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WORCESTERSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCILS

MEETING OF THE WORCESTERSHIRE REGULATORY SERVICES BOARD

THURSDAY 20TH NOVEMBER 2025

AT 4.30 P.M.

PARKSIDE SUITE, PARKSIDE, MARKET STREET, BROMSGROVE,
WORCESTERSHIRE, B61 8DA

MEMBERS: Councillor H. J. Jones, Bromsgrove District Council
Councillor K. Taylor, Bromsgrove District Council
Councillor D. Harrison, Malvern Hills District Council
Councillor C. Palmer, Malvern Hills District Council
Councillor M. Dormer, Redditch Borough Council
Councillor J. Spilsbury, Redditch Borough Council – Vice-Chairman
Councillor K. Holmes, Worcester City Council
Councillor A. Scott, Worcester City Council
Councillor R. Deller, Wychavon District Council
Councillor M. Goodge, Wychavon District Council
Councillor I. Hardiman, Wyre Forest District Council
Vacancy – Wyre Forest District Council

AGENDA

1. Election of Chairman
2. Election of Vice-Chairman (this item has been included, should the current Vice-Chairman be nominated and elected as Chairman of the Board)
3. Apologies for absence and notification of substitutes
4. Declarations of Interest

To invite Councillors to declare any Disclosable Pecuniary Interests or Other Disclosable Interests they may have in items on the agenda, and to confirm the nature of those interests.

5. To confirm the accuracy of the minutes of the meeting of the Worcestershire Regulatory Services Board held on 25th September 2025 (Pages 5 - 14)
6. Worcestershire Regulatory Services Revenue Monitoring April to Sept 2025 (Pages 15 - 22)
7. Briefing on Food Standards Agency (FSA) (Pages 23 - 26)
8. Worcestershire Regulatory Services Budgets 2026/27 - 2028/29 (Pages 27 - 40)
9. Activity and Performance Report Data - Quarter 2 2025/26 (Pages 41 - 80)
10. Noise and Licensed Premises (Pages 81 - 90)
11. To consider any other business, details of which have been notified to the Assistant Director of Legal, Democratic and Procurement Services prior to the commencement of the meeting and which the Chairman considers to be of so urgent a nature that it cannot wait until the next meeting.

J. Leach
Chief Executive

Parkside
Market Street
BROMSGROVE
Worcestershire
B61 8DA

12th November 2025

**If you have any queries on this Agenda please contact
Pauline Ross
Democratic Services Officer**

**Parkside, Market Street, Bromsgrove, B61 8DA
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**If you have any questions regarding the agenda or attached papers,
please do not hesitate to contact the officer named above.**

Notes:

Although this is a public meeting, there are circumstances when the Board might have to move into closed session to consider exempt or confidential information. For agenda items that are exempt, the public are excluded from the meeting.



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BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MEETING OF THE WORCESTERSHIRE REGULATORY SERVICES BOARD

25TH SEPTEMBER 2025, AT 4.30 P.M.

PRESENT: Councillors H. J. Jones, D. Clarke (Substitute), C. Palmer, D. Munro (Substitute), J. Desayrah (Substitute) (present during Minute No's 14/25 to 19/25), K. Holmes (present during Minute No's 14/25 to 19/25, R. Deller, M. Goodge, T. Onslow (Chairman) and I. Hardiman

Officers: Mr. S. Wilkes, Mr. B. Watson, Ms. K. Lahel, Mr. M. Cox, Mr. D. Mellors, Mrs. M. Patel and Mr. M. Sliwinski

Partner Officers: Mr. I. Edwards, Malvern Hills and Wychavon District Councils; and Mr. I. Miller, Wyre Forest District Council (on Microsoft Teams)

12/25

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTES

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors K. Taylor (Bromsgrove District Council), D. Harrison (Malvern Hills District Council), J. Spilsbury (Redditch Borough Council), M. Dormer (Redditch Borough Council), and A. Scott (Worcester City Council).

Councillor D. Clarke (Malvern Hills District Council) attended the meeting as a substitute for Councillor D. Harrison; Councillor D. Munro (Redditch Borough Council) attended as a substitute for Councillor J. Spilsbury; and Councillor J. Desayrah (Worcester City Council) attended as a substitute for Councillor A. Scott.

13/25

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

14/25

TO CONFIRM THE ACCURACY OF THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE WORCESTERSHIRE REGULATORY SERVICES BOARD HELD ON 26TH JUNE 2025

The minutes of the meeting of the Worcestershire Regulatory Services Board held on 26th June 2025 were submitted for Members' consideration.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Worcestershire Regulatory Services Board held on 26th June 2025 be approved as a correct record.

15/25

WORCESTERSHIRE REGULATORY SERVICES REVENUE

MONITORING APRIL - JUNE 2025

The Deputy Chief Executive and Chief Finance Officer, Bromsgrove District Council (BDC) and Redditch Borough Council (RBC) introduced the report and in doing so drew Members' attention to the report Recommendations as detailed on pages 19 and 20 of the main agenda pack.

Members were informed that at quarter 1 2025/26 the projected outturn for 2025/26 was a £2k surplus. It was noted that Worcestershire Regulatory Services (WRS) was now receiving income from all partner councils in respect of temporary event licence applications.

A 3 per cent pay award had been included in this report's projected outturn figures, as per the original budget. The final agreed pay award for 2025-26 was 3.2 per cent, creating additional salary pressure for WRS of £9k. This would be included in quarter 2 figures and was expected to be managed through existing financial allocation.

It was noted that work had already begun on preparing the WRS budget for 2026-27.

RESOLVED that the Board

1.1 Note the final financial position for the period April-June 2025.

1.2 That partner councils are informed of their liabilities for April-June 2025 in relation to Bereavements:

Council	Apr-June 25 Actual for Bereavements £000
Bromsgrove District Council	3
Redditch Borough Council	1
Worcester City Council	9
Total	13

1.3 That partner councils are informed of their liabilities for 2025-26 in relation to Pest control:

Council	Estimated Projected Outturn 2025/26 Pest Control £000
Redditch Borough Council	8
Wychavon District Council	10

Agenda Item 5

Worcestershire Regulatory Services Board
25th September 2025

Total	18
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- 1.4 That partner councils are informed of their liabilities for 2025-26 in relation to additional Technical Officers:

Council	Estimated Projected Outturn 2025/26 Tech Officer Animal Activity £000	Estimated Projected Outturn 2025/26 Gull Control £000
Bromsgrove District Council	9	
Malvern Hills District Council	7	
Redditch Borough Council	2	
Worcester City Council	3	41
Wychavon District Council	16	
Wyre Forest District Council	10	
Total	47	41

16/25

REPORT ON FUNERAL DIRECTOR INSPECTIONS IN WORCESTERSHIRE

The Environmental Health and Trading Standards Manager, WRS, provided a report on the Funeral Director Inspections in Worcestershire. It was stated that unlike many other sectors that deal with public welfare, the funeral industry remained largely unregulated and there was no statutory requirement for funeral directors to be inspected.

Following an incident uncovering serious failings at a funeral director business in Hull and East Riding, the Ministry of Justice (MoJ) issued the Local Authority Funeral Director Visits Guidance Pack in May 2024 which provided guidance for local authorities to conduct inspections of funeral directors within their regions.

The report before Members detailed the process of inspections of funeral directors across Worcestershire that was undertaken by WRS between December 2024 and April 2025 on behalf of its partner authorities. The Environmental Health and Trading Standards Manager, WRS, reported that most funeral director businesses in the county demonstrated good standards of care, with those identified as requiring areas for improvement being suitably advised. No formal action had been required from WRS in response to inspections.

In response to a question from a Board Member as to whether a programme of inspections would continue, it was explained that this was

a single reassurance exercise commissioned by the Ministry of Justice without funding support for local authority activities, and that local authority Environmental Health Officers had limited regulatory powers in this sector. The Director of WRS explained further that there was no legislation in place enabling local authorities to undertake inspections of funeral directors and the inspection exercise detailed in the report was undertaken under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974. Any change to a regular inspection regime would require the Government to introduce appropriate regulations to empower local authorities and come with new burdens funding. Members were reassured that the inspection exercise demonstrated good standards of care across the sector in Worcestershire.

It was clarified that residents should report concerns with funeral directors to the appropriate agencies, for example the Police if the concern was in relation to human remains, and the Worcestershire County Council (WCC) Trading Standards in relation to the mis-selling of funeral plans, although this may of itself be a fraud that the Police would also investigate.

Board Members expressed surprise at the lack of regulation of the funeral industry and it was remarked that the public would assume the sector was regulated more strongly. It was noted in relation to this that there were two professional bodies for funeral directors in England. Within Worcestershire, the professional bodies were supportive of the inspection programme and cooperated fully with WRS throughout the inspection programme.

A Board Member asked if the WRS monitored whether common areas for improvement identified as part of the inspection programme were being addressed by those establishments in which issues were identified. In response, a Board Member was advised that actions which were requested by WRS in response to inspections had been completed by the establishments in question.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

17/25

ACTIVITY AND PERFORMANCE DATA QUARTER 1 2025/6

The Technical Services Manager, Worcestershire Regulatory Services (WRS), presented the report which set out the Activity and Performance Data for Quarter 1 2025/26. and in doing so drew Members' attention to the following activity areas of the report:

Activity Data

There were 329 programmed interventions undertaken during quarter 1, slightly below the 392 and 391 respectively in the previous two periods. 5% of the 329 interventions resulted in businesses being rated as "non-compliant" (issued a rating of 0, 1, or 2 FHRS score). As with previous quarters a significant proportion of non-compliant ratings were issued to the hospitality sector (such as takeaways and pubs) or small retailers.

The number of health and safety at work cases remained on trend with 56 at quarter 1, compared to 63 last year and 49 two years ago for quarter 1. The service continued to deal with varied and sometimes complex cases in this area.

The number of complaints and enquiries about dog control was the lowest for many quarters at only 29. The figure was below all the quarterly figures reported in the last 3 years, with only the 33-figure in Q2 of 2023/4 being close.

However, the number of reported strays was high at Q1 2025/26 at 426, compared with 304 last year, and 402 the previous one. Around 94% of cases were reports of lost or stray dogs with most, as usual categorised as "contained strays", with dogs found and held by members of the public. Officers remained concerned at the notable increase in the number of dogs picked up with welfare concerns and subsequently requiring veterinary treatment or examination.

A Board Member expressed concern at the rise in the number of stray dogs and it was responded that addressing this remained one of the priorities for WRS and the communications officer was currently working on preparing a communications initiative to focus on this issue.

In Licensing, the number of complaints and enquiries followed the previous slightly downward trend, with 651 at Q1 2025/26 compared to 828 and 740 for the same period in the last two years for quarters 1, and well below the peak of 1026 in the final quarter of 2023/24. It was stated that this was positive and reflected the work done within the service on automation and communications.

Planning support work continued an upward trend, with Q1 figures again exceeding those at the same point in the previous two years, with 977 requests compared to 808 and 763 respectively. There had been a steady increase in the number of planning applications being submitted across Worcestershire and there had been a general increase in enquiries.

This year's hot summer had led to more reports of nuisance, and it was expected the number of nuisance complaints for Q2 2025/26 to be significantly higher than the previous two summer periods.

Board Members were asked to promote the work undertaken by WRS across six partner authorities to all elected members as it was apparent from recent meetings attended by WRS officers that some district/borough councillors remained unaware of the remit and work being carried out by WRS.

A Board Member asked about the licensing of vapes and vape shops. The Director of WRS responded that the proposed Tobacco and Vapes Bill, when passed, would provide powers to introduce a licensing

scheme for the retail sale of vapes and tobacco products, but it remained unclear which body would be responsible for the licensing regime or its enforcement. The existing regulatory regime that addresses illegal tobacco and vapes was the responsibility of Worcestershire County Council (WCC) and its Trading Standards service. There was no clarity at this stage as to whether district or county councils would be responsible for licensing.

Question was raised as to whether the increased number of Environmental Information Requests (EIRs) received was placing operational pressure on WRS. The Technical Services Manager, WRS, stated that a review of WRS approach to responding to EIRs was being undertaken, it being acknowledged that there was increased demand from the public for this kind of information. It was highlighted that the WRS tried to publish information relating to common types of queries on its website.

It was asked by a Board Member if a breakdown by district could be provided in relation to the taxi licensing complaints and enquiries being received by WRS. The Officers undertook to check if this information could be compiled in this format and would provide a response. It was also clarified that most of the contacts relating to taxi licensing were simple enquires, but that some were true 'complaints' and that these could relate to a range of issues from driver behaviour to the quality of vehicles and go outside of this regime to things like pubs making too much noise or trading outside of their licensed hours. If Officers identified that an enquiry contained the substance of a serious complaint, this could then be referred to the appropriate district council for consideration at a licensing sub-committee meeting, particularly if, for taxi drivers, the accusation went to the root of whether the driver met the "fit and proper person" test.

A Board Member referred to several districts within Worcestershire reporting large presence of 'Uber' vehicles which were not licensed within that district and queried what powers WRS had to address this. The Director of WRS responded that WRS had limited powers in this area as when Government introduced the Devolution Act in the mid-2010s, private hire vehicles were allowed to be licensed by one council but operate in another area, and local licensing authorities were not in a position to demand that 'Uber' registered taxi drivers or vehicles be licenced with a specific district area.

It was recognised that many taxis operating within Worcestershire were now licensed by City of Wolverhampton Council, and that this was true for many parts of the country, particularly urban areas. It was reported that officers had been engaging with colleagues at Wolverhampton to arrange joint enforcement and compliance visits at night, allowing taxis licensed in Wolverhampton to be in scope of the enforcement operations.

RESOLVED that the Activity and Performance Data Quarter 1 to 2025/26, be noted and that Members use the contents of the report in their own reporting back to their respective partner authority.

18/25

BRIEFING ON FIREWORK CONTROLS

The Director of WRS introduced the report on fireworks control and stated that this report was in response to a range of issues experienced by councillors at both district and county level in relation to fireworks. The report before the Board was intended to provide support for elected members in dealing with these questions as it was highlighted that the legal position provided local authorities with very limited influence over the use of fireworks by members of the public.

It was noted that Worcestershire County Council (WCC) was the licensing authority for the storage of explosives. Going back 10-20 years, around 100-120 premises would be licensed annually to store fireworks, but this number had been falling with only 63 premises submitting applications for this fireworks season. Most premises sell fireworks for limited periods only around Bonfire Night, (usually 3 weeks before and 1 week after) and for a short time around the New Year period. Only two businesses in the county held a license to sell fireworks all year round.

WCC Trading Standards team was also responsible for enforcing the legal provisions requiring that fireworks sold in the county be manufactured to the relevant standard and that fireworks were not sold to minors (under 18s).

The use of fireworks was not a licensable activity under the Licensing Act 2003, so public firework displays were not licensed by district councils. People undertaking public displays must ensure the health and safety of those attending and also observe any civil law duty of care they might have to those in the vicinity, but beyond this, controls were limited, and councils had few powers to address activities.

Most firework displays were one-off events and, because of the transitory nature of noise from such displays, it was likely that a single display, by itself, could not constitute a statutory nuisance that could be dealt with under the Environmental Protection Act 1990, especially if the terminal hours outlined in law are observed. Currently there was a noise limit for fireworks sold via retail of 120dB, although pressure groups were campaigning to have this reduced to 90dB.

The law specified cut-off (curfew) times for the use of fireworks which was 11pm for all nights except for bonfire night, when the cut off was midnight and 1am for New Year, Diwali and Chinese New Year celebrations, and this was enforced by the Police.

It was stated that the County Council issued licenses to premises through its Trading Standards service. Where a premise applied for a

fireworks license, and it had not held one previously, that premise would be visited to ensure that it was suitable. Appropriate conditions would also be attached to the licence. Following the initial visit, Officers would only license the premises for 12 months and, following this, the applicant could apply for longer, but Officers would undertake a risk assessment of the premises to determine whether it was suitable for a further licence of between one to five years.

It was reported that the County Council's Trading Standards team had not been made aware of significant issues with the misuse of fireworks in recent years. Only one incident, a referral from the Police, was raised with the Trading Standards during the last firework season. Many of the issues raised by members of the public relate to what was currently the legitimate use of fireworks by other residents in their gardens, or the noise from one-off organised displays.

The Parliamentary Petitions Committee looked at the issue of fireworks in 2018 with input from a range of experts from the Health and Safety Executive, Trading Standards, Environmental Health, the National Police Chiefs Council and the National Fire Chiefs Council, as well as those calling for changes to the law. The Committee felt that an outright ban on sales of fireworks to the public risked unintended consequences including a black market in the products, however it did make recommendations, including that legislation be introduced to allow local authorities to tackle the issues in relation to fireworks. The onset of the covid pandemic had meant that Government had not taken any action in this area since the Parliamentary Petitions Committee met.

A Board Member asked whether any testing of fireworks was undertaken. The Director of WRS responded that testing of firework products for compliance was expensive, with only a small number of testing facilities in the UK, which meant that trading standards officers relied primarily on product labelling checks to establish compliance and whether legal fireworks were being sold. Paperwork, such as receipts and invoices, would also be reviewed to establish the source of fireworks to help assess the likelihood of them complying.

In response to a comment about restaurants or similar establishments breaking the curfew on fireworks, it was stated that this would breach the law and Police could be alerted in such cases.

It was requested a briefing note be developed from this paper and that action be taken to circulate this to all elected members across the six partner authorities. It was also requested that the potential effect of fireworks on ex-service personnel be added to the report alongside the potential detriment to animals and others. Officers undertook to complete this action.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

BEEN NOTIFIED TO THE HEAD OF LEGAL, EQUALITIES AND DEMOCRATIC SERVICES PRIOR TO THE COMMENCEMENT OF THE MEETING AND WHICH THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS TO BE OF SO URGENT A NATURE THAT IT CANNOT WAIT UNTIL THE NEXT MEETING.

There was no Urgent Business on this occasion.

Councillor I. Hardiman (Wyre Forest District Council) commended Worcestershire Regulatory Services (WRS) Officers on recently providing an excellent presentation, detailing the work of WRS, to Overview and Scrutiny Committee at Wyre Forest. It was suggested that presenting at Overview and Scrutiny meetings at partner authorities was a useful part of engagement with elected members for WRS, allowing elected members to become familiar with the work being undertaken by WRS.

The Director of WRS explained that the service had used this as a route to speak to a broader group of local authority members, with recent engagement also with both Wychavon and Malvern Hills Overview and Scrutiny Committees, and it was something the service would continue where the Cabinet and Scrutiny model was in operation.

The meeting closed at 5.30 p.m.

Chairman

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WRS Board 20th November 2025

WORCESTERSHIRE REGULATORY SERVICES REVENUE MONITORING April – Sept 2025

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Board:

1.1 Note the final financial position for the period April
– Sept 2025

1.2 That partner councils are informed of their liabilities
for Apr – Sept 25 in relation to Bereavements

Council	Apr–Sept 25 Actual for Bereavements £000
Bromsgrove District Council	3
Malvern Hills District Council	2
Redditch Borough Council	4
Worcester City Council	13
Total	22

1.3 That partner councils are informed of their liabilities
for 2025-26 in relation to Pest control

Council	Estimated Projected Outturn 2025/26 Pest Control £000
Redditch Borough Council	5
Wychavon District Council	17
Total	22



Agenda Item 6

1.4 That partner councils are informed of their liabilities for 2025-26 in relation to additional Technical Officers

Council	Estimated Projected Outturn 2025/26 Tech Officer Animal Activity £000	Estimated Projected Outturn 2025/26 Gull Control £000
Bromsgrove District Council	9	
Malvern Hills District Council	7	
Redditch Borough Council	2	
Worcester City Council	3	41
Wychavon District Council	16	
Wyre Forest District Council	10	
Total	47	41

Contribution to Priorities

The robust financial management arrangements ensure the priorities of the service can be delivered effectively.

Introduction/Summary

This report presents the financial position for Worcestershire Regulatory Services for the period April – Sept 2025.

Background

The financial monitoring reports are presented to this meeting on a quarterly basis.

