



**EVERY CUSTOMER, EVERY TIME -  
“Everybody Matters”**

**Making Experiences Count  
Quarterly Customer Service Report**

**BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**1 January 2014 – 31 March 2014**



**Bromsgrove**  
District Council

[www.bromsgrove.gov.uk](http://www.bromsgrove.gov.uk)

## 1. Introduction

This report details the customer feedback received by Bromsgrove District Council during the period from 1 January 2014 to 31 March 2014.

It also provides information about the customer demand received through the customer service team and payment channels.

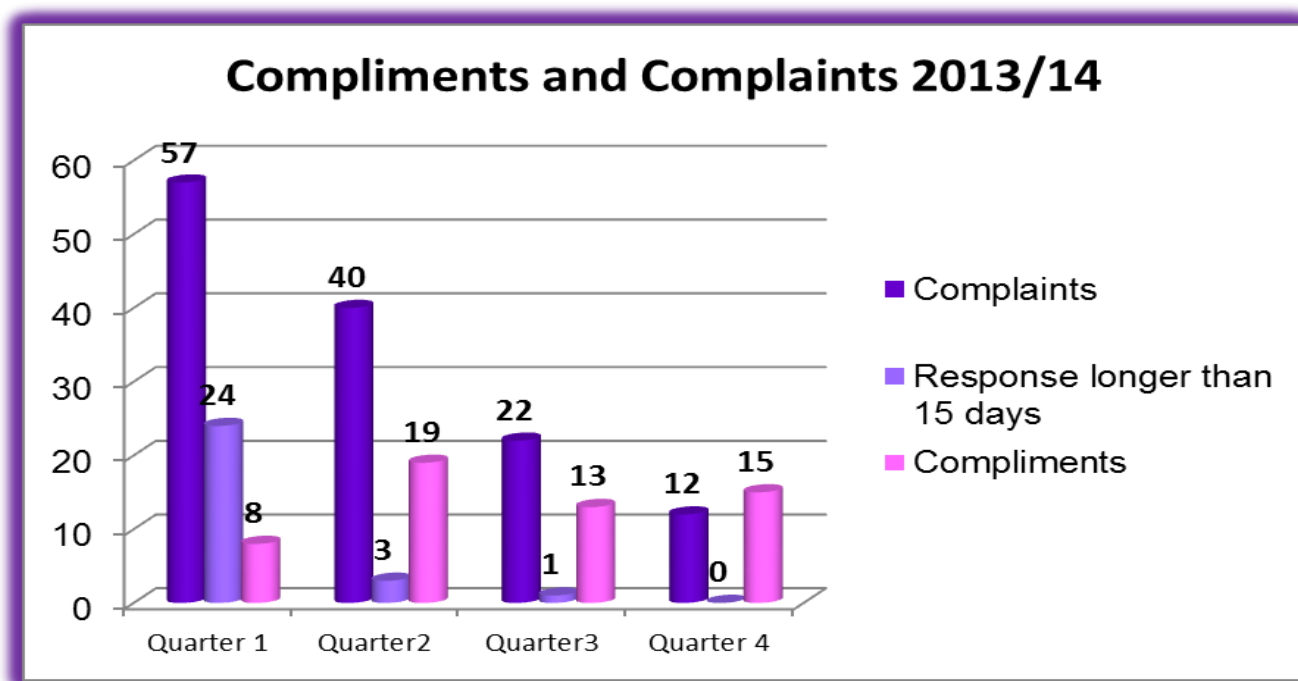
## 2. Customer Feedback Analysis

12 complaints were received during this quarter because we did not meet the customer's expectations, or failed to meet our own standards, or the customer was unhappy with an outcome. Details of all complaints received can be found at the end of this report in Appendix 1.

All complaints received (100%) were answered in 15 working days or less.

We also received 15 compliments.

This chart shows number of complaints and compliments for 2013 -14.



Complaint figures have significantly reduced each quarter of this financial year. The total figures for last year compared with 2013/14 are as follows

	Total compliments	Total complaints	Dealt with in target time
2013/14	71	131	103 (78%)
2012/13	124	151	95 (63%)

There has been a very marked decrease in complaints about waste collections this year. This is due in part to the way the Business Support team within Environmental Services is working. They have set up a dedicated call centre and are able to deal with customer queries before they escalate to become complaints. Our Refuse Crews have also introduced new processes to make the new collection service work and it seems that customers are appreciating this.

