



Half Yearly Update Complaints Performance and Service Improvement Report

1 April 2024 – 30 September 2024

Information Governance and Complaints Team

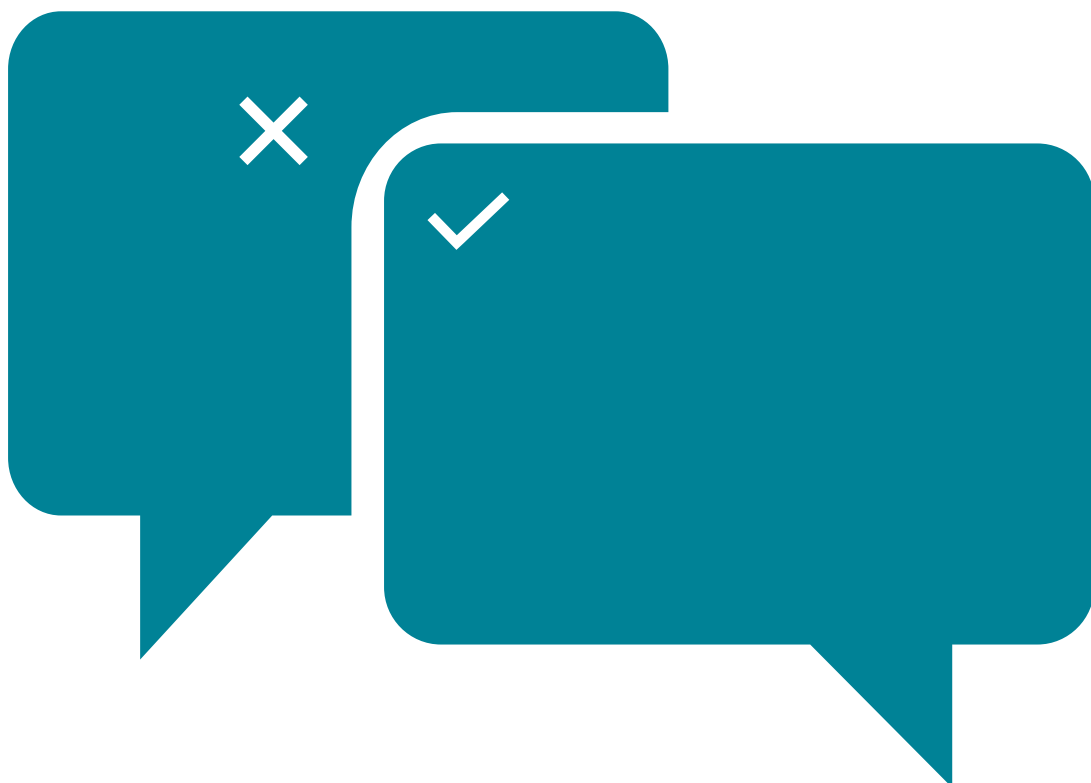


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1. Introduction

- 1.1 New Forest District Council ('the Council') is committed to providing residents, tenants and our communities with quality services. However, sometimes things do go wrong. We encourage people to tell us when this happens so we can put things right, explain what has happened, learn from our mistakes and improve our services.
- 1.2 We have a **Corporate Complaints Procedure** which we follow for complaints that are made to the Council. This process is managed by the Information Governance and Complaints Team.
- 1.3 Our approach to complaint handling is also in line with the Council's **Corporate Plan 2024 to 2028 for people, place and prosperity** and our values: LEAF:
- **Learning**: we use complaints as an opportunity to learn from our mistakes.
 - **Empathy**: we show empathy to complainants.
 - **Ambition**: we have ambition to improve our services where it is identified that someone has not received the standard of service that they should have.
 - **Fairness**: we are fair to complainants and residents in our complaint handling.
- 1.4 The purpose of this report is to provide a half yearly update on the complaints we have received during the period 1 April 2024 to 30 September 2024, highlighting key themes, trends and volumes recognising that accountability and transparency are integral to a positive complaint handling culture.

2. Complaint Handling Codes

Background

- 2.1 There are two Ombudsman services with jurisdiction over our complaint handling: The Housing Ombudsman for complaints from our tenants relating to the Council in its capacity as their landlord, and the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman with jurisdiction over all other complaints.
- 2.2 The Housing Ombudsman has a statutory power, in accordance with the Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023, to issue a statutory code of practice and a statutory duty to monitor compliance with this code.
- 2.3 Accordingly, the Housing Ombudsman has issued a **statutory Complaint Handling Code**. The Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman has also issued a **non-statutory Complaint Handling Code** which aligns closely with the Housing Ombudsman's code. Both codes took effect on 1 April 2024.

Self-Assessment

- 2.4 There is a requirement within both codes for us to carry out annual self-assessments to ensure our complaints procedure complies with the codes.
- 2.5 There is a further requirement in the Housing Ombudsman's code that this self-assessment is approved by our governing body (Cabinet), at least annually.
- 2.6 The self-assessments should also be published on the complaints section of our website. Our self-assessments against both codes are published here: **[Feedback, comments and complaints - New Forest District Council](#)**.

Annual complaints performance and service improvement report requirement

- 2.7 We must also produce an annual complaints performance and service improvement report for scrutiny and challenge.
- 2.8 The annual report prepared for the year 2023/2024 is published online, here: **Annual Complaints Performance and Service Improvement Report 2023/24** ('the Annual Report').
- 2.9 The Annual Report was approved by the Members Responsible for Complaints ('MRCs'), acting on behalf of the Cabinet:
- Housing and Homelessness Portfolio Holder – Housing complaints
 - Finance and Corporate Portfolio Holder – All other complaints
- 2.10 The MRC's formal response to the Annual Report, on behalf of Cabinet, is published, here: **Feedback, comments and complaints - New Forest District Council**
- 2.11 In future years the annual complaints performance and service improvement report and Cabinet's response will be approved by full Cabinet.

Housing Ombudsman Submission

- 2.12 The Housing Ombudsman requires that we submit a copy of our self-assessment, annual complaints performance and service improvement report and Cabinet's response for the preceding financial year to it by 30 June each year.
- 2.13 The Annual Report for the year 2023/2024 was submitted in accordance with this deadline.

3. Our procedure

3.1 We currently operate a 2 stage **Corporate Complaints Procedure** for all complaints.

3.2 The process followed since 1 April 2024 is set out below:

Stage	Responsible Officer	Steps and Timescales
1	Service Manager (in consultation with Assistant Director/Strategic Director as applicable). The Assistant Director or Strategic Director may personally deal with a complaint at stage 1 at their discretion.	Complaint received. Complaint acknowledged within 5 working days by the Information Governance and Complaints Team. This acknowledgement will set out our understanding of the complaint and the outcome the complainant is seeking. Complainant informed of officer dealing with complaint and expected response date. Complainant requested to clarify complaint and desired outcome if this is not clear. Stage 1 response sent within 10 working days of the acknowledgement advising the complainant of the right to escalate the complaint by contacting the Information Governance and Complaints Team (complaints@nfdc.gov.uk). The response will also advise the complainant of their right to escalate their complaint to the relevant Ombudsman when they have exhausted this Procedure.
2	Monitoring Officer on behalf of the Chief Executive.	Request to escalate complaint received. Escalation request acknowledged within 5 working days by the Information Governance and Complaints Team. This acknowledgement will set out our understanding of the complaint and the outcome the complainant is seeking. Complainant informed of officer dealing with complaint and expected response date. Stage 2 response sent within 20 working days of the acknowledgement advising the complainant that they have completed this Procedure, and they are entitled to refer their complaint to the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman or, for Housing Complaints (by Council tenants/ leaseholders about the Council as their landlord), the Housing Ombudsman if they remain dissatisfied.

3.3 These stages and timescales meet the requirements of the codes.

4. Structure

4.1 We recognise the importance of this report providing a clear half yearly update on all our complaint handling. As with the Annual Report, we have chosen to produce one report that covers all our service areas, which can be considered by our overview and scrutiny panels and Cabinet. We have structured the analysis sections of this report as follows:

- All complaints (section 5)
- Complaints from tenants to the Council as its landlord (section 6)
- Complaints not accepted (section 7)
- Learning (section 8)
- Ombudsman decisions (section 9)
- Compliments (section 10)
- Conclusion (section 11)

5. All complaints


Summary – 1 April 2024-30 September 2024

125 125 complaints received

Complaints received

42 42 / 125 complaints received relate to a single planning matter

Complaints relate to one issue

 The half year position shows complaints are increasing

 No Enforcement & Amenities complaints

 Increase in Waste and Transport complaints

 Lower proportion of complaints upheld (41% compared to 53% for 2023/24)

 97% of stage 1 and 100% of stage 2 complaints responded to within procedure timescales

