



**Brighton & Hove
City Council**

Customer Insight Report 2022/23

Our vision: Getting things right first time, every time

Our Vision

Getting things right first time, every time

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DRAFT

26th June 2023

Context

The purpose of this Customer Insight report is to bring together the information collected about the customer experience of using Brighton & Hove City Council services in 2022/23.

Our customers include everyone who lives, works, visits or does business in Brighton & Hove. Customers include those who need to interact with the council as well as those the council must interact with, such as where we have a duty of care.

This report presents what we currently know about our customer services. Our aim is to ensure we better understand the needs of all our customers, and to learn and grow consistently from the feedback we receive, in order to improve the customer experience.

The standards and principles within the promise do not only apply to staff who work directly with customers, but all staff who work for the council, including those in support services such as Human resources, IT & Digital, Finance, Legal. This ensures a consistency of approach and provides staff who do deal directly with customers the appropriate infrastructure, tools, and support to deliver the best customer experience.

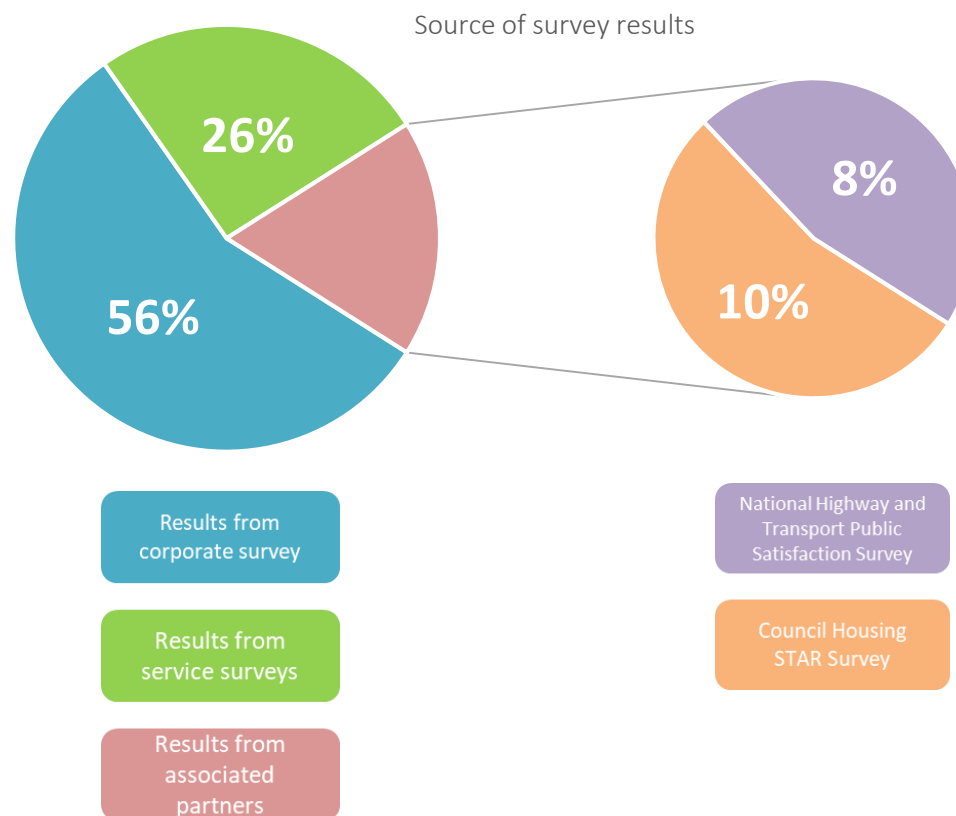
Our Customer Experience Vision describes how we intend to deliver on the Customer Promise and has been refreshed following customer feedback. These two documents are at the heart of our [Customer Experience Strategy](#) that was approved at the Policy & Resources Committee in December 2019.

Satisfaction Survey methodology

Results have been taken from the corporate Customer Experience Survey (from 5,803 respondents, compared to 3,192 respondents in 2021/22), including those who completed the survey in paper format at Council Customer Service Centres and Libraries. The survey was conducted between April 2022 and March 2023 and combined, where available, with surveys carried out by services or associated partners conducted during that period.

Service results are only presented within this report where more than 50 responses were returned for a specific service, however all results constitute the overall satisfaction score for the council.

Due to the varying methodologies used in collecting and compiling data, results shown can only be considered indicative of customer experience.



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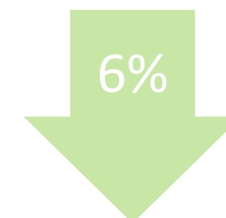


Satisfaction has improved

Overall satisfaction with the standard of customer service received from the council has improved by 2%, from 57% to 59%. This is in the context of the national benchmark for satisfaction with local councils which increased to 60% compared to 56% in 21/22 (Source: LGA Polling on resident satisfaction with councils)

Dissatisfaction has decreased

Overall, 30% of respondents indicated they were fairly or very dissatisfied with the level of customer service they received from the council. This is a reduction of 6% compared to those who indicated they were dissatisfied in 2021/22.



Comparable score for service accessibility

51% of respondents indicated they found council services fairly or very easy to access or use. This is the same result as 2021/22.

However, 39% of respondents found council services fairly or very difficult to access or use, a 1% increase compared to 2021/22.

The impact of outcome on accessibility score

72% of respondents who indicated they received what they needed from their interaction found council services easy to access or use, 21% higher than the average of all respondents.

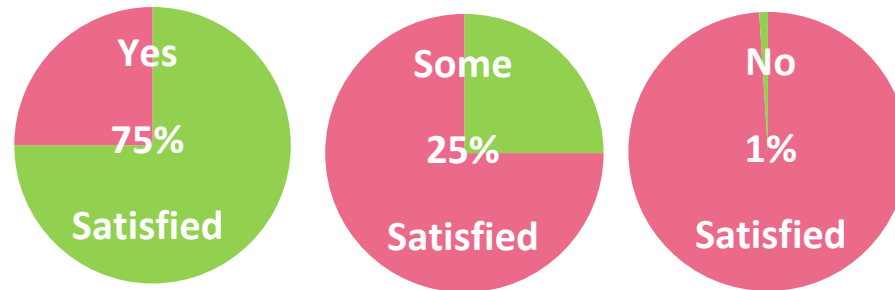
This compares to 22% of respondents who indicated they didn't receive what they needed from their interaction with council services and 27% of respondents who indicated they received some of what they needed from their interaction with council services.

The impact of outcome on satisfaction score

Some council teams deliver regulatory, enforcement or tax collection services, which may result in the customer not getting the outcome they wanted, for example a Planning Application being rejected. Data from the survey indicates that when customers did not receive the outcome they wanted, it directly impacted how they perceived the standard of service they received during their interactions with the council.

75% of respondents who indicated they received what they needed from their interaction with council services were fairly or very satisfied with the level of customer service, 16% higher than the average of all respondents.

This compares to only 1% of respondents who indicated they didn't receive what they needed from their interaction with council services and 25% satisfaction of respondents who indicated they received some of what they needed from their interaction with council services.

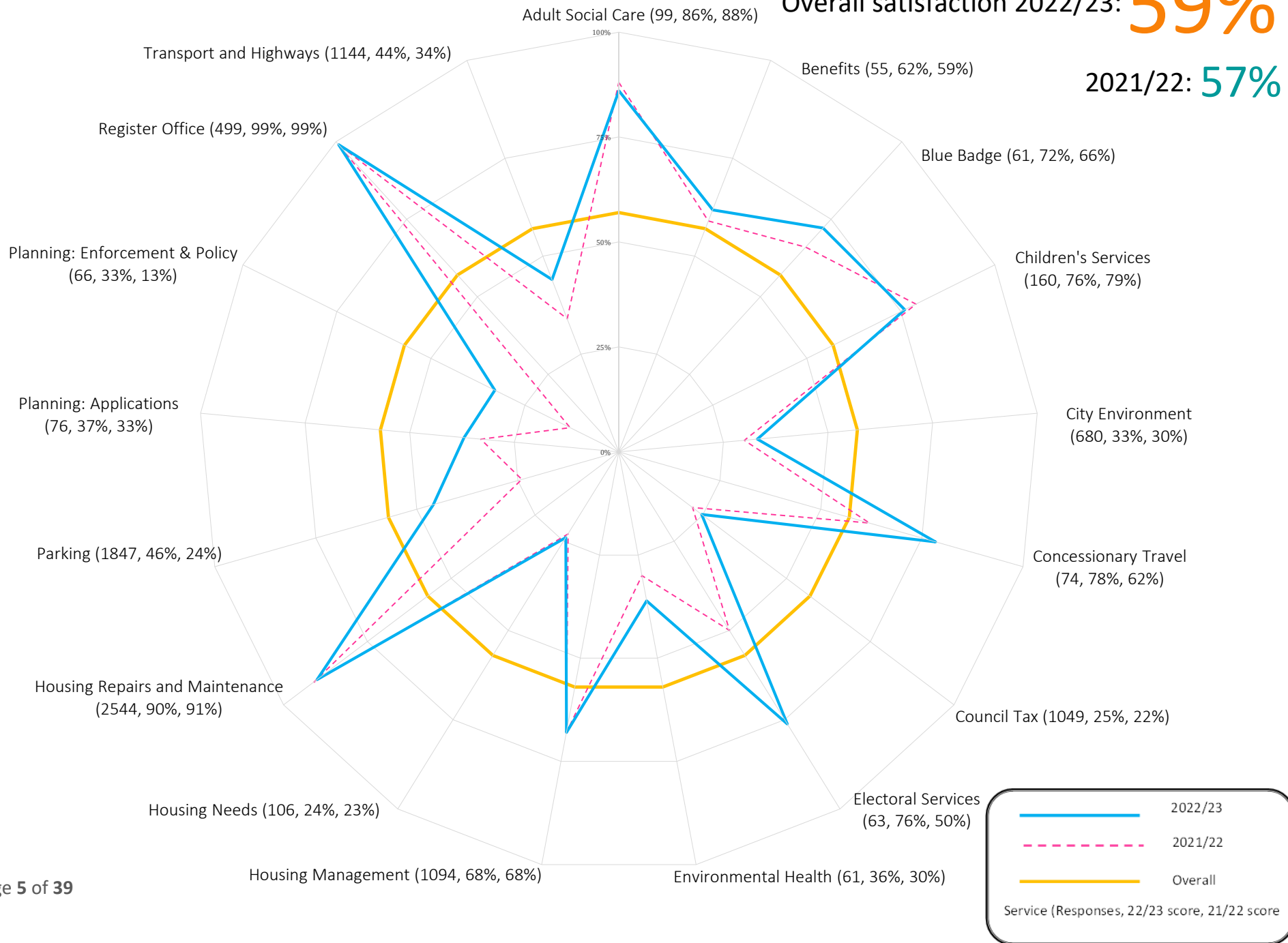


Satisfaction of respondents by outcome

Customer Satisfaction: How was the standard of customer service you received from the council team or service?

