



Annual Complaints Report
April 2024 – March 2025

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Purpose of the Report

This report summarises resident feedback and outlines our plans to respond during 2024/25, including improvements already made.

Why Complaints Matter

Complaints show us where to improve and help us deliver better services for residents, they also support us to achieve the following objectives in our strategic plans.

- Mid Suffolk: Committed to high-quality, reliable, and accessible council services.
- Babergh: Focused on delivering good quality core services.

We're committed to putting residents at the heart of service design and improvement, using feedback to drive change.

Complaints Process Overview

Our complaints process follows best practice from the Housing Ombudsman and Local Government Ombudsman. It includes:

1. **Stage One** – Initial complaint review.
2. **Stage Two** – Internal escalation if unresolved.
3. **Final Stage** – Referral to the relevant ombudsman if needed.

Following the last Overview and Scrutiny review in January 2025, we have created a visual process, which can be found at:

- [Complaints Process](#)
- [Housing Complaints Process](#)

Overview and narrative for Complaints

Complaints Received

Complaint Trends

The Council continues to see a steady rise in complaints. In 2024/25, we received:

- **1,227 stage one complaints** an increase of 179 from the previous year
- **160 stage two complaints** an increase of three cases from the previous year.

A key milestone this year was a **decline in housing repairs and maintenance complaints**, the first since we began tracking annual data. While this is a positive step, it was balanced by increases in complaints across other service areas.

Fig 1. Complaints Received by Year:

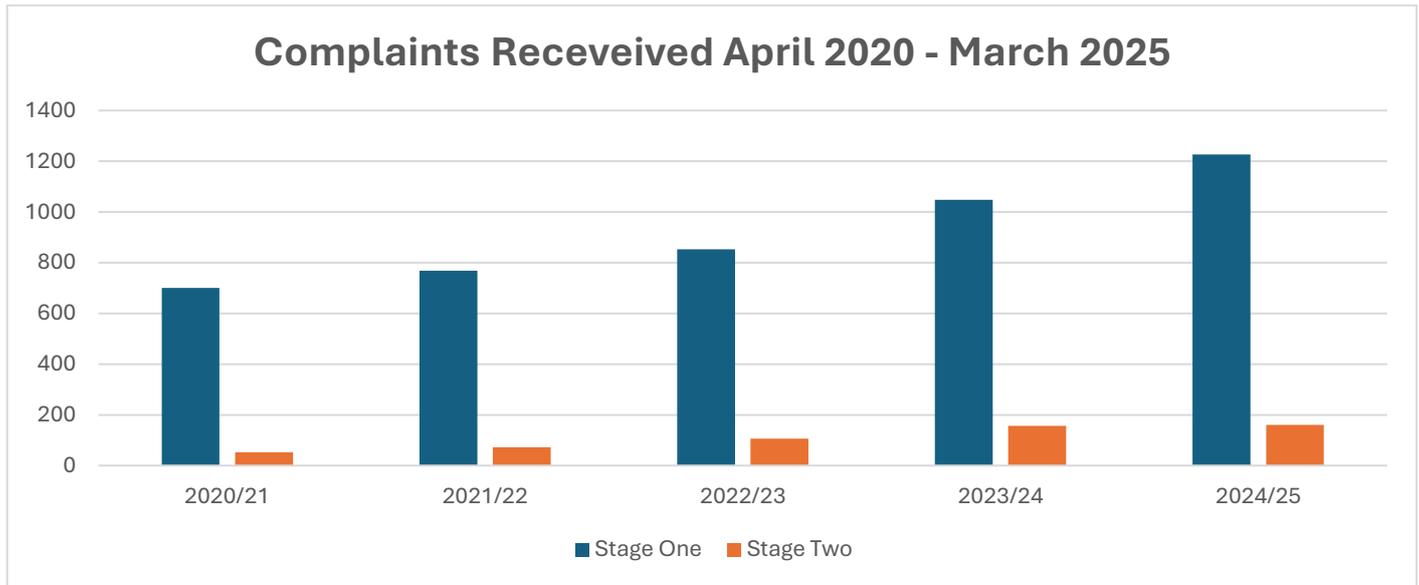
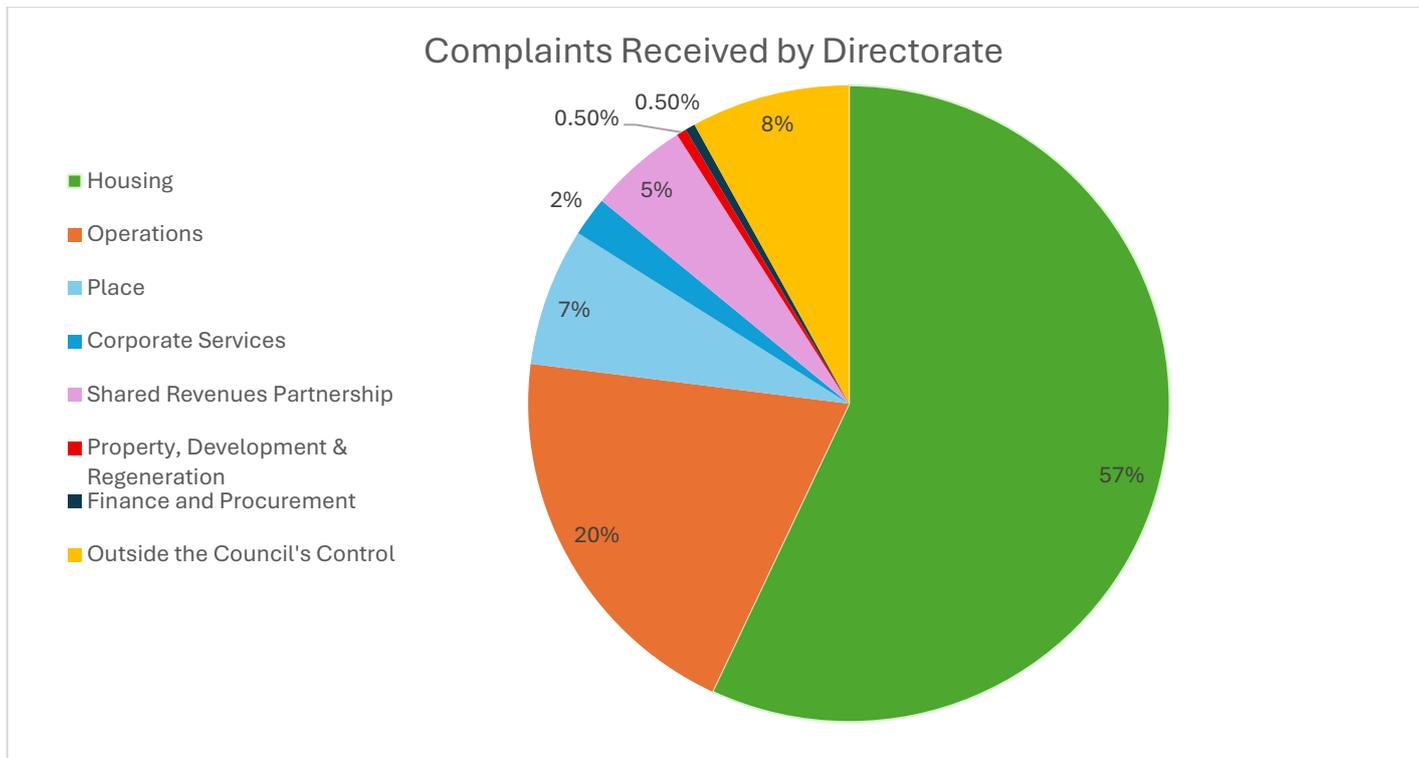


Fig 2. Complaints Received by Directorate:



For this year's report, complaints are presented in two categories, those related to our housing service and those from the remaining services of the Council. Most housing related complaints are overseen by the Social Housing Regulator and the Housing Ombudsman Service.

In the section below, "Complaints Received by Other Departments" there are appendices that show the year on year complaint figures for those years for 2022/23, 2023/24 and 2024/25. The largest increase in complaints received via the system was for the Council's Waste Services, followed by Car Parking complaints and there is more information on these below.

