

**TO: The Executive Member
APRIL 2025**

**ANNUAL REPORT – ADULTS SOCIAL CARE
COMPLIMENTS AND COMPLAINTS
APRIL 2024 – MARCH 2025**

1 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this paper is to present the Annual report of the Statutory Complaints function for Adults Social Care for approval by the Executive Member.

2 Recommendation

- 2.1 That the Executive Member, notes the report and endorses any recommendations

3 Reasons for Recommendation

- 3.1 The Local Authority Social Services and National Health Service Complaints Regulations 2009 (as amended) state that Complaints Services should produce an annual report for consideration.
- 3.2 The Complaints Service performs an important role in assuring the quality of response to vulnerable adults and families and Bracknell residents who make complaints. The annual report supports the continuing development and review of the service and learning from complaints.
- 3.3 The Annual Report will be submitted to the Overview and Scrutiny Panel for Adults and the Local Safeguarding Board following the approval of the Executive Member

4 Alternative Options Considered

- 4.1 None considered

5 Supporting Information

- 5.1 The reports provide an overview of the work of the Complaints Manager and identifies some of the key issues arising in terms of complaints during 2024/25. In addition to complaints, the report outlines compliments received.
- 5.2 We have continued to improve the consistency and approach with which we learn from complaints. In the year ahead we will work to improve this further including our ability to understand the impact of learning.
- 5.4 Overall, there were 45 complaints received during the period of 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025, this duplicates the total of 45 across Adults Social Care in 2023/24.
- 5.5 There were 627 compliments recorded during the year which is a significant increase from 337 in the previous year.

6 Consultation and Other Considerations

Legal Advice

- 6.1 The relevant legal issues are addressed within the body of this report.

Financial Advice

- 6.2 The Executive Director: Resources is satisfied that no significant financial implications are anticipated from this report on 2024/25 activity.

Equalities Impact Assessment

- 6.3 The Complaints Procedure is available to all those who meet the specified criteria for making a complaint using the Statutory or the Local Authority Procedure.

Strategic Risk Management Issues

- 6.4 None identified in connection with the annual report. It should be noted that complex complaints are carefully managed with support from the Borough Solicitor where relevant, to address and minimise risks with individual cases.

Strategic Risk Management Issues

- 6.5 None identified

Climate Change Implications

- 6.6 This is in line with the council's impact assessment

Health & Wellbeing Considerations

- 6.7 None outside the remit of this report

Background Papers

- Adults Social Care Compliments and Complaints Annual Report 2024/25

Contact for further information

Kogie Perumall
Head of Service



People Directorate

Compliments and Complaints

Adult Social Care

Annual Report

1st April 2024 – 31st March 2025

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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. Monitoring and preparing an annual report are 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 20 working days.

- 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 most 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 LGSCO 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.

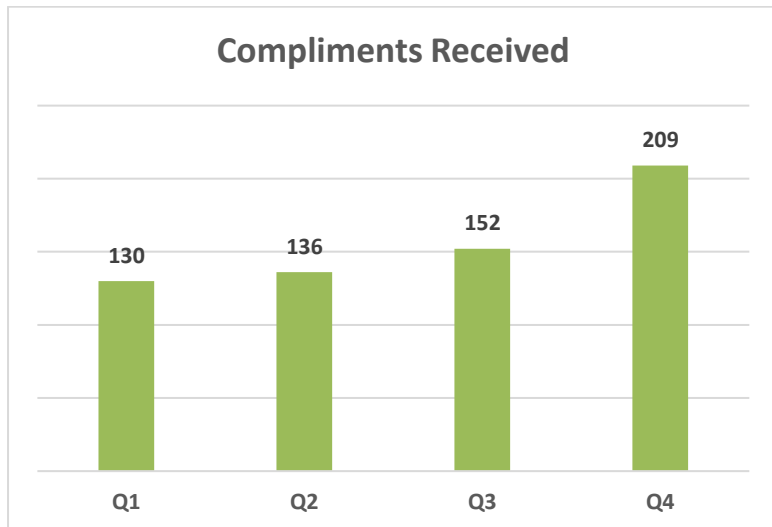
3. Adult Social Care Compliments

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.

