



ONE STOP SHOP

ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORT

APRIL 2003 – MARCH 2004

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1 INTRODUCTION

The One Stop Shop is the Council's high profile, established, professional customer service provider and exists to help Brent's residents and visitors with their Council enquiries. We provide information, help and advice regarding all Council services. Our staff are representative of the borough's multi-cultural communities.

1.1 Explanation of Service

- 1.1.1 The service is designed to offer maximum access and is sensitive to the diverse needs of our multi cultural and deprived borough. The One Stop Shop's primary objective is to provide professional customer service both externally for residents and visitors of Brent and internally for service areas within the organisation. The service also influences the development and improvement of customer service standards, customer care practice, customer focus and the joined up approach to service delivery across the organisation.
- 1.1.2 The Shops are conveniently located in high streets around the borough and the Contact Centre is spearheading improved access via Extended Hours and on-line enquiries. Demand for the service continues to grow and we are interacting with the public on a daily basis.
- 1.1.3 The role of the One Stop Shop service has continued to grow since its inception and the service is firmly established with residents who value and depend upon the friendly, convenient, local advice and service request processing that is provided.

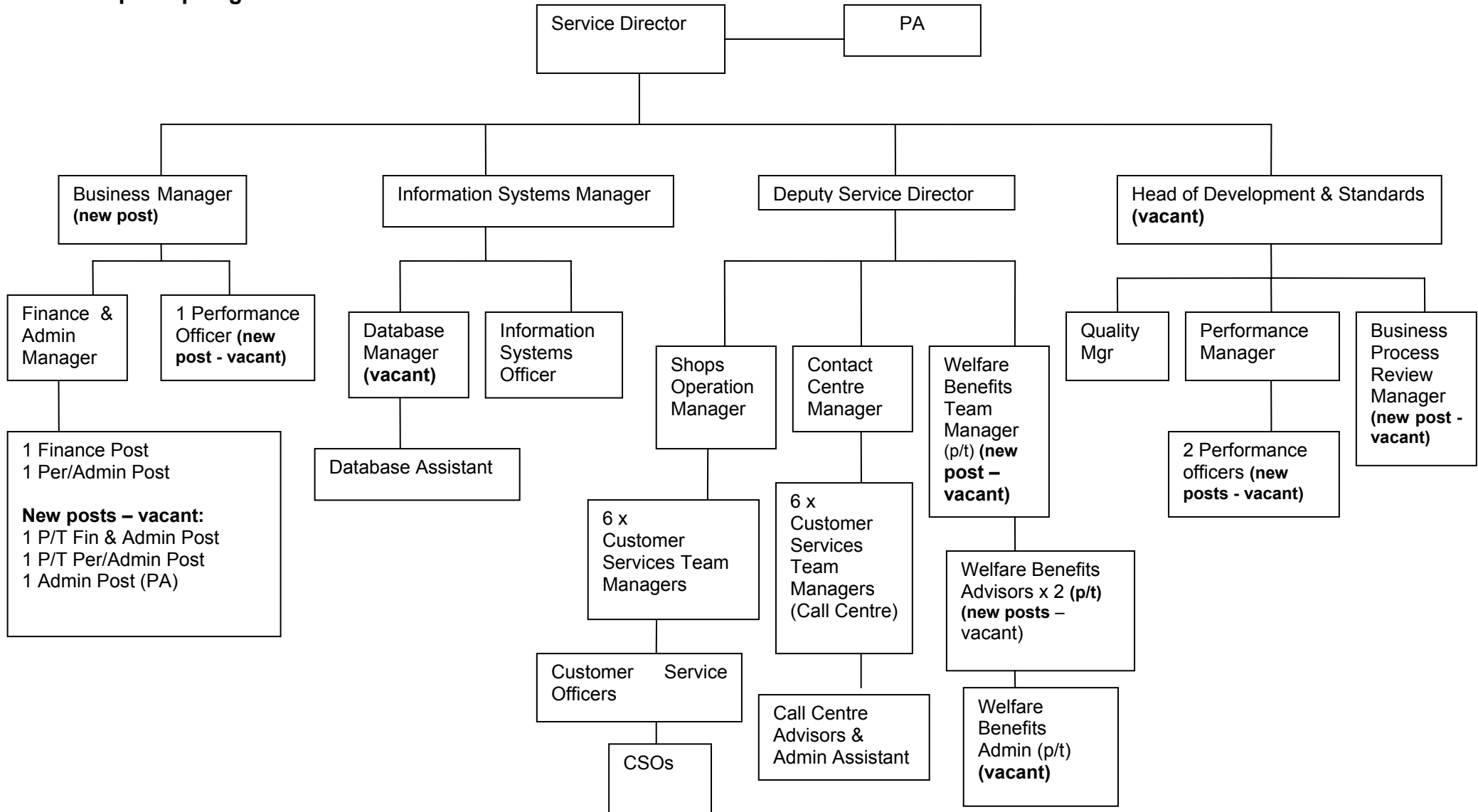
1.2 Structure

- 1.2.1 The service is delivered via the 'Operation Section'. This consists of 6 customer service centre shops around the borough located in:

Brent Town Hall	Willesden Green Library Centre
Brent House	Harlesden High Street
Kingsbury High Road	Kilburn – Dyne Rd

- 1.2.2 The Contact Centre telephone team based at Brent House, which is the backbone of the Council's telephone service, provides telephone and on-line access from 8am-8pm and consists of a generic team, a dedicated StreetCare team, a Revenues and Benefits team, dedicated Social Services lines and the Council's Switchboard.
- 1.2.3 There is also: -
 - A small IT Development Team at the Town Hall
 - A small personnel admin and finance team at the Town Hall
- 1.2.4 The service has an established small, dedicated Welfare Benefits Team responsible for increasing the uptake of benefits for the most vulnerable and low income residents. Their success will influence the demand on the Council's services.
- 1.2.5 The service has a staffing establishment of 135 staff located across 6 Council buildings.
