

FOREWORD BY TERRY RICH

DIRECTOR ADULT AND COMMUNITY SERVICES



Welcome to our 5th Annual Adult and Community Services Complaints Report.

This year Bromley Adult & Community Services has provided services to over 8000 residents in the borough and most of the time, when services are provided they have run smoothly. There are times however when we do get things wrong and when this does happen, the important thing is to deal with people's concerns as effectively as possible and to learn from our mistakes and make improvements to our services wherever necessary.

This year the big change in the way people receive services from us has continued. One change is the implementation of the Re-ablement Service, which we hope will help many of our residents who may otherwise have needed residential care to live independently in their own homes for longer; something I am confident most people wish for toward the latter years of their lives. New modern extra care housing developments are also being built in the borough to replace units that no longer meet the current standards, with the first development at Crown Meadow Court already complete. Indeed, major changes such as these always present challenges and the complaints service continues to provide a way in which our customers can highlight any shortcomings in the services we provide so they can be addressed and improvements made.

In fact, having learnt from the experience of how major changes can affect our service users; the setting up of a task force in the Care Services Division to aid the transfer of our in-house clients to our contracted domiciliary care providers has demonstrated that a little forward thinking in the Department, has kept concerns regarding these transfers to a minimum. Furthermore, surprisingly few complaints were received about extra care housing this year. This has helped inform us that the move of residents from the extra care housing units at Denton and Cranbrook Court to Crown Meadow Court has been successfully managed.

We are committed to the continuing improvement in how we deliver our services. Our customers' complaints are vital, highlighting when our services fail to meet the expected standards. Equally, compliments are also important in showing us where we have succeeded. This year, despite the continued pressures caused by the current economic climate, nearly 40 customers took the time and trouble to write and tell us about their positive experiences.

Our complaints service has made a difference. We have handled 275 formal complaints this year and the learning from many of these has resulted in improvements to service standards. We ensure a fair and robust investigation takes place into each complaint and have developed monitoring systems to ensure those who complain are fully informed of the progress of their complaint. We will continue to work with this positive approach towards complaint resolution over the coming years and hope to see continued high quality service provision as a result.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Terry Rich', written in a cursive style.

London Borough of Bromley

Section 1: Complaint Overview

Adult Social Care (Statutory Complaints)

The following report is a summary of complaints activity for the year 2010-2011. The aim of the report is to present an overview on the number and type of complaints received from April 2010 to March 2011, including the lessons learnt from those complaints in that period. The following includes complaints received for all services within the Adult & Community Services Department; housing and corporate complaints and adult social care complaints, which are dealt with under the statutory complaints procedures. In addition to information regarding formal complaints, there are also summaries of informal complaints, Ombudsman enquiries and compliments received over the year.

Given the large volume of adult social care services provided to people in Bromley, there will be times when service delivery may not fully meet intent or expectations. The number of complaints received about Adult Social Care during the 2010/11 financial year was 185. This compares to 253 for the previous year (2009/10); a drop of 27%. Improvements in performance management within the Learning Disabilities Support & Assessment and Transition Teams means there has been a significant drop in complaints about these services, particularly with regard to assessment delays. In addition, although we have had concerns this year from clients challenging their domiciliary and residential care bills, complaints about charging dropped by half this year following service improvements made by the charging teams; more of which is detailed in the next section of this report.

Overall last year, 8,261 people received a range of social care services so the number of complaints received equates to 2% of service users. This is a small number; however we do recognise this is still significant and that there are lessons to be learnt when services fail to deliver.

Within Bromley, we set a 20 day timescale to respond to complaints. Of the 185 complaints received this year for adult social care, 136 of those (**74%**) were responded to within our current timescale of 20 working days. This is an improvement from last year's figure of 66% and exceeded our 70% target.

Only 22 of the complaints received for adult social care were responded to after 28 days, which means 88% of complaints were responded to within this time. Delays were experienced mainly where investigations were more complex than usual or where investigating officers had to wait for information from other service providers. We recognised last year there is the need for continued improvement in this area and this has meant better response times this year. The complaints team will continue to ensure the progress of all complaints is monitored carefully and that complaints are responded to within the department's target time frame.

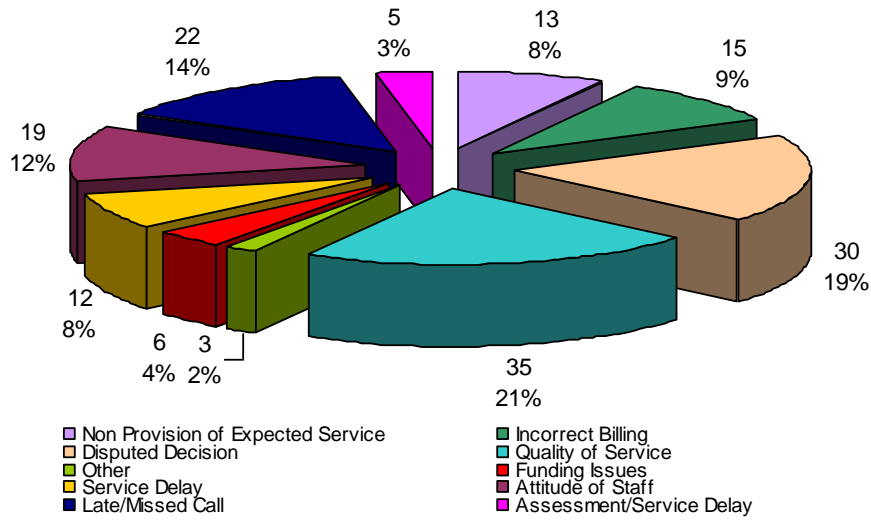
The types of complaints we receive are recorded under four main categories: Operational, Information, Lack of Action and Policy. As expected, most complaints fall under the Operational category, with the relevant sub-categories representing the primary reasons for complaint i.e. late/missed call, incorrect billing, assessment delays etc

Operational Complaints

We received a total of 160 complaints this year relating to operational issues, which constitutes **86%** of total complaints in 2010/11 for adult social care. It is important to note that not all complaints are upheld and this applied to **42%** of the complaints we received under this category this year.

Chart 1 below represents all the Operational complaints made this year about adult social care and shows how many complaints were received for each sub-category. A breakdown for each service is given in the next section of this report, including details of improvements made in the service to address the issues raised.

Chart 1



The table below shows a breakdown by subject of all the operational complaints received in 2010/11, and the number which have been upheld or partially upheld.

Outcome	Number of Complaints Received	Upheld	Partially Upheld	Total Upheld or Partially Upheld	Not Upheld	Total Upheld or Partially Upheld	%
Attitude of Staff	19	2	2	4	15		21.0%
Non-Provision of Service	13	0	4	4	9		31.0%
Quality of Service	35	12	16	28	7		80.0%
Incorrect Billing	15	10	4	14	1		93.0%
Service Delay	12	3	4	7	5		58.0%
Missed Call	17	14	2	16	1		94.0%
Late Call	5	3	1	4	1		80.0%
Disputed Decision	30	4	3	7	23		23.0%
Assessment Quality/Delay	5	0	1	1	4		25.0%
Funding/Back Payment Issues	6	4	1	5	1		83.0%
Other	3	2	0	2	1		67.0%
Total	160*	54	38	92	67		

* Please note 1 of these complaints is still active

The table below is a breakdown of all complaints recorded regarding the quality of care received and the number of complaints, which were either upheld or partially upheld.

