

Worcestershire  
**Regulatory Services**

*Supporting and protecting you*

# Activity Report | 2024-25



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# Foreword

Written by Simon Wilkes (Director of Regulatory Services)

Welcome to the second Activity Report of 2024/5. We retain the usual format that members will have seen for some years. The most obvious addition, which will include more detail as we go forward relates to the page on planning and enviro-crime enforcement, which Bromsgrove and Redditch formally added to their partnership requirements in June.

So far in 2024/5 planning support continues to show increases in demand. Food safety and health and safety at work activities are both on-trend. Numbers of food businesses being found with significant non-compliances remains relatively low. Stray dog complaints are up on Q4 the previous two quarters' figures, but overall close to trend.

Information requests fell in Q2, going against the increases in planning support related activity, which we have often suggested as a driver of these.

In Licensing, the level of applications fell last quarter after the peak in Q1. We suggested that last quarter's peak was possibly a reflection of the competition for custom in the sector, with businesses trying to get their summer event offers out earlier than previous years and into customers' diaries. Complaints and enquiries for licensing increased following a drop in Q1.

For pollution and nuisance related work, the year continued slowly with moderate levels of complaint, most likely because of the poor spring and summer weather. Whilst numbers did show a peak over the summer, numbers were curtailed compared to the same period in previous years. This clearly demonstrates the seasonality and impacts of weather on nuisance work. Warm weather leads to open windows so that noise can penetrate houses that would otherwise be stopped by the modern double and triple glazing deployed in most properties. Public Health related complaint work, linked to nuisance, like accumulations was roughly on trend for the period.

We hope you find the content information and, as ever please contact myself or the three Team Managers if you have any other queries.

Many Thanks



Simon

# Community Environmental Health

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

## Quarter One

The routine food hygiene intervention programme continued with support from our contractors. The recruitment process for the 5 new food safety officers agreed by the Board commenced to support this work. This is a key priority as we not only have our 2024-2025 businesses to inspect but also some 600 existing and new premises outstanding from 2023-2024. The latter have been risk assessed to ensure that we focus resources on the highest risk businesses.

Compliance continues to be very high with over 90% of premises achieving Food Hygiene Rating System (FHRS) scores for of Level 4-5. Level 3 is considered to demonstrate that premises are broadly compliant with the law, so these premises exceed the statutory requirements.

As always officers continue to find poor premises where more formal action is required. One persistently non-compliant premises (a bakery in Malvern) where the food business operator has shown reluctance over an extended period to make the serious improvements needed is currently going through the formal legal process. Officers also investigated chocolate Easter eggs at a major retailer that were found to have been nibbled by mice. Work is ongoing to bring these premises into compliance.

The aggregators (Just Eat, Deliveroo etc) now remove businesses with very poor scores from their platforms. Consequently, those poor performers wishing to partner with them tend to improve quickly and often pay for a re-rating. Getting a good FHRS score is a key driver to compliance. There are also early signs that numbers of new premises may be on an upward trend with more mobile and home-based traders registering with us. Indeed, the seemingly never-ending coffee shop openings continue, although we may now be at saturation point as several have also closed. The business closures reported appear to be mostly down to increased costs of staff, food, and energy.

We were also involved in two national initiatives in Quarter one.

- The Food Standards Agency's continuing national E Coli investigation. Worcestershire has several growers who supply the major sandwich producers and have been identified as the possible source. All the Worcestershire businesses involved have co-operated fully in providing the information requested.
- A traceability exercise on imported meat products led by the National Food Crime Unit. We worked closely with Trading Standards colleagues at the County Council on the latter as it often involved poor labelling. It is a legal requirement that food is labelled in English. In one case officers had to use an interpreter as none of the items found could be identified. The operation led to food being removed from the market.

A considerable amount of officer time was spent working with UKHSA (UK Health Security Agency) in an investigation into a Cryptosporidium outbreak at a farm in Worcestershire which received extensive media coverage. The number of reported cases ran into the hundreds and is said to be the largest known outbreak of its type. As this is also a working farm your officers had to work closely with the Health & Safety Executive on enforcement issues.

Officers also dealt with over 200 food complaints and enquiries about food premises and issued 23 Export Certificates.

In statutory nuisance work, an Abatement Notice was served on a public house in May under the Environmental Protection Act for noise from outdoor music events, and a noisy cockerel was put before the courts! Preliminary meetings were held for events including summer music festivals, and officers worked with event organisers for a previously controversial bank holiday event as well as preparation for the Christmas light switch on in Worcester.

Complex health and safety investigations continued, with your Officers attending the inquest into the death of a participant in a charity boxing event, and a dog sledging accident investigation was concluded.

## Quarter Two

Interviews for the recruitment of five new officers into the Community Environmental Health Team as agreed by the Board to meet the requirements of the Food Standards Agency food safety recovery programme were concluded in Q2. The outcome was successful in that three additional Regulatory Support Officers (RSO) joined us in September. They come from diverse backgrounds, namely travel, retail and teaching. One is also a fluent Chinese speaker. As WRS continue to lead the way in developing this RSO role our Principal Officer (Food) has developed a specific training programme to ensure they are 'competent' to deal with low-risk premises as required by the Food Law Code of Practice. Job offers were also made for two Technical Officer posts in food safety, and another to fill the vacancy in noise/pollution work. They will commence employment next quarter.

Major investigations in Q2 included noise from the refurbishment of a Sainsburys supermarket in Worcester with numerous complaints of night time disturbance whilst floors were being dug up. Site meetings were held with the local Councillor and members of Sainsburys senior management and compromise reached on permissible activities at specific hours. We also received an appeal in respect of a Noise Abatement Notice served on a public house in Droitwich for excessively loud music impacting on an elderly neighbour. We await a court date.

A prosecution file for a local bakery which is consistently non-compliant was submitted to Malvern Hills District Council. We continued as ever to undertake routine inspections completing 450 high risk visits during the quarter. Most premises continue with good levels of compliance although there does appear to be an upwards trend in premises dropping in their FHRS rating. Failure to have a documented system, poor cleaning, lack of training and inadequate pest control were the main reasons.

A farm in Bromsgrove was one of several venues which held music events under temporary event notices which were monitored over the summer using both noise monitoring equipment and personal visits by members of the team.

Evidence of breaches of a noise abatement notice was established during an ongoing investigation into loud music from a residential address in Worcester. A prosecution file has subsequently been prepared ready for submission to the legal team.

Quotations have been obtained for a major works in default project to replace a failed sewage treatment system in Barnt Green, Bromsgrove.

A licence review has been instigated in relation to a public house in Worcester following ongoing noise complaints concerning loud music and late-night noise from customers on the premises.

In addition, your officers provided evidence at a Licence application hearing, having made representations concerning premises in Wyre Forest which included proposals for outdoor music events until 0100 hours. As a result, the applicant amended their application for outdoor music to end by 2200 hours and agreed to a number of additional noise control conditions.

# Licensing

Written by Kiran Lahel (Licensing And Support Services Manager)

## Quarter One

On the whole there was a slight downward trajectory in licensing enquiries at the start of the quarter which is not dissimilar to other years at Q1 where this tends to be the calmer period between Christmas and summer queries. The team however have continued to remain busy due to other priorities which have namely taken the shape of policy matters that have required significant input from the teams.

At the beginning of April, it was announced that the Pavement Licencing Scheme that was originally introduced during the covid pandemic under the Business and Planning Act 2020 were to be made permanent as of the 31st March 2024 by provisions made in the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023. This has therefore involved the team putting together a new pavement licensing policy based on the new legislation for each district council and presenting the new policy to all licensing committees or similar with a recommendation to consult on each policy for implementation. In the meantime the team are continuing with the temporary scheme until such decisions are made.

A review of the Taxi Standards that were implemented by all district councils in 2022 highlighted the need to make safeguarding training for all taxi drivers mandatory. As part of the initial changes a mandatory requirement for all NEW drivers to undertake the competency certificate was introduced. This is a thorough training session looking at all aspects that are required for a taxi driver to do their role including equalities, safeguarding, communication, driver conduct and responsibilities. The feedback from drivers has remained positive and valuable but showed a uneven playing field with half of drivers now trained and others not. As a result, officers have presented reports to all district councils recommending that all drivers undertake safeguarding training and undertake refresher training every three years.

Members Training commenced across all districts in June with officers providing training to new and established members of the committee. A new interactive format has been welcomed by members and has allowed different scenarios to be played out through role play and videos which has allowed a multitude of different questions asked by councillors to get themselves ready for the role.

During the pandemic, an operation commenced to look at illegal dog breeding across Worcestershire and the results clearly brought to light the amount of people that were unlicensed and illegally selling dogs across the County. As a result, various teams across WRS including Licensing, the intelligence unit and the Dog Warden service have worked together to educate, communicate and monitor complaints in order to reduce this number in the long term. Earlier this year a second operation commenced through the intelligence team and again they identified there still to be a large number of potential illegal dog breeding cases across the County. Although it had reduced since the first operation the numbers still signified a problem and as a result licensing officers are now investigating a number of cases that will either result in licence applications being submitted, warning letters distributed, or enforcement action being taken.

Finally, the team have been working with Technical Services and the Intelligence team on introducing a new triage process for calls and queries. Licensing remains the service with the highest volume of call and queries to the duty desk. As a result, some of these queries are referred to a licensing technical officer but could be answered by the duty officer team. Both teams have been working together to establish a set of processes that the duty officers can use to enable them to efficiently navigate through the questions/queries they receive daily. The intelligence team have highlighted from information and data collected which areas of licensing form the largest numbers of queries in order to aid prioritisation.

## Quarter Two

The summer spike tends to show impact in this quarter with evidence of applications and queries higher than the last quarter. Most of these relate to both Taxi Licensing and the Licensing Act and due to summer leave in the team this can be a challenging quarter for officers with fewer staff members in over the summer period.

Offices have been busy working on a number of policies for consultation this quarter ranging from new policies including the 'Pavement licensing policy' that has started to make its way back from consultation in some districts and the 'Mandatory Safeguarding for Taxi Drivers' that has also started to make its way back from consultation in some districts. But also, policies that require review based on statutory requirements such as the Gambling Policy. All consultations are posted on each individual district website to reply to and hard copies can be collected from the districts if required.

The number of new Animal licensing inspections have been slowly increasing and there has been a programme of interim inspections scheduled which has required more officers to get involved than usual. The team have also been working on Operation Lisbon where investigations remain ongoing.

