



Bolsover District Council

Meeting of the Housing Liaison Board on Monday, 20th January 2025

**Agenda Item 5: Customer Service Compliments, Comments and Complaints
and Standards**

**Report for Housing & Repairs Quarter 3 1st October 2024 to 31st December
2024**

| | |
|---------------------------|----------------------------------------------------|
| Classification | This report is Public. |
| Report By | Customer Service, Standards and Complaints Manager |
| Contact Officer(s) | Customer Standards and Complaints Officer |

PURPOSE/SUMMARY OF REPORT

- To provide information on the Council's performance in relation to its customer service standards, Compliments, Comments and Complaints on behalf of the Housing Management and Repairs services.
 - To provide information on the effective management of complaints and customer requests which is central to excellent customer service and the Council can use to identify improvements within its Housing Management & Repairs services.
 - To provide information on the number of compliments, comments and complaints received for Tenant related matters for the period 1st October 2024 to 31st December 2024.
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REPORT DETAILS

1. Background

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to make Housing Management and Repairs departments and Tenants aware of performance in relation to the effective management of complaints and identifying any improvements.

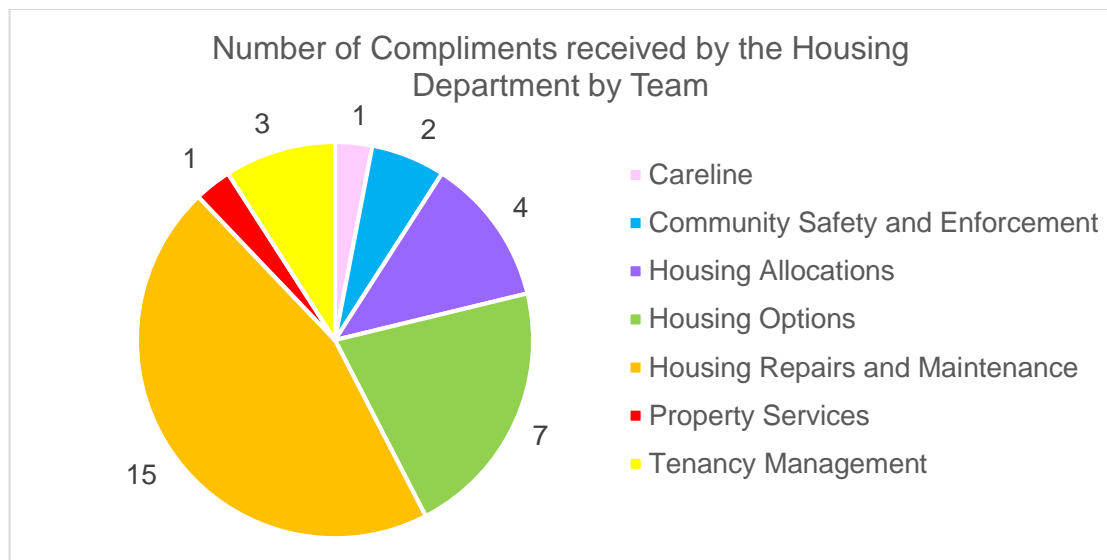
2. Details of Proposal or Information

2.1 Compliments, Comments and Complaints

Some customer contacts/complaints received during Q3 covered more than one service area, therefore when analysing the data by Housing Teams these do not mirror the actual volume of contacts received.

Compliments

In total 30 compliments were received during 1st October 2024 to 31st December 2024. Compliments were received from customers who appreciated excellent service. The pie chart below shows the breakdown across the teams.



When analysing the compliments received in Q3, Dragonfly (Housing Repairs and Maintenance) received the most compliments, followed by Housing Options then Housing Allocations.

As also shown in the Q1 and Q2 data, it is useful to note whilst repairs and maintenance has featured heavily as a core reason for complaint, this shows that a tenant's personal experience of the service by the team appears to influence their bias in response to the Council. There are clearly positives to be taken from the service delivered, as well as areas for improvement.