Quality of Service Breakdown	Total Received	Upheld	Partially Upheld	Total Upheld or Partially Upheld	Not Upheld	Total	%
Poor service given by carer	4	1	2	3	1		75.0%
Faulty/Broken Equipment	3	1	1	2	1		67.0%
Lack of Consistency	5	1	2	3	2		60.0%
Carer/Client Relationship Prob.	1	0	1	1	0		100.0%
Manual Handling Issues	2	0	2	2	0		100.0%
Poor English Language Skills	2	0	2	2	0		100.0%
Damage of Personal Items	2	1	1	2	0		100.0%
Short call/Carer leaving early	2	0	1	1	1		50.0%
Care plan not followed	9	5	3	8	1		89.0%
Incorrect/No medication given	1	1	0	1	0		100.0%
Lack of training	2	1	1	2	0		100.0%
Hygiene Issues	2	1	0	1	1		100.0%
Other	0	0	0	0	0		0.0%
Total	35	12	16	28	7		

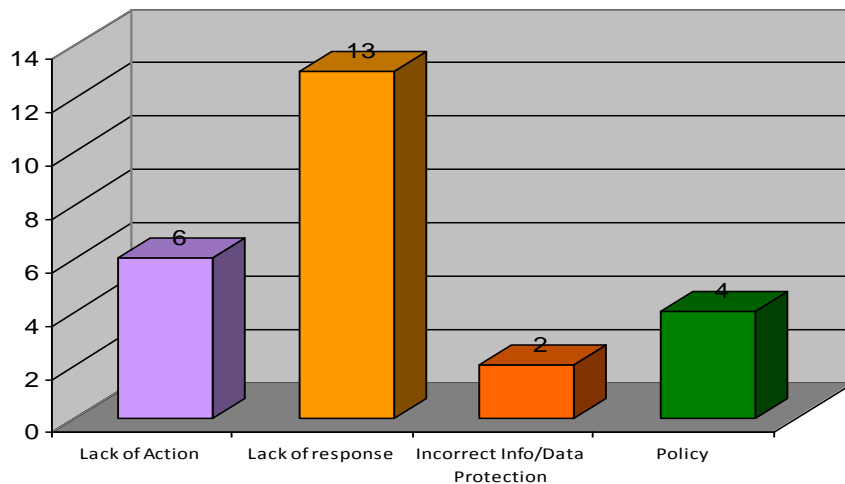
Information, Lack of Action & Policy Complaints

Chart 2 below is a breakdown of complaints recorded under the remaining categories. Section 2 details measures that have been put in place by individual teams to address the problems highlighted by these complaints.

We received a total of 15 complaints in this period relating to either the failure to communicate or the provision of incorrect information. 3 were upheld, 2 were partially upheld, while 10 are recorded as not upheld.

In addition, we received 6 complaints relating to lack of action and 3 were either upheld or partially upheld, while 3 were not upheld. We also received 4 complaints relating to policy and none of these were upheld.

Chart 2



Section 2: Complaints received by service & lessons learnt

Adult Social Care complaint activity –2010/11.

The tables below show comparisons between complaints received between this and the previous financial year.

Care Services 2010/2011 - by team					
Teams	2009/10	% of complaints	2010/11	% of complaints	Up/down
Penge Area Office	21	11%	17	13%	▼
Orpington Area Office	17	9%	16	11%	▼
LD Assessment and Support	26	13%	8	6%	▼
LD Transition	11	6%	4	3%	▼
PDSI	8	3.5%	9	7%	▲
Reviews and Brokerage	1	0.5%	1	1%	—
Care Link	2	1%	4	3%	▲
Home Care	32	16%	19	14%	▼
Extra Care Housing	7	3%	7	5%	—
Transport / ICES	0	0	1	1%	▲
Invicta / Out of Hours	1	0.5%	0	0	▼
Adult Protection	0	0	0	0	—
CARTS	2	1%	1	1%	▼
Occupational Therapy	11	6%	13	9%	▲
PRUH Social Services	2	1%	7	5%	▲
Blue Badges	9	5%	5	4%	▼
CMHT/Oxleas	2	1%	1	1%	▼
Finances/Charging Domiciliary Care	29	15%	18	13%	▼
Finance/Charging Residential Care	13	7%	3	2%	▼
Direct Payments	1	0.5%	1	1%	—
TOTAL	195	100%	135	100%	▼

Commissioning & Partnerships 2010/2011 - by team					
Teams	2009/10	% of complaints	2010/11	% of complaints	Up/down
Contracts - Dom Care	43	74%	33	66%	▼
Contracts - Resi Care	13	22%	5	10%	▼
Day services – LD	1	2%	3	6%	▲
Commissioning	0	0	4	8%	▲
Mental health	0	0	0	0	—
Residential services LD	1	2%	4	8%	▲
Supporting people	0	0	1	2%	▲
TOTAL	58	100%	50	100%	▼

The following is a summary of complaint activity for each service area and team, with details of the lessons learnt from complaints, wherever applicable.

Care Management

CARE MANAGEMENT 2010/2011												
	Penge Team		Orpington Team		Hospital Team		PDSI Team*		Review Team		CARTS Team**	
Complaints Received	17		16		7		9		1		1	
Resolved within 20 working days	13	76%	13	81%	6	86%	6	67%	1	100%	1	100%
Upheld	4	24%	2	12%	0	0%	2	22%	0	0%	0	0%
Partially Upheld	3	18%	2	12%	0	0%	2	22%	1	100%	0	0%
Not Upheld	10	58%	12	76%	7	100%	5	56%	0	0%	1	100%
Still Active	0		0		0		0		0		0	

*Physical Disabilities and Sensory Impairment.

**Community Assessment, Rehabilitation and Treatment Service.

The **Penge Older People's Team** received 17 complaints from April 2010 to March 2011 compared to 21 in the same quarter the previous year; a fall of 19%. Since measures were put in place to address issues around complaints received last year relating to attitude of staff and the failure to communicate, the team received one complaint this year about staff behaviour and no complaints relating to lack of response. The complaint about attitude of staff was upheld and actions were taken by management to address the issues that led to the complaint being made (*see Lessons Learnt below*).

Complaints related to:

- 1 x incorrect billing; not upheld.
- 4 x disputed decisions; 1 upheld, 3 not upheld.
- 1 x service delay; partially upheld.
- 1 x quality of service (faulty/broken equipment); not upheld.
- 1 x quality of service (lack of training); upheld.
- 2 x policy; both not upheld.
- 1 x data protection issues; not upheld.
- 2 x non-provision of expected service; both partially upheld.
- 2 x funding issues; 1 upheld, 1 not upheld.
- 1 x assessment quality/delay; not upheld.
- 1 x attitude of staff; upheld.

The **Orpington Older People's Team** received 16 complaints, compared to 17 in the same period the previous year. Two disputed panel decisions resulted in formal complaints from the service users' families. In both instances; in order to resolve the complaints locally, both cases were treated as appeals and presented again to panel.

The three other complaints about disputed decisions, which were also handled through the complaints procedure, were not upheld. There were also 3 complaints received about attitude of staff but none were upheld.

Complaints related to:

3 x attitude of staff; all not upheld.

5 x disputed decision; 2 upheld, 3 not upheld.

1 x non provision of expected service; not upheld.

3 x failure to communicate; all not upheld.

3 x service delay; 1 partially upheld, 2 not upheld.

1 x assessment quality/delay; partially upheld

The **Hospital Care Management Team** at the Princess Royal University Hospital received 7 complaints compared to 2 the previous year. Of the 7 received, three related to disputed decisions. None of the complaints received for this service were upheld by the Council.

Complaints related to:

3 x disputed decision; all not upheld.

1 x lack of action; not upheld.

1 x service delay; not upheld.

1 x attitude of staff; not upheld.

1 x non-provision of expected service; not upheld.