Overall satisfaction 2022/23: **59%**

2021/22: **57%**



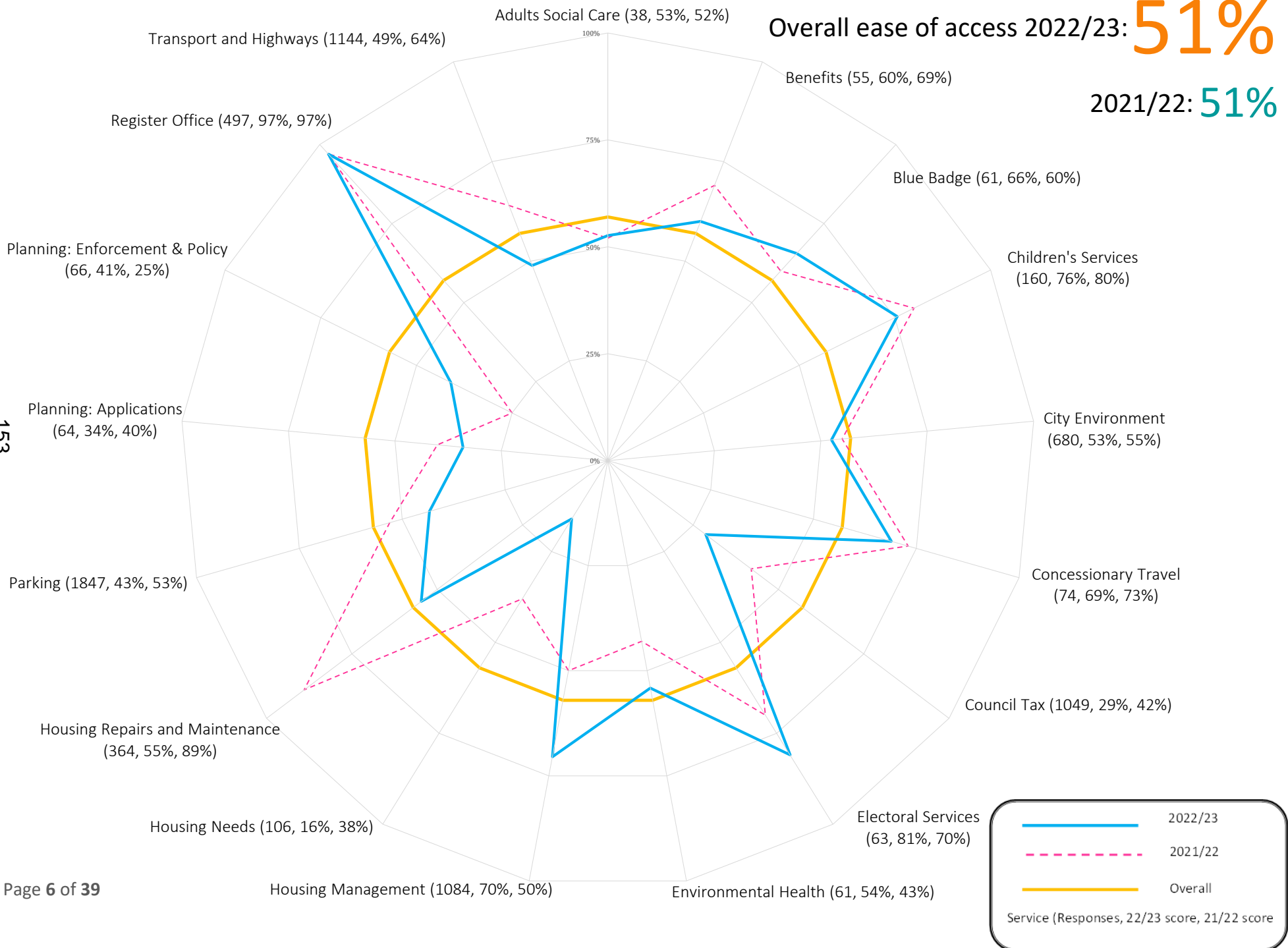
Customer Satisfaction

152

— 2022/23
- - - 2021/22
— Overall
 Service (Responses, 22/23 score, 21/22 score)

Service Accessibility: How easy or difficult was it for you to access or use the council service or team?

Overall ease of access 2022/23: **51%**
 2021/22: **51%**



Service Accessibility

Complaints

Services with the highest reduction in complaints:

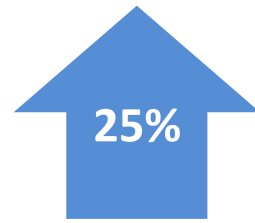
Parking received **24%** (94) fewer Stage 1 complaints when compared to 2021/22

City Parks received **21%** (13) fewer Stage 1 complaints when compared to 2021/22

Services who received the most complaints:

Housing Repairs and Maintenance saw a **44%** (115) increase in the number of Stage 1 complaints received when compared to 2021/22

City Clean received **20%** (66) more Stage 1 complaints when compared to 2021/22



25% increase in Stage 1 complaints when compared to 2021/22

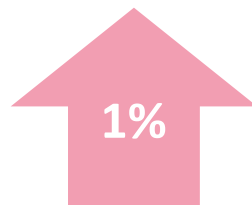


2,201

Stage 1 complaints received in 2022/23

Compliments

1,477

 Compliments received in 2022/23

1% increase in compliments received when compared to 2021/22



Services with the largest increase in compliments:

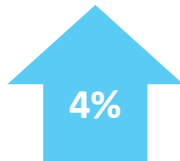
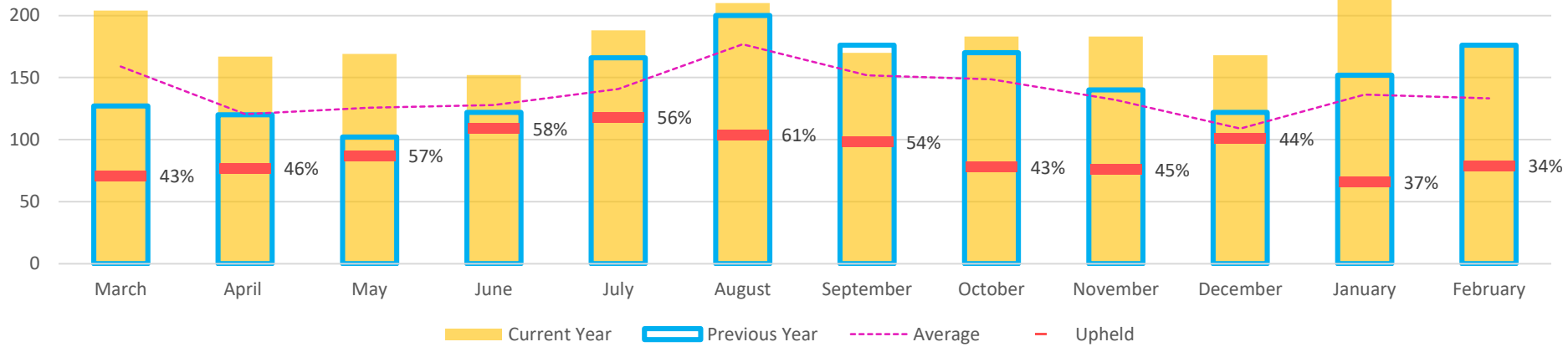
Housing Repairs and Maintenance saw a **192%** (204) increase in the number of compliments received when compared to 2021/22

Housing Strategy & Supply received **28%** (31) more compliments when compared to 2021/22

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Stage 1 complaints received: Year on year comparison

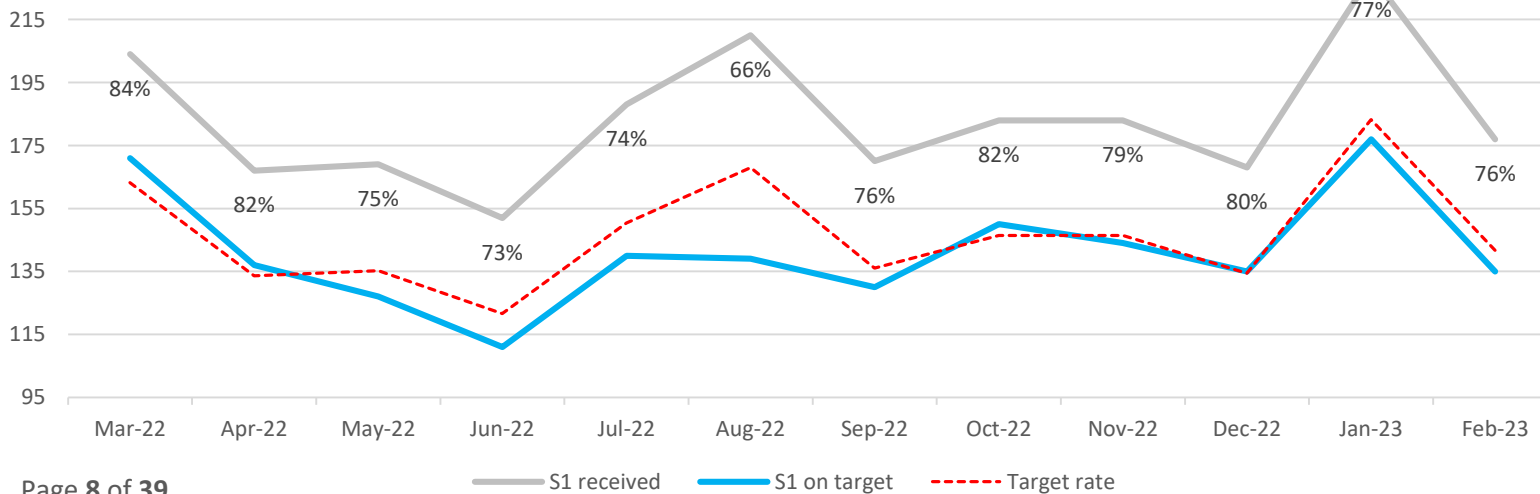
2021/22 to 2022/23



The number of Stage 1 complaints responded to within 10 working days has increased, going from 74% in 2021/22 to **78%** (1710/2201) in 2022/23. This is an improvement of 4%. Overall, **51.2%** of Stage 1 complaints were upheld, compared with 58.8% in 2021/22.

Stage 1 Complaints responded to within target

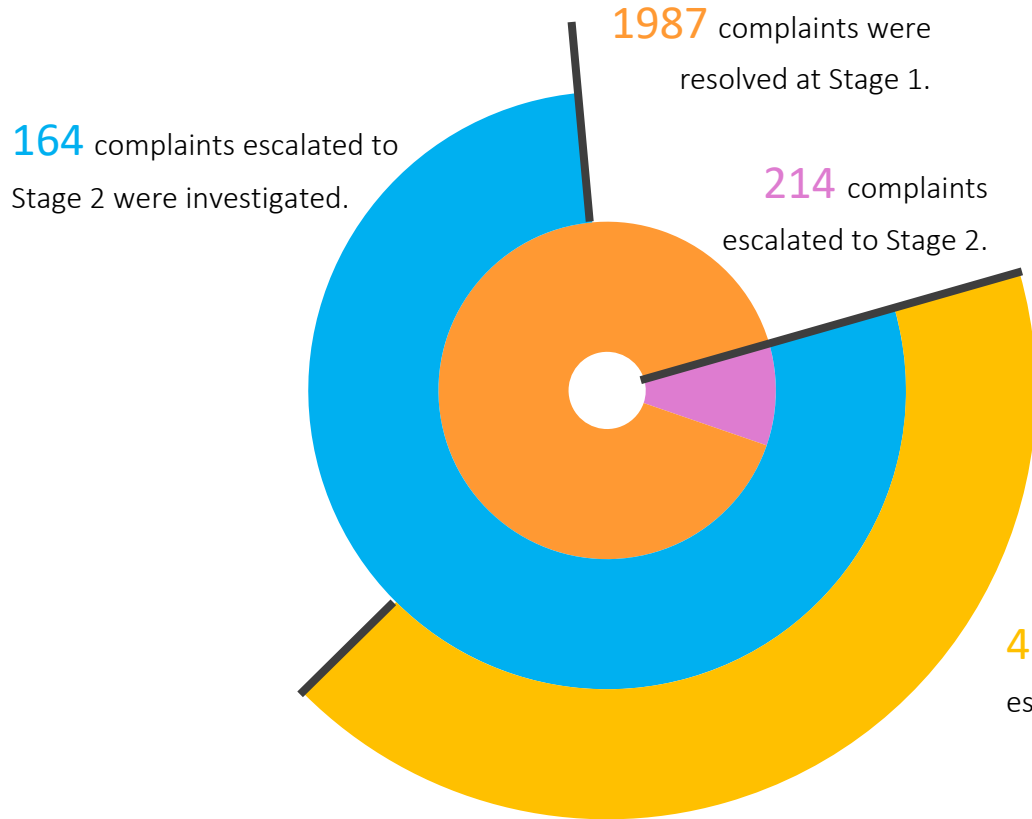
March 2022 to February 2023



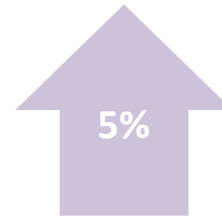
On average Stage 1 complaints were responded to in **9.7** working days in 2022/23, 0.7 days quicker than 2021/22.

