



OFFICIAL

**Bolsover District Council**

**Meeting of the Housing Liaison Board on 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2025**

**Agenda Item 6: Customer Service Compliments, Comments and Complaints  
and Standards**

**Report for Housing & Repairs Quarter 4 1<sup>st</sup> January 2025 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025**

<b>Classification</b>	This report is Public.
<b>Report By</b>	Customer Service, Standards and Complaints Manager
<b>Contact Officer(s)</b>	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 1<sup>st</sup> January 2025 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025.
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**REPORT DETAILS**

**1. Background**

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

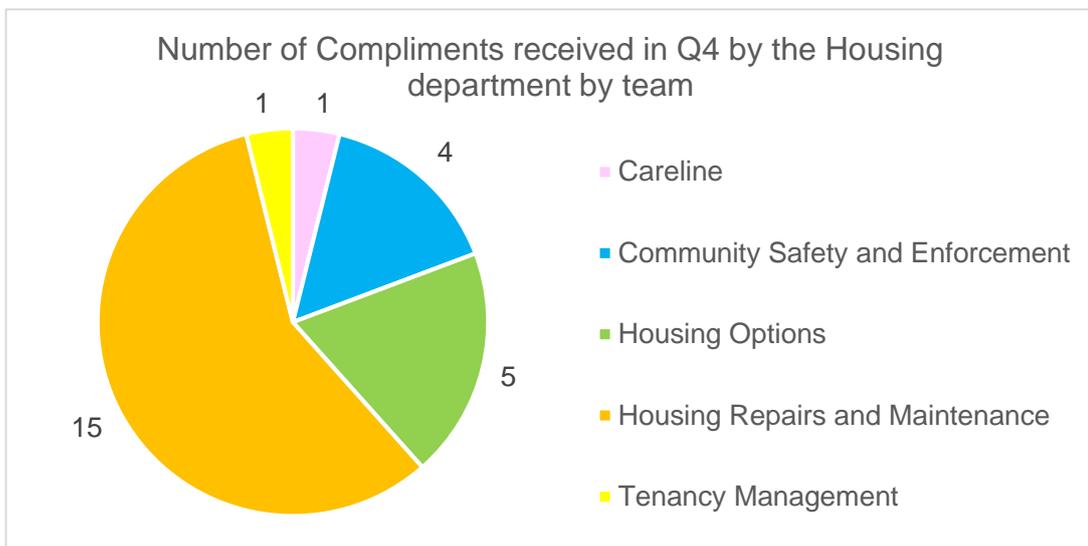
## 2. Details of Proposal or Information

### 2.1 Compliments, Comments and Complaints

Some customer contacts/complaints received during Q4 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 24 compliments were received during 1<sup>st</sup> January 2025 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025. 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 Q4, Dragonfly (Housing Repairs and Maintenance) received the most compliments, followed by Housing Options then Community Safety and Enforcement.

As also shown in all quarters for 2024-2025, 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 (Housing Repairs and Maintenance) focussed on the Repairs Operatives who were praised for being polite and described as 'lovely' and 'nice' individuals. Works carried out by the Operatives were described as 'above and beyond', 'fantastic', 'excellent' and 'brilliant' and praise was also given for being tidy and cleaning up well after a job.

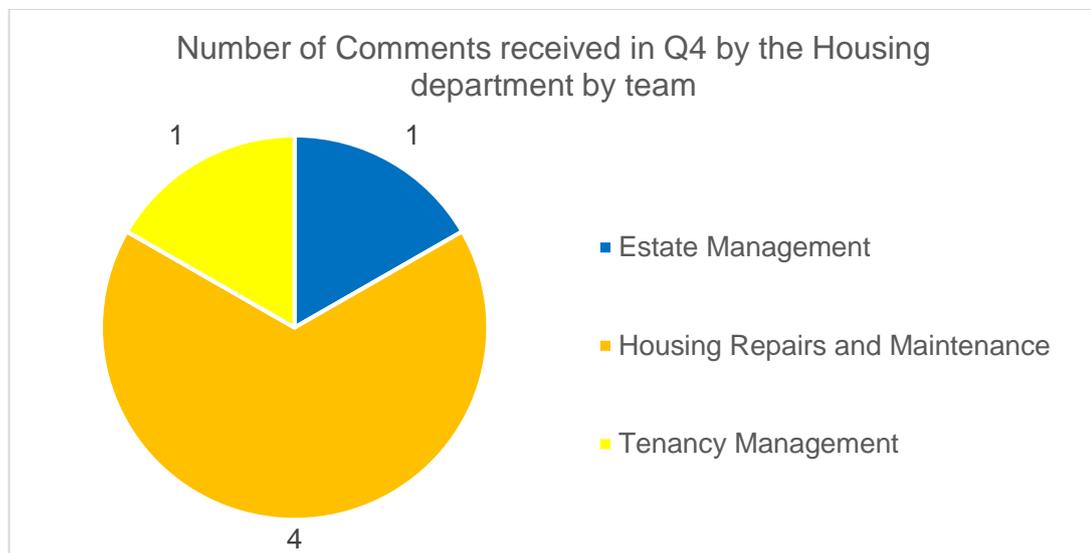
Compliments for Housing Options were primarily thanking Officer's for their support and assistance in finding/securing suitable accommodation. The team