- 1.2.6 The One Stop Shop organisational structure chart is provided overleaf.

One Stop Shop Organisational Chart



1.3 Position Statement on overall Demand & Performance (000s)

Location	03/04		02/03		Change in Demand	% Change in Demand
	Demand (in thousands)	% of Total Demand **	Demand (in thousands)	% Total Demand **		
Shops	232.6	23%	235	25.65%	-2.4	-1.0%
Generic Enquiry Line **	93.8	9.31%	92.3	10.07%	1.5	1.6%
Gujarati Line	0.4	0.04%	0.55	0.06%	-0.1	-23%
StreetCare	130.1	12.91%	130.1	14.20%	0	0
Switchboard	344.9	34.23%	359.3	39.21%	-14.4	-4%
Correspondence	0.5	0.05%	0.7	0.79%	-0.2	-30%
Online & Email	7.5	0.74%	6.5	0.74%	1.0	16%
Total	809.9	80.39	824.9	89.98%	-15.0	-2%
Revs and Bens	197.6	19.61%	91.8*	10.02%	105.8	115%
	1007.5	100%	916.7	100%	90.8	10%

*(6 months data only – full year including enquiries handled by EDS = 187.4)

1.3.1 In total the One Stop Shop dealt with 809.9 enquiries in the period April 2003 to March 2004. This compares to 824.9 for the same period last year and is a decrease of 2% (15,000). This decrease in demand is largely attributed to adjustments made to the Recording of data in the transition from manual to electronic stats.

The Revenues and Benefits telephone service has now transferred to the OSS. The first full years enquiries totalled 197.6. This is an increase of 10.2 (5%) compared to 02./03

1.3.2 The areas where enquiries have increased are the Generic Team 1.6% (1500); Online and emails 16% (1000) and Revenue & Benefits 115% (105,800)

1.3.3 The areas where enquiries have reduced are the Shops locations 1% (2,400)), Gujarati line (23% (200) Switchboard 4% (1,440) Correspondence 30% (200)

1.3.4 The demand regarding Streetcare enquiries has remained the same as the previous year (130,100)

1.3.5 The increase in online and email enquiries and the decrease in correspondence reflect the general change and trend towards electronic methods of contact.

1.3.6 The decrease in calls to the Switchboard may be attributable to establishment of other fringe Call Centres across the council such as Housing Resources and Environmental Health.

1.4 Data Gathering & Measurement

1.4.1 This is the first year the One Stop Shop Service has used entirely electronic statistical recording.

1.4.2 As well as recording statistics on e-shop an electronic tick sheet was introduced which replaced a manual sheet at all One Stop Shop receptions.

1.4.3 There were initial teething problems with this tick sheet which also involved a change in procedures for reception staff. This could have contributed to the decrease in reception enquiries at some locations.