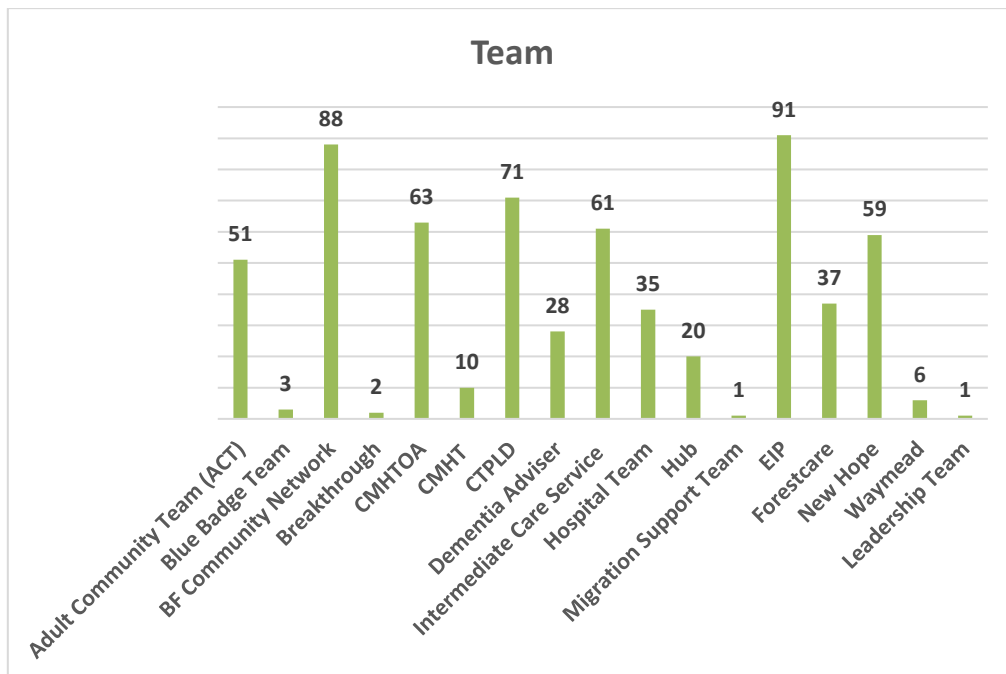
During 2024/2025 there were 627 compliments received across Adult Social Care service areas, compared to 337 received during 2023/2024. This is an increase of 86%.

We have now implemented a feedback form within all emails from staff to individuals which has generated some positive comments.



	Number of compliments
2018/19	73
2019/20	197
2020/21	207
2021/22	261
2022/23	201
2023/24	337
2024/25	627

This table shows who the compliments have come from.



The above table is a breakdown of the individual teams receiving the compliment.

