



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

**Making Experiences Count
Quarterly Customer Service Report**

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

1 April 2014 – 30 June 2014



Bromsgrove
District Council

www.bromsgrove.gov.uk

1. Introduction

This report details the customer feedback received by Bromsgrove District Council during the period from 1 April 2014 to 30 June 2014.

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

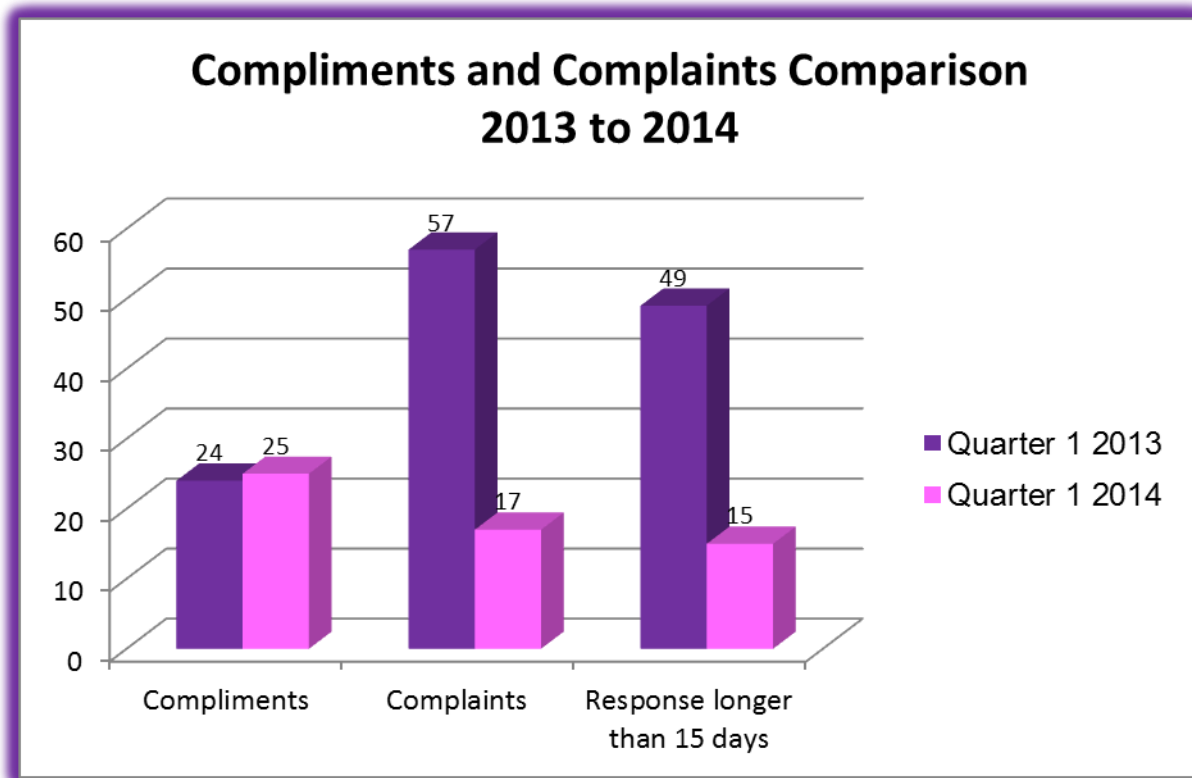
2. Customer Feedback Analysis

17 complaints were received during this quarter because we did not meet the customer's expectations 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.

82 % of complaints received were answered in 15 working days or less.

We also received 25 compliments.

This chart shows number of complaints and compliments for this quarter and the same quarter in 2013 - 14.



We can see from the comparison chart above that last year that there were 40 less complaints in the same quarter this year. This is mainly due to the Route Optimisation for refuse collections. When it was first introduced last year it caused an increase in complaints as customers got used to the changes. Teething problems were resolved, improvements made and customers are now very happy with the service. This is reflected in the low numbers of complaints and the increase in compliments received.

