

Number of complaints

During the period 1 April 2015 to 31 March 2016 the Council recorded 387 Step 2 complaints (compared to 477 during 2014/15). An analysis of these complaints reveals the following:

Communities and Environment

- Recorded 101 complaints
- Accounts for 26.1% of all complaints recorded
- Culture, Communities, Leisure and Volunteering received 42.6% of complaints in this service group
- 58.4% of complaints concern quality of service.

Care, Wellbeing and Learning

- Housing Services recorded 18 complaints
- 66.7% of recorded complaints concern quality of service.

Adult Social Care and Independent Living and Children's Services operate their own separate complaints recording system

Corporate Services and Governance

- Recorded 6 complaints
- Accounts for 1.6 % of all complaints recorded
- Property Services received 83.3% of complaints in this service group
- 50% of recorded complaints concerned quality of service.

Corporate Resources

- Recorded 15 complaints.
- Accounts for 3.9% of all complaints recorded.
- Customer and Financial Services received 100% of complaints in this service group.
- 86.7% of complaints concern quality of service.

Gateshead Housing Company

- Recorded 247 complaints
- Accounts for 63.8% of all recorded complaints
- 88.3% of complaints concern quality of service.

Category of complaints

The subject matter of complaints varies considerably. However, the resolved complaints can be broadly summarised into six categories. It must be noted, however, that a complaint can fall into more than one category.

The following table shows the total number of complaints in each category together with the proportions of the total number of complaints received by the Council.

Category of Complaint:	No Complaints 2015/16	Percentage of all Complaints
• Quality of services	305	78.8%
• Access to services	29	7.5%
• Employee	61	15.8%
• Policy	33	8.5%
• Injury/damage to person or possession	32	8.3%
• Other	47	12.1%

Closed Complaints

The total number of closed complaints is 19. These are complaints recorded on the system and subsequently identified and dealt with as issues other than complaints.

Resolution of complaints within target timescales

The Council has a target timescale to resolve step 2 complaints within 20 working days of receipt. The Council aims to resolve the majority of complaints at step 1 - sorting problems out on the spot. One of the aims of the procedure and of the recording system is to ensure that complaints are responded to as quickly as possible. The system allows service managers to review actual performance at any time and identifies those areas where improvements in response times are necessary. 320 complaints were resolved within the target timescale of 20 working days. This represents 82.7% of recorded complaints less the closed and open complaints. Of the 247 received by the Gateshead Housing Company 3 were closed and 222 were resolved within the target timescale. This represents 91% resolved within the target timescale compared with the 87.9% achieved in 2014/15. Of the 140 complaints recorded by the Council 16 were closed and 98 were resolved within the target timescale. This represents 79.3% resolved within the target timescale compared with 88.3% achieved in 2014/15.

Number of Complaints that were justified

Of the 368 complaints resolved 151 (41%) were fully justified and 50 (13.6%) were partly justified and appropriate remedies were offered to the complainants. This compares with the position in 2014/15 when of the 417 complaints resolved 88 (21.1%) were fully justified and 50 (13.6%) were partly justified.

Service Group Analysis

An analysis of the complaints resolved by each service group reveals the following:

Communities and Environment

- Of the 101 complaints recorded 14 were closed and none unresolved.
- 81.6% of the remaining complaints were resolved in target timescales
- 16.1% of resolved complaints were fully justified
- 13.8% of resolved complaints were partly justified.

Care, Wellbeing and Learning

- Of the 18 complaints recorded 2 were closed and none unresolved.
- 75% of the remaining complaints were resolved in target timescales
- 0% of resolved complaints were fully justified
- 12.5% of resolved complaints were partly justified

Corporate Services and Governance

- Of the 6 complaints recorded none were closed and none unresolved
- 50% of the remaining complaints were resolved in target timescales
- 0% of resolved complaints were fully justified
- 0% of resolved complaints were partly justified

Corporate Resources

- Of the 15 complaints recorded none were closed and none unresolved.
- 80% of the remaining complaints were resolved within target timescales
- 26.7% of resolved complaints were fully justified
- 13.3% of resolved complaints were partly justified.

The Gateshead Housing Company

- Of the 247 complaints recorded 3 were closed and none unresolved.
- 91% of the remaining complaints were resolved within the Council's target timescales
- 54.5% of resolved complaints were fully justified
- 13.9% of resolved complaints were partly justified

Reviewed Complaints

Complainants who are dissatisfied with the outcome of their complaints to individual service managers can request an independent review by the Chief Executive (or the Managing Director of the Gateshead Housing Company). The Chief Executive of the Council undertook 32 reviews across several service areas and categories of complaint in 2015/16 compared to 21 in 2013/14. The Managing Director of the Gateshead Housing Company undertook 14 reviews in 2015/16 compared with 15 during 2014/15.

Method of Submitting Complaints and Compliments to the Council

The system provides a variety of methods by which a customer can register a complaint with the Council and record compliments received by the Council and the Gateshead Housing Company. This can be done by telephone, visit in person, letter, internet form, compliment form or e mail.

An analysis of the compliments received is as follows:

Policy, Performance and communications recorded	2
Communities and Environment recorded	368
Care, Wellbeing & Learning recorded	47
Corporate Services & Governance recorded	27
Corporate Resources recorded	40
The Gateshead Housing Co recorded	239

The total number of compliments received above for 2015/16 is 723, compared to 779 received in 2014/15.