Report

The following reports are included for Board's Attention:

- Revenue Monitoring - April – Sept 25 – Appendix 1
- Income Breakdown - April – Sept 25 – Appendix 2



Revenue Monitoring

The detailed revenue report is attached at Appendix 1. This shows a projected outturn 2025/26 of £3k surplus. It is appreciated this is an estimation to the year-end based on following assumptions:

- A final agreement for the 25-26 pay award of 3.2% has been agreed, this will give WRS an addition salary pressure of £9k, this will be included in the quarter 2 figures. Officers will look to manage this within the existing financial allocation.
- If April to Sept 25 spend on pest control continues on the same trend for the rest of year, there will be an overspend on this service of £22k. WRS officers will continue to monitor and analyse this spend and advise of any changes in the projected outturn figure at quarter 3. The projected outturn figure to be funded by partners is:-

Redditch Borough Council	£5k
Wychavon District Council	£17k

- The following is the actual bereavements costs Apr – Sept 25 to be funded by partners. These costs are charged on an as and when basis. Due to the nature of the charge, it is not possible to project a final outturn figure:

Bromsgrove District Council	£3k
Malvern Hills District Council	£2k
Redditch Borough Council	£4k
Worcester City Council	£13k

This income is included in the income projected outturn.

- Appendix 2 shows the detail of the income achieved by WRS April – Sept 25
- Any grant funded expenditure is shown separate to the core service costs as this is not funded by the participating Councils.
- WRS are continuing to work on the Victoria Forms project & is now receiving income for all partner councils for temporary event notices licence



Agenda Item 6

(TEN's) & some Personal Licences, below is the income due to partner councils for Apr – Sept 25:-

TEN's

Bromsgrove District Council	£3.2k
Malvern Hills District Council	£6.2k
Redditch Borough Council	£0.8k
Worcester City Council	£2.9k
Wychavon District Council	£6.4k
Wyre Forest District Council	£1.3k

Personal Licence

Bromsgrove District Council	£0.1k
Redditch Borough Council	£0.1k
Worcester City Council	£0.3k
Wychavon District Council	£0.4k
Wyre Forest District Council	£0.2k

Financial Implications

None other than those stated in the report

Sustainability

None as a direct result of this report

Contact Points

Debra Goodall –
debra.goodall@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk

Background Papers

Detailed financial business case



WRS - Profit & Loss Report 2025/26

Total WRS Sept 25 / Period 6 - 25/26

	Revised Full Year Budget 25-26	Revised Budget Apr - Sept 25	Committed Expenditure Apr - Sept 25	Variance	Qtr 2 Projected outturn	Qtr 2 Projected Outturn Variance	Comments
	£	£	£	£	£	£	
Direct Expenditure							
Employees							
Salary	4,440	2,220	1,985	-234	4,056	-384	Includes Ukrainian employees, offset in income £155k
Agency Staff	0	0	299	299	531	531	Covered by salary savings & income generation work, including work for other local authorities
Employee Insurance	21	11	11	0	21	0	
Sub-Total - Employees	4,461	2,230	2,296	65	4,608	147	
Premises							
Rent / Hire of Premise	82	41	39	-2	81	-1	
Cleaning	1	0	0	-0	1	-0	
Utilities	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Sub-Total - Premises	82	41	40	-2	82	-1	
Transport							
Vehicle Hire	13	6	2	-4	5	-8	
Vehicle Fuel	8	4	5	1	9	1	
Road Fund Tax	1	0	0	-0	1	0	
Vehicle Insurance	5	2	3	0	5	1	
Vehicle Maintenance	3	2	1	-1	3	-1	
Car Allowances	53	27	23	-3	48	-5	
Sub-Total - Transport	83	41	34	-7	70	-13	
Supplies and Services							
Furniture & Equipment	46	23	17	-6	48	2	
Clothes, uniforms and laundry	2	1	0	-1	2	-0	
Printing & Photocopying	17	9	8	-1	13	-4	
Postage	11	6	7	2	12	1	
ICT	99	50	65	15	129	30	Includes £4k for special equipment & £10k for new, enhanced WFDC Cyber Security system
Telephones	40	20	12	-8	30	-10	
Training & Seminars	33	17	5	-12	31	-3	
Insurance	16	8	8	0	16	0	
Third Party Payments	209	105	104	-0	209	-1	
Sub-Total - Supplies & Service	474	237	226	-11	489	15	
Contractors							
Dog Warden	121	61	218	158	389	267	Due to increase in sucessful contracts, additional costs are offset in full and shown in income.
Pest Control	78	39	52	13	94	15	Recovered in income
Taxi / Alcohol / & Other Licensing	52	26	12	-14	24	-28	Reduction in Vet-led Inspections £24k, now doing in-house, this will reflect in reduced income
Other contractors/consultants	3	1	5	4	11	8	
Water Safety	5	3	4	1	6	1	
Food Safety	0	0	27	27	28	28	Works in Default £27k, recovered from partner council & shown in income
Environmental Protection	18	9	31	22	37	19	Bereavements recovered in income
Grants / Subscriptions	13	6	7	1	15	2	
Advertising, Publicity and Promotion	6	3	3	1	7	2	
Sub-Total	295	148	360	212	610	315	
Income							
Training Courses / Bereavement / Works in Default / Sewer Baiting etc	-1,102	-551	-855	-304	-1,569	-467	See append 2
Sub-Total	-1,102	-551	-855	-304	-1,569	-467	
Overall Total	4,293	2,146	2,100	-47	4,290	-3	

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Worcestershire Regulatory Services Income 2025/26

Income from Partners

April to Sept 25

£

Budget	2,146,487
Pension Backfunding	19,800
Bereavement / Public Burials	21,806
Employee for Animal Activity	23,902
Pest Control Overspend - Wychavon & Redditch	10,689
Employee for Additional Gull Work - Worcs City	33,000
Tameside - Subs to Anti Fraud Network - Worcs City	2,070
Technical Pollution Work - Worcs City	15,000
Contaminated Land Work - Worcs City	6,500
Marlpool - Redditch	1,795
WID - Padel Courts - Bromsgrove	4,060
WID - Hillrise Billy Lane - Bromsgrove	27,480
Planning Enforcement - Bromsgrove & Redditch	264,177
Ukrainian Support Work - Bromsgrove & Redditch	77,295
	2,654,061

Grant Income

Severn Trent - Sewer Baiting	2,000
	2,000

Other Income

Stray Dog Income	208,516
Worcester County - Mgmt, Legal & Admin Support	40,637
County - Safety at Sport Grounds	11,000
Planning Support Work	36,141
Contaminated Land Work	14,421
PPC Work	3,976
Primary Authority work	8,506
Pest Control	900
Training / Risk Assessments of Water Supplies / Burials etc	6,950
Vet Fee Inspection Costs Recovered	3,238
Licensing - Pre-App Advice	453
Food Training Courses / Certificates / Food Hygiene Rating / Pre-Opening	10,599
	345,337

Total Income Apr - Sept 25

3,001,398

2025/26 Base Budget from Partners

-2,146,487

Total Income Excluding Budget

854,911

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WRS Board

Date: 20th November 2025

On-going dialogue with Food Standards Agency (FSA)

Recommendation	That Members note the contents of this report.
Background	Members may recall the first period of engagement with the Agency in Autumn 2023, which led to the decision to invest approximately £235,000 in 5 additional posts for the service, two Senior Technical Officers and three Regulatory Compliance Officers. Whilst it took some time to recruit to these posts, and for the inexperienced officers to bed into their duties, this additional is now showing improvements in the volume of output. However, I did say at the time that this may not be the end of the process and that further challenges may come.
Introduction	The Food Standards Agency is the national, competent authority in England for ensuring that food is safe and what it says it is. Since our departure from the EU, the FSA has become the agency responsible for presenting a compliant food sector to the world, ensuring that there is confidence with UK produced food wherever it is exported to. This appears to be the driver behind a change in approach to become much more challenging of authorities that look for efficiencies in terms of delivery of food interventions that means departing from the statutory Code of Practice. This document is made under section 40 of the Food Safety Act 1990 and local authorities must have regard to it in determining their activities. . I met with representatives from the Agency on 23rd October, along with the WRS Food Safety lead officer and the Community EH and Trading Standards Manager to cover some matters raised and our performance. The Agency had identified a few minor issues with data, but as the meeting continued, it became clear that they remain concerned that our resource level does not give them confidence that we will be able to become wholly aligned with the Code of Practice. It became clear as the meeting progressed that they will not be happy unless they can see concrete steps in moving towards this. The Head of Performance was clear that he could not offer any form of derogation from the letter of the Code. This is different from their pre-pandemic position, which was more relaxed and whilst they would not endorse variations, they did not object in the way they are currently to experimentation. Managers from the Community EH team are going to work up a revised action plan that will provide a detailed outline of how we will work towards this. The Agency is happy that this can be a multi-year plan, so I have suggested we should consider the period up to 31st March 2028. It will have to include how we will go about addressing the backlog of activity for premises rated D and E, which is our main area. Whilst we aren't perfect on the A-C premises, our performance is relatively good on those representing the highest risk.



Agenda Item 7

The Agency's concerns seem to emanate from the many "what ifs" around lower risk businesses changing their food offer and effectively increasing the inherent risk in their activities without informing us, which they are technically required to do!

For further reassurance, steps we have taken already include re-organising the Community EH team to effectively re-create the split between Food/ Health and Safety, and the Environmental work. We will now have 16 FTE focused on food but also dealing with the limited level of Health and Safety work the partners have opted for, which is essentially investigating serious accidents and near misses. It is a little unfortunate that we've had 6 fatalities in recent years, and two are still drawing on officer resource. Again, the Head of Performance was clear in his view that a service should be resilient enough to discharge all its functions without impacting on the delivery of others!

Looking back to the detailed business case documents from 2009/10, the six partners were deploying 22.31FTE professional staff on food hygiene work, with 3.14FTE dedicated administrative support at this time. The document is silent on how many staff worked on the Health and Safety function, but the figures show that, even if further investment is needed, we are some distance from staffing levels previously employed. The table at Appendix A is only provided as indicative, to give members a feel for the potential cost of the partners of adding further staff.

The Agency has produced what they describe as a "time and motion" tool which is supposed to help local authorities estimate the amount of resource that is likely to be necessary to fulfil the code of practice requirement against the kind of premises in the area. Managers will look at what this throws up and we will make members aware of the outcome at February's Board Meeting. In the intervening period, Officer members of the Board will work with the section 151 officers on how this may be funded if required. The Agency representatives said that the revised Code of Practice published in October gives more flexibility and it may allow more credit for a lot of the non-inspection type work we do currently, so we will need to see how much we can use these options to improve the Agency's perception of our performance. We also need to review our current activities to ensure everything that is done which can be recorded as a contribution to the Code's requirements is being recorded.

The Agency agreed that we could send the revised action plan for mid-December. Managers hope to a draft well before then, which will be shared with Officer Members of the Board. They said that their next step, if they remain unhappy, would be to move to stage 3 of their intervention system where their Chief Executive would write to the Chief Executives of the six partners.

I am sure that members will be as disappointed as officers at this, particularly as the Agency's own figures indicate a significant improvement in our visit output since last October. They also claim to understand the current position of local authority finances, yet little leeway is being given in the face of this. The team will keep Officer members of the Board up to date with any developments and should be agency remain unhappy, we will alert Officers and CEOs immediately.

Contact

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Appendix A: Example Cost Table

These figures are purely illustrative, to give partners an indication of how any uplift might be divided. For this purpose, we have assumed an additional 2FTE Senior Technical Officers and 1FTE Regulatory Support Officer. Costs include salary and the usual on-costs at top of grade.

Partner Authority	Percent Contribution 2026/7	Addition Cost (£)
Bromsgrove DC	14.35	22,433
Malvern Hills DC	13.04	20,389
Redditch BC	17.56	27,447
Worcester City	16.64	26,014
Wychavon DC	23.27	36,376
Wyre Forest DC	15.14	23,659
Total	100%	156,319



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WRS Board 20th November 2025

WORCESTERSHIRE REGULATORY SERVICE BUDGETS 2026/27 – 2028/29

Recommendation

It is recommended that the WRS Board:

- 1.1 Approve the 2026/27 gross expenditure budget of £5,357k as shown in Appendix 1.
- 1.2 Approve the 2026/27 income budget of £1,064k as shown in Appendix 1.
- 1.3 Approve the revenue budget and partner percentage allocations for 26/27 onwards:

Council	£'000	Revised %
Bromsgrove District Council	620	14.35
Malvern Hills District Council	564	13.04
Redditch Borough Council	759	17.56
Worcester City Council	690	16.64
Wychavon District	1,006	23.27
Wyre Forest District Council	654	15.14
Total	4,293	

Agenda Item 8

1.4 Approve the additional partner liabilities for 2026/27 in relation to unavoidable salary pressure.

Council	2026/27 £'000 Excluding Pension Savings	2026/27 £'000 Pension Savings
Bromsgrove District Council	17	-14
Malvern Hills District Council	15	-13
Redditch Borough Council	21	-17
Worcester City Council	20	-16
Wychavon District Council	27	-23
Wyre Forest District Council	18	-15
Total	118	-98

1.5 Approve the additional partner liabilities for 2026/27 in relation to increase in hosting costs.

Council	Increase in Rent £000	Increase in ICT Hosting £000	Increase in Support Hosting £000
Bromsgrove District Council	0.5	0.4	0.6
Malvern Hills District Council	0.4	0.4	0.5
Redditch Borough Council	0.6	0.5	0.7
Worcester City Council	0.5	0.5	0.7
Wychavon District Council	0.7	0.7	0.9
Wyre Forest District Council	0.5	0.5	0.6
Total	3.2	3.1	4.0

1.6 Approve the additional partner liabilities for 2026/27 in relation to additional Technical Officers

Council	Planning Enforcement / Envirocrime £000	Animal Activity Technical Officer £000	Gull Control £000
Bromsgrove District Council	328	10	
Malvern Hills District Council		8	
Redditch Borough Council	145	2	
Worcester City Council		4	30
Wychavon District Council		14	
Wyre Forest District Council		10	
Total	473	48	40

Introduction/Summary

The production of a robust budget position enables partners and the service to manage the financial position of the organisation.

Report

This report presents the revenue budget for 2026/27 – 2028/29 in relation to Worcestershire Regulatory Services.

The following elements are included in this report for WRS Board Member's Attention:

- WRS Financial Plan 2026/27 – 2028/29 – Appendix 1
- WRS Partner Contributions Breakdown 2026/27 – 2028/29 – Appendix 2
- WRS Income Budget Breakdown 2026/27 – Appendix 3

WRS Budgets 2026/27

Appendix 1 shows the 2026-27 – 2028/29 budget breakdown for the district councils' partnership.

The following assumptions have been made in relation to the projections:

Agenda Item 8

- 3% pay award across all staff for 2026/27, 2027/28 & 2028/29. This will be subject to the National Pay Negotiations that are ongoing and therefore the final position will reflect any formally agreed increases, the budget also includes any employee entitled to an incremental increase.
- Increase in Rent of £3.2k in 2026/27, a further 3% in 2027/2028 and 2028/2029
- Increase in ICT Hosting of £3.1k on 2026/27, a further 3% in 2027/28 and 2028/29
- Increase in Support Hosting of £4.0k in 2026-27, a further 3% in 2027/28 and 2028-29
- Total partner contribution as included in Appendix 2
- Income projections as included at Appendix 3.
- No inflationary increases in supplies and services or transport.

The unavoidable salary pressures are not able to be met by WRS making additional income, therefore, an increase to partner funding will be required of the below year on year:

Council	2026/27 £'000 Excluding Pension Savings	2026/27 £'000 Pension Savings	27/28 £000	28/29 £000
Bromsgrove District Council	17	-14	19	19
Malvern Hills District Council	15	-13	17	18
Redditch Borough Council	21	-17	23	23
Worcester City Council	20	-16	22	22
Wychavon District Council	27	-23	31	31
Wyre Forest District Council	18	-15	20	20
Total	118	-98	132	133

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The contract for Rent and ICT support with Wyre Forest states that the increase will be in-line with the RPI for the current year, therefore the actual increase may change in April 26. For 2027/28 and 2028/29 a further 3% has been added to rent, ICT support & hosting support.

These pressures are not able to be met by WRS, therefore, an increase to partner funding will be required of:

Council	2026/27 Increase in Rent	2026/27 Increase in ICT Hosting	2026/27 Increase in Support Hosting
	£'000	£'000	£'000
Bromsgrove District Council	0.5	0.4	0.6
Malvern Hills District Council	0.4	0.4	0.5
Redditch Borough Council	0.6	0.5	0.7
Worcester City Council	0.5	0.5	0.7
Wychavon District Council	0.7	0.7	0.9
Wyre Forest District Council	0.	0.5	0.6
Total	3.2	3.1	4.0

Agenda Item 8

In addition to the base budget there are additional technical officers, working on animal activity, gull control & planning enforcement / envirocrime. We are unable to include these officers into the base budget as they are recharged on a different percentage basis to the agreed partner recharge allocations

Council	Planning Enforcement / Envirocrime £000	Animal Activity Technical Officer £000	Gull Control £000
Bromsgrove District Council	328	10	
Malvern Hills District Council		8	
Redditch Borough Council	145	2	
Worcester City Council		4	30
Wychavon District Council		14	
Wyre Forest District Council		10	
Total	473	48	30

The legal agreement between the Councils requires the Board to set a budget before the 1st December, although the agreement also allows the Board to revise this should there be a need, before the cut-off date of 7th March by which time all partners are required to confirm that the budget is agreed. This facility allows for the accommodation of any changes or revisions that partners may find necessary.