The common themes in the complaints received this quarter were:

- Lack of understanding of our processes
- Delays
- Staff attitude

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:-

- We are actively recruiting more planning staff to help with the delay in applications and are keeping customers informed of the situation.
- We are looking at the processes within Council tax to try and save time for the customers who may not need to fill out lengthy forms

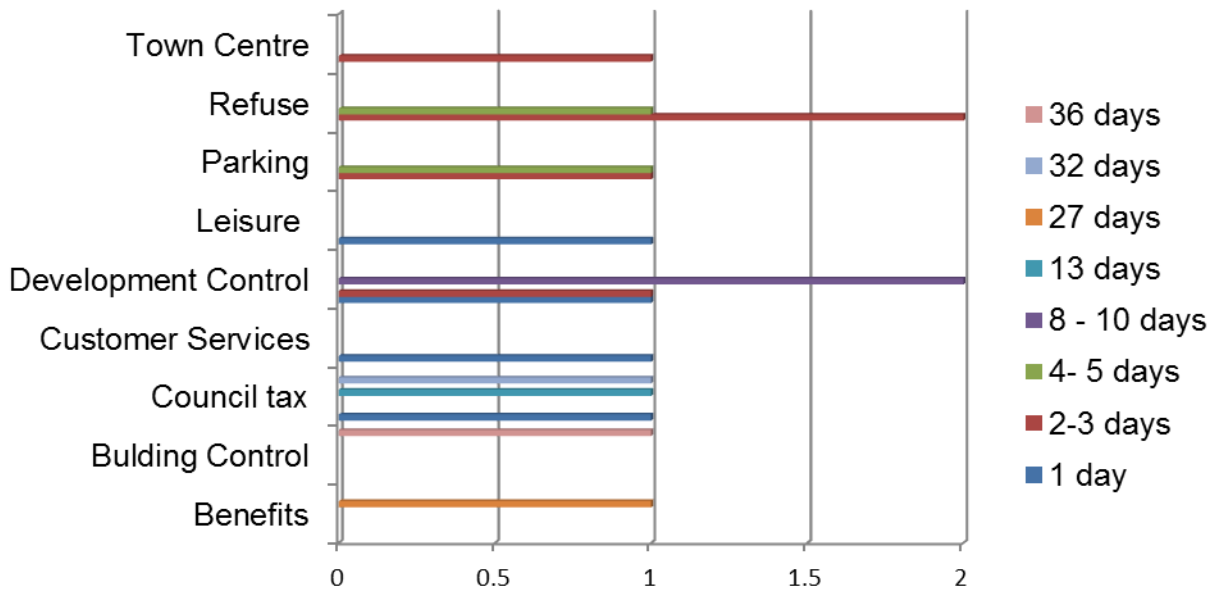
Number of complaints escalated to Head of Customer Services or to Stage 2

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 **82%** of complaints received during this quarter were dealt with within that time frame. 3 complaints took longer to resolve as they were complex cases which needed time to gather information for the customer.