Over the last quarter we have been trialling a system thinking driven process to handle complaints differently. This has involved Managers in Environmental Services talking directly to the customer in an attempt to resolve the problem.. The results have shown us that we can resolve the majority of complaints more quickly by taking a personal approach. It also gives us a greater understanding of what the real problems are. Managers are using this information to improve their systems and services and this has had a knock on effect of reducing the number of repeat calls for complaints.

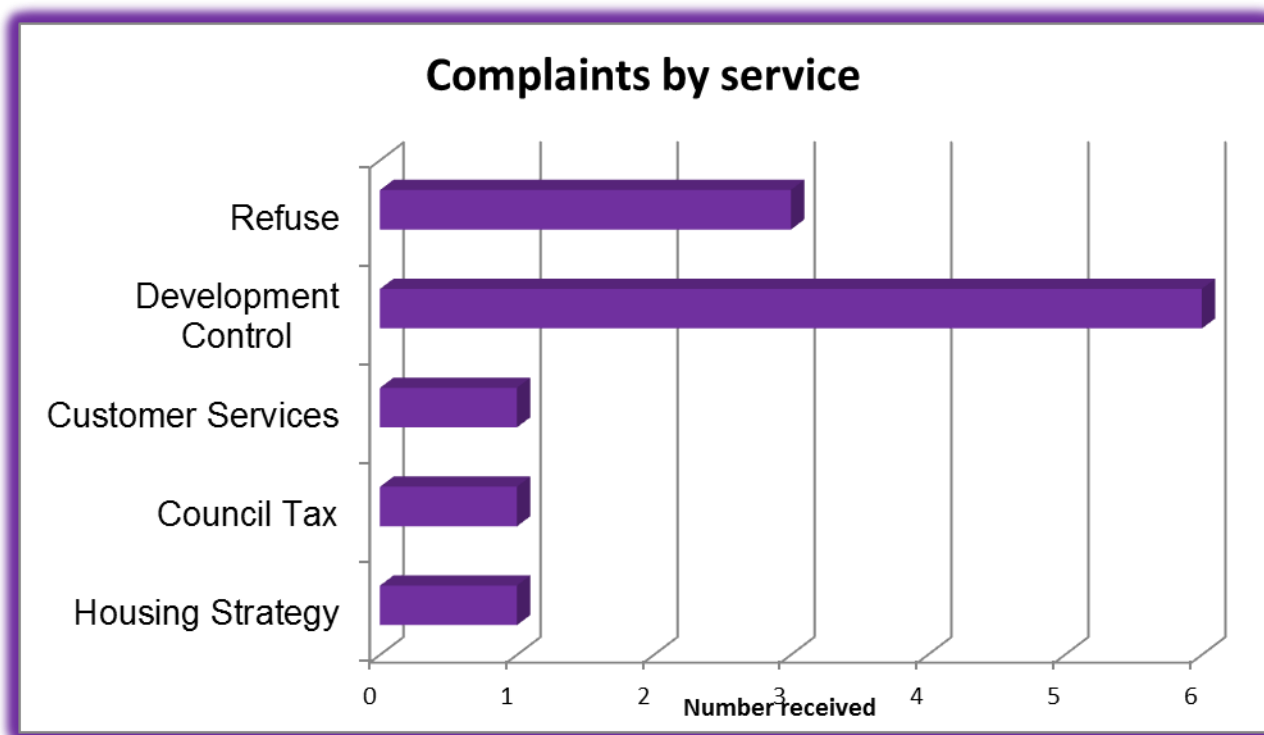
We have now rolled out this new way of handling complaints to all departments across the Council and will continue to monitor and develop the process.

The common themes in the complaints received this quarter were:

- Delays
- Lack of response to some customer's calls and queries.
- Incorrect details on website

### Number of complaints by service (detailed)

The following table provides a more detailed breakdown of complaints by service



### “You said – we listened” – what did we change as a result of complaints?

Some of the changes made as a result of complaints include:-

- Our website will be monitored more frequently to ensure that information is correct and timely
- Council Tax letters to be monitored for correct information
- Delivery process for new bins to be reviewed.