Enforcement work continues across the team including evening work on taxi ranks, officers investigating suspended premises licences and interim animal inspections scheduled whereby there has been intelligence received regarding a licensed or unlicensed premises.

Alongside operational and day to day work the team continues to strive for efficiencies and have been continuing their work on implementing Victoria forms for the automation of licensing forms and a number of procurement projects including making the DBS process for taxi drivers more efficient and last but not least the procurement of veterinary services for animal licensing inspections.

# Technical Services

Written by Mark Cox (Technical Services Manager)

## Quarter One

Our Air Quality work continued to work at pace. As well as drafting and submission of 6 Annual Status Reports by the team for all 6 Districts, a draft Air Quality Action Plan for Worcester City successfully navigated through Worcester City Council Committees. A behaviour change survey, jointly developed with Public Health also closed and the results stated to be analysed. Initial steering group meetings with key stakeholders were held for Bromsgrove and Wyre Forest District Council's in order to produce a draft Air Quality Action Plan for both by November 2024. Our AQ Behaviour Change work also has begun to pick up pace starting with lots of contact with schools some of which have led to visits.

During this period the draft Contaminated Land Inspection Strategy for Redditch Borough Council was finalised. This updated strategy reviews and replaces the 2001 document taking account of changes in the Contaminated Land Statutory Guidance 2012, national policy, council policy, and sets out the Council's strategic approach to review and assessment of contaminated land. The document is due to go to RBC committee in October 2024. The strategies for the other districts will follow on the back of this draft.

Although contract work for Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council (SMBC) came to an end during April 2024 we continued to offer contracted support to Gloucester City Council (GCC), East Staffordshire (ESBC) and North Warwickshire Borough Council's (NWBC) as well as the six Worcestershire districts. This often involves reviewing complex reports provided in support of planning applications and discharge of planning condition requests. We are asked to comment on the whole range of planning applications, large and small, including residential developments, commercial, infrastructure projects, solar farms, industrial processes, extensions, change of use, conversion of buildings and any other development where contamination may be a relevant consideration.

Interesting cases to note include the demolition and redevelopment of Bromsgrove Fire Station, a fuel depot in Gloucester City and an old farm near Pinvin all for various uses including residential development.

Routine Industrial Permitting work including inspection of large industrial processes, foundries and casting through to cement processing and petrol stations all continued. No significant issues arisen apart from continuing complaints against a large manufacturing facility in the Gloucester area.

As of April 2024, the current 2 remaining COVID Advisors are continuing to assist with the Homes for Ukraine scheme along with a principal officer managing the scheme in Bromsgrove and Redditch. Throughout Q1 significant effort have been dedicated to school and college registrations, the support workers have been working with education officers and Ukrainian guest with the registration process, applications, references and have accompanied several students to college open evenings; also supported parent with worries about school documentation, attended school meeting and helped rectify any issues that arose.



In April the Homes for Ukraine team had a meeting with an external Mental Health team to discuss some complex issues and best ways to deal with them, and in May we met with the wider Redditch Council Housing Team to build a relationship and discuss the best approach on how we can work together to support our guests on the scheme. As usual team have continued to support guests move from their hosts to independent living in either Social Housing or Private Rented Accommodation, this consists of financial advice, help setting up utilities, sourcing furniture and household goods and help getting children into schools / colleges. There were 2 new arrivals in Bromsgrove and 10 new arrivals in Redditch.

This first quarter of the new financial year is always busy from an IT development perspective as we prepare and submit most of our government returns. Over the quarter we have also taken part in various cyber security awareness activities designed to increase the security and resilience of the computer system we use. We have also worked to enhance service delivery, with these activities including regular updates and patches to our main back office system, record retention and deletions. We also offered PAT testing for all electrical equipment located in our offices and for remote working equipment. We are obliged to complete this every 2 years. Work on Service-wide projects has also continued including the Automation Project and introduction of Taxi digital Identity records. We have continued income generation work with Bromsgrove and Redditch Planning, Worcestershire Trading Standards, and Tewkesbury Borough Council's Environmental Health and Licensing.

## Quarter Two

For the Technical Pollution team, work on the 2 new draft Air Quality Action Plans commenced at pace for both Bromsgrove and Wyre Forest District Councils. This work involved continuation of the steering group meetings following from Q1 and into Q2 followed by detailed source apportionment, modelling, quantification and feasibility study assessment of the measures together with report writing. Additionally, our behaviour change work began to accelerate with contact with 49 schools to introduce our AQ work and Real Time Air Quality Portal.

A new draft Contaminated Land Strategy for Redditch Council was produced and submitted to the portfolio holder for consideration prior to Committee stages leading to sign off by Full Council later in 2024. Redditch's Strategy is the first in a refresh programme for all of the District Council's strategies, with the one for Malvern Hills proposed to follow in early 2025. We continue our contract work for North Warwickshire, Gloucester City and East Staffordshire District - including sites within Uttoxeter and Burton-on-Trent. The team have dealt with a couple of interesting cases in Gloucester requesting sign off of technical conditions, a standout being large new housing development at Hill Farm, Hempsted Lane, Gloucester. At Bakers Quay, Gloucester we also dealt with some sign off validation for areas of the site where planning consent was granted back in 2014 when the site was still being investigated/assessed and a remedial strategy agreed. We also provided support to our planning officers on a complex planning application at the Roxel Group site, near Stourport as well as several solar farms and battery storage facilities with scoping consultations and/or Environmental Information Requests across the Districts.

In terms of Environmental Permitting, a significant amount of time has been spent dealing with Modern Packaging in Pershore to upgrade their existing abatement technology as well as dealing with Roger Dyson (Foundry) in Droitwich Spa to improve their solvent management plan. As part of our contract work, minor issues involving Permal in Gloucester are ongoing and we are in liaison with Gloucester City representatives.

For our Database administration and information technology support team, over this second quarter we took part in various cyber security awareness activities designed to increase the security and resilience of the computer system we use. This quarter we facilitated the introduction of the new Mimecast e-mail security system. At the beginning of the quarter the 2 remaining COVID Advisor continued to assist with the Homes for Ukraine scheme along with a principal officer managing the scheme in Bromsgrove and Redditch. Also, in July we successfully recruited another part time Homes for Ukraine support worker into the team.

As well as the usual routine support given to existing guests, hosts, and new arrivals, significant time and effort was dedicated to school and college registrations. Specifically on-going support was provided to three Students trying to get into college and university, with liaison between them and the education authorities. Other support is provided such as that provided to support Ukrainian guests who wanted to improve their job prospects, liaising with the job centre to access available free courses. Offering Employment advice to two young Male guests and helping with CVs. There have been 2 new young mothers in recent months, who have received help and advice from the support workers such as childcare, medical support, healthy starts scheme, visas and passports. Between the team there has been attendance at Bromsgrove and Redditch welcome refugees support groups and the Ukrainian Pop-up café hosted in the Bromsgrove Methodist church.

During September we saw an increase in demand for more hosts with three new arrivals in Redditch, due to the ongoing war in Ukraine and with the colder months approaching and the continuation of blackouts. We are continuing to explore different ways to try and attract new hosts to the scheme. Again, during September following the loss of one Dog Warden and with the commencement of new contracts with Birmingham, Solihull and North Somerset, we increased the number of dog wardens from two full time to now having three full time and a part-time warden.

Unfortunately, due to the new contracts we have had to put to sleep increasing numbers of stray dogs because of aggression primarily, but also because we have received higher numbers of pitbulls and XL Bully dogs (both banned breeds). The heightened levels of aggression in some of the stray dogs has caused a significant percentage which are not rehomeable to be put to sleep using a dart gun at the kennels, minimising risk to wardens, the public and the vet by not having to move the dog unnecessarily. As well as the larger bull breeds, we have also seen an increase in the number of puppies and dogs with significant welfare support needs. We attempt to meet the identified best method of caring for each dog which may mean alternative forms of boarding outside of our contracted kennels, such as fostering.

# Dog Control

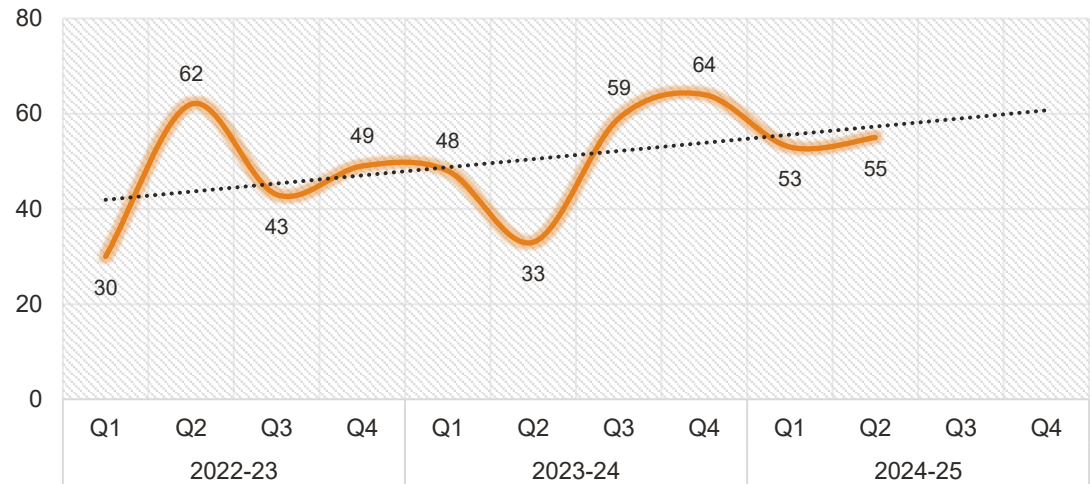
The data on this page outlines the number of dog control cases (complaints, enquiries, and reports of lost or stray dogs) handled by the service. Complaints received by WRS include reports of dangerous dogs, reports of dog fouling, and reports of dogs persistently straying. Complaints relating to the 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 cases received between 1st April 2024 and 30th September 2024 is comparable to 2022/23 but a reduction of 10% compared to 2023/24. Approximately 86% 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). There has, however, been a notable increase in the number of dogs picked up with welfare concerns and subsequently requiring veterinary treatment or examination. Approximately 55% of dogs have been successfully reunited with their owners although this figure is known to vary between local authorities.

In general terms, the service receives a low number of dog control complaints and enquiries each quarter. Based on the 42 complaints received during the year to date, 19 have related to dogs which are persistently straying from residential properties whilst 12 have related to dog fouling.

