



**People Directorate**

# **Compliments and Complaints**

## **Adult Social Care**

### **Annual Report**

**1<sup>st</sup> April 2021 – 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022**

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## 1. Background and Context

This report sets out information regarding compliments and complaints made by, or on behalf of, people who receive support or services from the Local Authority's Adult Social Care teams.

It is a statutory requirement to produce an annual report which will be published on the Council's website. For adult services complaints, the legal requirement for monitoring and preparing an annual report is set out in the Local Authority Social Services and National Health Service Complaints Regulations 2009 (as amended).

The current legislation requires local authorities to appoint a 'responsible person' with responsibility for ensuring compliance with the following arrangements:

- Managing, developing, and administering the complaints procedure
- Giving assistance and advice to those who wish to complain
- Liaising with services regarding the investigation of complaints where appropriate
- Supporting and training existing and new members of staff
- Monitoring and reporting on complaints activity

Staff will always try to resolve problems or concerns before they escalate into complaints, and this ensures that investigations are kept to a minimum.

Bracknell Forest Council has set procedures for resolving complaints to ensure that: -

- The views and experiences of people who use the services are heard
- Positive feedback is used to develop services and highlight good practice
- We continually learn as an organisation and resolve matters/issues
- We can sustain a quality focus on our customers

Our aims are to:

- Resolve complaints quickly and where possible using informal measures
- Offer early resolution of complaints
- Learn lessons from complaints

## 2. Statutory Adults Social Care Complaints Procedure

The complaints process aims to be as accessible as possible. Complaints can be made by telephone, in writing, by email or using our online complaints form on the Bracknell Forest Council website.

All complaints received are acknowledged within 3 working days and we aim to respond within 10 working days. More complex complaints may be responded to within 20 working days, with the complainant being kept informed during the process.

- Our principles for responding to complaints in adult social care are that all complaints are dealt with efficiently.
- Complaints are properly investigated.
- Complainants receive a timely and appropriate response.

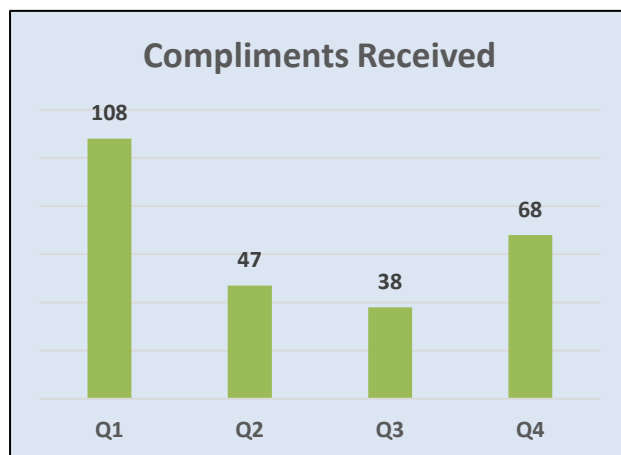
- Complainants are told the outcome regarding the investigation of the complaint.
- An apology is given if required.
- Appropriate response is taken where necessary.

The Adults Statutory procedure starts with an internal investigation. A response will be sent from the manager within the service area. If no resolution is achieved a further investigation will be carried out, this can sometimes involve an external investigator being appointed and a report will be sent to the complainant of the findings.

In the majority of cases, if a complaint is upheld or partially upheld, an apology will be offered, and information will be given to the complainant outlining actions the service will take to ensure the situation does not arise again for the complainant or individuals in the future. The apology is made by the manager on behalf of the service area complained about.

If the complainant is not happy with the outcome of their complaint, they may refer the matter to the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO) for consideration. Representations may be made to the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman at any time and any member of the public is able to complain to the Ombudsman if they feel there has been maladministration or injustice, however, the LGSCO will not normally accept the complaint until the Council has had a chance to complete the investigation internally first.