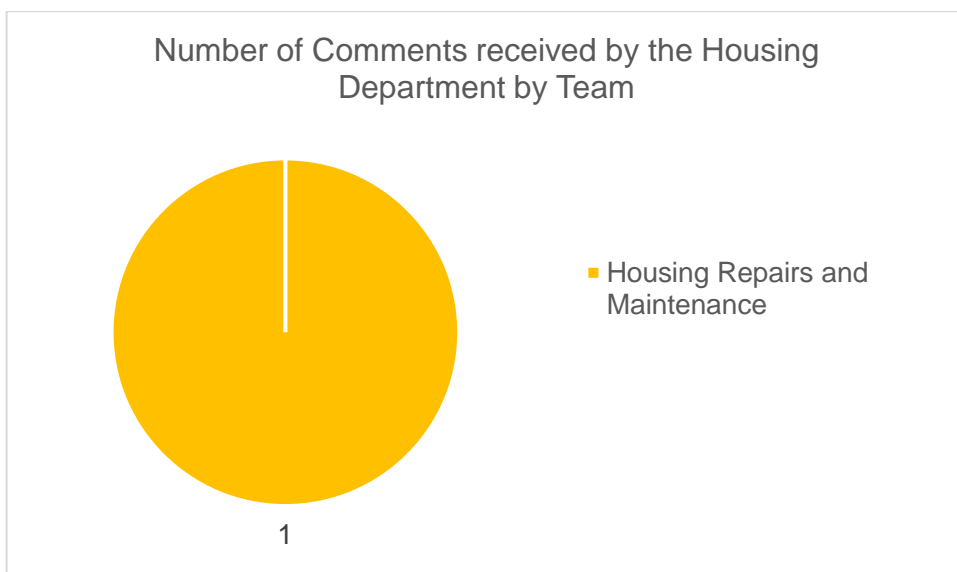
Compliments for Dragonfly were focussed on the Repairs Operatives who were praised for being polite, friendly and efficient. Works carried out by the Operatives were described as described as 'fantastic, amazing, brilliant' and praise was also given for being neat and tidy.

Compliments for Housing Options Team were primarily thanking Officer's for their support, care and help in finding suitable accommodation. The Team was described as 'wonderful' and 'amazing'.

Finally, compliments for the Housing Allocations Team were to thank the Officers in this department for their help, care and support in allocating homes. The service offered was described as both 'amazing' and 'professional'.

Comments

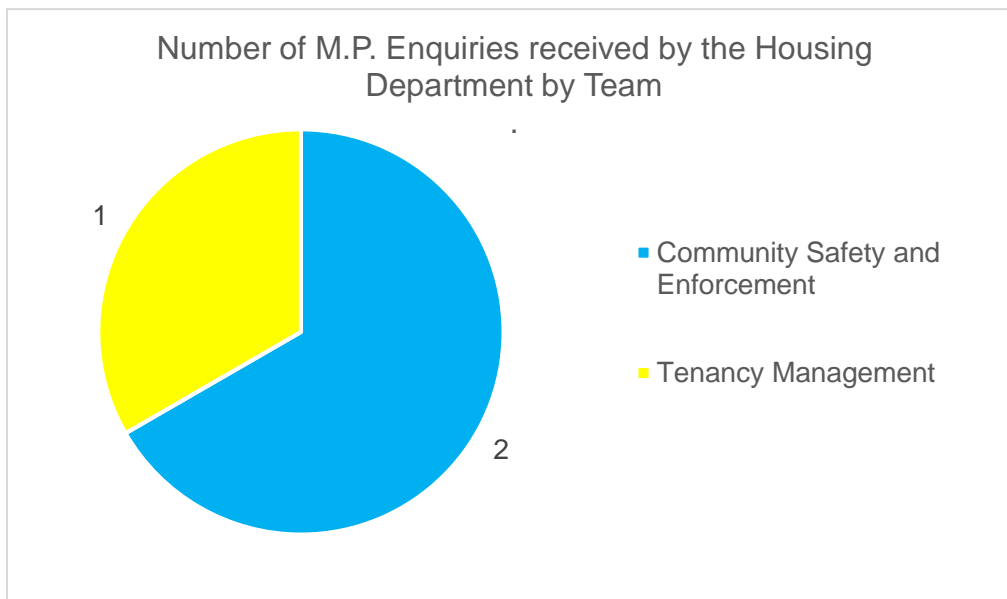
There was 1 written comment received for the period 1st October 2024 to 31st December 2024 and 100% were acknowledged and passed to the respective department within the target time of 5 working days, for consideration when reviewing their service.



