

Compliments, Comments and Complaints Summary

Compliments

The Compliments, Comments and Complaints (CCC) panel have high standards of expectation in relation to reviewing submitted compliments. Compliments included in the recorded data reflect services provided above the expected day-to-day function of an Officers' role. In all instances, the CCC panel ensure line managers and Officers are informed of any feedback received.

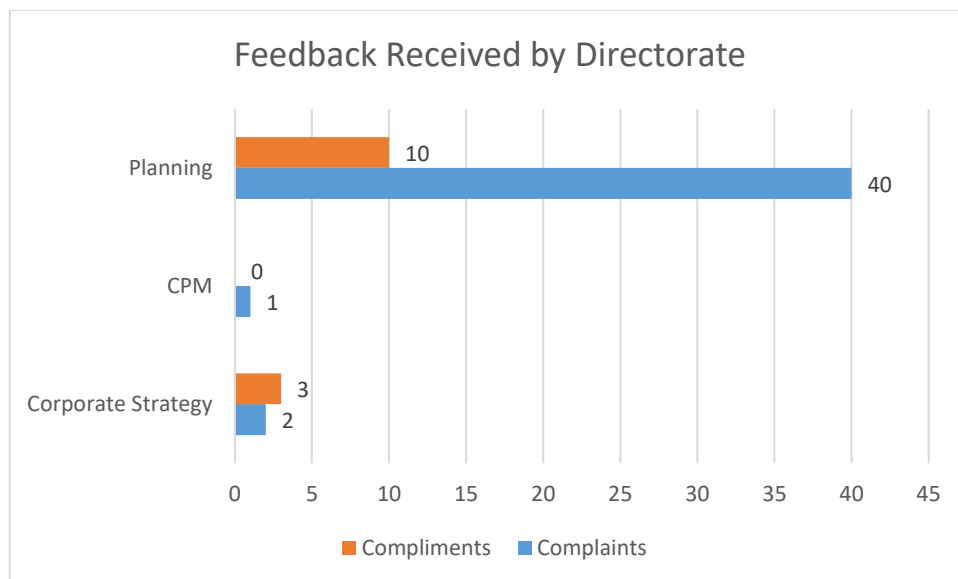
Complaints

The number of complaints received this year (43) demonstrates a return to more normal levels of activity following the legacy of the pandemic, with the figure remaining similar to that reported for the last year. The total number of planning complaints continues to represent a very small percentage of the business transacted by the planning team (in excess of 5500 applications handled during the year).

For the 2023-24 reporting period, 63% of complaint responses were issued on time this figure demonstrates little change in the performance from the previous reporting year. All SDNPA responses were provided on time but a high number of responses provided by Chichester District Council were not provided on time and this is being followed up (see below). It should be noted that the SDNPA handle all Host Authority complaints at later stages of the process if complaints progress that far.

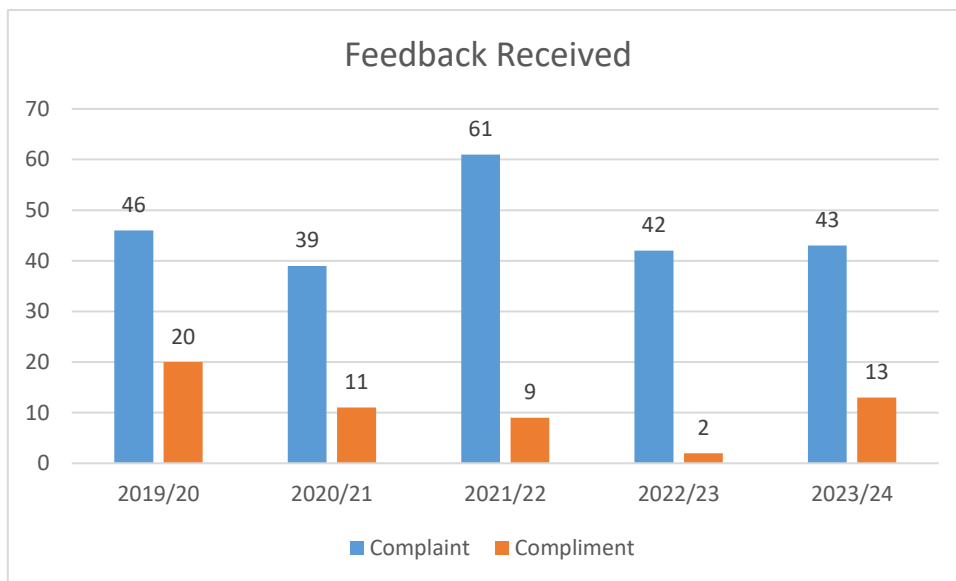
Feedback Received by Directorate 2023-24 (data table followed by graph)