Analysis

Numbers

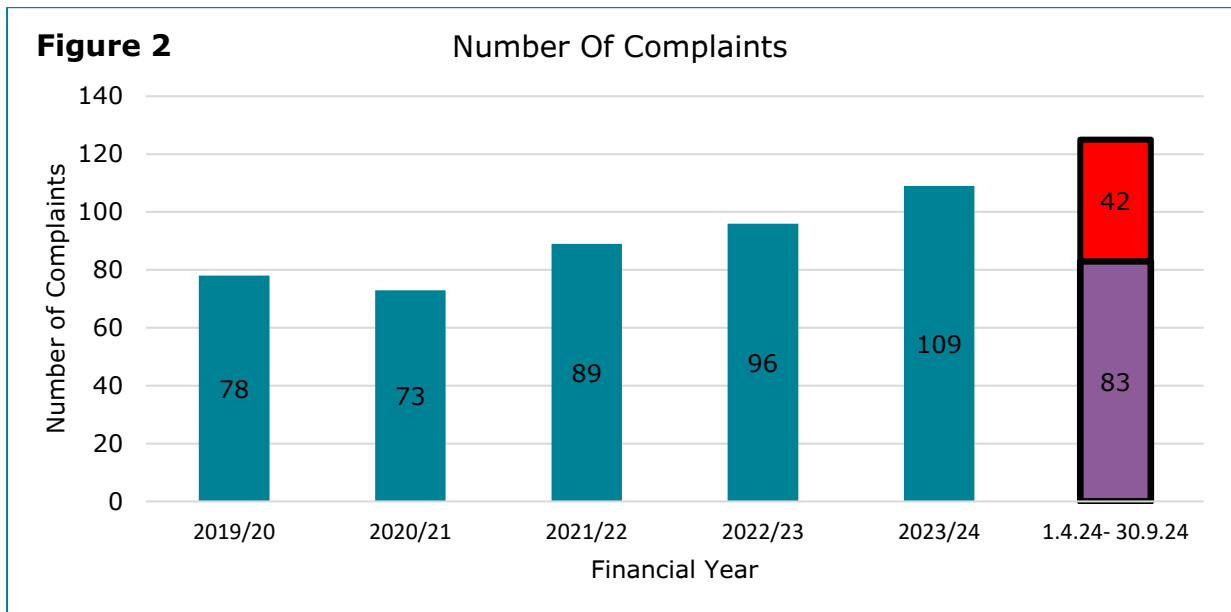
5.1 **Figure 1** below shows the total number of new complaints received by year with the half year position included in purple:



5.2 The half yearly total complaint figure currently exceeds the full year position for 2023/24. However, the Council has received 42 separate complaints that relate to one planning matter which has impacted these totals.

5.3 The total of 125 includes 2 complaints that were started at stage 2.

5.4 **Figure 2** overleaf is an updated version of **Figure 1** with these planning complaints demarked:

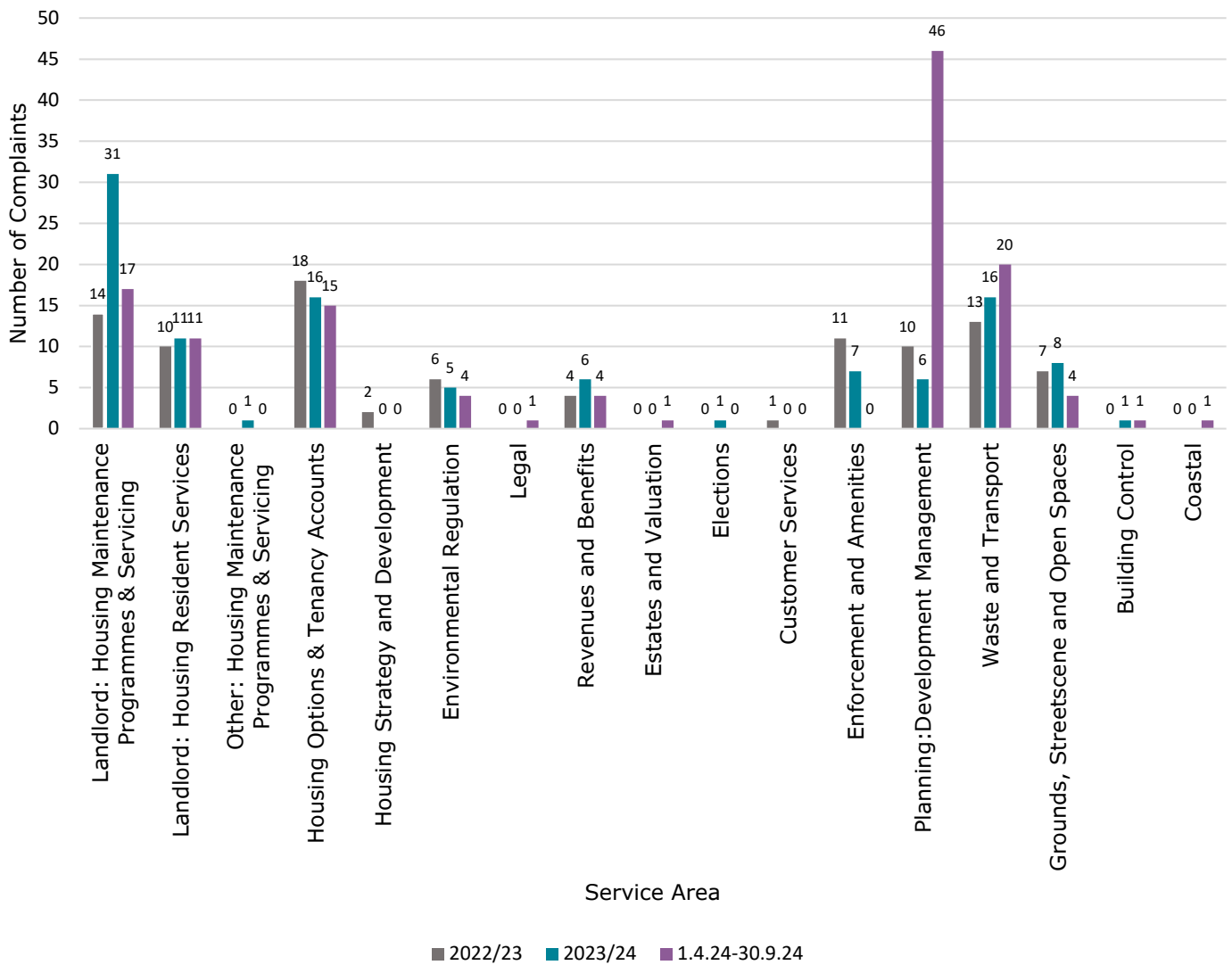


5.5 With the particular planning complaints identified in paragraph 5.2 above discounted for the purposes of comparison, the total of 83 complaints for the half year position shows that the trend in the total number of complaints is still increasing.

5.6 **Figure 3** overleaf shows the total number of complaints received for 2022/23, 2023/24 and the half year position, broken down by service area:

Figure 3

Comparison of Complaints by Service Area



5.7 The service areas with the largest increase in complaints for the half year period are Planning: Development Management, with a total of 46 complaints compared to 6 for the full year 2023/24 and Waste and Transport, with a total of 20 complaints compared to 16 for the full year 2023/24.

5.8 The reason for the significant increase in the Planning: Development Management complaints relates to the 42 complaints received regarding one planning matter as referred to at paragraph 5.2 above.

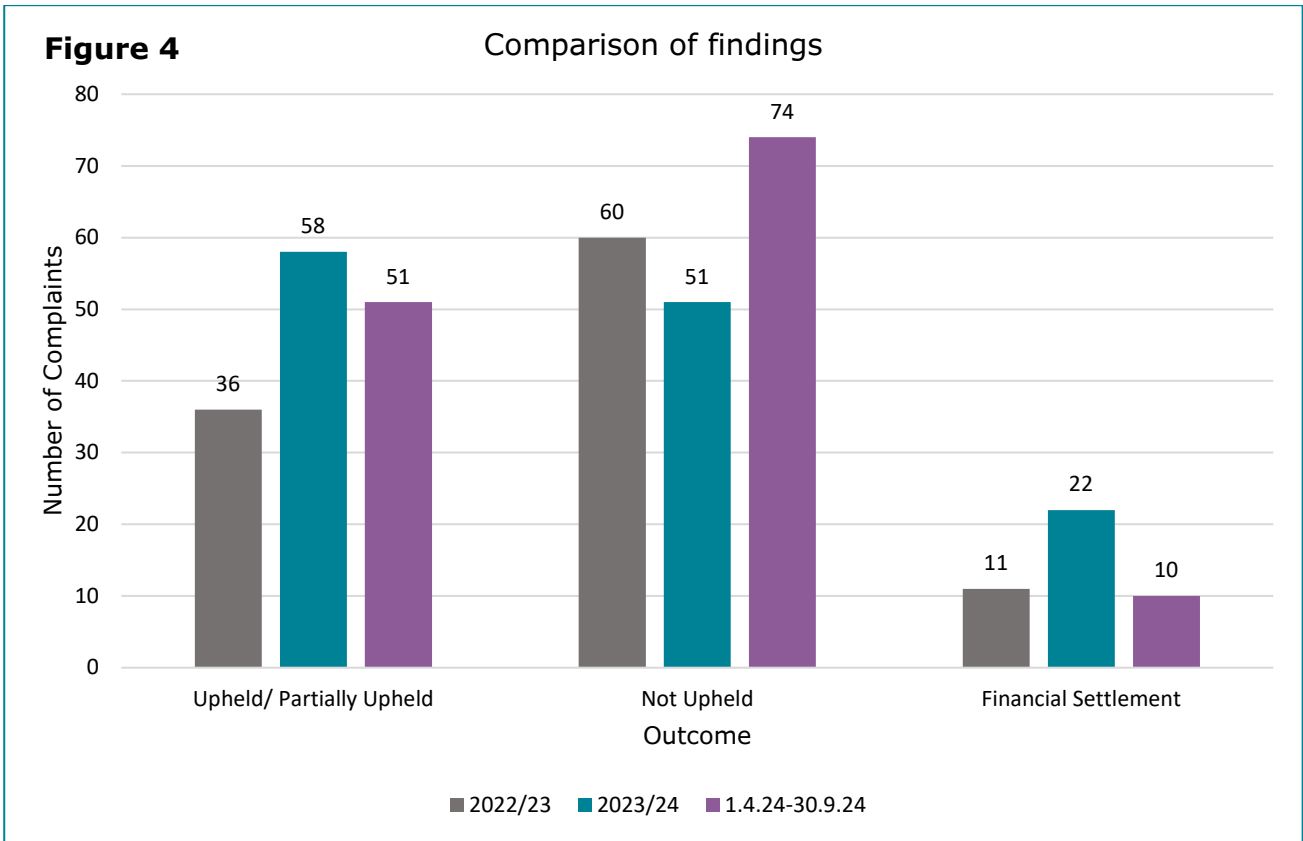
5.9 Of the 20 Waste and Transport complaints received for the half year period, 9 (45%) relate to the Council's garden waste service. From 1 April 2024, the Council introduced a new garden waste service using wheelie bins. This was a significant service change and during the first few months, after the new service was implemented, an increase in service requests and complaints was expected. For context, there are over 23,000 residents who have joined the new garden waste service. Additionally, 6 (30%) Waste and Transport complaints relate to issues with refuse bags being piled up and/or attacked by wildlife. A new domestic waste collection service is due to be rolled out across the District from summer 2025 which will involve the introduction of wheelie bins in accordance with our [Waste Strategy 2022 to 2027](#). One of the benefits of this service change is that it should alleviate issues related to the collection of refuse bags.