This comment was for the Dragonfly (Housing Repairs and Maintenance) and was passed back to the team for further action where a service improvement was made. Unfortunately, no more themes or analysis could be drawn from this data.

MP Enquiries

In the period 1st October 2024 to 31st December 2024, the Housing Management Department received 3 M.P. Enquiries.



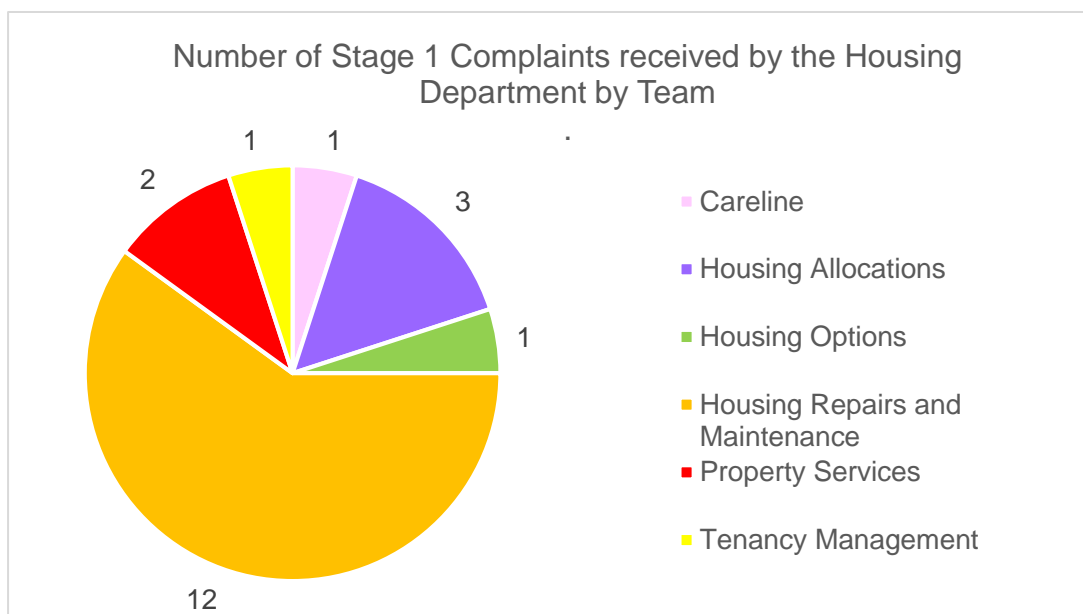
The Community Safety and Enforcement Team received the most M.P. Enquiries, followed by Tenancy Management.

The 2 Community Safety and Enforcement Team M.P. Enquiries were in relation to responses regarding antisocial behaviour within the district.

Complaints – Stage 1

In total 19 Stage 1 Complaints were recorded from the 1st October 2024 to 31st December 2024.

100% Stage 1 Complaints were responded to within our customer standard and the Housing Ombudsman Code of 10 working days.



The chart above shows the breakdown of complaints received by team for those at HOS Stage 1. The largest proportion related to Dragonfly (Housing Repairs and Maintenance) followed by Housing Allocations.