### Number of complaints escalated to Head of Customer Services or to Stage 2

There were no complaints escalated to the Head of Customer Services for further investigation.

## Time taken to respond to complaints

We aim to respond to customer complaints within 15 working days and **100 %** of complaints received during this quarter were dealt with within that time frame.

## Happy Customers!

From the **15** compliments received we can see that customers appreciate the range of services the Council provides, especially when we deal with their requests in a timely and professional manner.



Here are all of the compliments we have received this quarter.

Team	Compliment Detail
Car Parks	I would like to take the opportunity to thank your kind operatives who opened the car park up last night for my wife who had unfortunately lost her car keys and had to return home to fetch the spare set but on her return the gates were locked , on reading the notice board there was an out of office number of which your kind operatives arrived promptly and deal with the issue in a professional manner
Development Control	The information you so readily provided is really useful and has saved me a lot of time and bother today. This is really very helpful to me. Thank you again for your prompt action.
Landscaping	Got home from work today and the trees have been cut back. It looks brilliant, plenty of trees left to grow well away from the fence. Thank you so very much for your help and for the job being done so quickly.....fantastic
Lifeline	Customer was very grateful for our help and recommends our service to everyone
Lifeline	Customer called to thank us for our help
Lifeline	Customer wanted to thank Lifeline for their prompt assistance in calling ambulance following incident.

Lifeline	Customer wanted to thank Lifeline for their prompt assistance in calling ambulance following incident.
Lifeline	Customer contacted us on return from hospital. She wanted to thank us for the help we gave her and said that she didn't think she would be here if it wasn't for our service
Lifeline	Customer wanted to thank Lifeline for all their help
Lifeline	Customer thought our service was fantastic and could not praise us enough.
Refuse	Two of our refuse collectors helped Cllr Tidmarsh reinstate a fence panel after a storm whilst on their rounds. He wishes the two young men to receive public acknowledgement.
Refuse	Just a week ago I rang the council to request that my bins be taken to the roadside on delivery day as I am becoming increasingly disabled. I was dealt with courteously and assured the service would start next week. Today as we were driving out of our road at about 10.45 this morning we saw the refuse team. We stopped to ask if they had been told of my request. Before I had a chance to finish my sentence, the bin collector said, "Number 22? It's all sorted." He said this with warmth and a big smile and shook my hand wishing us a good day. Certainly made our day! And, yes, on our return we saw that the bin had been collected, emptied and returned. So, please thank the collection team and the organisation behind this.
Street Cleaning	Customer was very pleased with the work carried out by the cleansing crews dealing with her road
Street Cleaning	We so very grateful for you in organising the Staff to help last Friday morning at the Churchyard and I would be so grateful Graham, if you could personally thank the Staff concerned who helped with this project for their help and work on the day, which was so much appreciated.

### 3. Local Government Ombudsman Complaints

There were no complaints referred from the Ombudsman this quarter.

## 4. Customer Service Centre Information

This section provides some statistical information in respect of the amount of customer demand received via the telephone, face to face and through our payment channels.