The **Physical Disabilities and Sensory Impairment Team** received 9 complaints compared to 8 last year. Measures put in place the previous year in response to complaints about assessment delays and non-communication has reduced concerns raised in these areas. Although we did receive one complaint about an assessment delay, this was not upheld and involved a number of circumstances which were beyond the team's control.

Complaints related to:

1 x attitude of staff; not upheld.

1 x incorrect billing; partially upheld.

1 x assessment delay; not upheld.

1 x lack of action; upheld.

1 x non-provision of expected service; not upheld.

1 x disputed decision; partially upheld.

1 x policy; not upheld.

1 x funding issues; upheld.

1 x service delay; not upheld.

The **Review & Brokerage Team** recorded 1 complaint this period, which was about incorrect information being given. This complaint was partially upheld.

Lessons Learnt

As a result of a complaint to the **Penge Older People’s Team** about the delay in service caused by the care manager’s failure to correctly inform a customer about care charges. The care manager attended refresher training in long term care charging and also attended a complaints training course in order to help communicate more effectively with customers.

Following a complaint about the process of assessing eligibility to receive direct payments and misunderstandings caused during the process, the group manager of the **Penge Older People’s Team** has reminded care managers to discuss all available options with the person being assessed and their carers. The aim is to help avoid any future confusion about which services are and are not available and ensure clients feel they have been provided with sufficient information with which to make informed decisions.

There is a requirement for health & social care to deliver equipment to service users within 7 days of being ordered. One complaint received by the **Orpington Older People’s Team** was due to a delay in receiving community equipment. At the time this was caused by high demand. Following the complaint, senior management implemented an escalation process, to ensure timeliness of service. Since this was put in place, the service has not received any similar complaints.

Learning Disabilities & Mental Health

LEARNING DISABILITIES & MENTAL HEALTH 2010/2011						
	Assessment & Support		Transition Team		Mental Health	
Complaints Received	8		4		1	
Resolved within 20 working days	4	50%	2	50%	1	100%
Upheld	3	37.5%	0	0%	0	0%
Partially Upheld	1	12.5%	2	50%	0	0%
Not Upheld	4	50%	2	50%	1	100%
Still Active	0		0		0	

The Learning Disabilities Assessment & Support Team received 8 complaints between April 2010 and March 2011, compared to 26 the previous year; a drop of 69%. A substantial number of complaints received for this service last year related to the delay in carrying out assessments. Since measures were put in place to address this issue; including improvements in performance management and increased training, complaints have substantially decreased.

Complaints related to:

1 x non-provision of expected service; partially upheld.

1 x assessment delay; not upheld.

1 x funding/back payment issues; upheld.

3 x failure to communicate; 1 upheld, 2 not upheld.

1 x lack of action; not upheld.

1 x attitude of staff; not upheld.

The Learning Disabilities Transition Team received a total of 4 complaints this year, which is a decrease from last year's total of 11. One complaint related to the lack of continuity in service, which was caused by staffing inconsistencies. Since the complaint was received, staffing levels and supervision have been improved and subsequently the service has seen a marked drop in complaints.

Complaints related to:

2 x disputed decision; 1 partially upheld, 1 not upheld.

1 x quality of service (lack of consistency/continuity); partially upheld.

1 x non-provision of expected service; not upheld.

Lessons Learnt

One complaint received by the **Transition Team** about inconsistencies in service highlighted concerns at a time of high staff turnover. The staffing issues have been addressed and no further complaints around this area of concern have been received.

In addition, as a result of comments received from the **Transition Team** from families and professionals from other organisations regarding the availability of information, the team is producing a resource guide to transition and transition planning in Bromley. This will provide families with an overview of the transition process and will help address concerns over lack of accessible information for families of children with Learning Disabilities who are moving into adult social care.

After receiving complaints from clients disputing decisions made by professionals, managers are reminding their staff to ensure families are more involved in the transition process from start to finish. It is recognised not keeping families up-to-date at every stage, results in anxiety and complaints.

Direct Care Services

DIRECT CARE SERVICES 2010/2011										
	Home Care		Extra Care Housing		Care Link		Transport/ICES		Re-ablement	
Complaints Received	19		7		4		1		0	
Resolved within 20 working days	10	53%	5	71%	3	75%	1	100%	0	0%
Upheld	8	42%	1	14%	2	50%	0	0%	0	0%
Partially Upheld	4	21%	4	57%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Not Upheld	6	32%	2	29%	2	50%	1	100%	0	0%
Still Active	1		0		0		0		0	

There has been a drop in complaints about **Home Care** over the year (14 complaints received in the first half of the year compared to 5 in the second), which could be due to a gradual contraction of the service over the period, as clients are transferred to our contracted providers. The Home Care Team received a total of 19 complaints between April 2010 and March 2011, a drop of 41% compared to last year's total of 32.

Planned intervention by the service to raise the quality of care provided and to minimise instances of missed or late calls was introduced. The complaints about quality of service centred mainly on concerns about care plans not being followed and all complaints related to this were either upheld or partially upheld.

Complaints related to:

8 x quality of service; 2 upheld, 4 partially upheld, 1 not upheld, 1 still active.

1 x non-provision of expected service; not upheld.

6 x missed call; 5 upheld, 1 not upheld.

1 x late call; upheld

1 x failure to communicate; not upheld.

1 x attitude of staff; not upheld.

1 x lack of action; not upheld.

Extra Care Housing received a total of 7 complaints in 2010/11; the same number received as in the previous year. Three of the complaints were about quality of service and were all either upheld or partially upheld. They related to manual handling issues, poor English language skills and damage of personal items.

During the closure of two extra care housing units at Cranbrook and Denton Court and the transfer of clients to the new unit at Crown Meadow Court, the service has not seen an increase in complaints, this is a positive indication that these changes have been successfully managed.

Complaints related to:

3 x quality of service; 1 upheld, 2 partially upheld.

1 x non provision of expected service; not upheld.

2 x lack of action; both partially upheld.

1 x behaviour of another service user; not upheld.

There were 4 complaints about the **Care Link** service this year.

1 x disputed decision; not upheld.

1 x attitude of staff: upheld.

1 x quality of service (faulty/broken equipment); upheld.

1 x non-provision of expected service; not upheld.

Lessons Learnt

Following several complaints received for **Extra Care Housing** this year, the following measures have been taken to address some of the issues raised:

- Steps have been taken to improve communication and information sharing between staff members who work shifts. In addition, written information and handover instructions have been developed for non-permanent care staff that cover shifts for permanent staff.
- Out of hours contact for families has been improved, including the introduction of a mobile phone number for families to contact staff members outside normal office hours.
- Service managers are carrying out regular quality monitoring visits to ensure clients are receiving the service that they have been assessed for.
- Non-permanent staff members receive more frequent supervision to ensure better quality of care delivery.

Occupational Therapy & Blue Badges

OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY & BLUE BADGES 2010/2011				
	Occupational Therapy		Blue Badges	
Complaints Received	13		5	
Resolved within 20 working days	8	62%	4	80%
Upheld	2	15%	1	20%
Partially Upheld	1	8%	0	0%
Not Upheld	10	77%	4	80%
Still Active	0		0	

The **Occupational Therapy Team** received 13 complaints in 2010/11, compared to 11 in the same period last year. Most of the complaints received were about disputed decisions and attitude of staff; however none of the 8 complaints relating to these areas of concern were upheld.

Complaints related to:

- 1 x quality of service (faulty/broken equipment); partially upheld.
- 1 x non provision of expected service; not upheld.
- 3 x service delay; 2 upheld, 1 not upheld.
- 5 x attitude of staff; all not upheld.
- 3 x disputed decision; all not upheld.