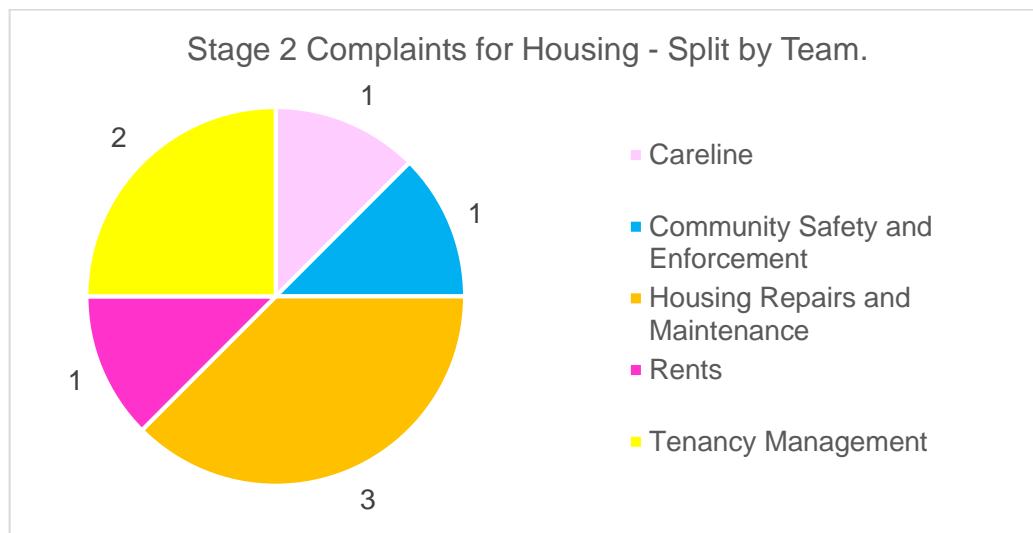
When analysing the themes of Stage 1 complaints, there was a range of reasons complaints were made about Dragonfly Repairs. Themes included lack of action taken by the Council, communication issues and the customer being unhappy with the action taken / standard of the repair.

Complaints made about Housing Allocations were mainly regarding communication with the Team.

Complaints – Stage 2

6 Stage 2 complaints were recorded, from the 1st October 2024 to 31st December 2024. 2 of these complaints were crosscutting over more than one Housing Team.

100% Stage 2 complaints were responded to within our customer service standard and the Housing Ombudsman Code of 20 working days. Up to the point of this data being submitted.



For the complaints received at Stage 2, the largest proportion related to Dragonfly (Housing Repairs and Maintenance), followed by Tenancy Management.

When identifying themes for Stage Two Complaints it was found that all related to different issues so no further analysis could be carried out.

Ombudsman

Neither the Housing Ombudsman (HO) nor the Local Government Ombudsman (LGO) have reviewed any complaints during this period.

Summary for Quarter 3 2024/25

| | October | November | December | Total |
|--------------------|---------|----------|----------|-------|
| Compliments | 9 | 11 | 10 | 30 |
| Comments | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| Stage 1 Complaints | 14 | 2 | 3 | 19 |
| Stage 2 Complaints | 3 | 1 | 2 | 6 |
| MP Enquiries | 0 | 3 | 0 | 3 |

Complaints Feedback

During quarter 3, the following service improvements were implemented as a consequence of complaints.