Some examples of the 627 compliments received

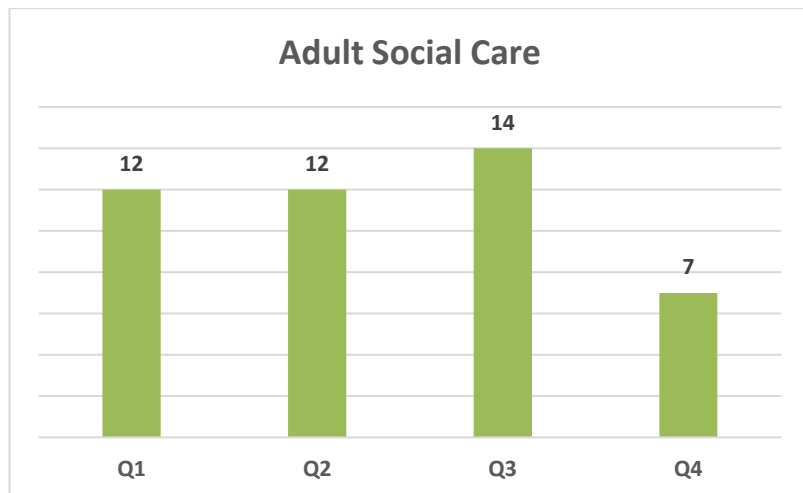
- **CMHTOA** – Family member was very complimentary about the team as a whole, including the community team, social care, ward staff, and HTT teams, he felt they couldn't do anything more and he felt supported throughout the process.
- **CTPLD** - My experience of working with ASC has been very positive, the worker is a constant support, and she has worked very hard to help us in lots of different ways. She has already been supporting us for several years now with my eldest son, so we know her well and we know we can rely on her to help us navigate the shark-infested waters.
- **Hospital Team** - Worker was extremely helpful patient and understanding. I always felt like I had a stay in my rehabilitation and am grateful for the huge improvement in my mobility.
- **HUB** - Worker has been a wonderful support for myself and who I care for. She came to my home to talk over the support I gave to her and my husband. She has a caring approach to my situation, and I felt supported after being able to discuss my situation with her.

- **BF Community Network** - S was extremely helpful and gave me tips on how to get on with coping techniques, day to day tasks when I was having a rubbish day. I would like to especially thank S for her great support with me, especially when I was going through a very low time in my life.
- **New Hope** - "without your support I wouldn't be alive, you really have been my rock through this, and I couldn't have done it without you".
- **Waymead** - Thank you so much for spending the time with me today, talking through the service you provide and giving some insight into guest experiences.
- **Intermediate Care Service** - Very friendly & helpful staff. I will miss them. Thank you to all of the team for the wonderful help & support.
- **EIP** - "The Physio was very informative. Worker was very helpful when she took me out with the walking frame, for the first time. She gave me confidence and calmness.
- **Forestcare** - Thanking the girls for the assistance yesterday ie no electrics and no mobile usage. Thought they were all marvellous and would not have known what she would have done without them
- **Adult Community Team (ACT)** – Social worker was brilliant getting my dad the support he needs and also very supportive of me as his main carer

4. Complaints Received for Adults Social Care

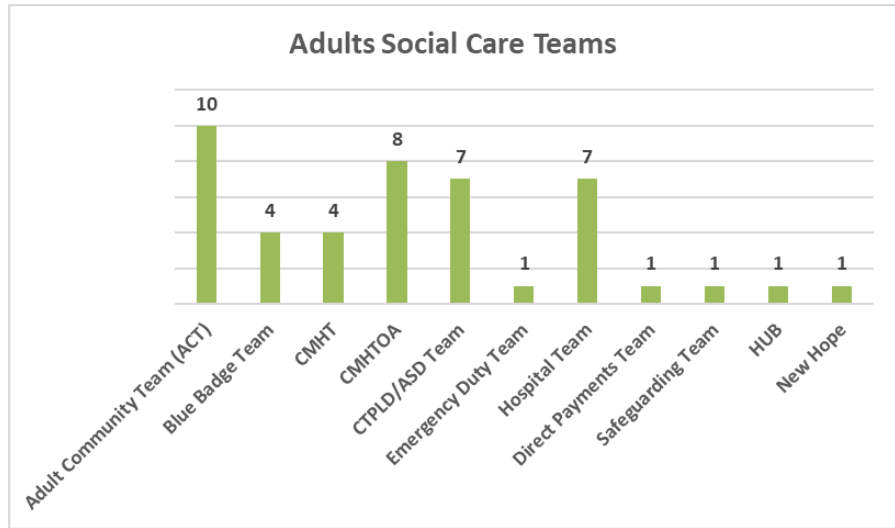
During 2024/25 there were 45 complaints received across Adult Social Care service areas, this is the same number as received during 2023/24.

Although there were 45 complaints these were from 42 complainants who put in more than one complaint.