1.4.4 Three days statistics were also lost due to system failure within the Contact Centre which could account for up to 4,300 enquiries.

1.4.5 As mentioned in last year's report it was anticipated that this move to E-stats would possibly highlight anomalies in recording, more noticeably within the shop locations, due to human error which would affect this year's figures and make comparison with last year's difficult. This has been the case and coupled with changed procedures and system failure has resulted in the reports showing up to an 8,000 reduction in demand. This is not an actual reduction but a re-representation of figures which requires an adjustment based upon more reliable figures and consistent recording methods.

1.5 Visitors and Requests for Information

1.5.1 36 other organisations have telephoned for information or OSS/Customer service consultancy advice. The One Stop Shop hosted 27 visits in total.

2 PERFORMANCE AND DEMAND - SHOP LOCATIONS

(NB: figures rounded to 2 Significant Places)

2.1 Demand by Shop Location

Location	Total for the year ending 31 st March 2004 (000's)	Totals for year 2002/2003 (000's)	Annual Change (000's)	% of total demand for 03/04	% change since 02/03
Brent House	53.3 (1)	52.6 (1)	+0.7 (2)	5% ()	+1% (2)
Kilburn	33.0 (5)	13.7 (6)	+19.3 (1)	3% ()	+141% (1)
Willesden	36.6 (4)	49.9 (3)	-13.3 (6)	4% ()	-27% (6)
Kingsbury	18.4 (6)	20.8 (5)	-2.3 (4)	2% ()	-11% (4)
Harlesden	39.5 (3)	46.2 (4)	-6.7 (5)	4% ()	-15% (5)
Town Hall	51.8 (2)	51.9 (2)	0.0 (3)	5% ()	0% (3)
Total	232.6	235.0	-2.4	23%	-1%

N.B Relative rankings shown in brackets

- 2.1.1 The One Stop Shop Locations account for approximately 23% (232,604) of all customer interactions with the One Stop Shop.
- 2.1.2 Overall shop demand decreased by 1% (2,400) compared to last year. Demand increased at Brent House by 1% and at Kilburn by 141%. Three shops experienced a fall in demand, namely Kingsbury (-11%), Harlesden (-15%) and Willesden (-27%), and there was no change in demand at the Town Hall. The relative rankings are consistent across locations.
- 2.1.3 Kilburn experienced the greatest increase in demand of 141% (19,300). This was due to a successful relocation from Kilburn Library to Dyne Road in January 2003, increased opening hours (by an additional two days a week) and increased staffing. The main increase in enquiries is for Brent Housing Partnership as the OSS is co-located with BHP at the Dyne Road location.
- 2.1.4 The biggest reduction in take up was experienced by Willesden with a loss of 27% (13,300) compared to the previous year. This was followed by Harlesden, with a loss of 15% (6,700) and Kingsbury with a loss of 11% (2,300).
- 2.1.5 Brent House remains the busiest location with 53,300 enquiries (23% of all shops demand). This was followed by the Town Hall with 51,800 enquiries (22% of shops demand).

2.1.6 Despite the significant fluctuations in demand at 4 of the shop locations, the overall effect is only a reduction of 1% (2,400). This is because the rise in demand encountered at Kilburn (+19,300) was offset by fall in demand experienced at Willesden (-13,300) and Harlesden (-6,600) which would nullify the effect. All three of these are located in South Brent and in close proximity to one another and some customers may have chosen to use the new Dyne Road location as it is more convenient.

2.1.7 The face-to-face enquiries at the Shop locations are divided into Reception Information Requests and Main Counter Service Requests. Information requests are fast-track enquiries, sign posting, and receipts given for documents handed in. Customers with more in-depth and complex enquiries are issued with a ticket, by reception, to wait for the main counter service.

2.2 Volumes by enquiry type

Location	Annual Change in Demand (000's)	Reception Enquiries 03/04 (000's)	% Change on 02/03	Actual Change (000's)	Main Counter Enquiries 03/04 (000's)	% Change on 02/03	Actual Change (000's)
Brent House	+0.7 (2)	43.9 (1)	+11%	+4.4 (2)	9.4 (6)	-29%	-3.7 (6)
Kilburn	+19.3 (1)	21.6 (4)	+213%	+14.7 (1)	11.4 (4)	+68%	+4.6 (1)
Willesden	-13.3 (6)	19.9 (5)	-38%	-12.2 (6)	16.7 (1)	-6%	-1.1 (3)
Kingsbury	-2.4 (4)	8.7 (6)	-12%	-1.2 (3)	9.7 (5)	-11%	-1.2 (4)
Harlesden	-6.6 (5)	23.4 (3)	-16%	-4.5 (5)	16.0 (2)	-12%	-2.2 (5)
Town Hall	-0.1 (3)	36.2 (2)	-9%	-3.6 (4)	15.7 (3)	+29%	+3.6 (2)
Total	-2.4	153.7	-2%	-2.4	78.9	0%	0.0