was described as 'fantastic', 'excellent', 'amazing' and going 'above and beyond'.

Finally, compliments for Community Safety and Enforcement were to thank Officers for being helpful. The service offered / Officers were described as both 'excellent' and 'fabulous'.

### Comments

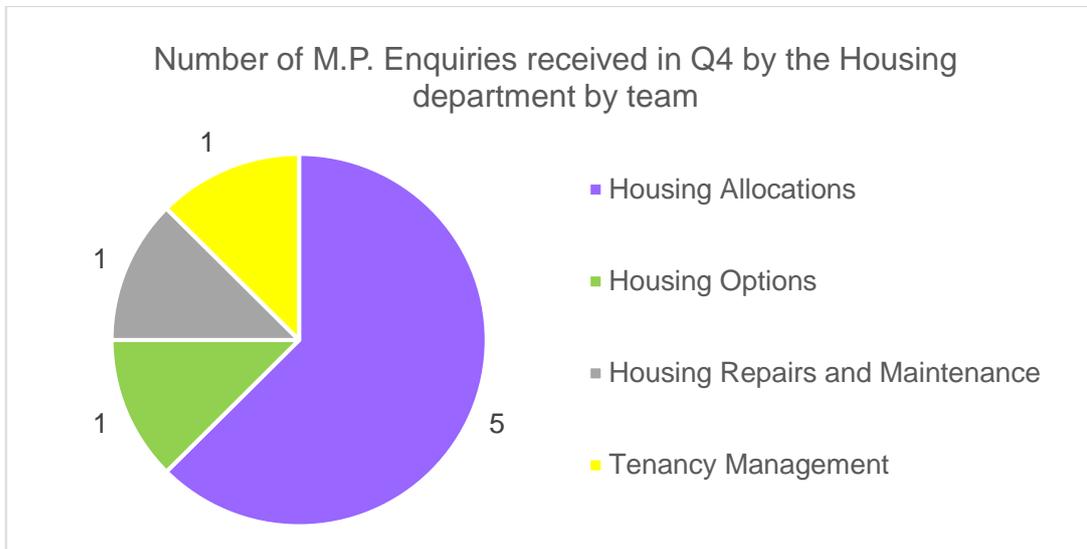
There were 6 comments received for the period 1<sup>st</sup> January 2025 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025 and 100% were acknowledged and passed to the respective department within the target time of 5 working days, for consideration when reviewing their service.



Most comments received were for Dragonfly (Housing Repairs and Maintenance). The only theme found was in relation to communication from the Council to ensure tenants are kept updated.

## MP Enquiries

In the period 1<sup>st</sup> January 2025 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025, the Housing department received 7 M.P. Enquiries.

