

Forward Plan Select Committee – 26 August 2010

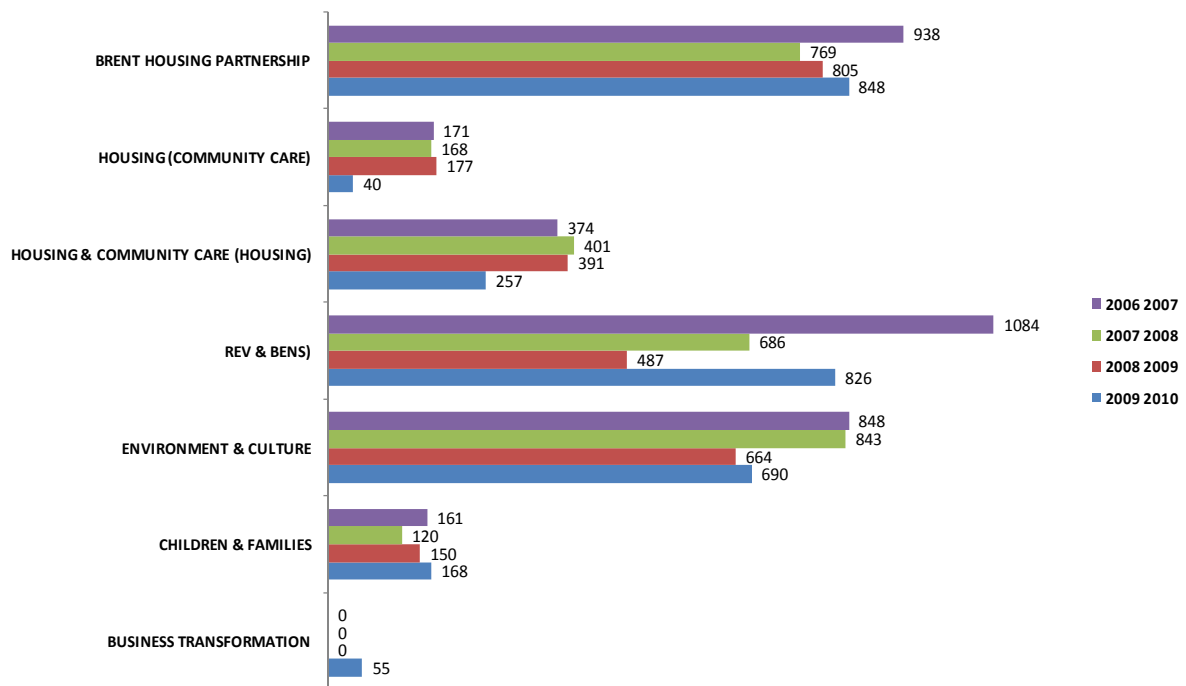
Details of the patterns and trends of complaints and the profile of the complainants in Brent

The patterns and trends of complaints in Brent.

Historic data trends

The following table provides a service area overview of the total complaints received in the period from 2006 to 2010 broken down by service area. In 2009/10 a total of 2924 were dealt with under the corporate complaints procedure.

Total of stage 1 complaints received under the corporate complaints procedure 2006 to 2010



Trend for 2009/10

The increase in complaints received reverses the downward trend of the past two years. The most marked increases are:

- **Brent Housing Partnership** – a 5.3% increase, largely about repair issues,
- **Revenues and Benefits service** The total number of stage 1 complaints rose from 487 in 08/09 to 826 in 09/10. This was in part due to the significant increase in the number of new or change in circumstance claims dealt with in Revenue and Benefits Service with the total rising from 11,332 claims in 2008/09 to 14,456 in 2009/10. As well as the increase in work load a restructuring of the service took place during this time. Although the work load increased the average time taken to process these claims fell from 16.05 days in 08/09 to 9.25 days.

Local Government Ombudsman (LGO) Trends 2009/10

Complaints to the LGO have fallen year on year and are now only a quarter of the number dealt with in 1999/2000 – demonstrating a significant and sustained improvement both in

service delivery and customers' satisfaction with the Council's complaint handling. The following table shows the steady decrease over the past decade.

	Complaints decided by the LGO	Complaints referred back as premature	Total
1999/00	286	42	328
2000/01	238	128	366
2001/02	98	124	222
2002/03	83	104	187
2003/04	95	102	197
2004/05	110	72	182
2005/06	104	82	186
2006/07	131	61	192
2007/08	112	63	175
2008/09	77	44	121
2009/10	77	36	113

Continuing the trend of recent years, just over 40% of the complaints investigated by the LGO were housing matters. The other main categories of complaint were those about the Environment and Culture service (25%) and Revenues and Benefits (18%).

	Local settlement	No mal	Ombuds discretion	Outside jurisdiction	Total excl premature complaints	Premature complaints
Bus Trans	0	0	0	3	3	0
Central	0	0	1	0	1	0
C & F	0	5	2	0	7	0
E & C	0	10	5	4	19	5
BHP	2	5	6	1	14	10
Housing	2	7	5	3	17	8
Comm care	1	1	0	0	2	0
Rev & Bens	2	5	4	3	14	11
Total	7	33	23	14	77	36

For the third year running, the LGO did not issue any formal reports against the Council. Seven complaints resulted in local settlements. This represents just 11% of the complaints decided by the LGO which were within his jurisdiction and reflects extremely well on the effectiveness of the Council's complaints procedure in providing prompt and suitable redress when things go wrong. (The average local settlement rate nationally was 26.9 %.), and compensation was paid as a result of only seven complaints. In all other cases (70 in total) the LGO found no reason to criticise the Council's actions.

Equalities data 2009/10

All complaints performance is collected by the corporate complaints team on a quarterly basis and this includes a section on each of the equality strands in Brent.