Complaints Closed

During 2024/25 when closing complaints, the complaint closure figures were as follows:

Stage One:

- 45% Upheld
- 30% Not Upheld
- 25% Not considered to be a complaint

Complaints submitted at stage one that are later not considered to be a complaint are for reasons such as:

- A request for a service that is being made for the first time.
- There is an appeals process in place (Planning Inspectorate, Housing Allocations)
- Outside the Council's control (e.g. Suffolk County Council administered service)

Stage Two:

- 40% Upheld
- 32% Not Upheld
- 28% Not considered to be a complaint

Complaints escalated to Stage Two of Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils' complaints procedure may be closed without investigation if they do not meet the criteria for a valid complaint. Common reasons include:

- The reasons listed above at stage one
- It has been escalated whilst the stage one complaint is still open
- It has been raised before a stage one complaint has been raised.

We monitor complaint response times against our policy timeframes using Key Performance Indicators, which are reported on a quarterly basis through our corporate performance reporting. In 2024/25, during the transition between our old and new complaints systems:

- **69%** of Stage One complaints were responded to on time

- **82%** of Stage Two complaints were responded to on time

Since launching in **June 2024**, improved case management boosted our response rates to:

- **72%** of Stage One complaints responded to on time
- **94%** of Stage Two complaints responded to on time

Also, since launching the complaints system, we are now able to track the average number of days to responds to complaints:

- 20.76 working days at Stage One, 10.76 days above target
- 14.20 working days at Stage Two. 5.8 days below target

We have seen further improvement as teams have continued to use the system and complaint handling processes have improved particularly in our housing teams. The average stage one response time has reduced to 11.43 days between the 1st April 2025 and 31st January 2026. This data will be captured in full in the next annual report.

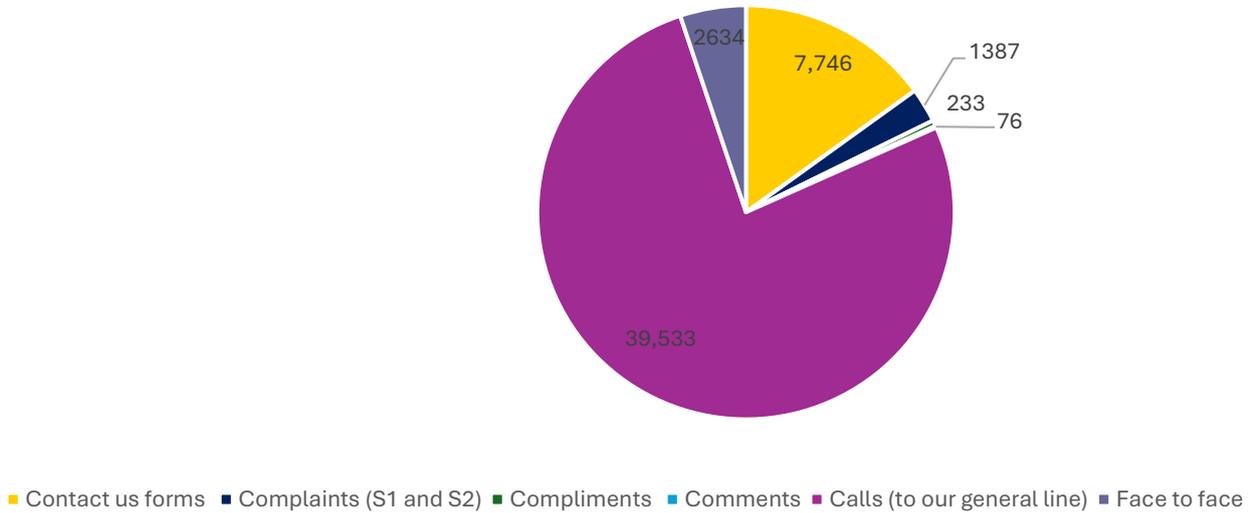
This improvement is driven by better reporting tools, enabling services to easily identify overdue complaints and monitor progress effectively.

Online Web Forms Received

In 2024/25 the Council received a total of 1,696 submissions relating to compliments, comments and complaints. The Council also received a further 7,746 submissions through our “Contact Us” form which acts as a form for when residents cannot resolve their query through the self-service options.

Fig 3: Council Complaints, comments and compliments form and contact us general enquiry form.

Compliments, Comments, Complaints, Contact Us Enquiry Forms



In addition to this the Council received a further 118,310 reports through our self-service webforms, 2,634 visits to our customer access point (face to face) and 39,533 calls into our general enquiries line in the customer services team.

These include reporting a repair, creation or updating of Council Tax accounts and ordering of waste bins amongst others.

This means that complaints make up only 2.6% of all general enquiry contact received in 2024/25 and a much smaller percentage of all customer interactions overall.

Complaints Received

Complaints Received by Housing

Housing Complaints Breakdown

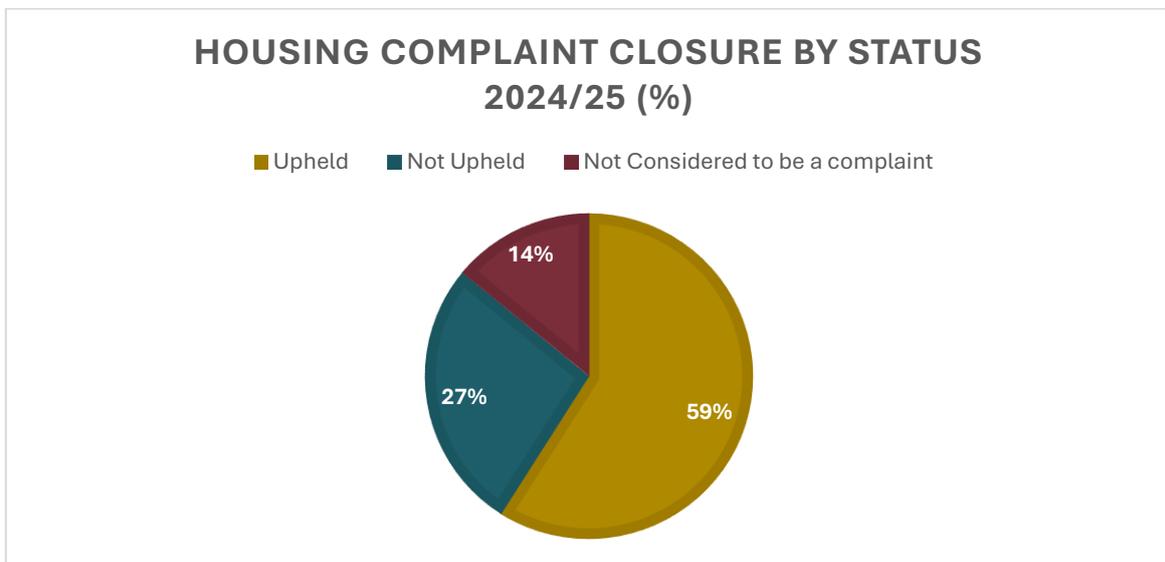
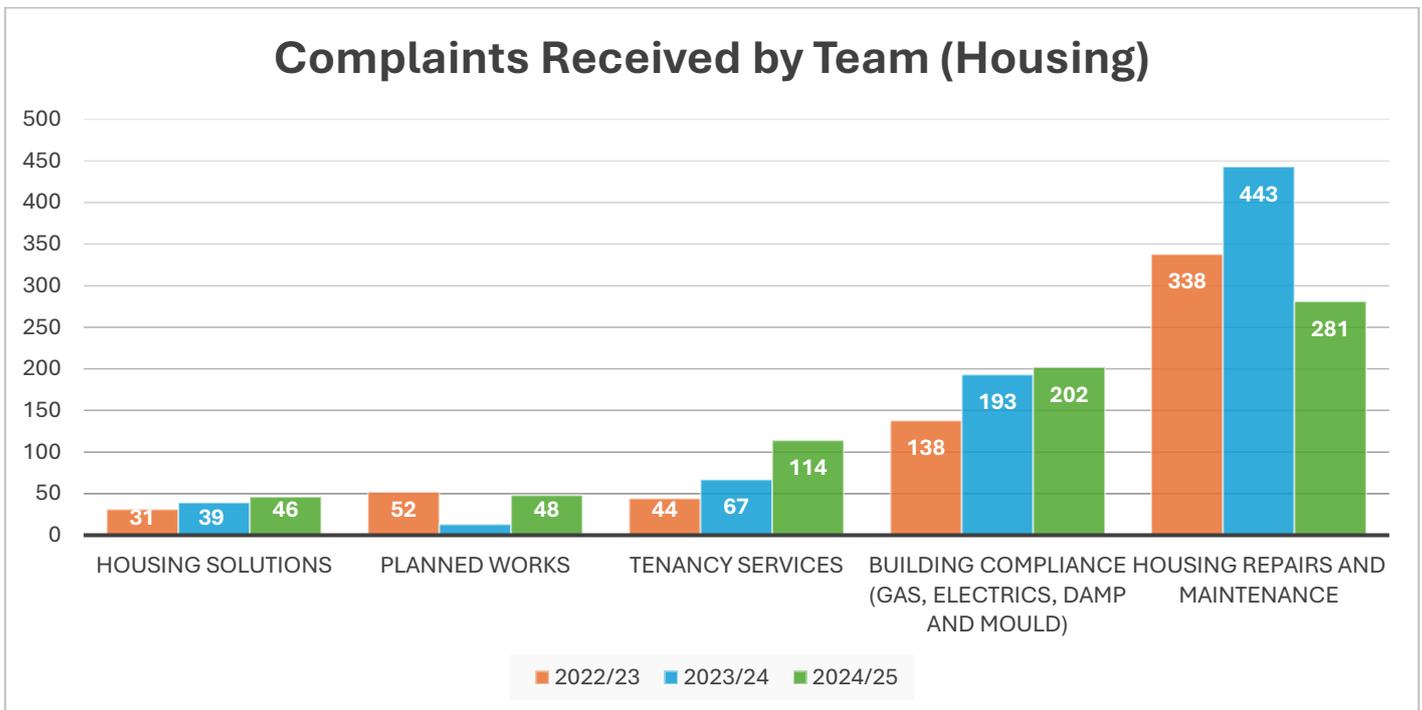
Complaints relating to our Housing Services have decreased overall year on year, driven in large part by a significant reduction in complaints about the Housing Repairs and Maintenance Service from 443 to 281. This improvement has positively impacted the total volume of complaints across the service.