Financial Implications

None other than those stated in the report

Sustainability

None as a direct result of this paper

Contact point

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Background Papers

Detailed financial business case

Account description	Approved Budget	Budget	Budget	Budget	Comments
	2025 / 2026	2026 / 2027	2027 / 2028	2028 / 2029	
	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	
Employees					
Monthly salaries	4,395	4,417	4,556	4,711	Pay award of 3% applied to all years
Medical fees (employees')	2	2	2	2	
Employers' liability insurance	21	21	21	21	
Employees' professional subscriptions	4	4	4	4	
Sub-Total - Employees	4,422	4,444	4,583	4,738	
Premises					
Rents	80	83	86	89	Increase of 4% applied 26/27 & 3% 27/28 & 28/29
Room hire	2	2	2	2	
Trade Waste	1	1	1	1	
Sub-Total - Premises	83	86	88	92	
Transport					
Vehicle repairs/maint'ce	3	3	3	3	
Diesel fuel	8	8	8	8	
Licences	1	1	1	1	
Contract hire of vehicles	3	3	3	3	
Vehicle insurances	5	5	5	5	
Van Lease	9	9	9	9	
Car allowances & Car Parking	53	49	49	49	
Sub-Total - Transport	82	78	78	78	
Supplies & Service					
Equipment - purchase / maintenance / rental	46	46	46	46	
Clothing, uniforms & laundry	2	2	2	2	
Trading fees	33	33	33	33	
General insurances	16	16	16	16	
Printing and stationery	17	17	17	17	
Postage/packaging	11	11	11	11	
ICT	99	111	111	111	
Telephones	40	36	36	36	
Support service recharges - Hosting	132	137	141	145	Increase of 3% applied to all years
Support service recharges - ICT	77	80	82	84	Increase of 4% applied 26/27 & 3% 27/28 & 28/29
Sub-Total - Supplies & Service	473	489	495	501	

	Budget 2025 / 2026 £000's	Budget 2026 / 2027 £000's	Budget 2027 / 2028 £000's	Budget 2028 / 2029 £000's	
Contractors					
Consultants / Contractors' fees/charges/SLA's	277	242	242	242	Due to reduction in vet inspections & gull control
Advertising (general)	5	5	5	5	
Grants and subscriptions	13	13	13	13	
Sub-Total - Contractors	295	260	260	260	
Total Expenditure Budget	5,355	5,357	5,505	5,669	
Income					
Grants / Primary Authority / Food Training / Contaminated Land / Stray Dogs / Ad Hoc	-463	-483	-483	-483	
Sub-Total - Income	-463	-483	-483	-483	
Income					
Funding from Bromsgrove & Redditch for Enforcement Work	-482	-473	-479	-498	
Funding from partners for Technical Officers	-88	-79	-80	-82	
Funding from partners for Increase in Rent		-3	-6	-8	
Funding from partners for Increase in ICT		-3	-5	-8	
Funding from partners for Increase in Hosting Charges		-4	-8	-12	
Funding from partners due to unavoidable salary pressures 26-27		-118	-118	-118	
Funding from partners due to unavoidable salary pressures 27-28			-134	-134	
Funding from partners due to unavoidable salary pressures 28-29				-137	
Savings due to change in forward pension rate		98	101	104	
Sub-Total - Income	-570	-581	-729	-893	
Additional Income					
Additional reduced charge to Worcester City Council	-30			0	
Sub-Total - Income	-30	0	0	0	
Total Income Budget	-1,063	-1,064	-1,212	-1,376	See Appendix 3
DISTRICT PARTNERSHIP BUDGET	4,293	4,293	4,293	4,293	
26-27 Partner Percentages	%s				
Bromsgrove District Council	14.35%				
Malvern Hills District Council	13.04%				
Redditch Borough Council	17.56%				
Worcester City Council	16.64%				
Wychavon District Council	23.27%				
Wyre Forest District Council	15.14%				
Total	100.00%				

Budget 2026 / 27

Bromsgrove District Council
 Malvern Hills District Council
 Redditch Borough Council
 Worcester City Council
 Wychavon District Council
 Wyre Forest District Council
Total

Base Budget	Agreed reduced charge to Worcs City to be added back	Contribution Technical Officers - Including NI Increase	Contribution Increase in Rent, ICT & Hosting Charges	Savings due changes in Forward Pension Rate	Unavoidable Salary Pressures	Total Partner Contribution
2025 / 2026 £000's	2026 / 2027 £000's	2026 / 2027 £000's	2026 / 2027 £000's	2026 / 2027 £000's	2026 / 2027 £000's	2026 / 2027 £000's
620		338	1	-14	17	962
564		8	1	-13	15	576
759		148	2	-17	21	912
690	30	34	2	-16	20	759
1,006		14	2	-23	27	1,027
654		10	2	-15	18	668
4,293	30	551	10	-98	118	4,904

Budget 2027 / 28

Bromsgrove District Council
 Malvern Hills District Council
 Redditch Borough Council
 Worcester City Council
 Wychavon District Council
 Wyre Forest District Council
Total

Base Budget	Agreed reduced charge to Worcs City to be added back	Contribution Technical Officers - Including NI Increase	Contribution Increase in Rent, ICT & Hosting Charges	Savings due changes in Forward Pension Rate	Unavoidable Salary Pressures	Total Partner Contribution
2025 / 2026 £000's	2027 / 2028 £000's	2027 / 2028 £000's	26-27 & 27-28 £000's	26-27 & 27-28 £000's	26-27 & 27-28 £000's	2027 / 2028 £000's
620		343	3	-15	36	987
564		8	3	-13	33	595
759		150	3	-18	44	939
690	30	34	3	-17	42	782
1,006		15	4	-24	59	1,060
654		10	3	-15	38	690
4,293	30	559	19	-101	252	5,052

Budget 2028 / 29

Bromsgrove District Council
 Malvern Hills District Council
 Redditch Borough Council
 Worcester City Council
 Wychavon District Council
 Wyre Forest District Council
Total

Base Budget	Agreed reduced charge to Worcs City to be added back	Contribution Technical Officers	Contribution Increase in Rent, ICT & Hosting Charges	Savings due changes in Forward Pension Rate	Unavoidable Salary Pressures	Total Partner Contribution
2025 / 2026 £000's	2028 / 2029 £000's	2028 / 2029 £000's	26-27, 27-28 & 28-29 £000's	26-27, 27-28 & 28-29 £000's	26-27, 27-28 & 28-29 £000's	2028 / 2029 £000's
620		356	4	-15	56	1,020
564		9	4	-14	51	613
759		156	5	-18	68	969
690	30	34	5	-17	65	806
1,006		15	7	-24	91	1,094
654		11	4	-16	59	712
4,293	30	579	28	-105	389	5,215

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Council	WRS Approved Budget 25-26	Add back reduced charge to Worcester City Council	Tech Officer Animal Activity	Tech Officer Gull Control	Envirocrime & Enforcement Officers	Increase in Rent	Increase in ICT Support	Increase in Hosting Charges	Savings due changes in Forward Pension Rate	26-27 Unavoidable Salary Pressures	Total Partner Contribution 26-27
	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
Bromsgrove District Council	620,393		9,910		327,966	457	442	570	-14,086	16,870	962,522
Malvern Hills District Council	563,853		7,972			415	402	518	-12,802	15,333	575,692
Redditch Borough Council	759,036		2,585		145,289	559	541	698	-17,234	20,640	912,114
Worcester City Council	689,423	30,000	3,663	30,000		530	513	661	-16,335	19,563	758,018
Wychavon District Council	1,005,973		13,789			741	717	924	-22,841	27,355	1,026,659
Wyre Forest District Council	654,295		9,695			482	467	601	-14,856	17,792	668,476
Total	4,292,973	30,000	47,614	30,000	473,255	3,185	3,082	3,973	-98,154	117,553	4,903,481

Council	WRS Approved Budget 25-26	Agreed reduced charge to Worcs City	Tech Officer Animal Activity	Tech Officer Gull Control	Enforcement Officers	Increase in Rent	Increase in ICT Support	Increase in Hosting Charges	Savings due changes in Forward Pension Rate	26-27 Unavoidable Salary Pressures	27-28 Unavoidable Salary Pressures	Total Partner Contribution 27-28
	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
Bromsgrove District Council	620,393		10,440		332,129	814	787	1,157	-14,520	16,870	19,251	987,322
Malvern Hills District Council	563,853		8,397			740	716	1,052	-13,196	15,333	17,497	594,391
Redditch Borough Council	759,036		2,723		147,133	996	963	1,416	-17,765	20,640	23,554	938,696
Worcester City Council	689,423	30,000	3,858	30,000		944	913	1,342	-16,837	19,563	22,324	781,529
Wychavon District Council	1,005,973		14,525			1,319	1,277	1,877	-23,544	27,355	31,216	1,059,998
Wyre Forest District Council	654,295		10,213			858	830	1,221	-15,313	17,792	20,303	690,199
Total	4,292,973	30,000	50,156	30,000	479,262	5,670	5,486	8,065	-101,175	117,553	134,145	5,052,134

Council	WRS Approved Budget 25-26	Agreed reduced charge to Worcs City	Tech Officer Animal Activity	Tech Officer Gull Control	Enforcement Officers	Increase in Rent	Increase in ICT Support	Increase in Hosting Charges	Savings due changes in Forward Pension Rate	26-27 Unavoidable Salary Pressures	27-28 Unavoidable Salary Pressures	28-29 Unavoidable Salary Pressures	Total Partner Contribution 28-29
	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
Bromsgrove District Council	620,393		10,758		344,752	1,181	1,143	1,762	-15,005	16,870	19,251	19,702	1,020,806
Malvern Hills District Council	563,853		8,653			1,073	1,039	1,602	-13,638	15,333	17,497	17,906	613,318
Redditch Borough Council	759,036		2,806		152,726	1,445	1,398	2,156	-18,359	20,640	23,554	24,105	969,507
Worcester City Council	689,423	30,000	3,976	30,000		1,369	1,325	2,044	-17,400	19,563	22,324	22,847	805,471
Wychavon District Council	1,005,973		14,967			1,915	1,853	2,858	-24,331	27,355	31,216	31,947	1,093,752
Wyre Forest District Council	654,295		10,524			1,245	1,205	1,859	-15,825	17,792	20,303	20,779	712,177
Total	4,292,973	30,000	51,684	30,000	497,478	8,229	7,963	12,280	-104,559	117,553	134,145	137,286	5,215,031

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Worcestershire Regulatory Services Budgeted Income 2026/27

Appendix 3

Grant Income

Severn Trent - Sewer Baiting	£	14,000
		14,000

Partner Funded Income

Employee - Animal Activity	48,673
Additional Gull Work - Worcs City	30,000
Envirocrime & Planning Enforcement - Bromsgrove	327,966
Envirocrime & Planning Enforcement - Redditch	145,289
Increase in Rent	3,185
Increase in ICT Hosting	3,082
Increase in Support Hosting	3,973
Worcs City - Add back £30k reduction from 23-24	30,000
Unavoidable Salary Pressures 26-27	117,553
Savings due to reduction in forward pension rate	-98,154
Total Partner Funded income	611,567

Other Income

Stray Dog Income	133,746
County - Mgmt / Admin / Legal / Database etc	69,718
County - Petroleum Work / Safety at Sports Grounds / Uniform Support	49,717
Contaminated Land Work / Planning Support work	100,000
Primary Authority work	40,052
Vet Fee Inspection Costs Recovered	6,000
Animal Inspections	3,000
Private Water Supplies	6,000
Health Certificates / Food Hygiene Re-Rating	24,362
Licensing - Pre-App Advice	6,000
Total Other income	438,595

1,064,162

Total Income



WRS Board
Date: 20th November 2025

Title: Activity and Performance Data Quarter 2 2025/26

Recommendation	That the Board notes the Report and that members use the contents of the activity data in their own reporting back to fellow members of the partner authorities.
Background	The detail of the report focuses on the second quarter of 2025/6, but the actual data allows comparison with previous quarters and previous years.
Contribution to Priorities	Board Members have asked the service to provide data on activity levels to help reassure local members that WRS continues to address a range of issues in each partner area and more broadly across the county.
Report	Activity Data The second quarter of 2025/6 provided us with the driest summer on record, a significant change from the previous two years which were both damp affairs, with many people querying whether we had a summer at all. The extended period of dry weather this year almost certainly impacted on at least one or two of our measures. Food: The number of food safety cases received during the year to date represents an increase of 23% compared to 2024/25 and an increase of 18% compared to 2023/24. At 326, the figure for quarter 2 is the highest number of complaints and enquiries in the 30-month period represented in the graphs. Of the 279 actual food complaints received during the year to date, 69% have related to issues with food products (such as poor-quality food or food containing a foreign object) whilst 31% have related to poor hygiene standards or practices at food businesses.



Of the 694 interventions undertaken during the year to date, only around 5% have resulted in businesses being rated as "non-compliant" (issued a rating of 0, 1, or 2). A higher proportion of non-compliant ratings continue to be issued to the hospitality sector (such as takeaways and restaurants) or small retailers. To find out more about food hygiene ratings, please visit <https://ratings.food.gov.uk>.

The overall number of health and safety cases received during the year to date is broadly comparable with 2024/25 but represents an increase of 7% compared to 2023/24. Looking at the graphs, both accidents reports and complaints remain reasonably within what might be expected. As usual, around half of cases relate to reported accidents in workplaces, with most cases relating to injuries where a worker was incapacitated for more than seven days or injuries to members of the public. Slips, trips, and falls remain the most frequently cited cause. Sadly, the service has investigated two further fatalities during the second quarter including an incident where a member of the public drowned in a swimming pool.

The overall number of licensing cases received during the year to date represents a reduction of 11% compared to 2024/25 and 6% compared to 2023/24. The number of complaints and enquiries was lower than the same period in the previous two years as was the number of applications and registrations. The split between applications and complaints/ enquiries is a approximately 68% to 32%. The most common types of applications submitted to the service relate to temporary events (33%), private hire vehicles (18%) and hackney carriage vehicles (11%).

Of the 807 complaints and enquiries, some 505 were what might be considered complaints about license holders, with approximately 40% relating to taxi licensing (such as reports of poor driver behaviour, unauthorised parking, or poor driving standards) and 30% relating to alcohol licensing (reports of businesses failing to comply with the licensing objectives). A further 12% of complaints have related to animal licensing with most cases relating to the unlicensed breeding and/or sale of dogs.

Planning enquiries continued to fall during Q2, but number are still 5% higher than the same period in 2024/25 and 26% up on the same 2023/24 figure. Whilst there have been falls in two consecutive quarters, it is too soon to say that this will represent a true change in the upward trend. Some 94% of enquiries were consultations for air quality, contaminated land, or nuisances; and approximately 1 in 4 enquiries have been processed on a contractual basis on behalf of local authorities out of county.



Information requests also fell between Q1 and Q2, however, not to a level that would indicate a change to the upward trend in workload.

The overall number of dog control cases received during the year to date is an increase of 27% compared to 2024/25 and an increase of 15% compared to 2023/24. Having talked about the lowest level of dog control complaints and enquiries in 3 years during Q1, we now see the largest number report in the Q2 figures for the same time-period. In comparison with other areas of our work, dog control complaints and enquiries are few in number each quarter. Of the 43 actual complaints received during the year to date, some 33 have related to a mix of dog fouling and dogs that were persistently straying from residential properties. A further 4 cases related to solely dog fouling.

Like complaints and enquiries, the number of reported strays in Q2 was the highest in the current 3-year reporting period, slightly surpassing last year's Q3 figure. The upward trend appears to be continuing.

Approximately 94% of cases have been reports of lost or stray dogs with most cases categorised as "contained strays" (meaning dogs were found and held by members of the public). Around 1 in 5 dogs assessed had welfare concerns and/or required veterinary treatment or examination. As outlined in previous reports, there has been a notable increase in these cases over the past few years. Overall, approximately 41% of dogs have been successfully reunited with their owners when accounting for the work we do for the partners and our contracted local authorities, however, this figure varies significantly between local authorities and the average across the six Worcestershire districts is approximately 51%. Obviously, the contracted authorities cover the costs of kennelling for the relevant period before rehoming, and any necessary veterinary costs.

The number of pollution cases received during the year to date is very similar to 2023/4 (around 2% less) but 21% higher than 2024/25, when we had that very wet summer. This may suggest that, whilst we always sad good weather results in more nuisance complaints, there is probably a ceiling on how much work the hot weather generate given how hot and dry this summer was. Around 92% of cases have been reports of potential nuisances with 45% of cases relating to noise from residential properties (such as noise from barking dogs or audio-visual equipment). As with previous reports, other prominent nuisances included noise from night-time economy businesses, noise from other hospitality businesses, smoke from the burning of domestic or commercial waste, and noise or dust from construction sites. The last of these can be particularly problematic during extended periods of dry weather.

Public Health complaints, usually relating to accumulations of rubbish or pest issues follow a similar trend to nuisance issues in thy increase into the summer. However, overall numbers are broadly comparable to both



2024/25 and 2023/24. Approximately 46% of cases have related to pest control and been enquiries about domestic treatments, enquiries about sewer baiting, or complaints about pest activity caused by the actions of neighbouring residents or businesses. A further 31% of cases have been reports of accumulations at residential properties, however, such complaints often reference the presence of rodents or other pests.

Some 351 domestic treatments were undertaken by pest control contractors during the year to date under the auspices of the subsidised schemes run by 5 of the partners. Around 47% of treatments related to problems with rats with a further 31% due to issues with wasps or hornets. This would probably be expected given the weather conditions. Around two thirds of treatments have taken places at properties in the Redditch or Wychavon districts

Performance

The non-business customer measure increased from 53.8% last quarter to 61.7% at the end of this. Number of people are happy with the speed of initial response is at 62%, and 60% are happy with the time it takes to reach a conclusion. The biggest issue remains our inability to deliver the outcome people would like to see, which is most often down to public expectations not being met by what the law on nuisance allows for. The figure for people feeling better equipped to deal with future problems is up from 42.9% to 57.8% Numbers of responses to our questionnaires, whether by paper or electronic, also remain low with just over 50 returned so far this year.

Business satisfaction has increased this quarter, from 91.8% to 95.1% but remains lower than we might expect. We will continue to monitor this and look at the detail behind the overall figures to see what may be at work.

Compliments continue to significantly outnumber complaints.

Performance on processing complete driver license renewals was slightly lower for the first 6 months at 88.4% within 5 working days, than the figures of 97.6% and 93.9% for the same period in the last 2 years. There were many pressures on the team over the summer and significant numbers of applications for 1 partner whose drivers all fall due at the same time every 3-years. We should see an improvement in the second half of the year. Once an application is made, drivers can continue to drive until their license is determined so slight delays in renewal do not impact this client group

The data on defective vehicles shows a significant improvement on the same period in recent years, with only 8 vehicles suspended whilst in



service. As members will be aware, this relates to situations where the vehicle is recorded as having been suspended either by the district garage on inspection or by an officer. This may follow a reported accident taking the vehicle outside the acceptable standards, or even when the vehicle is submitted for its routine 6-monthly check. In recent reporting periods we have seen on average of 32 vehicles suspended at this point in the year, many of which related to a single partner. Whilst this partner still has most of the suspensions, it is at a much lower level than seen previously.

Staff sickness has increased from 2.17 days per FTE to 3.04 days cumulative for the year. This is much higher than in recent years and closer to the figures shown pre-pandemic for 2019/20 (2.91,) and 2018/19 (2.77) at the same point in the year. Over 78% of the sickness is long term, so for a period beyond 28 days and mainly relates to a small number of officers with serious health conditions. Short terms sickness accounts for around 51 days in total, so significantly less than 1 day per FTE.

The overall rate of noise complaints against population is 0.77, slightly higher than the figure of 0.67 at this point last year, and just below the figure from 2023/4 of 0.79. All of these are well below the figures at Q2 in the most recent years preceding these (0.9, 1.08, 0.94 and 0.85, respectively.) The figures for nuisance complaints in Q1 and 2 were very similar to those in 2023/4, so given the hot weather over the summer, this feels quite good. Members will be aware that this measure has been significantly higher at this point in previous years, as high as 2.1 in 2017/18.

The rate of businesses in the hospitality sector allegedly not upholding the 4 licensing objectives is 5.1%, slightly above the 4% last year and in line with 5% the year before. It is also similar to the same time-period in other recent years. (6.7%, 4.3%, 4.9%.) So far, this is looking like a relatively normal year for this measure. We know it can vary, having seen figures as low as 2.7% at this point, and on occasion, one or other district can hit above 8% in the first half of the year.

Income brought in during the first half of 2025/26 is £347,337, which is higher than the previous three years (£258,989, 204,718 and £232,520 respectively.) Using the historic budget figure for 2016/17 (£3,017,000) to maintain the comparison with previous years, this comes out at 11.5% of that budget. Looking back at this point over recent years for comparison, the figures were 8.6%, 6.8%, 7.7%, 5.42%, 4.37%, 5.3% and 4.7% going back to 2018/19. The figure is roughly 8.09% of current revenue budget, so at a healthy level.



Contact Points

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Background Papers

Appendix A: Activity Report (separate document),
Appendix B below



Appendix B: Performance indicator table 2025/6

Indicator	Reporting period	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4/ Outrun
1. % of service requests where resolution is achieved to customers satisfaction	Quarterly NB: fig is cumulative	53.8	61.7		
2. % of service requests where resolution is achieved to business satisfaction	Quarterly NB: fig is cumulative	91.8	95.1		
3. % businesses broadly compliant at first assessment/ inspection	Annually	98.3	Bromsgrove 98.3 Malvern Hills 98.1 Redditch 97.5 Worcester City 99.2 Wychavon 98.2 Wyre Forest 98.1 Worcestershire 98.3		
4. % of food businesses scoring 0,1 or 2 at 1 st April each year	Annually	1.7	Bromsgrove 1.7 Malvern Hills 1.9 Redditch 2.5 Worcester City 0.8 Wychavon 1.8 Wyre Forest 1.9 Worcestershire 1.7		
5 % of drivers licence renewal applications issued within 5 working days of receipt of a complete application	6-monthly	NA	88.4	NA	
6 % of vehicles found to be defective whilst in service Number of vehicles found to be defective by district and the percentage this represents of the fleet county-wide	6-monthly	NA	8/1551 or 0.5% of the fleet county-wide Vehicles found defective in service (suspended during the period) are: BDC 0 MHDC 0 RBC 5 WCC 1 WDC 1 WFDC 1	NA	
7 % of service requests where	Quarterly NB: fig is cumulative	42.9	57.8		



	customer indicates they feel better equipped to deal with issues themselves in future					
8	Review of register of complaints/compliments	Quarterly NB: fig is cumulative	3/11	5/25		
9	Annual staff sickness absence at public sector average or better	Quarterly NB: figure is cumulative	2.17 days per FTE	3.04 days per FTE		
10	% of staff who enjoy working for WRS	Annually	NA	NA	NA	
11	% of licensed businesses subject to allegations of not upholding the 4 licensing objectives	6-monthly	NA	Bromsgrove 6.8 Malvern Hills 3.5 Redditch 3.9 Worcester City 5.5 Wychavon 3.5 Wyre Forest 7.6 Worcestershire 5.1	NA	
12	Rate of noise complaint per 1000 head of population	6-monthly	NA	Bromsgrove 0.74 Malvern Hills 0.86 Redditch 0.61 Worcester City 0.86 Wychavon 0.72 Wyre Forest 0.80 Worcestershire 0.77	NA	
13	Total income expressed as a % of district base revenue budget (16/17)	6-monthly	NA	£347,337 which is 8.6% as a proportion of the 2016/17 revenue budget figure (£3,017,000) and 8.09% of current revenue budget (£4,293,000)	NA	
14	Cost of regulatory	Annually	NA	NA	NA	



services per head of population (Calculation will offset income against revenue budget)					
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Worcestershire
Regulatory Services

Supporting and protecting you

Activity Report | 2025-26

Published on 7th November 2025



Foreword

Written by **Simon Wilkes** (Director of Regulatory Services)

Welcome to the second activity report for 2025/26. It follows the familiar format that Board members will have seen many times and, whilst the detail covers the period 1st July to 30th September 2025, figures in the graphs and tables will allow comparison with the data in previous periods.