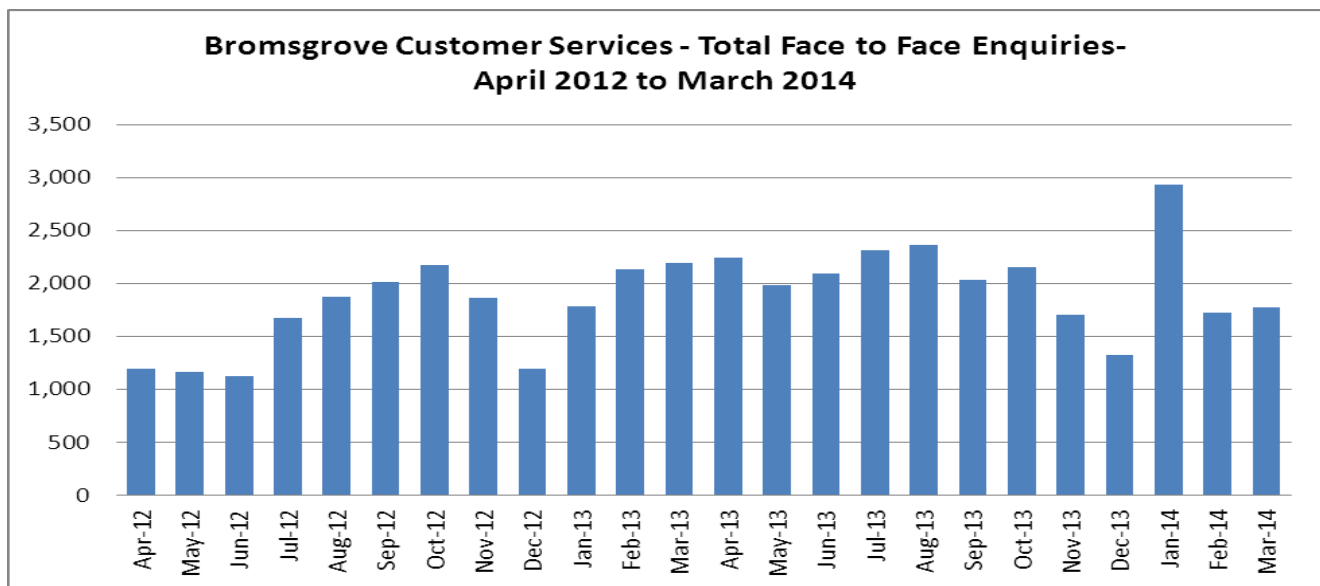
The operational purpose of the Customer Services team is **'Help me get the support I need with my issue or problem'**. Most customer demand is now passed to expert teams and the customer service staff act as a filter to ensure that the customer gets to see or speak to the right expert. We use this information to help us understand the demand on all Council services.

The following tables and charts show the numbers of customer transactions recorded and trends over time.

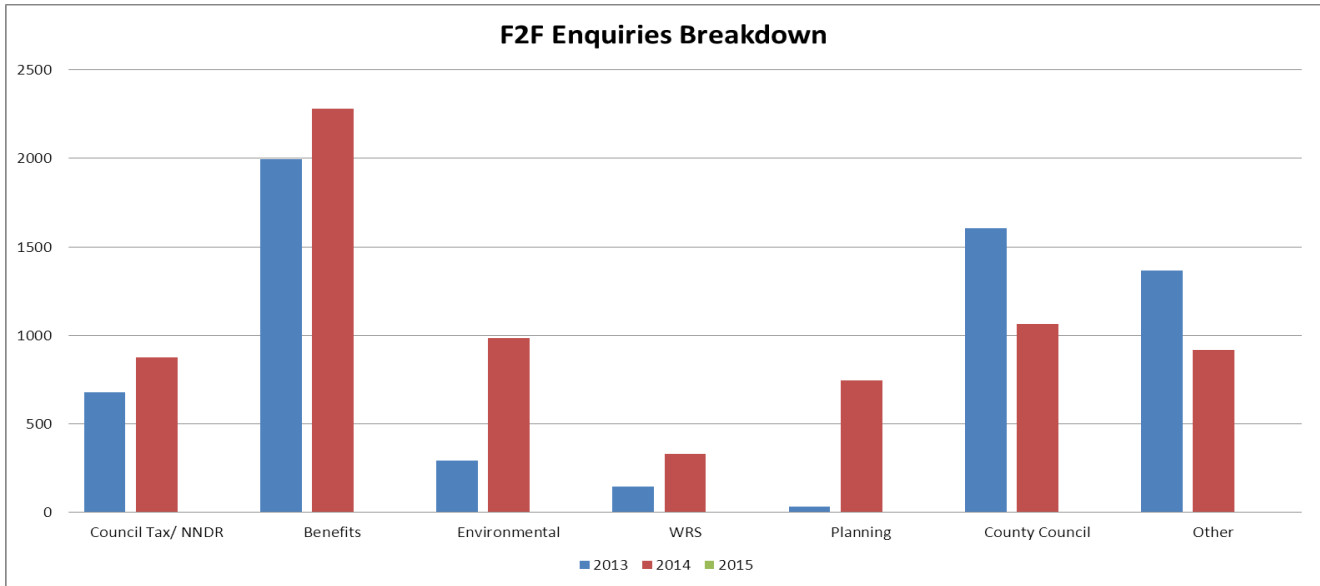
### Face to face demand at the Customer Service Centre

The following chart shows the total face to face enquiries being dealt with at the customer service centre on a month by month basis since April 2012 to March 14. It informs of patterns that occur and the data is then used to plan for busy times and to check the reasons for the peak, this may identify waste in systems which can then be addressed.