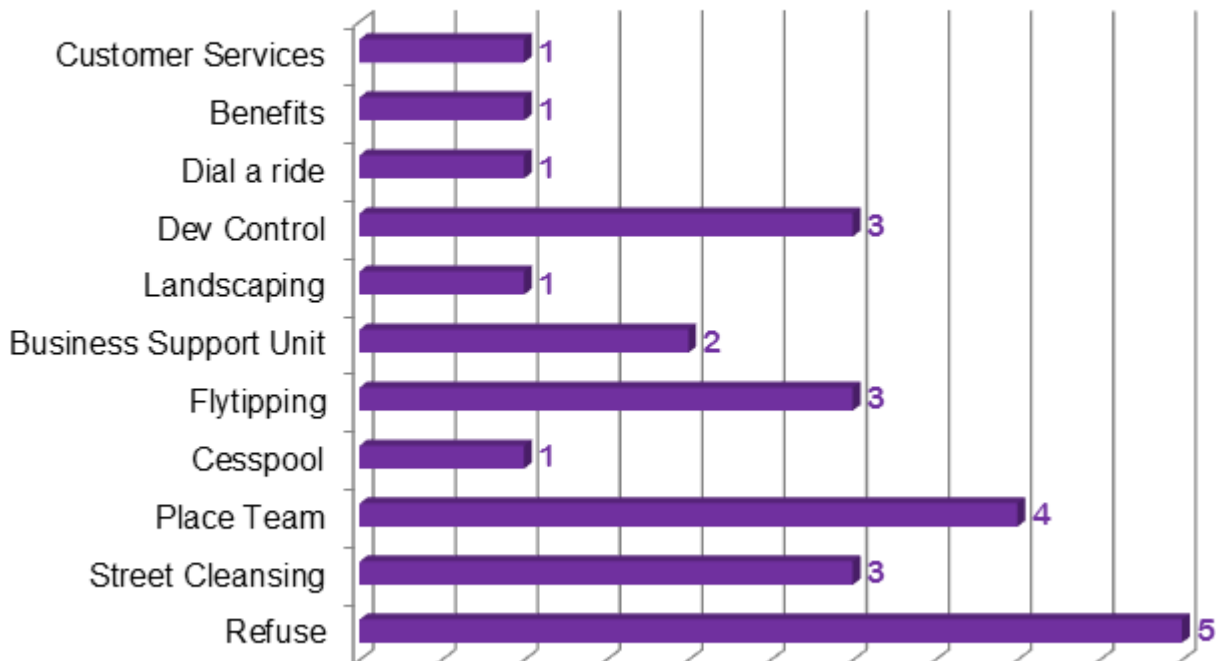
Time taken to respond by service



Happy Customers!

From the **25** 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.

Compliments by service



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

Refuse

Craig Jarvis and Wayne pulled a dog from my cat. They did what they could trying to help. Customer was so impressed and she wanted to say a big thank you.

Customer called to say thank you for the service received by the refuse crews. They have always been very pleasant, polite & professional. An excellent service.

Good nature and kindness shown by the operative who found my purse and delivered it to me at my home.

Wanted to compliment the refuse team on the bulky collection service. My request for a collection was executed within an hour and a half. An excellent service.

Customer called Cllr Bullivant to pass on a big thank you to the staff - she described the service as "Outstanding".

Street Cleansing

Praised street cleansing for work carried out.

Very quick service.

Customer called on behalf of all the residents in Hadley Close to say thank you for all the work that Leon and other members of his team have done. They have done such an excellent job in cleaning up this area. We want to thank all the team for their hard work, well done lads and keep up the good work.

Place team

Customer very impressed with how quickly we delivered her bin.

Thank you for picking up litter.

From Cllr Bullivant - I am personally proud of the achievement to date and thank the team.

Very impressed with bin delivery.

Cesspool Team

Many thanks for cesspool service, very professional.

Fly tipping

Thank you for removing it so fast.

Really great service and fast.

Reported problem at 10.00 done by 12.30.

Business Support Unit Environmental Services

Thank you for being so helpful and friendly – it's lovely to hear a friendly voice.

Many thanks to Julie for excellent services sorting out replacement brown bin.

Landscaping
Thank you for responding so quickly.
Development Control
Officer's proactive and professional regarding rights of way policy.
Officer was helpful with professional approach and explained issues to me.
I've just been singing your praises to a colleague and topped it off with a helpful email.
Dial a Ride
Thanks to all staff at Dial a Ride for boosting my confidence.
Benefits
The lady was very professional and took the time to explain details.
Customer Services
Thank you for everyone's help with parking permits.

3. Local Government Ombudsman Complaints

There were no complaints referred from the Ombudsman this quarter.

4. Customer Service Centre Information

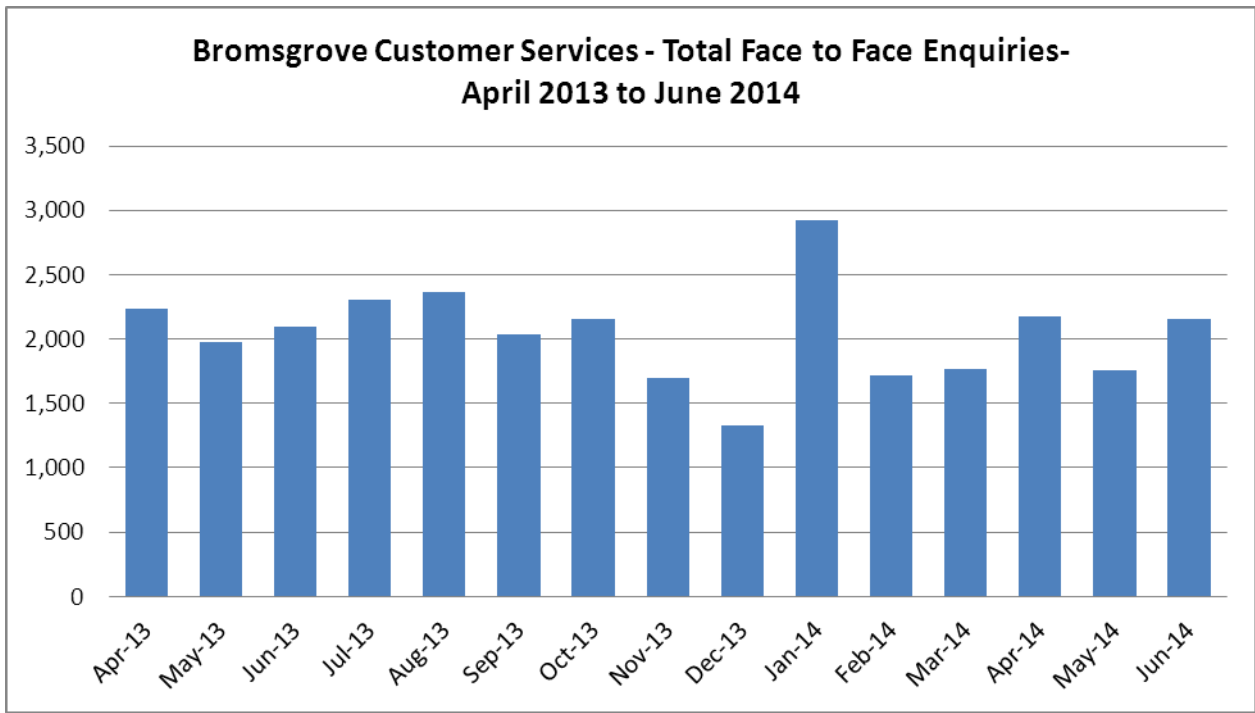
This section provides some statistical information in respect of the amount of customer demand received via the telephone, face to face and through our payment channels.