Stray dog numbers continued to be high due to new contracts with other authorities, with the highest quarterly figure during the reporting period. Managing the space with kennelling partners has been taxing at times. Numbers of dog-related complaints and enquiries also leapt up after a quiet Q1.

Food complaints and enquiries were slightly above the established trend in Q2. Interventions were slightly down on last year for the same period, probably due to the better summer and more need to divert onto nuisance work. The figures still demonstrate a good number of interventions and again the food sector continues to show good levels of compliance. Health and safety work also generally following trends during this period. Another fatality was reported during Q2, a death at a privately run swimming pool, which remains under investigation.

Information requests fell slightly compared to Q1, but not enough to deflect from the upward trend. Requests for support in the planning system dropped marginally compared to Q1, but the overall trend remains upward, with combined demand for Q1 and 2 exceeding demand in the same period for the last 2 years. This year may be one of our busiest for planning support should requests continue at this level.

Overall, Licensing work involving both applications and complaints/ enquiries remained around the trend line during quarter 2, with complaints and enquiries slightly up but applications slightly down.

Pollution cases started the year on the increase and continued through the summer with the total for Q1 and 2 being virtually the same as 2023/4 and well above the same period last year during our very soggy summer. Given how good the weather was this year, it is a little surprising that numbers didn't increase even further, but perhaps this showed some increased tolerance of other people during this time. Public Health related complaints (accumulations, vermin, public burials, etc.) appear to be on trend and at similar levels to 2023/4.

We hope the report demonstrates the volume of work staff are undertaking and that some of the stories behind the numbers highlight the difficulties staff sometimes face. If you have further queries, please feel free to contact myself and the Team Managers.

Many thanks.



Community Environmental Health

Written by **David Mellors** (Environmental Health And Trading Standards Manager)

Quarter One

Quarter 1 was a challenging time for your Community Environmental Health Team, with some very complex and challenging cases coinciding with the retirement of one of the Principal Officers who led on noise and pollution issues and some officers requiring extended and unforeseen periods of leave. Recruitment has proven to be very difficult due to the nationally recognised shortage of qualified environmental health officers but remains ongoing.

Following receipt of a Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013 notification, an accident investigation was carried out into a Jewson DIY outlet in Redditch. A Forklift truck had reversed into and run over the right foot of a window fitter from a local company, who was collecting building materials from the branch. He was attended by a paramedic and taken directly to hospital with multiple foot fractures and dislocated toes.

The Parent Company was subsequently successfully prosecuted in Q1, found guilty of offences under the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974, and on appeal against sentence fined £300,000 with costs to the sum of £11,029.

Sadly, investigations continued into the several fatalities notified to the team and covered in previous reports, with regular liaison and updates being made to the Coroner's Office.

There was on-going CEH involvement following the discovery of a rodent infestation and food product recall in respect of a retail warehouse in Kidderminster. Following the voluntary closure of the premises, legal proceedings were instigated for food hygiene offences. The company has entered a guilty plea, and sentencing has been set for December.

The new programme of pro-active food safety interventions commenced, and your Officers continued to work with food giant Muller as part of the Primary Authority arrangement whereby WRS provide assured advice nationally.

The investigation into continuing food offences at a Bakery in Malvern Hills DC escalated with a prosecution pre-hearing scheduled for June.

The end of season reviews were completed on the designated sports grounds and stands on behalf of the County Council, which include Worcester Warriors rugby, Worcester City football, Bromsgrove Sporting, Kidderminster Harriers and Worcester Racecourse.

Infection control investigations were undertaken into cases of norovirus and cryptosporidium across the district, and an Officer was deployed to oversee an exhumation.

Major works in default were undertaken to resolve a long-standing drainage issue in Barnt Green. An old septic tank system and soakaway at a residential property had failed, giving rise to discharges of sewage across the property and into the road. The remedial works included the installation of a modern packaged sewage treatment plant with consented discharge into the highway drainage system, avoiding the need for a new soakaway which would have been costly and disruptive and prone to future failure.

In nuisance work, Officers are working with the respective partner legal teams following appeals against abatement notices served on Padel Courts in Bromsgrove District and a noisy water tank in a block of flats in Worcester City. Both unusual and novel issues.

Quarter Two

The summer months saw the Team involved in some very interesting and unusual nuisance investigations. In addition to the usual barking dog complaints which included the submission of an enforcement file for breach of an abatement notice in Worcester, Officers investigated nuisance arising from extensive development works in Bromsgrove, noise nuisance from a car wash in Redditch which has subsequently closed following our involvement, and noise in Bromsgrove in respect of the fast-growing sport of Padel, the sound of which unfortunately is somewhat akin in nature to that of a shooting range. We also received a query in respect of paramotor aviators in Malvern Hills. Not a problem for which we have powers, but we were able to signpost to the appropriate regulatory body.

In Food, allergens continue to provide a cause for concern and a restaurant in Worcester, operated by a large national chain, closed voluntarily whilst it carried out much-needed improvements in food safety.

In health and safety, we continue to liaise with the Coroner's Office in respect of the fatalities under investigation. We were also able to provide safety advice in respect of the re-enactment battles of Evesham and Worcester, which sounds somewhat ironic, and in respect of an algal bloom which made an appearance in a Redditch park, presenting a safety hazard. We also assisted the new owners in their preparations for welcoming Rugby back to Sixways and carried out checks at the Sunshine Music Festival.

In our infection control role, we are also supporting the invasive mosquito surveillance efforts coordinated by the Medical Entomology and Zoonoses Ecology Team (MEZE) at UKHSA. This project has been crucial in detecting invasive mosquitoes (*Aedes albopictus*/tiger mosquito and *Aedes aegypti*) on seven occasions since 2016. This surveillance is significant given the rising number of Dengue virus cases in Europe, exemplified by the detection of three locally acquired cases in Paris last year, necessitating invasive mosquito control measures. Our role is in running and submitting mosquito traps as part of the surveillance effort. With rising temperatures, we anticipate detections to become more frequent. Early detection and control of these mosquitoes will be increasingly crucial across England to mitigate public health risks associated with mosquito-borne diseases.

Licensing

Written by **Kiran Lahel** (Licensing And Support Services Manager)

Quarter One

It is apparent from the data presented that licensing applications have once again followed previous trends and numbers have again increased this quarter. Officers themselves have noted a larger increase, and this has largely been due to the number of early TEN's being submitted for events and a high number of three year licence renewals due in April this year for Wyre Forest. On a positive note, we can see that complaints and queries are reducing, and this is largely due to the triaging process and the steady introduction of Victoria Forms our online form submission process. The team have worked hard on creating detailed FAQ's and piloting the forms with key stakeholders prior to being rolled out.

A number of key areas have been noted to have increased officer input this quarter and have required either working with colleagues within the licensing team and Community Environmental Health, third parties or West Mercia Police.

Pavement Licensing

With all policies now introduced across the districts there has not only been an increase in application forms for this licence but also some non compliance visits required. Although work has commenced prior to summer there will be a requirement for another pavement licensing audit to take place prior to next spring and summer to ensure that everyone that requires a licence should have one in place. The introduction of the permanent scheme has allowed for a renewal licence which reduces the cost for businesses that already had a licence under the temporary regime.

Animal Licensing

Applications are again increasing in this area of work with more applications being received by the team for new licences. A project looking at 5* rated premises and undertaking interim visits by officers have unfortunately highlighted that not all businesses are keeping up standards and requirements as set out in the guidance long after an inspection has been carried out. As a result, a number of premises have had their licence suspended with officers providing advice and guidance to licence holders of the improvements required so that suspensions can be lifted. In this licencing regime if businesses have their star rating changed, or licence suspended or revoked they have a right of appeal to the first tier tribunal.

Taxis

Several districts have now been in touch through either Councillors, Licensing Chairs and operators or licence holders themselves to discuss the presence of 'Uber' in their areas and what can be done to prevent such a large presence. A report has been produced by the team and has started to be taken through the Licensing Committees in each district to explain the legislation and the limited amount of powers officers have. However, on a positive note the teams have also been engaging with colleagues at Wolverhampton City Council to arrange joint enforcement and compliance visits at night.

Joint Engagement

Officers have seen an increase in engagement activity on SAGs/Event Management Plans for large festivals jointly with community environmental health colleagues. There are several large recurring festivals over the summer periods where event holders are getting in touch early to ensure there are no problems however there have also been a few new festivals that are receiving increasing number of concerns due to the nature of them taking place near residential properties. If objections are received for these events not covered by a TEN then these would need to go to a licensing Sub Committee to be determined.

Quarter Two

Applications received by the team always tend to be higher in quarter 2 due to the number of Temporary Event Notices received by the team for summer events and festivals. This year has seen the first full summer using the victoria forms method for TENs and it has been not only positively received by the public but it has had a positive impact on the team from a processing perspective.

The high number of TENs received for festivals and events has come hand in hand with more out of hours compliance checks being conducted jointly with both West Mercia Police colleagues and Community Environmental Health colleagues. This year the team have seen a higher number of festivals that have caused concerns for nearby neighbours and therefore a joint up approach with colleagues has been essential and welcomed through investigations.

New Animal Licensing inspections continue to be submitted with a slight increase in applications since pre covid. This is an area of licensing that continues to pull on resources due to not only the length of time it takes officers to inspect premises but also due to the requirement to work with licence holders on their applications. The proactive work the team also continue to do has improved compliance across the County.

Compliance and multiagency work has continued throughout the summer with a number of visits taken place at caravan sites in Wychavon that have raised concerns in various partnership meetings and officers have continued to visit gambling premises across the County as part of the annual inspection programme.

On policy matters the team are working with each Licensing Committee on new Street Trading policies to incorporate changes in peoples buying habits and behaviours but also taking into consideration festivals, markets and events that sometimes require road closures. The Chairs of Licensing hope that it will bring a more flexible and up to date approach for both traders and the public.

Technical Services

Written by **Mark Cox** (Technical Services Manager)

Quarter One

The team were focused on production of the **air quality** Annual Status Reports (ASRs) for the six Districts prior to the end of June deadline but also continued to work on the draft air quality strategy in the background. In addition, following the review of real time monitoring data with deployment of the Earthsense Zephyr monitors last year, a number have been relocated.

As well as reviewing a number of priority sites, work on **contaminated land** has largely focused on the continued digitisation of records to enhance the services ability to respond to Environmental Information Requests.

In relation to **Planning and Environmental Enforcement**, a total of 9 Fixed Penalty Notices have been issued for fly-tipping and littering, and four Community Protection Warnings which progressed to four Community Protection Notices have been issued. In general, most planning enforcement matters are resolved by informal means or regularisation (through granting of planning consent retrospectively).

The number of **dogs** being reported as strays remains high and for quarter one is over 100 more than last year. The poor condition that a significant proportion of the dogs are found in is a worrying trend, such as a French Bull dog with a large mammary tumour, and others with a variety of infections, mange and emaciated. We also had a number of very young puppies and very old dogs, at 17 and 18 years of age. Such cases are difficult to cater for in terms of welfare whilst looked after by the Council and often presents a difficult task in obtaining a rehoming placement when not claimed. Unfortunately we have had an outbreak of parvovirus which is a highly contagious disease for dogs.

Towards the end of 2024, the Home Office announced that current guests in the UK under the **Homes for Ukraine** (HfU) scheme are eligible to apply for the Ukraine Permission Extension (UPE) scheme. As nearly half of the guests on the HfU scheme arrived between April and July 2022 in Bromsgrove and Redditch, the team experienced a particularly busy period the first quarter of this financial year, dedicating significant time to reminding guests to apply and assisting them throughout the application process.

Support was also provided in cases where application decisions were delayed beyond expected timeframes. Unfortunately, one notable case involves a guest who arrived as an unaccompanied minor and applied for her UPE in May 2025. As of the end of Q1, she has yet to receive a decision. This delay has caused considerable distress, as it prevented her from attending a planned university trip to the United States as well as a long-awaited home visit to Ukraine. Such cases are emotionally taxing for the guests and time-consuming for the support workers.

While the Homes for Ukraine scheme has generally received positive feedback, some challenges remain. In May, one host faced significant criticism from their family for their involvement in the scheme, ultimately leading to their withdrawal. As a result, the guest had to be relocated to temporary accommodation, a transition that was fully supported by the team.

During Q1 there were new arrivals across the 2 districts which WRS support with this work (4 adults and 4 children). There are currently 15 hosts in Bromsgrove (17 adults / 13 children) and 17 hosts in Redditch (20 adults / 9 children). Support Workers continue to provide assistance to all hosts and guests remaining on the Homes for Ukraine scheme, as well as to those guests who have transitioned to independent accommodation.

Quarter Two

Following successful delivery of our **gull control** programme during the breeding season over the summer months, our Gull Control Officer has been preparing the Organisational Licence return for Natural England to demonstrate compliance with our licence as well as finishing off arrangements for the last of the proofing works for this year. We have continued to receive requests for help and have prepared a programme of control for 2026/27 to be presented at Committee next quarter including a summary of this year's activity.

During the summer the updated **Contaminated Land** Inspection Strategies for Bromsgrove and Wychavon continued to progress through the respective committee processes. In parallel, the prioritization and risk scoring of approximately 10,000 potentially contaminated sites across the area has been actively ongoing. This process is critical for determining the order of site investigations based on potential risks to human health and the environment.

The summer months also saw a high volume of Environmental Information Requests (EIRs) related to contaminated land, alongside routine **planning consultations** (which is where support is provided to planning officers on environmental health related elements of applications or requests to discharge conditions). The team also continued to support Gloucester City Council and North Warwickshire District Council and responded to ad hoc consultations from Bristol City Council.

In August and September, WRS was asked to provide a second opinion on a planning application involving a site where remediation of a public open space had not been implemented, in Bristol City Council area. The original developer had gone into administration, and WRS reviewed the submitted assessment report, offering professional recommendations to the Environmental Health Officer.

A different significant planning case in Gloucester City involved proposed development on part of a closed landfill site. The site presents risks from ground gases and residual contamination, compounded by its proximity to the River Severn, in-situ leachate systems, and protected water supply zones. The inclusion of privately owned residential properties adds complexity regarding long-term infrastructure management. WRS's Contaminated Land Team has been actively working with the Local Authority and stakeholders to ensure the site is safe and suitable for its intended sensitive use. Furthermore, support was provided in the development of the South Worcestershire Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) for air quality. This work was led by the Senior Strategic Planning Officer at the County Council and culminated in the SPD being presented to committee in September, where it was formally approved by all three districts.

During this quarter, significant progress was made in **air quality** management across the region. The process of revoking several Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAS) was initiated, specifically those located in Bromsgrove (Lickey End and Redditch Road) and Wychbold in Wychavon. In addition, the relocation of ten low-cost air quality sensors was successfully completed. This forms part of the ongoing effort to improve spatial coverage and data quality for local air quality monitoring. The Annual Status Reports for all Districts (ASR) were published in July and made available on the council's website, providing a comprehensive overview of air quality trends, monitoring data, and progress against local objectives.

Air Quality Behavioural Change work

The Behavioural Change Officer with support from colleagues undertook a series of community engagement activities aimed at raising awareness and promoting behavioural change around air quality issues across key locations in Worcestershire.

A number of school visits were conducted in Bromsgrove as part of the Community Awareness initiative. These sessions focused on educating pupils about the sources and impacts of air pollution, as well as practical steps individuals and families can take to reduce their exposure and contribution to poor air quality. The interactive nature of the sessions helped to foster a strong understanding of the topic among young people, encouraging them to become ambassadors for cleaner air within their schools and homes.

In September, the team participated in the 2025 Freshers' Fairs at both the Worcester and Redditch campuses of Heart of Worcestershire (HOW) College. These events provided an excellent platform to engage with new students, many of whom are new to the area and may be unaware of local air quality challenges. Through informative displays, interactive activities, and one-on-one conversations, students were introduced to the importance of sustainable travel choices, the health impacts of air pollution, and the role they can play in improving local air quality.

Further outreach was carried out through visits to community centres and businesses along Redditch Road and Lickey End Road in Bromsgrove. These visits aimed to engage residents and business owners in discussions about air quality, offering tailored advice on reducing emissions and exposure in both domestic and commercial settings. The team also gathered feedback on local concerns, which will help inform future interventions and policy development.

Additionally, a visit was made to St. Martin with St. Peter Church of England Church, where members of the congregation were engaged in a discussion about the links between environmental stewardship and air quality. This provided a valuable opportunity to connect with the community in a more reflective setting, reinforcing the shared responsibility for protecting the environment and promoting public health.

In relation to Planning and Environmental Enforcement, this quarter has seen an increase in the amount of Fixed Penalty Notices issued for fly-tipping and littering related offences at 18 with 4 Community Protection Warnings also served. The team are continuing to investigate and bring to account those responsible for such crimes in Bromsgrove and Redditch Council areas.

Our **Homes for Ukraine** work has continued in Bromsgrove District and Redditch Borough Council areas including the following two case studies:

One of our Ukrainian guests, 'Olga' (not her real name) a young student who arrived in the UK in April 2022, was recently refused admission to several local Sixth Forms. The reason cited was that her English Language GCSE result was not high enough at a Grade 3.

However, this decision did not reflect the full context of Olga's situation. As a newly arrived child from a war zone on the Homes for Ukraine scheme, Olga had no prior knowledge of English when she arrived in the UK. Despite this, she became fluent in the language within just three years, while also performing strongly in her other GCSE subjects. In addition, she is multilingual and has demonstrated exceptional resilience and academic potential.

With her mother's consent, our Homes for Ukraine Support Workers intervened by liaising with the admissions teams directly. They assisted in setting out Olga's unique background and achievements whilst showcasing her achievements, despite the significant pressure she endured whilst taking her GCSEs, while her father was serving on the frontlines in Ukraine providing medical aid, and her mother was undergoing treatment here in the UK for a life-threatening illness.

Shortly after our intervention, Olga's mother updated the team to confirm Olga went for an interview at a sixth form that had been contacted by the team and was successful in gaining a place. She went on to say 'I will remember your help for the rest of my life. Thank you again for everything! '

In our other case study, back in August 2022, a young guest and her mother arrived in the UK under the Homes for Ukraine scheme. Like many others adjusting to a new country, both mother and daughter faced significant challenges in settling into life in the UK. They struggled not only with the language barrier but also with mental health concerns, particularly for the young woman.

Recognising their need for additional support, one of our Ukrainian speaking support workers dedicated time to working closely with the family over the past three years. Her consistent involvement has been vital in helping them navigate both daily life and complex systems such as healthcare and education. We recently received the following message from a teacher highlighting the invaluable contribution of the support provided in our community:

'I just wanted to pass on my gratitude for allowing us access the support worker who interprets at our 6 weekly education progress meetings which are held between us, our pupil KP, the parent and school. These meetings are so important to ensure that school and parents are kept up to date with the pupil's progress and also of any concerns. These meetings would not be as effective without the support worker's input, not solely due to her interpreting so masterfully educational terms and pupil's mental health agencies such as CAMHS, but also helping us to understand the cultural differences. The family have started to make a positive step towards becoming more settled at home and at school and this is very much thanks to them. I think that the Homes for Ukraine scheme is fantastic and I do hope that you and your team appreciate how much you are supporting these families in so many ways.'