Complaints and Enquiries



Reports of Lost or Stray Dogs



# Food Safety

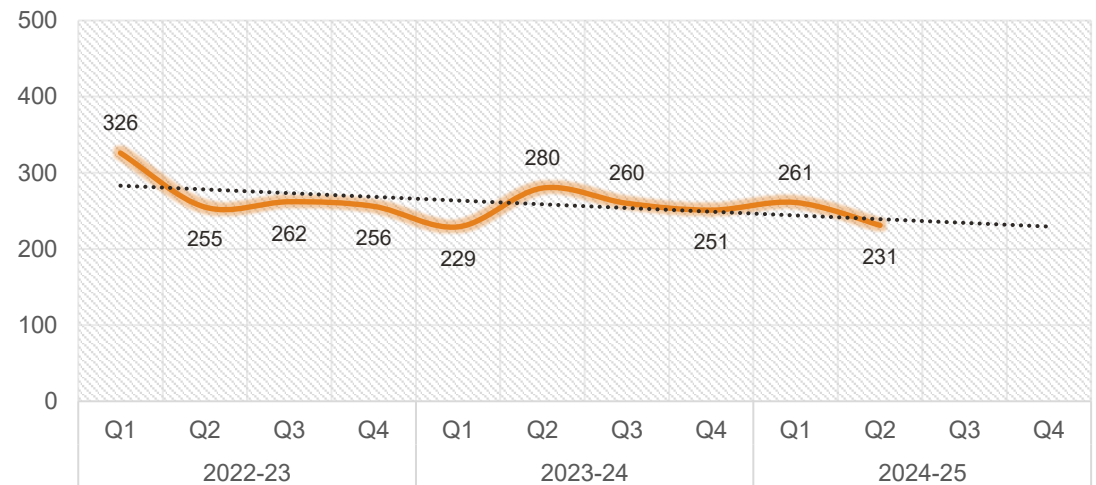
The data on this page outlines the number of food safety cases (complaints, enquiries, and notifications) received by the service and the number of food safety interventions undertaken at premises included in the Food Hygiene Rating Scheme. Complaints handled by WRS relate to food products and premises, however, complaints regarding the composition and labelling of food (including allergen labelling) are primarily investigated by Trading Standards. 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

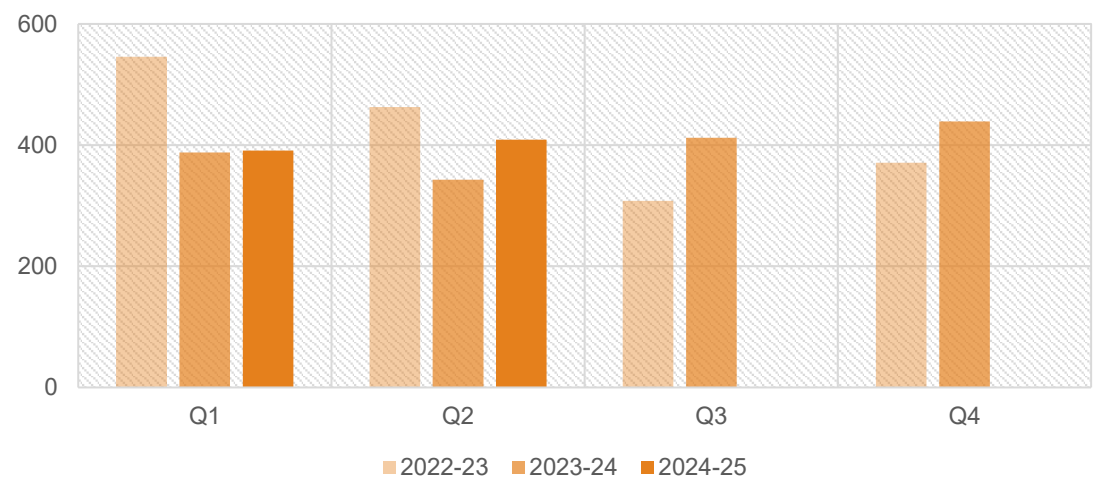
The number of cases received between 1st April 2024 and 30th September 2024 is a reduction of 15% compared to 2022/23 and a reduction of 3% compared to 2023/24. The service tends to receive a greater number of enquiries (including requests for business advice) than complaints. Based on the 220 complaints received during the year to date, 68% have related to issues with food products (such as poor quality food or food containing a foreign object) and 32% have related to poor hygiene standards or practices at food businesses.

Based on the 891 interventions undertaken during the year to date, 3% have resulted in a business 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 takeaway sector and small retailers. To find out more about food hygiene ratings, please visit <https://ratings.food.gov.uk>.

## Complaints and Enquiries



## FHRS Interventions



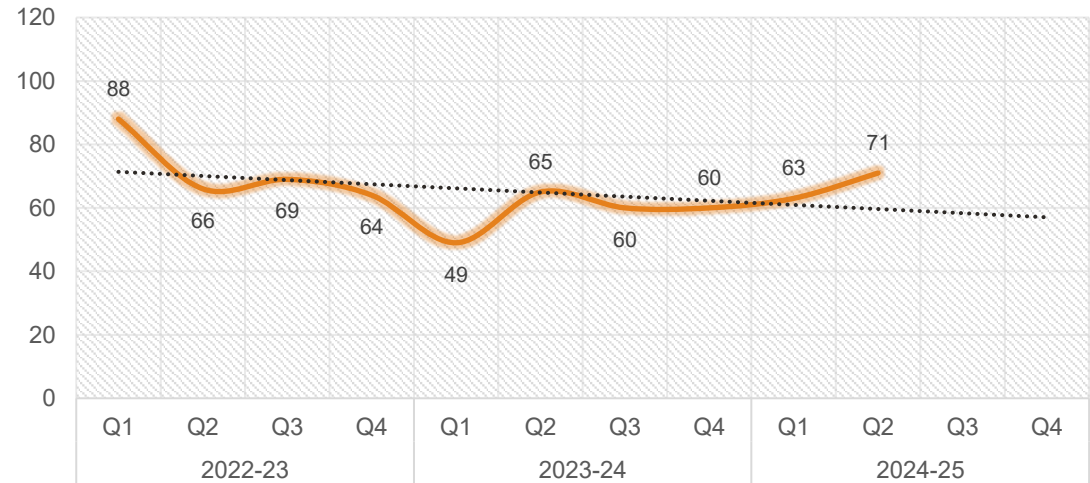
# Health & Safety

The data on this page outlines the number of health and safety cases (complaints, enquiries, and reports of accidents in the workplace) received by the service. 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.

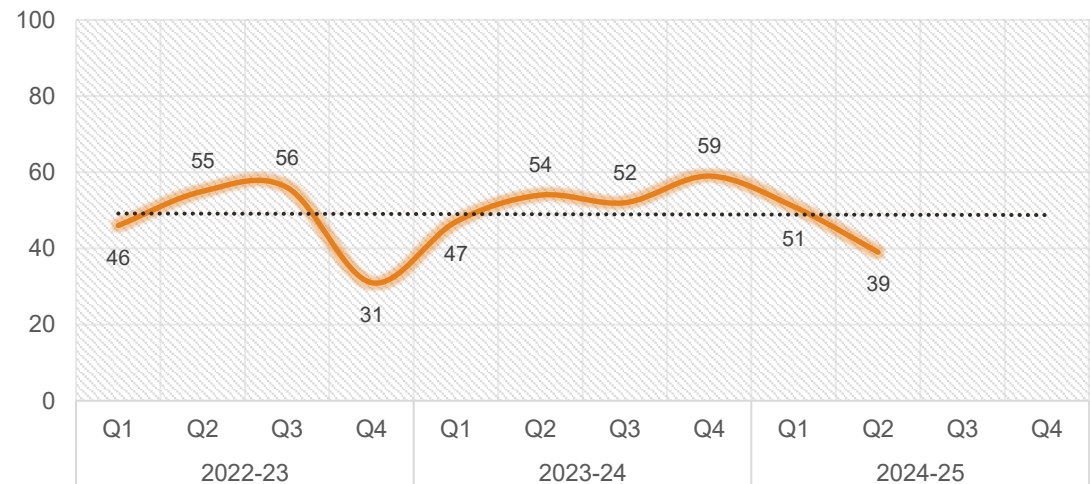
## Comments

The number of cases received between 1st April 2024 and 30th September 2024 is a reduction of 12% compared to 2022/23 but an increase of 4% compared to 2023/24. Approximately 40% 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. The most common cause of accidents continues to be slips, trips and falls (whether on the same level or from height). Sadly, the service has investigated a fatality during the second quarter after a contractor working at a retail outlet was crushed by a piece of mechanical equipment.

## Complaints and Enquiries



## Accident Reports



# Information Requests

The data on this page outlines the number of information requests received by the service. Requests for information are generally received from the public, or private sector companies, and are made under the Environmental Information Regulations, Freedom of Information Act, or General Data Protection Regulations (commonly known as Subject Access Requests). Requests for information are also received from other local authorities or law enforcement agencies and are made under the Data Protection Act (for the prevention and detection of crime or in connection with legal proceedings).