Complaint escalation: Stage 2

March 2022 to February 2023

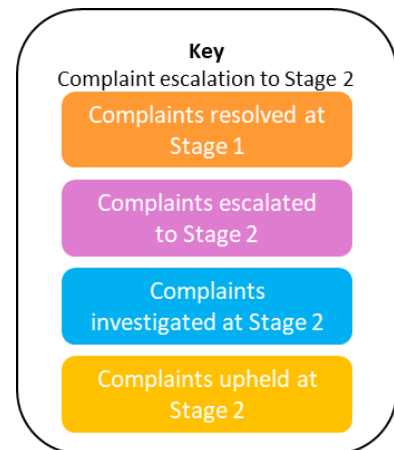


Escalation of complaints from Stage 1 to Stage 2 increased from 6.2% in 2021/22 to **7.5%** in 2022/23, however, reduced from 11% in 2020/21.



The number of complaints escalated to Stage 2 and **responded to within 20 working days** has increased, going from 65% in 2021/22 to **70%** in 2022/23. An improvement of 5% (150/214).

43% (70) of the **164** complaints escalated to Stage 2 were upheld.

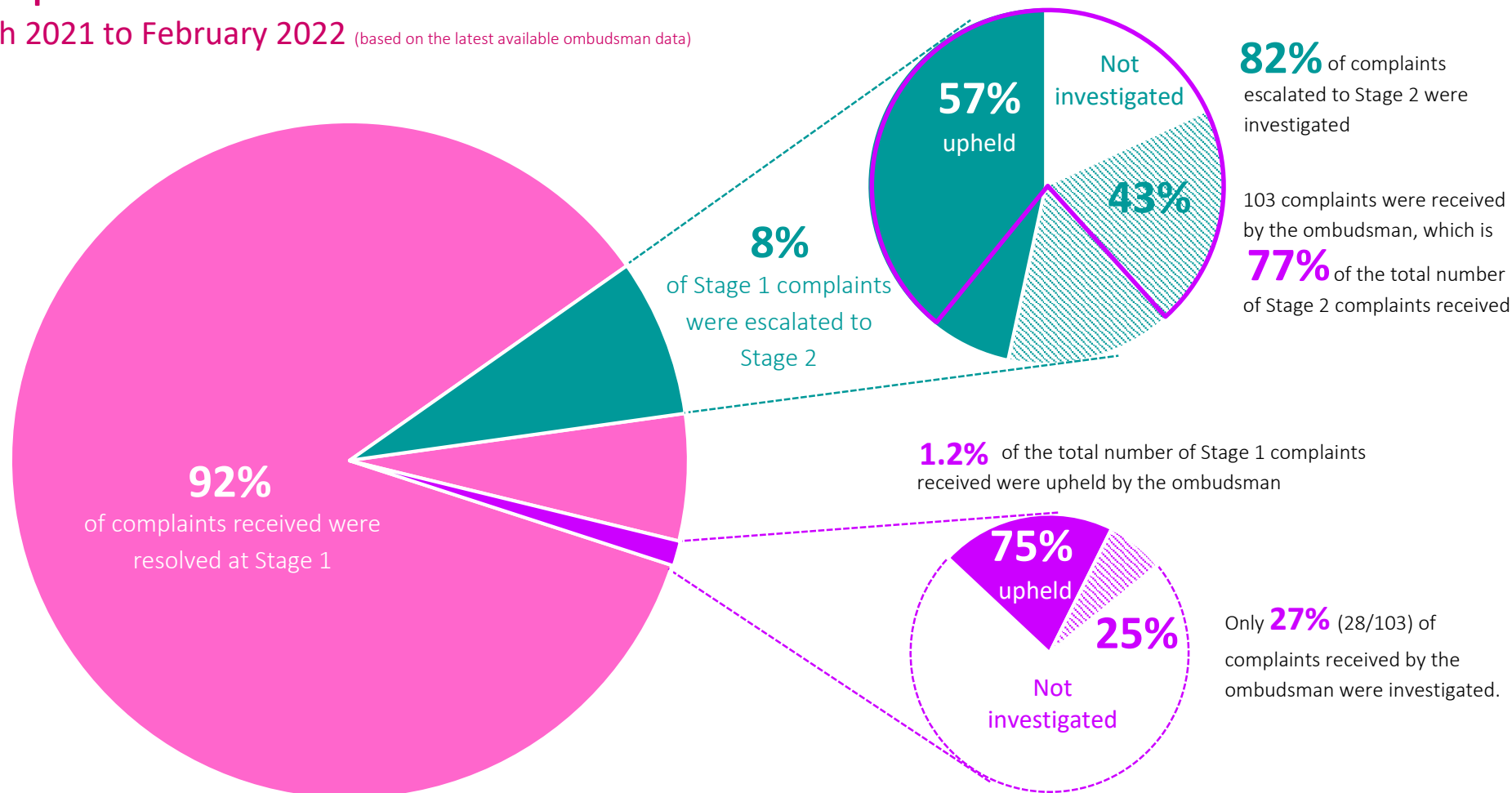


When a customer feels their complaint has not been resolved, they are able to escalate it to Stage 2 for independent review by a Customer Feedback Manager.

Complaints are not investigated at Stage 2 when it has been deemed there was a comprehensive Stage 1 response provided, it is out of jurisdiction, the complaint is withdrawn by the customer, or the complaint is referred back to the service to review at Stage 1.

Complaint escalation: Ombudsman

March 2021 to February 2022 (based on the latest available ombudsman data)



82% of complaints escalated to Stage 2 were investigated

103 complaints were received by the ombudsman, which is **77%** of the total number of Stage 2 complaints received

1.2% of the total number of Stage 1 complaints received were upheld by the ombudsman

Only **27%** (28/103) of complaints received by the ombudsman were investigated.

In **19%** of cases upheld by the Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO) in 2021/22, BHCC had identified a suitable remedy through its internal complaints procedure, before the case was investigated by the Ombudsman. This compares to an average of 12% in similar authorities.

1768 Stage 1 complaints were received in 2021/22 with **8%** (133/1768) being escalated by the customer to Stage 2.

82% (109/133) of the complaints escalated were investigated at Stage 2, with **57%** being upheld or partially upheld.

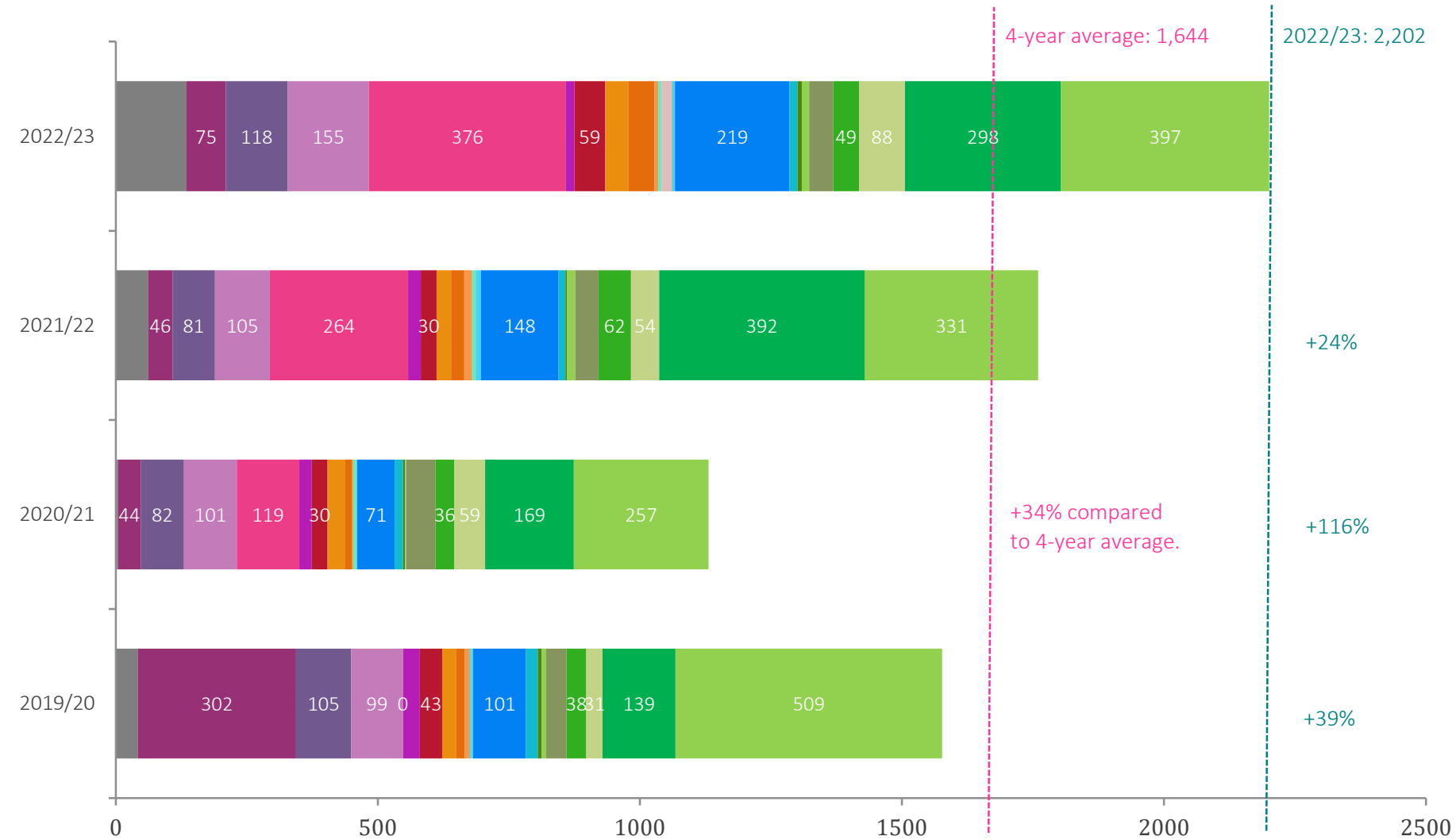
The Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman received 103 (77% of the number of Stage 2 complaints received) complaints about Brighton & Hove City Council. 73% (75/103) of the complaints received were not investigated further by the ombudsman. The ombudsman upheld **75%** (21/28) of complaints they investigated about Brighton & Hove City Council in 2021/22. The number of complaints upheld by the ombudsman is **1.2%** (21/1768) of the total number of Stage 1 complaints received in 2021/22.

Similar authorities averaged 64% of complaints upheld by the ombudsman, the difference represents 3 additional complaints upheld.

Stage 1 complaints received by service over the past 4 years.