Data regarding details on the complainant is requested but frequently not completed. Many complainants do not and will not provide data they see as irrelevant to resolving their problem. In particular there is no data against sexual orientation or faith.

Total complaints received 09/10 was 2924. Out of that total only 52 provided data against their ethnicity.

African	Asian/ Asian British	Asian other	Bangladesh	Black/ Black British	Black other	Caribbea n	Chinese	Chinese/ other ethnic group
9	7	5	1	19	5	6	2	0
Indian	Irish	Jewish	Mixed race	Pakistan	White	White & Asian	White & Black	White other
0	5	0	1	0	36	0	4	7

Total complaints received 09/10 was 2924. Out of that total only 241 provided data against their gender and 37 reported themselves as being disabled

Male	Female	Disabled
56	148	37

Total complaints received 09/10 was 2924. Out of that total only 78 provided their age.

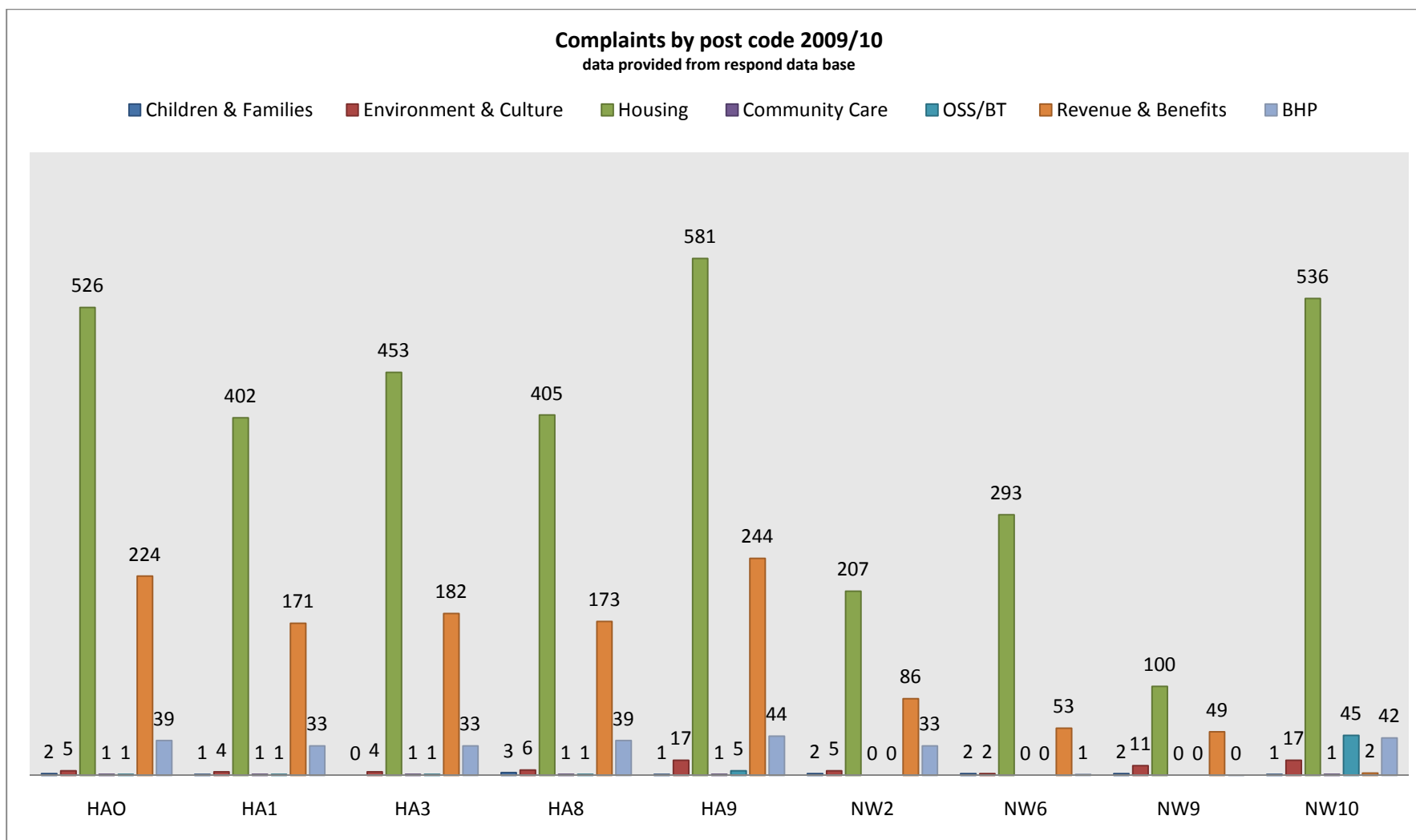
Age 5 14	Age 15 24	Age 25 44	Age 45 65	Age 65 75	Age75 +
2	16	16	22	7	15

Postal breakdown 2009/10

In the past months the corporate complaints team have been looking at developing a more outcome focused way of capturing complaints data. As part of this change to a more service improvement based reporting, a high level look at complaints based on postcode is in the process of being developed.

Currently mapping is only available based on the main HA or NW postal groupings in the borough. As the work in this area develops it is expected that a more detailed mapping of complaints closed by postcode showing a breakdown by each stage of the complaints process 1, 2 and 3 will be available. There is a difference in the totals shown by postcode versus total closed as a complaint in the year, relates to some being reassigned as service requests and not being progressed as a complaint. This issue on recording will be resolved as work develops on this data collection method.

The data which is available has been supplied through the councils respond data collection system and is based on complaints logged and closed on this system. All the complaints shown are dealt with under the corporate complaints 3 stage process.



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