Information Requests



# Licensing

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

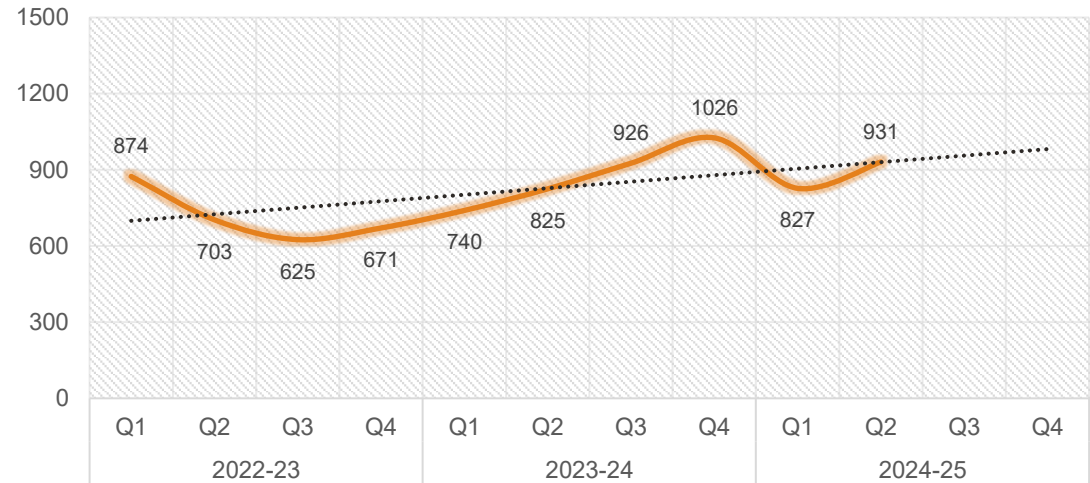
- Alcohol and Entertainment
- Animals
- Caravans
- Gambling
- Scrap Metal
- Sex Establishments
- Skin Piercing
- Street Trading, Amenities, and Collections
- Taxis

## Comments

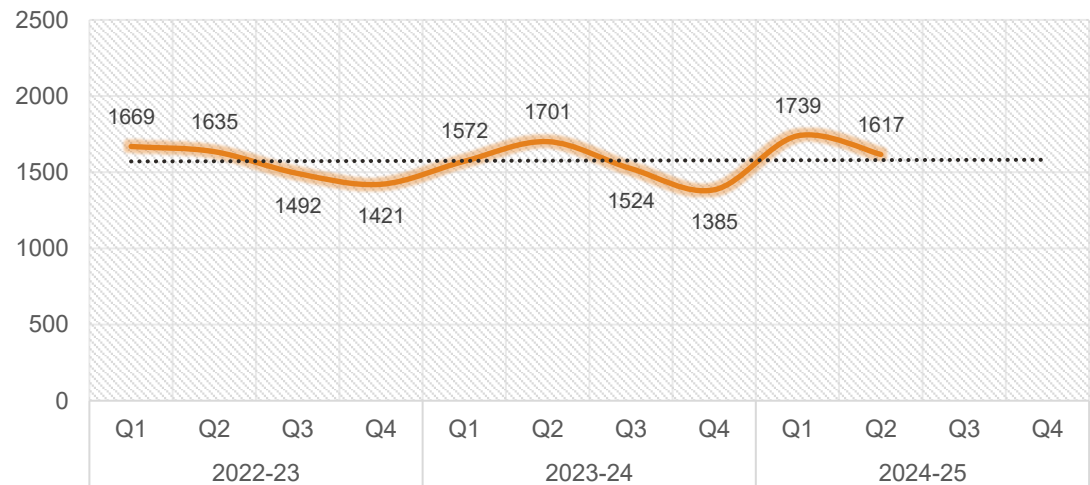
The number of cases received between 1st April 2024 and 30th September 2024 is an increase of 5% compared to 2022/23 and an increase of 6% compared to 2023/24. Approximately 66% of cases have been applications and registrations with 30% relating to private hire or hackney carriage vehicles and 28% relating to temporary events.

In general terms, the service receives a higher number of enquiries (such as queries about regulations, by-laws, and licence conditions) compared to complaints. Based on the complaints received during the year to date, approximately 43% have related to taxi licensing (such as reports of poor driver behaviour, unauthorised parking, or poor driving standards) and 21% have related to alcohol licensing (businesss breaching the lciensing objectives). A further 14% of complaints have related to animal licensing with most cases relating to the unlicensed breeding and/or sale of dogs.

## Complaints and Enquiries



## Applications and Registrations



# Planning

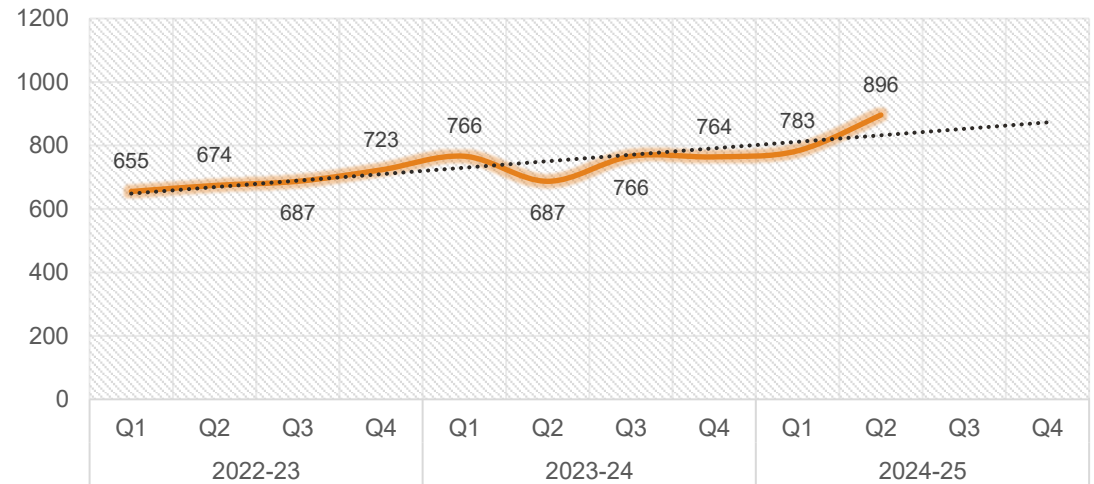
The data on this page outlines the number of planning enquiries received by the service. Planning enquiries processed by WRS are either consultations or requests to discharge planning conditions, however, enquiries only relate to the following areas:

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

## Comments

The number of cases received between 1st April 2024 and 30th September 2024 is an increase of 26% compared to 2022/23 and an increase of 16% compared to 2023/24. Approximately 90% of enquiries have been consultations for air quality, contaminated land, and nuisance; whilst 1 in 5 enquiries continue to be processed, on a contractual basis, on behalf of other local authorities.

## Planning Enquiries





# Planning Enforcement & Enviro-Crime

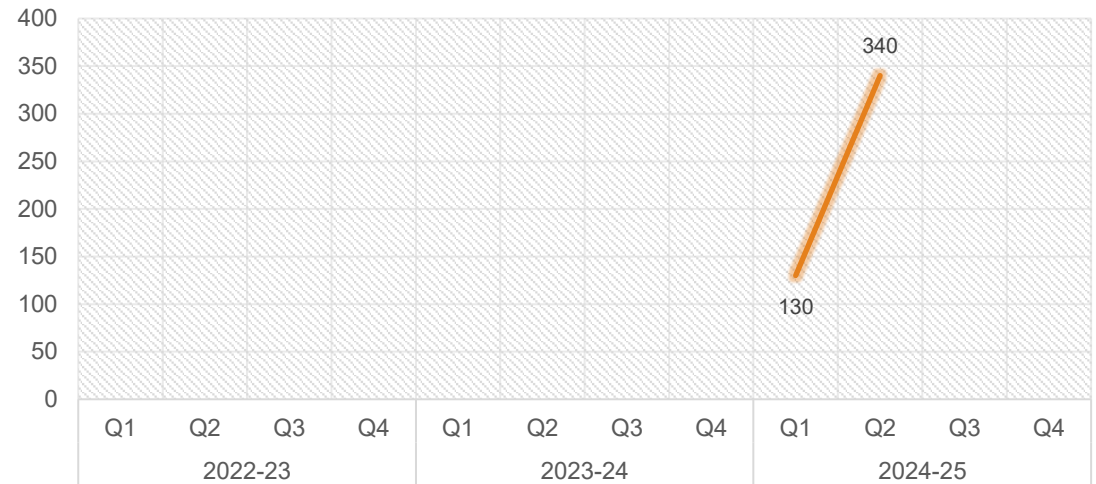
The data on this page shows the number of planning enforcement and environmental crime cases (complaints and enquiries) received by the service. Complaints handled by WRS include reports of fly-tipping, littering, and planning breaches at residential or commercial premises. The planning enforcement and environmental crime 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. Based on the 470 cases investigated during the year to date, 69% have related to fly-tipping whilst 19% have related to suspected planning breaches at residential properties.

As this is a new service area for WRS, processes and priorities continue to be adapted however there are a number of priority work areas which include: enforcement of fly-tipping hotspots, clearing a backlog of legacy planning enforcement cases, and streamlining and standardising the approach to tackling untidy land cases.

## Complaints and Enquiries



# Pollution

The data on this page outlines the number of pollution cases (complaints and enquiries) received by the service. Complaints handled by WRS include reports of nuisances (noise, light, odour, smoke) originating from domestic, commercial, or agricultural activity and notifications of contamination incidents.

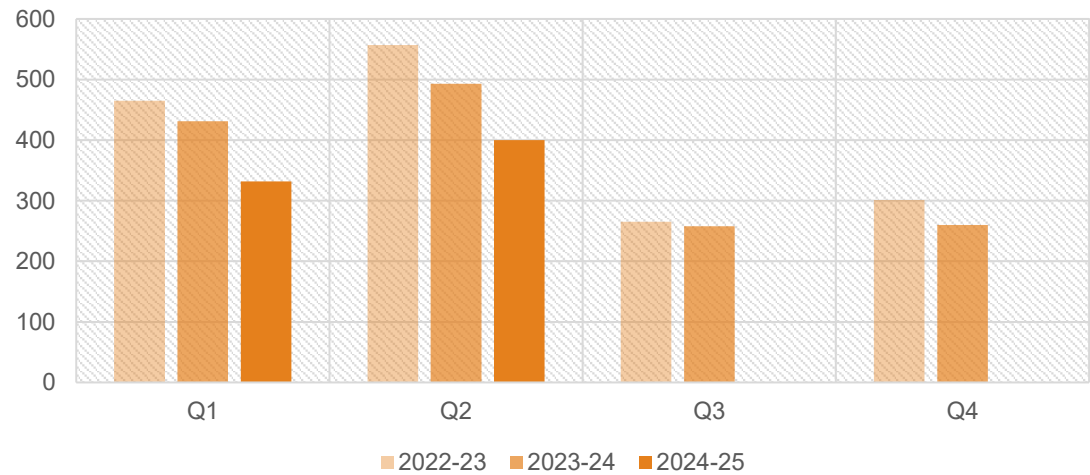
## Comments

The number of cases received between 1st April 2024 and 30th September 2024 is a reduction of 31% compared to 2022/23 and a reduction of 19% compared to 2023/24. Approximately 91% of cases have been reports of nuisances with most cases relating to noise from domestic properties (such as noise from barking dogs or noise from loud music). Other prominent nuisances commonly include noise from hospitality businesses, smoke from the burning of domestic or commercial waste, and dust from construction sites.