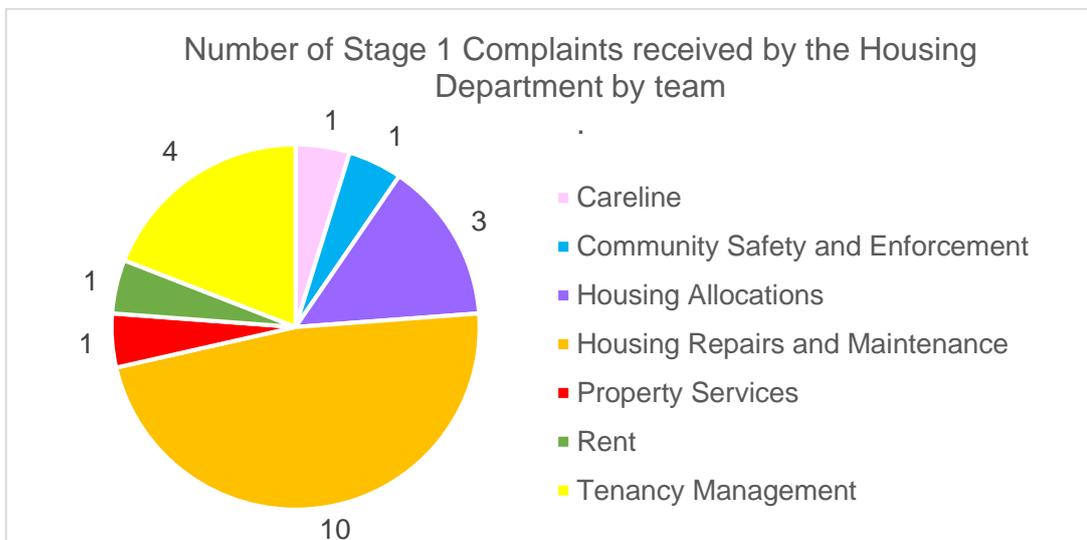


Housing Allocations have received the most M.P. Enquiries. Nearly all enquiries were in relation to refused housing applications for various reasons.

## Complaints – Stage 1

In total 20 Stage 1 Complaints were recorded from the 1<sup>st</sup> January 2025 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025.

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 Tenancy Management, then Housing Allocations.

When analysing the themes of Stage 1 complaints, there was a range of reasons complaints were made about Dragonfly (Housing Repairs and Maintenance). Themes included behaviour and attitude of Repair Operatives and long standing repair issues (multiple repair jobs).

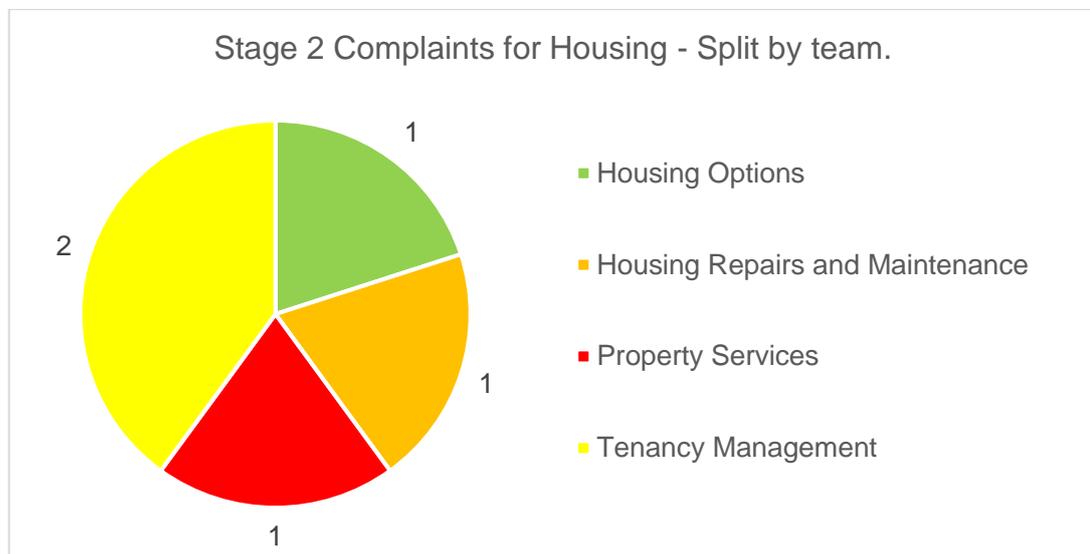
Tenancy Management complaints related to communication and Officer behaviour/attitude.

All Complaints for Housing Allocations were regarding housing application assessment (handling, eligibility for properties and banding).

### Complaints – Stage 2

5 Stage 2 complaints were recorded, from the 1<sup>st</sup> January 2025 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025.