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 teams 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 2013 to June 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 as this may identify waste in systems which can then be addressed.

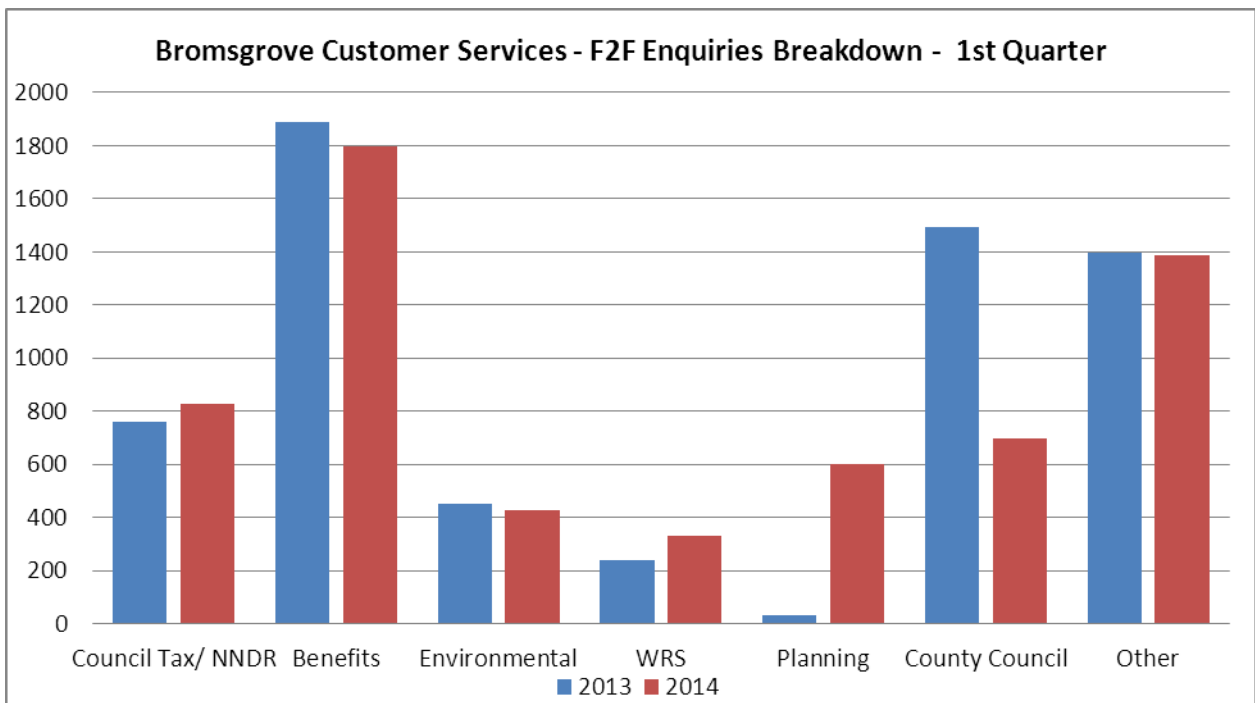


The following chart shows the breakdown of face to face customer enquiries received during quarter 1 2014, compared with the same period in 2013.