| Directorate | Number of Complaints | Number of Compliments |
|--------------------|----------------------|-----------------------|
| Corporate Strategy | 2 | 3 |
| CPM | 1 | 0 |
| Planning | 40 | 10 |



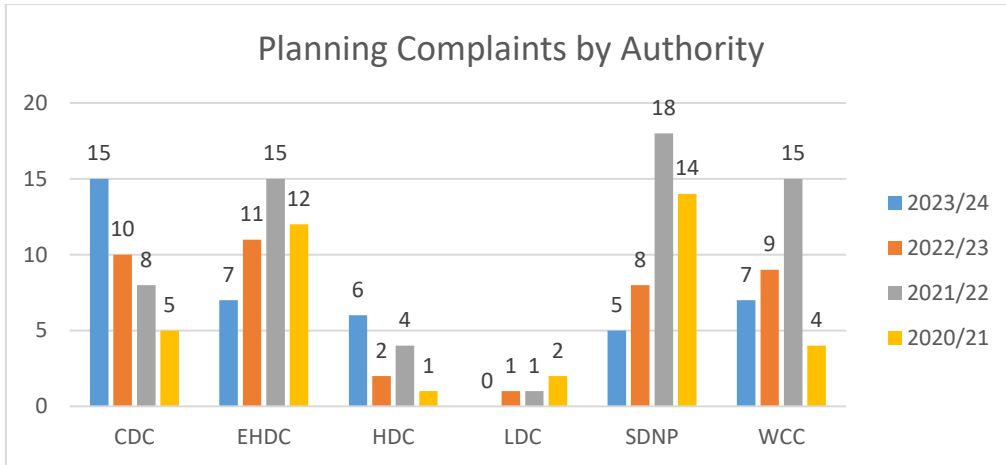
Feedback Received – 5 Year Comparison (data table followed by graph)

| Reporting Year | Number of Complaints | Number of Compliments |
|----------------|----------------------|-----------------------|
| 2019/20 | 46 | 20 |
| 2020/21 | 39 | 11 |
| 2021/22 | 61 | 9 |
| 2022/23 | 42 | 2 |
| 2023/24 | 43 | 13 |



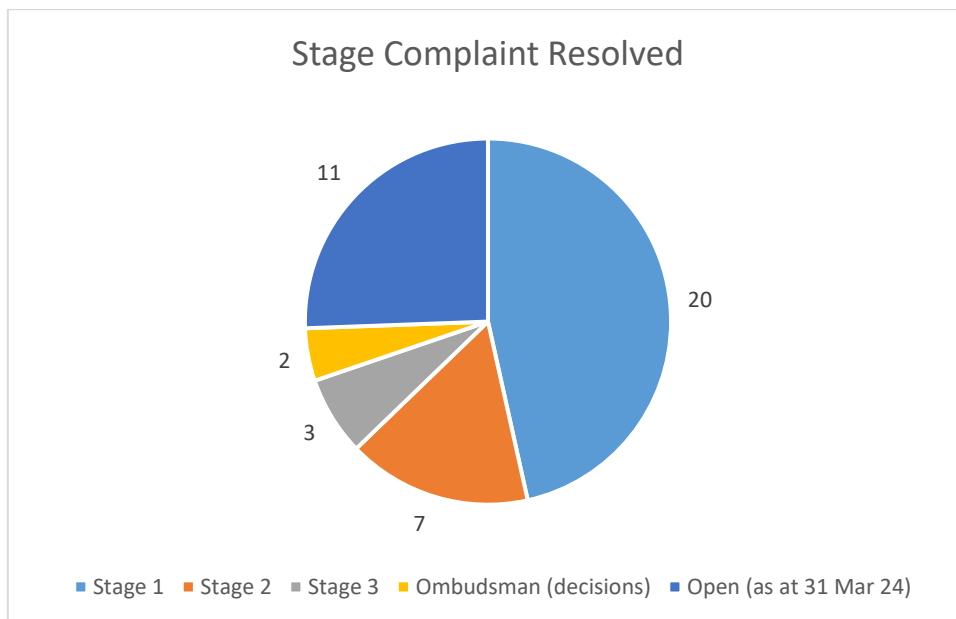
Planning Complaints by Authority (data table followed by graph)