All but one Stage 2 complaints have been 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 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 4 2024/25**

	<b>January</b>	<b>February</b>	<b>March</b>	<b>Total</b>
Compliments	5	9	10	24
Comments	3	1	2	6
Stage 1 Complaints	10	8	2	20
Stage 2 Complaints	1	3	1	5
MP Enquiries	2	2	3	7

## Complaints Feedback

During quarter 4, the following service improvements were implemented as a consequence of complaints.

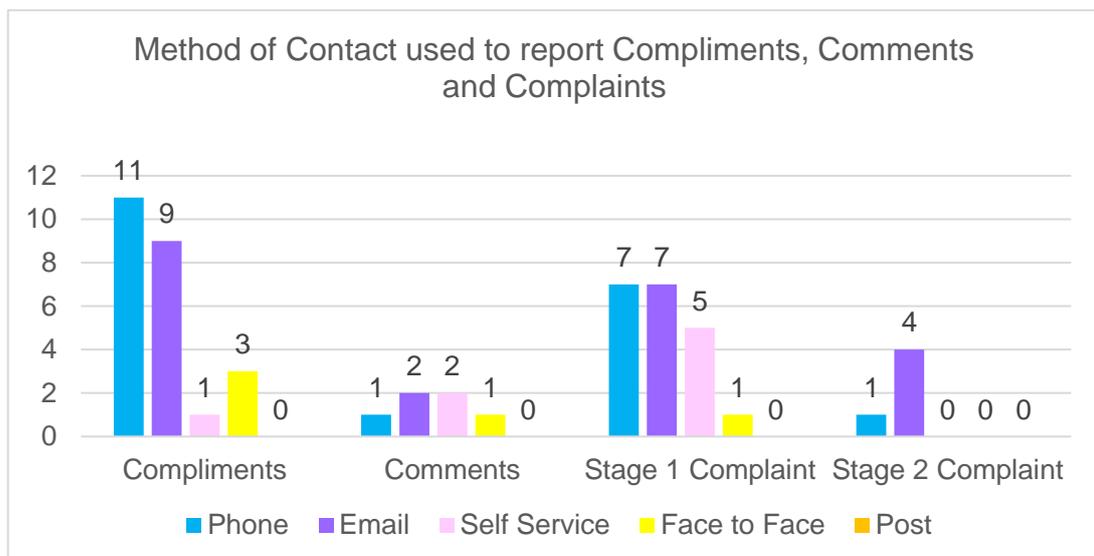
1. If the Council does any Stock Condition Surveys again or anything similar, the Council will ensure an established way of sharing data at the beginning of contracts.
2. Decision to provide all properties whose outbuildings are due to be demolished with replacement storage.
3. Dragonfly (Housing Repairs and Maintenance) have changed their working practices and external follow on works will now be contacted and receive an appointment date.
4. All Housing Officers have been reminded that a tenant should be alerted to their presence at a property.

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 (Housing Repairs and Maintenance) is scheduled for April/June 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.

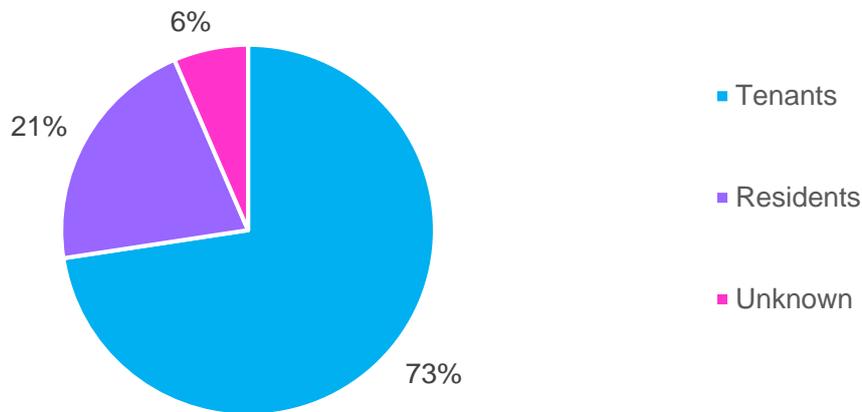
When analysing how customers contact the Council to pass on a compliment, a comment or make a complaint, most compliments were via telephone followed by email. Comments were mainly made by email or self service. Stage 1 Complaints were made equally via telephone and email, followed by self service. Stage 2 Complaints were mainly made via 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