Mobility Assessments (Blue Badges)

During this period we received 5 complaints about mobility assessments and the awarding of a blue badge. All complaints related to disputed decisions; where the client disagreed with the outcome of their mobility assessment and where the complaints procedure was used as the means of appealing against the decision. Four appeals were not upheld and, with regard to the upheld decision; a re-assessment by another occupational therapist resulted in a blue badge being issued to the client.

Lessons Learnt

Following complaints last year from blue badge applicants challenging their mobility assessments, an appeals process has been implemented. Mobility assessments can now be reviewed independently by a qualified senior occupational therapist. This provides the applicant and the Council the assurance that eligibility has been fully assessed and process correctly followed.

Charging & Finance

CHARGING & FINANCE 2010/2011						
	Charging Domiciliary Care		Charging Residential Care		Direct Payments	
Complaints Received	18		3		1	
Resolved within 20 working days	17	94%	2	100%	0	0%
Upheld	12	68%	1	33%	0	0%
Partially Upheld	3	16%	1	33%	1	100%
Not Upheld	3	16%	1	33%	0	0%
Still Active	0		0		0	

We received 18 complaints relating to the charging of domiciliary care and 3 for the charging of residential care (**total 21**). This compares to 29 and 13 (**total 42**) received respectively the previous year; an overall drop of 50%. Complaints about billing have seen a drop as a result of improvements to billing systems. There was one complaint relating to administering of direct payments and this was partially upheld.

Complaints related to:

13 x incorrect billing; 10 upheld, 3 partially upheld.

4 x disputed decisions; all not upheld.

1 x quality of service (lack of consistency); upheld.

2 x service delay; 1 upheld, 1 partially upheld.

1 x funding/back-payment issues; upheld.

Direct Payments

1 x funding/back-payment issues; partially upheld.

Lessons Learnt

Following a number of complaints received and upheld with regard to incorrect bills, the Fairer Charging Team reviewed and improved processes to ensure:

- Statements are accurate, and easier to understand.
- Accounts for deceased clients are prioritised in order to help prevent incorrect final account information being sent out to Executors.

- Finance details related to direct payments, extra care housing and supported audited on a monthly basis by senior managers, in order to create an additional monitoring safeguard.

As a result of a complaint, which highlighted errors in the recording and processing of direct payment information, the procedure for setting up the payments has been updated and improved. Fresh guidance has been issued to care managers to ensure information systems are accurate.

Contracted Services

The Council supports approximately 1,500 people in Bromley to stay in their own homes through the provision of domiciliary care services and the 33 complaints received this year about contracted providers equates to 2% of our clients.

CONTRACTED SERVICES 2010/2011										
	Domiciliary Care		Residential Care		LD Day Services		LD Residential Services		Supporting People & Commissioning	
Complaints Received	33		5		3		4		5	
Resolved within 20 working days	28	85%	3	60%	1	50%	4	100%	3	60%
Upheld	16	49%	0	0%	1	25%	2	50%	1	20%
Partially Upheld	12	36%	2	40%	0	0%	1	25%	2	40%
Not Upheld	5	15%	3	60%	2	75%	1	25%	2	40%
Still Active	0		0		0		0		0	

The total number of complaints received between April 2010 and March 2011 about contracted domiciliary care agencies is 33, which is a **23%** reduction from the 43 received in the same period last year.

Of the 33 complaints received about **domiciliary care** agencies, the majority related to the quality of service provided or late and missed calls. Complaints about quality of service included carers not following care plans, carers leaving early and clients being visited by lots of different carers; this totalled 15. Of these, 12 were either upheld or partially upheld. The Contracts Monitoring Team is monitoring the service provided by these agencies.

Care UK received 6 formal complaints and 8 informal complaints this year, highlighting inconsistencies in their service. The problems were caused by a change of management. The issues have since been addressed by the agency and since October 2010 we received only one formal complaint. The other agency which received the same number of complaints over the year is Sure Care, followed by AG Care, which received 5 complaints.

The table below provides a breakdown of complaints received this year for each domiciliary care agency.

Domiciliary Care Agency 2010/11

Dom Care Agency	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Total	% of all complaints
AG Care	1	0	4	1	6	19%
Care UK	1	5	1	0	7	21%
Westminster	2	1	1	0	4	12%
Redspot	1	0	0	0	1	3%
Kentish Homecare	1	0	0	0	1	3%
Carewatch	1	1	2	0	4	12%
Sure Care	0	1	2	4	7	21%
Mackleys	0	1	0	0	1	3%
Goldsborough	0	0	0	1	1	3%
Delta Care	0	0	0	1	1	3%
Total	7	9	10	7	33	100%

Complaints related to:

Quality of Service:

2 x short call/carer leaving early - 1 partially upheld (*Westminster*), 1 not upheld.

3 x poor service given by carer - 2 partially upheld (*Westminster* x 1, *Redspot* x 1), 1 not upheld.

5 x care plan not followed - 4 upheld (*AG Care* x 2, *Goldsborough* x 1, *Sure Care* x 1), 1 partially upheld (*Carewatch*).

2 x lack of consistency/continuity - 1 partially upheld (*Care UK*), 1 not upheld.

1 x lack of training - partially upheld (*Sure Care*).

1 x poor English language skills - partially upheld (*Sure Care*).

1 x hygiene issues - upheld (*Sure Care*).

Missed/Late Calls:

11 x missed calls - 9 upheld (*Care UK* x 4, *AG Care* x 4, *Westminster* x 1), 2 partially upheld (*Westminster* x 1, *Carewatch* x 1).

4 x late call - 2 upheld (*Care UK* x 1, *Delta Care* x 1), 1 partially upheld (*Sure Care*), 1 not upheld.

Other Concerns:

2 x non provision of expected service - 1 partially upheld (*Care UK*), 1 not upheld.

1 x attitude of staff - partially upheld (*Sure Care*).

Contracted **residential care** services received 5 complaints this year. One was about the failure to communicate and was not upheld, while one related to damage of personal items at Elmwood and is recorded as partially upheld. We also received three complaints relating to the attitude of staff and one of these (Elmwood) was partially upheld, while the other two (Bromley Park & Rosecroft) were not upheld.

Residential and Nursing Care Homes 2010/11

Residential Home / Nursing Home / Other	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Total	
Kingswood House	0	0	0	0	0	0%
Isard House	1	0	0	0	1	20%
Elmwood	0	1	1	0	2	40%
Bromley Park	0	0	0	1	1	20%
Rosecroft	0	0	0	1	1	20%
Total	1	1	1	2	5	100%

We received 7 complaints about **Learning Disability Day Services** and **Learning Disability Residential Services**. Two of these related to the respite service at Tugmutton Close.

Complaints related to:**Quality of Service:**

- 1 x incorrect or no medication given; upheld.
- 1 x hygiene issues; not upheld.

Other concerns:

- 1 x attitude of staff; not upheld.
- 2 x failure to communicate; 1 partially upheld, 1 not upheld.
- 2 x behaviour of another service user; both upheld.

We also received one complaint about services provided by the **Kent Association for the Blind** and one about a service commissioned from **Mencap**. The first was about the failure to communicate and was upheld and the second was about a disputed decision and was partially upheld. There was also a complaint against Commissioning with regard to policy and this was not upheld.

Lessons Learnt

As a result of complaints the in-house service received last year around late and missed calls, the previous annual report gave details of a new electronic monitoring system that was introduced in order to address this problem. External providers are also introducing these systems and electronic monitoring of care worker arrival and departure times is in places for just over 20% of the Borough's domiciliary care service users. Commissioners are encouraging all providers to work towards the introduction of electronic data monitoring systems, with the aim of reducing complaints about timekeeping.