### Complaints and Enquiries



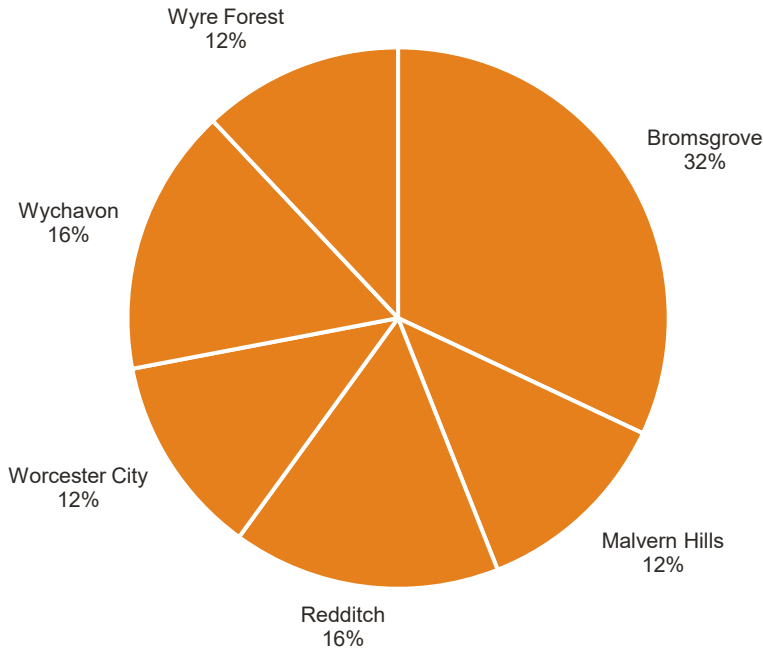
### Complaints and Enquiries (Noise Only)



# Noise

The data on this page outlines the wards in Worcestershire which have the highest case rate in terms of noise pollution. It also shows the districts in which 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 2025. Where a ward is highlighted, it was also one of the top 10 wards featured in the 2023/24 Activity Report.



Ward	Total	Population	Rate
Barnt Green And Hopwood	11	2,951	3.73
Cathedral	35	11,760	2.98
Avoncroft	10	3,451	2.90
Perryfields	4	1,557	2.57
Honeybourne And Pebworth	7	2,844	2.46
Warndon	12	5,661	2.12
Droitwich Central	5	2,621	1.91
Dodderhill	5	2,809	1.78
Winyates	14	8,139	1.72
Rock Hill	5	2,970	1.68
Wribbenhall And Arley	9	5,381	1.67
Bewdley And Rock	14	8,457	1.66
Alvechurch South	5	3,105	1.61
Lodge Park	9	5,619	1.60
Batchley And Brockhill	14	8,930	1.57
Link	10	6,455	1.55
Hallow	3	1,941	1.55
Blakebrook And Habberley South	14	9,350	1.50
Belbroughton And Romsley	10	6,771	1.48
Arboretum	9	6,130	1.47
Harvington And Norton	4	2,788	1.43
Lowes Hill	4	2,854	1.40
Church Hill	11	7,991	1.38
Catshill North	4	2,912	1.37
Priory	6	4,384	1.37

# Public Health

The data on this page outlines the number of public health cases (complaints and enquiries) received by the service and the number of subsidised treatments carried out by contractors. Complaints handled by WRS include reports of accumulations and reports of pest due to the activities of local residents or businesses. Pest control treatments are only offered by four districts (Bromsgrove, Malvern Hills, Redditch, and Wychavon) as Worcester City Council and Wyre Forest District Council do not offer a subsidised pest control service.

## Comments

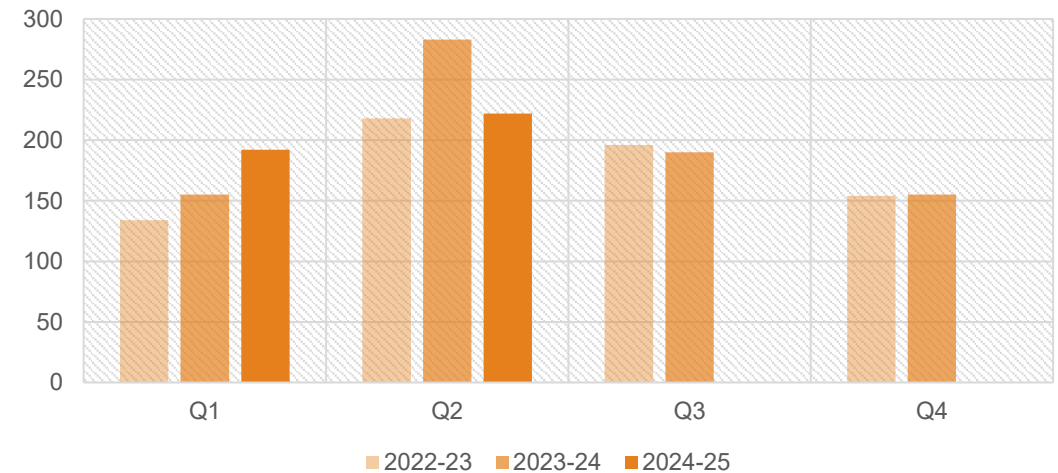
The number of cases received between 1st April 2024 and 30th September 2024 is a reduction of 3% compared to 2022/23 and a reduction of 6% compared to 2023/24. Approximately 60% of cases have related to pest control such as enquiries about domestic treatments, enquiries about sewer baiting, or complaints about pest activity caused by the actions of neighbouring residents or businesses. A further 26% of cases have related to accumulations at residential properties which can also include pest control issues.

Based on the 414 domestic treatments undertaken by contractors during the year to date, 48% were due to issues with rats whilst 35% have taken place at properties in the Redditch district.

## Complaints and Enquiries



## Domestic Subsidised Treatments

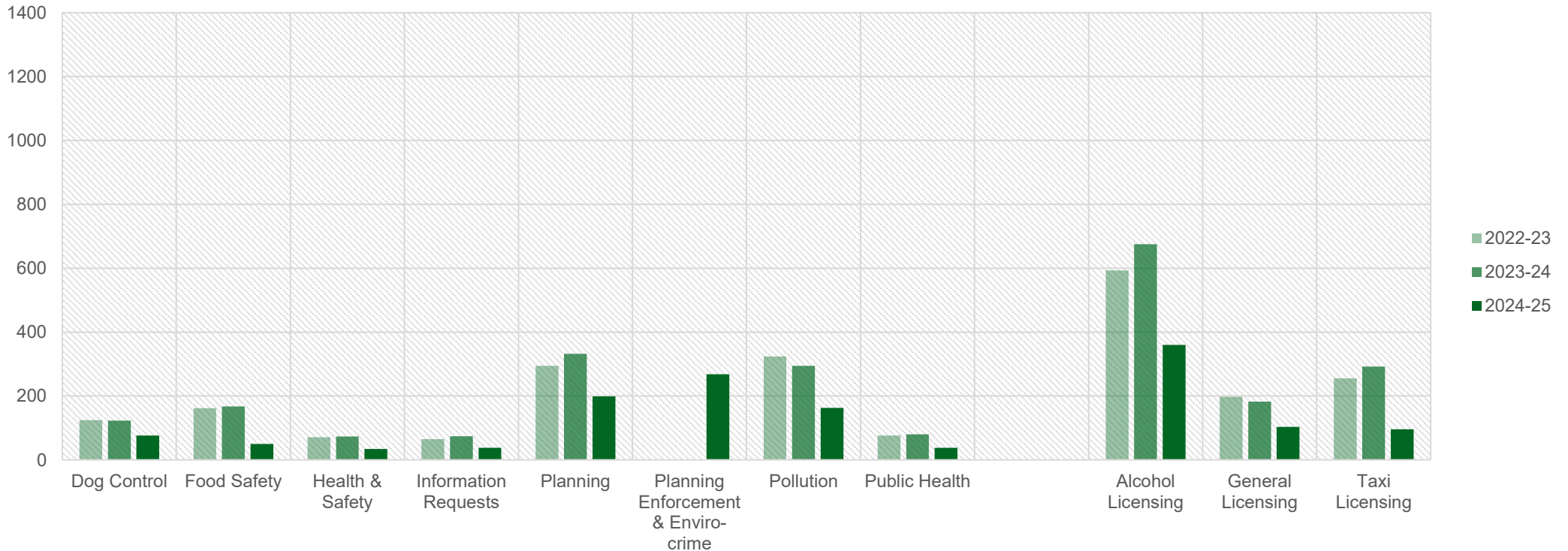
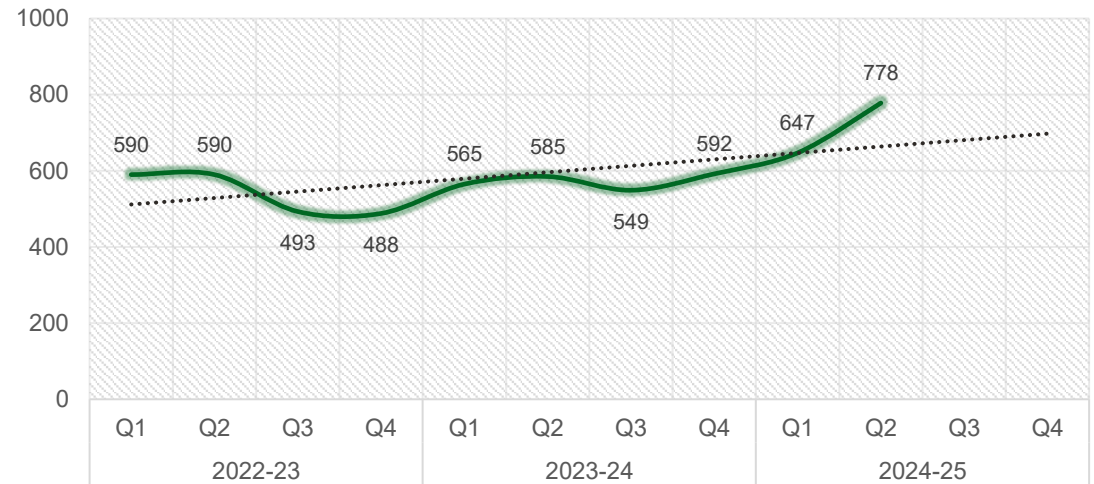


# Bromsgrove

The data on this page outlines the number of Environmental Health and Licensing cases (complaints, enquiries, applications, and notifications) received by WRS where the subject or enquirer were located in the Bromsgrove district.

