

Complaints, Service Requests & Compliments

Annual Report

April 2024 to March 2025





ANNUAL COMPLAINTS, SERVICE REQUESTS AND COMPLIMENTS REPORT 2024/25

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1.0 Executive Summary

This is the Adult Social Care Annual Complaints, Service Requests and Compliments report for the financial year 1st April 2024 to 31st March 2025.

Complaints, service requests and compliments form a vital part of our overall engagement activity. By listening to the adults we support, along with their carers and family we can gain valuable insight into the unique experiences of adults who use our services.

Whilst our service works closely with adults and their families to ensure they understand what is happening or will happen when they receive care and support from us, there may be times where things go wrong. Our aim is to resolve and learn from complaints raised, identify when we are not getting things right and what we need to do to improve our services to ensure it does not happen again.

This report provides an overview and analysis of all concerns received and handled through the Council's statutory complaints procedure, resolved through normal service delivery in the first instance as a service request, and feedback received in the form of compliments about Adult Social Care services. Comparisons from the previous reporting period, i.e., from 1st April 2023 to 31st March 2024, have been included where available.

We aim to:

- To make it easy and accessible for adults and their relatives to make a complaint.
- To try and resolve a complaint or respond to a service request as efficiently as possible.
- To provide concise comparable data on feedback received about our services.
- To identify topics and trends which will inform service improvements to demonstrate learning to improve our practices and processes.
- To show our commitment to transparency and a positive approach to dealing with and learning from complaints.

Complaints received in the year concerning communication were related to issues about the quality, accuracy, and timeliness of information provided, and how a lack of information creates perceptions of adults feeling uninvolved in decisions affecting them.

It is common for a complaint to involve different services including, for example, the NHS, GP practices, and commissioned care providers. Each complaint is dealt with on an individual basis with Adult Social Care taking the lead and working with other services to ensure the complainant receives one coordinated response.

On occasion there are safeguarding concerns raised within a complaint. Those concerns are referred directly to our Adults Safeguarding Team to be considered as part of our statutory requirement to carry out enquiries to decide whether any further action should be taken.

2.0 Complaints, Service Requests, and Compliments Activity

In 2024/25 we received less complaints and service requests than the previous year. Complaints decreased from 41 in 2023/24 to 33 in 2024/25. Service requests decreased from 52 in 23/24 to 50 in 24/25 and the number of compliments we received increased from 415 in 23/24 to 500 in 24/25.

33
Complaints
received.

50
Service Requests
received.

500
Compliments
received.

Concerns are assessed at the outset and if appropriate the concerns are resolved as a service request. Some issues can be addressed through normal service delivery in the first instance. By utilising the service request option, we strive to address the concerns efficiently without the need to escalate to a formal complaint. Service requests are a proactive effort to prevent issues from escalating into formal complaints, addressing concerns earlier, providing a timely and appropriate outcome for the individuals. If the complainant remains unhappy after Adult Social Care has attempted to resolve the matter, it can be escalated and dealt with as a complaint.

There has been a reduction in the number of complaints and service requests received by the Complaints and Compliments Team. This is a result of Adult Social Care teams working effectively to discuss concerns raised whilst supporting adults at the frontline, offering a solution straight away without the need for escalation to the Complaints and Compliments Team.

We have seen an increase in compliments this year. This is due to improved recording and inclusion of feedback from Satisfaction Questionnaires which form part of our engagement and assurance activities. Figures now offer a comprehensive overview of the total compliments received from individuals and their families, as well as positive feedback shared by staff about their interactions with colleagues. There has also been an increased awareness amongst teams to share compliments received with the Complaints and Compliments Team for accurate recording and awareness.



3.0 Overview of the Statutory Adults Complaints Procedure

It is a statutory requirement for all local authorities who deliver a social care service to report annually on the number of complaints received. Such complaints are administered by the Local Authority Social Services and National Health Service Complaints (England) Regulations 2009.

In Adult Social Care, we have a one stage process for complaints about one of our services or any of our commissioned services. A commissioned service is a service provided by an external company or voluntary agency on behalf of the Council. A complaint made about a commissioned care provider can be referred to the Council if the complainant is dissatisfied or the relationship between the two parties has broken down. When a complaint does not relate specifically to the care of an adult, the complaint may be handled under the Council's Corporate Complaints Procedure.

Complaints can be made by anyone who has received a service, is currently receiving a service or by a representative acting on behalf of the adult with their consent. We will only investigate a complaint within 12 months of the incident which caused the complaint to be raised. Should a complaint be made after the 12-month timeframe, the Council will look at the circumstances to determine if there is merit in investigating the complaint outside of the timeframe.

At the conclusion of the complaint investigation, lessons learned are reviewed by Service Managers and discussed with senior management to capture any learning and improvements to be made. This is recorded and monitored to give assurances those improvements have been made and any agreed actions completed.

Should a complaint not be resolved through our complaints process, a referral can be made to the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman. The Ombudsman will independently review the complaint to determine if there is any fault and identify recommendations to remedy that fault. A complaint can only be referred to the Ombudsman after the Council has investigated the complaint, and a final response has been issued by the Council.

4.0 Accessing the Adult Social Care complaints procedure

Adult Social Care encourages adults and their carers who use our services to provide their feedback to us about the care and support they have received.

Information on how to make a compliment, a service request or complaint is readily available on our dedicated Adult Social Care webpage on the Council website. There is also an Adult Social Care form which can be used to make a compliment, complaint or inform us of a service request about our services, which is given to adults and/or their relatives during our involvement with them.