Following complaints about late and missed calls with regard to **Care UK**, the agency has agreed to review all its rotas, in order to minimise the risk of further missed visits. In addition, the agency has now replaced the on-call phone with another, which flashes when messages are waiting. It is intended this will avoid delays in dealing with customer enquiries.

As a result of a complaint, senior management at **Care UK** carried out a review of their contingency plan for dealing with emergencies in cases of staff absence. It was decided that in future disciplinary procedures would be instigated for staff who failed to follow the relevant contingency plan.

As a result of a complaint made about **AG Care** with regard to a care plan not being followed correctly by staff, the contracts monitoring team requested the agency reviews the care provided to all clients who have been supported by the relevant care workers, to ensure the same lapses in care standards are not being experienced by other clients.

The monitoring team also reviewed the care workers' records, in particular those pertaining to their training and supervision. As a result, the agency routinely sends quality monitoring reports to the Contracts Team so that appropriate action can be considered; pending evidence of any further concerns.

Following a complaint about poor food preparation, **Sure Care** has introduced new training for care workers, specifically regarding food types and food preparation. This follows concerns raised about carers' understanding of the typical local diets of their clients. The aim of the course is to instruct carers on food preparation, local diets and how to cook the kinds of dishes typically preferred by their clients.

In addition, following concerns raised about poor levels of spoken English, the agency now ensures all care workers undergo the International English Language Testing System (IELTS), before allowing them to work for the agency. The Council manages a training consortium of which 14 of the 28 domiciliary care agencies registered to work in Bromley are already members. This year the consortium scheduled a specific course in English used in the care scenario to address concerns around the English language proficiency of care workers across agencies.

One complaint about the care home, **Elmwood**, highlighted issues they have been experiencing with the laundry service. As a result, Mission Care, which runs the home, has implemented a system of providing individual laundry bags for each resident. Therefore each resident's laundry will be washed individually. This should avoid instances where clients' clothes are mixed up or misplaced.

Section 3: Housing & other corporate complaints

This year we received a total of 83 complaints for **Housing & Residential Services** compared to 69 for the same period the previous year. This represents a rise of 20%.

All of the 83 complaints received have been resolved and of these, 54 (65%) were responded to within 20 working days. The rise in complaints is largely due to recent increased pressures on the housing services and increased workload caused by an increase in housing register applications.

Below are tables showing comparisons of Housing and other corporate complaints received this and the previous year.

Housing Services 2009/10 & 2010/11 - Comparison by team					
Teams	2009/10	% of complaints	2010/11	% of complaints	Up/down
Housing Options and Advice	28	41%	28	34	—
Housing Initiatives	1	2%	4	5	▲
Housing Solutions	30	43%	37	45	▲
Resettlement (Young People)	3	4%	5	6	▲
Resettlement (Vulnerable Adults)	5	7%	2	2	▼
Housing Development	0	0	0	0	—
Residential Services	2	3%	7	8	▲
TOTAL	69	100%	83	100	▲

Strategy & Performance and DAT 2009/10 & 2010/11 - Comparison by team					
Teams	2009/10	% of complaints	2010/11	% of complaints	Up/down
Appointee & Deputyship	1	12.5%	2	28%	▲
Complaints	1	12.5%	1	16%	—
Adult Safeguarding	1	12.5%	0	0	▼
Freedom Passes	3	37.5%	2	28%	▼
Drug Action Team	2	25%	2	28%	—
TOTAL	8	100%	7	100%	▼

Housing & Residential Services

With regard to the categories under which formal complaints are recorded; Housing and Residential Services received 52 complaints relating to operational issues, 27 complaints about information/communication and 4 regarding lack of action.

All of the complaint investigations relating to operational issues have been completed and, of those, 10 complaints were fully upheld, 10 were partially upheld and 32 (62%) were not upheld. Of the 27 information complaints, 14 were either fully or partially upheld while 13 were not upheld. Of the 4 complaints regarding lack of action, 1 was upheld and 3 were not upheld.

Due to the pressures on Housing as a result of the current economic climate, there has been a rise in complaints; although many of these have not been upheld. This would indicate that frustrations experienced by some by their housing circumstances are causing them to complain. Nearly half the complaints about lack of communication however were either upheld or partially upheld and this is largely due to the increasing volume of applications for social housing and the subsequent pressure on front door services dealing with this increase. Measures introduced to address this problem are outlined in the lessons learnt section below.

HOUSING & RESIDENTIAL SERVICES 2010/2011												
	Housing Options		Housing Solutions		Housing Initiatives		Support & Resettlement (Young People)		Support & Resettlement (Vulnerable Adults)		Residential Services	
Complaints Received	28		37		4		5		2		7	
Resolved within 20 working days	19	68%	24	65%	4	100%	1	20%	2	100%	4	57%
Upheld	5	18%	10	27%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	1	14%
Partially Upheld	2	7%	11	30%	1	25%	1	20%	0	0%	2	29%
Not Upheld	21	75%	16	43%	3	75%	4	80%	2	100%	4	57%
Still Active	0		0		0		0		0		0	

The **Housing Options & Advice Team** received 28 complaints this year; which is the same number as received the previous year. The main areas of concern this year were around disputed decisions, delays in service, failure of staff to communicate and the attitude of staff. Although there were 9 complaints about the attitude of staff, three of these were either fully or partially upheld.

Complaints related to:

5 x failure to communicate; 3 upheld, 2 not upheld.

3 x disputed decisions; 1 upheld, 2 not upheld.

4 x service delays; all not upheld.

3 x lack of action; all not upheld.

3 x incorrect information provided; all not upheld.

9 x attitude of staff; 1 upheld, 2 partially upheld, 6 not upheld.

1 x anti-social behaviour; not upheld.

The **Housing Solutions Team** received a total of 37 complaints this year compared to 30 in the same period the previous year, a rise of 23%. In addition, the team also received 49 MP Enquiries, mainly relating to banding disputes and residents feeling they need to move to larger properties. This rise in complaints is linked to the extra pressures on housing services as a result of the current national economic situation, and particularly in its effects on people seeking to address their housing situation. There has been a dramatic increase in housing register applications. As a result, there have been processing delays, along with an unprecedented number of households pursuing the limited supply of housing. This has resulted in an increase in complaints relating to communication delays, service delays and applicants challenging their priority banding allocations.

Complaints related to:

9 x disputed decisions; 4 upheld, 1 partially upheld, 4 not upheld.

7 x service delay; 3 upheld, 3 partially upheld, 1 not upheld.

15 x failure to communicate; 2 upheld, 6 partially upheld, 7 not upheld.

1 x incorrect information; not upheld.

2 x attitude of staff; 1 partially upheld, 1 not upheld.

2 x non-provision of expected service; 1 upheld, 1 not upheld.

1 x allegation of racism; not upheld.

The **Support & Resettlement Vulnerable Adults** and **Young People** teams received a total of 7 complaints between April 2010 and March 2011 compared to 8 in the same period the previous year.

Complaints related to:

1 x service delay; not upheld.

3 x disputed decision; all not upheld.

1 x allegation of theft; not upheld.

1 x non-provision of expected service; partially upheld.

1 x failure to communicate; not upheld.

Residential Services received 7 complaints in this period compared to 2 last year. Three of the complaints related to disabled facility grant applications, where complainants accessed the complaints process to dispute the decisions made by the DFG panel.

Complaints related to:

3 x service delay; 1 partially upheld, 2 not upheld.

1 x lack of action; upheld.

3 x disputed decision; 2 not upheld, 1 partially upheld.

Lessons Learnt

This year the Housing **Solutions Team** is implementing a new Housing Allocations Scheme and an automated banding system so the service is in a better position to respond to those who approach the Council for assistance. The proposed changes have taken into account 'lessons learnt', changes in legislation, consultation with staff, partners, interested parties, members of the public; as well as taking account best practice in other Local Authorities.