2019/20 to 2022/23

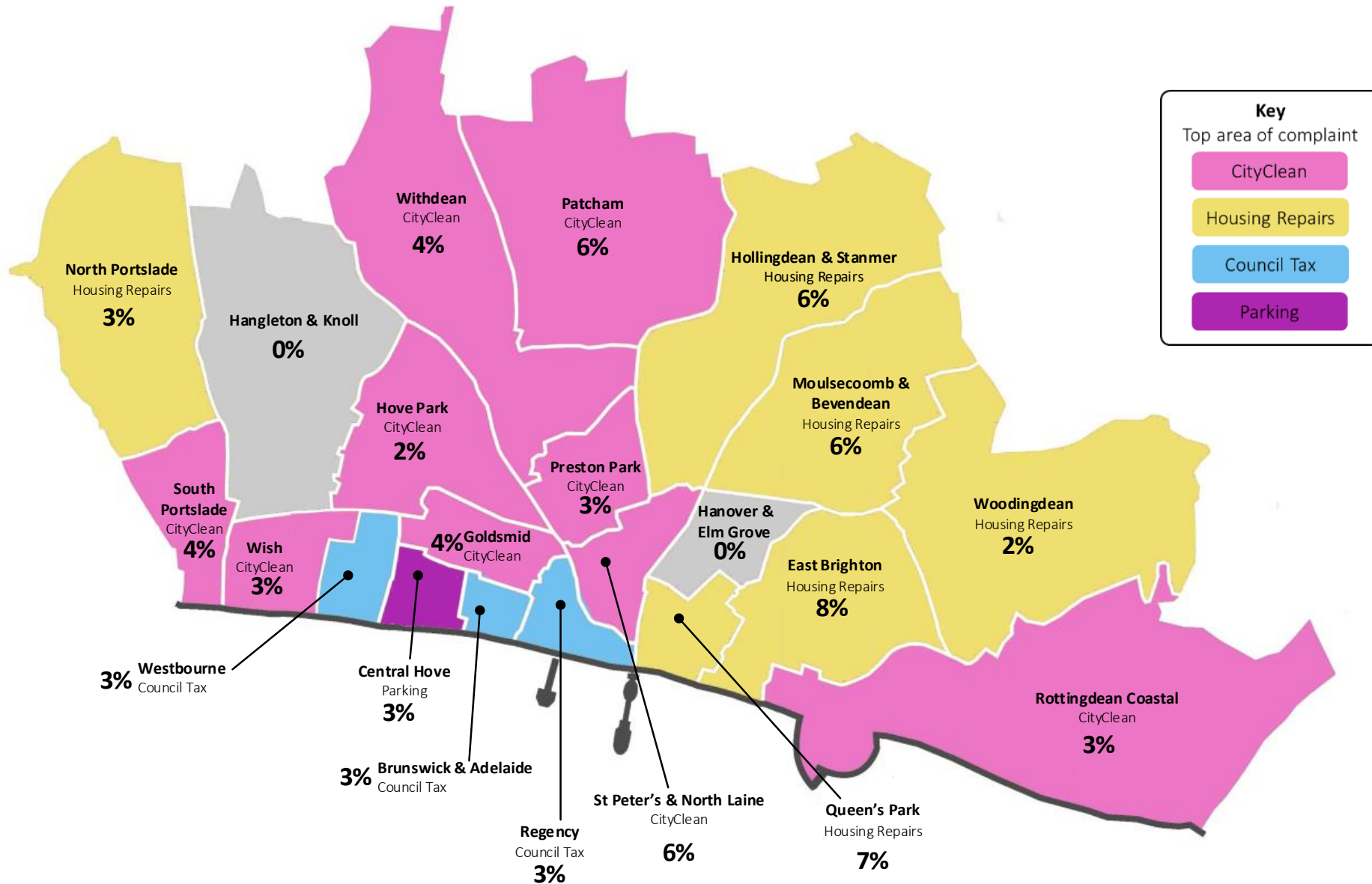
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- Other Services (135)
- Property & Investment (75)
- Tenancy Services (118)
- Housing Needs (155)
- Repairs & Maintenance (376)
- Safer Communities (16)
- HASC (59)
- Children's Social Care (44)
- Health, SEN & Disability (50)
- Education & Skills (7)
- Bereavement (6)
- Legal & Democratic Services (20)
- Electoral Services (1)
- ICT (5)
- Revenues (219)
- Benefits (15)
- Property & Design (8)
- Sport & Leisure (14)
- City Development & Regeneration (46)
- CityParks (49)
- Transport & Highways (88)
- Parking services (298)
- CityClean (397)

Customer Feedback

Where did complaints come from?



73% (1,608/2,201) of customers who submitted a Stage 1 complaint provided post code data when submitting their complaint. The above chart shows the breakdown of the number of complaints received by ward as a percentage of the overall number of complaints received and the highest area of complaint for each ward. 22% of complaints came from customers who reside outside of Brighton & Hove, and of the remaining 78% of complaints, 51% were from 6 wards (East Brighton, Moulsecoomb & Bevendean, Hollingdean & Stanmer, Patcham, St Peter's & North Laine and Queen's Park).

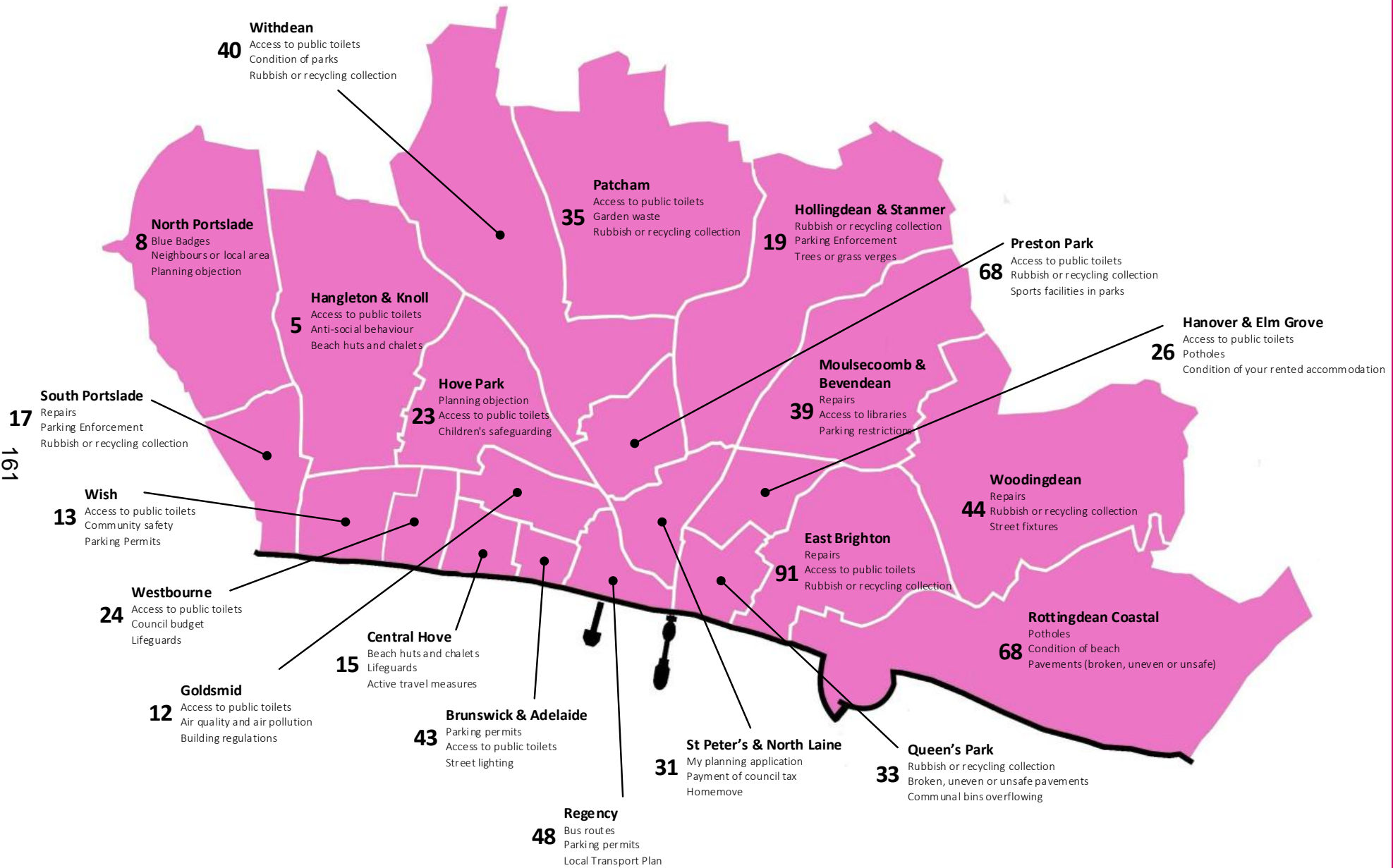
Why did residents contact their councillor?



The above graphic shows the top 20 reasons for residents contacting their councillor across all wards between 31st October 2022 until 31st March 2023. Combined, the top 20 reasons for contact make up 55% (386 out of 702) of all enquiries received through the Councillor Enquiries Case Management system.

Where did councillor enquiries come from?

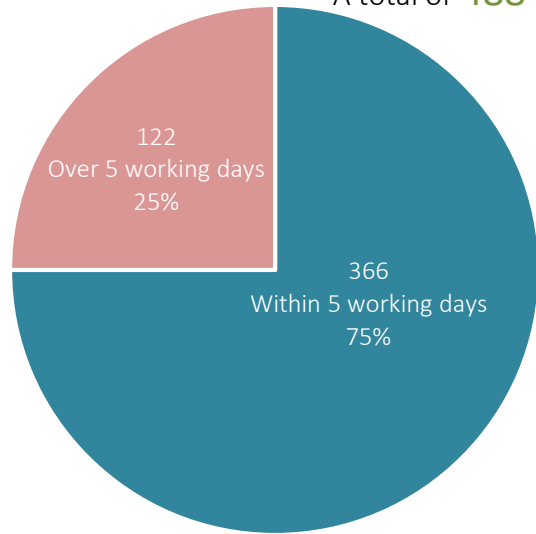
Councillor Enquiries



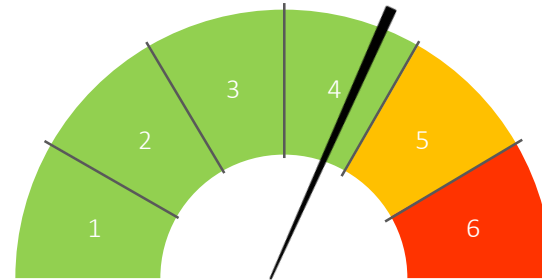
A total of 702 enquiries were received by councillors through the Councillor Enquiries Case Management system between 31st October 2022 until 31st March 2023. The above graphic shows the breakdown of enquiries received by Ward and the top three reasons for contact.

Councillor Enquiries: Service Response

A total of **488** requests for response were made to council services between 31st October 2022 and 31st March 2023