Note: The chart below provides a breakdown of cases by the primary functions undertaken by the service. The recent increase in cases can be attributed to the additional functions (enviro-crime and planning enforcement) now being delivered by the service. The figures for the current year are cumulative and will continue to increase until the end of year report is published in April 2025. The Y axis on this chart has also been standardised so the level of demand received against each function can be broadly compared to other districts.

## Bromsgrove District Council

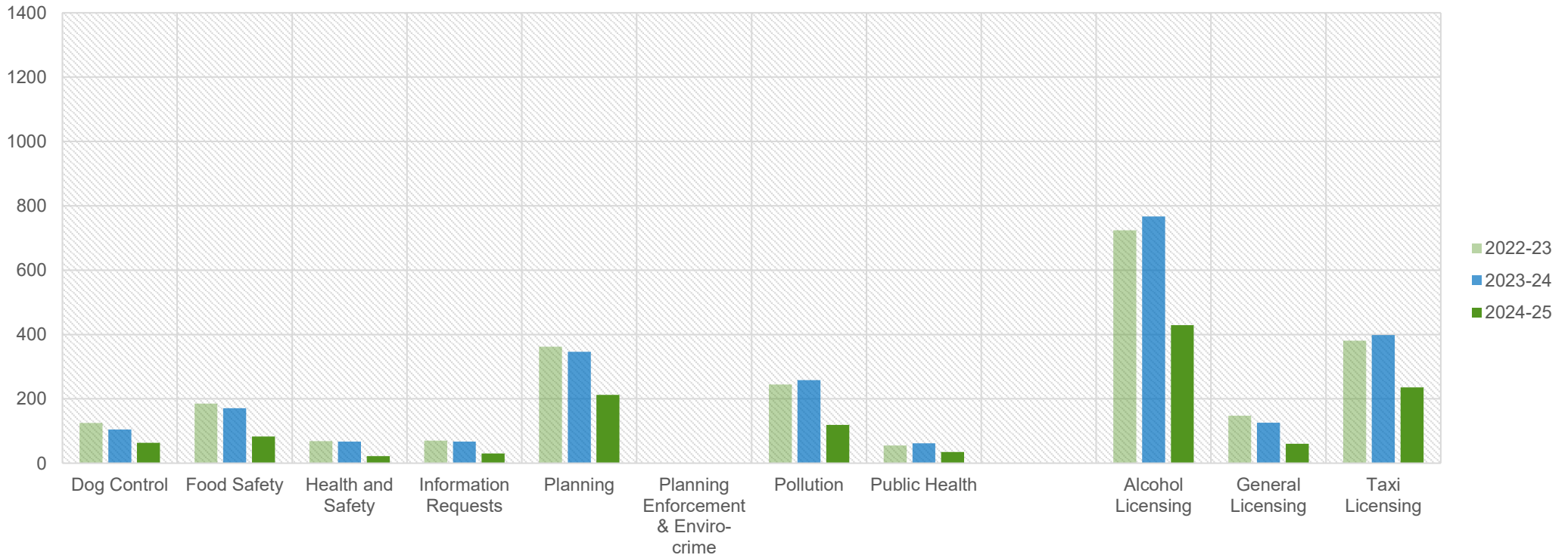
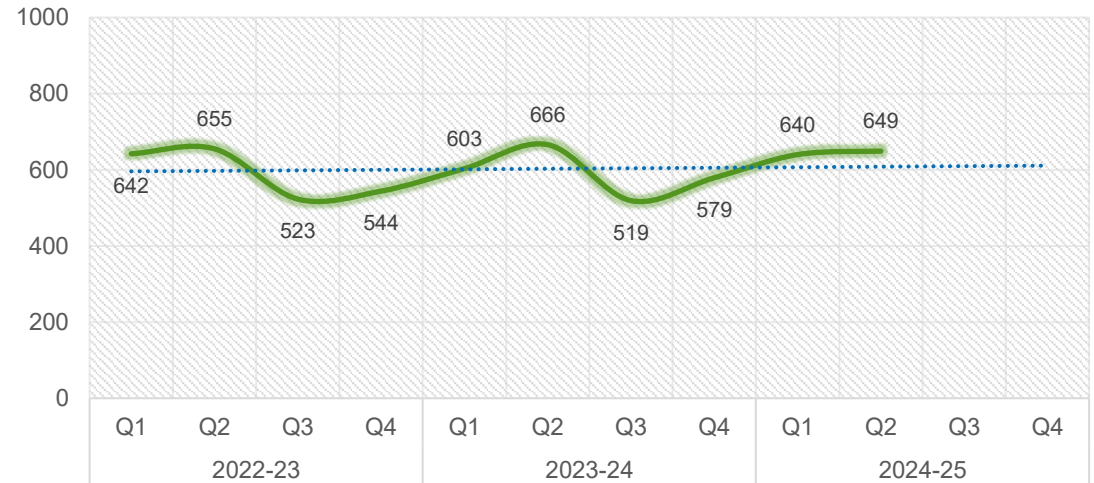


# Malvern Hills

The data on this page outlines the number of Environmental Health and Licensing cases (complaints, enquiries, applications, and notifications) received by WRS where the subject or enquirer were located in the Malvern Hills district.

Note: The chart below provides a breakdown of cases by the primary functions undertaken by the service. The figures for the current year are cumulative and will continue to increase until the end of year report is published in April 2025. The Y axis on this chart has also been standardised so the level of demand received against each function can be broadly compared to other districts.

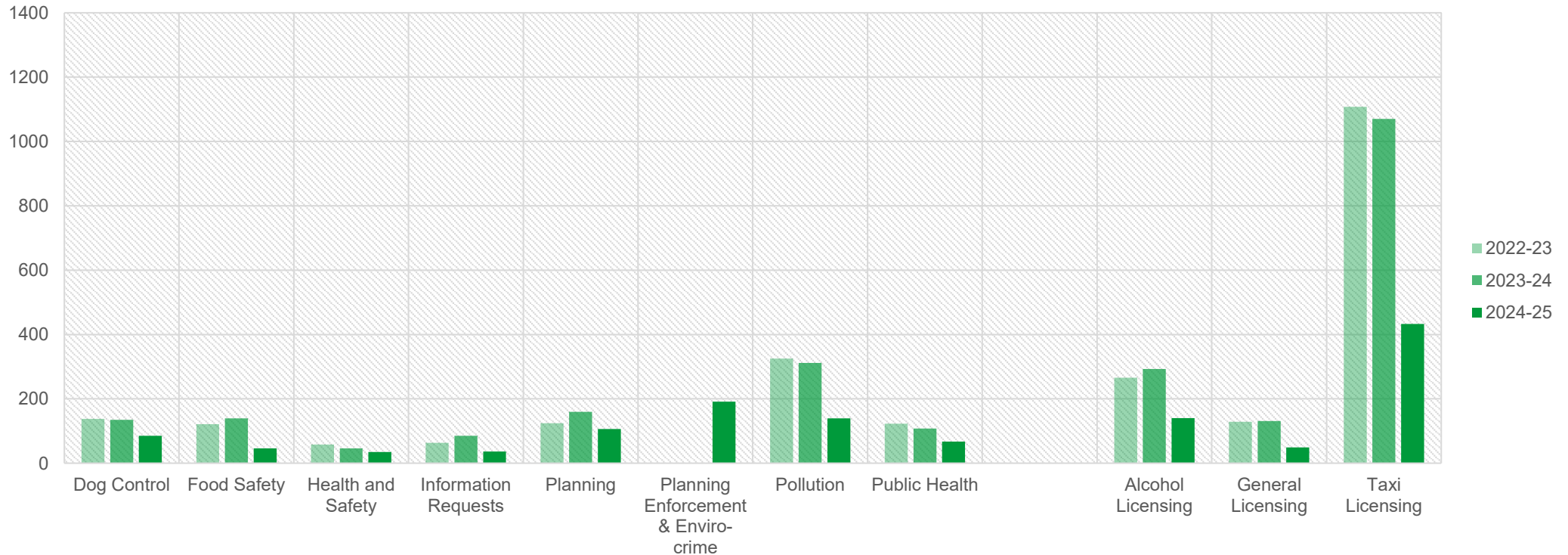
## Malvern Hills District Council



The data on this page outlines the number of Environmental Health and Licensing cases (complaints, enquiries, applications, and notifications) received by WRS where the subject or enquirer were located in the Redditch district.

Note: The chart below provides a breakdown of cases by the primary functions undertaken by the service. The recent increase in cases can be attributed to the additional functions (enviro-crime and planning enforcement) now being delivered by the service. The figures for the current year are cumulative and will continue to increase until the end of year report is published in April 2025. The Y axis on this chart has also been standardised so the level of demand received against each function can be broadly compared to other districts.