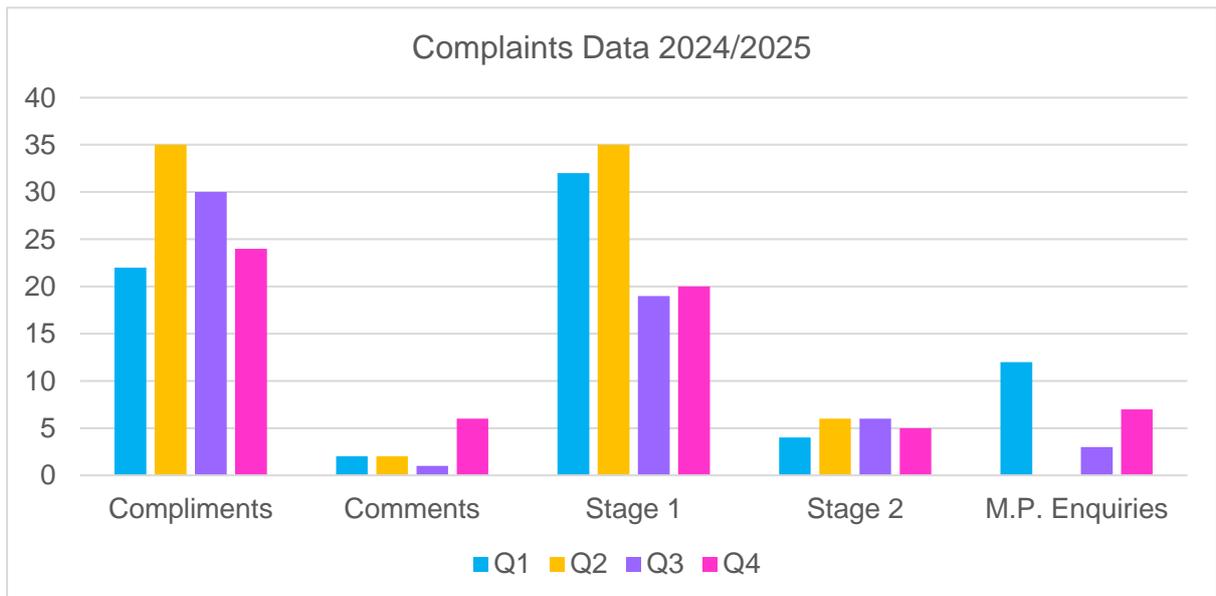
When analysing the data on who was making the reports to the Council for compliments, comments, M.P. enquiries and complaints we found that Tenants made most of these reports compared to residents.

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



**2024-2025 quarterly comparison**

2024-2025 breakdown by quarter				
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
<b>Compliments</b>	22	35	30	24
<b>Comments</b>	2	2	1	6
<b>Stage 1</b>	32	35	19	20
<b>Stage 2</b>	4	6	6	5
<b>M.P. Enquiries</b>	12	0	3	7



Stage 1 complaints in Q4 have remained similar to Q3 and there has been small decrease in compliments. Q1 and Q2 stage 1 complaints were comparative and Q3 and Q4 were comparative. Whereas Q2 and Q3 compliments are comparative and Q1 and Q4 are comparative. Comments have remained low throughout Q1-Q3 and have slightly increased in Q4 and the number of stage 2 complaints have remained similar throughout.

As noted in previous reports, it is noted due to the small number of comments received throughout 2024-2025 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 a gradual increase in M.P. Enquiries following the General Election and new M.P., however this is still lower than Q1. The Complaints team have communicated with the MP's Office to ensure that they are able to signpost the constituent to the appropriate organisation and have provided them with the Complaints policy (for out of scope issues). This information may have led to a reduction in MP Enquiries as constituents are being appropriately advised of the action required and being dealt with through other Council processes i.e. as a service request/first enquiry.

2024-2025 breakdown via team					
	Compliments	Comments	M.P. Enquiries	Stage 1	Stage 2
<b>Careline</b>	5			6	1
<b>Community Safety &amp; Enforcement</b>	13	2	3	11	5
<b>Estate Management</b>		1			
<b>General (all)</b>	1		1		
<b>Housing Allocations</b>	13	1	13	15	2
<b>Housing Innovations</b>	1				
<b>Housing Options</b>	25		1	4	1
<b>Housing Repairs and Maintenance</b>	57	7	2	51	7
<b>Property Services</b>	1			6	1
<b>Rent</b>	1		1	7	2
<b>Tenancy Management</b>	6	1	4	23	10

\*The highest number from each category has been highlighted in red text.