However, this trend has not been consistent across all Housing teams. While some areas such as housing repairs and maintenance have seen fewer complaints, others such as tenancy services have experienced an increase during the same period (please see Fig. 4)

Trends for the rise in complaints in these areas include:

- A continued lack of communication between contractors and our tenants especially regarding our gas compliance contractor. Complaints raised highlight a lack of pre-visit communication, missed appointments and delays to works being carried out.
- Our planned works team have seen an increase of complaints also due to a lack of communication whilst works are ongoing.
- Anti-Social Behaviour – complaints relate to a perceived lack of action and outcomes to reports

Fig 4 and 5: Complaints received by housing teams and closure status



Housing still accounts for the highest percentage of complaints received by the Council from a Directorate at 57% of all complaints.

Housing Repairs remain the most common issue that are reported across housing, with 281 Stage One complaints this year, down from 338 in 2022/23 and 443 in 2023/24, showing a continued downward trend. The decrease in complaints within this service area can be attributed to the following changes in service provided:

- In 2024, the Housing Repairs and Maintenance team underwent a restructure to establish a staffing model that better supports service delivery, improves response times, and enhances customer satisfaction.
- In December 2024, the team launched the Repairs and Maintenance Policy, clearly outlining the Council's responsibilities for maintaining tenants' homes and support with managing expectations and providing transparent services.
- The Housing department introduced the Babergh and Mid Suffolk Tenant Handbook, a guide designed to help tenants understand what to expect from their housing service. It covers key topics like repairs, rent, communication, and how to raise concerns or complaints.
- Feedback from previous complaints showed that tenants wanted better communication and higher-quality repairs. In response, the team introduced a new repairs system to schedule jobs at the first point of contact, aiming to reduce delays and improve customer satisfaction.
- Housing strengthened how we collect tenant contact details to improve communication and offer appropriate adjustments where needed.

Further improvements are underway. Housing have also started work to review the process for moving into a new Council home and ensure this is a positive experience and demonstrates that we are learning from feedback.

Tenant Board Scrutiny Project

In February 2025, the Tenant Board launched a complaint focused scrutiny project. This ongoing work aims to identify areas for service improvement and demonstrates our commitment to ensuring residents are included in service improvement. The key areas they recommended improvements for are:

- To ensure learning from complaints is embedded throughout the complaints process
- To ensure that reasonable adjustments for vulnerability are being provided
- To ensure that our communication with tenants is in a clear language, via their preferred method of contact and that tenants are kept informed throughout their complaint
- To ensure that contract managers within our housing department undertake the following:
 - o Ensure all contract managers meetings have an agenda item of complaints
 - o Ensure that the relevant policies and procedures are in place

As a result of the tenant board project, and with an increased focus on lessons learned from complaints. The Complaints Taskforce will now collate a document with the lessons learned from complaints to ensure that themes and trends are managed with actions agreed to help mitigate repeat complaints, moving forward.

We are also introducing a new involvement opportunity for tenant complaint experts who will help us to review our complaint responses on a regular basis, suggest improvements for future responses and help us to identify lessons learned and improvements to services.

Policy Updates

Housing have also introduced or updated several key policies to improve clarity, consistency, and service standards:

- Fencing Policy – Sets out when fencing can be requested, who is responsible, and how decisions are made to support safety and neighbourhood appearance.
- Housing Compensation Policy – Provides a fair and transparent framework for offering compensation where service failures have caused inconvenience or loss.
- Empty Property Standards – Ensures homes are re-let in a safe, clean, and well-maintained condition, helping reduce void times and improve tenant satisfaction.
- The new aids and adaptations process to ensure we can help residents access the support and adjustments they need to live safely and independently in their homes.

Complaints Received by Other Departments

The other areas of complaints across the organisation are relatively low in comparison to Housing. This report has chosen to focus on the top three other directorates with the highest volume of complaints which are:

- Operations
- Shared Revenues Partnership
- Planning

Operations

In 2024/25, the Operations Directorate received 246 complaints between 1 April 2024 and 31 March 2025. This reflects the high volume of public facing services it covers, including Waste Services, Public Protection, and Public Realm.

- Waste Services received the most complaints, mainly about:
 - Missed collections
 - Operative conduct (e.g. bins not returned properly or collections before 6:30am)
 - Delays in delivering new bins

Recruitment difficulties for HGV drivers during late 2024 and early 2025 significantly affected service delivery, particularly within waste and recycling collections. While this challenge was largely beyond the Council's direct control, it was the primary factor contributing to the rise in complaints received by the Operations team during this period.

- Car Park complaints detailed machines not working, condition of car parks, and some complaints regarding charges introduced in Babergh.
- Public Realm complaints focused on missed or poor-quality grass and hedge cutting. In some cases, the areas were not included on the cutting schedule or missing from the online map. Maps and schedules have since been updated. It is also noted that some proactive social media campaigns have been running to help alleviate complaints and reduce misconceptions and improve public understanding. Our communications team in the last year have implemented a proactive communications strategy. This included a series of social media posts highlighting the benefits of wildflower meadows, supported by myth-busting video explainers on site management. These posts generated overwhelmingly positive engagement, for example, a post on 12 August received approximately 150 interactions, with most feedback being positive
- In Mid Suffolk, we also showcased the work of the new REACT team (respond, enforce and clean team) through highly engaging content, including 'before and after' images and videos. Individual posts regularly reached over 20,000 views and attracted strong positive sentiment, making them some of our most successful social media outputs of the year.
- Public Protection complaints were mainly about noise nuisance and anti-social behaviour. Some were new reports treated as service requests, as they were raised for the first time. Complaints about investigation outcomes typically stemmed from disagreement with the officer's findings.