We also have an easy read version of our complaints procedure to support adults with learning disabilities to make a complaint, and those adults who may find it easier to understand a simplified version.

The most used method to make a complaint in 2024/25 were by email (29), by letter (2) and telephone call (2).

Advocacy services are available upon request to support with raising a complaint and the ongoing process.



5.0 Role of the Complaints Officer

The Adult Social Care Complaints Officer facilitates the complaints process and referrals to the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman.

6.0 Key Findings/Summary

- Adult Social Care supported 845 carers and 8292 adults between 1st April 2024 to 31st March 2025. This includes all direct and commissioned services for short-term, one-off services and longer-term support.
- 33 complaints and 50 service requests were received in the same period. This represents 0.90% of the total adults supported in this year felt they had concerns that required escalation.
- The most common theme for complaints was poor service delivery (33%) and lack of communication/information (30%).
- A total of 15 (45%) complaints had an outcome of upheld or partially upheld.
- 7 (21%) complaints were not upheld.
- 3 (0.90%) complaints were resolved informally after progression through the Adult Social Care Complaints process.
- 5 (15%) complaints were withdrawn.
- 3 (0.90%) complaints were unable to proceed due to the complaint being raised by an unsuitable representative, a requirement to refer to an external organisation or a desired resolution was sought through an alternative process.
- Compliments have increased by 20% when compared to the previous year.

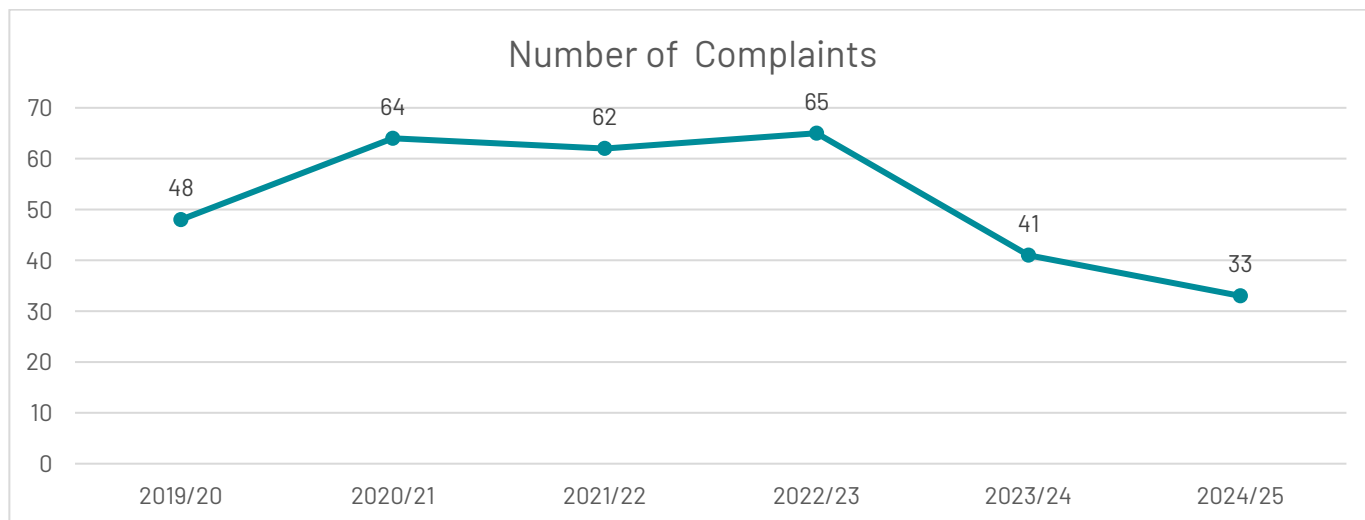


The complaint outcomes from this year highlighted individuals and their families raised concerns regarding poor service delivery. Some of the issues highlighted included the standard of care provided by care providers, changes to care packages and unsuitable accommodation. These issues are interconnected with lack of communication. There is still a need for staff to ensure that individuals and their family members receive appropriate, relevant, and accurate support and information. We reminded staff across the service about the importance of clear, accurate and timely communication in team meetings, 1:1 supervision, as well as the importance of recording decisions and when information is provided and to whom.