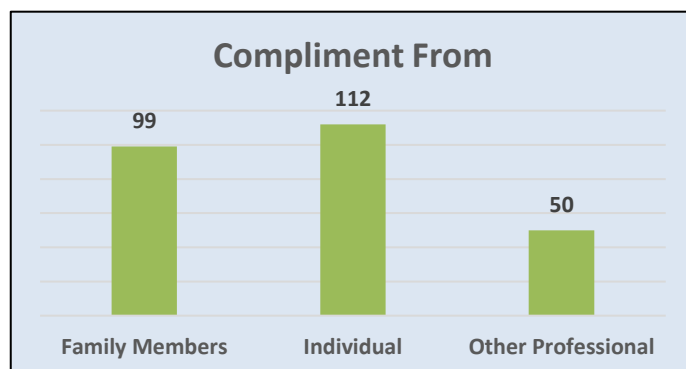
### 3. Adult Social Care Compliments



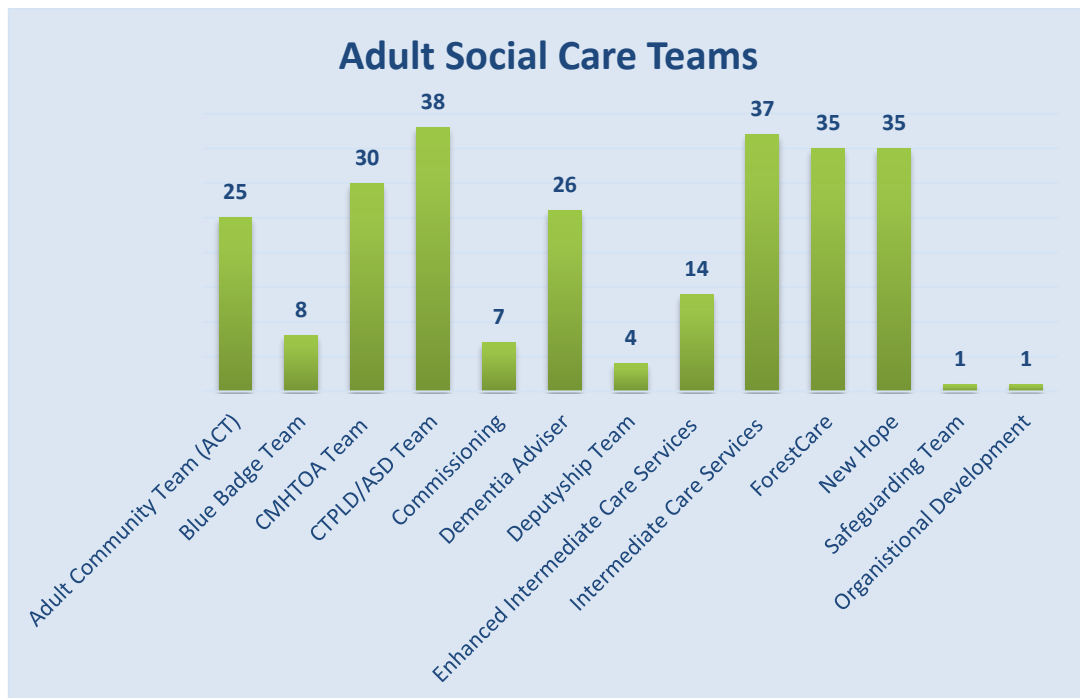
Compliments are received from a wide range of sources via surveys, feedback forms and directly to the staff involved. All compliments received are sent to the individual's line manager to support the appraisal process and personal development of employees.

	Number of compliments
2018/19	73
2019/20	197
2020/21	207
2021/22	261

During 2021/2022 there were 261 compliments received across Adult Social Care service areas, compared to 207 received during 2020/2021. This is an increase of 20.6%. This reflects a year-on-year increase.



Below sets out the numbers of compliments for individual teams within Adults Social Care. Most teams within the service received a compliment.