Fig 6: Complaints received by the Operations Directorate (waste services, car parking, public realm and environmental protection)

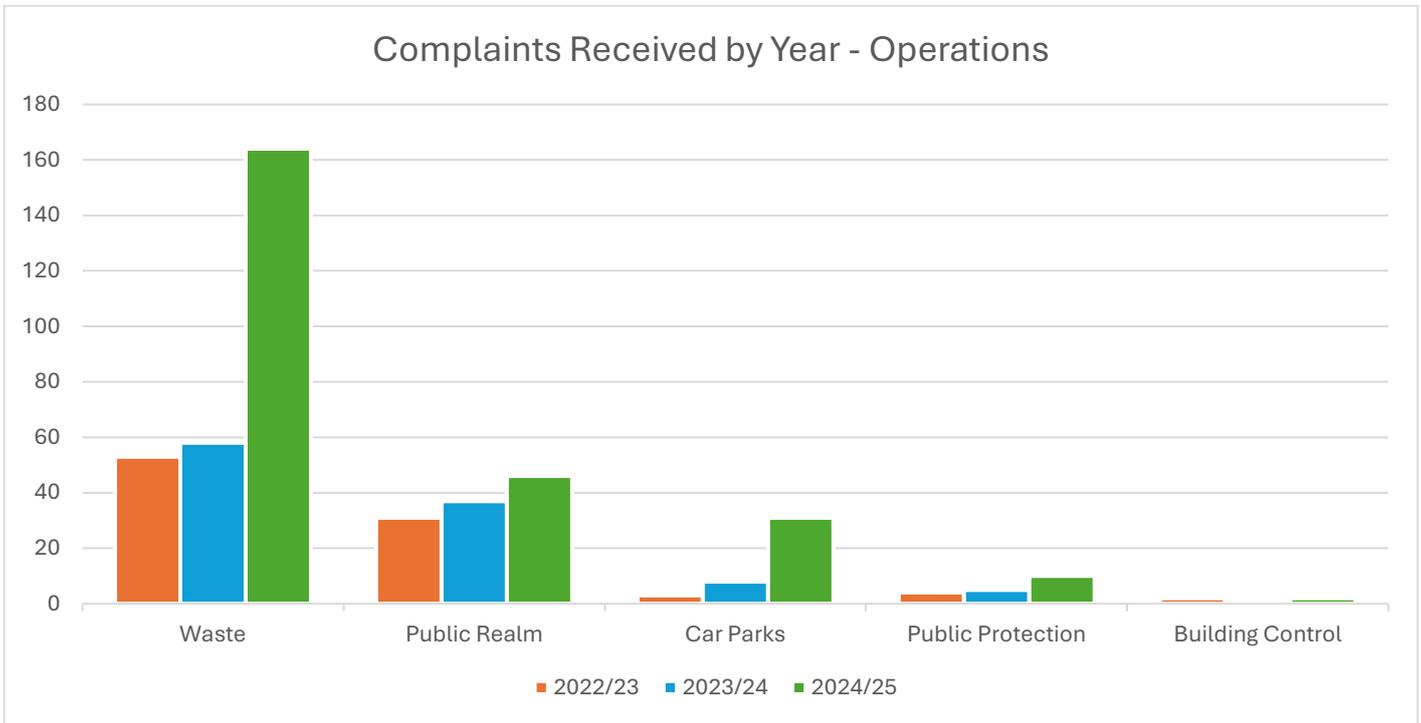
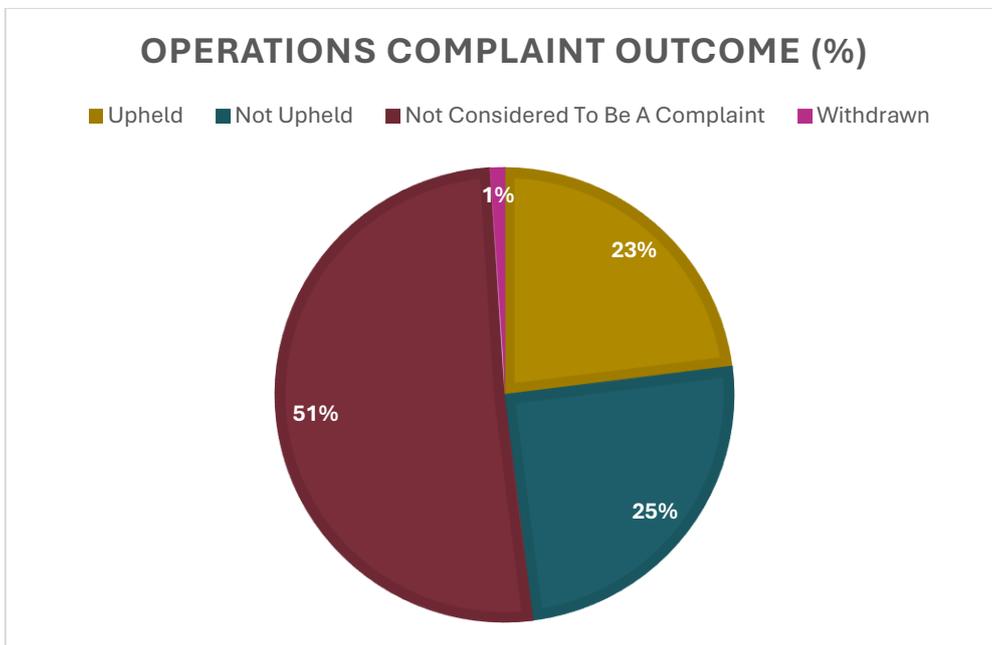


Fig 7: Operations complaint outcomes



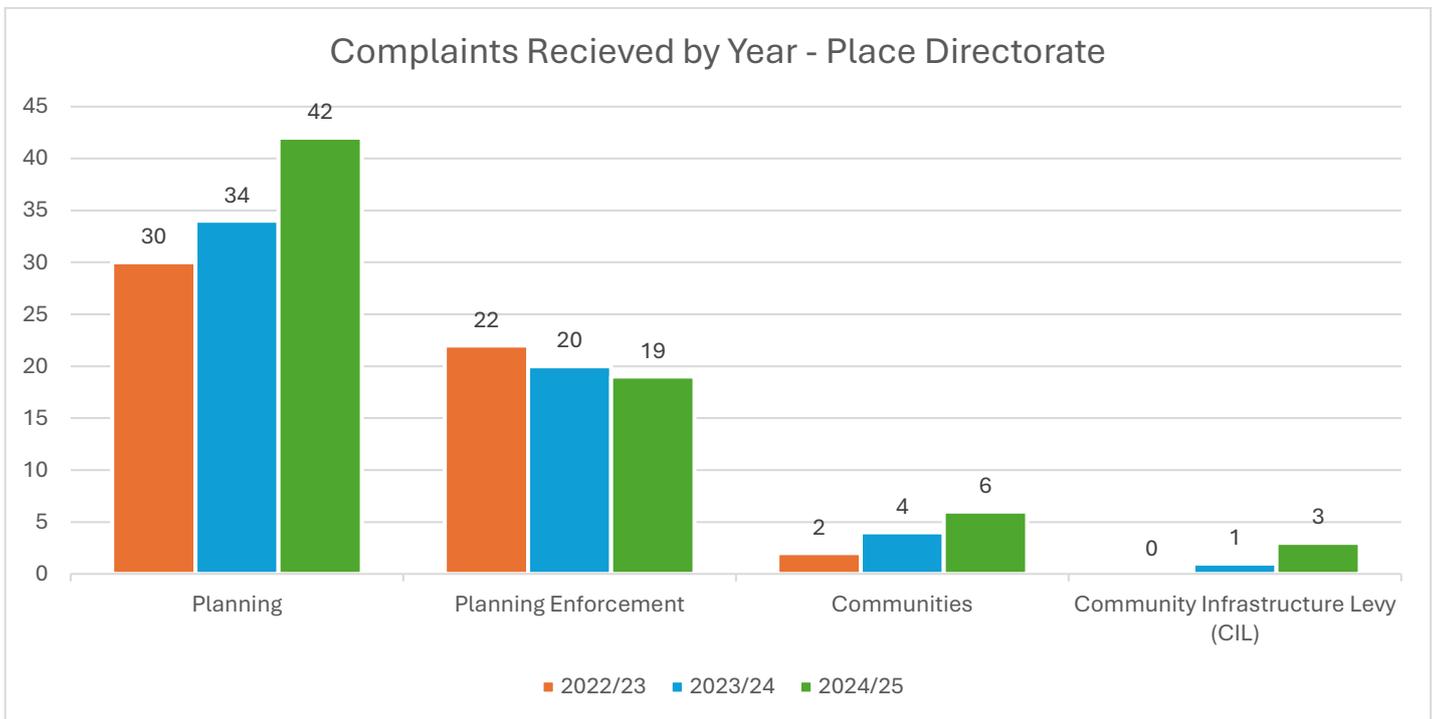
Just over 50% of the complaints received by operations were closed as ‘not considered to be a complaint’ this is where the complainant may be alerting us to an issue for the first time, for example an initial missed collection or for example contaminated waste being the reason for the missed collection.

Place Directorate

In 2024/25, the Place Directorate received **73 complaints**, related to Planning, Planning Enforcement, and Communities. Planning and Planning Enforcement accounted for the majority, with Communities making up just under 10%.