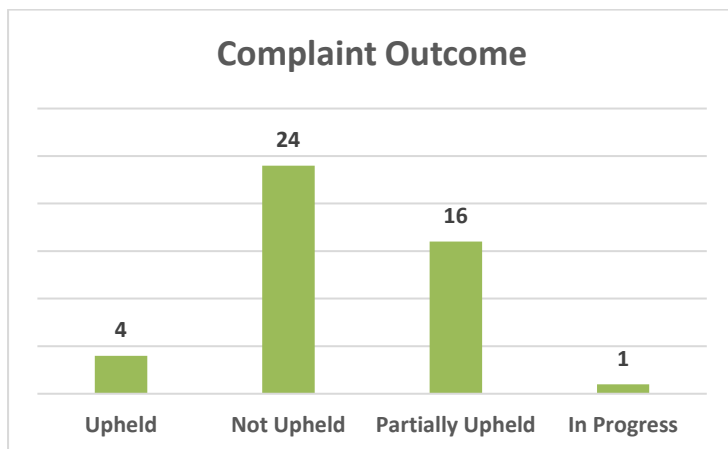
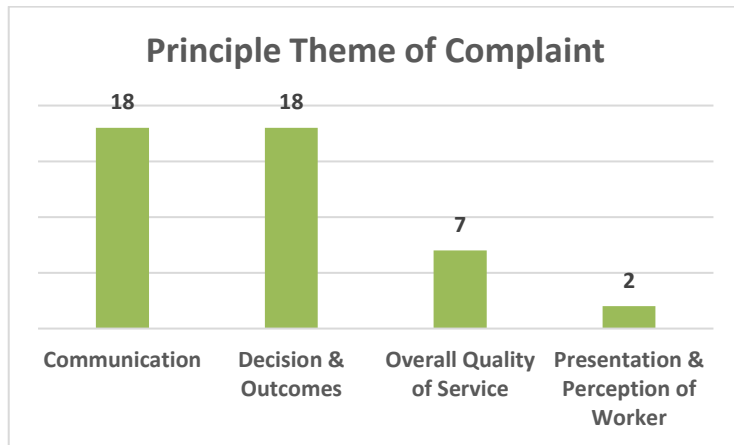
	Number of complaints
2018/19	41
2019/20	47
2020/21	36
2021/22	49
2022/23	39
2023/24	45
2024/25	45

This table shows the numbers of complaints for individual services within Adults Social Care.



5. Analysis of Complaints

“Decisions & Outcome” & “Communication” had the most complaints, in this reporting year.



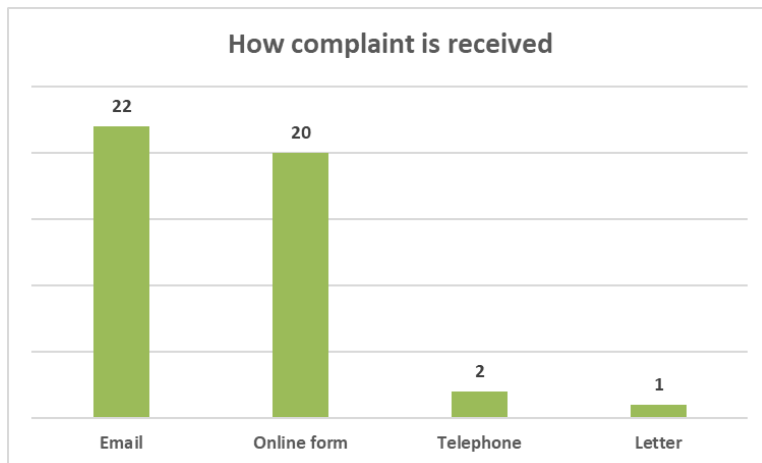
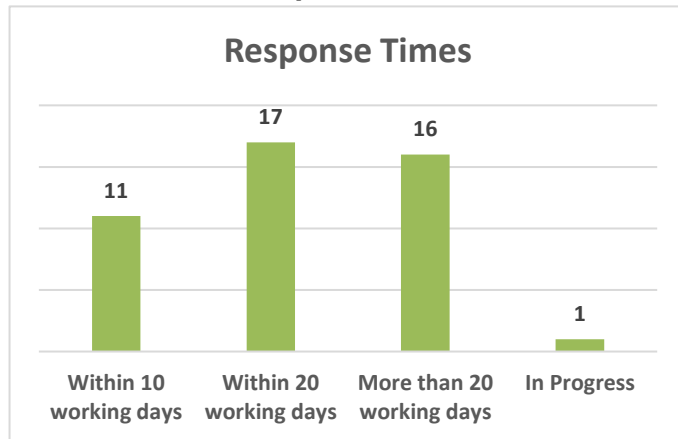
In total 4 complaints were upheld compared to 8 in 2023/24.