5.10 Several other service areas are showing the same or a similar number of complaints at the half year position, when compared to the full year 2023/24. This is in keeping with the general trend showing an increase in complaints received.

5.11 The service area showing the largest improvement in complaints at the half year position is Enforcement and Amenities who have received no complaints, compared with 7 for the full year 2023/24.

Complaint findings

5.12 **Figure 4** overleaf shows the number of complaints that were upheld or not upheld for 2022/23, 2023/24 and during the half year period covered by this report. It also shows the number of complaints that resulted in some form of financial settlement (including goodwill/time and trouble payments and compensation for losses). **Figures 4** and **5** include information based on responses sent by 21 October 2024, when this report was prepared.



5.13 **Figure 5** overleaf shows the percentage of complaints that have been upheld/ partially upheld and not upheld in 2022/23, 2023/24 and during the half year period covered by this report.

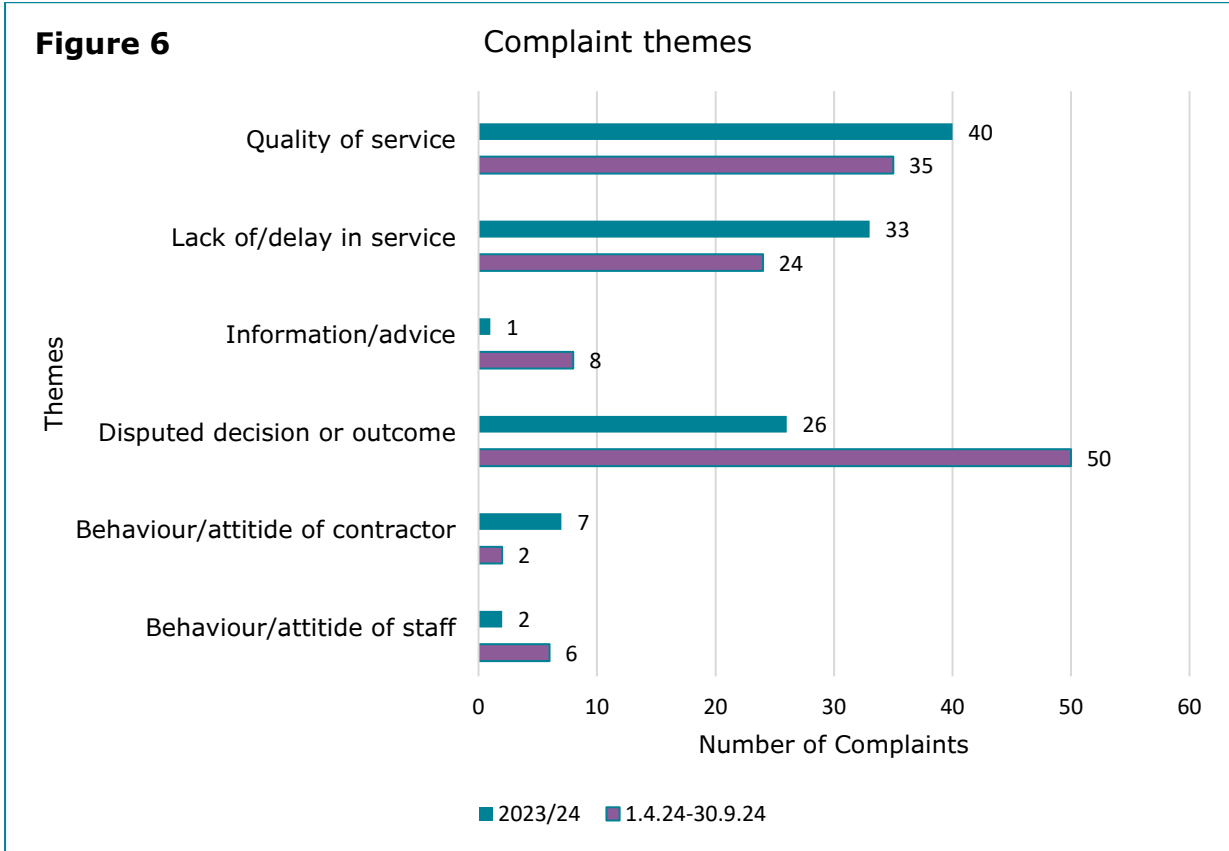
Figure 5



5.14 There has been a decrease in the proportion of complaints that have been upheld/partially upheld from 2023/24 (53%) compared to the half year position (41%).

Themes

5.15 **Figure 6** overleaf shows the complaints we have received in 2023/24 and at the half year position categorised by theme.

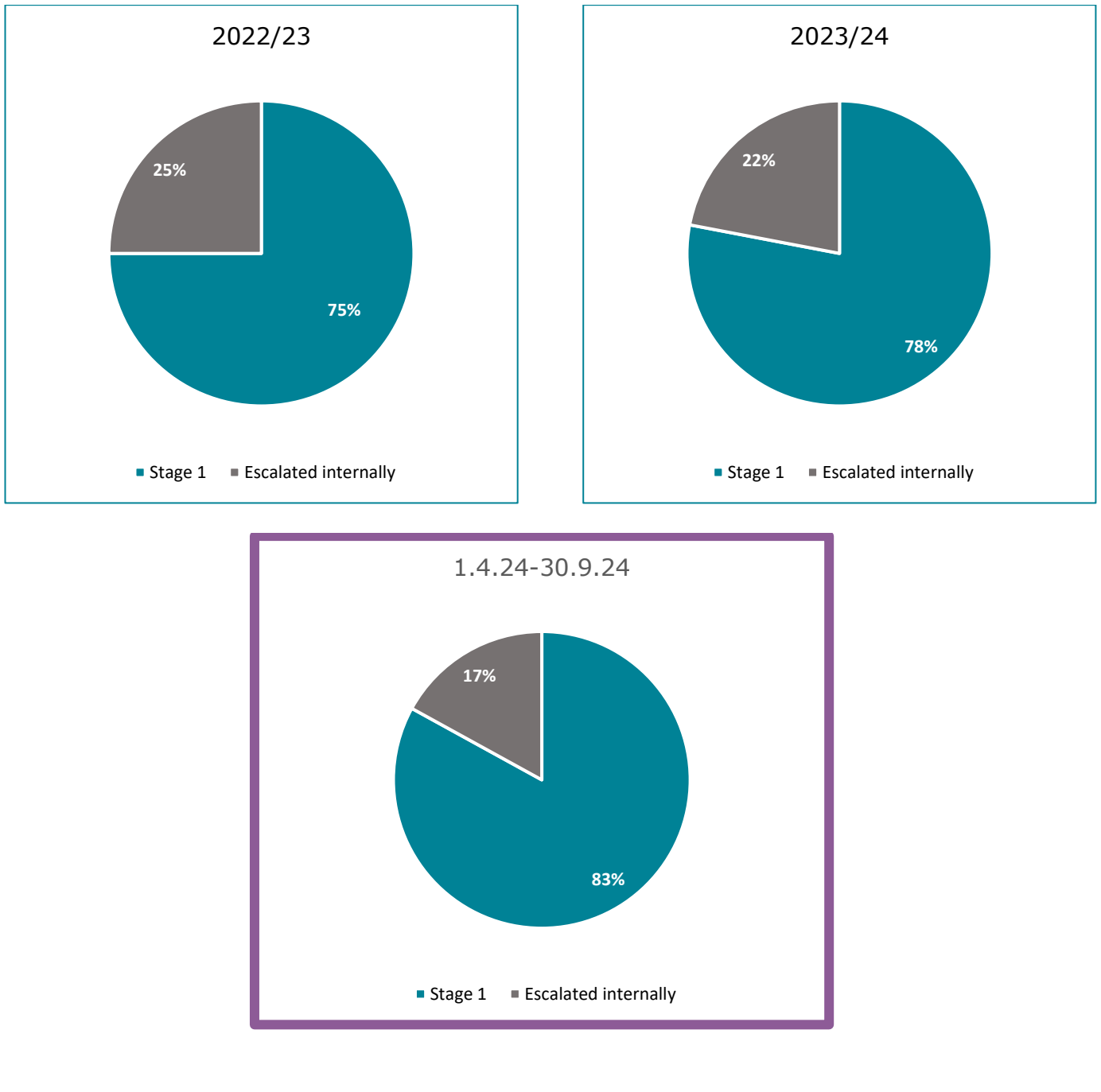


5.16 For the half year period the most common type of complaint has related to a disputed decision or outcome (40%). This is due to the planning complaints referred to at paragraph 5.2 above. This is followed by complaints related to quality of service received (28%) and lack of/delay in service (19%). There are some instances where complaints relate to more than one issue, but these have been categorised based on the most prevalent theme.