| | 2023/24 | 2022/23 | 2021/22 | 2020/21 |
|------------------------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| Chichester District Council | 15 | 10 | 8 | 5 |
| East Hants District Council | 7 | 11 | 15 | 12 |
| Horsham District Council | 6 | 2 | 4 | 1 |
| Lewes District Council | 0 | 1 | 1 | 2 |
| South Downs National Park | 5 | 8 | 18 | 14 |
| Winchester City Council | 7 | 9 | 15 | 4 |
| Total | 40 | 41 | 61 | 38 |



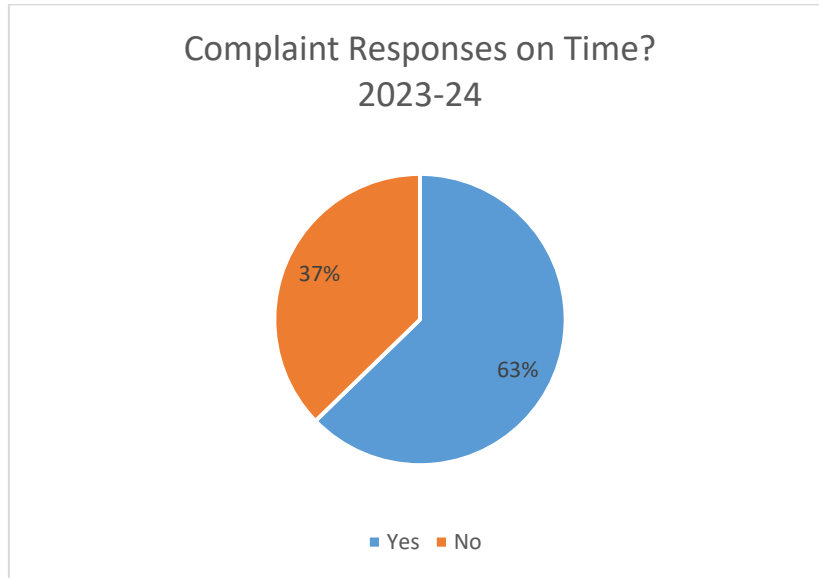
Stage Complaint Resolved 2023-24 (data table followed by graph)

| Stage Resolved | Number of Complaints |
|--------------------------------|----------------------|
| Stage 1 | 20 |
| Stage 2 | 7 |
| Stage 3 | 3 |
| Open (as at 31 March 24) | 11 |
| Ombudsman (decisions received) | 2 |