Dog Control

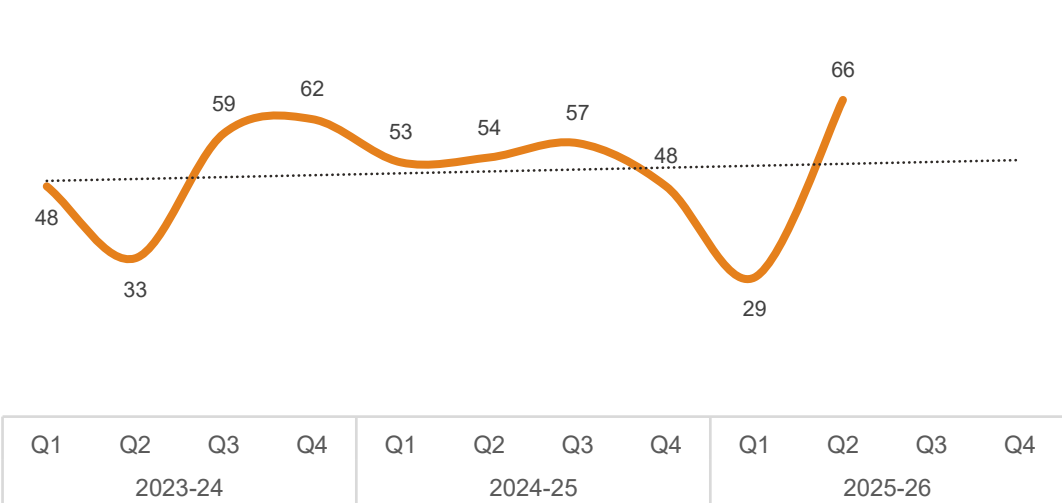
The data on this page shows the number of dog control cases (complaints, enquiries, and reports of lost or stray dogs) handled by the service over a three-year period. Complaints reported to WRS include reports of dangerous dogs, reports of dog fouling, and reports of dogs persistently straying. Complaints relating to the welfare of dogs, however, are investigated by the RSPCA and West Mercia Police unless the dog is found to be straying.

Comments

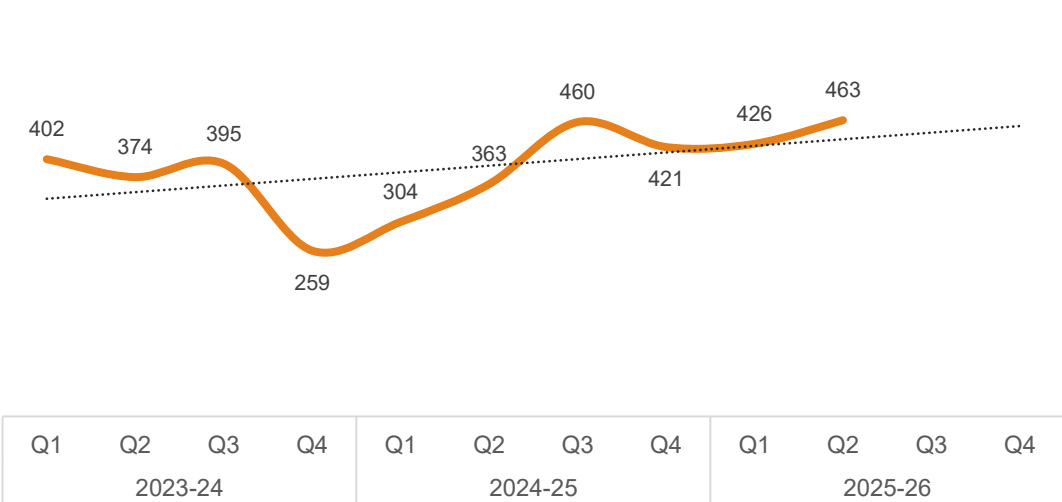
The number of dog control cases received during the year to date is an increase of 27% compared to 2024/25 and an increase of 15% compared to 2023/24. Approximately 94% of cases have been reports of lost or stray dogs with most cases categorised as "contained strays" (meaning dogs were found and held by members of the public). Around 1 in 5 dogs assessed had welfare concerns and/or required veterinary treatment or examination. As outlined in previous reports, there has been a notable increase in these cases over the past few years. Approximately 41% of dogs have been successfully reunited with their owners, however, this figure varies significantly between local authorities and the average across Worcestershire is approximately 51%.

In general terms, the service receives a low number of dog control complaints and enquiries each quarter. Based on the 43 complaints received during the year to date, however, 33 have related to dog fouling and/o dogs that were persistently straying from residential properties whilst 4 cases have related to dog fouling.

Complaints and Enquiries



Reports of Lost or Stray Dogs



Food Safety

The data on this page outlines the number of food safety cases (complaints, enquiries, and notifications) handled by the service over a three year period. The data also outlines the number of food safety interventions undertaken at premises included in the Food Hygiene Rating Scheme. Complaints reported to WRS relate to food products and premises, however, complaints regarding the composition and labelling of food (including allergen labelling) are primarily investigated by Worcestershire Trading Standards Service. Enquiries handled by the WRS include requests for business advice, requests for hygiene ratings, and requests for export health certificates which are required by businesses seeking to export food to Northern Ireland, the European Union, and non-EU countries.

Comments

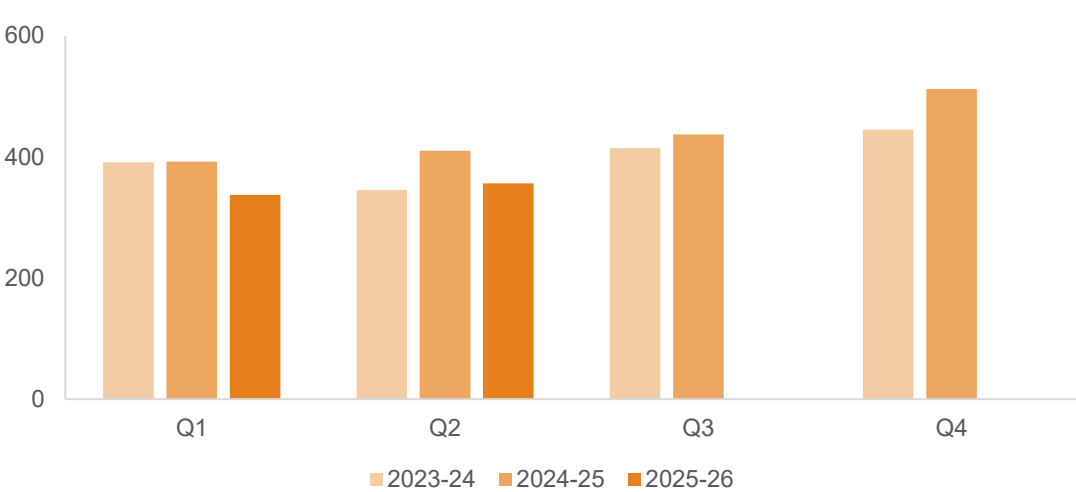
The number of food safety cases received during the year to date is an increase of 23% compared to 2024/25 and an increase of 18% compared to 2023/24. The service tends to receive a greater number of enquiries (including requests for business advice) than complaints. Based on the 279 complaints received during the year to date, however, 69% have related to issues with food products (such as poor quality food or food containing a foreign object) whilst 31% have related to poor hygiene standards or practices at food businesses.

Based on the 694 interventions undertaken during the year to date, 5% have resulted in businesses being rated as "non-compliant" (issued a rating of 0, 1, or 2). In parallel with previous reports, a higher proportion of non-compliant ratings continue to be issued to the hospitality sector (such as takeaways and restaurants) or small retailers. To find out more about food hygiene ratings, please visit <https://ratings.food.gov.uk>.

Complaints and Enquiries



FHRS Interventions



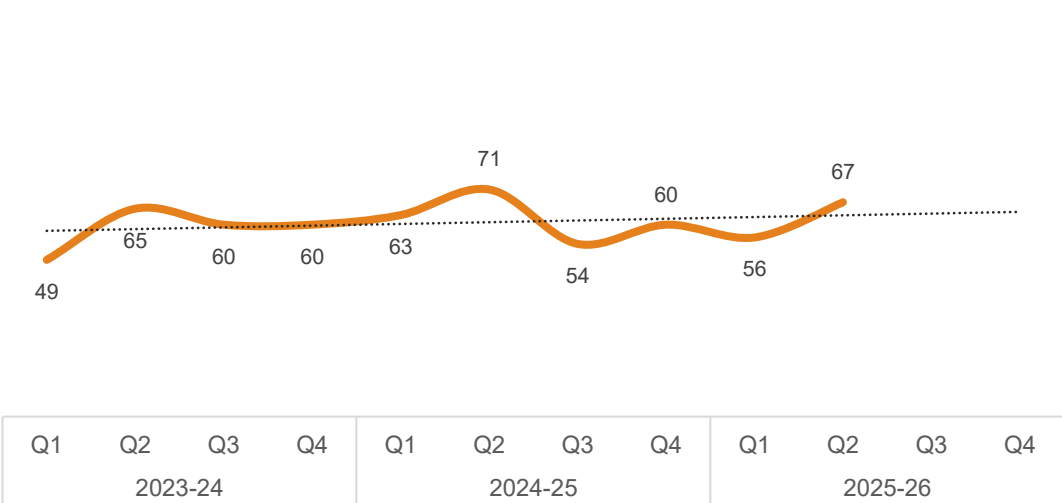
Health & Safety

The data on this page outlines the number of health and safety cases (complaints, enquiries, and reports of accidents in the workplace) handled by the service over a three-year period. Investigations are only undertaken by WRS where they relate to premises such as retail outlets, offices, leisure services, hospitality premises, and cosmetology premises. Other premises, such as factories and medical premises, fall with the remit of the Health and Safety Executive.

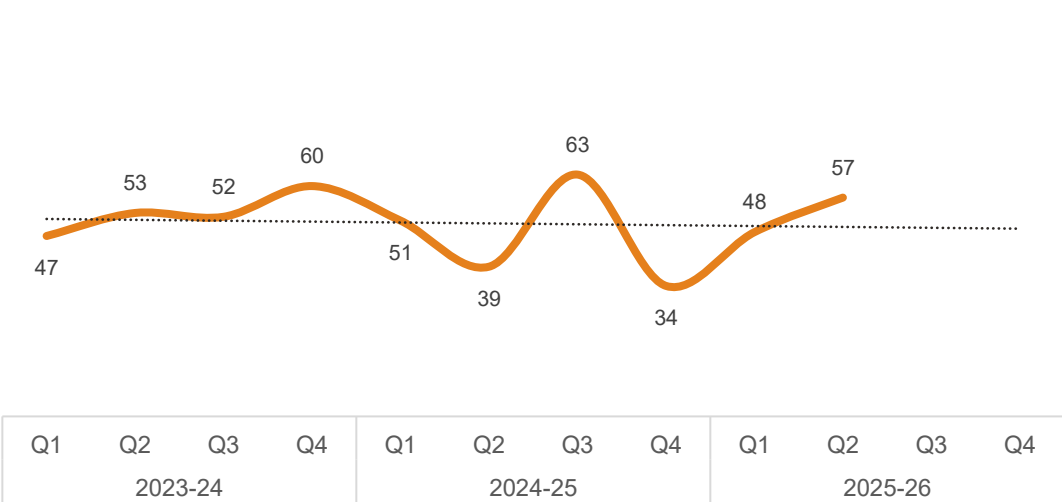
Comments

The number of health and safety cases received during the year to date is broadly comparable to 2024/25 but an increase of 7% compared to 2023/24. Approximately 46% of cases have been reports of accidents in workplaces with most cases relating to injuries where a worker was incapacitated for more than seven days or injuries to members of the public. In parallel with previous reports, most accidents have occurred due to slips, trips, and falls (whether on the same level or from height). Sadly, the service has investigated two further fatalities during the second quarter including an incident where a member of the public drowned in a swimming pool.

Complaints and Enquiries

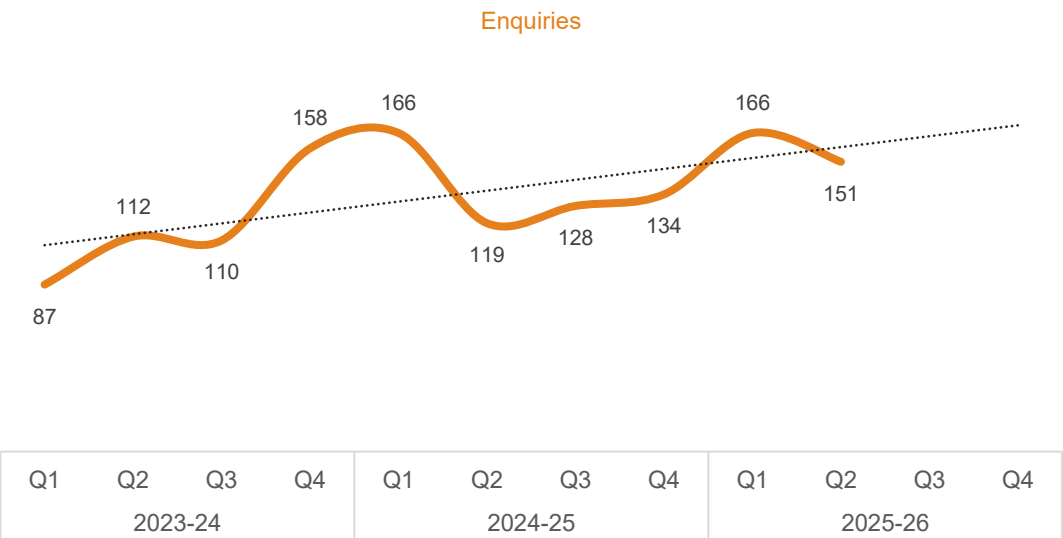


Accident Reports



Information Requests

The data on this page outlines the number of information requests handled by the service over a three-year period. Requests for information are generally received from the public, or private sector companies, and are made under the Environmental Information Regulations, the Freedom of Information Act, and the Data Protection Act (including Subject Access Requests). The service also handles requests for information from other local authorities, or law enforcement agencies, for the prevention and detection of crime and/or the apprehension and prosecution of offenders.



Licensing

The data on this page outlines the number of licensing cases (complaints, enquiries, applications, and registrations) handled by the service over a three-year period. Complaints reported to WRS can relate to licenced and unlicensed activitiy, however, cases generally relate to the following areas:

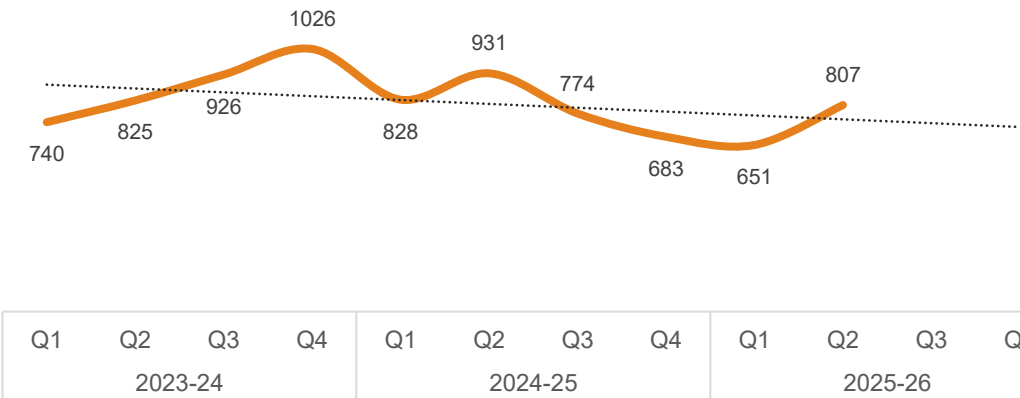
- Alcohol and Entertainment
- Animals
- Caravans
- Gambling
- Scrap Metal
- Sex Establishments
- Skin Piercing
- Street Trading, Amenities, and Collections
- Taxis

Page 65
Comments

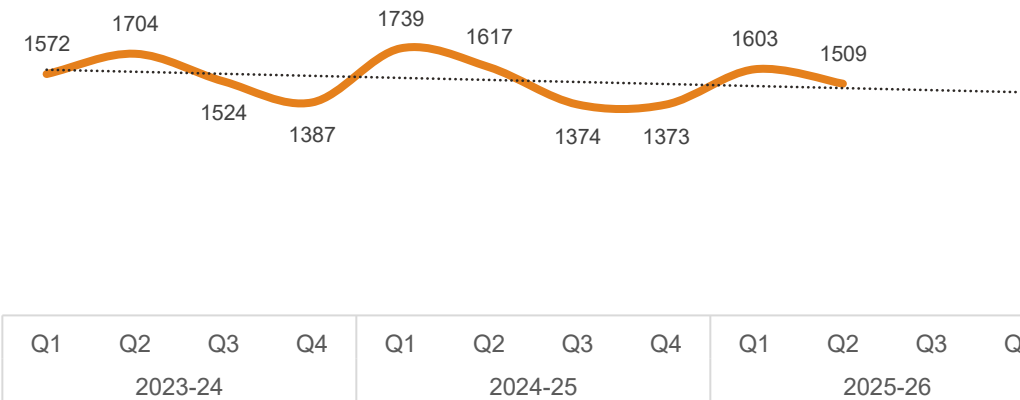
The number of licensing cases received during the year to date is a reduction of 11% compared to 2024/25 and a reduction of 6% compared to 2023/24. Approximately 68% of cases have been applications or registrations and, in parallel with previous reports, the most common types of applications submitted to the service relate to temporary events (33%), prviate hire vehicles (18%) and hackney carriage vehicles (11%).

In general terms, the service receives a higher number of enquiries (queries about regulations, by-laws, and licence conditions etc.) than complaints. Based on the 505 complaints received during the year to date, however, approximately 40% have related to taxi licensing (such as reports of poor driver behaviour, unauthorised parking, or poor driving standards) whilst 30% have related to alcohol licensing (reports of businesss failing to comply with the licensing objectives). A further 12% of complaints have related to animal licensing with most cases relating to the unlicenced breeding and/or sale of dogs.

Complaints and Enquiries



Applications and Registrations



Planning

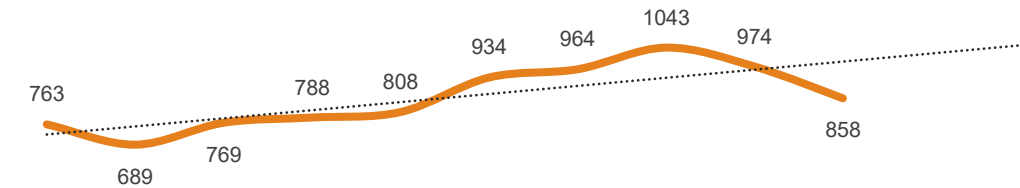
The data on this page outlines the number of planning enquiries handled by the service over a three-year period. Planning enquiries processed by WRS are either consultations or requests to discharge planning conditions, however, enquiries only relate to the following areas:

- Air Quality
- Contaminated Land
- Environmnetal Permitting
- Food
- Health and Safety
- Nuisance
- Private Water Supplies

Comments

The number of planning enquiries received during the year to date is an increase of 5% compared to 2024/25 and an increase of 26% compared to 2023/24. Approximately 94% of enquiries were consultations for air quality, contaminated land, or nuisances; whilst approximately 1 in 4 enquiries have been processed (on a contractual basis) on behalf of other local authorities.

Planning Enquiries



Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
2023-24				2024-25				2025-26			

Planning Enforcement & Environmental Crime

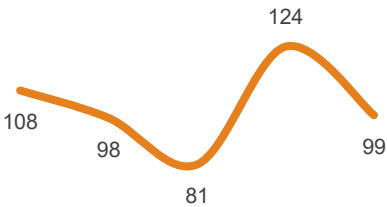
The data on this page outlines the number of planning enforcement and environmental crime cases (complaints and incidents) handled by the service over a three-year period. Complaints reported to WRS include reports of fly-tipping, littering, and planning breaches at residential or commercial premises. These functions are only delivered on behalf of Bromsgrove and Redditch Councils and have only been within the remit of the service since June 2024.