Stages

5.17 **Figure 7** overleaf shows the percentage of complaints that were either resolved at stage 1 or escalated to stage 2 of the corporate complaints procedure. This will not include the 2 complaints that were started at stage 2 but does include any stage 2 complaints that were escalated during the half year period (including where the stage 1 complaint may have been received in 2023/24).

Figure 7



5.18 The extent to which complaints escalate through the corporate complaints procedure is an important measure, as it is preferable to find resolutions for complainants at the earliest possible stage. As shown in **Figure 7**, the majority of complaints in the half year period (83%) were resolved at stage 1 and therefore only 17% of all complaints were escalated internally, compared with 22% in 2023/24.

Timescales

5.19 In 2023/24 100% of complaints were responded to within the timescales included in the corporate complaints procedure that was applicable at that time.


5.20 For the half year period, 97% of stage 1 complaints and 100% of stage 2 complaints were responded to within the timescales included in the corporate complaints procedure as detailed at paragraph 3.2 above or with an agreed extension in accordance with the codes.


6. Complaints from tenants


Summary – 1 April 2024-30 September 2024

28
Complaints received
28 complaints received from tenants

%
61% of tenant complaints relate to Housing Maintenance, Programmes and Servicing


Decrease in the proportion of complaints being upheld (54% compared to 69% for 2023/24)


The half year position shows tenant complaints are increasing


Most common themes for tenant complaints are quality of service (36%) and lack of/delay in service (36%)

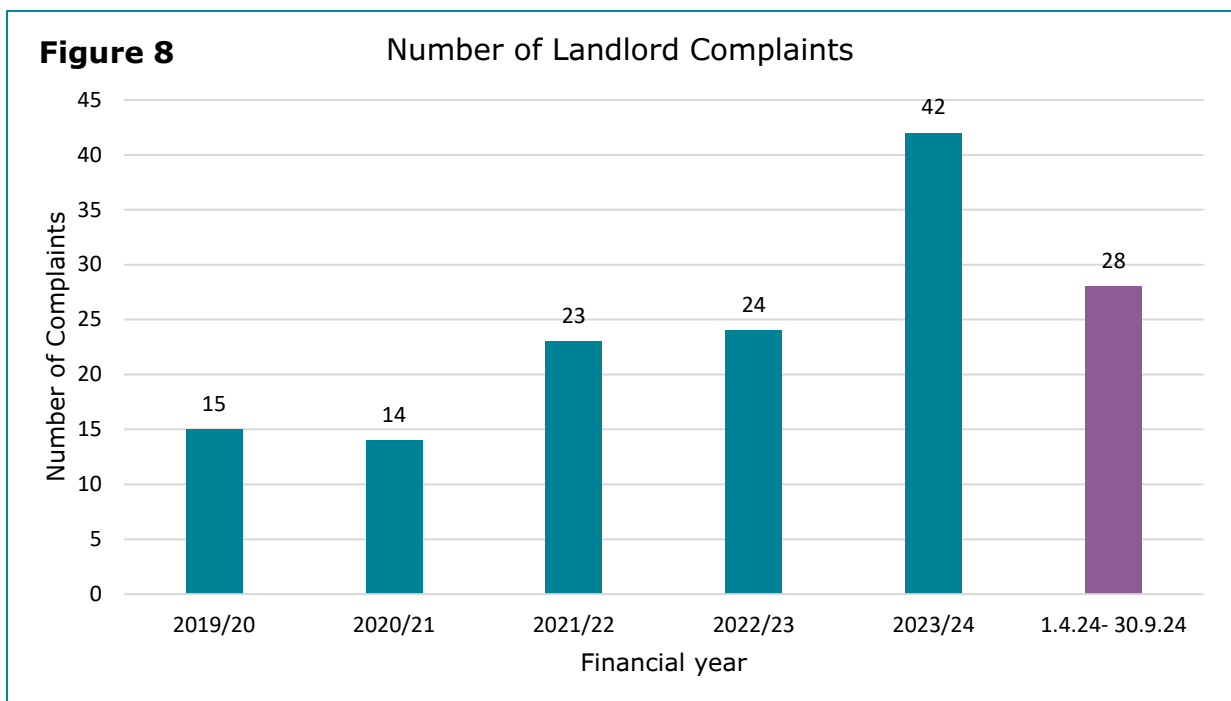

96% of stage 1 and 100% of stage 2 complaints responded to within procedure timescales

Analysis

Numbers

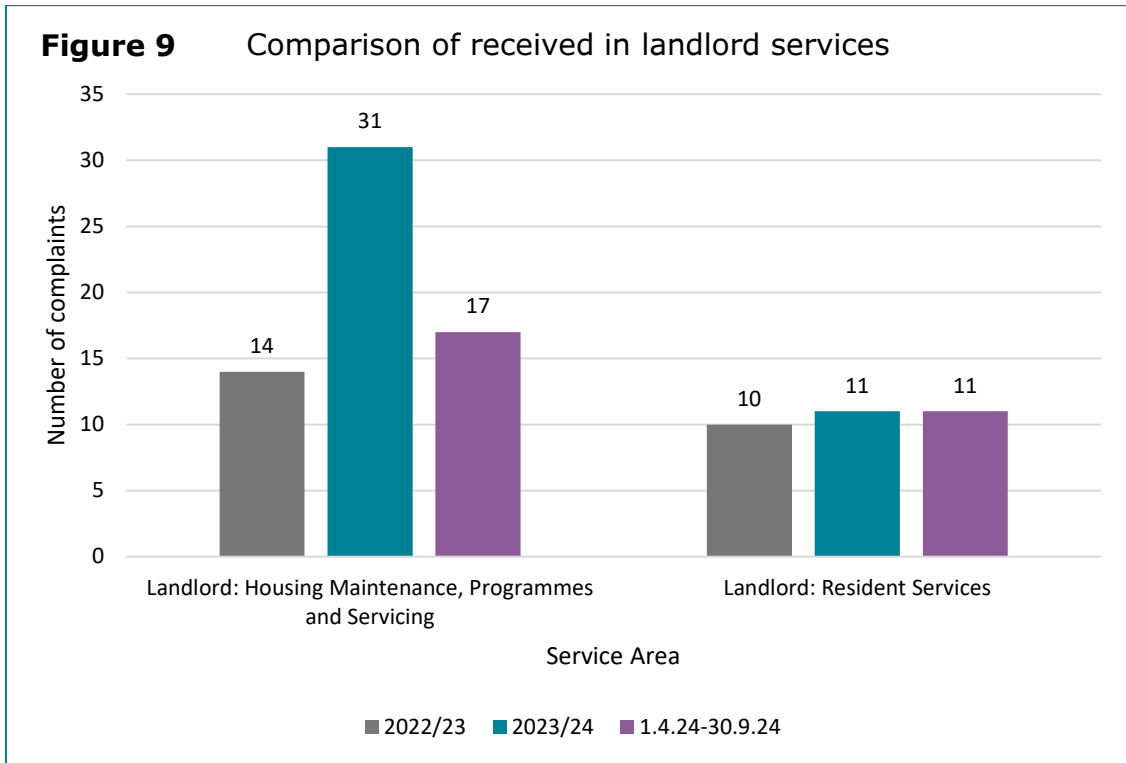
6.1 As of the end of 2023/24 we had 5,285 Council properties that we either owned or managed and let to tenants.