## Redditch Borough Council

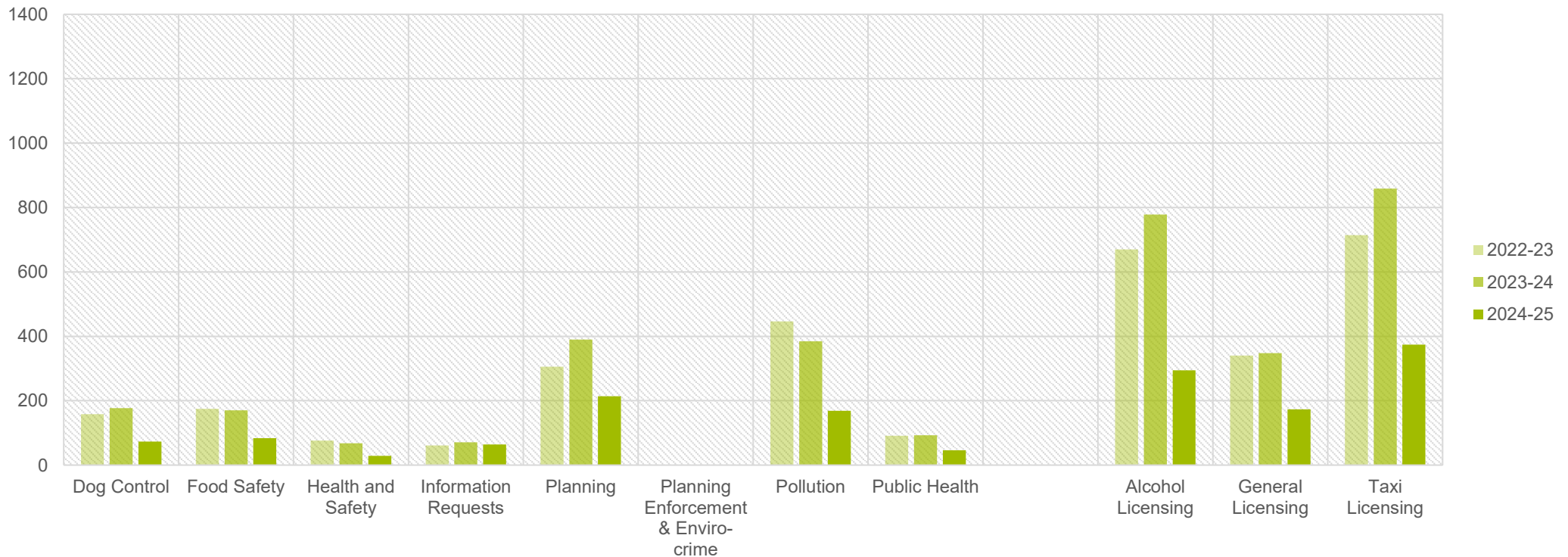
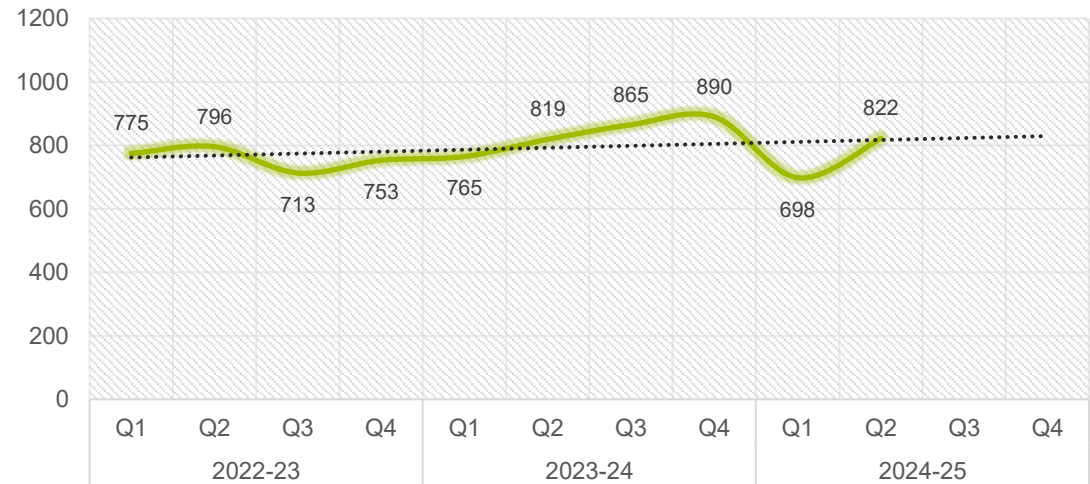


# Worcester City

The data on this page outlines the number of Environmental Health and Licensing cases (complaints, enquiries, applications, and notifications) received by WRS where the subject or enquirer were located in the Worcester City district.

Note: The chart below provides a breakdown of cases by the primary functions undertaken by the service. The figures for the current year are cumulative and will continue to increase until the end of year report is published in April 2025. The Y axis on this chart has also been standardised so the level of demand received against each function can be broadly compared to other districts.

## Worcester City Council

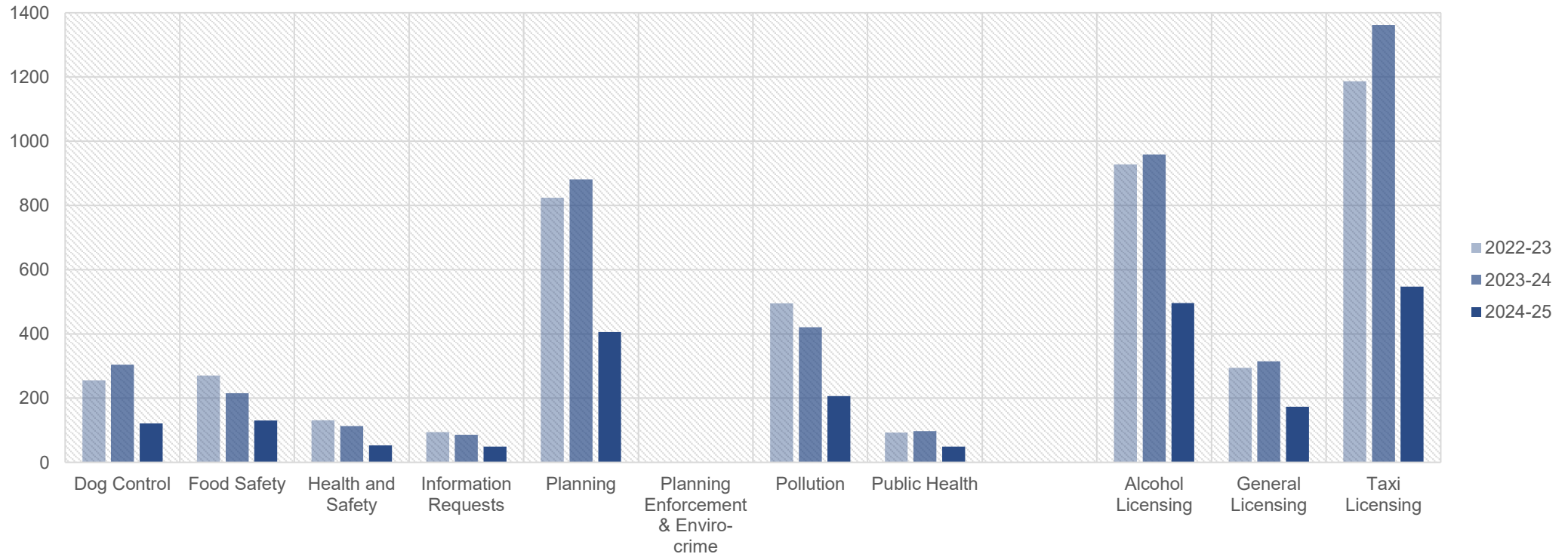
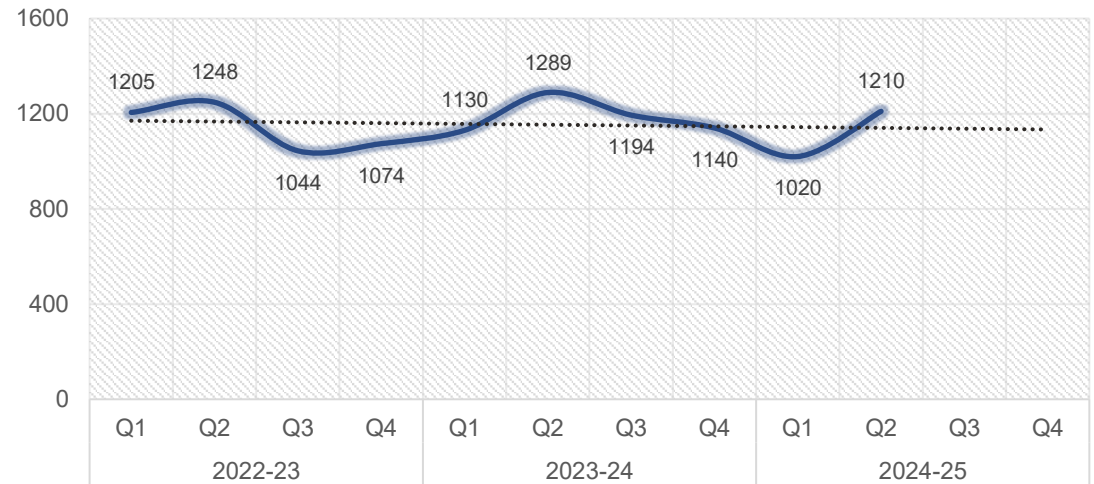




The data on this page outlines the number of Environmental Health and Licensing cases (complaints, enquiries, applications, and notifications) received by WRS where the subject or enquirer were located in the Wychavon district.

Note: The chart below provides a breakdown of cases by the primary functions undertaken by the service. The figures for the current year are cumulative and will continue to increase until the end of year report is published in April 2025. The Y axis on this chart has also been standardised so the level of demand received against each function can be broadly compared to other districts.