A further 24 complaints were not upheld compared to 14 in 2023/24.

There were 16 complaints were partially upheld compared to 19 during 2023/24.

Timeliness of Complaints

The complaints responded to within 10 working days were 24%. Complaints responded to within 20 working days were 38% and 36% of complaints were responded to over 20 working days, this is due to meeting with complainants, further investigation, or information was required.



Although the online form was a popular avenue for complainants during 2024/25, a large number of complainants have opted to email the Adults Social Care mailbox. On 5 March 2025 we launched our new Liberty complaints handling system which allows complainants to complain directly using the online form and communicating with us through their own online portal. This has been received well and since the launch we have received 2 complaints using this process. Complainants can still complain by telephone, in person or by writing to us.

6. 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.

Adult social care identified comprehensive learning related to blue badges which includes effective referral to the subject matter expert, further training on the role of the subject matter expert and letters which are more person-centred.

Improve our communications and use plain English when explaining our processes. We are complementing letters that are shared about home first approach by developing new leaflet.

Refresher on phone etiquette. Remind staff to seek senior support when dealing with complex or lengthy telephone calls

The complaints manager is working with our Adults Social Care teams to ensure complaints are dealt with in a timely manner and that learning from complaints is taken forward across

all of Adults Social Care. Complaint's themes and learning from them are presented at the Adults Social Care Learning Events which takes place three times a year.

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

The complaints manager attends team meetings throughout the year to offer support and explain the complaints process.

7. Update on forward plan from 2024/25

Learning from complaints	Reflective/learning sessions to take place with the relevant team involved to capture and agree a specific learning plan	After each upheld complaint	<i>Completed within team meetings and 1:1 supervision</i>
	Work closely with the Adults Principal Social Worker to capture the learning points to support workforce improvements	Through the year	<i>Ongoing development – continuing through 2025</i>
	Attend team meetings to discuss compliments and complaints received for individual teams	1 team meeting per team for 2023/24	<i>Completed</i>
	Complaints Manager to meet with Assistant Director to discuss how the learning from complaints will be actioned and disseminated to the service	Meeting to be arranged by October 2024	<i>Completed</i>
Governance	Provide quarterly reports to Senior Leadership team during the year	Every quarter	<i>Completed</i>
Policy update	Update complaints policy for Adults Social Care	30.11.2024	<i>Completed</i>
Timeliness	Ensure responses to all complaints are within the required timescales	Within 20 days of receipt of complaint	<i>Continue to aim to achieve target</i>

8. Forward plan for 2025/26

Learning from complaints	Reflective/learning sessions to take place with the relevant team involved to capture and agree a specific learning plan.	After each upheld complaint, within team meetings and 1:1
	Work closely with the adult's 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 2025/26
	Complaints manager to continue meeting with Head of Service twice weekly to discuss incoming complaints and learning from complaint	Twice weekly

Governance	Provide quarterly reports to Assistant Director, Head of Service and Team Managers during the year	Every quarter
Timeliness	Ensure responses to all complaints are within the required timescales	Within 20 working days