6.2 **Figure 8** below shows the total number of new complaints received by year from tenants to us in our capacity as their landlord with the half year position included in purple:

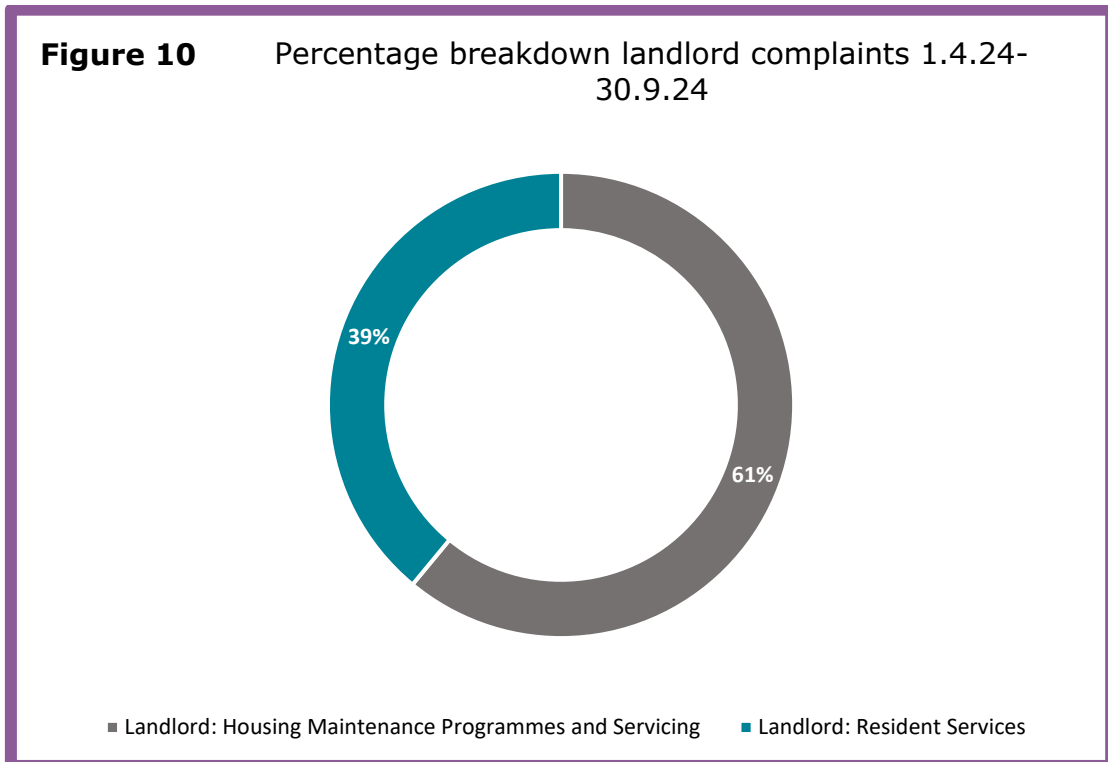


6.3 At the half year position, 28 complaints have been received by the Council from tenants in its capacity as their landlord.

6.4 **Figure 9** overleaf breaks down the landlord services complaints received by service area.



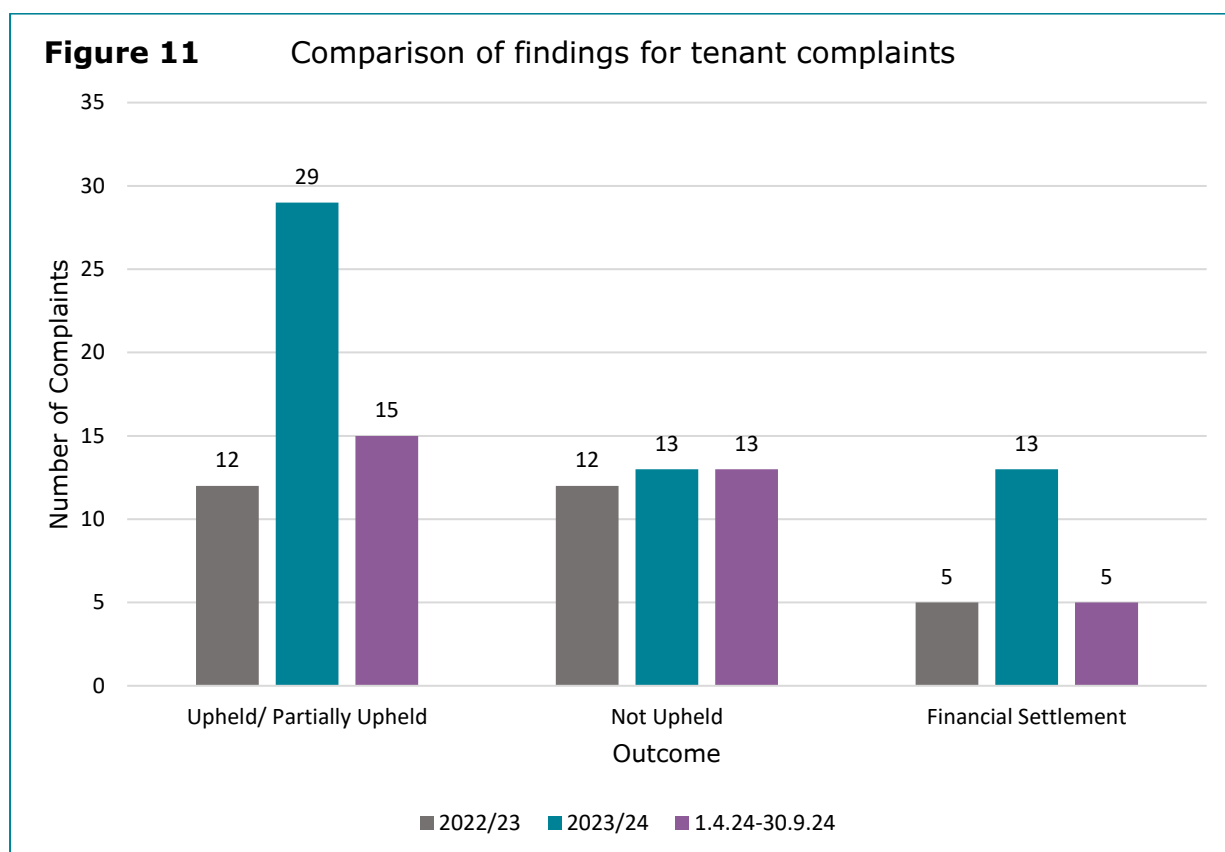
6.5 The percentage breakdown of complaints relating to landlord services for the half year period is shown in **Figure 10** below:



6.6 This compares to 26% for Landlord: Resident Services and 74% for Landlord: Housing Maintenance Programmes and Services for the year 2023/24.

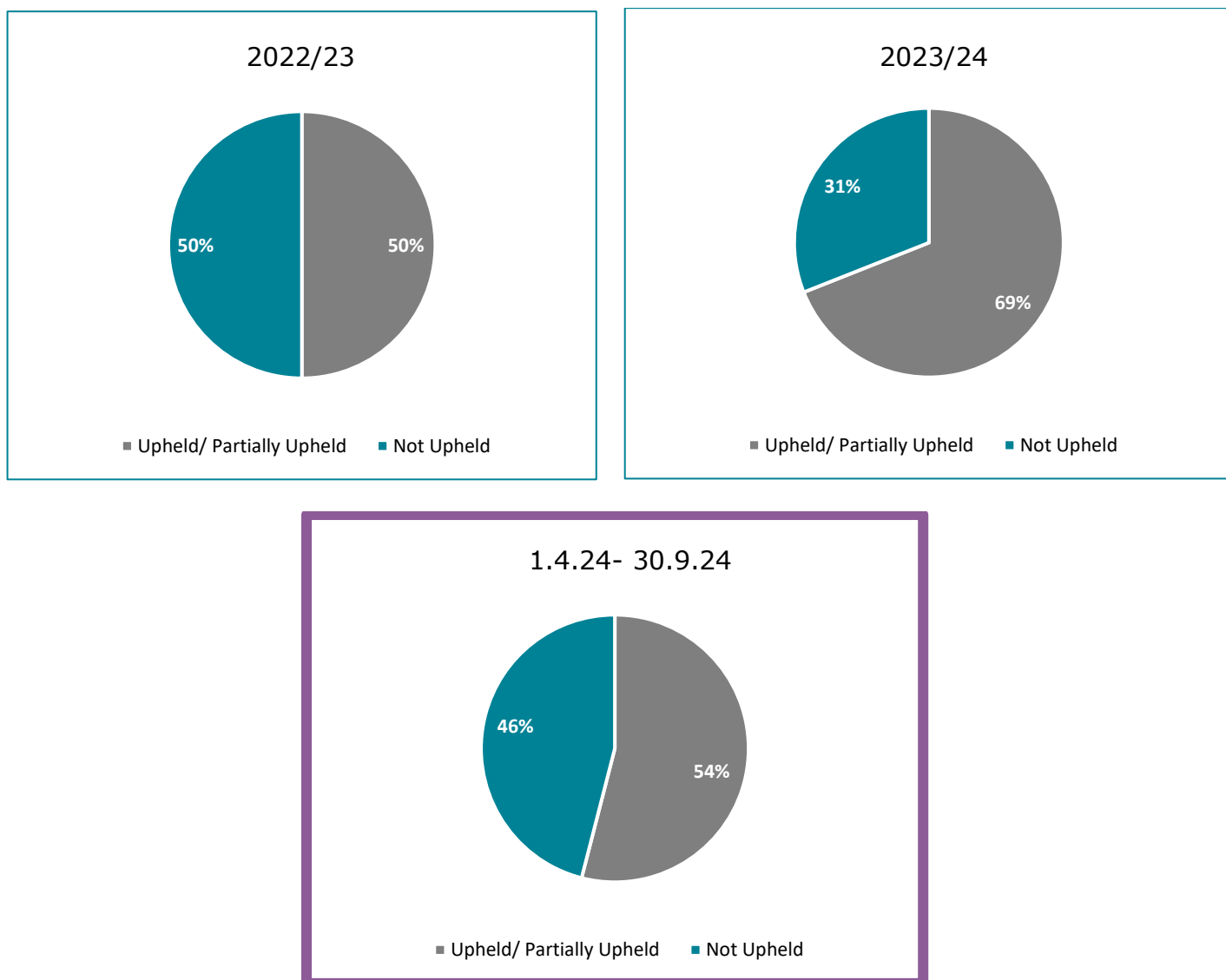
Complaint findings

6.7 **Figure 11** below shows the number of tenant complaints that were upheld or not upheld for 2022/23 compared to 2023/24 and at the half year position. It also shows the number of complaints that resulted in some form of financial settlement (including goodwill/time and trouble payments and compensation for losses).