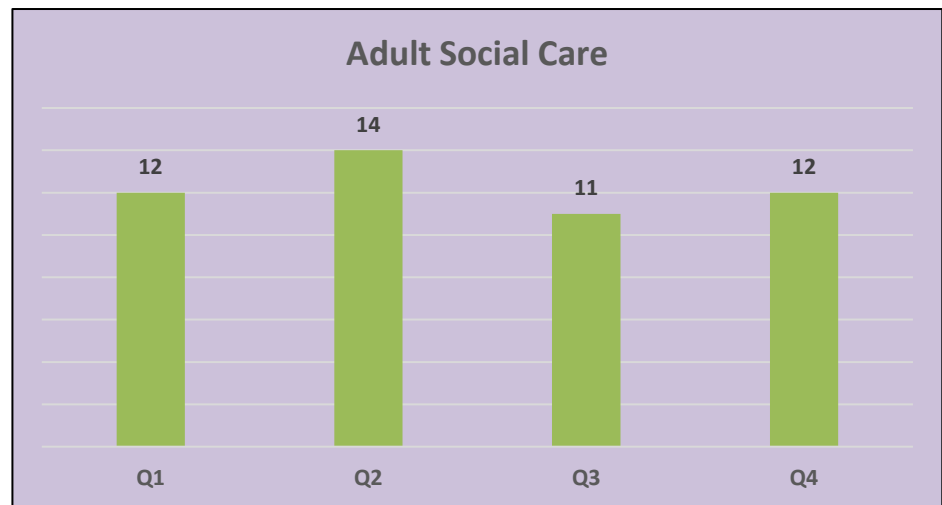


### What are compliments saying?

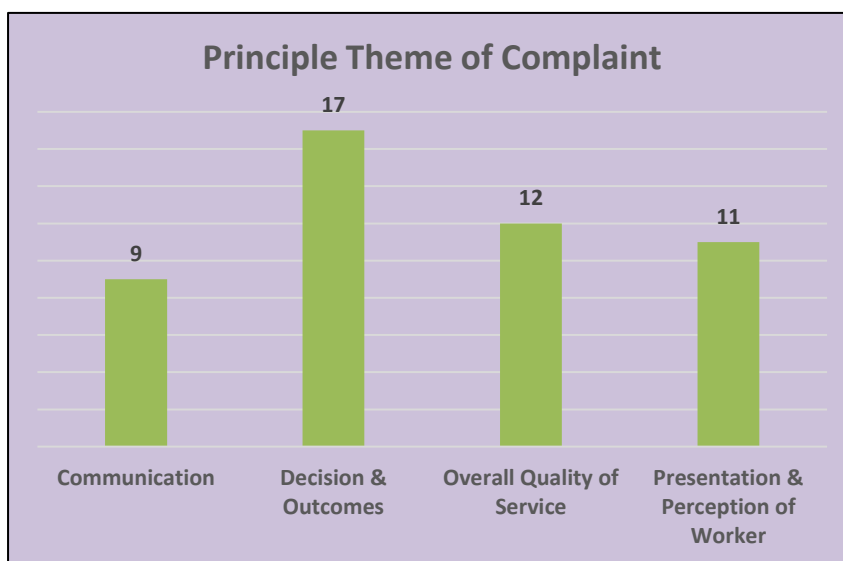
- **Individual** – I just wanted to write and thank you very very much for your help over the past couple of months. You have always been so patient and understanding and never minding how often I phoned!
- **Family Member** - This is to say a huge thank you for looking after our mum for many years. Having you guys there to support her made all the difference to her life and ours
- **Family Member** - From a state of wild panic, her knowledge and kindness to both of us calmed me and gave me belief it would all be OK, I wasn't alone with her support. I cannot express how grateful I was and still am without getting emotional but imagine you get the picture.....
- **Individual** - client stated New Hope was worth its weight in gold and commended me for supporting him through a recent relapse
- **Family Member** - we all really appreciate all the assistance you and BFC provide for my brother (he is fortunate to have it) and your detailed update is greatly appreciated
- **Individual** - she was enquiring about how to apply for a Blue Badge – she wanted to say how impressed she is with the wonderful frontline staff at BFC, she said whenever she calls it doesn't matter which department, everyone is very kind and caring
- **Family Member** - The CMHT OA has been caring for my mother for many years. They have been available, helpful caring and professional throughout. The professional care has been very good in particular the continuity of staff has been very welcome.
- **Individual** - These great ladies sorted everything out for me and showed such empathy towards me having mobility problems. They really were a cut above the rest. I would love them to know how wonderful they were and how grateful I am.

## 4. Complaints Received for Adults Social Care

During 2021/22 there were 49 complaints received across all Adult Social Care service areas, compared to 36 received during 2020/21. This is an increase of 26.5%.