Comments

There is currently no comparable temporal data available for the planning enforcement and environmental crime functions as the service has only been delivering these functions since June 2024. Based on the 666 cases recorded during the year to date, however, 64% have related to fly-tipping incidents whilst 32% have been complaints about suspected breaches of planning legislation at residential or commercial properties. The planning enforcement function has seen a reduction in the number of reports of breaches of planning control and this has enabled the team to focus on finding resolutions to long standing cases.

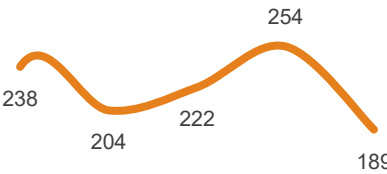
From an environmental crime perspective, it should be noted that the number of cases outlined on this page is the number of cases that have been (or are in the process of being) investigated by the service. During the year to date, approximately 1,243 fly-tipping incidents been reported to Bromsgrove District Council whilst 998 incidents have been reported to Redditch Borough Council. Where an incident is not investigated, this is commonly because there is no possible means for the service to identify a suspect and/or because insufficient information was supplied via the reporting form.

Planning Enforcement



Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
2023-24			
Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
2024-25			
Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
2025-26			

Environmental Crime



Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
2023-24			
Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
2024-25			
Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
2025-26			

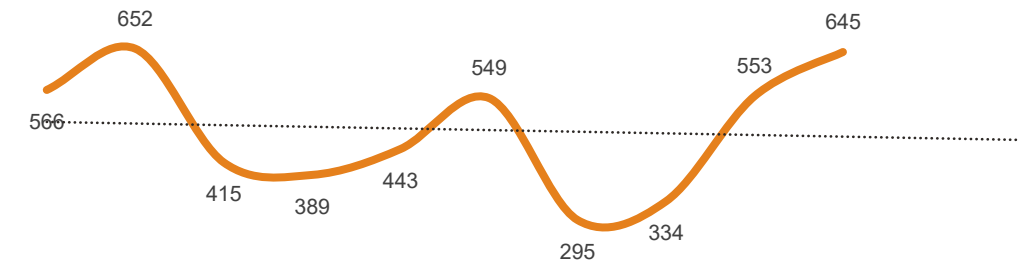
Pollution

The data on this page outlines the number of pollution cases (complaints and enquiries) handled by the service over a three-year period. Complaints reported to WRS include reports of nuisances (noise, light, odour, smoke) resulting from domestic, commerical, or agricultural activity and notifications of contamination incidents.

Comments

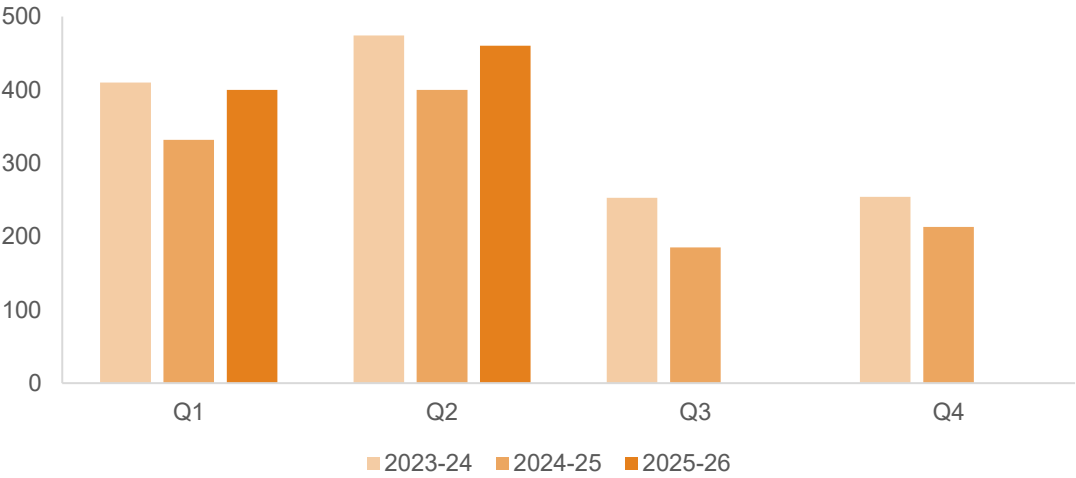
The number of pollution cases received during the year to date is an increase of 21% compared to 2024/25 but a reduction of 2% compared to 2023/24. Approximately 92% of cases have been reports of nuisances with 45% of cases relating to noise from residential properties (such as noise from barking dogs or audi-visual equipment). In parrallel with previous reports, other prominent nuisances included nosie from night-time economy businesses, noise from other hospitality businesses, smoke from the burning of domestic or commercial waste, and noise or dust from construction sites.

Complaints and Enquiries



Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
2023-24				2024-25				2025-26			

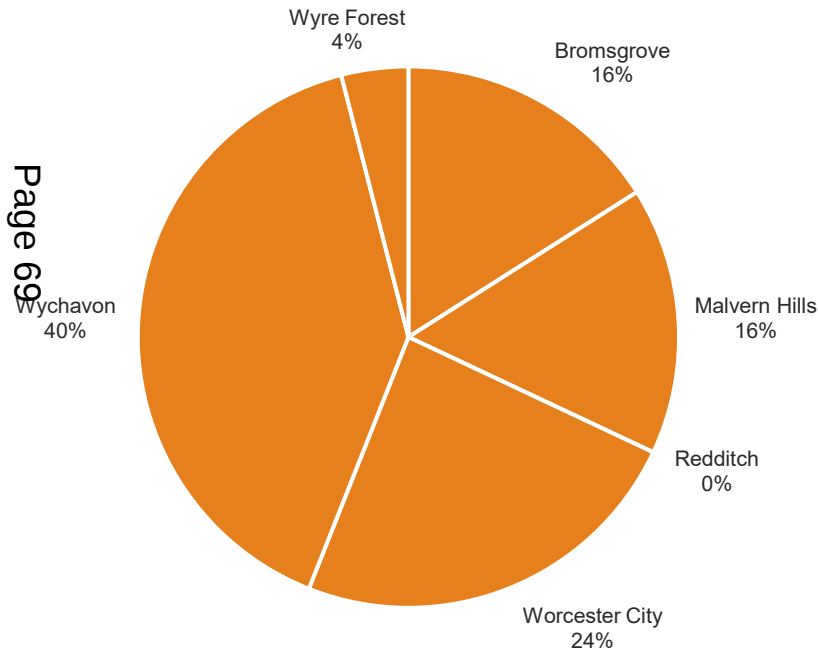
Complaints and Enquiries (Noise Only)



Noise

The data on this page outlines the wards in Worcestershire which have the highest rates of noise pollution cases. It also shows the districts where these wards are located.

Note: The figures in the table are cumulative and will continue to increase until the end of year report is published in April 2026. Where a ward is highlighted, it was also one of the top 10 wards featured in the 2024/25 Activity Report.



Ward	Total	Population	Rate
Barnt Green And Hopwood	9	2,951	3.05
Bredon	8	2,645	3.02
South Bredon Hill	7	2,427	2.88
Alvechurch Village	8	2,960	2.70
Little Hampton	14	5,899	2.37
Upton And Hanley	10	4,268	2.34
Aston Fields	8	3,513	2.28
Hartlebury	7	3,214	2.18
Longdon	4	2,087	1.92
Droitwich Central	5	2,621	1.91
Saint Peters Parish	10	5,310	1.88
Baldwin	4	2,216	1.81
Warndon	10	5,661	1.77
Bretforton And Offenham	5	3,010	1.66
Broadway And Wickhamford	8	4,885	1.64
Charford	6	3,677	1.63
Cathedral	19	11,760	1.62
Bedwardine	13	8,107	1.60
Wells	5	3,256	1.54
Saint John	13	8,736	1.49
Aggborough And Spennells	13	8,774	1.48
Upton Snodsbury	4	2,705	1.48
Rainbow Hill	8	5,418	1.48
Drakes Broughton	4	2,711	1.48
Dodderhill	4	2,809	1.42

Public Health

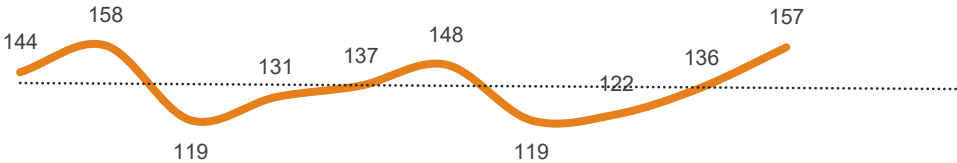
The data on this page outlines the number of public health cases (complaints and enquiries) handled by the service over a three-year period. The data also shows the number of domestic subsidised treatments carried out by contractors. Complaints reported to WRS include reports of accumulations and reports of pests due to the activities of local residents or businesses. Pest control treatments are offered by five of the districts, however, Wyre Forest District Council does not offer a subsidised pest control service.

Comments

The number of public health cases received during the year to date is broadly comparable to both 2024/25 and 2023/24. Approximately 46% of cases have related to pest control and been enquiries about domestic treatments, enquiries about sewer baiting, or complaints about pest activity caused by the actions of neighbouring residents or businesses. A further 31% of cases have been reports of accumulations at residential properties, however, such complaints often reference the prescence of rodents or other pests.

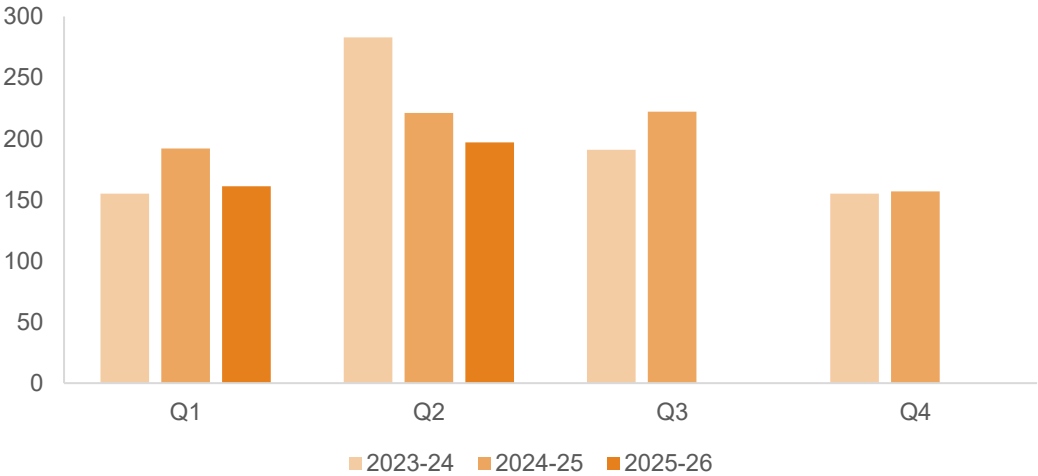
Based on the 351 domestic treatments undertaken by pest control contractors during the year to date, approximately 47% were due to problems with rats whilst 31% were due to issues with wasps or hornets. Around two thirds of treatments have taken places at properties in the Redditch or Wychavon districts.

Complaints and Enquiries



Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
2023-24				2024-25				2025-26			

Domestic Subsidised Treatments

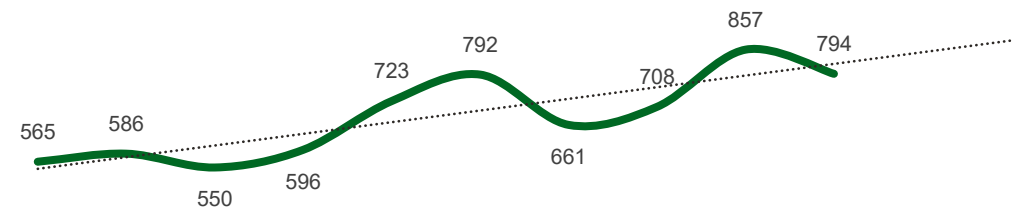


Bromsgrove

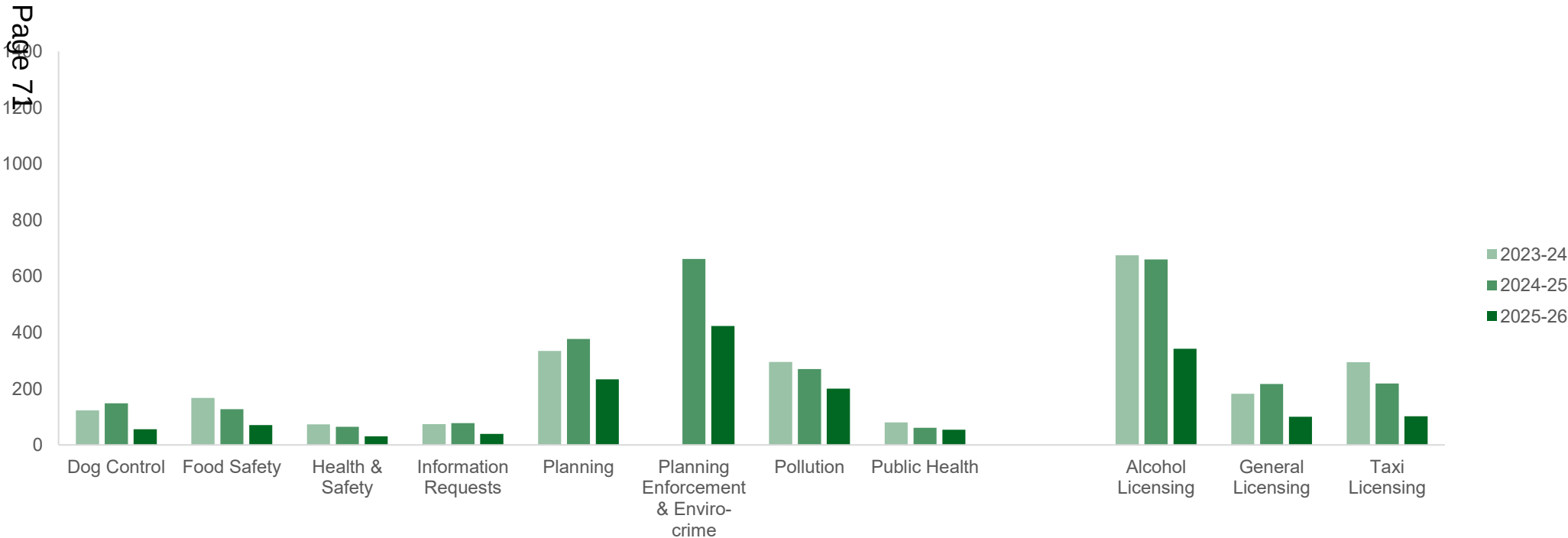
The data on this page outlines the number of complaints, enquiries, applications, and notifications handled by WRS over a three-year period where the subject and/or enquirer were located in the Bromsgrove district. The data also shows a breakdown of these cases by the primary functions delivered by the service.

Note: The recent increase in cases can be attributed to the additional functions (enviro-crime and planning enforcement) now being delivered. The figures for the current year are cumulative and will continue to increase until the end of year report is published in April 2026. In addition, the Y axis on the chart below has been standardised so the level of demand received against each function can be broadly compared to other districts.

Complaints, Enquiries, Applications, and Notifications



Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
2023-24				2024-25				2025-26			

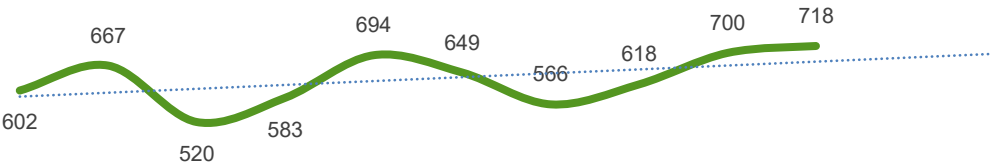


Malvern Hills

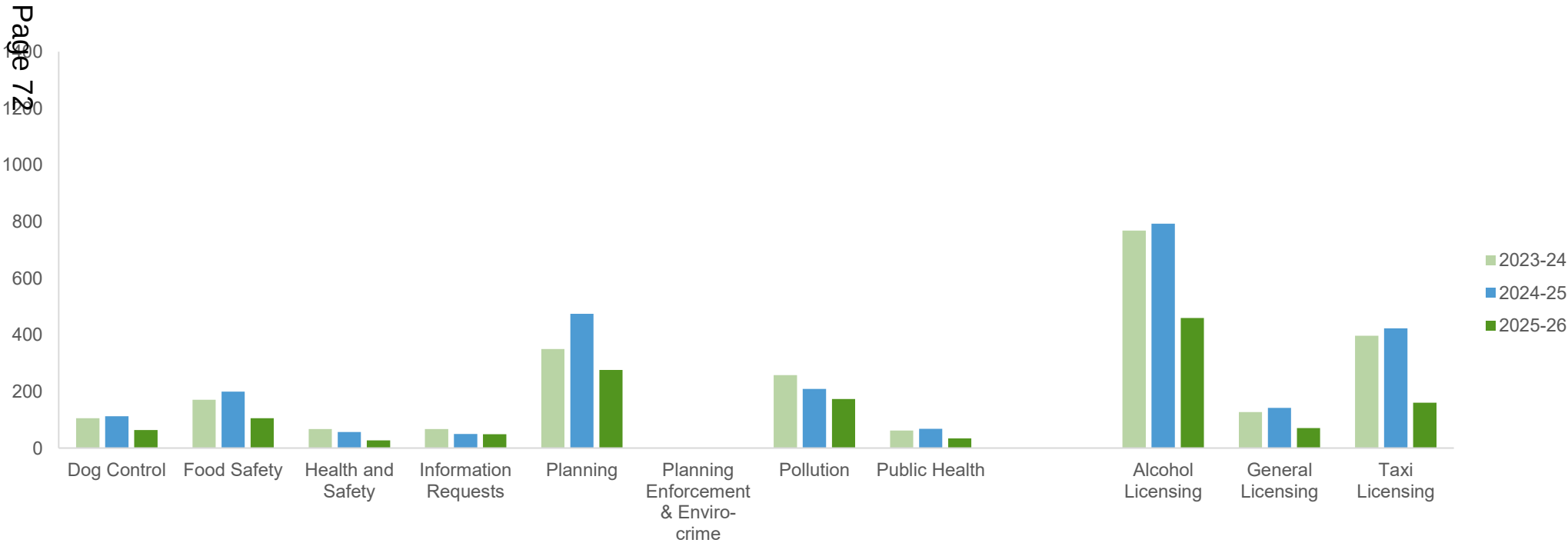
The data on this page outlines the number of complaints, enquiries, applications, and notifications handled by WRS over a three-year period where the subject and/or enquirer were located in the Malvern Hills district. The data also shows a breakdown of these cases by the primary functions delivered by the service.

Note: The figures for the current year are cumulative and will continue to increase until the end of year report is published in April 2026. In addition, the Y axis on the chart below has been standardised so the level of demand received against each function can be broadly compared to other districts.