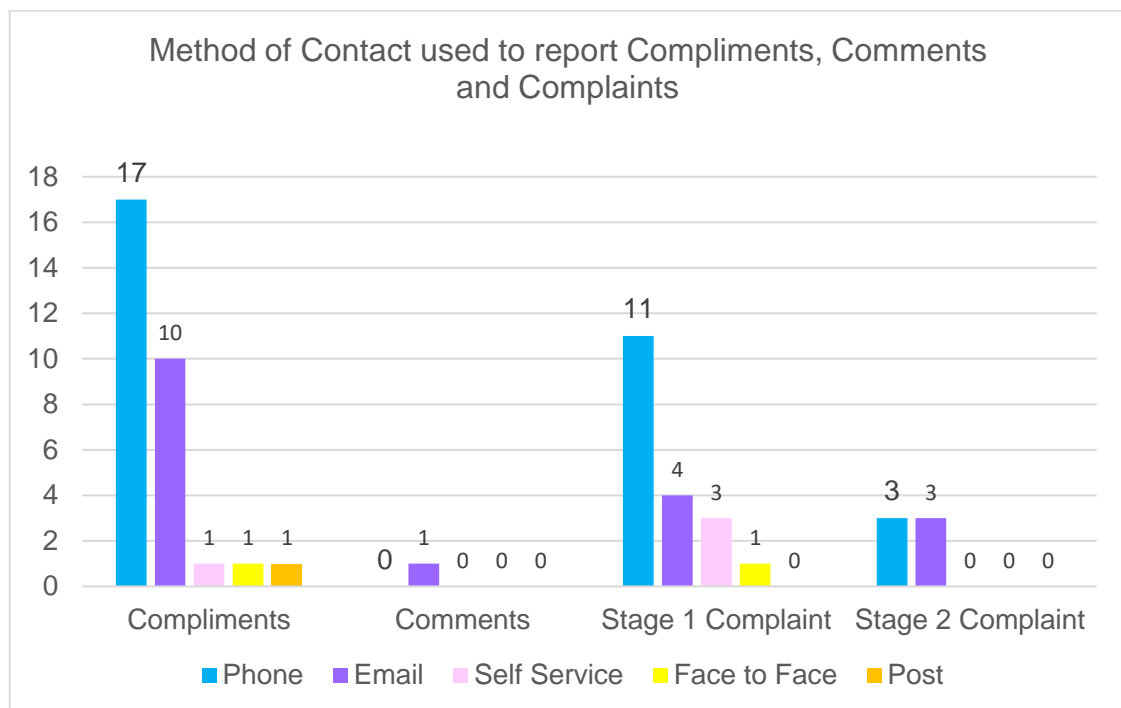
1. Amended the gas safety check letter to advise that both gas and electric will need to be switched on and amended the electrical safety check letter to advise the electric will need to be switched off for a short period.
2. The Repairs system has been updated to ensure that all jobs are locked to a date and the specific Operative.
3. The Repairs Team must double check the appliance type in properties to ensure the correct Operatives and tools are taken to jobs.
4. The Gas Engineer has been spoken with regarding the importance of informing the Office of any further works required in the future.
5. The Repairs Operative in question will be given further training procedures and expectations for customer services and working practices.
6. The Housing Options Team must ensure that any landlord is contacted with updates/information if grants cannot be progressed.

The Council will continue reviewing the data at the Department Service Reviews, to explore themes and discuss any improvements which may have not been reported. The next Service Review for the Housing Department and Dragonfly is scheduled for April 2025.

Method of Contact

For the purposes of analysis, anything written that has come via post has been classed as 'post', this may include letters, thank you cards and feedback on posted surveys or forms.

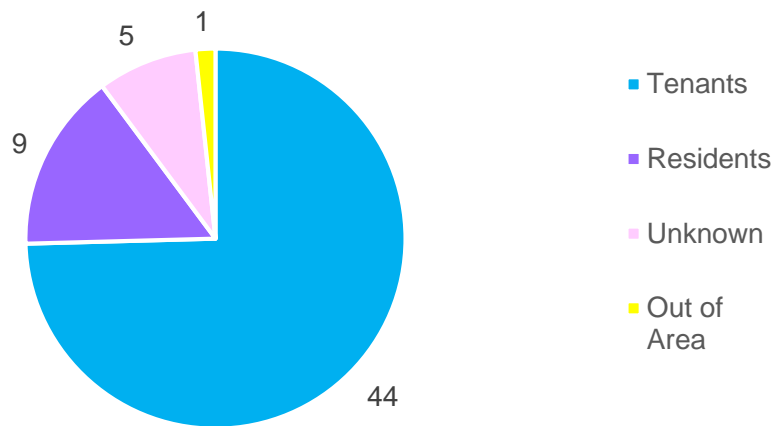
When analysing how customers contact the Council to pass on a compliment, a comment or make a complaint, most compliments were via telephone followed by email. The one comment made was by email. Most Stage 1 Complaints were made via telephone, followed by email then self-service. Stage 2 Complaints were equally made via telephone as they were email. This is interesting as through previous tenant surveys it has shown that tenants prefer contact via post/letter however the preferred method of contacting the Council in relation to complaints is telephone or email. It is worth noting that M.P. Enquiries have not been reported on in the below graph as all M.P. Enquiries are sent via email.



