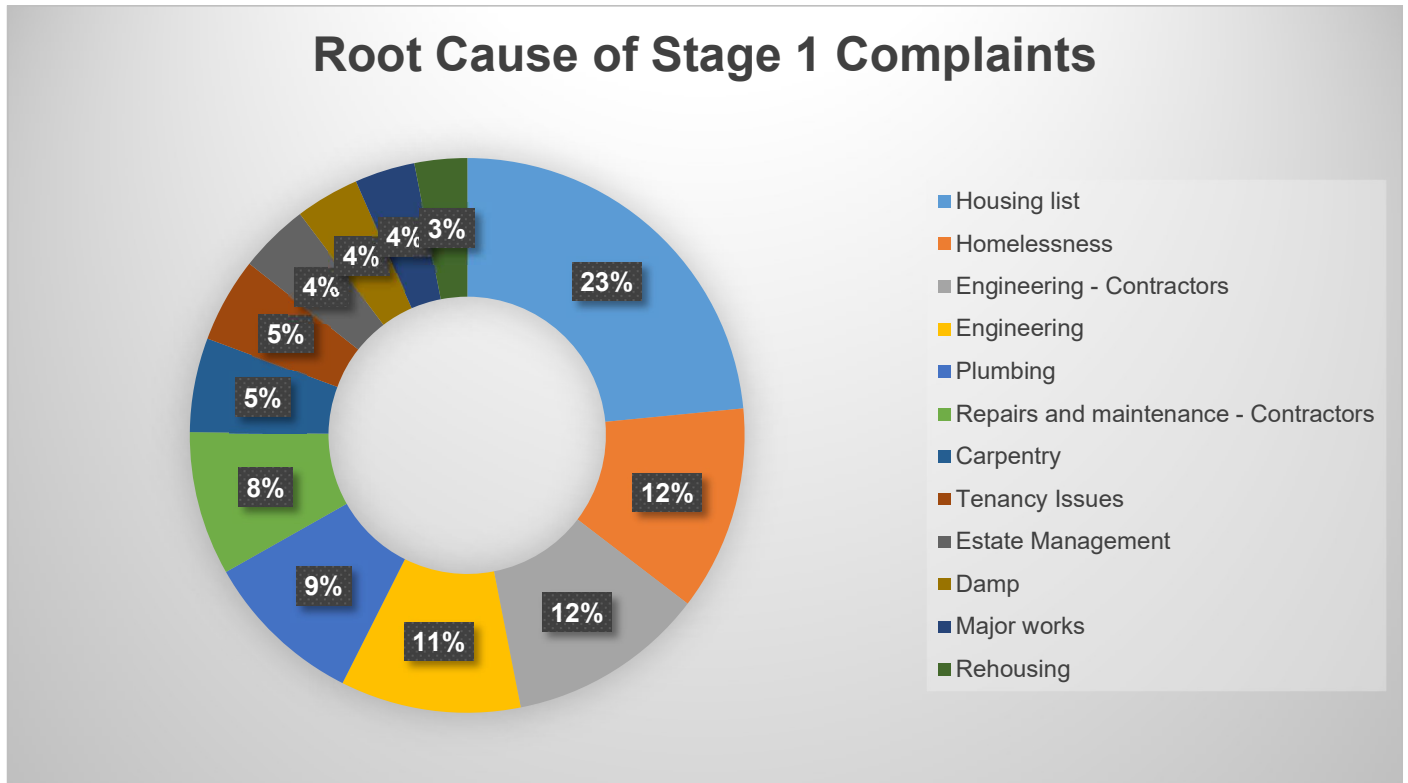
There was a 110% increase in the number of stage 2 complaints for Housing in 2023/24 compared with 2022/23.

Housing Ombudsman Decisions

	Closed after initial enquiries - no injustice	Closed after initial enquiries - out of jurisdiction	Not upheld: No Maladministration	Referred back for local resolution	Severe Maladministration	Upheld: Maladministration and Injustice	Upheld: Maladministration, No Injustice	Upheld: No further action	Grand Total
Asset Management		3	3	2	6	15	5	1	34
Customer Experience			1	1	1	6	1	1	11
Resident Services	10	6	3	3	3	16	2	2	44
Grand Total	10	9	7	6	10	37	8	4	89

Of the 89 cases that have had determinations issued, 55 found service failure, maladministration and severe maladministration, an upheld rate of 61%. 10 of these cases found severe maladministration.

Housing Root Causes



Housing applications and homelessness make up 35% of classifications of complaints within Housing.

Learning from Complaints

Following the Corporate Management restructure in March 2023 a full and thorough review of the complaints process was commissioned within the council. The review commenced in May 2023 and spanned 16 weeks, and included input from Asset Management, Environment, the Contact Centre and Exchequer services.

The review focused on:

- The whole end to end complaint process
- Data from complaints
- The Complaint Handling Code provided by the Housing Ombudsman
- Recent negative decisions from both the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman and the Housing Ombudsman
- Escalation details from complaints

The outcome of the view included

- A full process review has been undertaken, with the creation of a complaints procedure which was co-produced with services
- 497 complaint handling staff attended training
- Complaints Community and Complaint and Member Enquiry board created
- Detailed reporting developed for CMT & Leaders Board, highlighting areas of concern and best practice
- Additional resources deployed at stage 1 and stage 2 to (where possible) manage increases in volume
- Resolution plan process developed for complex complaints that need to be monitored after response provided