County Council enquiries continue to reduce through the Customer Service Centre; these services are now accessed via online methods.

During this quarter we have seen an increase in planning enquiries. Planning has made changes to how they work: officers are in regular contact with customers about their applications and they provide planning surgeries at Bromsgrove Council House which are very successful.

At the end of March customers receive their Council Tax bills for 14/15 and Benefits statements which at results in an increase in customer demand.

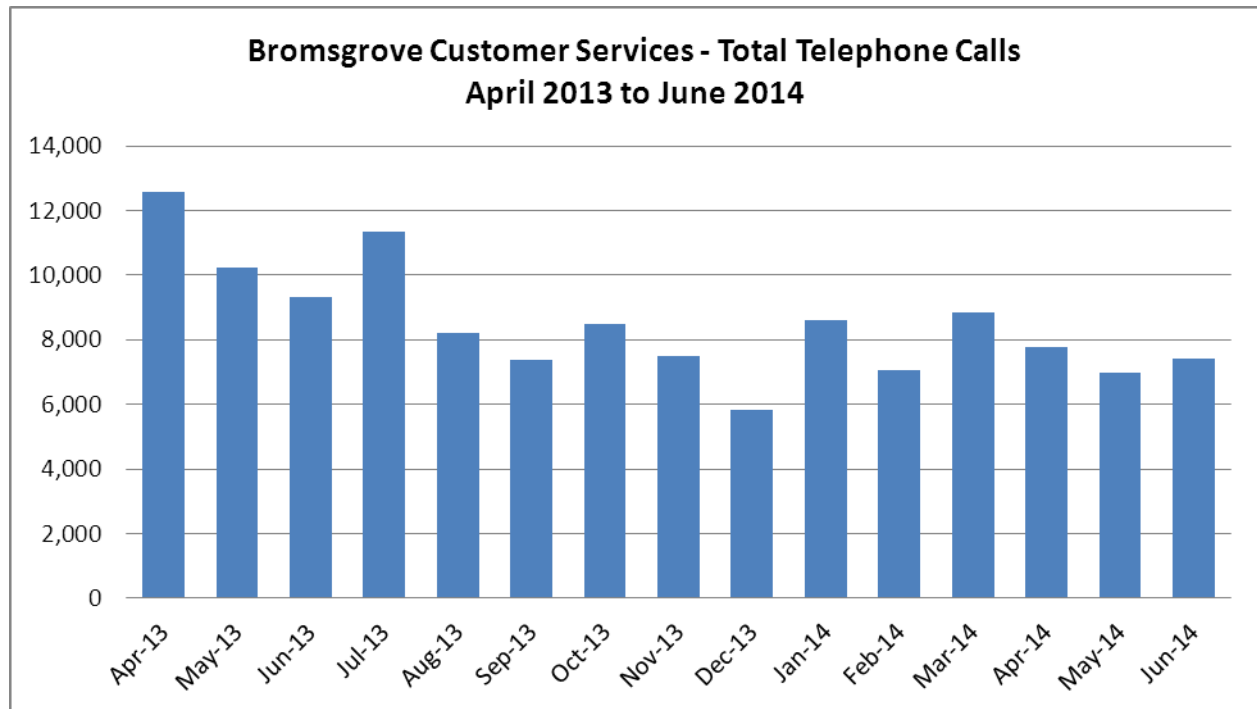


Telephone demand received

The following chart shows the total telephone calls recorded on the customer service systems from April 2013 until the end of June 2014.