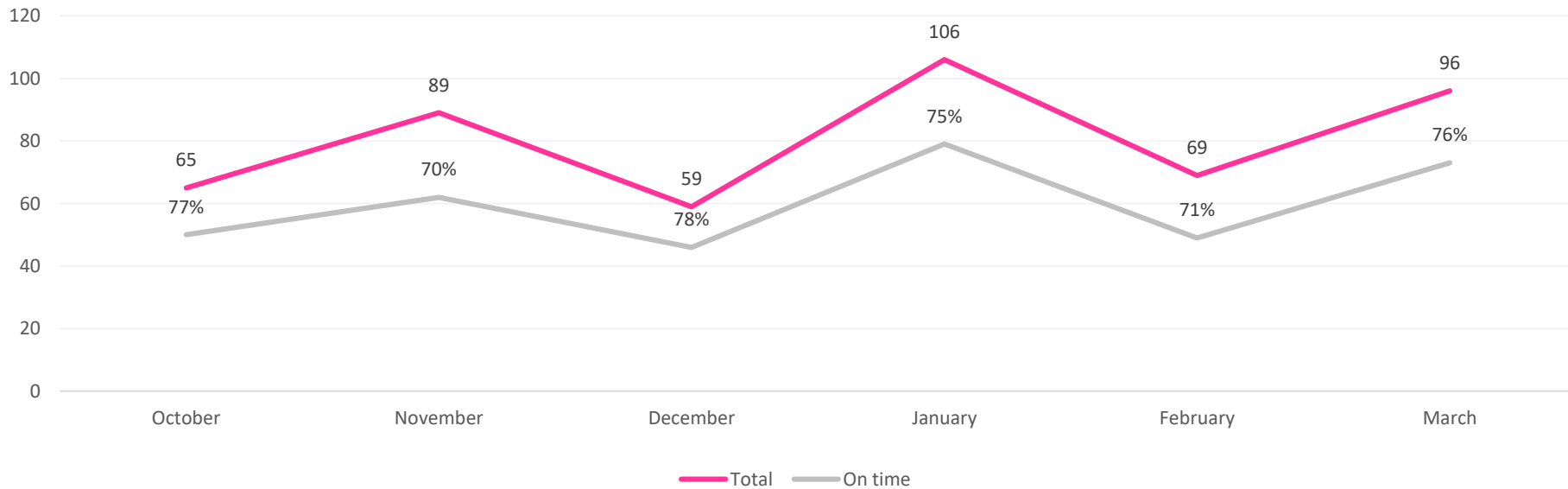


Overall, **75%** (366) of requests were responded to within 5 working days



On average, council services responded to requests in **3.69 days**

Requests received and % of responses made within 5 working days by

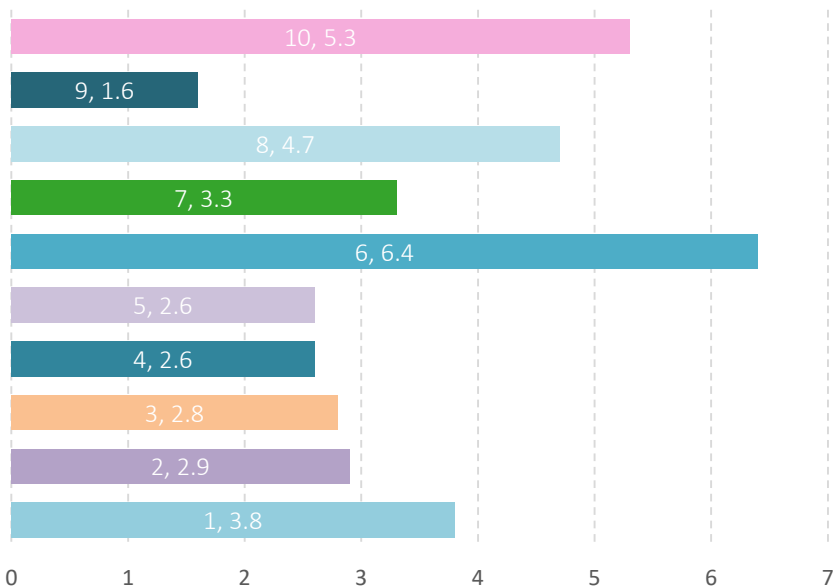


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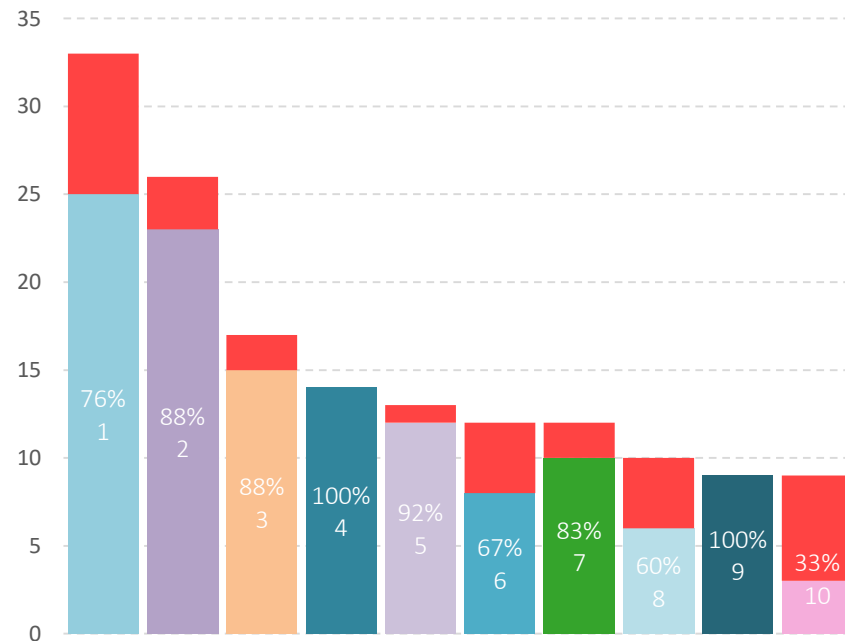
Councillor Enquiries: Top 10 services providing responses

	Reason for contact	Requests received	Requests responded to within 5 working days	On time %	Requests responded to over 5 working days	Average number of days to respond
1	Rubbish or recycling collection	33	25	76%	8	3.8
2	Repairs - day to day, including emergencies	26	23	88%	3	2.9
3	Potholes	17	15	88%	2	2.8
4	Parking Permits	14	14	100%	0	2.6
5	Condition of your rented accommodation	13	12	92%	1	2.6
6	Parking Enforcement	12	8	67%	4	6.4
7	Payment of council tax	12	10	83%	2	3.3
8	Pavements (broken, uneven or unsafe)	10	6	60%	4	4.7
9	Access to public toilets	9	9	100%	0	1.6
10	Condition of beach	9	3	33%	6	5.3

Average working days to respond
(Top 10 reasons for contact)



% of responses within 5 working days
(Top 10 reasons for contact)



The council received just over **1,009,500** contacts in 2022/23, a decrease of **0.2%** when compared with 2021/22.

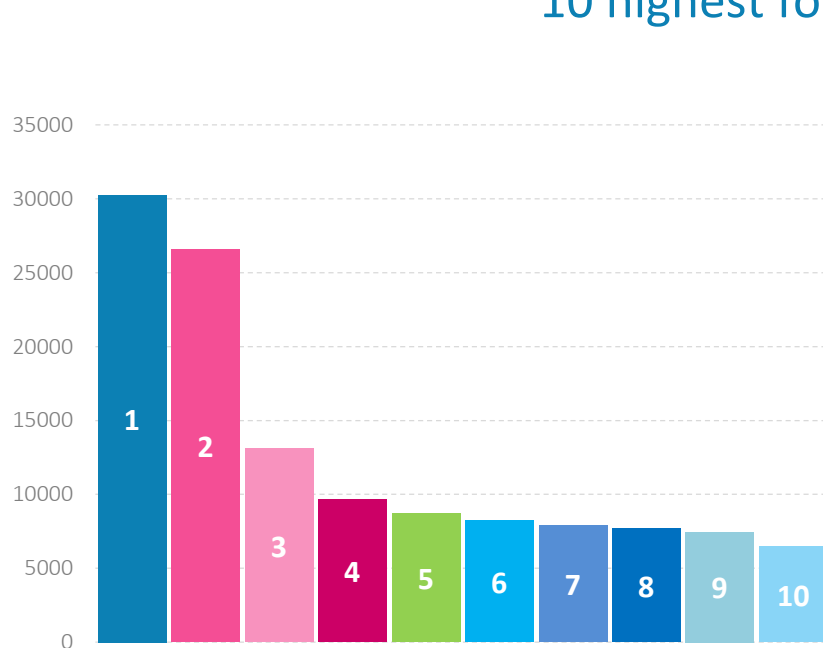
Online Forms account for **27%** of all contact with the council.



268,802 online forms were received in 2022/23.

Council Tax received **84,159** online forms, the highest number across the council, accounting for **31%** of all forms.

10 highest form submissions in 2022/23



	Online Form	Total	% of all submissions
1	Council Tax: Send us a message	30248	11%
2	Missed Collections: Refuse	26568	10%
3	Missed Collections: Recycle	13089	5%
4	My Bins	9641	4%
5	Contact Parking Services: Permits: resident parking	8732	3%
6	Council Tax Discount	8228	3%
7	Council Tax: Move out of area	7918	3%
8	Council Tax: Move into area	7686	3%
9	Council Tax: Move within area	7466	3%
10	Council Tax: Tell us about a change of tenants	6471	2%

44% of contact with the council was through email.

Over 450,850 emails were received by front line services in 2022/23.

Council Tax make up 35% of all emails received across the council, with approximately 154,000 emails received in 2022/23.

Except for Benefits, Council Tax, Housing Needs: Homemove and Housing Needs: Advice, all services responded to emails or contact forms within the 10-working day promise.



24% of contact was made by Phone.

Our high-volume services received 226,786 phone calls in 2022/23.

Housing Repairs received 80,205 calls accounting for 35% of all calls received in 2022/23.

Taking into account all high-volume services, the average call waiting time for the council was 7 minutes 20 seconds. In Quarter 4 (Jan/Feb/March) of 2022/23 most services have answered phone calls within an average of 10 minutes. The exceptions to this were Council Tax, Housing Needs: Homemove and Housing Needs: Advice who all had average waiting times longer than 10 minutes for one or more months in that period.



Over 13,500,000 unique page views in 2022/23 on the Council website

Pages with the most unique views in 2022/23:

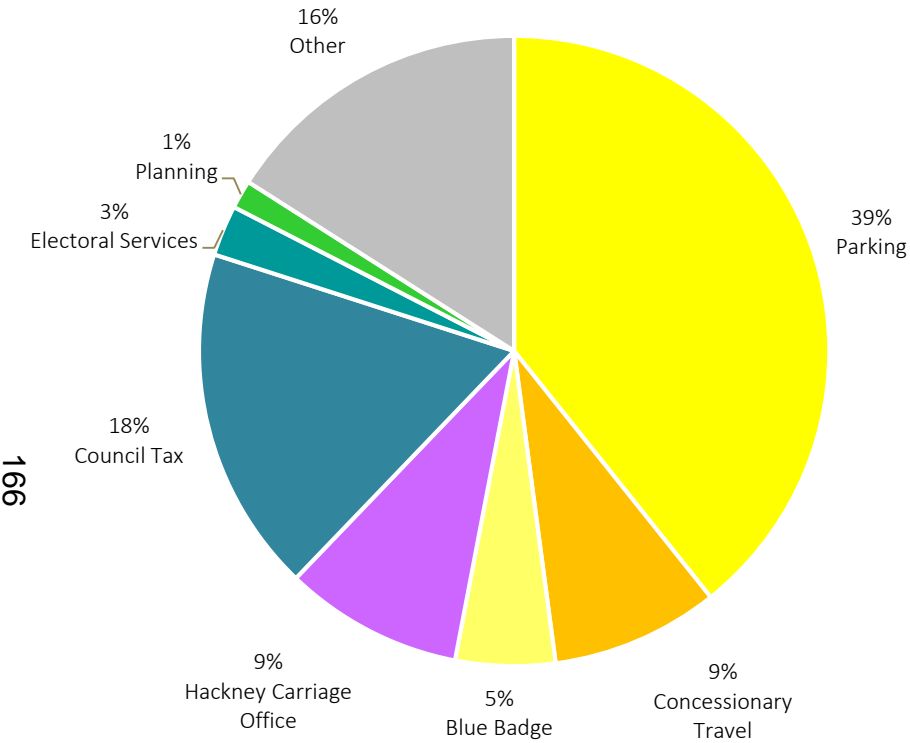
- > Check your bin and box collection days page had 230,880 unique page views.
- > Council Tax Service page had 155,941 unique page views.
- > View your council tax and bills page had 147,567 unique page views.



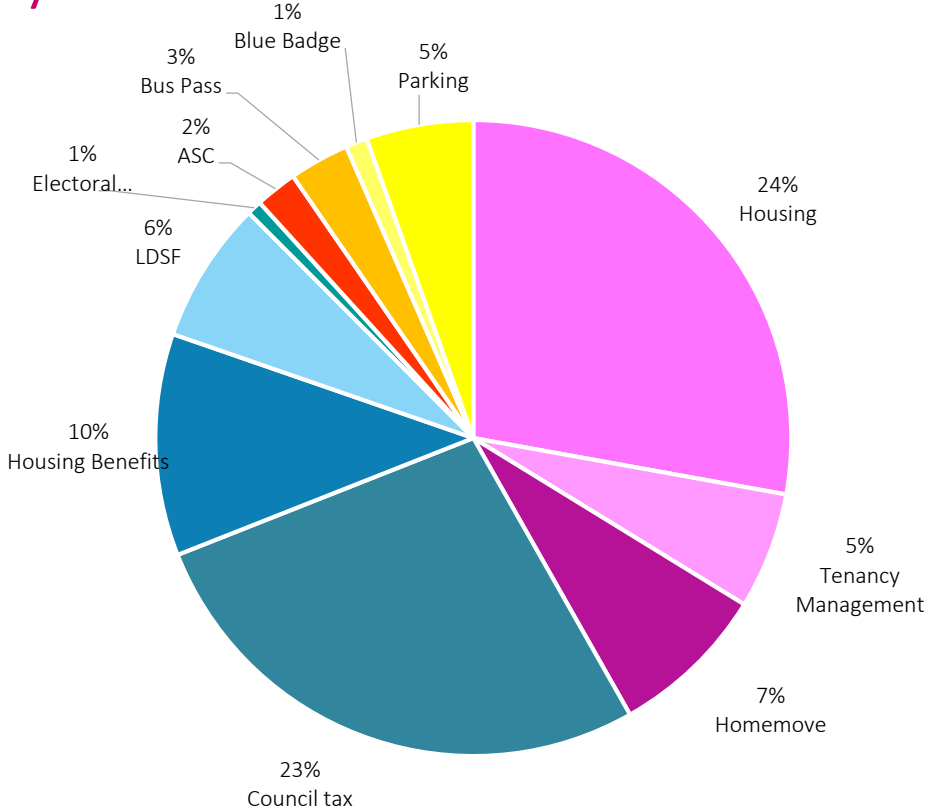
Customer Service Centres (CSC)

A total of **40,228** customers visited Hove Town Hall CSC (12,868) or Bartholomew House CSC (27,360) in 2022/23.

