

Appendix 1

High-level summary:

2021/22 – Annual Complaints Report

Top Ten Complaints Areas

The areas receiving the highest number of complaints are outlined below together with the individual learning for each area. Figures in brackets below represent 2020/21 data.

Directorate & Area	S1 rec'd	% upheld	S1 escalated	S2 rec'd	% upheld	% of S2 upheld, that were not upheld at S1	S2 escalated	S3 rec'd	% upheld	% of S3 upheld, that were not upheld at S2
Public Realm - Waste Management	391 (151)	55% (58%)	43 (28)	43 (54)	37% (63%)	19% (26%)	2 (3)	2 (3)	100% (67%)	0% (0%)
Housing –Repairs	218 (194)	47% (39%)	21 (24)	21 (26)	5% (31%)	100% (38%)	0 (3)	0 (3)	0% (0%)	0% (0%)
Housing – Estates Management	94 (80)	22% (14%)	18 (16)	18 (30)	28% (20%)	40% (33%)	0 (2)	0 (2)	0% (0%)	0% (0%)

Housing – Housing Solutions	81 (75)	17% (21%)	15 (8)	15 (18)	20% (28%)	33% (0%)	0 (3)	0 (3)	0% (0%)	0% (0%)
Public Realm– Clean & Green	71 (27)	38% (30%)	7 (2)	7 (10)	43% (30%)	0% (0%)	0 (2)	0 (2)	0% (0%)	0% (0%)
Public Realm– Development Control	55 (35)	22% (9%)	10 (9)	10 (11)	20% (0%)	100% (0%)	0 (3)	0 (3)	0% (67%)	0% (100%)
Resources & Place Delivery – Council Tax	57 (30)	32% (20%)	3 (3)	3 (5)	67% (20%)	0% (0%)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0% (0%)	0% (0%)
Public Realm - Highways Maintenance	29 (15)	34% (33%)	3 (2)	3 (6)	0% (50%)	0% (10%)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)
Public Realm – Parking Enforcement	30 (11)	13% (18%)	0 (2)	0 (15)	0% (13%)	0% (0%)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0% (0%)	0% (0%)
Housing – Transforming Homes	25 (21)	32% (38%)	3 (0)	3 (0)	0% (0%)	0% (0%)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0% (0%)	0% (0%)

High Level Learning for Top 10 Areas:

Directorate and Area	High Level learning identified from complaints
Public Realm -Waste Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• In the event of a missed waste collection the attending crew will be issued with clear written instructions to ensure that they are aware of expected standard of service. This will also be monitored through one-to-one meetings between crew members and Supervisors• Introduction of a monitoring system, to ensure that when a non-collection occurs, the relevant address is then flagged to collection crews, to ensure bins are collected the following week• Crews reminded of importance of ensuring that any spillages or waste dropped during collection must also be collected and not left behind• To review the process for capturing missed bin service requests and/or complaints
Housing –Repairs	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mears have reviewed training requirements for their electricians, with a view to them all having basic knowledge around plumbing repairs relating to showers, which will further assist in Mears being able to achieve a first time fix for repairs• Mears staff have been reminded of ensuring that works orders that require approval are to be sent to Thurrock Council within a 72-hour timeframe to avoid unnecessary delays. This has also recently been implemented as part of a process review with the council. Residents are also to be kept updated if delays do occur

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All Aaron Services engineers have been reminded that where they are running late on earlier appointments and cannot attend a scheduled appointment, this is to be relayed to the office. This in turn will allow for the resident to be contacted as soon as possible and kept updated. • All staff managing the repairs mailbox have been reminded of the process of responding and progressing of works required within 48 hours • Mears operatives have been reminded of the importance of ensuring detailed notes are included within reports to ensure that there are no oversights when further progressing a repair and that there are no delays in progressing any required works
Housing – Estates Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To improve communication between teams, weekly meetings between the Central Voids Team and Tenancy Management have been implemented • Ensure that any correspondence relating to ASB cases is sent from the ASB generic inbox and that this is the email provided to residents to ensure there are no delays in responding to queries in the event of staff absence • Training has been provided to all Tenancy Management staff to ensure that all details of any tenancy changes in their areas are provided during staff handovers
Housing – Housing Solutions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Temporary Accommodation officers reminded to ensure that they thoroughly review properties to ensure the property meets the expected standard before a resident is placed into the accommodation • Staff to ensure that when providing information to residents or to other members of the council, any emails