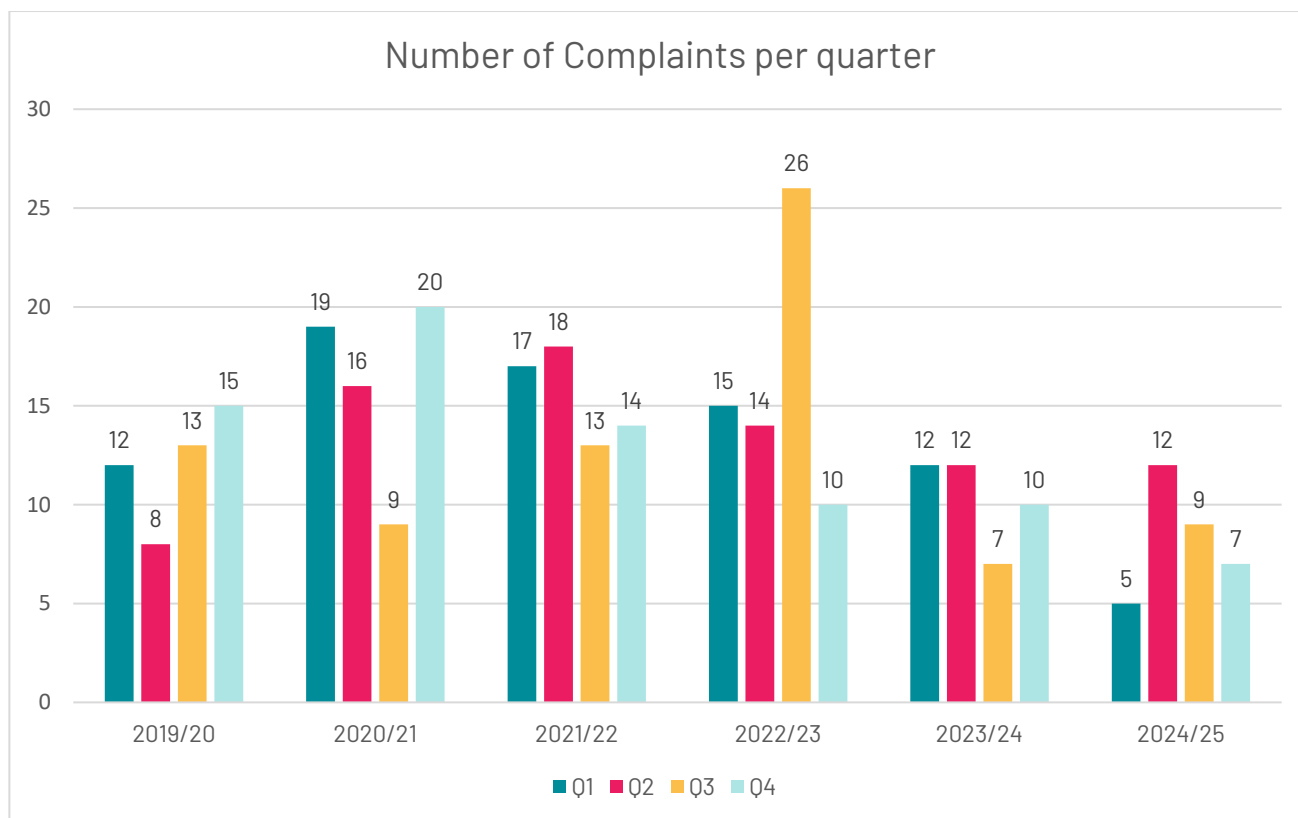
6.1 Number of Complaints

33 formal complaints were received during 2024/25.

The graph below shows the number of complaints received between 2019/20 and 2024/25.



The chart below shows quarterly comparative data for complaints over the last 6 years.



The number of complaints we receive each quarter on average over the last 6 years has remained relatively stable, indicating no specific trends or peak periods for complaints.

Quarter	Number of complaints received
Q1	80
Q2	80
Q3	77
Q4	76

6.2 Time taken to respond to complaints in 2024/25

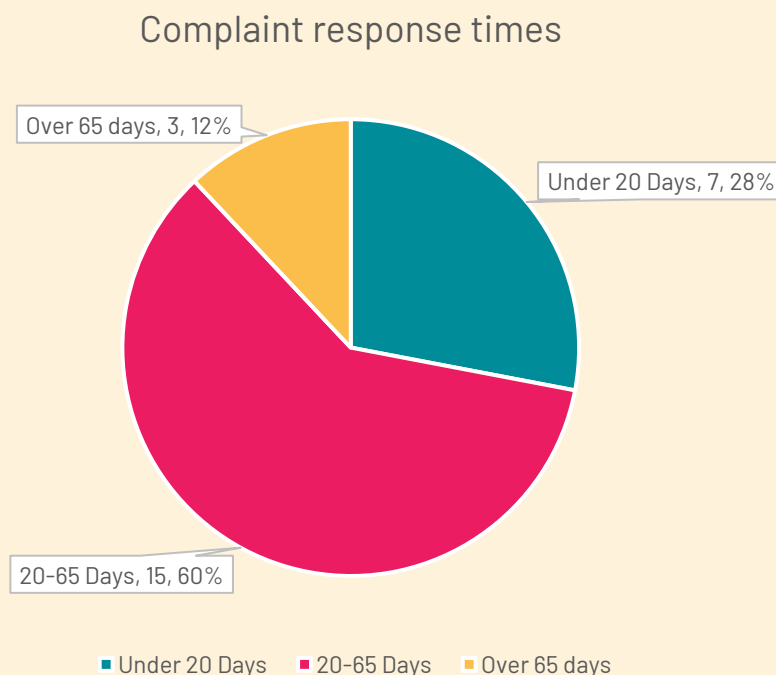
It is important to note that when something is wrong, we act quickly to remedy the issue to ensure individuals, and their carers are supported and safe; and we do not wait until the outcome of the investigation to put things right.

Concerns are assessed at the outset and if appropriate the concerns are resolved as a service request. By utilising the service request option, we strive to address the concerns efficiently without the need to escalate to a formal complaint. Service requests are a proactive effort to prevent issues from escalating into formal complaints, addressing concerns earlier, providing a timely and appropriate outcome for the individuals.

We have a timeframe of twenty working days to provide a full written response to a complaint and we do our best to investigate and provide a written response within these timescales. However, when the investigation is underway there are times when other issues emerge that mean further time is required to investigate all relevant issues and reach a properly informed conclusion. These could be, delays in allocating an investigating officer, absence of staff who need to be interviewed as part of the investigation and waiting for a third party to respond.

In this circumstance we will provide a written response no later than 65 working days. The complainant is kept informed of the progress of their complaint and any causes for extension or delay.

In 2024/25 the timescales to investigate and formally respond to complaints is illustrated below.



The average length of time to conclude a complaint in 2024/25 was 33 days. In comparison to 2023/24 the average length of time to conclude a complaint was 36 days.