The data shows an overall reduction in calls compared with quarter 1 2013

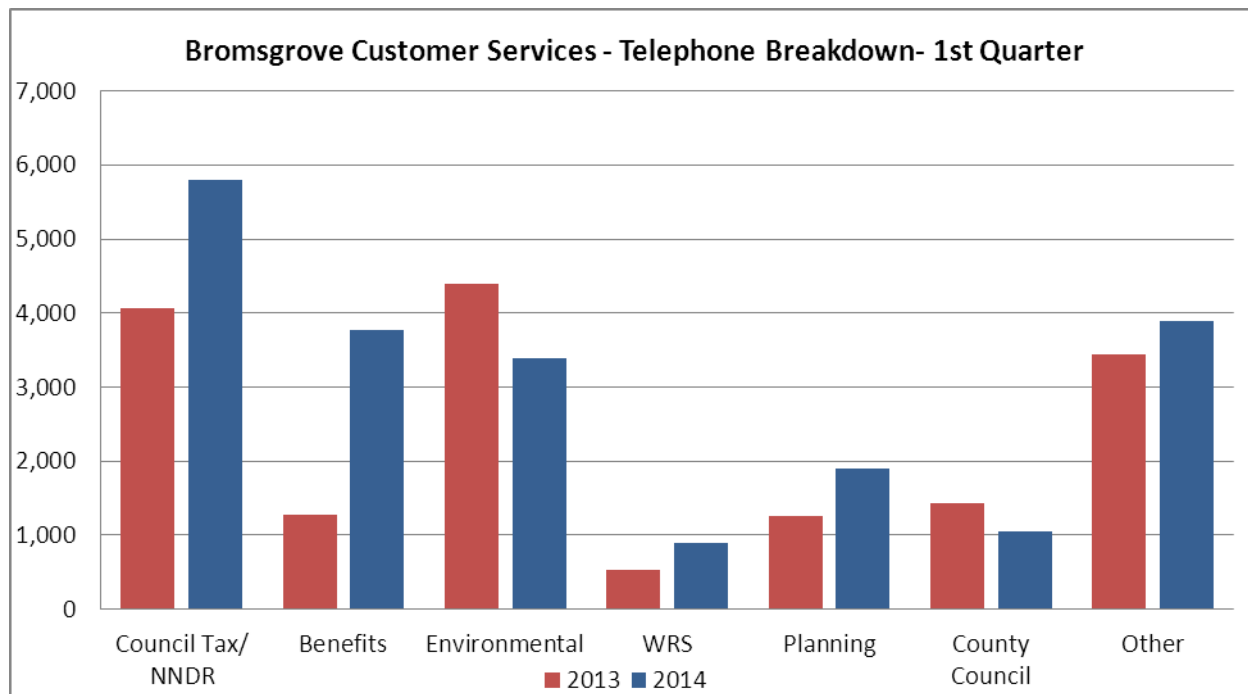
Revenues, Benefits and Environmental Services calls are now answered by the service staff which would account for the reduction as more calls will go through directly to the relevant team.



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.)

Compared with quarter 1 2013 the data shows an increase in the number of Benefits and Council Tax calls in 2014. Officers are aware that there has been an increase in customer contact for Benefits as a result of changes to the way the team operate. Various trials are in place to improve the customer journey and reduce failure demand.

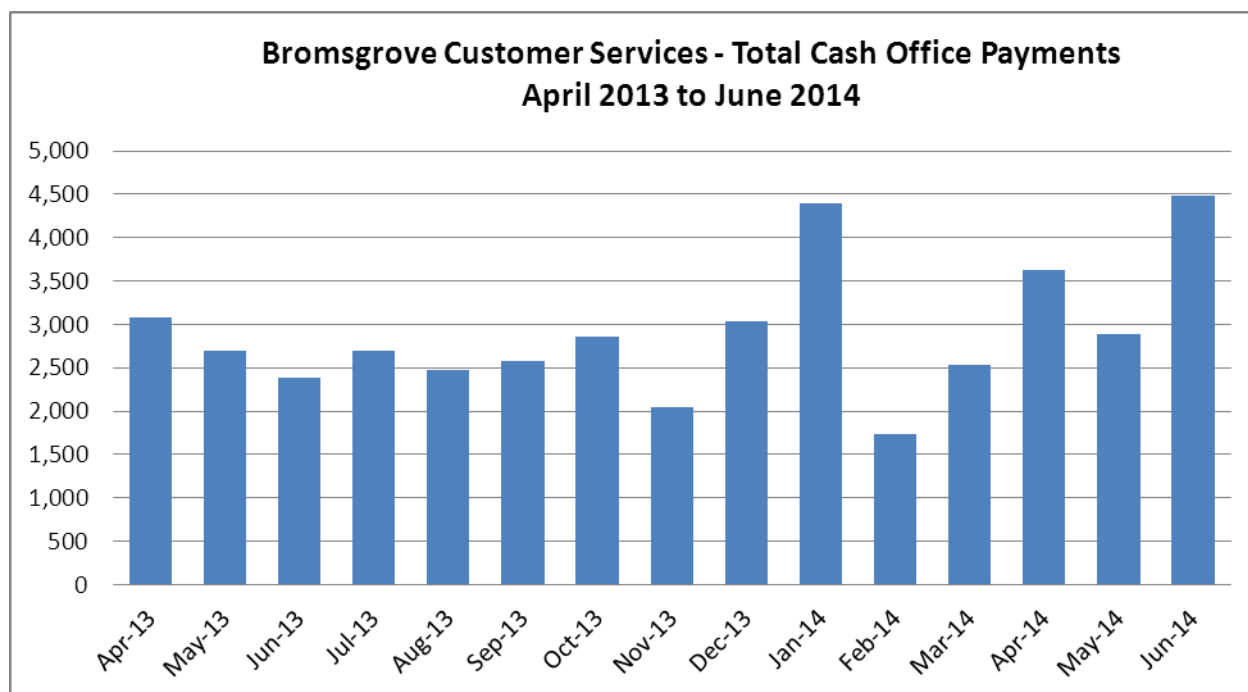
Investigation is under way to put a Benefits telephone solution in place which will provide greater flexibility of resources available and improve the customer experience.