	<p>sent are via the generic inbox. This will ensure that any correspondence and the information provided in responses can be more easily tracked to ensure enquiries are being dealt with correctly</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A new process has been implemented to ensure that in the event an officer leaving the council, their cases are distributed amongst the team • Staff reminded to ensure that all queries received via the housing.reg mailbox are answered directly by a member of the team. In the event that an enquiry is passed to another service for specialist advice, they must also clearly request that a response is provided to the resident to ensure effective communication
Public Realm– Clean & Green	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Contact Centre have been provided with the staffing details of the Tree Team, to allow for contact to be made in the event of any staff absence • Members of staff within the Tree team have been reminded of the importance of ensuring that correspondence from residents is responded to in a timely manner. Staff also reminded to ensure that if responding via email then the response must include all of the relevant information • All staff reminded of importance of ensuring that when cutting larger areas, the grass must be cut closely around walls and obstacles and that areas must be left tidy after grass cutting works are completed
Public Realm– Development Control	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional training on planning application consultation platform has been provided to the team to ensure they are fully aware of how the platform works and are able to ensure that consultations are created correctly • Updates on any enforcement cases are to be provided to the relevant residents more regularly.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Measures implemented to ensure Enforcement Notices are correctly registered against a property.
Resources & Place Delivery – Council Tax	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Officers reminded of the importance of ensuring that any correspondence for another service is sent to the correct service to avoid any potential delays in collating the necessary information to respond. • The automated message on Council Tax emails, have been amended to reflect the correct expected response timeframes • Officers reminded that in any correspondence with residents they must use clear and plain English to ensure that residents will understand the advice or information being provided in any response.
Public Realm - Highways Maintenance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ‘Report It’ system updated to provide more information to assist with managing resident expectations regarding timeframes • Staff reminded of the importance of ensuring that any potential delays in processing a dropped kerb application are communicated to the resident as early as possible and that the reason for the delay is explained clearly
Public Realm – Parking Enforcement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refresher training has been provided to all officers who are responsible for or support service request responses, to ensure a quality response is provided back to residents • The back-office processing team will now take responsibility for ensuring initial responses and follow up responses are sent direct to the resident and will include

	information on expected actions and outcomes in their responses
Housing – Transforming Homes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wates contractors reminded that in instances where they are unable to access a site and are unsuccessful in speaking with the resident, they are required to contact the council to seek advice on how to proceed with the access issues • Ensure that any response to communications from a resident, addresses all concerns raised and is presented in a way that the response will be understood by the recipient • Deactivation of the voicemail service that had remained active on the previous direct line. This was because the direct line had been disconnected so the team did not have direct access to listen to any voicemails from residents in a timely manner. Any calls are now dealt with via contact slips

High Level Learning for other Housing Areas that fall within the Housing Ombudsman Jurisdiction:

Note – It is a Housing Ombudsman requirement to report learning outcomes that fall within the Housing Ombudsman jurisdiction.

Area	High Level learning identified from complaints
Rents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional training provided to staff on insolvency procedures to ensure all staff are aware of the correct processes

Voids	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All staff have been reminded of the importance of ensuring that full and thorough checks of a property are carried out, as a part of the handover process • All Repairs relating to newly acquired properties will be sent to the Central Voids Team in the first instance, in order to prevent any potential delays • Processes relating to recharge invoices have been reviewed to ensure that any invoices that are generated include a detailed description of the works completed
Leaseholding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A policy will be produced to address the criteria for housing land disposals. This will help to ensure that the council deal with any enquiries in a consistent manner
Sheltered Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No upheld complaints in this reporting period