Breakdown by service



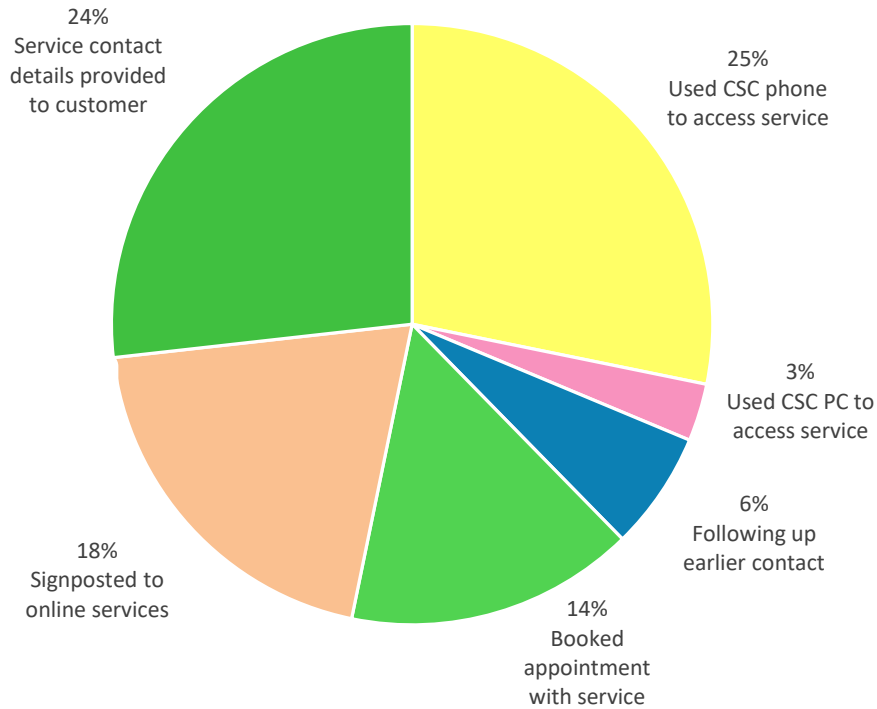
Hove Town Hall CSC



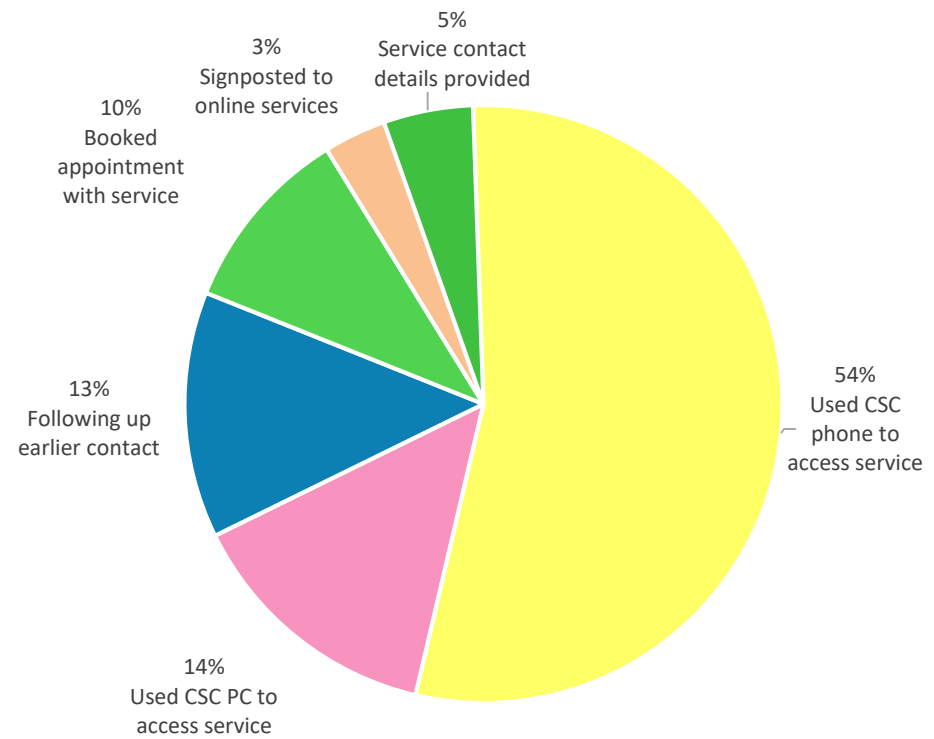
Bartholomew House CSC

Across both Customer Service Centres, Council Tax **22%** (8,708), Housing Advice **16%** (6,567) and Parking **16%** (6,338) were the most frequent reasons for customers to visit, collectively accounting for **54%** of all visits.

Breakdown by outcome or reason for visit



Hove Town Hall CSC



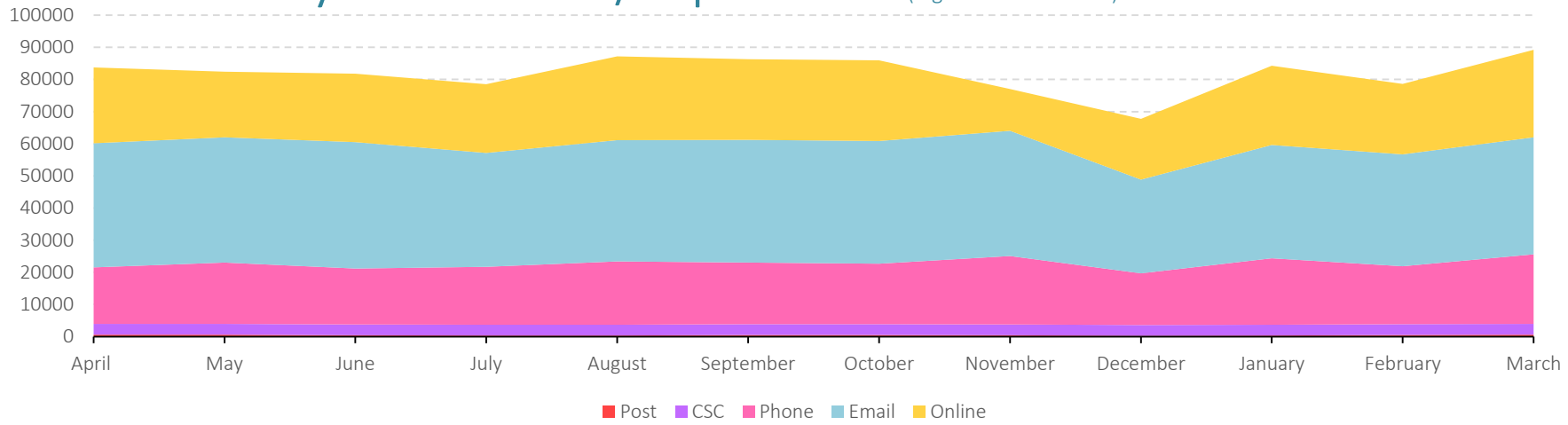
Bartholomew House CSC

In total **45%** of customers used a phone within the CSC to access council services.

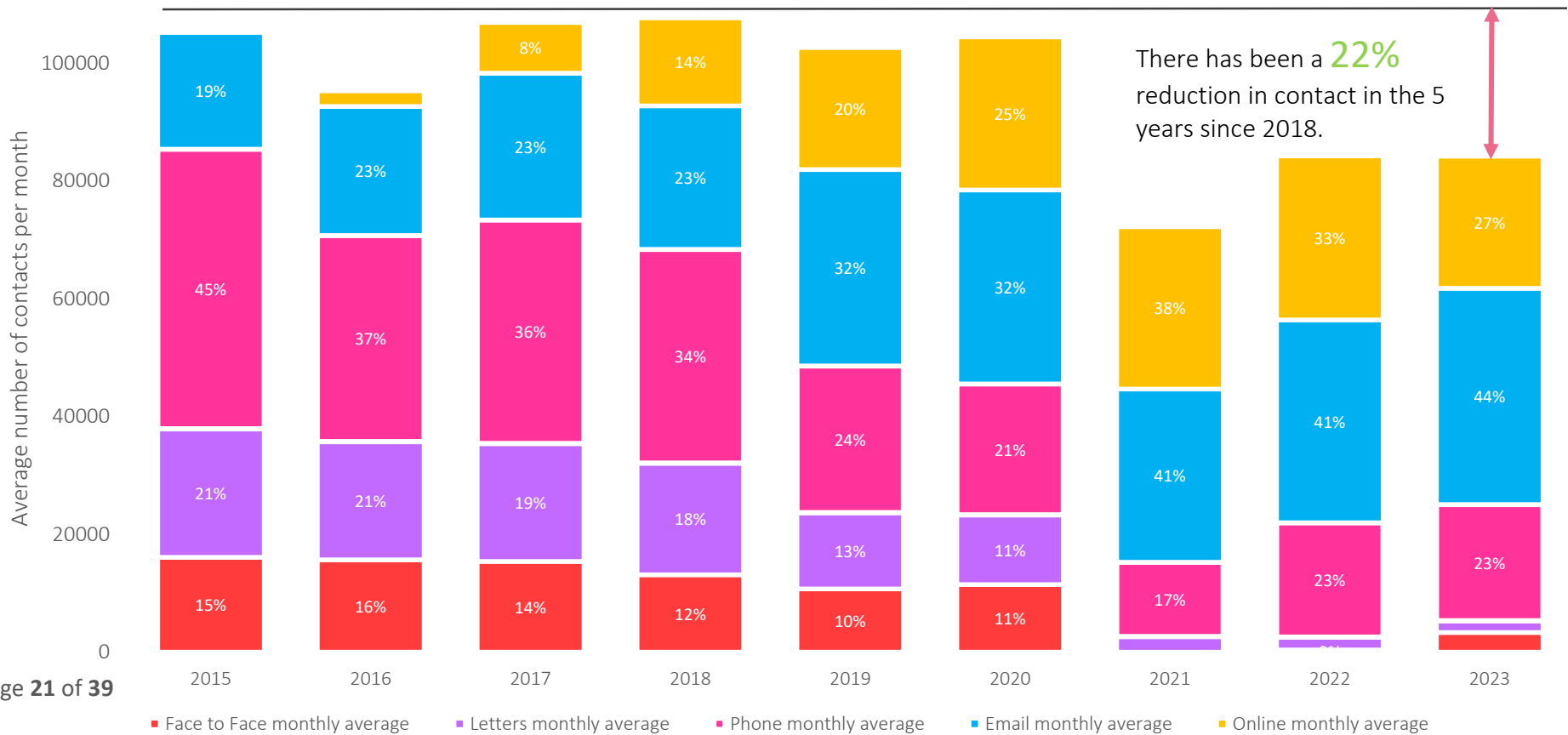
11% (4,380) of all customers attending a CSC were following up after not receiving a response from an earlier contact with the service.

3.5% (1,374) of customers were provided additional support to access services online or over the telephone due to their health condition, disability, or language barrier. This data is included within the above charts.

Contact by channel: 2022/23 per month (high volume services)



Contact by channel: year to year comparison (based on average contact per month for high volume services)



Equalities Data Summary

The Equality Act 2010 protects people from discrimination on the basis of the following 'protected characteristics': age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race/ethnicity, religion or belief, sex (gender), sexual orientation.

All customers have the right to be protected from discrimination, harassment or victimisation based on their protected characteristics.

Understanding the protected characteristics of people living, working in and visiting the city helps us to be fair, accessible, and appropriate when we make policies, deliver services, and employ people. The council is committed to becoming Fair and Inclusive and is working with the community to shape our Anti-Racism Strategy and Accessible City Strategy.

Supporting and developing good customer experience in relation to the city's diverse communities is a central aim of the council. Customers may experience numerous barriers to accessing services or need different support to achieve the right outcomes for them. Where these barriers or needs are related to legally protected characteristics, the council has a duty to consider how to remove these barriers, reduce disadvantage and promote equality of opportunity.

The equalities data presented below is taken from responses to the satisfaction survey provided through the corporate consultation portal and does not include results from independent surveys carried out within services or by associated partner. Therefore, the results presented as an *average of all respondents*, in the summary below, differs from the data presented as the overall customer satisfaction score (page 5).

Information on the city demographic is taken from the last census which was conducted in 2021.