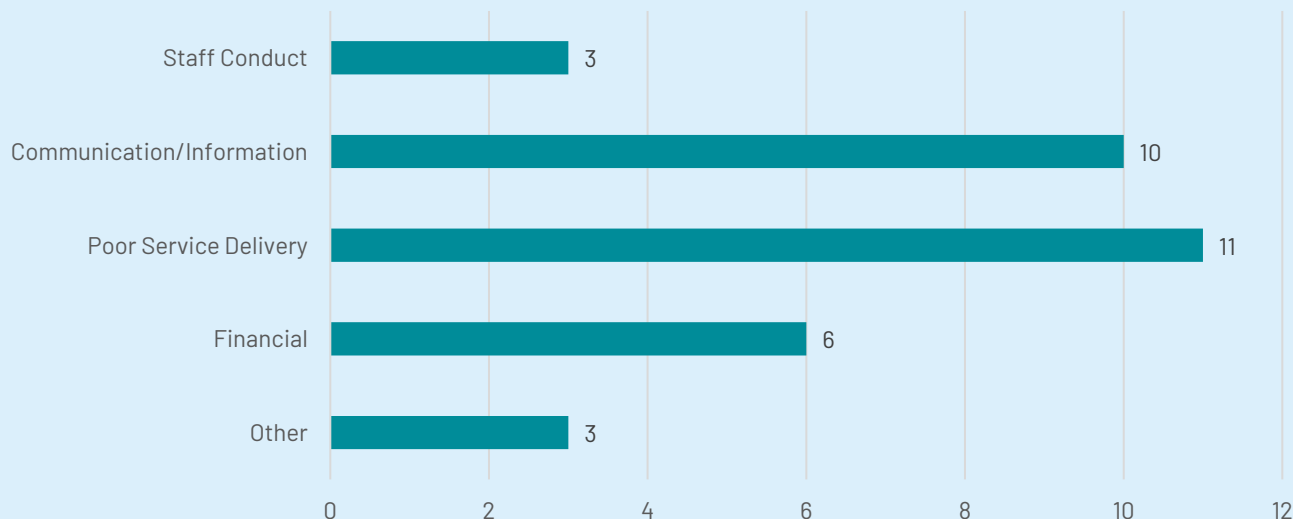
Service managers have been reminded to prioritise reviewing concerns raised, to determine if the complaint process is the most appropriate next step and allocate Investigating Officers in a timely manner to avoid delays.

Complaints over 30 days are now escalated to Assistant Directors to aide improvement of response times.

6.3 Nature of complaints in 2024/25

Due to the complex health and care needs of the individuals we support, complaints received by Adult Social Care will often raise more than one issue. However, the complaint is recorded by the “primary” area of concern as shown in the table below:

Nature of Complaints in 2024/25



6.4 Complaint Outcomes

When reaching a decision on the outcome of a complaint, we use one of the following definitions:

- Withdrawn
- Referred
- Out of time
- Safeguarding Referral
- Unable to proceed – Consent not held
- Unable to proceed – Alternative process required
- Inconclusive
- Informal Resolution
- Not Upheld
- Partially Upheld
- Upheld

Adult Social Care complaints frequently include several elements with often multiple resolutions. It is therefore expected some of those complaints will conclude with a mix of outcomes.

The below graphic shows the number of outcomes of complaints investigated in the reporting year.



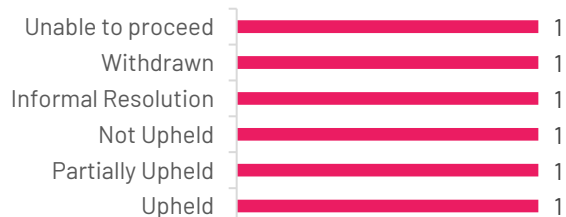
The percentage of 'upheld' complaints was 9%, 'partially upheld' 36% and 'not upheld' complaints were 21%.

- Withdrawn complaints (15%) were closed on two occasions as no response was received from the complainant to be able to continue with an investigation and three complainants decided not to proceed with a formal complaint upon speaking with the Investigating Officer at the outset.
- 9% of complaints which progressed as a formal complaint were resolved informally and did not require a full investigation.
- Three complaints (9%) exceeded the timeframes for a response within 65 days. One was due to multi-agency involvement in the case which regrettably meant the complaint response was made outside the legislative parameters. One was due to a delay in appointing an investigating officer and one complaint was investigated late due to conflicting work commitments and staffing pressures.

6.5 Breakdown of complaints by service area

Detailed below is a breakdown of complaint outcomes by service area.

Outcome Analysis



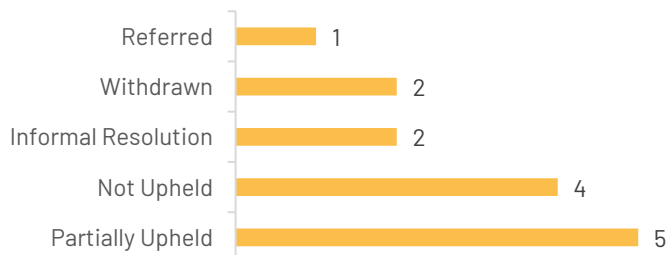
Learning Disabilities & Mental Health Social Work Services

The service area includes social work for Adult Mental Health, Older Persons Mental Health, Adults with Learning Disabilities, and Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards.