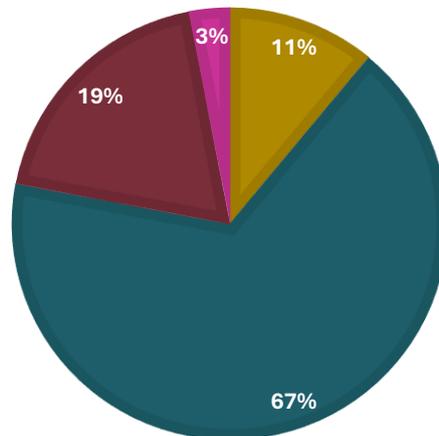
- **Planning** complaints focused on delays and poor communication with applicants. A few challenged planning decisions and were referred to the Planning Inspectorate, as they fall outside the Council's complaints process. Some complaints were also submitted by individuals opposing applications, these should be logged as formal objections via the planning portal. Feedback highlighted the need for more consistent and timely communication.
- **Planning Enforcement** Complaints often involved perceived delays or lack of action. Concerns about investigation outcomes were also raised. The team is working to improve communication throughout enforcement cases, and it should be noted that enforcement complaints have reduced year on year.

Fig 8 and 9: Complaints received by the Place Directorate (planning, planning enforcement, communities, strategic planning and the community infrastructure levy)



PLACE COMPLAINT OUTCOMES BY %

■ Upheld ■ Not Upheld ■ Not Considered to be a Complaint ■ Withdrawn



Shared Revenues Partnership

The Shared Revenues Partnership (SRP), based at Ipswich Borough Council (IBC), manages **Council Tax** and **Housing Benefits** services for our districts.

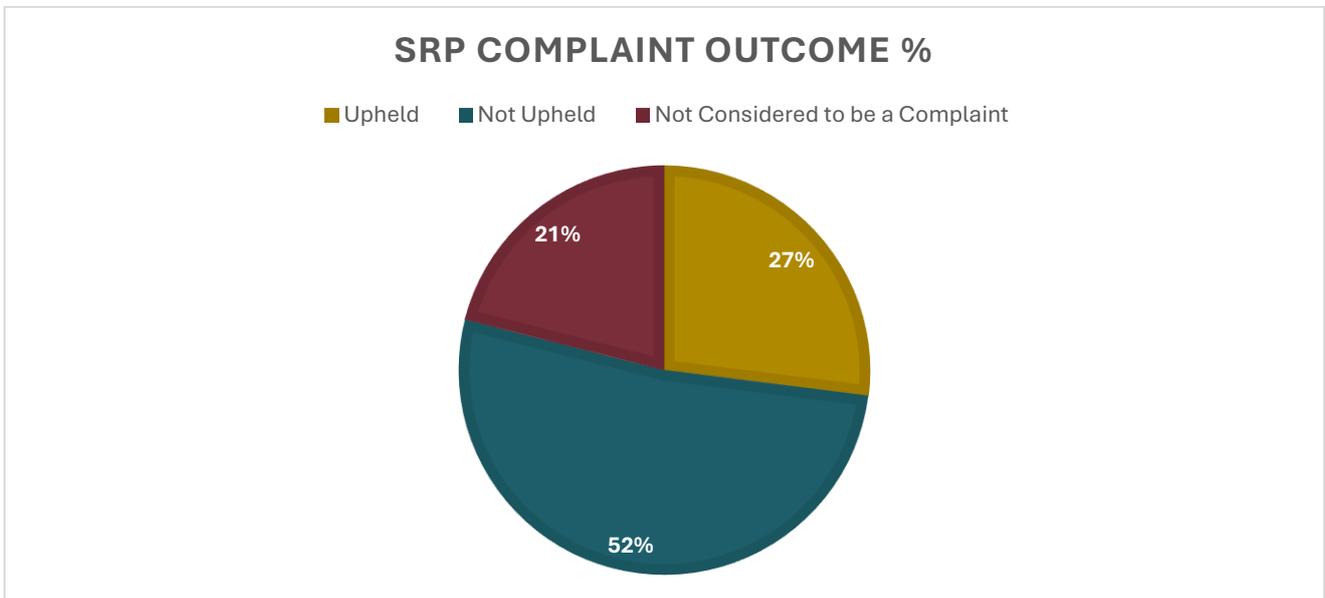
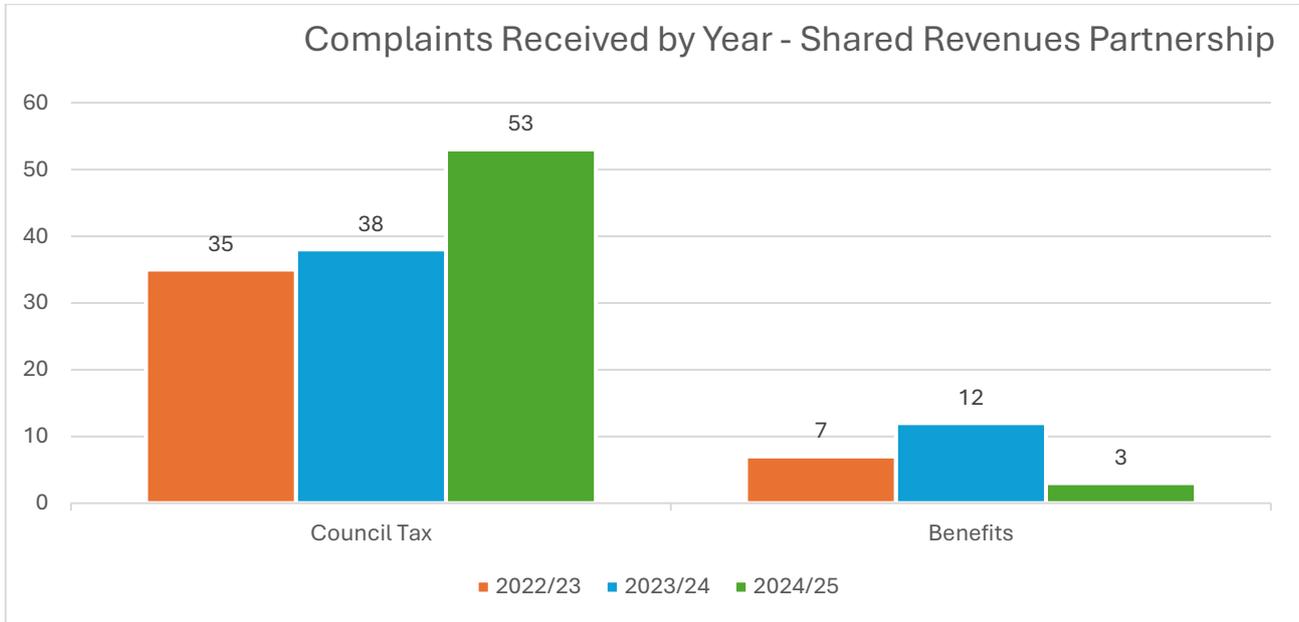
Council Tax complaints mainly involved:

- Incorrect charges
- Direct debit errors
- Enforcement Agent involvement
- Issues accessing online accounts

In response, the team issued refunds, withdrew enforcement actions, and clarified account details. Investigations highlighted the need for clearer communication and more thorough account checks. It is important to note that the volume of complaints received against the level of contact received directly by SRP works out at less than 0.1% of all contact received

- **Benefits** received fewer complaints, mostly related to benefit calculations. No specific remedies or learning outcomes were recorded, suggesting the service is generally performing well.

Fig 10 and 11: Complaints received by year for Council Tax and Benefits and outcome status.



Housing Ombudsman Service (HOS)

Introduction

If tenants aren't satisfied with how their complaint is handled, they can contact the Housing Ombudsman. This is an independent service that investigates complaints about housing providers, including councils, housing associations, and some private landlords.

The Ombudsman helps resolve issues fairly and may recommend compensation or other actions. It also works with landlords to improve how complaints are handled, ensuring tenants' concerns are taken seriously and their rights are protected.

The Housing Ombudsman's Annual Complaints Review (national report) 2024–25 highlights several important national trends:

- Repairs and Property Condition remain the most common complaint, with a 43% rise in findings, often linked to delays, poor diagnosis, and temporary fixes.
- 71% of complaints were upheld, with 120 landlords having a maladministration rate of 75% or higher.
- Complaint handling showed some improvement, with a 7% drop in maladministration findings in this area.
- The Ombudsman made over 26,000 interventions, with 40% of compensation linked to leaks, damp, and mould.
- Serious cases continue to show the impact of poor housing conditions on residents' health and wellbeing.