The peak in January includes visitors to a 1 day planning event held at the Council house, Garden waste enquiries and the payment system was unavailable for 6 days which increased the number of face to face enquiries.

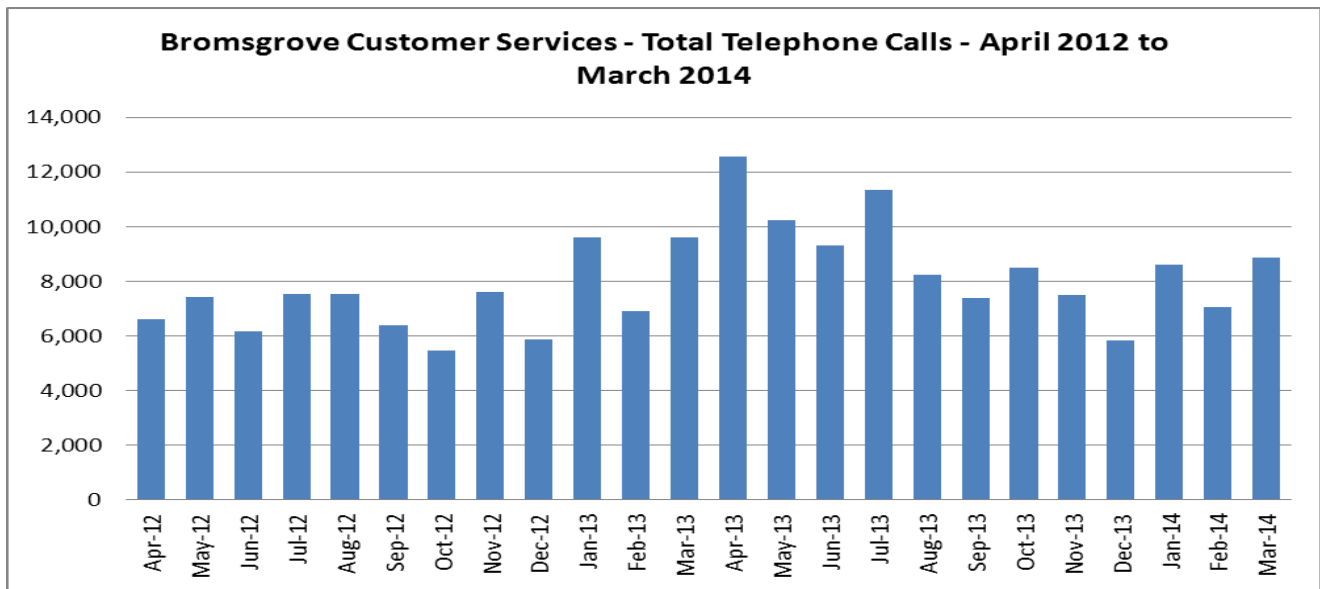


The following chart shows the breakdown of face to face customer enquiries received during Qtr 4 2014 compared with the same period last year.