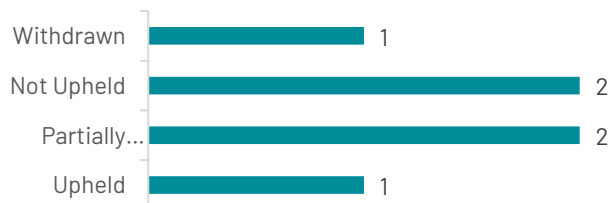
Social Work & Safeguarding

The service area includes social work for Adult Access and Safeguarding, Community Locality Assessment, and Hospital Social Work.

Outcome Analysis



Outcome Analysis



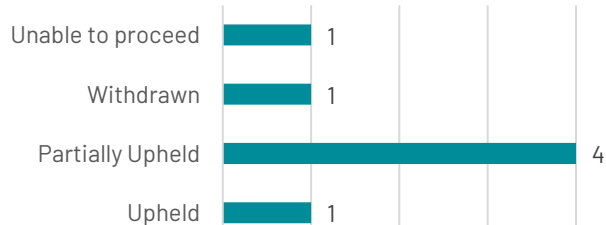
Occupational Therapy, Partnerships & Provider Services

The service area includes the Occupational Therapy service, Pathways to Independence and other In-house Provider Services.

Commissioning & Social Care Finance

The service area includes Commissioning, Brokerage, Social Care Income & Payments, and Property & Financial Affairs.

Outcome Analysis



6.6 Complaints to the Local Government Social Care Ombudsman

The Local Government Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO) investigates a complaint when it has not been resolved by the Council through our complaint's procedure. The Adult Social Care complaints procedure is a one stage process for all Adult Social Care complaints in Redcar and Cleveland Borough Council. Complainants can refer their complaint to the Ombudsman should they remain dissatisfied with the response received from us.

Every year the Ombudsman produces an annual letter which provides information on the Council's complaint handling performance. This letter is usually received in mid-July however, this year following feedback from the councils who were piloting the new LGSCO's Code of Conduct, the annual letter was issued to authorities in late May 2025. Rescheduling the annual letter to this new time will enhance compatibility with reporting cycles.

The annual review letter from the Ombudsman provided a full breakdown of the total amount of complainants who directed their complaint to the Ombudsman. The Ombudsman do not make the Council aware of each case unless further information is required to assist with their investigation.

The Ombudsman annual letter reported 7 complaints were referred to the Ombudsman during 2024/25.

The 7 complaints referred to the Ombudsman represents 21% of the complaints received in this year.

Below is a summary of the 7 complaints:

1. Mr X says the Council failed to document a mental capacity assessment on managing finances which it completed last year. Mr X says not having the assessment outcome meant the NHS delayed his discharge from hospital. This has affected Mr X's mental health, he has been very worried, and he feels let down and not listened to by the Council.

The LGSCO decided not to investigate as the complainant did not suffer significant personal injustice that would justify them investigating the complaint. Investigation closed.

2. Mr A and Miss B complained about the Council's actions relating to a family relative, Ms Y. They said it did not do enough to safeguard her or take sufficient action when they raised concerns about her wellbeing, and this caused Ms Y to become more isolated.

The LGSCO decided not to investigate this complaint as deemed the complainants were not suitable representatives. Investigation closed.

3. Complaint concerning transition from Children's Services to Adult Social Care.

The LGSCO classed the initial complaint as premature and requested the Local Authority to relook at the complaint. This was completed and a complaint response was issued in October 2024 to which the LGSCO have now requested more information to assist with their consideration on whether to investigate. We await their decision, ongoing.

4. Mrs X complained that a delay by the Council in assessing her mother for NHS CHC funding caused her to spend £9000 engaging a private company to carry out the assessment and delayed the implementation of the funding until June 2024. She says the Council should reimburse the agency fee and pay the care home charges back to the beginning of 2024.

The LGSCO requested information to be shared with them for their consideration. This was shared in February 2025 and in April 2025 the LGSCO informed us they are investigating and sought some further information from us. We await their decision, ongoing.

5. Complaint regarding Direct Payments.

The LGSCO have passed the request to their investigation team for their consideration and requested information from us to assist with their review. We await their decision, ongoing.

6. 2 cases were referred to the LGSCO whereby the LGSCO did not contact the Local Authority for further information as the information they received was incomplete/invalid and therefore had insufficient information to proceed. They referred back to the complainant. Investigations closed.

6.7 Vexatious Complainants

The Council will handle complaints impartially, objectively, and professionally, treating complainants with respect. Complainants and their families will not face adverse treatment for making a complaint.

However, if a complainant's behaviour is abusive, offensive, or threatening, the Council may restrict contact to protect staff. Legitimate queries or criticisms are acceptable if raised appropriately. If a complainant is unhappy with an outcome and simply seeks to challenge it, this will not result in them being considered as vexatious or unreasonable.

Furthermore, we appreciate that complainants may often be frustrated and aggrieved, and it is, therefore, important to consider the merits of their case rather than their attitude. However, if a complainant becomes unreasonable in an unnecessarily persistent or aggressive manner, action under the Vexatious Complaints Procedure may be considered.

In 2024/25 two individuals receiving support from Adult Social Care were made vexatious.

1. Miss Y's conduct had become unreasonable in the unnecessarily persistent email communications with numerous Council Officers and Members regarding the same issues, placing excessive demands on the time and resources of numerous council officers. Formal restrictions were invoked for a period of 12 months, outlining the local authority would only accept communications via email to a single point of contact email address.
2. Mr X's conduct had become unreasonable in the unnecessarily persistent email communications with numerous Council Officers regarding the same issues, not accepting our responses and using inappropriate language. This placed excessive demands on the time and resources of numerous council officers. Formal restrictions were invoked for a period of 12 months, outlining the local authority would only accept communications via email to a single point of contact email address and Council officers will not engage in telephone conversations without prior agreement.