72% (4,175) of respondents to the satisfaction survey agreed to provide equalities data out of a total 5,803 responses.

47% of respondents who provided equalities data (1,975) were satisfied with the level of customer service they received, 6% more than the average of all respondents; 41% (5,803).

Only 23% of respondents who did not choose to provide equalities data (382/1,628) were satisfied with the level of customer service, significantly lower than the average of all respondents (-18%) and those who provided equalities data (-24%).

51% of respondents who provided equalities data (2,125) found council services fairly easy or very easy to access or use, 6% more than the average of all respondents; 45% (5,803) and 22% higher than respondents who did not provide equalities data, 29% (472/1,628).

Ethnicity

- From the 4,175 respondents who provided equalities data; 4,037 (70% of all respondents) provided their ethnicity

- Of the 4,037 respondents, 703 (16.8%) are from a Black & Minority Ethnic background¹ (city demographic 26%)
- Respondents who identified as BME were on average 4% more satisfied (51%) with the level of customer service than the average of all respondents who provided equalities information (47%)
- 49% of respondents who identified as BME found council services fairly easy or very easy to access or use, 2% less than the average of all respondents who provided equalities information (51%)

Sexual Orientation

- From the 4,175 respondents who provided equalities data; 3,625 (63% of all respondents) provided their sexual orientation
- Of the 3,625 respondents, 600 respondents (17%) identified as Lesbian, Gay or Bisexual (LGB) (city demographic 11%)
- Respondents who identified as LGB were on average 2% less satisfied with the level of customer service (45%) than the average of all respondents who provided equalities information (47%)
- 50% of respondents who identified as LGB found council services fairly easy or very easy to access or use, 1% less than the average of all respondents who provided equalities information (51%)
- 38% of respondents who identified as other were satisfied with the level of customer service, 9% lower than the average of all respondents who provided equalities information (47%)
- 44% of respondents who identified as other found council services fairly easy or very easy to access or use, 7% lower than the average of all respondents who provided equalities information (51%)

Day to day activity limited due to health or a disability

- From the 4,175 respondents who provided equalities data; 4,002 (69% of all respondents) provided data on whether their day-to-day activities were limited due to health or disability
- Of the 4,002 respondents, 626 (16%) are limited in day-to-day activities due to a long-term health problem or disability (city demographic 11.5%) with 565 respondents (14%) indicating they are limited a lot in day-to-day activities due to a long-term health problem or disability (city demographic 8%)
- Respondents who identified as having their day-to-day activity limited due to health or a disability were on average 1% more satisfied with the level of customer service (48%) than the average of all respondents who provided equalities information (47%)

¹ In line with the Census 2021 data Black & Minority Ethnic (BME) is defined as all ethnic groups other than White English/Welsh/Scottish/Northern Irish/British

- 51% of respondents who identified as having their day-to-day activity limited due to health or a disability found council services fairly easy or very easy to access or use, 6% more than the average of all respondents (45%)

Satisfaction by age

- From the 4,175 respondents who provided equalities data; 4,026 (69% of all respondents) provided data on their age
- Of the 4,026 respondents, 2,621 (65%) are age 16 to 64 (city demographic 71%), 1,403 (35%) are age 65 years or older (city demographic 14%)
- Respondents who are age 20 to 39 were on average 9% less satisfied (38%) than the average of all respondents who provided equalities information (47%)
- 39% of respondents who are age 20 to 39 found council services fairly easy or very easy to access or use, 12% less than the average of all respondents who provided equalities information (51%)
- Respondents who are aged 50 years or older were on average 3% more satisfied (50%) than the average of all respondents who provided equalities information (47%)
- 56% of respondents who are aged 50 years or older found council services fairly easy or very easy to access or use, 5% more than the average of all respondents who provided equalities information (51%) and 8% higher than those who are age 16 to 64

Satisfaction by gender

- From the 4,175 respondents who provided equalities data; 4,157 (72% of all respondents) provided data on their gender
- Of the 4,157 respondents, 2,138 (51%) identified as female (city demographic 51%), 1,924 (46%) identified as male (city demographic 49%) and 31 (1%) identified as other
- Respondents who identified as male were on average 2% more satisfied (49%) than the average of all respondents who provided equalities information (47%)
- 53% of respondents who identified as male found council services fairly easy or very easy to access or use, 2% higher than the average of all respondents who provided equalities information (51%)
- 47% of respondents who identified as female were satisfied with the level of customer service, the same as the average of all respondents who provided equalities information (47%)
- 51% of respondents who identified as female found council services fairly easy or very easy to access or use, 6% higher than the average of all respondents who provided equalities information who provided equalities information (51%)
- Respondents who identified as 'other' were on average 2% less satisfied (45%) than the average of all respondents who provided equalities information (47%)
- 35% of respondents who identified as 'other' found council services fairly easy or very easy to access or use, 16% lower than the average of all respondents who provided equalities information (51%)

Our Customers

By customer we mean, any user of council services, voluntary or involuntary. This includes residents, visitors to the city, businesses, students, service users and their representatives.



Brighton & Hove's population is estimated at 277,200



121,400 households



130,000 Council Taxpayers



The population registered to vote is 204,291



16,400 receiving housing benefit



31,800 children attending school



11,300 Business rate payers



11,550 council owned dwellings



1,020km of footpaths



624km of carriageway



98 parks and open spaces



12km of coastline

Our Services



City Environment

5.5 million refuse collections per year
2 million recycling collections per year
700 miles of pavement cleaned per year



Parking and Transport

360,000 visitor permits issued per year
57,000 resident permits issued per year
6,300 concessionary bus passes issued per year
4,500 Blue Badge issued per year
1,200 business permits issued per year
14,387 permits for roadworks granted per year



Development Management (Planning)

3,700 applications received per year
2,650 applications approved per year



Housing Management

11,592 council tenancies
2,290 leasehold flats in council blocks



Housing Needs

2,800 applications for social housing per year
1,800 units of temporary accommodation
1,700 open cases for prevention, intervention, advice
1,150 emergency placements and transfers per year



Health & Adult Social Care

4,700 care assessments or reviews conducted per year
4,350 people receiving long term adult social care service
1,300 people receive short term intensive support per year
30,200 items of daily living equipment issued



Families, Children & Learning

5,450 children with special education needs receive support in schools
2,150 children attend our children's centres and nurseries
1,950 children supported by social work to be safe (including children in care)
500 receive family support



Registrars

3,400 births registered per year
2,500 deaths registered per year
1,300 marriages registered and officiated per year
580 new British naturalisation certificates issued per year



Libraries

14 libraries across the city
978,000 items issued per year
680,000 visits to libraries per year
19,100 unique users of public computers in libraries per year



Bereavement

2,000 cremations per year
350 burials per year
1,250 deaths reported to the Coroner's Office per year



Benefits

19,100 receiving help with council tax
3,250 new claims assessed per year
2,500 applications assessed for emergency help per year

Planned council wide improvements

What actions are we taking as a council?

Delivering good customer service isn't just a one-off initiative, it's a continual process of culture change - reviewing, redesigning, monitoring, training, learning and listening. We will continue to embed and reinforce the good practices that are already in place across the organisation and will find innovative ways to keep improving the way that services are delivered. The following examples show some of the key actions planned.

In Person Accessibility

We are reviewing our Customer Service Centre provision, to ensure that we are as accessible as possible to those who need additional support to use council services, or who do not have access to the internet or a telephone. This includes providing support and signposting for those at risk of digital exclusion. We will also be strengthening the links between our frontline customer service advisors and specialist officers so that timely and appropriate support can be provided to customers visiting our centres. We will be exploring providing council contact points across the city (such as Libraries and Family Hubs) to make accessing services even easier if additional support is needed.

Improved Online Services

It is more important than ever that the council delivers services in relevant and modern ways, to make it easier for customers to access the services they need. We have invested in improving online services which enable customers to self-serve for simple transactions (such as buying a parking permit, applying for school places or amending council tax information). This means that customers can use services and access information at a time convenient to them, without having to travel or wait in a telephone queue. If customers use self-service options when they can, this also enables the council to use more of its limited resources to support those customers who are unable to self-serve or have more complex enquiries and needs. According to research conducted by the Office of National Statistics (2020), we know that in Brighton & Hove we have a higher percentage of residents who use the internet (97.7%), compared to the South East of England (94.2%) and the UK as a whole (92.1%). Online services, including the design and content of the council website, are subject to continuous review, improvement and refinement based on customer need, accessibility and advancements in available technology.

Mystery Shopping

Another way in which we will be quality assuring our service delivery and customer experience is by conducting mystery shopping exercises. These exercises will be designed to test organisational compliance with our customer promise, as well as helping identify any systemic barriers or issues that customers experience in their real-life interactions with the council.

Planned Service Improvements

What actions are services planning to take?

Adult Social Care: Access Point

- Wholesale review of methods of access to improve response times to residents.
- Review of forms and process to increase immediate resolution and prevention and ensure, if required, enquiries are passed to the most appropriate team in a timely way.
- Continue to focus on learning from complaints and customer feedback in Health & Adult Social Care monthly performance meetings to identify actions needed and monitoring of progress around these.

Benefits

- We now have improved our internal communication channels with the customer service teams in Hove Town Hall and Bartholomew House, so that they can contact Housing Benefit staff when customers require in person support. This means that face to face support can be provided at the time, without the need for an appointment being made at a later date.
- Our phone line opening days have increased since November 2022, from 4 days to 5 days. Our opening times are now Mon- Fri from 9am to 1.30pm. Phone lines are closed in the afternoon to focus staff resources on processing claims and returning calls to customers who have called that morning to provide detailed responses to their queries.
- We are looking at all our online forms and literature to ensure they are more straight forward and jargon-free. We will clearly advertise our new opening times and ways to contact us.
- We continue to regularly review how we manage our service and interact with the public in light of the migration of the Housing Benefit caseload over to Universal Credit. We monitor the numbers contacting the service by phone call, email and in person, adapting how we resource our interaction with the public accordingly.

Blue Badge & Concessionary Travel

- Improve processing times by using technology to improve the customer journey
- Work with the customer service centres to ensure adequate provision is in place for customers who require assistance due to digital exclusion.
- Review the webpages to ensure information is clear and easy to use.

Childrens Services (including School Admissions)

- Provide more control, efficiency and consistency in how we respond to customer contact including encouraging the use of the Contact Management System to improve the customer journey.
- Engage and consult with customers using customer feedback to adopt a more customer centric approach including a focus on targeting service users who have been 'under-reached and under-served' in the past.
- Reviewing the quality, availability, and accessibility of all Families, Children & Learning content published online, to ensure that service information in the public domain is consistent and accurate, promoting the best way to contact the service.

City Environmental Management

- Improve refuse and recycling collections through round audits, changes, reducing sickness absence and ongoing improvement of management grip on the service.
- Review and find solutions for persistent missed collections.
- Deliver digitisation projects to improve service delivery and communications with residents such as Digital Cityclean and a new system to manage the allotment service.

Council Tax

- We are continuing to commit resources to support the directorate objective of developing, initiating, delivering and driving change to modernise the council and improve service to customers. We are collaborating closely with our colleagues in IT&D to introduce an improved digital offer for customers under the MyAccount service. This offer is designed to provide increased automation for core Council Tax transactions and lead to an improved customer experience and response times across the service.
- Analysis of customer demand, with a particular focus on digital contact, to support the development of the improved digital offer.
- Dynamic management of our phone opening times to match resources with the known trends of customer demand. This includes continuing to offer a dedicated phone service to financially vulnerable residents in the city who are struggling to pay their council tax and increasing resources at our busier times and reducing those resources during lower demand periods to support other work, for example the collaboration with IT&D on the digital service.

Housing Needs

- Introduce and embed a new triage service in Homelessness & Housing Options, centralising all customer channels into a single team, providing customers and partners with a single point of contact to access housing advice and support.
- Establish more effective case management practices to ensure applications are progressed in a timely way and customers are kept informed of the steps that we are taking, and they need to take, to prevent their homelessness.
- Develop an online single-access portal for customers who are seeking housing advice, want to join the housing register or update their records and see the action being taken on their application.

- Improve our housing register application and change of circumstances online form to make it quicker and easier for applicants to apply or notify us of any changes.