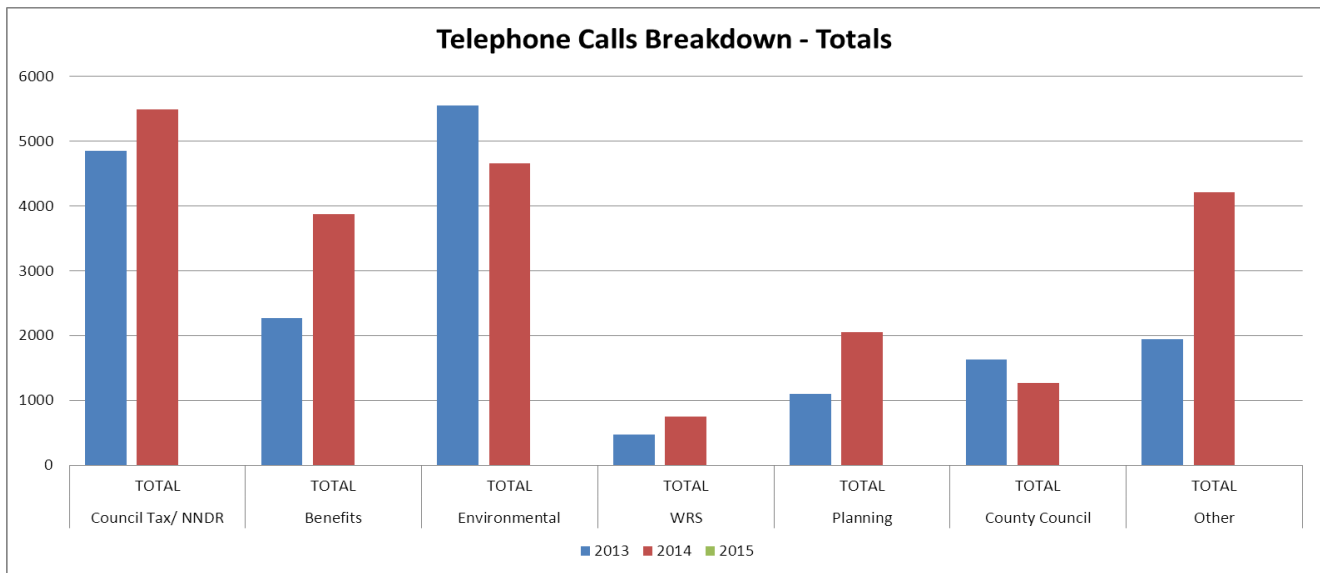
### Telephone demand received

The following chart shows the total telephone calls recorded on the customer service systems from April 2012 until the end of March 2014.



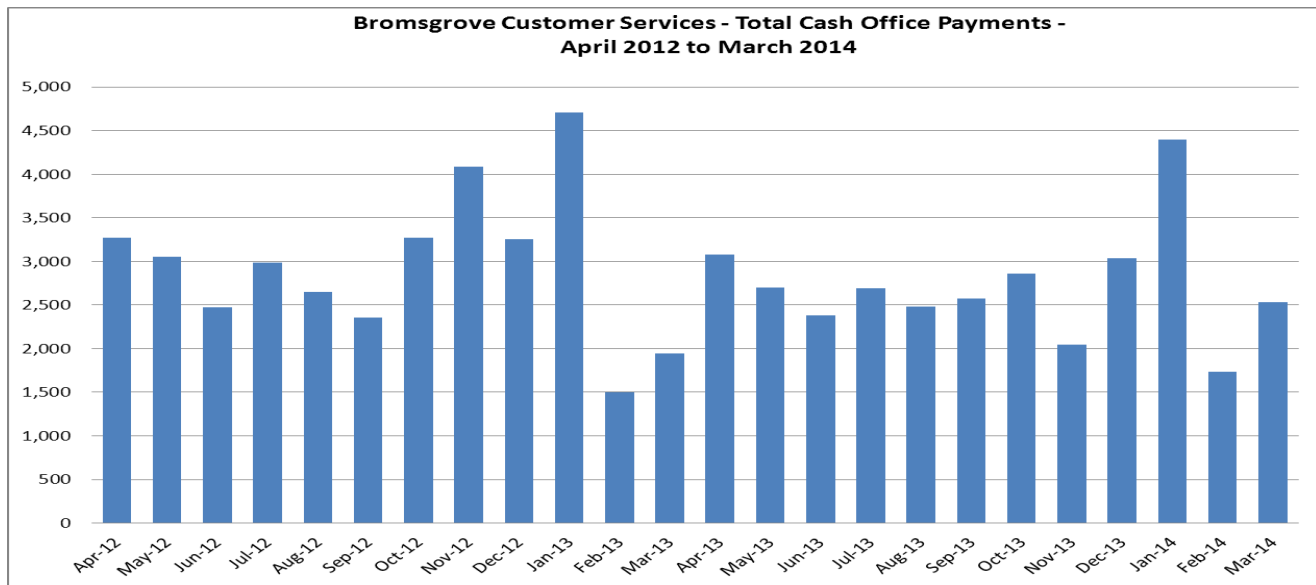
The following chart shows the breakdown of calls received via the switchboard and customer contact centre phone lines by department during the quarter. (Calls made to direct dial lines are not recorded and therefore not included.) The 2012 data does not include switchboard calls which accounts for the significant difference when comparing years.