7.0 Lessons Learnt

The priority in dealing with all complaints is seeking a timely and satisfactory resolution, where lessons are learnt and where outcomes from complaints can inform service improvements. Learning from complaints gives us opportunities for improvements to be made, for issues to be prevented where possible going forward, and to inform our future plans for services delivery.

Through our engagement plan, we identify a set of commitments and actions we will take to fulfil our pledge to put people at the heart of everything we do. We achieve this by listening and involving the individuals we support as they are best placed to tell us their lived experience, and how we can make positive changes to our services.

By analysing trends in complaints, we can use this intelligence to inform our commissioning intentions and service delivery. We share new developments, changes in guidance and practice updates, through team meetings, our staff newsletter, and our quality assurance process. Individual issues and specific learning are addressed through training, reflection, and supervision.

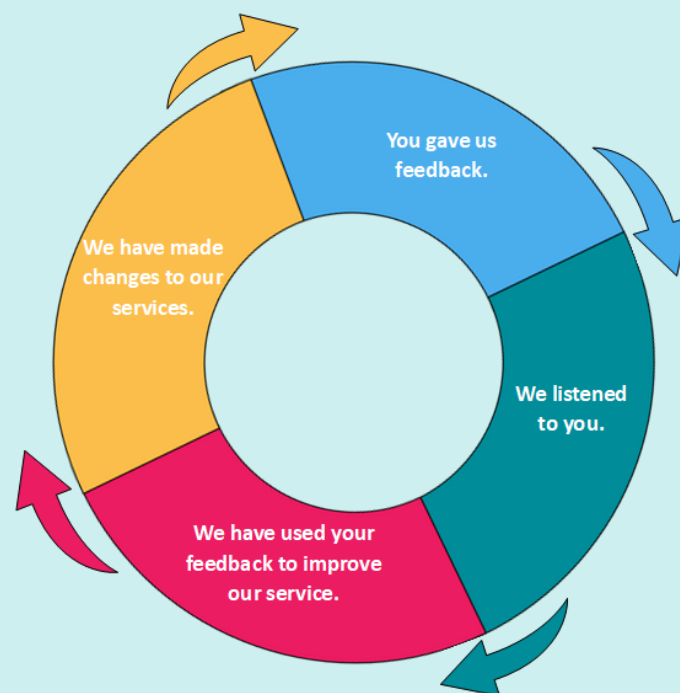
Of the 33 complaints investigated and 50 service requests actioned last year, 22 investigations identified learning actions such as training for staff, improvements to our processes and communication, changes to working practices and revision of our documentation to be implemented.

Examples of learning from complaints for this reporting year are detailed below:

Theme	Recommendation for improvement
Improved Processes	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• All address requests must be accompanied by a screen print of the original handwritten address from the adult's representative, on the Financial Assessment 2 form.
Changes to Social Work Practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Adult Social Care to ensure individual service offers (ISO's) are sent to care agencies promptly with any increase/decrease to support plans.
Improved Care Provider Processes	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Accurate record keeping within daily notes documenting staff names and times, checked through management audits of 6 random residents daily notes.• Recommended a procedure/process map is implemented around hospital admission and discharge.
Improved Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Commissioners attend the monthly Operational Transitions meeting where individuals are identified at age 14 who have significant needs including accommodation.

Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that Adult Social Care staff have a level of understanding and knowledge around financial charging processes to ensure that clear information can be provided to individuals, carers and families.
Explore new resources/ services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to explore identified service for rolling respite commissioning.

Where a complaint involves a commissioned service, this is addressed through contract management procedures with lessons learned fed back to the service by Adult Social Care Commissioning. This shapes the work of the Commissioning service to review working practices, procedures, policies, and contract compliance with commissioned providers to improve the quality-of-care provision across the social care sector within the borough. The quality of care is monitored through those contract compliance mechanisms which includes quality assurance visits, working with the Care Quality Commission (CQC) where a provider is not meeting the standard of care or their regulated function, and following up on safeguarding concerns where appropriate.



8.0 Overview of Service Requests received in 2024 - 2025

Service Requests are received across a wide range of topics that range from social work and occupational therapy practice to housing adaptations and commissioned services. Service requests decreased from 52 in 23/24 to 50 in 24/25. Outlined below are a range of examples.

What happened	What we did
Concerns around how staff are allowing Mrs X's sister to make inappropriate choices.	Meeting held with provider manager and Mrs X to discuss concerns. Provided reassurances regarding ongoing support and that sister has the freedom to make choices with staff offering advice.
Issues with grandmother's care company, doesn't feel supported by social services. Wants a new care company for grandmother.	A new care provider commenced, and a 6-week review scheduled with the social worker. Arranged for granddaughter to contact via email to report any other concerns.
Frustrated with measures in place regarding managing finances.	Discussion took place with social worker who explained managing money independently can be reviewed and mechanisms put in place to support money management skills.
Request to change social worker and care package has been wrongly charged.	New social worker allocated, and an advocate appointed. Explained outstanding care cost invoices and completion of financial assessment forms.
Contact details not kept up to date and request for post to be issued to the power of attorney.	LPA Documents stored correctly on the individuals Adult Social Care record with correspondence details updated.

During 2024/25 a total of 83 concerns were identified by individuals where they felt their concerns required escalation. A total of all concerns raised, irrespective of the resolution process, shows our transparency and commitment to address and resolve any issues. Concerns were assessed at the outset and if appropriate the concerns were resolved as a service request. By utilising the service request option, we strive to address the concerns efficiently without the need to escalate to a formal complaint. Out of the 50 concerns handled as a service request, only one required to be escalated as a formal complaint to establish a resolution. Service requests are a proactive effort to prevent issues from escalating into formal complaints, addressing concerns earlier, providing a timely and appropriate outcome for the individuals.