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 2013 – June 2014.

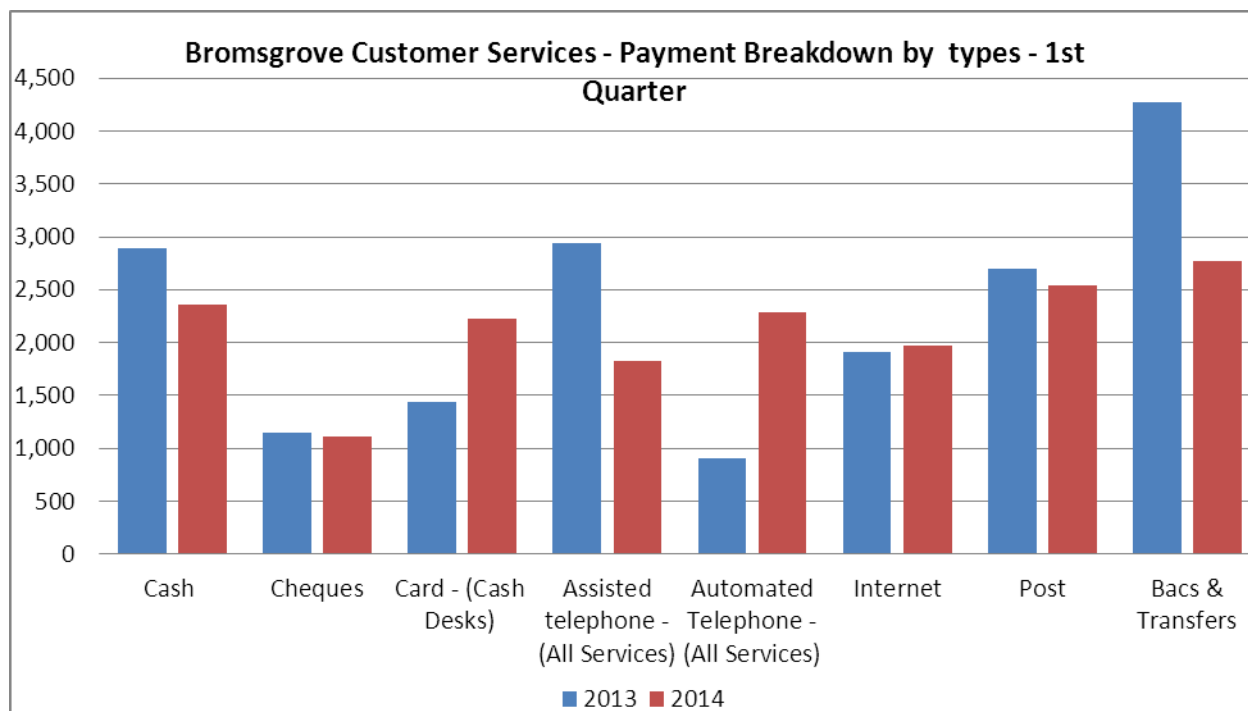
Comparison shows an increase in payments during the 1st quarter 2014 compared with April – June 2013. This is due to changes in invoicing for the lifeline service.



The chart below shows the breakdown of payments across all payment channels.

In February 2014 an upgrade to Bromsgrove payments system was installed. This has improved access to online and automated telephone payments self-serve access. The data shows we are seeing an increase in these methods of payments in.

We can also see an increase in payments by card at the cash desk, which is in line with the general trend away from cash.