Complaints, Enquiries, Applications, and Notificaitons



Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
2023-24				2024-25				2025-26			

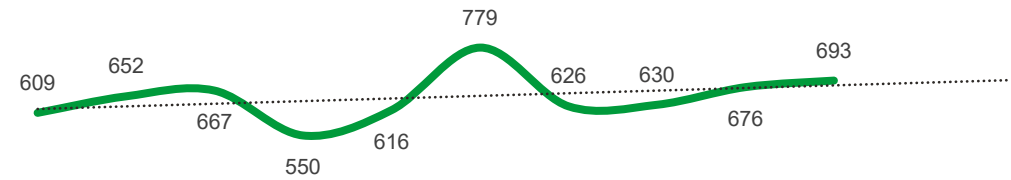


Redditch

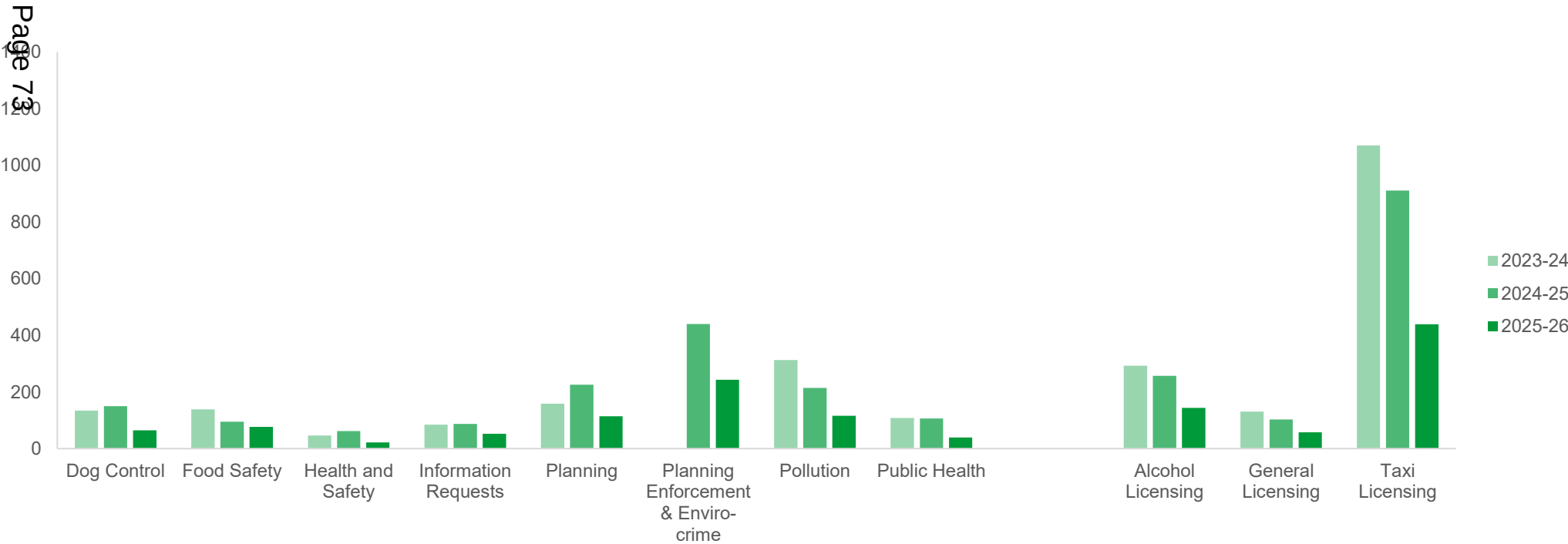
The data on this page outlines the number of complaints, enquiries, applications, and notifications handled by WRS over a three-year period where the subject and/or enquirer were located in the Redditch district. The data also shows a breakdown of these cases by the primary functions delivered by the service.

Note: The recent increase in cases can be attributed to the additional functions (enviro-crime and planning enforcement) now being delivered. The figures for the current year are cumulative and will continue to increase until the end of year report is published in April 2026. In addition, the Y axis on the chart below has been standardised so the level of demand received against each function can be broadly compared to other districts.

Complaints, Enquiries, Applications, and Notifications



Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
2023-24				2024-25				2025-26			

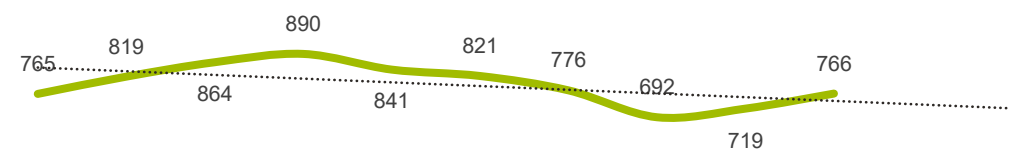


Worcester City

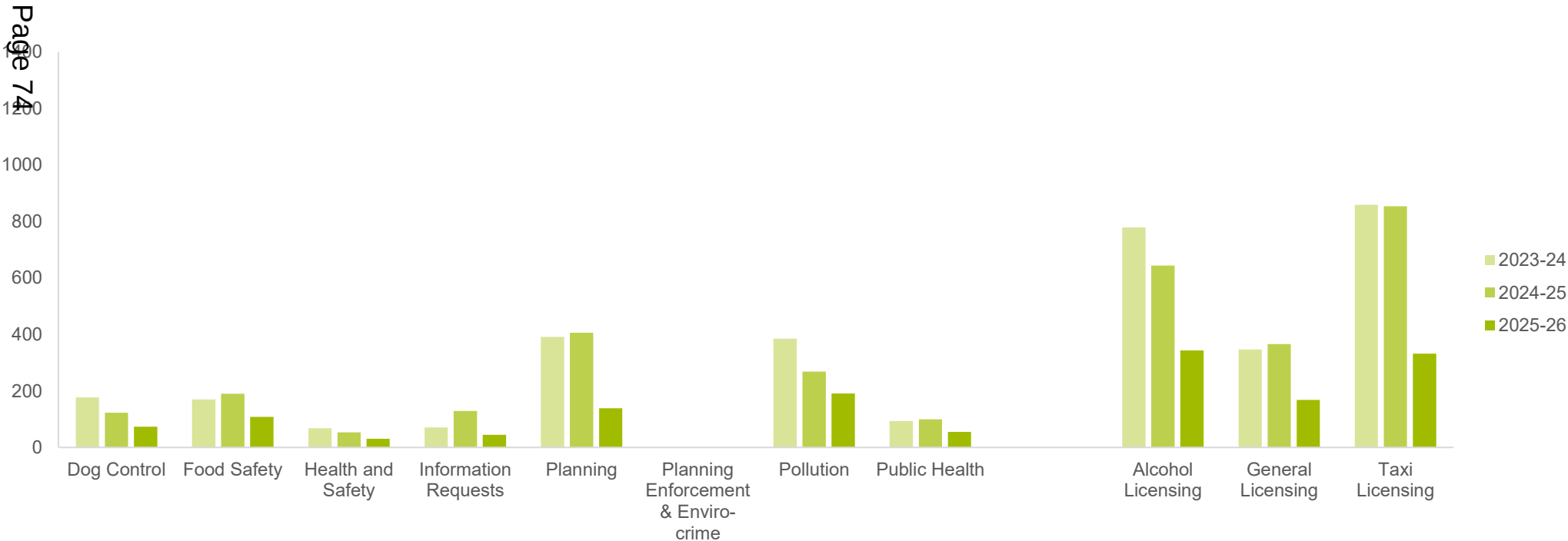
The data on this page outlines the number of complaints, enquiries, applications, and notifications handled by WRS over a three-year period where the subject and/or enquirer were located in the Worcester City district. The data also shows a breakdown of these cases by the primary functions delivered by the service.

Note: The figures for the current year are cumulative and will continue to increase until the end of year report is published in April 2026. In addition, the Y axis on the chart below has been standardised so the level of demand received against each function can be broadly compared to other districts.

Complaints, Enquiries, Applications, and Notificaitons



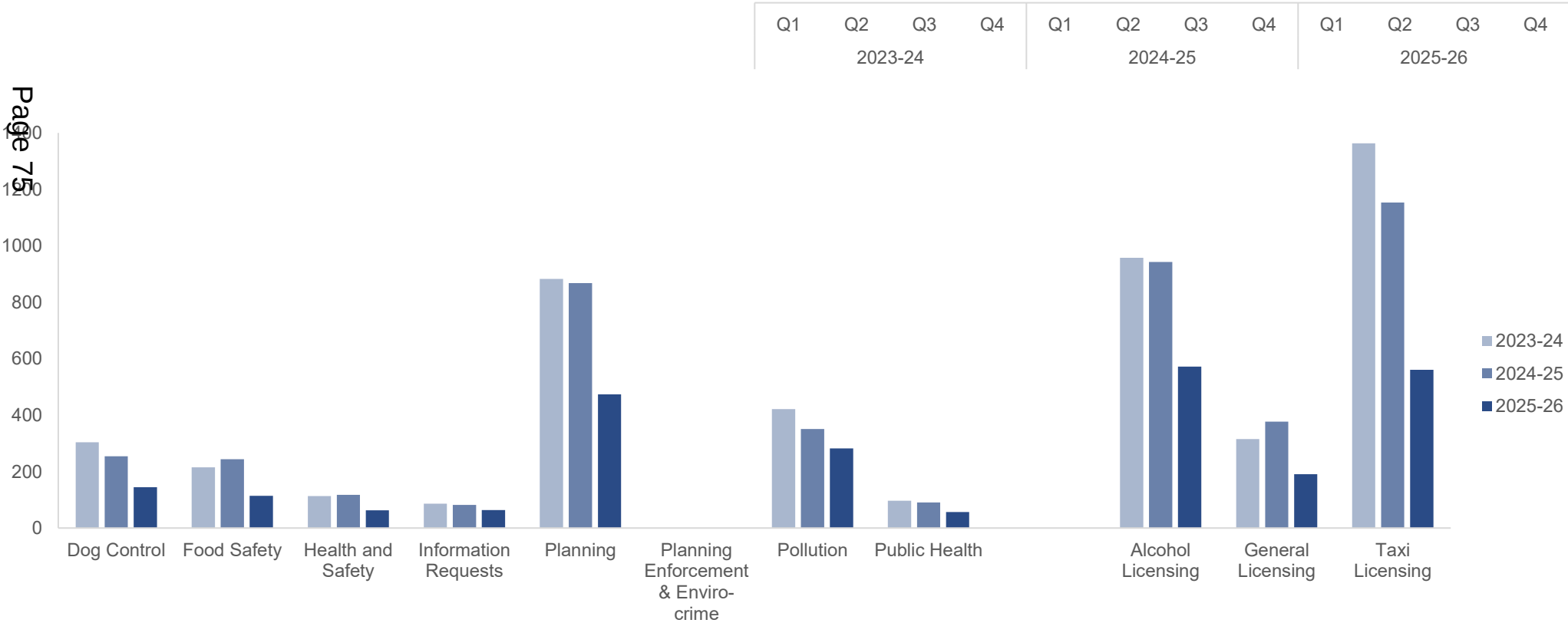
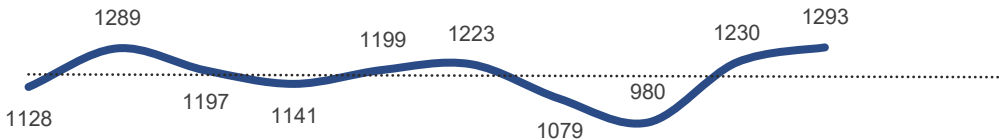
Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
2023-24				2024-25				2025-26			



The data on this page outlines the number of complaints, enquiries, applications, and notifications handled by WRS over a three-year period where the subject and/or enquirer were located in the Wychavon district. The data also shows a breakdown of these cases by the primary functions delivered by the service.

Note: The figures for the current year are cumulative and will continue to increase until the end of year report is published in April 2026. In addition, the Y axis on the chart below has been standardised so the level of demand received against each function can be broadly compared to other districts.

Complaints, Enquiries, Applications, and Notificaitons

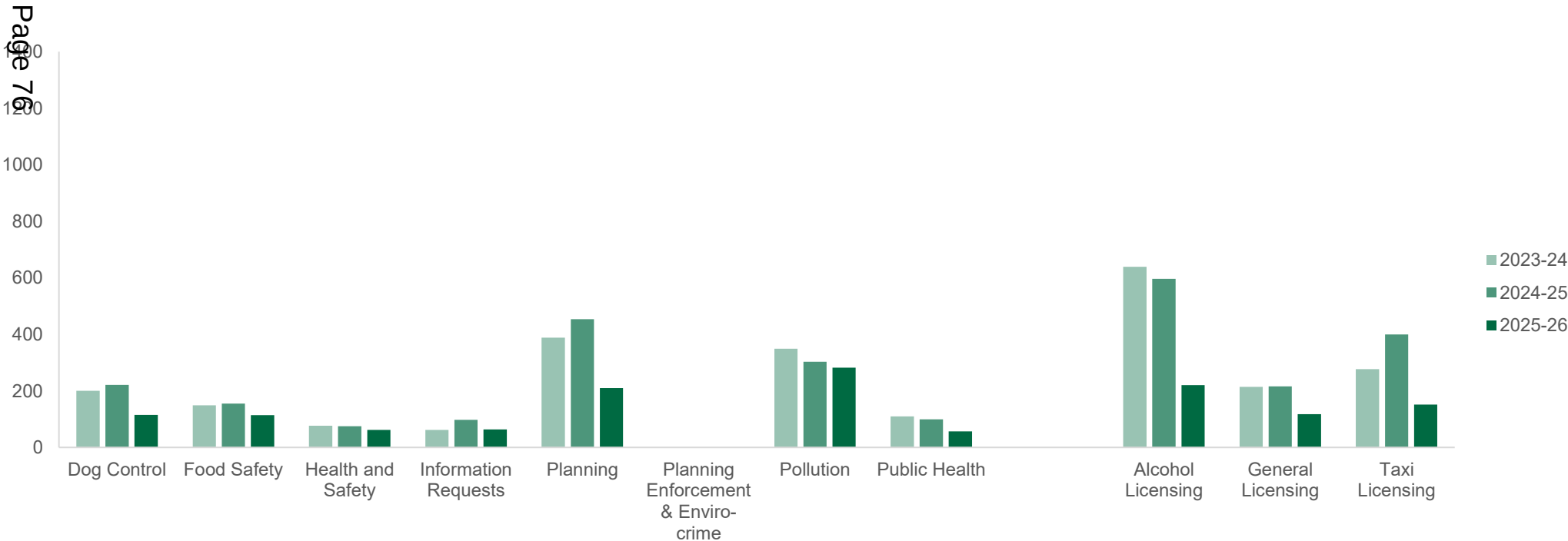
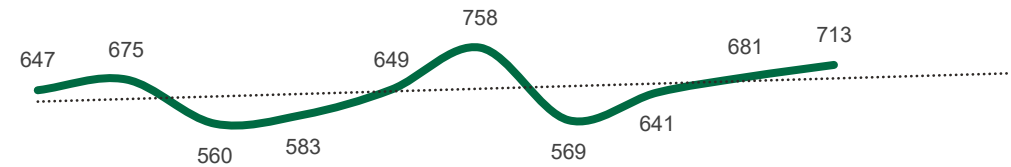


Wyre Forest

The data on this page outlines the number of complaints, enquiries, applications, and notifications handled by WRS over a three-year period where the subject and/or enquirer were located in the Wyre Forest district. The data also shows a breakdown of these cases by the primary functions delivered by the service.

Note: The figures for the current year are cumulative and will continue to increase until the end of year report is published in April 2026. In addition, the Y axis on the chart below has been standardised so the level of demand received against each function can be broadly compared to other districts.

Complaints, Enquiries, Applications, and Notificaitons

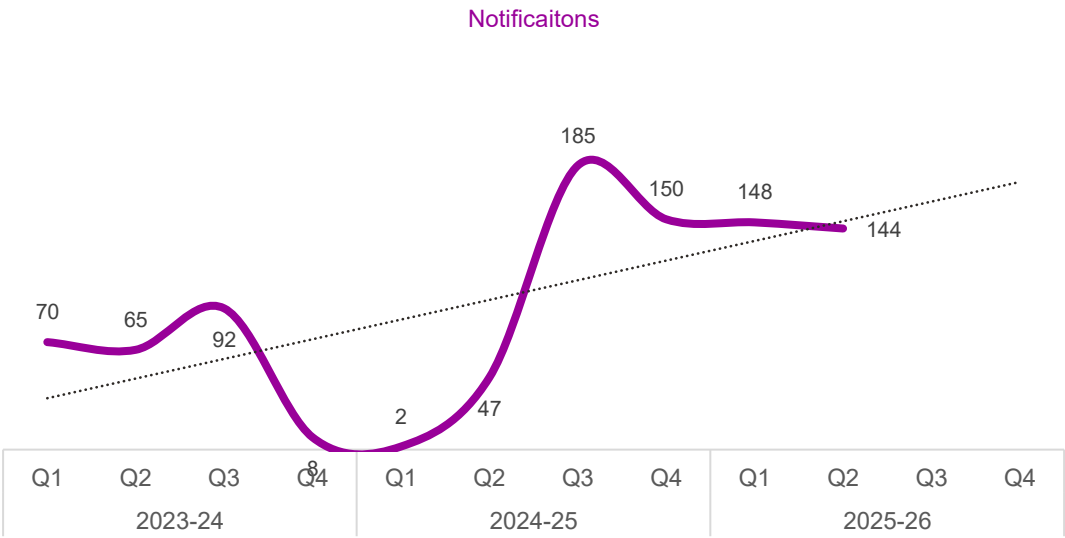


Birmingham City

The data on this page outlines the number of planning enquiries processed by the service on behalf of Birmingham City Council.

We currently, and historically, have only ever provided services in relation to dog control. We commenced provision of an out of hours stray dog kennelling, reuniting with owners and rehoming of unwanted stray dog service which continued until Q1 2022-23 with finders dropping off dogs out of hours which they had found. Unfortunately we lost the use of the kennels we were primarily using to service this contract and, as a result, changed the contract delivery to include collection of stray dogs. This increased the number of dogs received, kennelled and rehomed, reducing the number of dogs Birmingham City might see as strays in the future. In Q4 2023-24, the out of hours contract arrangements with Birmingham ceased with assistance being provided on an ad hoc basis only until a new contract for kennelling of all Birmingham stray dogs commenced.

The new contract arrangement, which started on 1st September 2024, includes the receipt of stray dogs (deposited by Birmingham City Dog Wardens) to our kennelling facilities, where we facilitate reunification, rehoming or where a banned or dangerous dog, arrange euthanasia. We envisage there to be in excess of 1200 stray dogs a year received through this contract. Our experience since the new contract is that 50% of the XL Bully dogs we receive as strays are from Birmingham City Council area. Of the other dogs seized as strays, a significant proportion are larger bull or status breeds.

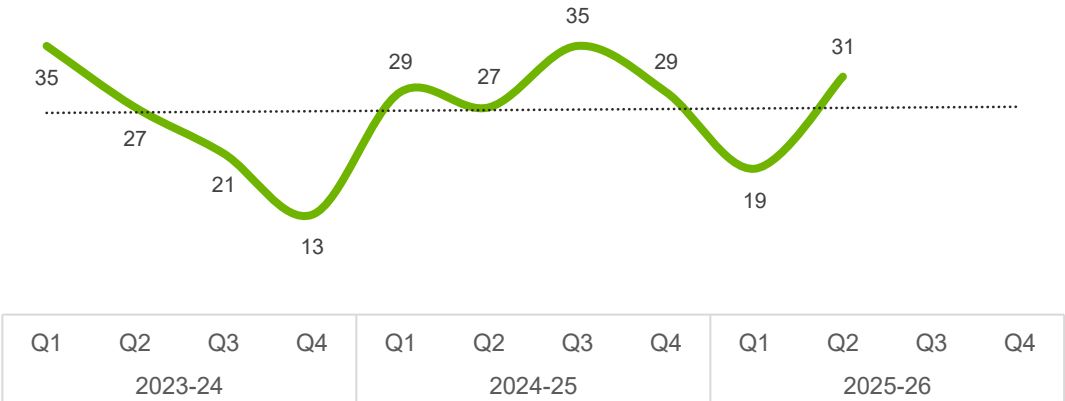


Cheltenham

The data on this page outlines the number of dog control cases (reports of lost or stray dogs) handled by the service on behalf of Cheltenham Borough Council.

The dog control work undertaken for the authority is part of a contract with two other Gloucestershire authorities to deliver the collection, kennelling, returning of dogs to owners, and rehoming of stray dog functions. The contract was recently renewed and has been highly successful in reducing stray dog numbers for Cheltenham Borough Council as well as utilising existing WRS resource and expertise. Having said that, post-pandemic stray dog numbers have been increasing year on year following the issues widely reported about dog socialisation and anxiety since as well as the current cost of living crisis.