Dragonfly (Housing Repairs and Maintenance) have received the most compliments for 2024-2025 and all have been regarding the Repairs Operatives politeness and excellent work. In most quarters compliments have also been received for Operatives friendliness, keeping areas clean/tidy and their efficiency. Housing Options received the second most compliments followed by Housing Allocations and Community Safety Enforcement.

Dragonfly (Housing Repairs and Maintenance) also received the most comments for 2024-2025. Most comments received were regarding communication or keeping tenants informed followed by comments regarding Council vehicle parking/driving.

Housing Allocations received the most M.P. Enquiries for 2024-2025. The majority of M.P. Enquiries were with regards to refusal onto the housing list and cancellation of housing applications following the Housing Allocation Policy renewal. This is followed by eligibility for bungalows under the Policy. Tenancy Management received the next most M.P. Enquiries and these related to issues with neighbouring Council tenants.

Upon analysis of Stage 1 complaints received for 2024-2025 it has been found that Dragonfly (Housing Repairs and Maintenance) had the most complaints, with a similar number of complaints being made throughout the year, although Q4 has seen the lowest figure for this financial year Q1 – 13, Q2 – 16, Q3 – 12, Q4 – 10. This has been despite implementing a range of service improvements this year, this trend will be monitored further over the next financial years to see if the variety of improvements lead to a reduction.

This is followed by Tenancy Management and Housing Allocations. Tenancy Management complaints reduced significantly from Q1 – Q3 (Q1 -13, Q2 5, Q3 – 1) but have seen a small increase again in Q4 with 4 complaints. Housing Allocations have also received a similar number of complaints throughout the year Q1 – 4, Q2 – 5, Q3 – 3, Q4 – 3.

The number of stage 2 complaints have remained similar throughout 2024-2025. Overall Tenancy Management have received the most stage 2 complaints, followed by Dragonfly (Housing Repairs and Maintenance) and then Community Safety and Enforcement. Unfortunately, no themes could be found within the stage 2 complaints.

While there has not been a reduction as with stage 1 complaints (Q3 and Q4 compared to Q1 and Q2), the consistently low numbers escalating to stage 2 indicates that our general approach to complaint handling at stage 1 is robust.

Throughout 2024-2025 it has been noted that tenants are reporting more compliments, comments and complaints than residents. This supports that the Housing department provide detailed information to tenants on how to make compliments, comments and complaints. This percentage increased from 58% in Q1 to 73% in Q2 and has remained similar in Q3 and Q4 (Q3 - 75%, Q4 – 73%).

**Compliments/complaints for Q4 included:**

<b>Compliments</b>	<b>Complaints</b>
Customer wanted to say a massive thank you to the Plumber that completed the works. They said the Plumber was brilliant, had done a fantastic job and went above and beyond.	Customer is not happy with how their housing application has been handled or the communication with Housing Allocations team.
Customer wanted to thank the Housing Options Officer for keeping them up to date with any updates/progression and despite the case being very complex was positive throughout.	Customer has complained about damp and mould issues in their property.
Customer has thanked two Community Enforcement Rangers for their fast and helpful response with an incident despite challenging circumstances.	Customer is not happy that the Contractors carrying out the Stock Condition Survey did not arrange an appointment as requested
Customer complimented the Repairs Operative for being polite and considerate, they did an extremely good job and cleaned up thoroughly. The customer is happy to know that there are Operatives that take pride in their work and deserve a pay rise.	Customer is not happy that conflicting information has been received regarding an invoice and promised maintenance has not been carried out.
The customer wanted to thank the Housing Options Officer for their help in securing accommodation, they felt that the Officer went above and beyond for them.	Customer is not happy with the number of housing disrepairs in the Council Property
Customer thanked both the Bricklayer and Joiner who were very pleasant, did a good job and cleared up afterwards.	Customer has complained about the behaviour of the Tenancy Management Officer.

Compliments	Complaints
<p>The customer has thanked the Community Enforcement Rangers for their assistance in clearing the side of their father's property so they could access it with their mobility scooter. The customer states they did a fantastic job and provide an excellent service.</p>	<p>Customer has complained regarding the attitude of a Repairs Planned and that their request for visits to be prearranged was not followed.</p>

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### **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