Lynn Jones
Customer Services Manager
July 2014

Complaint Details April to June 2014

Complaint details	Days taken to respond	Action taken	Outcome update from HOS
Benefits			
Customer not happy that claim was not allowed and the way that she was spoken to.	27	<p>The Deputy Manager contacted the customer and an apology was given to customer about the way she was spoken to.</p> <p>The officer who was dealing with this case was trying to help the customer understand why her claim was not accepted. Customer was asked to provide evidence to support her claim and didn't understand the reasons.</p> <p>Since this complaint customer care training has been delivered for Benefits staff and coaching to support staff.</p>	<p>There was contact on a number of occasions with the customer during the response period. Regular quality assurance monitoring to be put in place which will form part of staff development reviews appraisals.</p> <p>In August 14 Managers will receive refresher training in dealing with complaints.</p>
Building Control			
Complaint regarding building control and various issues in getting a result and lack of communication	36	<p>Delay in resolution time due to the need to obtain specialist reports and third party calculations by both us and complainant.</p> <p>Apology given to customer for delays.</p> <p>After investigation it was found that poor workmanship by the builder had occurred and customer was advised to seek redress against builders insurance.</p>	This has raised some learning points about flat roof insulation specifications which will be discussed with the team.
Council Tax			
Customer unhappy that she was advised to complete wrong form and spent a lot of time doing it.	13	<p>Staff instructed to take a pragmatic approach rather than send out forms unnecessarily.</p> <p>Apology given to customer and she was assured that processes would be changed.</p>	We are aiming to improve this system by looking at what forms we really need to send out.

Customer unhappy that he had received a letter querying his single person discount.	32	<p>Customer unhappy that his case is being reviewed.</p> <p>Further facts gathered by telephone call to customer.</p> <p>Following investigation the manager spoke to the customer and explained that this was normal practice and the reasons why we have to do this.</p> <p>Followed up with a letter confirming conversation.</p>	This case required investigation with a 3 rd party in order to fully respond to the customer
Customer unhappy that she is still receiving bills and court summons when property sold and bill paid	1	<p>Customer had paid an incorrect amount, which led to a summons.</p> <p>Customer advised of the payment outstanding and that this payment was required in full to prevent further action.</p>	No further action
Customer Services			
Customer unhappy with the attitude and rudeness of staff and that she had been given an incorrect telephone number	1	<p>The officer who took this call found it difficult to understand what the customer was asking for, and did not hear clearly which service the customer asked to be transferred to.</p> <p>Apology given to the customer and officer advised to take the time required and ask relevant questions to ensure call is transferred correctly.</p>	Teams to be reminded of the importance to listen and question the customers to ensure they give the correct details first time.
Development Control			
Customer unhappy about caravans illegally sited on land.	8	Site visit made to secure removal of caravans	No further action
Customer acknowledged letter responding to his queries but wants more detailed response as he still considers works are illegal	9	<p>Investigation carried out. All relevant information given to the customer.</p> <p>Suggested contacting Ombudsman for independent review if not happy with the way matter has been handled.</p>	No further action

Customer unhappy about delays in pre application	1	Case officer visited site and explanation given to customer.	No further action
Customer unhappy about length of time taken in dealing with application	3	Apology given as this didn't actually need permission so therefore didn't need to be in the backlog.	We are aiming to recruit more staff to reduce the backlog
Leisure			
Customer unhappy and wants explanation why toilets in Rubery village are closed at 14.30 and not 4.30	2	Apology and explanation given to customer and she was assured that the new opening hours will match time of local retail units opening hours.	No further action
Parking Enforcement			
Customer unhappy about the attitude of staff issuing parking tickets.	3	Customer contacted and apology given as there was no intention to upset them. Customer rapport has been discussed with Enforcement officer involved.	No further action
Customer unhappy about parking enforcement fine issued whilst loading vehicle at Worcester Road.	4	Customer contacted and it was explained that the PCN was issued correctly and no evidence was found to his claim that businesses in Bromsgrove were being victimised.	No further action
Refuse			
Customer unhappy about the recycling and general waste service at Newland Close.	4	Spoke to customer and arranged new collection point.	No further action
Customer unhappy about brown bin payment and collection.	3	Error with payment – apology given to customer and collection made.	No further action
Customer unhappy about non delivery of grey bin.	3	Error on delivery list. Apology given to customer and bin delivered.	No further action

Town Centre			
Customer unhappy as she fell over in the High Street because of a raised slab.	3	It was explained that the pavement slabs in this area belonged to a private company and she was given the contact details for them.	No further action