9.0 Compliments

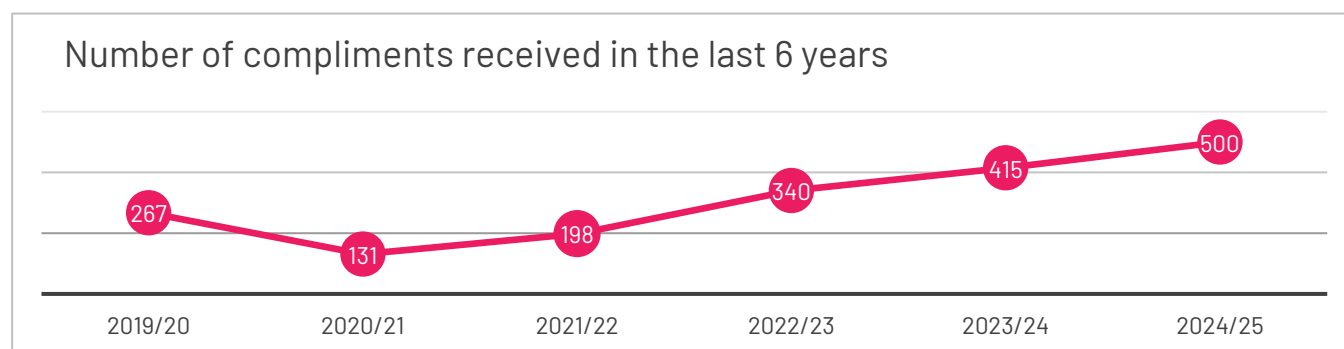
9.1 What is a compliment?

Redcar & Cleveland Borough Council's Adult Social Care Complaints and Compliments Policy states a compliment is: *"When someone is happy with the service they have received and wishes to express their thanks or appreciation."*

9.2 Number of compliments?

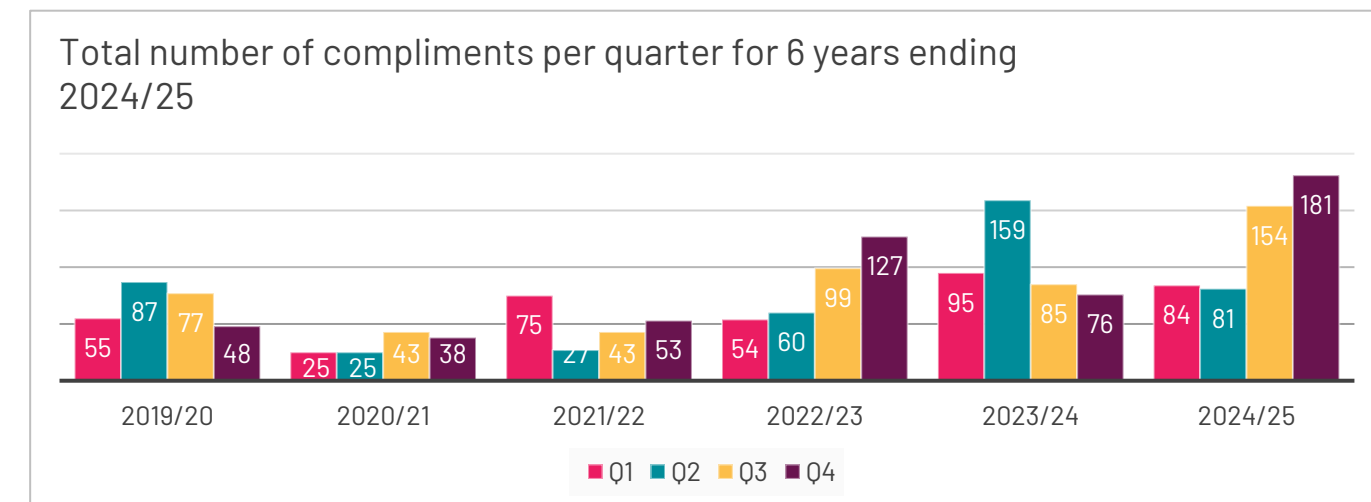
We received 500 compliments in 2024/25 compared to 415 in 2023/24 which is a 20% increase. Compliments evidence how Adult Social Care is meeting the key qualities individuals and their carers expect from a social care service such as being treated with dignity, respect, staff being caring, response to people's needs, being effective and well-led.

The table below shows the number of compliments received over the last 6 years.



Compliments are received by letter, email, thank you cards, feedback forms and satisfaction surveys. They are recorded and the members of staff involved are congratulated by the senior management team on their good practice. We use feedback received from compliments to affirm when services are working well and have made a positive impact on individuals accessing our service.

The chart below shows the quarterly breakdown of compliments over the last six years.



Across the Adult Social Care service, Provider Services historically receive by far the highest number of compliments from individuals and their families. However, in 2024/25 Adult Social Work & Safeguarding Services received the highest number of compliments with 194, 38.8% of the total compliments received.

Service Area	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	YTD
Adult Social Work & Safeguarding	21	19	80	74	194
Learning Disabilities & Mental Health	5	4	19	16	44
Prevention & Partnerships	5	3	23	27	58
Provider Services	48	52	29	61	190
Principal Social Worker Teams	5	1	3	1	10
Adults Commissioning & Support Services	0	2	0	2	4
Total Compliments	84	81	154	181	500

This change is due to the increased number of completed satisfaction surveys being returned by individuals who are supported by the social work and safeguarding teams. As well as the proactive efforts by the Redcar Coastal Locality team to encourage individuals to provide feedback.