6.8 **Figure 13** below shows the percentage of tenant complaints that have been upheld/ partially upheld and not upheld in 2022/23, 2023/24 and during the half year period covered by this report.

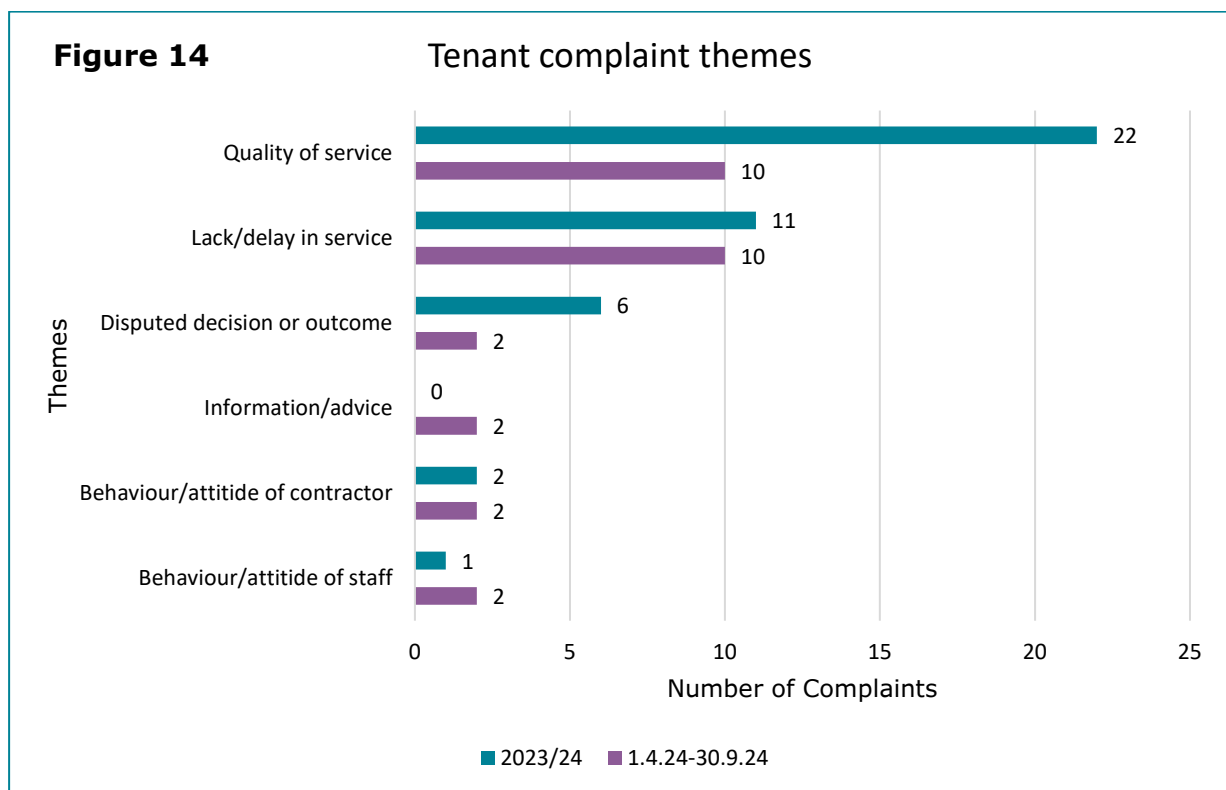
Figure 13



6.9 There has been a decrease in the proportion of tenant complaints that have been upheld/partially upheld at the half year position (54%) compared to 2023/24 (69%).

Themes

6.10 **Figure 14** below shows the tenant complaints we have received in 2023/24 and at the half year position categorised by theme.

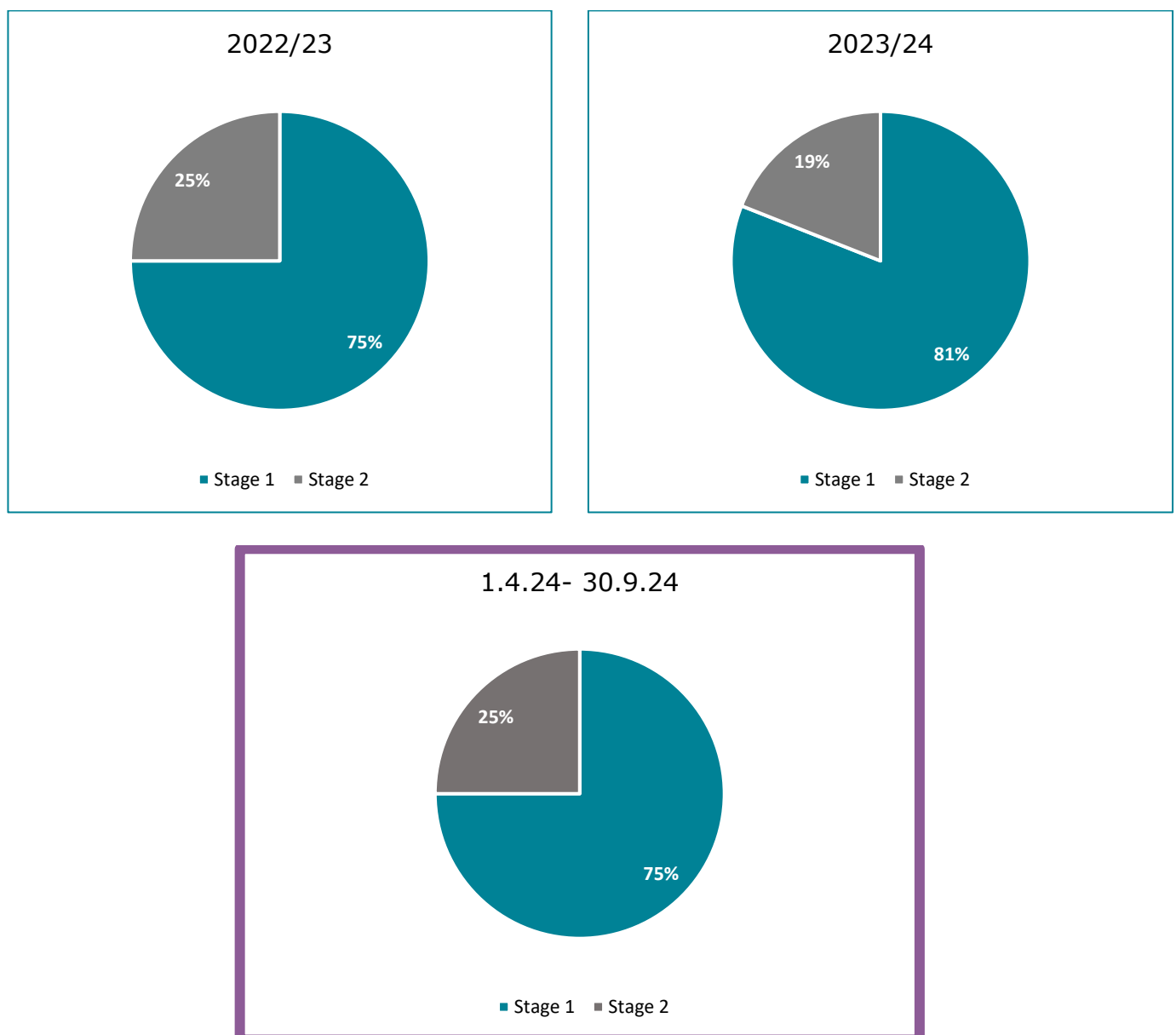


6.11 The most common types of tenant complaint have related to the quality of service received and lack of/delay in service (36% each). There are some instances where tenant complaints relate to more than one issue, but these have been categorised based on the most prevalent theme.

Stages

6.12 **Figure 15** below shows the percentage of tenant complaints that were either resolved at stage 1 or escalated to stage 2 of the corporate complaints procedure. This includes any stage 2 complaints that were escalated during the half year period (including where the stage 1 complaint may have been received in 2023/24).

Figure 15



6.13 The majority of tenant complaints at the half year position were resolved at stage 1 (75%).

Timescales

6.14 In 2023/24 100% of tenant complaints were responded to within the timescales included in the corporate complaints procedure that was applicable at that time.

6.15 For the half year period, 96% of stage 1 tenant complaints and 100% of stage 2 complaints were responded to within the timescales included in the corporate complaints procedure as included at paragraph 3.2 above or with an agreed extension in accordance with the complaint handling codes.