Notifications



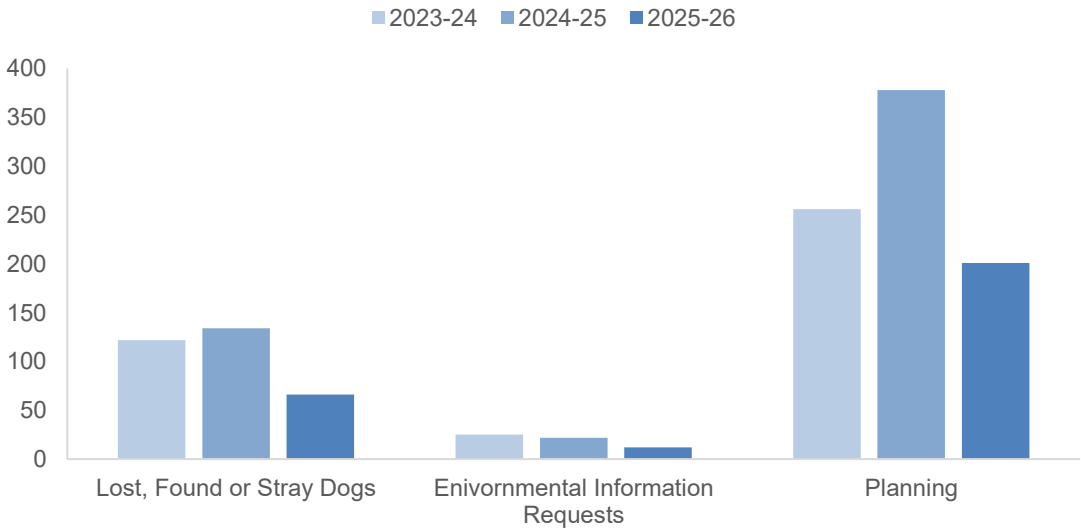
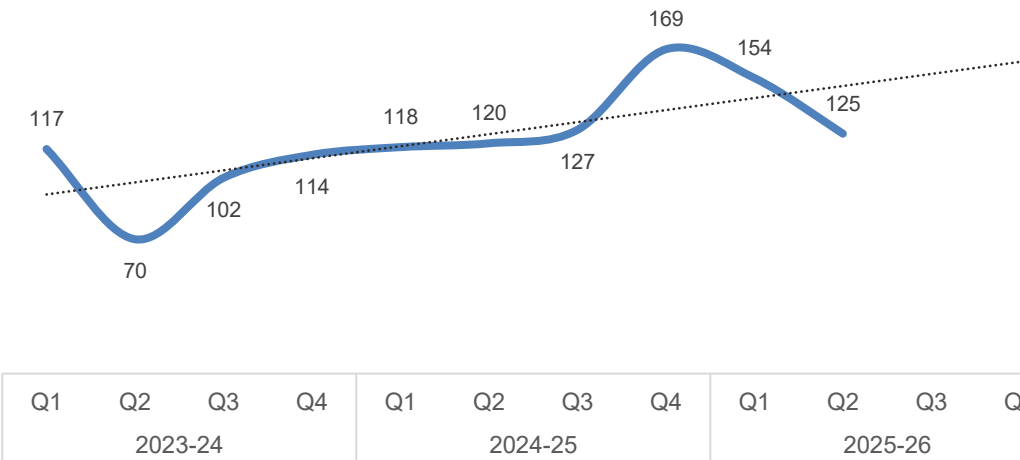
Gloucester City

The data on this page outlines the number of dog control cases (reports of lost or stray dogs), environmental information requests, and planning enquiries handled by the service on behalf of Gloucester City Council.

The dog control work undertaken for the authority is part of a contract with two other Gloucestershire authorities to deliver the collection, kennelling, returning of dogs to owners, and rehoming of stray dog functions. The contract was recently renewed and has been highly successful in reducing stray dog numbers for Gloucester City Council as well as utilising existing WRS resource and expertise. Such arrangements enable economies of scale to be realised and the continued retention of valuable assets to the benefit of Partner Authorities. The numbers of stray dogs are reducing annually, however, this is being closely monitored as the numbers are plateauing and there have been recent increases in the number of abandoned strays in other areas due to the cost of living crisis and post-COVID behaviour changes.

In addition to dog control activity, the service continues to deal with environmental information requests and planning enquiries.

Enquiries and Notifications



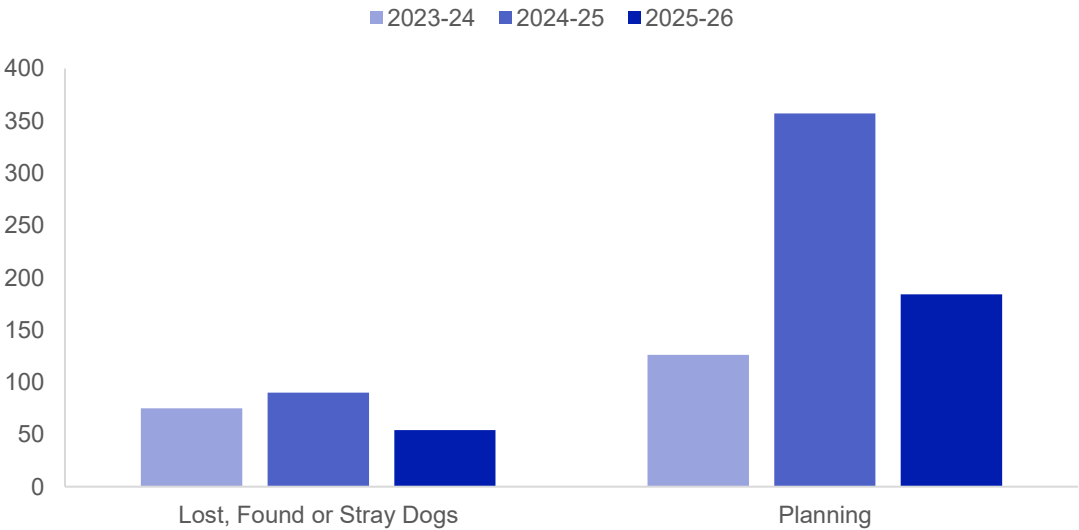
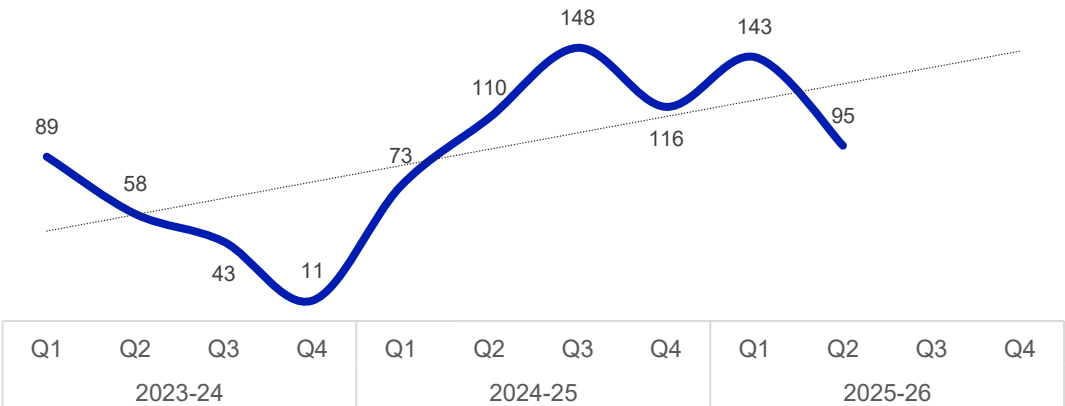
Tewkesbury

The data on this page outlines the number of dog control cases (reports of lost or stray dogs), and planning enquiries handled by the service on behalf of Tewkesbury Borough Council.

The dog control work undertaken for the authority is part of a contract with two other Gloucestershire authorities to deliver the collection, kennelling, returning of dogs to owners, and rehoming of stray dog functions. The contract was recently renewed and has been highly successful in reducing stray dog numbers for Tewkesbury Borough Council as well as utilising existing WRS resource and expertise. Such arrangements enable economies of scale to be realised and the continued retention of valuable assets to the benefit of Partner Authorities. As with other Gloucestershire and Worcestershire authorities, the numbers of stray dogs are reducing annually, however, this is being closely monitored as there have been recent increases in the number of abandoned strays in other areas due to the cost of living crisis and post-COVID behaviour changes.

In addition to dog control activity, the service has recommenced the provision of advice to Planning Officers on nuisance and air quality matters, following cessation of the service in Q4 2023-24 following a successful recruitment campaign.

Enquiries and Notifications





WRS Board

Date: 20th November 2025

Noise and licensed premises

Recommendation	That Members note the contents of this report.
Background	Whilst numbers of noise nuisance complaints vary from year to year, generally officers feel that cases are becoming far more complex, often shaped by expectations of complainants, and many investigations take a prolonged period due to issues with obtaining sufficient evidence. This has also not been helped by the length of time cases take to get into court with the current backlogs in the system. An increase in challenges by complainants to approaches taken by local authorities in relation to nuisance matters appears to have been accompanied by a greater willingness to involve the Ombudsman when people are not happy with the outcome of something they have raised. This pushes services towards more standardised approaches rather than looking at how best to seek resolution in relation to the individual circumstances of a complaint. One way of tackling these trends is to attempt to be more proactive, so that issues do not arise in the first place.
Noise from pubs and clubs	Commercial premises are responsible for around 1/3rd of nuisance complaints to WRS. A reasonable proportion of these are issues with noise is from pubs and clubs. Pubs and clubs are a traditional part of the UK's culture and can bring money into local areas. They are also a source of complaints to Local Authorities often related to music and customer behaviours. This can be triggered by a pub changing its offer to help maintain its financial sustainability. Changes in social habits, particularly the increased tendency of younger people to socialise with each other at home and to "order in" food, also means less trade for the sector unless offers are reshaped. Understanding the wider environment and the reasons why in general pubs and clubs are struggling in today's financial climate, Leads us to thinking that a sensible course of action is to try to work with all parties to help pubs and clubs thrive whilst keeping a balance on the impact on their local communities. In some cases, the change in offer from licensed premises has been quite dramatic. Some are offering educational workshops on aspects of their own activities (e.g., cocktail making, cooking) or hosting pop-up markets and events. A few are even providing spaces for remote working and offering spaces for social groups. In more rural areas, some colleagues are reporting an increase in offers around holidays and camping. This diversification has no doubt helped pub businesses to survive, but some of these changes have also led to additional noise for nearby residents. Outdoor events, particularly those involving music festivals and bands, not necessarily large scale and accommodated under Temporary Event Notices, can and have generated concerns, particularly where these occur on the edge of rural communities.



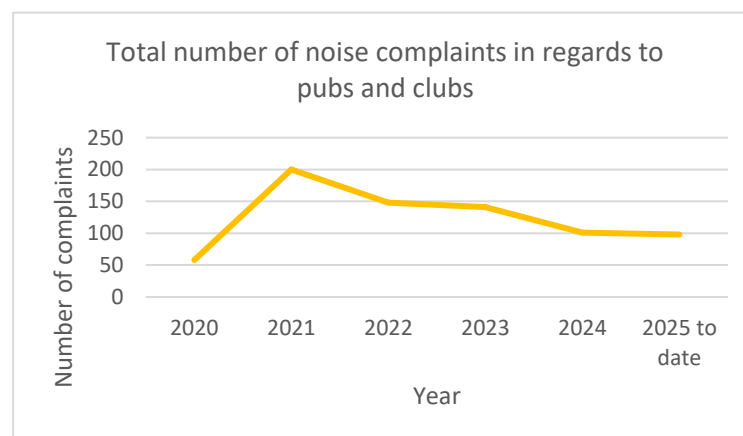
Proactive Approach

In 2023, the Community Environmental Health and Licensing teams decided to try to take a more proactive first response to nuisance issues by sending a targeted advisory letter to all pubs and clubs where a noise complaint was received. The letter reminded license holders of their duties under the Act, and included reference to the threat of license review should noise and other issues of disorder not be addressed. However, this approach received a positive response from the business community. In 2024 the approach was further developed to include issuing pre-season (i.e., before the summer nuisance spike,) noise control advice to premises where complaints had previously been reported. Its purpose was to try and reduce the number of complaints received, help support smooth running of events for local businesses whilst maintaining a positive relationship with local communities.

The guidance document (attached at Appendix 1) includes a look at noise amplification, equipment used, structure of the building and outdoor areas and how this may help. It also sets out a basic explanation of the law on nuisance, and the potential consequences have also been set out. Alongside the guidance document, visits were offered to any premise to discuss upcoming events as a proactive method to combat any potential complaints, including those that might arise from perceptions of what an event may be like. Some of these offers were taken up and the initial perception of officers is that it has assisted the managers of these premises to reduce the impact of their activities. We have continued this approach in 2025 and will be looking in more detail at the data to try to quantify the impacts. As our activity data shows, whilst we had an incredibly hot summer, which could have precipitated significantly more noise complaints, numbers were held at the same levels as 2023/4, when the summer was not particularly good. Whilst we cannot confirm that this is the only reason for this, we hope that it has helped with our officer workload and ensured that balance between businesses and communities.

The tables below illustrate the annual number of noise complaints received in respect of pubs and clubs.

District	2021	2022	2023	2024
Bromsgrove	27	25	40	18
Malvern Hills	17	6	7	11
Redditch	23	22	11	9
Worcester City	72	40	34	21
Wychavon	31	26	13	13
Wyre Forest	30	29	36	29
Total	200	148	141	101



Positive Outcomes

The service continues to believe it is important to work with businesses work to achieve our community protection aims where possible, as this ensures both economic success and a good environment for residents. Officers will continue to review this initiative every year to build up outcome data and business response information.

The use of social media for communication is one aspect that has yet to be considered as a preventive element for controlling these situations. Providing clear guidance on our website, ensuring that correct information is given to potential complainants at first point of contact and managing the public's expectations on what constitutes Statutory Nuisance under the Environmental Protection Act 1990 also form part of the approach. Engagement with other regulatory colleagues, whether in planning, building control or the wider aspects of environmental protection often referred to as street scene are also key. By working together, improved outcomes should be achievable that protect communities without imposing significant regulatory burden on businesses that provide both economic opportunity and places to socialise for the public.

Contact

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Controlling Noise from Pubs and Clubs



Pubs and clubs are a traditional part of Worcestershire's culture. In recent years and particularly since Covid we have seen a change in people's attitudes and reduced tolerance toward noise from licensed premises. There has also been a change to the way pubs and clubs are run with licensees needing to be more adventurous, branching out to new ventures to bring in income and a change to operational hours.

Each year Worcestershire Regulatory Services receives numerous complaints alleging noise nuisance from pubs and clubs. We hope that by offering this advice there will be a reduction in these and a smoother running of events for you whilst maintaining a positive relationship with your local communities.

It is important to note that, if complaints are confirmed, we always recommend that you seek professional advice from an acoustic engineer to design and implement a noise management plan. This will help ensure the right solution for your premises.

Statutory Nuisance:

Statutory Nuisance law only needs one complainant to trigger an investigation.

For a noise to amount to an actionable Statutory Nuisance, i.e. service of a Noise Abatement Notice, two conditions must be met:

- cause significant interference to the normal occupation of domestic premises by a person of average sensitivity
- caused by some unreasonable or unusual act or omission or behaviour

If the Council has gained evidence a Statutory Nuisance is taking place the Council **must** serve a Noise Abatement Notice under S80 of the Environmental Protection Act 1990. Failure to comply with an Abatement Notice is an offence and legal proceedings may result. If found guilty of an offence of this type then the maximum fine is £20,000 on commercial premises. In addition to this Environmental Health Officers can also consider asking for a review of your premises licence for failing to properly promote the licensing objective of the prevention of public nuisance.

Further information <https://www.worcsregservices.gov.uk/all-services/nuisance/the-law-on-noisance>
CD/V1/0425 Noise from Pubs and Clubs 2025

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Licence Review:

Under the Licensing Act 2003 an authorised body (Environmental Health, Police, Public Health etc.) can call a licence review. A review takes place in front of a Licensing Sub Committee when the following could happen:

- issue a warning
- modify the conditions of your premises licence
- remove a licensable activity from your licence
- remove the designated premises supervisor
- suspend your licence for a period
- revoke your licence

Pubs and clubs can potentially cause a statutory noise nuisance through:

- Amplified music – Live bands, DJ's , Sound systems
- Patron noise – noise created by customers arriving, during and leaving the premise
- Deliveries/refuse collection
- Mechanical – air-conditioning units/ extractor fans

There are four potential ways to manage the above noise sources:

- Reduce noise at source
- Prevent noise from escaping
- Management of the noise produced
- Remove source from premises

When it comes to assessing an existing or potential noise nuisance/when undertaking a noise management plan you need to consider:

- Frequency
- Duration
- Time of day
- Character/offensiveness of noise
- Character of location
- Existing ambient [background] noises
- Weather
- Wind direction



- Soundproofing – acoustic insulation walls, floors, ceilings
- Double glazing or upgrade windows to acoustic glazing
- Keep windows closed
- Use air conditioning rather than opening of windows.
- Install acoustic doors and door closers
- Minimise openings – use of lobbied entrance (double door)
- If using a marquee consider the use of acoustic marquees

Outdoor areas

Most noise complaints relate to noise generated in outdoor spaces. Noise at night when background noise reduces will sound louder and travel further Consider following to reduce risk of complaints:

- Avoid use of loud speakers outdoors/control volume if used
- Recommend outdoor music should only be for background noise. Live bands in a residential area will likely result in complaints from nearby residents
- Consider acoustic barriers,
- Keep your customers away from residential areas – think location of smoking shelters, seating areas.
- Consider preventing customers from taking drinks into smoking areas to stop them lingering there.
- Restrict late night use of outdoor areas (may be licensing condition)
- Provide signage asking patrons to be quiet when leaving (usually a licensing condition)
- Consider restricting the number of people outside
- Train staff to control behaviour and noise level of patrons (may be licensing condition)
- Consider placing staff on the door (may be licensing condition)

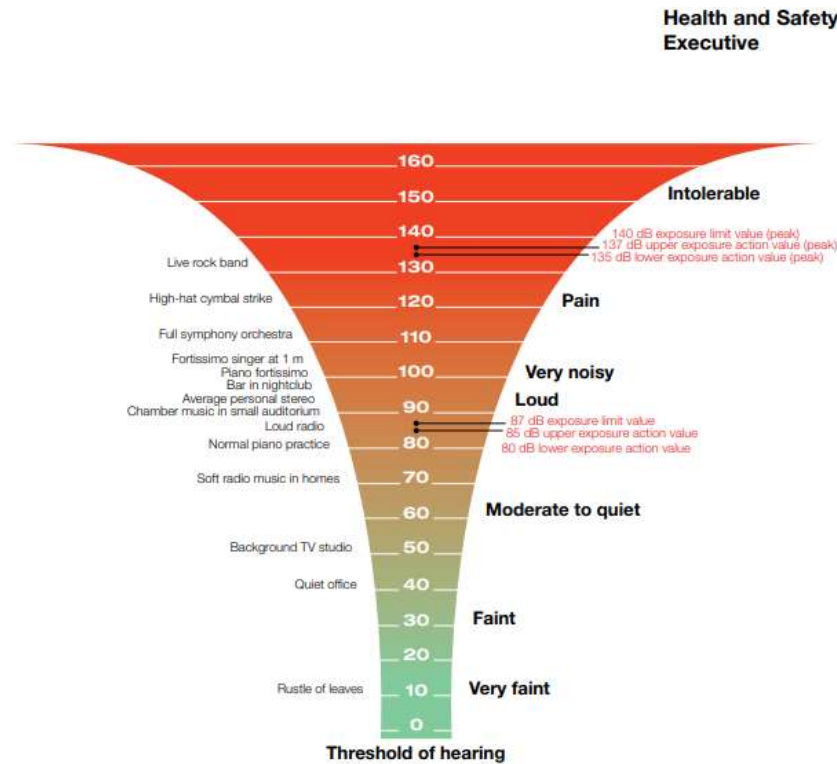


Communication:

Keep open communication with local residents – inform them of upcoming events/provide contact details so they can report concerns on the day. Ensure that any phone number provided is answered.

Impact on workforce:

You also need to consider the health and safety of your staff as per the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and the Control of Noise at Work Regulations 2005. Long exposure to noise at increased levels can permanently damage staff hearing as shown in the diagram below.



Sound advice Control of noise at work in music and entertainment HSE.

Summary

By following the above advice you can reduce the likelihood of complaints, avoid legal implications (Abatement Notices, Court fines and licence reviews) and maintain a positive relationship with the surrounding communities.

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