N.B Relative ranking shown in brackets

2.2.1 The ratio of Reception enquiries to Main Counter enquiries remains at two to one this year.

2.2.1 The overall demand for the Reception service has decreased by 2% (2,400) on last year. The decrease is partially due to changes in the way in which Council Tax Benefit and Locata enquiries are recorded. Also receipts issued for documents handed in at reception are recorded as main counter service requests. Modifications have been made to E-Shop from 1st April 2004 to separate these receipts from Main Counter Service Requests.

2.2.2 The greatest percentage increase in Reception enquiries was at Kilburn with a 213% (14,700) rise. This was followed by Brent house with an 11% (4,400) rise.. The reception facility at Brent House was reviewed and increased to a two person facility. This enabled staff to deal with more quick enquiries and reception and is reflected in the decrease in the number of enquiries at the main counter.

2.2.3 The greatest percentage fall in Reception demand was at Willesden which fell by 38% and Harlesden, which fell by 16%. Most of the fall in demand was due to a reduced number of Benefit and Locata enquiries.

- 2.2.4 The demand for the Main Counter service has slightly reduced despite showing 78,900 enquiries which is the same as last year. Changed procedures have included Receipts issued for documents handed in at reception within Main Counter data and this has slightly inflated the number of main counter enquiries. This cannot be quantified as the reception and main counter enquiries cannot currently be separated on E-shop reports. Amendments have been made to E-shop to divide these enquiries as from 1st April 2004.
- 2.2.5 The greatest percentage increase in Main Counter enquiries was at Kilburn with a 68% (+4,600) rise. As previously stated, Kilburn has the greatest rise in demand due the relocation to Dyne Road, extended opening hours and increased staffing resources.
- 2.2.6 The only other increase in Main Counter enquiries was at the Town Hall with a 29% (+3,600) rise. This mirrors the decrease in reception enquiries (-3,600) and can be attributed to the way e-shop receipts were recorded as main counter service requests. See 2.2.2.
- 2.2.7 The greatest percentage reduction in Main Counter demand was at Brent House which fell by 29% (-3,700) and Harlesden, which fell by 12% (-2,200).

2.3 Shop locations average waiting & interview times – Main Counter

Location	Actual Change in Counter Demand (000's)	Waiting 03/04 (mins)	Waiting 02/03 (mins)	Annual Change (mins)	Interview 03/04 (mins)	Interview 02/03 (mins)	Annual Change (mins)
Kingsbury	-1.2 (4)	6 (1)	6 (1)	0 (3)	20 (3)	20 (2)	0 (5)
Brent House	-3.7 (6)	7 (2)	7 (2)	0 (3)	17 (1)	17 (1)	0 (5)
Town Hall	+3.6 (2)	21 (6)	21 (5)	0 (3)	23 (5)	29 (6)	-6 (1)
Kilburn	+4.6 (1)	10 (3)	17 (3)	-7 (2)	25 (6)	28 (5)	-3 (4)
Willesden	-1.1 (3)	11 (4)	18 (4)	-7 (2)	18 (2)	23 (3)	-5 (2)
Harlesden	-2.2 (5)	12 (5)	23 (6)	-11 (1)	22 (4)	26 (4)	-4 (3)
Average	0	12	15	-3	21	24	-3

N.B. Ranking in brackets

- 2.3.1 Both waiting times and interview times have reduced by 3 minutes on last year, whilst the counter service demand has remained constant. Customers handing in documents for receipt are usually seen at reception within 5 minutes of arrival and each enquiry only takes a few minutes to complete.
- 2.3.2 A true comparison of interview and waiting times cannot be made against the times for last year because the reception receipts are included with the main counter enquires on e-shop. Changes have been made to e-shop so that the reception receipts can be recorded separately from 1st April 2004. This will give more accurate information on both waiting and interview times for reception and the main counter service in 2004/2005.