Housing Management (Housing Customer Services)

- We will consider our customer service offer to tenants, focusing on ensuring that the way customers contact our service meets their needs in the best way possible.
- We will consider the Housing Management Service's operating model to ensure it makes best use of resources to meet our obligations as a landlord.
- We will begin to collect the new Tenant Satisfaction Measures, a core set of statutory measure that all social landlords will have to meet and report against. These measures will be used to inform our future service delivery.
- We will review, and provide staff training, on how we communicate with customers and other services, focusing particularly on how we meet the Customer Promise while adapting to the council's future ways of working.

Housing Repairs

- Look to improve communication across the service which includes updating residents on changes to appointments or information: Trade teams to improve communication with residents when they have called into Helpdesk and requested an update/information. Many trade teams have recently recruited new planners to try and improve communication levels as they will then be more able to accommodate more frequent call back requests and book in more appointments. Resources have been increased with Housing Repairs to improve first contact communication and case management.
- Continuously improve training methods for new starters to develop knowledge and understanding: Recent implementation of Repairs Finder for new members of staff on Repairs Helpdesk, this software improves the accuracy and detail of raising jobs and assists with training of new members of staff as well as aiding longer serving members of staff to be certain on the details they are inputting and ensuring all questions are asked to diagnose the problem. This has improved job accuracy as trade teams now require much less clarification on certain job descriptions/locations.
- Further implement various methods for residents to report repairs so that it is easily accessible for all: The Housing Online accounts have recently been rolled out to 2,000 homes whereby residents can now report repairs online using Interfinder, rather than calling or emailing. This reduces wait times for other residents that do need to call as well as alleviate pressure for the Repairs Helpdesk during busy periods.

Parking

- Ensure new website makes it clear how people can contact us, including phone opening hours.
- Collect customer survey results at point of transaction to gain more responses to improve customer engagement and satisfaction.
- Ensure adequate provision is in place for customers who require assistance due to digital exclusion.

Planning and Development Control

- Regular customer service training for officers
- Implement Planning Enforcement Modernisation Programme to improve the timeliness and responsiveness of the service
- Implement improvements to the Planning website to allow more transparency and self-service.

Register Office

- Review website information in response to customer comments to ensure information is as simple and clear as possible.
- Ensure that email correspondence responds appropriately and fully to customer queries at first point of contact to minimise repeat contact.
- Develop ceremonies 'FAQs' on website for most common queries and embed link in correspondence.
- Consider new ways of gathering feedback.

Transport

- Make use of the Contact Management System to provide more control, efficiency, accountability and consistency in customer contact. This will remove confusion over the best way to contact the service by having a single point of contact that is more manageable for both staff and managers. We are now in the process of rolling out the system within Transport Projects and Traffic Management.
- Improve the quality, accountability, and accessibility of information about Transport services on the Brighton & Hove City Council website. We are working closely with IT to make our webpages more user friendly.
- Ensure we engage and consult with our residents/stakeholders on transport projects to ensure we are engaging with under-represented groups within the city.

Contact Us

We welcome any suggestions, questions or other feedback about this report, please contact:

Jenny.Garlick@brighton-hove.gov.uk Customer Experience Manager

Luke.Hamblin@brighton-hove.gov.uk Corporate Performance & Risk Management Lead

Victoria.Paling@brighton-hove.gov.uk Customer Experience Lead

Rima.Desai@brighton-hove.gov.uk Assistant Director – Customer, Modernisation & Performance Insight

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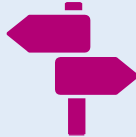
Performance Management Framework



Customer Insight is one element of our Performance Management Framework that sets out how the council manages performance, to achieve our purpose as set out in the Corporate Plan.

Our customer promise to you

We will make it clear how you can contact or access our services



- Communicate with you online (email/ website/social media) where possible and appropriate. This is often quicker and more convenient for you
- If you have specific access needs, work with you to find the best way to get the help you need
- Ensure our services are inclusive and responsive to your needs

We will be clear and treat you with respect



- Be honest and easy to understand in all our communication with you
- Keep your personal data secure
- Work together with other services across the council and city to meet your needs and make it easier for you to get the help you need

We will understand and get things done



- Aim to answer your query at first point of contact. When we can't do this, tell you clearly what will happen next so you know what to expect
- Make sure our staff have the skills, behaviours and tools to deliver the service you need
- Keep you informed with up to date information about the services you use

You can help us to keep our promise by



- Treating us, and other customers, with respect
- Letting us know if you have any specific needs
- Giving us all the information we require to help us meet your needs
- Giving us feedback on our service so we can learn and improve

Please tell us how we are doing



- We welcome all feedback, including when things don't go right. We are committed to using this information to improve our services
- Please tell us how satisfied you are with our service, this [short survey](#) should take you about two minutes
- If you would like to provide a detailed compliment or complaint please contact the [Customer Feedback team](#)

Checking our performance against this promise



- We check our performance through monitoring:
 - customer satisfaction and ease of access
 - compliments and complaints
 - information about how our customers contact us
 - survey of Brighton & Hove residents and service users
- The results will be published through our [Customer Insight Report](#) annually

Different ways to contact us

Website

We will:

- aim to have the council website available for 24 hours a day all yearround
- continually improve our online services to meet your needs
- ensure our online services are accessible and simple to use
- let you know about other ways of contacting us

Written communication

We will:

- ensure all service email addresses have an 'automatic reply' which clearly explains what will happen next
- aim to keep average response times within 10 working days. At busier times, we will aim to let you know how long you may have to wait
- let you know about other ways of contacting us

Telephones

We will:

- aim to keep average waiting times under 10 minutes. At busier times, we will aim to let you know how long you may have to wait
- update voicemails and telephone messages regularly to hold accurate information
- aim to respond to voicemails within one working day
- let you know about other ways of contacting

Face to face

We will:

- make sure our customer service buildings are welcoming, safe, fully accessible and designed to make it easy to get the help you need
- aim to greet you within five minutes of arrival and see you on average within 20 minutes. At busier times, we will aim to let you know how long you may have to wait
- let you know about other ways of contacting us

Social media

We will:

- be clear how we will respond to any queries received
- share relevant information and keep this up to date
- let you know about other ways of contacting us

Our Customer Experience Vision:

Getting things right first time, every time

Efficiency



Services are available online, where possible and are easy to find



Council Information systems are joined up appropriately to make it easier for customers



It is clear to customers what the best way of contacting the council is, based on what they need



Staff are skilled and confident in delivering customer service, including being able to resolve customer dissatisfaction quickly and fairly



The Customer Promise is checked regularly to make sure it includes what is important for customers



All services are delivered to the standards set in the Customer Promise



Customers are confident that all services keep the Customer Promise

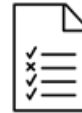


All services engage with everyone who may be affected before making changes

Improvements



Improving the customer experience is the top priority in everyone's day to day role



Customers are asked what they think about the services they receive and their feedback is acted upon



The council uses data and information to plan service improvements



Services work together for the benefit of the customer



Council Resources are used to meet customer needs through all contact methods



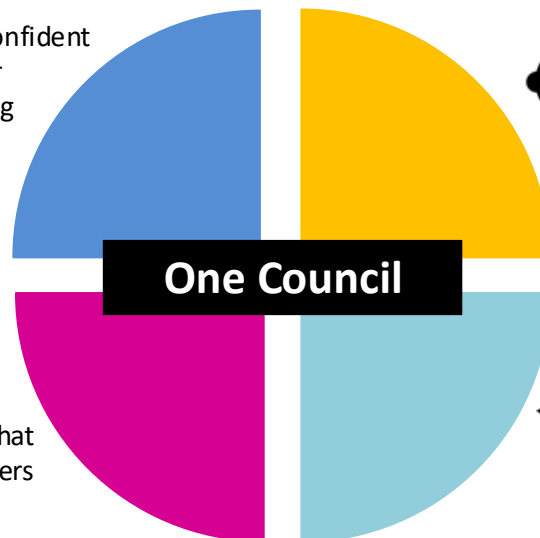
All services support each other positively to fulfil the Customer Promise



All staff are able to offer basic advice, support or signposting to other council services and external support



The council works with other public or private services, charities and community groups to resolve issues together



Consistency

Resilience

Current Operating Model



Online

We are working towards making sure good quality services are available online and are easy to find to enable self-service options.

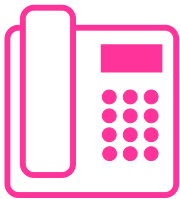
Services communicate with customers online where appropriate including resolving queries.

Enhanced offer for complex transactions and/or higher support needs

All relevant staff are able to provide support to access digital transactions and information about their services for those who need it, including for those who are digitally excluded.

All staff are expected to provide a basic level of digital help and signposting to deliver a One Council approach.

Corporate customer service advisors are available via central council phone line and at Customer Service Centres to support customers in accessing digital services.



Over the phone

Central council phone line is open 9 to 5pm to help customers with basic queries and signposting.

Consistent live telephone offer is being provided by all key services for a minimum of 4 hours each day (9.30 to 1.30pm) aiming to have an average call waiting time of no more than 10 minutes.

We are working towards improving consistency to ensure all key public phone lines have easy to access options and provide information about waiting times.

Where relevant, customers are provided with individual phone contacts for specific officers.

Enhanced offer for complex transactions and/or higher support needs

Services are strongly encouraged to extend their phone opening times adapting to customer needs at any given point in time.



In person

Corporate Customer Service Centre

At least one Customer Service Centre is open providing drop-in self-help area supported by customer service advisors including telephone and computer facilities.

Individual services provide customers with pre-booked appointments based on need. The drop-in offer includes support to book face to face appointments, working with the relevant service.

Customer service advisors and concierge are able to arrange urgent support from the relevant service, where absolutely necessary.

Enhanced offer for complex transactions and/or higher support needs

Additional council contact points across the city are being explored as appropriate.

We will explore formalising partnership working with other public, private and third sector organisations who are able to advise customers about council services.

Service Specific buildings/reception points

This currently includes children's centres, social work hubs, libraries etc. Service provision is based on customer need and is regularly reviewed and adapted as appropriate by relevant services.

Visits / inspections / appointments are carried out as required to meet service and customers needs by relevant staff e.g. social workers, regulatory services and are regularly reviewed and adapted as appropriate by relevant services

Customer Survey Data

- > Data presented in this report is collected from the corporate Customer Experience Survey from 5,803 respondents, including those who completed the survey in paper format at Council Customer Service Centres and Libraries, surveys carried out by services (2,654) and associated partners (1,852) conducted between April 2022 and March 2023
- > Service results are only presented within this report where more than 50 responses were returned for a specific service, however all results are included in the overall satisfaction score for the council.
- > Shows the percentage of customers who found the standard of customer service good or very good and compares it to the previous year.
- > Shows the percentage of customers who found council services easy or very easy to access or use and compares it to the previous year.

Customer Feedback Data

- > Data presented in this report is taken from the council's Complaint Management System and provided by the Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman.
- > Complaint response performance is shown as the proportion of complaints responded to within target (10 working days except for Adult Social Care)
- > Complaint escalation shows the number of Stage 2 complaints investigated in comparison to the number of Stage 1 complaints received.
- > Complaint escalation to the ombudsman shows the proportion of complaints investigated in 2021/22 (the latest available data provided by the ombudsman) in comparison to Stage 1 and Stage 2 complaints received by the council.

Customer Contact Data

- > Data presented in this report is only collected for the highest volume transactional services for email, online forms and telephone. Data is only taken from externally published email addresses, phone numbers and online forms
- > Shows the volume of online forms, emails, phone calls received, visitors to the council website, visitors to customer service centres and post received during 2022/23 and compares it to previous years.
- > Data on visitors to Customer Service Centres is recorded by Customer Service Advisors

Councillor Enquiries Data

- > Data presented in this report is from the Councillor Enquiries Case Management System. It does not include enquiries received by councillors through alternate channels, such as phone, email or at surgeries.
- > Councillor enquiry volume shows the number of enquiries received, the top reasons for contact and the number of requests made to services for response for the period of 31st October 2022 to 31st March 2023.
- > Councillor enquiries performance data is shown as the proportion of enquiries responded to within 5 working days and the average number of days to respond.
- > The data presented in this report is based on ward boundaries as they were in 2022/23, prior to the changes made in May 2023.