Tenants' vs Residents

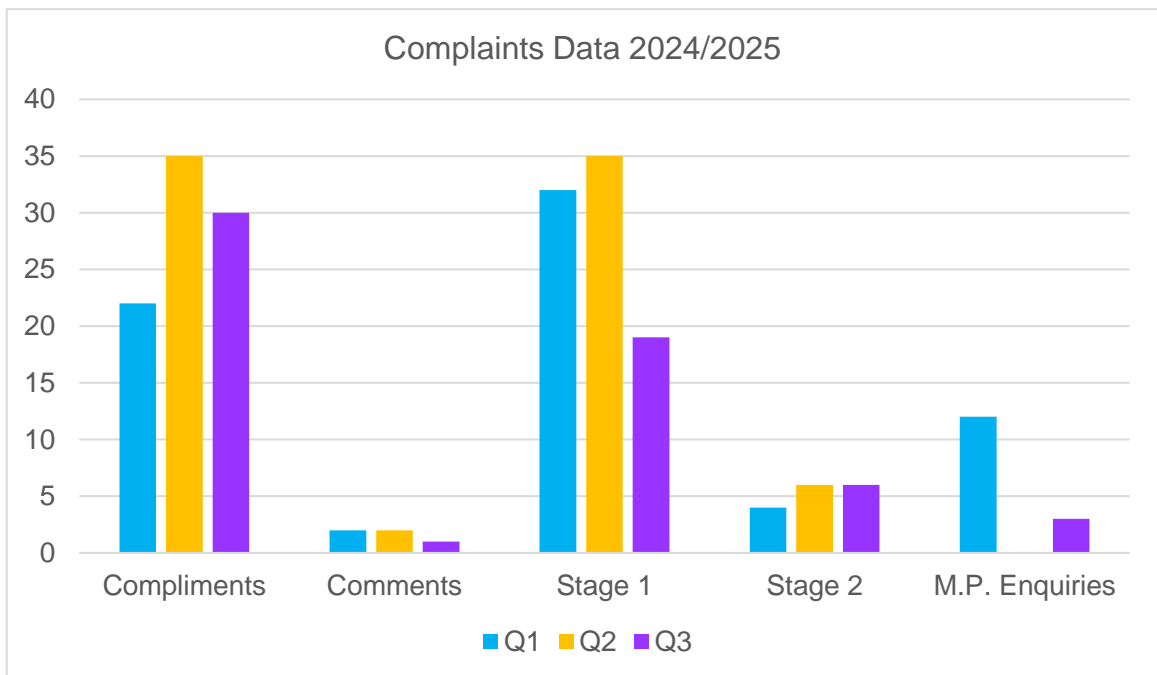
When analysing the data on who was making the reports to the Council for compliments, comments, M.P. enquiries and complaints we found that Tenants made most of these reports compared to residents.

Number of Council Tenants vs District Residents reporting compliments, comments, M.P. enquiries and complaints.



Comparison to Quarter 1 & 2

| | Q1 | Q2 | Q3 |
|-----------------------|----|----|----|
| Compliments | 22 | 35 | 30 |
| Comments | 2 | 2 | 1 |
| Stage 1 | 32 | 35 | 19 |
| Stage 2 | 4 | 6 | 6 |
| M.P. Enquiries | 12 | 0 | 3 |



There has been a large decrease in stage 1 complaints from Q2 to Q3 and a small decrease in compliments. In Q1 and Q2 stage 1 complaints were comparative whereas in Q2 and Q3 compliments are comparative. Comments have remained low throughout Q1-Q3 and the number of stage 2 complaints have remained similar.

Dragonfly Repairs Team have received the most compliments over any team for all three quarters and all have been regarding the Repairs Operatives politeness, efficiency and excellent work. After Dragonfly Repairs, the Housing Options Team and Housing Allocations Team received the next most compliments throughout Q1-Q3.

As per our previous report, it is noted due to the small number of comments received throughout Q1-Q3 that customers may not use comments as frequently as they utilise the Customer Services Department to make enquiries, service request or liaising teams direct with suggestions.