The next page shows 10 anonymised quotes from compliments we have received in the reporting year.

9.3 Adult Social Care 2024/25 Compliments

Staff in the Social Care Payments Team took time to listen and show empathy. Both staff members have helped in a very difficult time in our lives, and they took time to explain the circumstances. A credit to Redcar & Cleveland Council.

I would like to pass on our heartfelt thanks. The new access is a huge success. It makes things so much safer and a lot less stressful to get him in and out the house. I can't put into words how much easier it has made things. Thank you all so much.

Information provided by the Safeguarding Team was very helpful. We were asked what we wanted to happen and this happened promptly. The Safeguarding Team did an excellent job, and we were very happy with the end result.

The social care officer wrote my care plan extremely well and was very respectful of me at all times which I really appreciate. She took that extra time to listen and support me.

It's with great sadness that you will no longer be our mum's social worker. You are the best we have ever had, and it would take someone extremely special to fill your shoes. Thank you for being professional and skilled in your work, in understanding, being 100% supportive, resourceful and committed to helping our mum. You certainly moved mountains for her.

The Handy Person was absolutely superb, and did a marvellous job, very well done. I am very delighted, and it will make such a good difference to my wife's confidence.

I am highly impressed with your service. You have been looking after my needs perfectly and I very much appreciate it. The Occupational Therapist is easy to talk to and sorted me out properly. Thank you so much.

The social worker has been so good to my husband and I. Providing me with invaluable information, nothing is too much trouble. She has our best interests at heart, and we are very fortunate to have her as our social worker. I know I can contact her at all times if I encounter any problems. She is very knowledgeable, and I believe an asset to social service for Redcar and Cleveland. Thanks for all your hard work and understanding.

Meadowgate is a marvellous place. If I needed to go to rehabilitation again, I would recommend coming back. Being in and out of hospital for months and now it feels like I have returned home. Everything is pleasant and run well.

The Community Reablement Team were wonderful in helping my mum to return to independence after major surgery. They provided her with support and was tailored to her needs and responsive to the quirks of a ninety-year-old lady, used to doing things her own way. All the enablers who visited her were kind, friendly and professional. We could not have managed without this service. It was more effective than anything I could have achieved. Her recovery was smooth and quick, this would not have been possible without your support.

10.0 Conclusion

This year has shown a reduction in the number of complaints and service requests that have been deemed by individuals and their families to require escalation to the Complaints and Compliments Team. This is a result of teams working effectively to discuss concerns raised at the outset, working to offer a quick resolution to benefit the individual and their families with an appropriate outcome. Teams are offering a solution straight away reducing the need for escalation to the Complaints and Compliments Team which ultimately ensures individuals feel listened too and supported.

We continue to remain effective in dealing with complaints, with a relatively small number referring the matter to the Local Government Social Care Ombudsman. This report demonstrates that Adult Social Care welcomes feedback from individuals and their families to help support our culture of continuous learning from a mistake by acknowledging it, investigating, reviewing, apologising when we get things wrong, and implementing new processes and practices to avoid a similar mistake happening again in the future.

The increase in compliments received from individuals and their families, along with the praise from our peers, is a testament to the high quality of service we are providing to individuals and their families. This positive feedback highlights our commitment to excellence and the significant impact of our efforts in delivering exceptional care and support.

The transition of the Adult Social Care Complaints Officer position in 2023 to the central Corporate Complaints and Compliments Team has proven to be highly advantageous. This strategic move has ensured a consistent approach across the entire local authority, enhancing the efficiency and effectiveness of our complaint handling processes. It has provided a robust resource, enabling us to address concerns more comprehensively. This centralisation has significantly improved our overall awareness of issues raised across all directorates, fostering a more cohesive and responsive service.

In addition, having a single Complaints and Compliments Team for individuals to contact makes the process of raising complaints easier and more accessible. Complainants can now raise their concerns with greater ease, ensuring their issues are addressed promptly and effectively.

11.0 Future Developments 2025/26

1. Continue to work with all staff across Adult Social Care to enhance information shared about the complaints process, improving complaint investigations and responses.
2. To apply effective and meaningful lessons learned.
3. Work collaboratively within the Corporate Complaints and Compliments Team to develop effective training about complaint resolutions and the handling of service requests, providing a consistent approach across the entire Council.
4. The Complaints and Compliments Team has devised a uniformed approach to record-keeping of complaints for the whole local authority. The Corporate Complaints and Compliments Team will continue to utilise this system, enabling better performance monitoring of complaints and the production of effective data against statutory response times. This improvement aims to enhance our ability to track and address complaints more efficiently, ensuring a higher standard of service.
5. Resolve complaints at the earliest opportunity in a manner appropriate to resolve it speedily and efficiently. Utilising service requests where possible to provide individuals with an appropriate, timely outcome without the need for a detailed investigation.
6. We will review our current Adult Social Care complaint materials and handling procedures to ensure they align with the guidance provided by the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO) in their publication, "Adult Social Care Complaints, Reviews and Appeals: A Good Practice Guide for Local Authorities."

Our vision:

We will help you live safe and well, in the place you call home, with the people and things you love, connected to your community, doing the things that matter to you.

Our commitment to adults and unpaid carers:

Listen I am listened to and shape my own support

Advise I am given information and advice when I need it

Enable I am enabled to regain my wellbeing and independence

Support I am provided with quality care that is value for money.