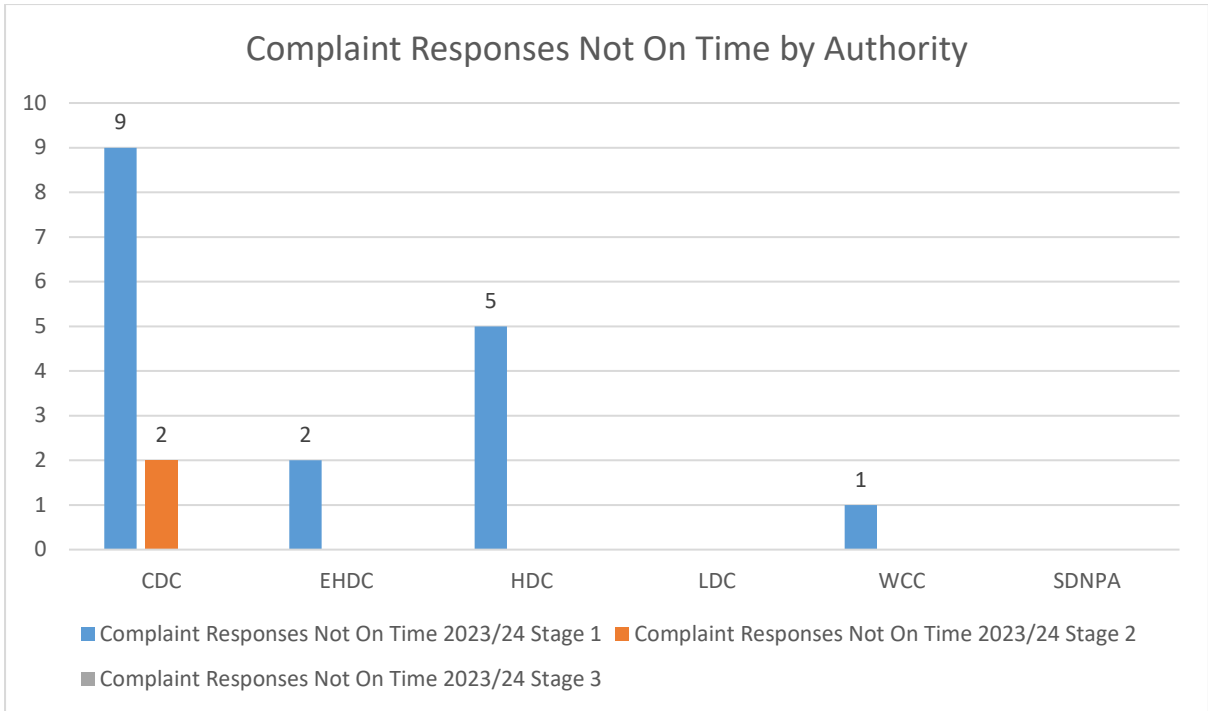
Percentage of Complaint Responses sent within time 2023-24 (data table followed by graph)

| Yes | No |
|------------|-----------|
| 63% | 37% |



Complaint Responses not on time by Authority (data table followed by graph)

| Authority | Stage 1 | Stage 2 | Stage 3 |
|-----------------------------|----------------------|----------------|----------------|
| Chichester District Council | 9 | 2 | |
| East Hants District Council | 2 | | |
| Horsham District Council | 5 | | |
| Lewes District Council | | | |
| Winchester City Council | 1 | | |
| South Downs National Park | All provided on time | | |



SDNPA Complaints – Ombudsman Decisions 2023-24

| | |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Ombudsman Reference: | 23 001 126 |
| Ombudsman Decision: | Complaint not upheld |
| Decision Date: | 5 January 2024 |

The Complaint

- A case was brought against the Authority in relation to their handling of planning matters relating to developments on the use of land next to the complainant’s home, specifically the failure to take enforcement action, the commercial use of the land, incorrect validation of the application and questioned the relationship between the landowner and planning officers.

Ombudsman’s Conclusion

- The Ombudsman commented that new evidence had been received by the Authority to suggest there was a change of use at the site where previously there had been no evidence of this. The Authority had subsequently opened an enforcement case.
- The Ombudsman concluded that they would not investigate this further as the matter was being addressed through the opening of the enforcement investigation to review the use of the site and investigating the other matters raised within the complaint would not be likely to provide a remedy or any other meaningful outcome.

| | |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Ombudsman Reference: | 22 013 757 |
| Ombudsman Decision: | Complaint not upheld |
| Decision Date: | 15 June 2023 |

The Complaint

- A case was brought against the Authority in relation to the decision to approve a neighbour’s application for a house extension. They complained that the planning application had not been properly publicised and that there was a failure to protect amenity.

Ombudsman’s Conclusion

- The Ombudsman noted that there was a temporary policy in place at the time due to Covid restrictions and no neighbour notification letters had been sent as restricted access to the Council offices [of a Host Authority] meant this was not practicable. The Council accepted that the site notice had initially been placed in the wrong location, this was rectified by them putting up another site notice. The issue of amenity had been properly considered by the case officer.
- The Ombudsman concluded that any lack of site notice would not have made any difference to the outcome and that there was no evidence to support the claim of loss of amenity.
- The Ombudsman did not investigate the complaint as it was unlikely that they would find fault, a remedy or any other meaningful outcome.

Full transcripts of the Ombudsman’s reports are available on the [Local Government Ombudsman website](#).