There has been an increase in M.P. Enquiries for Q3 as none were received within Q2 following the General Election, however in comparison with Q1 the number of M.P. Enquiries received in Q3 is low, with only a quarter of Q1 M.P. Enquiries being received. Most M.P. Enquiries in Q1 related to Housing Allocations, however most M.P. Enquiries in Q3 related to Community Safety and Enforcement with none relating to Housing Allocations.

Upon analysis of Q3 Stage 1 complaints it has been found that the Dragonfly Repairs Team had the most complaints throughout Q1-Q3, with a similar number of complaints being made throughout the year. This has been despite implementing a range of service improvements this year, and this trend will be monitored further over the coming quarters to see if the variety of improvements lead to a reduction.

Q1 – 13, Q2 – 16, Q3 – 12. Housing Allocations have also received a similar number of complaints throughout the year Q1 – 4, Q2 – 5, Q3 – 3. Tenancy Management complaints have reduced significantly since Q1 from 13 to 5 in Q2 and then 1 in Q3. Not as many Housing Teams have been complained about in Q3 (6 teams) compared to Q2 (8 teams) and Q1 (7 teams).

The number of stage 2 complaints have remained similar throughout the year. In Q1, 4 stage 2 complaints were received with the most relating to Housing Allocations. In Q2, 5 stage 2 complaints were received with most for Tenancy Management and finally in Q3, 6 stage 2 complaints were made with Dragonfly Repairs Team accounting for most. While there has not been a reduction as with stage 1 complaints, the consistently low numbers escalating to stage 2 indicates that our general approach to complaint handling at stage 1 is robust.

Throughout Q1-Q3 it has been noted that tenants are reporting more compliments, comments and complaints than residents. This supports that the Housing Team provide detailed information to tenants on how to make compliments, comments and complaints. This percentage has increased from a

58% tenant majority in Q1 to a 73% tenant majority in Q2 and has again increased in Q3 to 75%.

Finally, as shown above the Housing Management Department have been able to implement more improvements using complaints data than both Q1 and Q2. The Council will continue to analyse these areas to draw future improvements and conclusions.

Compliments/complaints Included:

| Compliments | Complaints |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| The Repairs Operative was friendly, polite, a good worker and understanding of their job. | Customer complained because he was given the wrong timescales for a repair to his roof. |
| Customer thanked the Housing Services Manager for organising for the locks to be changed, she now feels safe again. | The Council's former contractor did not attend planned appointments. |
| Customer has complimented the Housing Options Team and Housing Allocations Team for all their help in making them feel cared for and supported through their difficult journey. | Customer has requested a report from the Housing Allocations Team but has not received a response. |
| Customer thought the two Repairs Operatives did their job so well. They were brilliant, efficient, friendly and mindful of being in someone else's house. | Customer is not happy with the standard of repair carried out by the Council's contractor. |
| Customer wanted to thank the amazing Repairs Operatives who fitted the new boiler, all of them were lovely and cleaned up after themselves leaving no mess. | Customer is unhappy with the way the warden is treating a tenant |
| Customer has thanked the Housing Options and Housing Allocations Team for all their help, they have made a stressful time much easier for the customer. | Customer is not happy they were given information regarding a grant and then heard nothing further. |

| Compliments | Complaints |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Thanked the Community Enforcement Rangers for attending their property they feel a lot safer now. | Customer is unhappy about the way a repair is being dealt with and is not happy with the communication |

RECOMMENDATION(S)

1. That members of the Board review the overall performance on Compliments, Comments and Complaints handling performance as detailed in the report.

Links to Council Ambition: Customers, Economy, Environment and Housing

Ambition: Housing

Priorities: Building more, good quality, affordable housing, and being a decent landlord.

Maintaining and improving property and housing management standards and ensuring that standards and living conditions in the district contribute towards better health outcomes for all

Target HOU4: Work towards compliance with the Social Housing Consumer Standards, ensuring tenants' voice is key when developing new council housing policies, procedures, and improvements.

DOCUMENT INFORMATION

| Appendix No | Title |
|-------------|-------|
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