The demand for accommodation continues to exceed the available supply and it is intended the revised housing allocations scheme will be more transparent, dispelling some of the common misconceptions about who receives assistance and to focus upon providing assistance to those in the greatest housing need. In conjunction with the revised policy, the implementation of automated banding will reduce the opportunity for human error in the assessment of an application and further speed up assessment times.

These changes will help to manage expectations and reduce complaints which; particularly in recent times, have been heavily centred on assessment times and the level of priority awarded. The new Housing Allocations Scheme is due to be implemented by November 2011.

Following a complaint where the **Housing Solutions Team** failed to notify a client in writing of their decision, the team has been reminded by management to update clients when a decision has been altered, particularly when it is in the client's favour. This will avoid the team having to deal with complaints because of poor communication.

As a result of the increase in complaints and MP Enquiries, particularly relating to overcrowding and disputes over housing allocation, the **Housing Solutions Team** will be employing a reviewing officer, who will be responsible for processing banding appeals. This will help minimise delays in communication and completing banding appeals; and will ease pressure on managers and allow them to continue developing the service.

In response to the complaints about response times, increased callers and phone calls and the associated workload pressures, the Housing Needs service has recently introduced a phone duty system involving all staff on a rota basis. This is ensuring calls are answered, giving more information early in the process, making sure accurate information/messages are taken and relayed to the correct officer/team and that these are then dealt with promptly by that officer/team. This work is also giving all staff a wider and in depth knowledge of the issues, work and pressures of the other teams in the service which will improve advice and help given. Work has also been done with the Council's Customer Service Centre to ensure simple enquiries are dealt with at first point of contact and that callers are directed to the correct service.

Other Corporate Complaints

Strategy & Performance received two complaints about Freedom Passes. One related to a service delay and was partially upheld, while the other related to the failure to communicate and was not upheld.

The **Drug Action Team** received two complaints this year. One related to a partner agency and the attitude of a staff member; and the complaint was partially upheld. The other was a disputed decision around eligibility criteria and this was not upheld.

DAT* & STRATEGY COMPLAINTS 2010/2011										
	Freedom Passes		Complaints Service		Drug Action Team*		Adult Safeguarding		Appointeeship & Deputyship	
Complaints Received	2		1		2		0		2	
Resolved within 20 working days	2	100%	1	100%	1	50%	0	0	2	100%
Upheld	0	0%	1	100%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Partially Upheld	1	50%	0	0%	1	50%	0	0%	0	0%
Not Upheld	1	50%	0	0%	1	50%	0	0%	2	100.0%
Still Active	0		0		0		0		0	

*The Drug Action Team is part of the Commissioning & Partnerships Division.

Section 4: Ombudsman Enquiries

Adult Social Care

From April 2010 to March 2011, we received 10 Ombudsman enquiries for adult social care. Five of these have been completed and 5 are still being investigated by the Local Government Ombudsman (LGO).

Of the 5 closed enquiries, one related to a deceased client with learning disabilities who did not return to his residential home prior to his death. The Ombudsman did not uphold the complaint and decided to discontinue her investigation.

Two enquiries related to the failure of the Council to carry out assessments and the delay in reviewing a client within agreed timescales, following Adult Safeguarding investigations. Both were partially upheld and compensation payments totalling £1500 were agreed.

One enquiry was about the suggested failure to provide services to a physically disabled client, including the failure to house the client in a suitably adapted property. The Ombudsman partially upheld the complaint and recommended a compensation payment of £500 and an apology for lack of care planning and delays in carrying out assessments.

Following an enquiry regarding the reduction of day care provision to one client, the Ombudsman partially upheld the complaint and recommended a remedy of £600 for the failure to provide the client with copies of the assessment and care plan documents. In addition, the LGO advised a further assessment be made and that the client be recompensed for the reduced service up to the date of the re-assessment.

The compensation payment in this case will be paid in the next financial year (2011/12) and therefore the total figure has not been included in this report.

Blue Badges

This year we received two Ombudsman enquiries on behalf of residents who did not meet the eligibility criteria for a blue badge, following two mobility assessments and an appeal; but who continue to dispute the Council's decision. Both investigations are still ongoing.

Housing

The Council received 3 Ombudsman enquiries regarding housing this year. One investigation has been completed and partially upheld by the Ombudsman. Compensation of £250 was recommended for additional rent paid by the complainant due to errors made in processing a housing application. The remaining two enquiries are still being investigated by the Local Government Ombudsman

Compensation Payments

A total of £4,650 in compensation has been paid as a result of Ombudsman enquiries completed from April 2010 to March 2011 and this also includes enquiries that were received by the Department last year.

Section 5: Informal Complaints

The complaints regulations encourage front line staff to deal with and, whenever possible, resolve less serious complaints orally and within 48 hours. The aim of this is that service users who have less serious concerns or issues that do not require detailed investigation can have them dealt with quickly and without the need to go through a lengthier formal complaints process, which may unnecessarily delay resolution and cause further inconvenience or frustration. Although there is no requirement under the complaints regulations to record informal complaints, the complaints team understands the importance of recording this information in order to identify problems in service provision before they become more serious.

The following is a breakdown of such complaints received for adult social care in 2010/11. This year, we recorded 62 informal complaints.

Home Care received 9 informal complaints:

3 x quality of service 3 x missed/late call 2 x attitude of staff 1 x policy

We received 8 informal complaints about Care UK:

3 x quality of service 5 x late calls

We received 14 informal complaints about Sure Care:

8 x quality of service 5 x attitude of staff 1 x late call

We received 2 informal complaints about Redspot:

1 x quality of service 1 x late call

We received 2 informal complaints about Carewatch:

1 x attitude of staff 1 x late call

We received 4 informal complaints about Bridges:

1 x quality of service 2 x late call 1 x attitude of staff

We received 2 informal complaints about Keratome:

1 x missed call 1 x early call

We received 4 informal complaints about AG Care:

2 x attitude of staff 1 x missed call 1 x quality of service

We received 4 informal complaints about Delta Care:

1 x quality of service 3 x late calls

We received 2 informal complaints about Westminster Homecare:

1 x quality of service 1 x missed call

We received 1 informal complaint about Goldsborough:

1 x late call

The remaining 9 informal complaints were about Carelink, LD Transition, the Orpington Older People's Team, Transport, the Occupational Therapy service, Kingswood House, Elmstead residential home and Extra Care Housing respectively.

1 x non-provision of requested service 1 x failure to communicate 2 x attitude of staff

2 x quality of service 1 x service delay 1 x lack of training

1 x behaviour of another service user

The largest sector that received informal complaints this year was domiciliary care, with one agency, Sure Care, receiving 14. These complaints were mostly around missed/late calls and the attitude of staff. The largest areas of concern for those who made informal complaints were the attitude of staff, the failure to communicate and the quality of service received.

Section 6: MP Enquiries and Compliments

Between April 2010 and March 2011 we received 27 MP enquiries for adult social care. We also received 75 MP enquiries for housing. This compares to 18 for adult social care and 45 for housing last year; representing a 50% and 67% increase respectively.

In addition, the Complaints Team received 30 compliments for adult social care and 8 for housing. The following is a sample of some of the compliments we received during this period:

Adult Social Care

- I wish to inform you of the wonderful care given to my mum over the last four years. She had a lovely set of devoted carers, who looked after her so well.
- I am extremely grateful to Bonnie and her morning partner, Janet, for the care and support that they provided.
- It was like having Christmas and Birthday today when you brought all the wonderful gadgets which will make such a difference to my life. It was an absolute pleasure to meet you and the understanding and empathy you showed me has enriched my life.