7. Complaints not accepted

- 7.1 Our corporate complaints procedure sets out what will not be considered as a corporate complaint.
- 7.2 This includes, but is not limited to, complaints against councillors, anonymous complaints, cases where other legal rights of appeal/review exist, or cases where we or the complainant has started legal proceedings.
- 7.3 Where we decide that a complaint cannot be dealt with as a corporate complaint, we will let the complainant know and advise them of their right to take that decision to the relevant Ombudsman.
- 7.4 During the half year period covered by this report, the following complaints were not accepted in accordance with the corporate complaints procedure:

Nature of complaint	Reason not a corporate complaint (section 4.2 of corporate complaints procedure)
Complaint regarding recovery of parking ticket fine	'cases where other legal rights of appeal/review exist, including complaints about a Penalty Charge Notice (parking ticket) or recovery action taken after the issue of the ticket'
Complaint regarding refusal to write off a debt	'Complaints which have already exhausted this Procedure'

- 7.5 We also have complaints that are not dealt with as corporate complaints because they are service requests. Our procedure includes the following regarding service requests:

'Service requests where an individual is requiring the Council to take action to put something right.'

- *Such service requests will be recorded, monitored and reviewed regularly.*
- *Where an individual expresses dissatisfaction with the response to their service request, a complaint will be raised. Efforts to address the service request will continue.'*

7.6 Some service requests are received by the Information Governance and Complaints Team for allocation to the relevant service, but many service requests will be received directly by services.

8. Learning

8.1 We recognise the importance of learning from complaints. Below are some examples of service improvements that have been made as a result of complaints dealt with during 1 April 2024 to 30 September 2024:

Case Study 1 – Environment and Regulation - Licensing

The complaint

A complaint was made regarding delays in the processing of a pleasure boat licensing application and requesting additional information from the applicant.

What did we do?

It was considered that the application was processed in a reasonable time, but the review of the complaint identified that the Council's website did not inform applicants of response and processing times. Further information was added to the website and internal guidance updated to require contact with an applicant if required information is missing from an application.

What is the ongoing service improvement?

Increasing transparency in the licensing process and managing applicants' expectations will improve the standard of service for pleasure boat licence applicants.

Case Study 2 – Landlord: Resident Services

The complaint

A complaint was made that the Council was trying to recover rent for a period of time after the tenant believed they had terminated their tenancy and left the property, but had not left vacant possession. The reason for leaving the property related to concerns about the behaviour of person who remained.

What did we do?

An update was added to standard letters advising tenants of the requirements regarding the end of tenancy process to include vacant possession. Steps will be taken to review and update policies and procedures relating to end of tenancy and vacant possession, particularly where disclosures regarding the behaviour of someone living at the property are made.

What is the ongoing service improvement?

Having updated policies and procedures will improve consistency and the support/signposting provided to tenants. Making sure information provided to tenants is up to date and complete will assist with managing expectations.

Case Study 3 – Environment and Regulation - Environmental Protection

The complaint

A complaint was received regarding the handling of alleged noise nuisance.

What did we do?

Whilst it was considered that the investigation had been handled appropriately, it was identified that further information regarding the statutory nuisance investigation process should be published on the Council's website.

What is the ongoing service improvement?

Increasing transparency in the statutory nuisance investigation process will improve the customer experience.

Case Study 4 – Landlord: Housing Maintenance, Programmes and Servicing

The complaint

A complaint was received from a tenant relating to repair issues at their property. This included that some agreed drainage works that were identified several years ago had not been completed and that other issues had been raised on multiple occasions before being rectified.

What did we do?

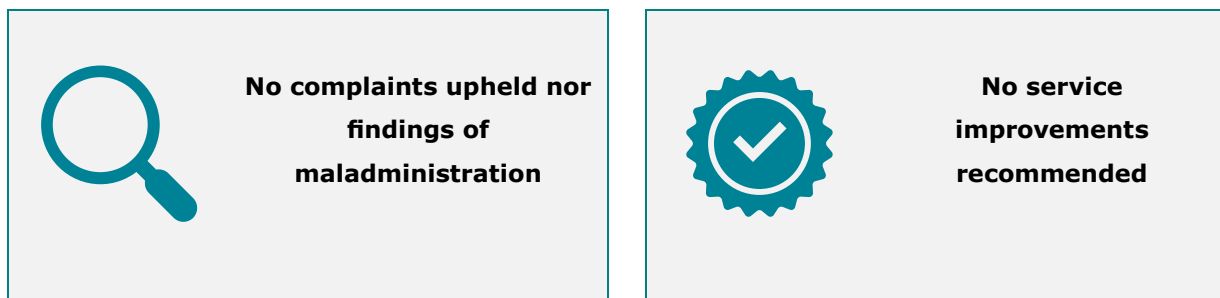
We apologised for the delays and steps were taken to progress these works. Steps have been taken to avoid repair works being missed through introduction of more comprehensive housing management software. We have introduced reporting to raise alerts for multiple repair requests or repeat repair requests so that issues can be resolved sooner.

What is the ongoing service improvement?

Improved software and alerts will increase repair requests being actioned without delay.

9. Ombudsman decisions

Summary – 1 April 2024-30 September 2024



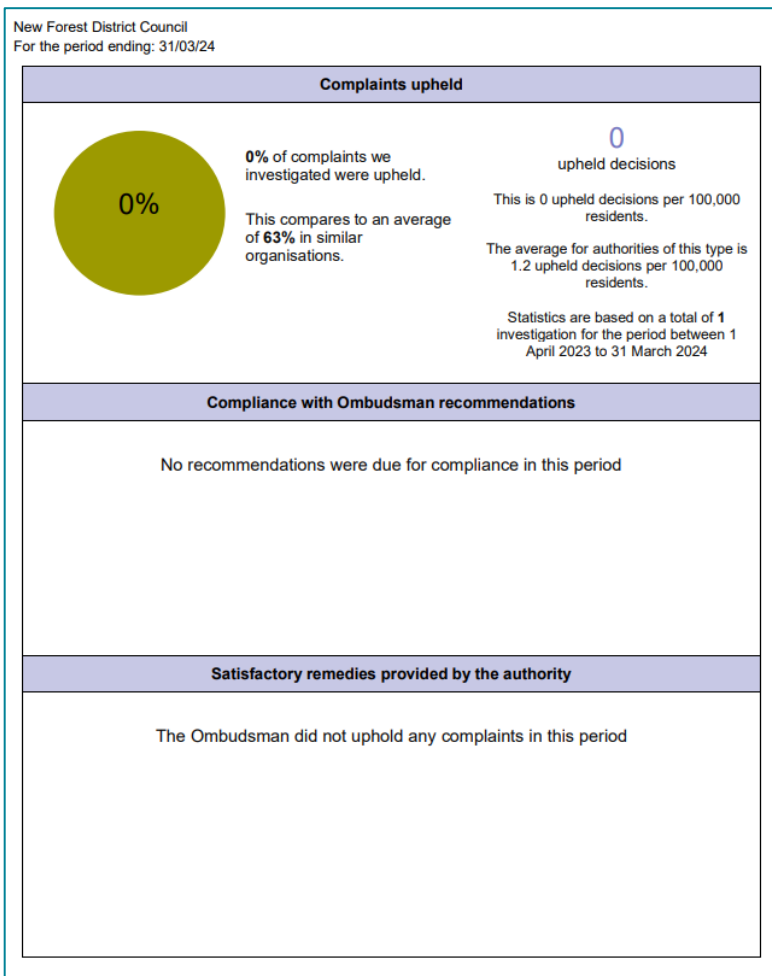
Right to escalate

- 9.1 If complainants are not satisfied with our response to their complaint, when they have exhausted our internal corporate complaints procedure, they can escalate their complaint to either the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman or, for tenants, the Housing Ombudsman.
- 9.2 Both Ombudsman services will generally not investigate complaints unless the complainant has completed our internal procedure. However, complainants can contact the relevant Ombudsman at any stage during their complaint.

Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman

Annual review letter

- 9.3 The Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman provides us with an annual review letter each year in July which includes a summary of complaint statistics for complaints which have escalated to them. This covers the preceding financial year.
- 9.4 Our annual review letter for 2023/24 was not available at the time the Annual Report was prepared. The complaint statistics from the 2023/24 letter are shown below:



9.5 The annual review letter for 2023/24, and previous years, is published on the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman’s website: [Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman - New Forest District Council Annual Reviews](#).

9.6 Our performance is also viewable on the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman’s website: [Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman - New Forest District Council Performance](#)

Investigations and findings

9.7 We are not always aware of every complaint or enquiry that is made to the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman.

9.8 Our records show that there has been 1 complaint decided by the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman, during the half year period covered by this report, related to the Council. This was closed after initial enquiries.

Housing Ombudsman

Performance report

9.9 The Housing Ombudsman publishes individual landlord performance reports for landlords with 5 or more findings for a particular financial year. These reports are available on the Housing Ombudsman's website: [Housing Ombudsman - Landlords Archive](#)

9.10 There is no landlord performance report relating to the Council currently published on the Housing Ombudsman's website.

Investigations and findings

9.11 As with the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman, we are not always aware of every complaint or enquiry that is made to the Housing Ombudsman.

9.12 Our records show that there have been no determinations made by the Housing Ombudsman, during the half year period covered by this report, related to the Council.