2.4 Top 10 Enquiries for the Shop Locations –

Top 10 for shops combined:

	Main Counter Service Requests	No of Enqs.	% of Total Main Counter		Reception Requests	No. of Enqs	% of Total Reception
1)	Housing and Council Tax Benefit	41,382	52%	1)	Housing and Council Tax Benefit	26,994	18%
2)	Council Tax	10,078	13%	2)	Housing Resources	25,256	16%
3)	Brent Housing Partnership Repairs	7,686	10%	3)	General Enquiries	21,083	14%
4)	Planning	4,052	5%	4)	Council Tax	11,115	7%
5)	Housing Resources Centre	3,402	4%	5)	Social Services	4,918	3%
6)	Education	2,002	3%	6)	Committee & Member Services	4,042	3%
7)	Physical Disability Services	1,414	2%	7)	Education	3,923	3%
8)	Older Peoples Services	1,096	1%	8)	BHP – Appointments & Visitors	3,868	3%
9)	Building Consultancy	640	1%	9)	Private Housing	3,748	2%
10)	BHP Rents	600	1%	10)	Planning	3,659	2%
	Top 10 Subtotal	72,352	92%		Top 10 Subtotal	108,606	71%
	Other	6,536	8%		Signposting internal	21,814	14%
	Total Main Counter	78,888	100%		Signposting external	8,424	5%
					Signposting Total	30,238	20%
					Other	14,872	10%
					Total Reception	153,716	100%

2.4.1 The most popular Service Request at the Main Counter is Benefits this year, which accounted for 52% (41,382). In second place is Revenues (Council Tax) with 13% of the total. The top 10 enquiries account for 92% of all Main Counter demand.

2.4.2 The most popular Information Request on Reception is Housing Benefits, which accounted for 18% of all Reception enquiries. In second place is Housing Resources with 16% of the total. The top 10 enquiries account for 71% of all Reception demand.

2.4.3 The fact that the top 10 enquiries account for less on Reception than on the Main Counter, illustrates how enquiries taken at Reception are of a more varied nature than those dealt with at the Main Counter.

Shops – Total			Contact Centre Generic		
03/04	02/03	Enquiry Type	03/04	02/03	Enquiry Type
1	1	Benefits	1	1	General Enquiries
2	2	Housing Resources Centre	2	2	Older Person Services
3	4	Council Tax	3	5	Revenues
4	6	General Enquiries/Other	4	4	Housing Benefits & Council Tax Benefit
5	7	BHP Repairs	5	3	Physical Disabilities
6	5	Planning	6	6	BHP – Repairs
7	-	Education	7	7	Children's Services
8	-	Social Services	8	8	Benefits Agency
9	10	Committee Services	9	10	Housing Resource Centre
10	9	Private Housing	10	9	Legal & Democratic Services

- 2.4.4 Housing Benefit continues to be the top enquiry for personal callers at the Shop locations. This is followed by Housing Resources which also has remained in the same position as last year. The majority of the enquiries regarding Housing Resources were handled at Reception. In third place was Council Tax.
- 2.4.5 The Contact Centre Generic Team section reflects the different nature of enquiries presented by telephone and face to face. This could indicate that customers prefer to make a personal visit with more complex enquiries.

2.5 Performance Indicators - Shop Locations

Indicator	Standard	2003/04	2002/03	Change
Waiting Times	20 minutes	12 minutes	15 minutes	-3 minutes
Interview Times	30 minutes	21 minutes	24 minutes	-3 minutes
Customer Satisfaction-comment cards – shop locations	95%	99%	97.3%	0.7%
Customer Satisfaction- Surveys – shop locations	95%	99%	95%	4%

- 2.5.1 For the shops combined, both waiting and interview times are within target and have both fallen by 3 minutes compared to the previous year. However, this is only an average. We are aware that some customers have had to wait in excess of two hours to be seen, particularly in the first 6 months of the fiscal year. This was particularly linked to problems with Housing Benefits and Council Tax Services.