- My mother, along with all the family, wishes to extend an enormous thank you for all you have done over the time she has been in your care. Your assistance has allowed her to stay in her home for far longer than would have ever been possible and we would not hesitate to recommend your service (Carelink) in the future.
- Ms A passed on her thanks to everyone who cared for her at Durham House. She was very happy there.
- Carelink is a wonderful service that came to our rescue on a number of occasions and gave both my mother and me the comfort of knowing someone was always just the push of a button away.
- My wife and I wish to express our sincere thanks to you and all those involved in moving my son into the house provided. I can only repeat that in the past his care has always been excellent.
- Thank you for your help in speeding things up; especially the Blue Badge, which has proved a godsend. Sam, the OT, couldn't have been kinder and was incredibly helpful and efficient.
- The ladies you have sent to me for the last few weeks have really cheered me up. They were like a breath of fresh air and nothing seemed to bother them. I could not have managed without them, especially in the first few weeks.
- Elmwood Rehab centre is the most efficient and kind establishment I have ever stayed at. The staff are wonderful.
- You can rest assured that I have only praise, commendation and heartfelt thanks to Barbara and her team for the way Mum's case has been handled.
- We are just dropping you a little line to say an enormous THANK YOU for sending us 4 members of your valuable staff to help clear the snow at Bertha James. They have done an absolutely amazing job in this awful weather and we are really grateful to them.
- Please pass on my thanks to all involved with my daughter's plan as it is already making a huge difference to her life and as a result to the rest of the family.
- I would like to say a very personal big thank you to you Varsha for all your support and encouragement. From the day we met, I knew we would work well together and achieve the best outcome for our daughter.
- May I end by saying how very impressed I was by your out-of-hours call centre and duty social worker on Monday evening. Had that been the response of my department I would have been very proud of the staff concerned.

Housing

- I am writing to express my sincere thanks to you for securing the grant for repairs at my address. The work was carried out efficiently and conscientiously.
- I must say I am very impressed by the very speedy response from the housing team to my enquiry on behalf of one of my residents.
- My wife and I would like to take this opportunity to thank you and your staff for all your help, advice and guidance that you have provided to us whilst looking for a place to live.

Section 6: Listening to our service users

Complaints survey

We sent 72 follow up letters and customer satisfaction questionnaires to clients who had made formal complaints in 2010/11 and, of those, 17 (24%) were returned. The purpose was to ask the complainant whether or not they feel their complaint has been fully responded to and to gather information from service users about how they felt their complaints were handled.

Overall, we found the survey painted a positive picture of the complaints service. While 65% of those who responded said they have not experienced a re-occurrence of the issues that caused them to complain, 59% thought the person who handled their complaint helpful.

Most encouraging of all is that 88% of respondents said they were treated with courtesy and respect while their complaint was being dealt with.

A weakness identified through the customer feedback was customers felt they were not being sufficiently informed of changes made as a result of their complaint. In addition, 70% of complainants felt their complaint could have been dealt with better with a face-to-face meeting. The complaints team will be looking at these two issues over the coming year and working with colleagues to improve on these areas.

Monitoring information (adult social care)

Equality and Diversity

71% of adult social care complaints were received from female service users. 106 (81%) of female service users who complained were over 65. This proportion of female over male complainants is consistent with the overall profile of service users in the borough. Most social care complaints relate to service users who are over 65.

Most of those who made an adult social care complaint this year considered themselves to be White British (95%), while 1% considered themselves to be Asian British and 2% British Caribbean.

Disability

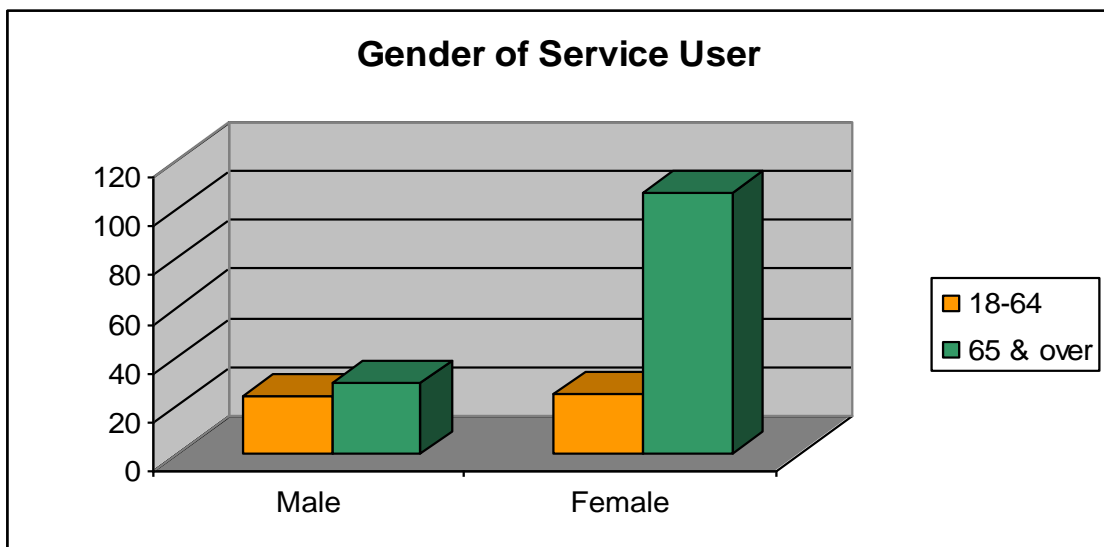
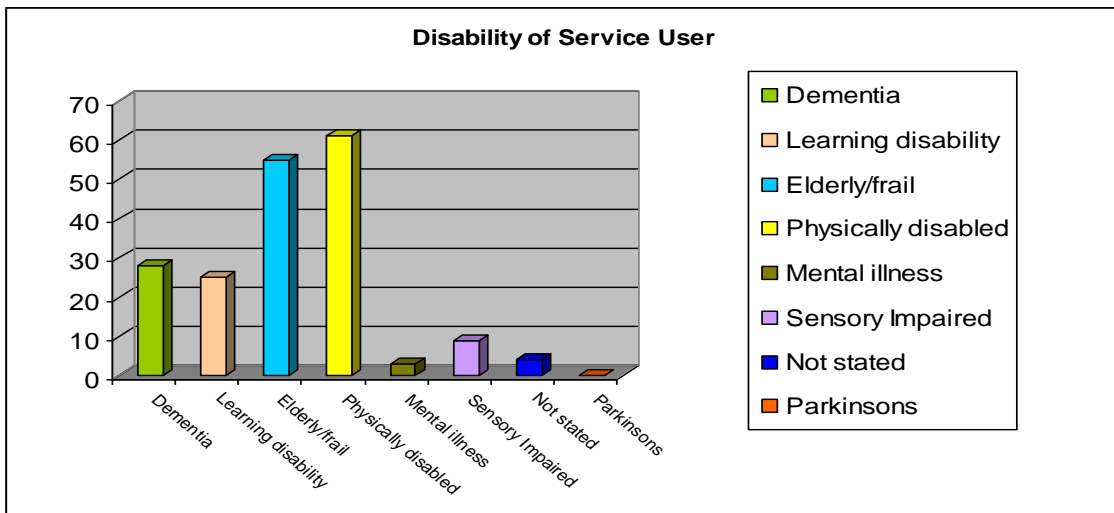
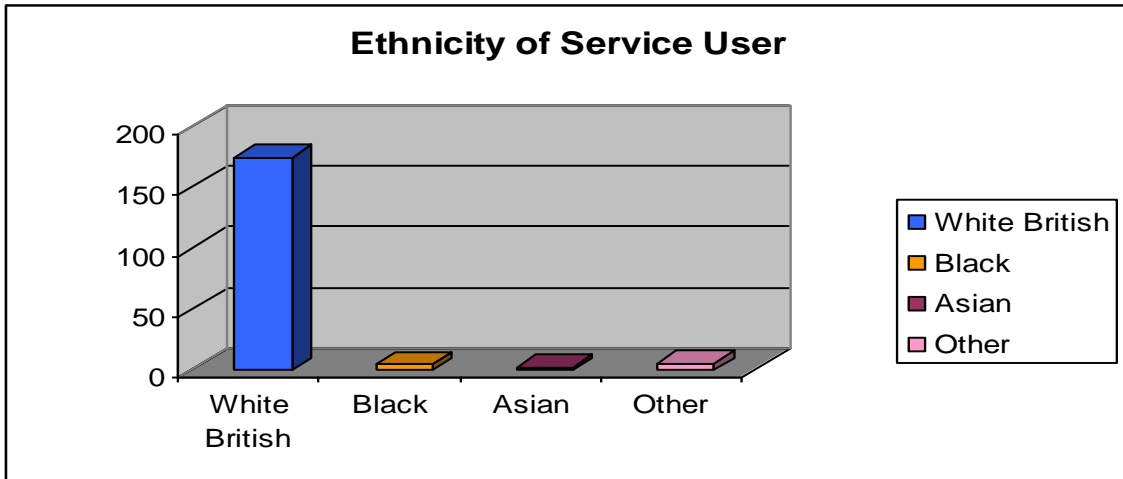
Out of the 184 of those in adult social care who complained, 29% considered themselves elderly and frail; 33% physically disabled, 14% have a learning disability and 5% to be living with sensory loss (either partial sightedness or hearing loss).