The number of "other" reflects the number of calls due to the payment system unavailable for a week in January 2014. Staff Finder was not available; which made it difficult for the operator to identify which service the call should be logged, this is now available.



## Payments

The following chart shows a month by month comparison of payments received by the cash office and customer services staff during the period April 2012 – March 2014. On 26<sup>th</sup> February 2014 an upgrade to the payments system was installed including cash receipting, on line and telephone payments. This has improved resilience of the systems. As we expected there have been some teething problems which has affected the payments data we are able to provide this quarter.



Lynn Jones  
 Customer Services Manager  
 May 2014



## Bromsgrove Complaint Details Q4 2013/14

Complaint details	Days taken to respond	Action taken	Outcome update from Head of Service
<b>Customer Services</b>			
Customer unhappy about the music that was played when she was put on hold as it interfered with her hearing aid and she had to hang up and didn't get the information she wanted.	3 days	Apology given.	Customer was contacted to confirm she had the information she needed.
<b>Development Control</b>			
Customer unhappy with the length of time a planning application was taking. It was submitted over 7 weeks ago and had still not been accepted .It would not therefore be decided within the statutory period.	3 days	Apology given to customer. We acknowledged that the process is slow at present due to a new system and staffing problems.	We are aiming to improve the system.
Customer wishes to complain about the lack of progress in registering a planning application which he submitted via the Planning Portal.	14 days	There are currently delays in dealing with applications due to the new ways of working and the lack of staff. Apologies given for this.	Improvements being made to the system.
Customer concerned about planning application in terms of loss of his light, privacy and overlooking his home.	8	Letter sent to customer explaining that we have followed procedures and that the application does not exceed planning regulations.	No further action
Customer unhappy about planning committee process with regard to planning application.	14	Explanation given to the customer explaining the process and that Members make the decisions	No further action
Customer unhappy that as she feels that no consideration given to residents regarding a planning application for a property in the next road.	15	Letter sent to explain the process for consultation and to invite the customer to speak to the Head of Planning if she had any further queries.	No further action
Customer unhappy that the use of the old market area in Bromsgrove being used as a site for storing equipment relating to Town Centre	2 days	No action will be taken as high street improvements are progressing in a timely manner and it would not be expedient to enforce	Officers involved from town centre team advised that this sort of

redevelopment works and asks why they have not applied for planning permission..			matter requires planning permission.
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### **Housing Strategy**

Customer unhappy because he is currently in a shared ownership with BDC on a 70/30 ratio, and he felt that he could now purchase the remaining 70% but has been told that he could have done this earlier. He feels that this has disadvantaged him because now he feels that he has to pay due to the fluctuations in the property price, and now will have to pay more than if he would have purchased it earlier.	<b>15 days</b>	Discussed the issue with the customer and advised of the policy regarding the purchase of the remaining share which had confused the customer when he first purchased 10 years ago.	No further action
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### **Council Tax**

Customer is acting as executor for his deceased mother and had completed and returned a Council Tax credit balance refund form. The form has not been received and he is concerned about the inefficiency of the department.	<b>1 day</b>	Apology given to customer.	Letters will be reviewed to ensure that they do not contain misleading information
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### **Refuse**

Customer unhappy that the collection details were wrong on our website leading her to put her bin out on the wrong day and it not being collected	<b>15 days</b>	Apology given to customer and bin collected.	Website corrected and will be monitored.
Customer has paid for her garden waste service last month and has contacted us on 5 occasions to ask for the wheelie bin to be delivered. She is a new customer. She has been promised the bin but it has never arrived. She is really fed up with having to chasing it.	<b>14 days</b>	Apology given to the customer as this request had not been put on the delivery list	Delivery process for new garden waste bins to be reviewed

<p>Customer unhappy that her bin was missed and when she challenged them they just shrugged their shoulders. When she returned home they had emptied the bin, but she is unhappy at their attitude</p>	<p><b>14 days</b></p>	<p>Crew spoken to but they say they weren't laughing at customer. Apology given to customer</p>	<p>Crew were advised to be careful of their manner when dealing with customers</p>
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