Their full annual report for national trends can be found on their website here: <https://www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk/annual-complaint-review-reports/annual-complaints-review-2024-25/>

Babergh District Council

Landlord Performance Report

Between April 2024 and March 2025, Babergh District Council was included in the Housing Ombudsman's annual performance report, having received more than five findings. During this period, four complaints were investigated, resulting in eight findings. A single complaint can cover multiple service issues, such as fencing, window repairs, and complaint handling leading to multiple findings per case.

Of the eight findings, five were for service failure or maladministration, giving Babergh a rate of 63%, slightly better than the national average of 71% for similar landlords.

The Ombudsman acknowledged Babergh's compliance with its decisions but identified areas for improvement, particularly in record keeping, complaint handling, and responses to repair and adaptation needs.

Although the annual report listed four complaints for Babergh, one case was mistakenly attributed to Mid Suffolk. For accuracy, this report includes that case under Babergh, bringing the total to five complaints, four upheld and one not upheld.

Complaint Investigation Reports

For each investigation, the Housing Ombudsman provides a written report outlining findings, recommendations, and next steps. These reports are included in the appendices, along with easy-to-read summaries.

The Ombudsman also identifies service improvements and lessons learned. Key themes include:

- **Set clear expectations:** Be transparent about risks, limitations, and timelines.
- **Respond promptly:** Avoid delays in repairs and planning.
- **Maintain accurate records:** Ensure documentation supports accountability.
- **Handle complaints properly:** Follow the Ombudsman's Code with timely, coordinated responses.
- **Support vulnerable residents:** Consider health and family needs in service delivery.
- **Communicate effectively:** Keep residents informed and schedule appointments appropriately.
- **Provide fair redress:** Apologies and compensation should reflect the impact of service failures.
- **Learn and improve:** Use complaints to identify gaps and strengthen processes.

You can find a summary for each complaint for this section in the appendices. The summary also includes a link to Housing Ombudsman's investigation report displayed on their website.

- Appendix 1 – Landlord Performance Report (Babergh)
- Appendix 2 – Summary of 202405744
- Appendix 3 – Summary of 202338266
- Appendix 4 – Summary of 202318473
- Appendix 5 – Summary of 202314102
- Appendix 6 – Summary of 202411317

Mid Suffolk District Council

Mid Suffolk District Council was not included in the Housing Ombudsman's annual report for 2024–2025, as fewer than five findings were made against the Council during that period.

One complaint was investigated and upheld, with the Ombudsman highlighting the importance of responding promptly and thoroughly to reports of damp and mould, ensuring clear communication and coordinated action.

Key lessons from complaint handling included:

- Keep accurate records to support fair and effective resolution.
- Be mindful of household vulnerabilities.
- Accept follow-up complaints when issues continue, to support learning and service improvement.
- Ensure compensation reflects the full impact, including distress, delays, and time spent seeking resolution.

You can find a summary for this complaint in the appendices. The summary also includes a link to Housing Ombudsman's investigation report displayed on their website.

- Appendix 7 – Summary of 202338776

Compliance with Complaint Handling Code

As part of the compliance of the Complaint Handling Code under section 8.1, Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Council must produce annual complaints report for scrutiny and challenge, which must include the following information:

- (A) the annual self-assessment against this Code to ensure their complaint handling policy remains in line with its requirements
- (B) a qualitative and quantitative analysis of the landlord's complaint handling performance - this must also include a summary of the types of complaints the landlord has refused to accept
- (C) any findings of non-compliance with this Code by the Ombudsman
- (D) the service improvements made as a result of the learning from complaints
- (E) any annual report about the landlord's performance from the Ombudsman
- (F) any other relevant reports or publications produced by the Ombudsman in relation to the work of the landlord

You can find out how we comply with points A-F in the following appendix:

- Appendix 8 – Compliance with the Complaints Handling Code

Housing Ombudsman Self-Assessment

Each year, the Council are required to complete a self-assessment against the complaint handling code. The date for submission to the Housing Ombudsman this year was the 30th September 2025.

Landlords are required to submit a self-assessment to the Housing Ombudsman's complaint handling code to ensure accountability, transparency, and continuous improvement in how we are handling complaints.

- Appendix 9 – Annual HOS Self-Assessment

Updates to Complaints Policy

In July 2025, we worked with the Housing Ombudsman to ensure our Complaints Policy aligned with their Self-Assessment and guidance. While no major changes were made, several minor updates improved clarity and accessibility. Key updates included:

- A full list of exclusions, matters not covered by the policy.
- Clarification that discretion may be applied to late complaints.

- A commitment to consider requests for accessible formats.
- Minor wording changes to better reflect our processes.

Appendix 10: Our updated policy can be found on our website here:

- <https://www.babergh.gov.uk/documents/d/asset-library-54706/our-compliments-comments-and-complaints-policy>
- <https://www.midsuffolk.gov.uk/documents/d/asset-library-54706/our-compliments-comments-and-complaints-policy>

Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGO)

Introduction

If residents are dissatisfied with how their complaint was handled at stages one or two, they can escalate it to the Local Government Ombudsman (LGO) an independent body that ensures fair review and promotes transparency and accountability in councils.

Babergh District Council

In 2024/25, the LGO received 12 complaints about Babergh services and made decisions on 13 cases. Two complaints were upheld, involving a code of conduct issue and a planning application.

While the number of complaints received decreased from 22 in 2023/24, the number of upheld complaints increased from zero to two.

This report includes one case that was mistakenly attributed to Mid Suffolk in the LGO's annual report, bringing Babergh's total to five complaints, four upheld and one did not uphold.

You can find the full details for the upheld complaint in the attachments:

- Appendix 11 – Babergh LGO Complaint – 23 003 839
- Appendix 12 – Babergh LGO Complaint – 23 016 115
- Appendix 13 – Babergh LGO Complaint Category
- Appendix 14 – Babergh LGO Complaint Outcomes

Mid Suffolk District Council

In 2024/25, the Local Government Ombudsman (LGO) received 16 complaints about services in Mid Suffolk. All were reviewed, and decisions were issued. One complaint was upheld, relating to a planning enforcement case where fault and injustice were identified.

To prevent similar issues, the Council committed to reviewing its policies, procedures, and practices to identify any necessary changes.

Compared to 2023/24, the number of complaints increased by 10. However, the number of upheld complaints remained the same, with one case each year where fault was found.

You can find the full details for the upheld complaint in the attachments.

- Appendix 15 – Mid Suffolk LGO Complaint – 23 014 947
- Appendix 16 – Mid Suffolk LGO Complaint Category
- Appendix 17 – Mid Suffolk LGO Complaint Outcomes

Comparative Data

The appendices include a chart and table comparing Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils with other local authorities in Suffolk. The data is presented as follows:

- **Complaints dealt with by the LGO:** Total complaints received during the reporting period.
- **Not for the LGO:** Complaints the LGO determined were outside its scope.
- **Assessed and closed:** Complaints reviewed but not taken forward for investigation.
- **Investigated – Not Upheld:** Complaints investigated with no fault found.
- **Investigated – Upheld:** Complaints investigated where fault was identified.

The LGO also reports the number of upheld complaints per 100,000 residents, in line with Office for Local Government (Oflog) performance metrics.

Comparison to other Suffolk Authorities:

	Complaints dealt with by the LGO (Total)	Not for the LGO	Assessed and Closed by the LGO	Investigated – Not Upheld	Investigated - Upheld (& upheld total per 100,000 residents)
Babergh	2023/24: 18 2024/25: 13	2023/24: 10 2024/25: 3	2023/24: 8 2024/25: 6	2023/24: 0 2024/25: 2	2023/24: 0 (0.0) 2024/25: 2 (2.1)
Mid Suffolk	2023/24: 6 2024/25: 16	2023/24: 1 2024/25: 10	2023/24: 4 2024/25: 5	2023/24: 1 2024/25: 0	2023/24: 1 (0.9) 2024/25: 1 (0.9)
Ipswich	2023/24: 9 2024/25: 9	2023/24: 5 2024/25: 3	2023/24: 4 2024/25: 5	2023/24: 0 2024/25: 1	2023/24: 0 (0.0) 2024/25: 0 (0.0)
East Suffolk	2023/24: 21 2024/25: 38	2023/24: 4 2024/25: 6	2023/24: 14 2024/25: 30	2023/24: 1 2024/25: 1	2023/24: 2 (0.8) 2024/25: 1 (1.1)
West Suffolk	2023/24: 15 2024/25: 19	2023/24: 5 2024/25: 5	2023/24: 8 2024/25: 11	2023/24: 0 2024/25: 0	2023/24: 2 (1.1) 2024/25: 3 (1.6)

Suffolk County Council*	2023/24: Not available	2023/24: Not Available	2023/24: Not available	2023/24: 8	2023/24: 50 (6.5)
*Full data unknown for 2023/24	2024/25: 186	2024/25: 38	2024/25: 68	2024/25: 5	2024/25: 75 (9.7)

All data collected by the LGO can be publicly accessed here: [Your council's performance \(lgo.org.uk\)](https://lgo.org.uk)

Lessons Learned from Complaints

User Story

The appendix includes user stories that illustrate the processes individuals went through before and after submitting a complaint. These narratives have been developed to highlight the impact of their experiences with the Council

- Appendix 18 – User Stories

Housing Complaints Taskforce

Each quarter, Housing teams meet as part of the Complaints Handling Taskforce. Attendees include a nominated representative from each team, the Complaints and Feedback Officer, the Head of Housing Transformation, the two Housing Portfolio Holders and the Chair of the Tenant Board.