Section 7: Achievements

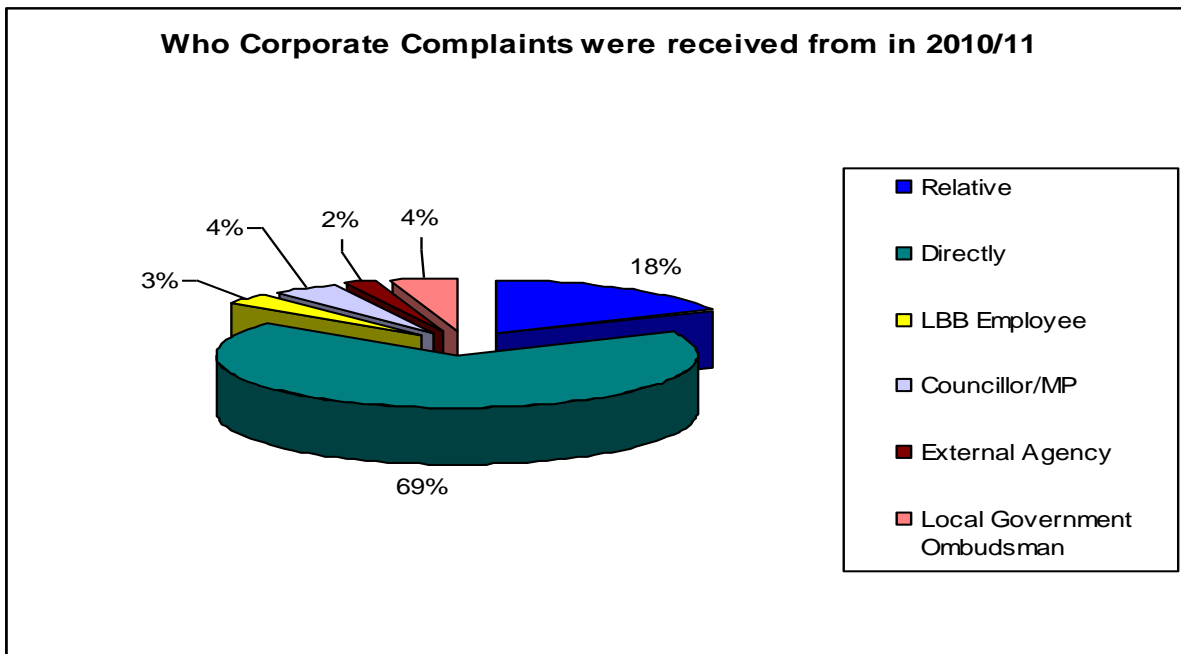
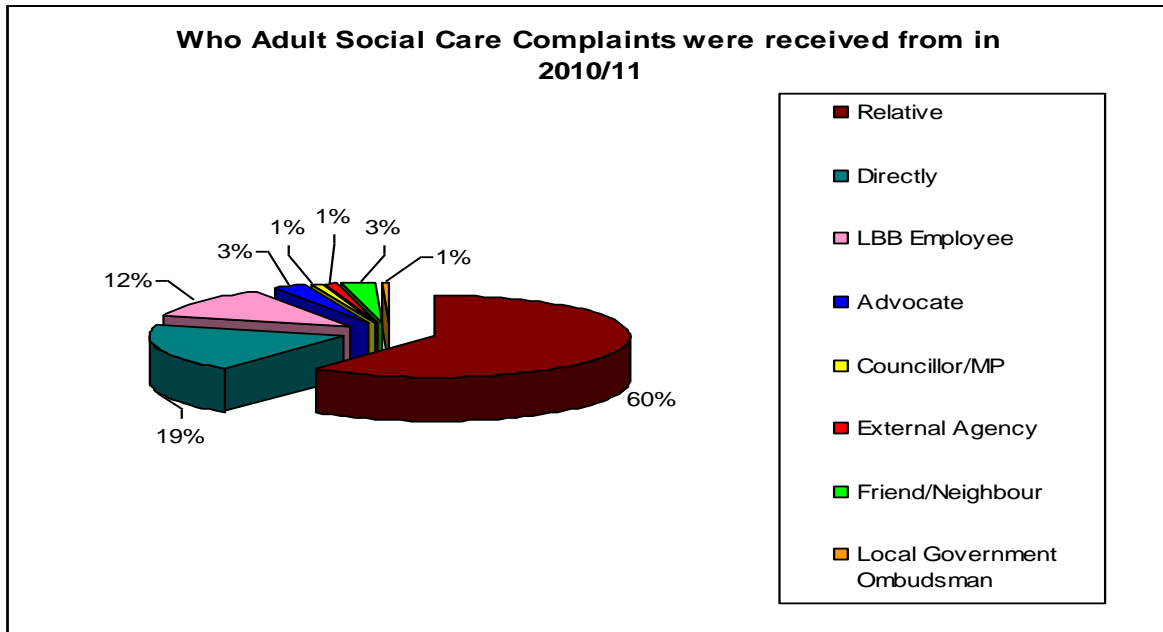
Between April 2010 and March 2011, the complaints team has trained over 50 members of staff in complaints handling skills and plans on continuing this training over the coming year. The complaints team continues to offer regular complaints surgeries for managers and heads of service who require assistance to draft complaint response letters. As a result of these surgeries, the department has seen an improvement in the quality of responses and response times. This year, 74% of social care complaints have been responded to within 20 working days.

The complaints team has sent out 72 follow up letters and customer satisfaction questionnaires so far to service users who have made formal complaints this year. As well as ensuring those who have made complaints are happy their concerns have been fully investigated, this provides an opportunity for customers to share with us their experience of the complaints handling service and help us make continued improvements in how complaints are managed. The aim is to ensure all but the most serious and complex complaints are resolved locally at an early stage and resources are not unnecessarily stretched as a result of ineffective complaints handling.

Appendix 1 – Gender, Ethnicity & Disability of service users who complained
(Adult Social Care only)



Appendix 2 – Who complained were received from



Appendix 3 – How complained were received