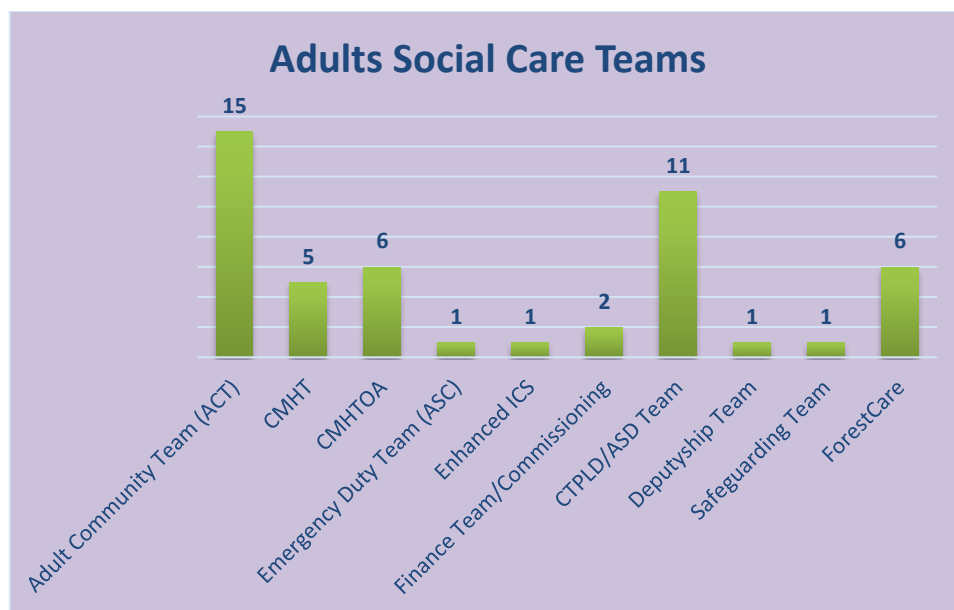


	Number of complaints
2018/19	41
2019/20	47
2020/21	36
2021/22	49

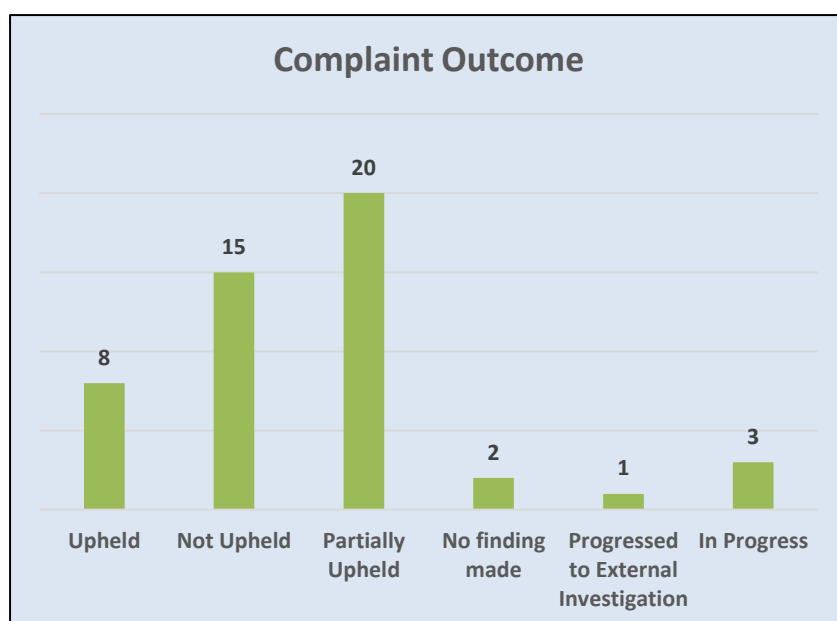


In 2020/21 “Decisions & Outcome” had the most complaints, in this reporting year this is still the most reason for complaints. This report covers a period of time in which there was still a pandemic which impacted significantly on the way that adult social care was delivered. This included the need to change the way that services operated at

short notice, and meant that teams and services were operating beyond their normal capacity.



## 5. Analysis of Complaints



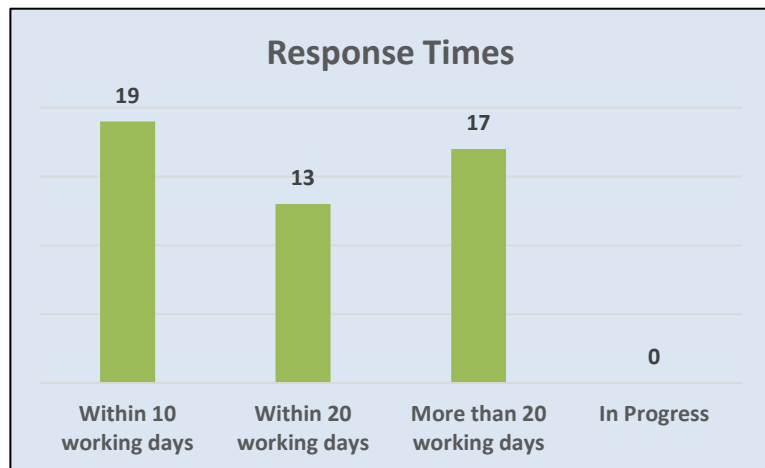
In total 16.3% of complaints during 2021/22 were upheld which is an increase from 11% during 2020/21. A further 40.8% of complaints were partially upheld compared to 46% during 2020/21. 30.6% of complaints received were not upheld compared to the 32% in 2020/21.