## Wychavon District Council

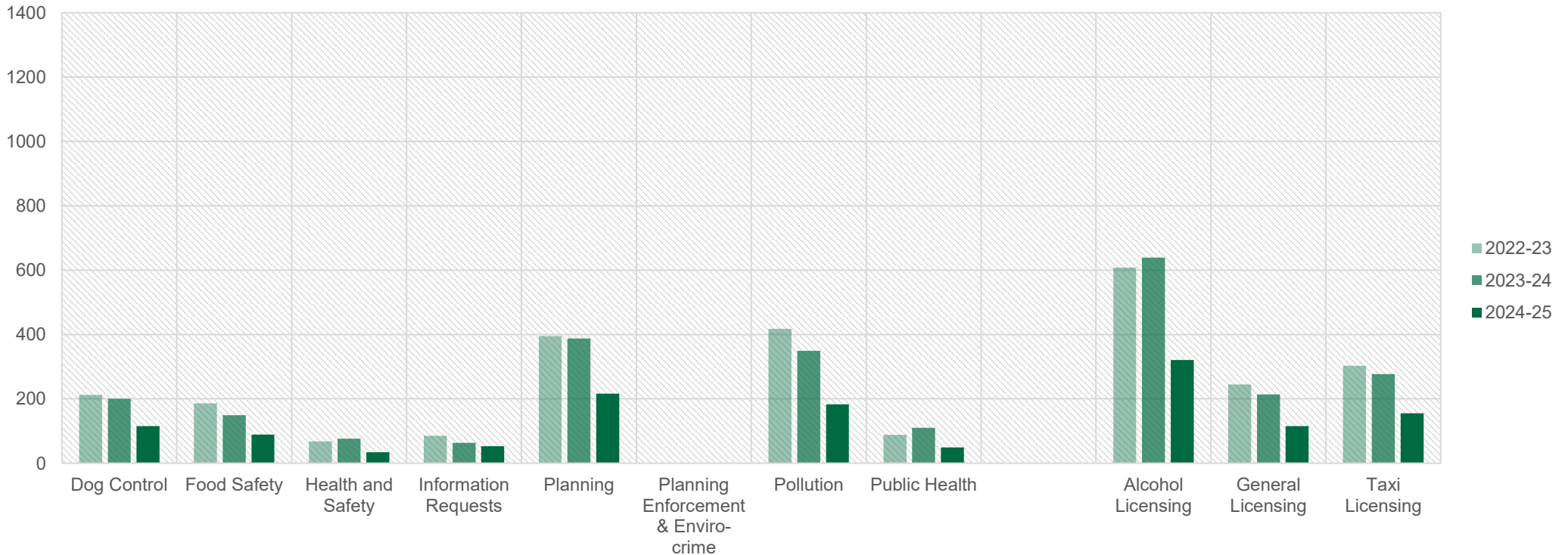
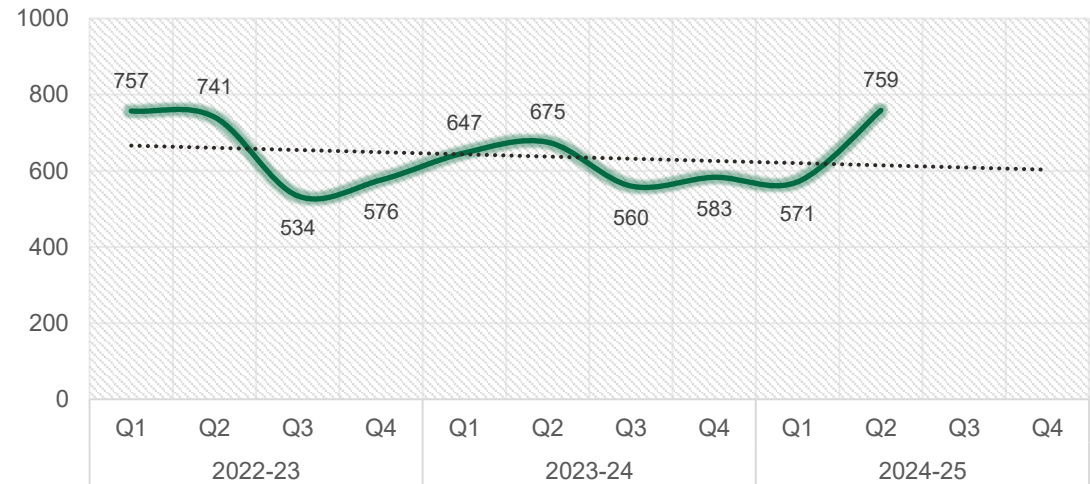


# Wyre Forest

The data on this page outlines the number of Environmental Health and Licensing cases (complaints, enquiries, applications, and notifications) received by WRS where the subject or enquirer were located in the Wyre Forest district.

Note: The chart below provides a breakdown of cases by the primary functions undertaken by the service. The figures for the current year are cumulative and will continue to increase until the end of year report is published in April 2025. The Y axis on this chart has also been standardised so the level of demand received against each function can be broadly compared to other districts.

## Wyre Forest District Council



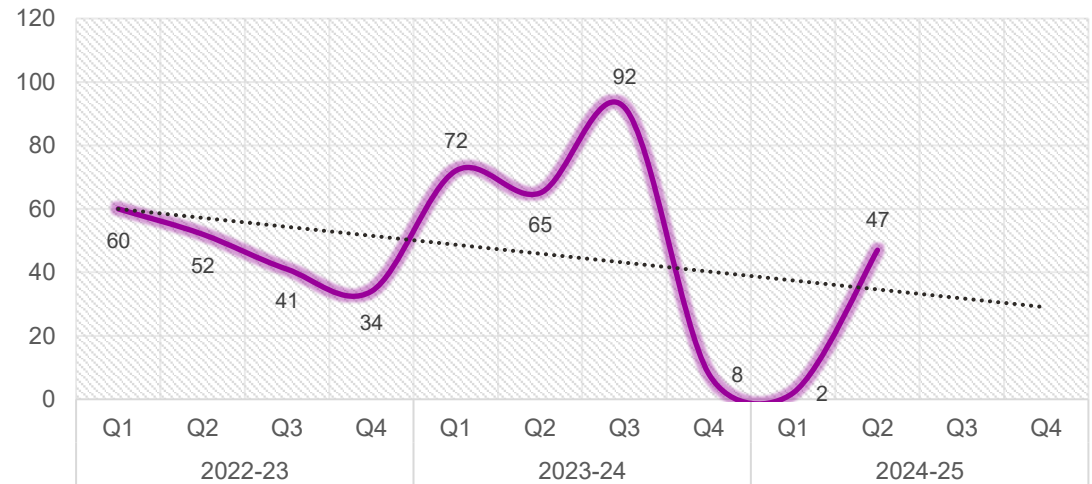
# Birmingham City

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 this year 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.

## Birmingham City Council

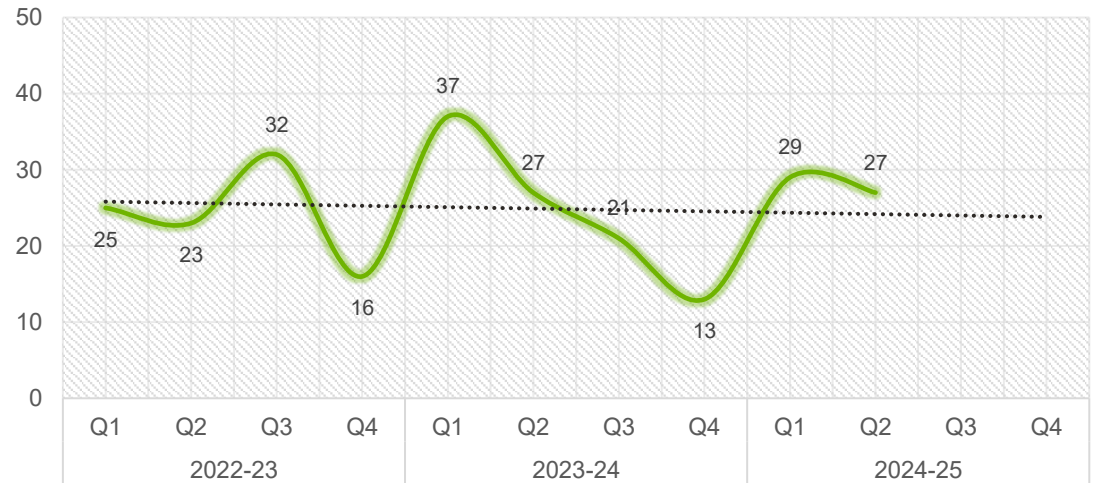


# Cheltenham

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.

Cheltenham Borough Council



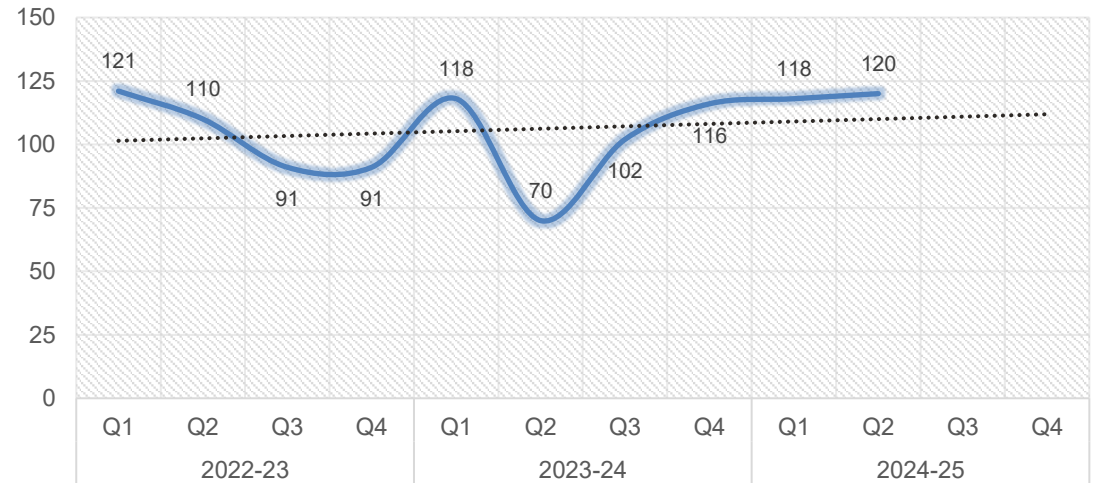
# Gloucester City

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.

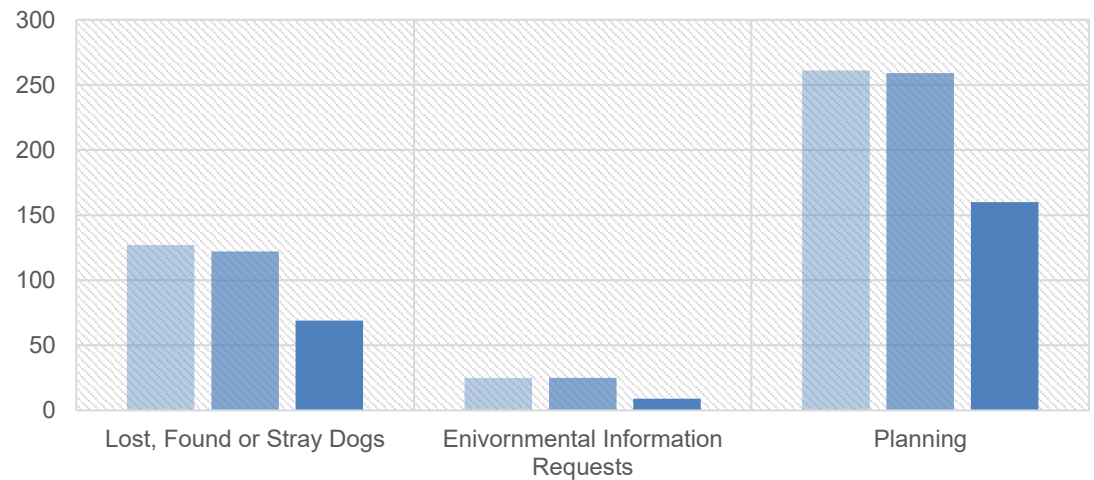
The dog control work undertaken for the authority is part of a contract with two other Gloucestershire authorities to deliver the collection, kennelling, returning of dogs to owners, and rehoming of stray dog functions. The contract was recently renewed and has been highly successful in reducing stray 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.

Gloucester City Council



■ 2022-23 ■ 2023-24 ■ 2024-25



# 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 recommended 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.

Tewkesbury Borough Council