The group reviews:

- Complaint volumes by team
- Stage two complaints
- Housing Ombudsman determinations
- Complaints themes and trends to help capture lessons learned and improvements that can be made.

They also share updates and best practice, including:

- **Spotlight reports** from the Housing Ombudsman (e.g. Damp and Mould, Anti-Social Behaviour)
- **Legislative updates**, such as changes under Awaab's Law
- **Inspection outcomes** from the Social Housing Regulator

Complaints Improvement Project

In 2025, we launched the Complaints Improvement Project to strengthen complaint handling across the organisation, focusing on teams outside the Housing Department, which already operates its own Complaints Taskforce.

The project aims to:

- Establish a consistent approach for triggering service improvements from complaints.
- Use insights from the new complaints system (introduced mid-2024) to support service areas.
- Reduce repeat complaints and the cost of service failures.

We are committed to sharing lessons learned and data analysis to promote continuous improvement. By encouraging collaboration and standardising processes, we aim to enhance service quality and operational efficiency.

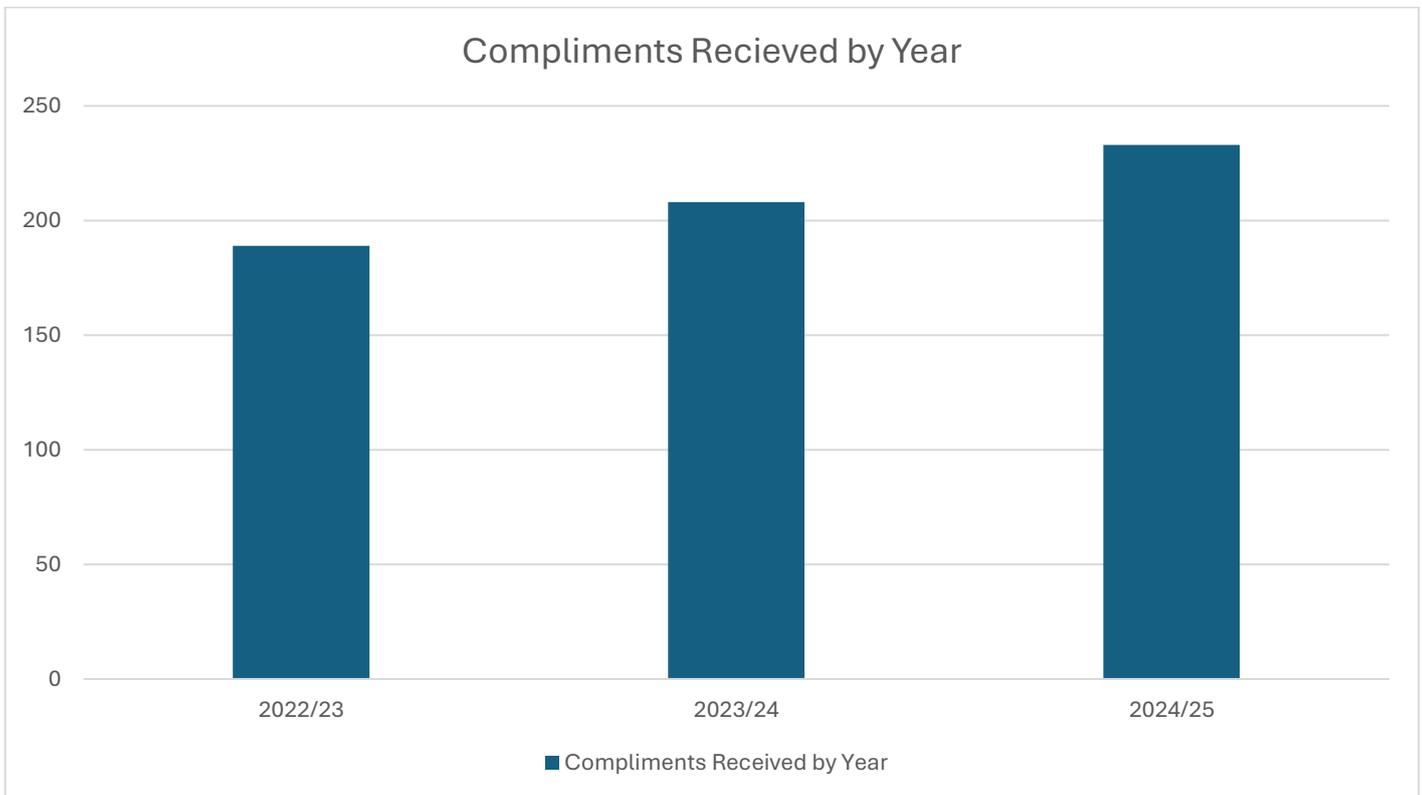
Compliments

In 2024/25, the Council received 233 compliments, an increase of 12% compared to 208 the previous year.

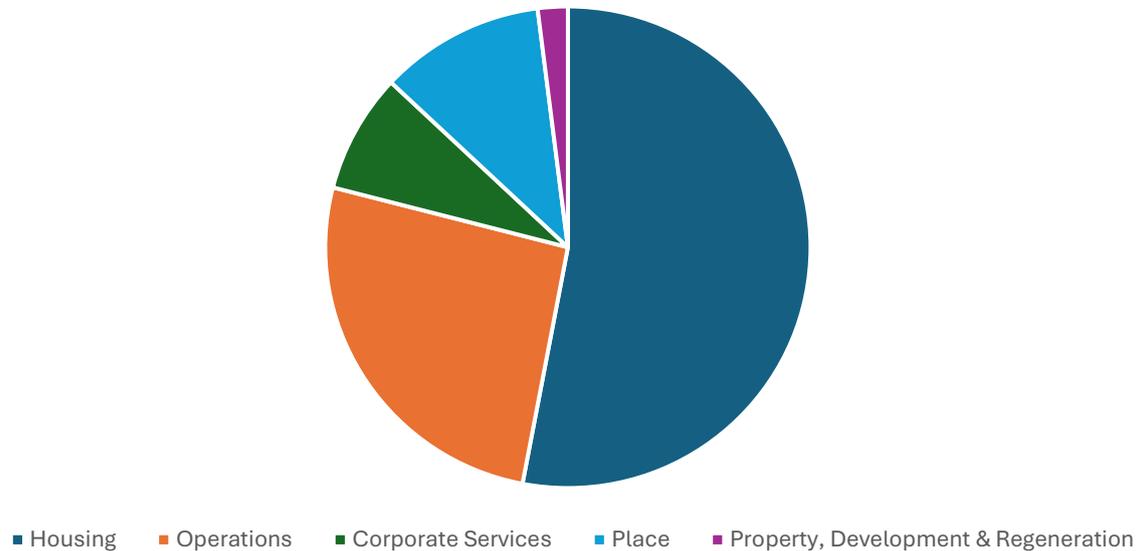
Previously, our system couldn't track which teams received compliments. This changed with the launch of a new system in June 2025. Since then, 177 compliments have been recorded, with team-level details available in the charts below and in the appendices.

- Appendix 19 – Sample of Compliments Received

Fig 12/13: compliments received by year and by directorate:



Compliments Received by Directorate (%)



Other Data and Information

Tenant Satisfaction Measures

As a social housing provider, we are required to collect data on Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs), introduced by the Regulator of Social Housing to help improve standards. These measures aim to:

- Give tenants visibility into how well their landlord is performing and enables them to hold their landlord to account.
- Help the Regulator identify where improvements may be needed.