10.Compliments

10.1 It is important to recognise the good work that officers of the Council do, as well as identifying where improvements can be made.

10.2 Managers and officers are encouraged to pass on compliments and positive feedback that has been received. A compliments inbox (compliments@nfdc.gov.uk) has been set up to assist with this.

10.3 Below are anonymised examples of the positive feedback that has been received by some of our service areas during the half year period covered by this report.

Landlord: Housing Maintenance, Programmes and Servicing

“ Many thanks for the repair carried out this morning by xx. He has done his usual great job, very much appreciated”.

“ Tenant called and said ‘He ... was very happy with the service and input he received from us...”

“A big thank you for the fencing work we have just had completed”

“ I just wanted to say that the team carrying out the work on the soakaway have done an excellent job.”

“Tenant called in she is thrilled and really full of praise for the works we completed today. She would like to pass on her thanks to the worker and commend his wonderful craftsman ship.”

“The tenant from xx has called in to say she is really happy with works xx has done today and how nice polite and helpful he has been 😊”

"Whilst doing building checks at xx, I bumped into the tenant in xx, who has lived at this address for 10 years. He praised me and NFDC for the work we are doing and said he and his family was 110% happy with where they are and the work we do – we fix problems very quickly"

"I had workman here Monday I must say xx so polite and helpful ... He is a lovely man! Please pass this onto his boss please!"

" Tenant has called in to the Hub this morning to pass on her thanks and compliments to our operative xx for all his hard work in the back garden, she is extremely grateful."

" I would also inform you that the workman who came was absolutely wonderful he worked so quickly and soon was able to find the problem after many tries. Definitely someone to keep on your 'book's'. Thank you again."

" Compliments given over the phone to operative xx for a job he was on yesterday, at xx Tenant noted xx is a very hardworking man and should get recognition as such. All is done to a very high standard..."

"... I wanted to say that he was both very friendly and efficient at his job; he made me feel very much at ease, and also made sure to explain what he'd just done afterwards clearly. He basically did everything just the way you'd hope it would be, and as such I thought it important to pass on my compliments, and give full credit where it's due. If you could pass on these thoughts, thanks and best wishes, it would be much appreciated.."

" I would like to thank the three guys who came one last week and two today who were lovely guys and did a great job. Especially thank you xx for a brilliant job..."

"Xx called the Hub this afternoon to pass on her thanks and compliments to both the call taker and the tradesman who helped her today..."

"Thank you to kitchen fitter (contractor) I can never thank you enough for the care and respect they gave me whilst they carried out to work on my kitchen. They put my needs above the work. They have kept me informed and each and every day they have made sure I was safe They left the kitchen clear of trip hazards..."

" Tenant called regarding her replacement driveway.

She said that everyone at NFDC and our contractors had all 'gone above and beyond' and 'gone out of their way to make everything easier' for her. She is absolutely delighted with the work and with the way she has been treated all along..."

" I would like to convey my grateful thanks to xx and his workforce for being so thorough, so kind and considerate to my needs. xx went above and beyond ...he ensured his crew did the same. Amazing workers and nothing was too much trouble."

Landlord: Resident Services

" I would like to say thank you. The property on xx road is beautiful, it's everything I hoped for it really is. I have accepted the flat and we sign the tenancy agreement tomorrow! I am very delighted to be able to relax and not have to worry all of the time. You have helped me in many ways, you have listened to me and have taken my situation into consideration and you did all you could to give me an amazing place to live with all of the beautiful surroundings. I am excited to move into the property."

"xx, again I must reiterate that every day I go and visit Mum and every time she is in her kitchen and singing your praises! The kitchen refit has made such a massive difference to her, not only physically, but mentally as well!"

" Two residents at xx would like to offer feedback on xx, the regular cleaner. 'she's great, she does a fantastic job' they were very pleased with the regular cleaning that she does!"

"I've just had a chat with xx and she wanted me to convey her thanks to all the team who helped xx and those who have given their assistance to her over the last week. xx said that it's been a great help to her and her children knowing xx was in great hands, and that he was very optimistic about the move on accommodation he'd been allocated.!"

"Hi xx, thank you for your time yesterday and the smooth and caring sign-up process."

"Mum of tenant, passes thanks through to xx for all her help..."

"Tenant wanted to pass on how lovely, helpful, and efficient everyone has been in dealing with all her recent issues and what an amazing and efficient service we provide. She is very happy."

" I would also like to thank you for your help and support at a very difficult time. "

Housing Options and Tenancy Accounts

"xx, I have to say a huge thank you to you for your help, advice, and reassurance during this nightmarish time...Thank you again,"

"Thank you, xx, you've been amazing at helping me"

" Thank you, xx, I really appreciate all that you're doing and helping us so much."

" Just want to say thank you for everything you have done for me and my children. It's much appreciated, thank you."

" xx, I Just like to say how jolly efficient and kind you have been. Well done and thank you..."

"xx, Thanks for your email, it has been a pleasure having a great contact in the New Forest."

"Tenant ...wanted to thank everybody involved with assisting her mum to be re-housed, she said she cannot believe the difference it has made to xx and how happy she now is...She asked for special thanks to xx as you showed her around ... she is now in a secure, safe place she loves,"

" Tenants both said how great and supportive you both have been, and they are very grateful for all your help.."

" Thank you, xx,... you have been a godsend in a really difficult time for me.."

"Thank you to xx-So great news!!!! Thanks a million!!!I wanted to say a huge thank you again for your help and participation!!! This is incredibly good news; we are very happy!..."

"Thank you for all your help."

" Me and my wife really grateful to you for your help! Without your assistance we can't proceed, previously we tried but unsuccessfully :(Thanks a million, to You!"

"Thank you for all your support"

" Thank you for your help with this application. In an age of social media and ever-increasing technology it is great to speak to someone who can and does help!"

"Thank you for sending me this amazing piece of news!...Its taken a massive weight from my shoulders and I should be able to finally get a good nights sleep tonight. Thank you so much for your help and advice."

"I really wanted to express my appreciation and thanks to the absolutely wonderful staff from the nfdc that have made such a difference along the way, xx from the allocation team has been not only incredibly helpful but empathetic and kind, she listened and really cared about my xx, her quick reactions and competence really did start this whole process..."

Community safety and support

“Hi just really wanted to say thank you again Thank you for today don't think you realise the difference you've just made!”

“I just wanted to say thank you for all your help, support and guidance over the past couple of years – I've loved working with you. The range of issues you deal with is immense and how you keep on top of it all is beyond me. There have been some real challenges as I'm sure there will continue to be – but I think some of the relationships and working arrangements we've put in place will only serve to make the partnership (and therefore the New Forest) stronger and safer.
Thanks again for everything”

Environmental and Regulation

“Thank you and a quick note to say how good an experience it has been to work with you and the team on the ground. Lots of useful advice by everyone, respectful and very customer friendly. You and the team are a shining light not just to the council, but business in general on how to engage with the general public...”

“ Thank you very much for this information and making sure we are all kept safe.”

“ THANKYOU , you are still my favourite Licensing authority !!”

“ Many thanks for your email. I think you should know that you are by far the easiest and most efficient Licensing team to deal with! Many thanks”

“ ...I just wanted to say again thanks to you and all concerned in Licensing ... every time I've communicated with NFDC you've all been super polite and helpful”

"I have had excellent service from licensing department over the past 13 years and thank you for the friendly and efficient way I have been looked after. "

" Thank you for your most kind letter of xx, which is much appreciated. "

Revenues and Benefits

"...I was met with another member of your staff, xx who again was patient, kind and incredibly efficient."

"... I just wanted to say again, thank you so much for keeping an eye on things with me and for the increased support... I am grateful for good people like yourself working in and around this process and your support is so very much appreciated Thank you, not just for me, but for my children, whose well being your are also assisting."

"...Many thanks for arranging this for me. The staff at Lymington made the whole process very easy please pass my thanks".

Coastal

"Please pass on my personal thanks to the NFDC team who provided so much information ... all the best to you and thanks again...."

" We are also very grateful for the coastal team - you have always given very prompt and thorough responses whenever we contacted you during our beach hut search"

Waste and Transport

“Thank you very much for your kind reply. The operatives work hard and at a pace. The new bins should solve it all.
I [would] like to say a huge thank you for resolving the issue of the domestic waste... Long may it continue”

“ Many thanks to the team ... They were really friendly and did a really great job, an asset to the council...”

“I have just had a visit from xx and write to state my gratitude for the swift and timely manner he dealt with my complaint.”

“We wanted to write to extend our gratitude to the refuse collectors...Our 2 year old boy, xx, eagerly awaits the bin collection every xx morning and loves to go out and watch the team collect our bins. They are always incredibly friendly with him and take the time to stop, wave and chat and let him see what they're doing. Please ensure [our] appreciation is shared with them and their line managers.”

11. Conclusion

11.1 This report provides a half yearly update on our complaint handling from 1 April 2024 to 30 September 2024.

11.2 It is vital that complaints are responded to adequately and in a timely manner and that our corporate complaints procedure works effectively for both complainants and staff.

11.3 Complaints serve as one of the Council's most important intelligence sources and learning from complaints, and developing meaningful service improvements, will drive our complaints handling going forward. We will continue to work on the actions identified in the Annual Report to improve our complaint handling.