These outcomes are a slight increase in complaints upheld and a decrease in complaints partially or not upheld compared to the outcomes during 2020/21.

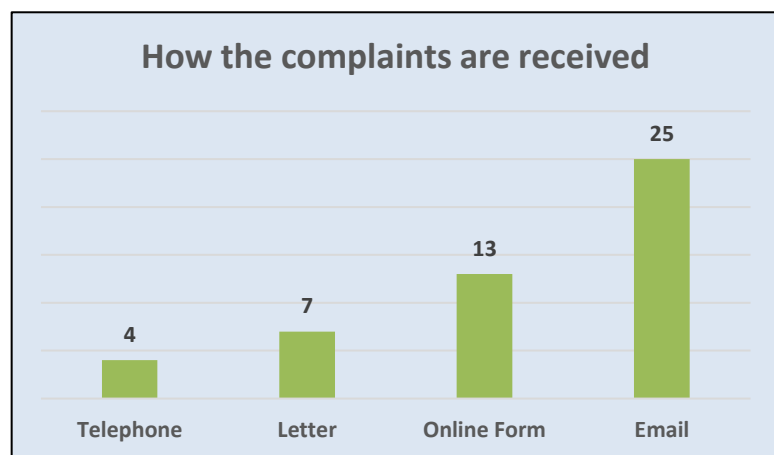
During 2021/22, 2 complaints had no findings made and 1 progressed for further investigation. This was commissioned to an external investigator and is still in progress.

## Timeliness of Complaints

Whilst it is the aim to respond to most complaints within 10 working days, 20 working days are allowed for more complex complaints. Sometimes the response can go over 20 working days if this involves meeting with complainants or further investigations are required.



Although the online form was a popular avenue for complainants during 2020/21 most complainants have opted to email the Adults Social Care mailbox directly at [ASC.Complaints@bracknell-forest.gov.uk](mailto:ASC.Complaints@bracknell-forest.gov.uk) during 2021/22.



## 6. Cost of Complaints Service & Investigations

Most investigations within Adult's Social Care are dealt with internally. One complainant requested for the complaint to be dealt with by an external investigator, this is currently being addressed.

## 7. Learning from Complaints

During the past year we have improved our processes for learning from complaints, and these continue to develop within Adults Social Care.

Below is the feedback from the teams on what learning has been implemented during 2021/22.

- *When a person is not seen to be at home upon visiting, the necessary procedures are followed including checking around and contacting NoK (next of kin) if still unsure of whereabouts.*



- Seniors making sure they understand the difference of grams vs micrograms when dealing with medication and writing up Medication Administration Record charts to support with medication administration.
- Staff understanding the importance of completing their six rights of medication administration checks prior to administering to prevent any risk of a medication error.
- Following missed medication by a new starter in the team, we have implemented a note on staff phones to indicate when a person is provided medication support by our team, to prevent this from being missed; staff to check notes on phones before each visit.
- A way of building rapport with clients, does not mean evoking your personal opinion and/ or advice, as this could result in a conflict of interest. Staff need to respect that people can make their own decisions however unwise the decision may be.
- Around communication, have had a few complex complaints, learning taken from it, including a case file audit, and any changes are implemented quickly.
- Learning from Blue Badges complaints, some policies have been changed this is ongoing. There is still a backlog of Blue Badge applications, this is being worked on now.
- One of the learning points is ensuring joint working with Children's Social Care.

The Complaints and Compliments Manager is working with our Adults Principal Social Worker to ensure that this learning contributes to training plans and development of best practice and quality throughout Adults Social Care. Complaints themes and learning from them are presented at the QA service Adults Social Care Learning Events which takes place yearly.

The Complaints Manager is on hand to offer advice and guidance when required and is regularly accessed by staff in Adult Social Care.

## 8. Forward plan for 2022/23

<b>Learning from complaints</b>	Reflective/learning sessions to take place with the relevant team involved to capture and agree a specific learning plan	After each upheld complaint
	Work closely with the Adults Principal Social Worker to capture the learning points to support workforce improvements	Through the year
	Attend team meetings to discuss compliments and complaints received for individual teams	1 team meeting per team for 2022/23
<b>Governance</b>	Provide monthly and quarterly reports to Assistant Director, Head of Service and Team Managers during the year	Monthly and quarterly
<b>Policy update</b>	Update complaints policy for Adults Social Care	30.7.2022
<b>Timeliness</b>	Ensure responses to all complaints are within the required timescales	Within 20 days of receipt of complaint

End