3 PERFORMANCE AND DEMAND - CONTACT CENTRE

- 3.1.1 The total number of calls handled by the Contact Centre during the year was 774,916.
- 3.1.2 The calls handled across all services was static except for the Revenues and Benefits Call Centre Line where these increased by 5%.
- 3.1.3 StreetCare experienced zero growth during 2003/4 but managed to achieve an increase of 8% to 78% in call response over last year, enabling the target of 75% to be exceeded for the first time.
- 3.1.4 The Switchboard also exceeded its speed of response target of 95% by 0.7%.
- 3.1.5 Additionally, there were some small performance improvements in most other services but the call statistics for the Revenues and Benefits Line show poor performance with only 20.25% calls answered within 15 seconds. Performance standards for R&B also need to be defined and agreed.
- 3.1.6 During the year, the average call duration increased for all services where figures were reported. For example, the Generic and Social Services Line experienced a 33% increase in average call duration, going from 2 minutes 9 seconds to 2 minutes 51 seconds. Both StreetCare (4.5% increase) and the Extended Hours service (5% increase) also reported longer call durations.

3.1.7 Table 1 below provides a summary of demand by Contact Centre Teams

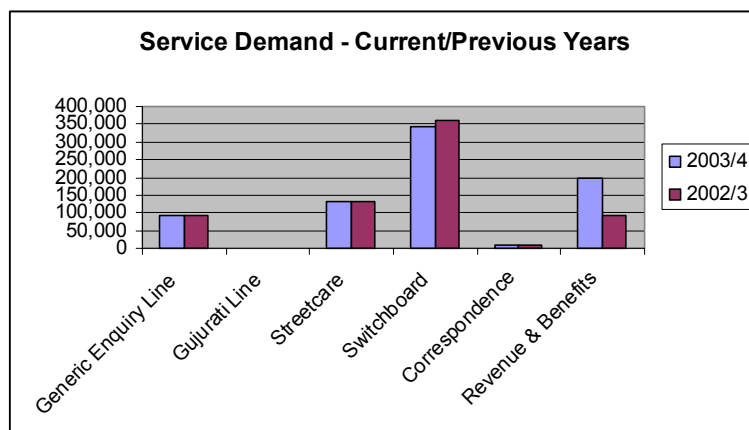
Service	03/04		02/03		Change in Demand (000s)	% Change in Demand
	Demand (000s)	% of Total Demand	Demand (000s)	% of Total Demand		
Generic & Social Services Enquiry Line	93.8	9.31	92.3	10.08	1548	1.68
Gujarati Line	0.4	0.04	0.6	0.055	- 127	- 22.8
StreetCare	130.1	12.91	130.1	14.20	26	0.01
Switchboard	344.9	34.23	359.3	39.19	- 13,966	- 3.9
On-Line & E-Mail	7.5	0.74	6.5	0.74	1,056	16.3
Correspondence*	0.5	0.05	0.7	0.05	816	- 30.1
Sub-Total	577.2	57.30%	589.5	64.32%	- 11,703	- 2%
Revs and Bens	197.5	19.61	#91.8	10.02	105,788	115%
Total Demand	774,916	76.91%	681.3	74.34%	94,085	13.82%

(#6 months data only as service transferred to OSS on 1st October 02. 187,400 enquiries were taken for the full year including those for EDS).

Table 1

* total includes emails

Chart 1



3.1.8 There was an increase in demand over the previous year of 13.82% with a further 94,085 customer calls being received. However, this increase was because of the previous years figures only covering 6 months of the Revenue & Benefits service. The remaining OSS Contact Centre services experienced a small decrease in demand of 2% (see Chart 1 above) concentrated on switchboard calls.

- 3.1.9 The Switchboard service had a 3.9% fall in demand on the previous year. The Gujarati Line also saw a decrease of 22.8% although this had little impact on total demand as Gujarati volumes are so low. The On-line and E-mails service saw an increase in customer usage of 16.3%, but the volume of correspondence fell during the year by 3%.
- 3.1.10 During February 2004, computer problems lasting three working days caused the loss of statistics for all services except the Switchboard and Revenues & Benefits services. This means that there were 4,300 unrecorded enquiries (2,500 streetcare & 1,800 generic).
- 3.1.11 Sections 2 to 8 below provide more detailed information on the individual services shown in Table 1 and covers both demand and performance against Performance Indicators.
- 3.1.12 Finally, performance targets have been set for speed of response to customer calls, i.e. call pick-up. Calls to the OSS Contact Centre can either be answered by an Officer or via the Automatic Call Distribution system (ACD). The ACD will answer a call automatically after 15 seconds if not picked up by an Officer. The customer hears a comfort message; if the call is not answered in a further 20 seconds the customer has the option to leave a message or wait for an officer. In this way 100% of calls are answered within 15 seconds.