Every three months, an independent company, Acuity, surveys our tenants about their satisfaction with housing services. The results are submitted to HouseMark and were last shared with the Regulator for Social Housing on 30 June 2025. These results are publicly available.

TSMs assess performance across key areas, including:

- Property repairs and building safety
- Respectful and helpful engagement
- Complaint handling
- Neighbourhood management

There are 22 measures in total: 12 based on tenant perceptions and 10 based on management data. Full results are available here:

- [Tenant satisfaction measures - Babergh District Council - baberghmidsuffolk.com](https://www.baberghmidsuffolk.com/tenant-satisfaction-measures)

- [Tenant Satisfaction Measures - Mid Suffolk District Council - baberghmidsuffolk.com](https://www.baberghmidsuffolk.com)

In 2024/25, Acuity surveyed 1,201 tenants, with 59 partial responses. Survey methods included:

- 961 phone interviews (80%)
- 240 online surveys (20%)

One key question asked tenants how satisfied they were with complaint handling. This year, through our tenant perception survey's 33% of our tenants said they were satisfied. HouseMark also undertook an estimation based on their data and scored our satisfaction rate at 35% which is close to the median of 34.1% for similar landlords with fewer than 15,000 homes.

More detail on complaints and tenant feedback is available in the appendices. We are committed to improving these figures in the coming year.

- Appendix 20 – TSM Complaints Data
- Appendix 21 – TSM Complaints Survey Comments
- Appendix 22 – Satisfaction Scores

Unique or Repeat Complainants

For this report, a repeat complainant is defined as a customer who submitted more than one complaint about the same service area. Complaints across different service areas (e.g. tenancy and waste services) are not counted as repeats.

This data is available from June 2024, following the launch of the Council's new complaints system. Since then, 42 repeat complainants submitted a total of 96 complaints, an average of 2.29 complaints per person.

Of these, 79% were directed to housing teams, while the remaining 21% involved Shared Revenues Partnership, Planning, and Operations teams.

- Appendix 23 – Repeat Complainant Data

Post Code/Location Data

Over the past year, we've worked with the IT team to create a complaint mapping tool. This tool shows complaint data by Parish, helping us spot hotspots and areas where issues are concentrated.

Much of our focus so far has been on collecting data to build a reliable foundation and provide a useful tool for understanding trends at a local level. While the mapping features haven't yet been used to their full potential, we expect to use them more proactively over the coming year and will be discussing this with teams as part of our complaints handling work.

2025/26 Complaints Data

Below is a brief update on complaints received between 1st April 2025 and the 28th January 2026. This data will be presented in full in the next annual report.

- 809 Stage One complaints received
- 117 Stage Two complaints received

This data is currently showing an improvement on the full year before, whilst it is too early to predict the final numbers of complaints for the full year, these figures are hopefully pointing to an improvement in the reduction of our complaints received.

Out of the 809 Stage One complaints, 45% have been upheld, 31% not upheld and 23% not considered to be a complaint. Whilst of the 117 complaints at Stage Two, 42% have been upheld, 37% not upheld, 21% not considered to be a complaint.

In our 2025/26 annual report, where possible we will ensure that reporting on our annual data includes information as to whether the complaint was regarding Babergh or Mid Suffolk

Complaints for 25/26 up to 28.1.26

	2025/26 (up until 28 th January 2026)	2024/25 (Up until 28 th January 2025)	% Increase/Decrease
Housing			
Housing Repairs and Maintenance	158	241	-83 (-34.4%)
Compliance (Gas, Electrics, Damp & Mould)	143	164	-21 (-12.8%)
Planned Works	55	31	+24 (+77.4%)
Tenancy Services	106	92	+14 (+15.2%)
Housing Solutions	45	41	+ 4 (+9.76)
Housing Totals	507	569	-62 (-10.9%)
Operations			
Waste	66	130	-64 (-49.2%)
Public Realm	19	43	-24 (-55.8%)
Car Parks	17	24	-7 (-29.2%)

Public Protection	8	5	+14 (+280%)
Building Control	0	1	-1 (-100%)
Operations Total	110	203	-82 (-45.8%)
Place			
Planning	28	32	-4 (-12.5%)
Planning Enforcement	17	11	+6 (+54.6%)
Communities	5	6	-1 (-16.7%)
Community Infrastructure Levy	1	2	-1 (-50%)
Place Total	51	51	0
Shared Revenues Partnership			
Council Tax	51	39	+12 (+30.8%)
Benefits	2	2	0
SRP Total	53	41	+12 (+29.3%)

Next steps:

- Identify areas needing targeted action.
- Share insights to guide planning and resource allocation.
- Promote early intervention to reduce repeat complaints.

This approach will foster a data-driven culture of continuous improvement, enabling us to respond better to feedback and enhance service quality.

Update on O&S Recommendations from 2023/24

Following the presentation of the report to Overview and Scrutiny Committee in January 2025, the Committee made several recommendations for improvement. For transparency, these have been listed below and any changes that has been made.

- **That the Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee receives an annual complaints performance report as per the new Housing Ombudsman complaint code.**

This has been scheduled for February 2026.

- **That officers take on board the Committee's suggestions about additions to future reports including clearer language, an illustrative complaint handling process map, lessons learnt, and the number of unique complainants.**
- The paper has been reviewed from a language perspective, an illustrative process map has been created, as before lessons learnt have been included and the number of repeat complainants has been included.
- **That the Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee supports the introduction of a vulnerable person's policy.**
- This is being implemented at present.
- **That the Head of Customer Experience explores introducing more training for officers to assist with undertaking investigations into complaints.**
- We trained over 70 officers in complaints handling over 2024/25 through the local Government Ombudsman. Over 25/26 we will be exploring lunch and learns and other opportunities to help officers responding to complaints.
- **That the Communications department explores using pre-communication as a means of potentially reducing the number of complaints.**
- As part of the complaint's continuous improvement project, we will be reviewing complaints root cause analysis to see if and where communication gaps exist. We will also be looking at areas of our website and communications where higher quality information can be provided up front.

Complaint Handling Risks

The Council recognises several key risks associated with managing complaints through its formal complaints process and these are recorded on services operational risk registers. Effective complaint management is essential to maintaining public trust, improving services, and ensuring accountability. As part of our commitment to transparency and continuous improvement, the Council has identified a range of risks associated with handling complaints, which are monitored and tracked on the Councils operational risk management system.

To manage these risks moving forward, the Council will continue to:

- Monitor performance against Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)
- Provide regular staff training on complaint handling and policy compliance
- Improve accessibility of the complaints process for all residents
- Ensure clear and timely communication with complainants
- Use complaint data to identify trends and inform service improvements

Future Plans

Complaint Handling Projects

The Council will continue to monitor and evaluate complaint handling performance and the lessons learned through both the Housing Complaints Taskforce and the Complaints Improvement Project. These groups meet quarterly to review complaint trends, assess performance, and identify opportunities for learning.

As part of these initiatives, we are working to strengthen how lessons learned are captured and applied, with the aim of driving service improvements across both authorities. We are also continuing to develop and enhance the data that supports these projects.

You said, We did (just a sample of some of the customer feedback we have received)

You Said: *"Appointments for repairs are often missed or rescheduled without notice."*

We Did: We improved our contractor communication process and now send reminders and updates via text or email to keep tenants informed of any changes.

You Said: *"The repair was completed, but no one checked if it was completed properly."*

We Did: We launched a post-repair satisfaction survey and follow-up checks for selected cases to ensure repairs meet quality standards.

You Said: *"Why are some grass areas left uncut? It looks neglected."*

We Did: We introduced signage in wildflower zones to explain the purpose of reduced mowing, supporting pollinators and biodiversity. We also ensured that our mapping and scheduling programming were updated following reports or complaints made, as well as running a series of proactive social media campaigns.

You Said: *"My boiler repair is not being completed in a timely manner"*

We Did: We removed 1,000 servicing jobs from winter months to summer months to ensure that our contractor could be fully focused on responsive repairs at the coldest time of year. We also worked with our gas compliance contractor to ensure that they improve their van stock to complete the repair as quickly as possible.

You Said: *"Dissatisfied with handling of ASB"*

We Did: We undertook a Tenant Scrutiny Project into how we managed ASB reports from a tenant perspective and the improvements are being implemented at present.