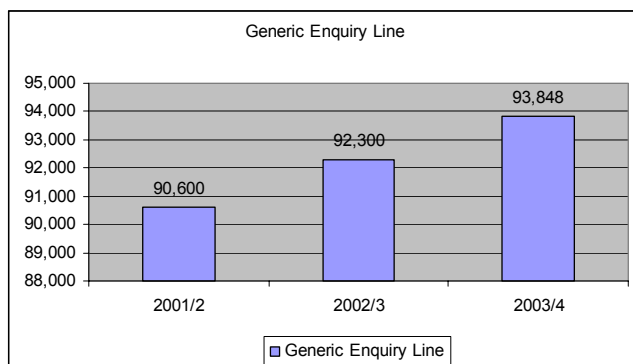
3.2 Generic Enquiry Line

3.2.1 Volume of Calls

Team	Total for year 03/04 (000s)	Total for year 02/03 (000s)	% of total demand for 03/04	Actual Change (000s)	% change since 02/03
OSS Advisors / ACD	93.8	92.3	9.31	+ 1,548	+ 1.68

There has been a small increase in customer calls to the Generic team of 1.68% (1,548 calls) compared to the previous year.

Chart 2



3.3 Analysis of Response Performance

Team	Calls Presented (000s)		Actual Change (000's)	Calls Answered (000's)		% Answered within 15 seconds by officer.	Variance with last year (calls answered within 15 seconds by officer)
	03/04	02/03		03/04	02/03		
OSS advisers – ACD	102.1	101.1	1.0	93.8	92.3	79.3%*	0.3%

*As percentage of calls presented -100% by ACD

3.3.1 79.3% (74,421) of calls were answered within 15 seconds. This is a small increase (0.3%) on the previous year when 72,917 calls were answered within 15 seconds.

3.3.2 92% (93,848) of calls presented were answered by the officer (an increase of 1% on the previous year). A total of 9,252 calls were lost. These were calls where the caller did not speak to an officer and did not choose to leave a message for someone to call them back.

3.4 Top 10 Enquiries

Generic Enquiry Line			
03/04	Volumes	02/03	Type
1	17,895	1	General Information
2	10,585	2	Older Peoples Services
3	10,483	5	Revenue
4	5,367	4	Housing & Council Tax Benefit
5	5,023	3	Physical Disability
6	4,681	6	Brent Housing Partnership-Repairs
7	2,905	7	Children's Social Work
8	2,879	8	Benefits agency
9	2,728	10	Housing Resources Centre
10	2,392	9	Legal and Democratic services

3.4.1 The most popular enquiry type for the Generic Line was "General Information", followed by "Older Peoples Services". The increase in calls regarding Revenues relate to a training programme, whereby the Generic Team are able to deal more comprehensively with these enquiries.

3.5 Performance Indicators

Indicator	Standard	2003/2004	2002/2003	Change
Generic & Social Services Enquiry Line	90% by officer -15 secs 100% by ACD	79.3% by officer 100% by ACD	79% by officer 100% by ACD	0.3 %
Customer Satisfaction Survey	95%	96%	93.5%	2.5 %

3.5.1 There was a slight increase in the response rate of officers who answered 79.3% of calls within 15 seconds. As the volume of Onlines and Emails enquiries increased more resources were used on this service, hence the target of 90% of calls answered by an officer was not achieved.

3.5.2 Call Duration

The average duration of calls to the Generic Enquiry Line was 2 minutes 51 seconds, 42 seconds (33%) more than in 2002/3. The average duration of the calls to Social Services lines is 2 minutes 33 seconds, one second more than the 2002/3 figure. Enquiry completion time (outgoing calls, system updates and other actions to progress or resolve the enquiry) is not included.

3.6 OSS Gujarati Line

3.6.1 Volume of Calls

Team	Total for year 03/04	Total for 02/03	% of total demand for 03/04	% of total demand for 02/03	% change since 02/03
OSS Advisors – ACD	430	557	0.04%	0.06%	- 0.02%

3.6.2 The Gujarati line accounts for approximately 0.04% (430) of total demand.

3.6.3 There has been a reduction of 23% (127) on the previous year in the number of calls presented to the Gujarati line.

3.7 Analysis of Call Response Performance

Team	Calls Presented 03/04	Calls answered 03/04	% answered within 15 secs by ACD	Variance with last year
OSS advisers – ACD	430	430	100%	2%

*As percentage of calls presented

3.7.1 A 100% rate was achieved for answering calls within 15 seconds by ACD. The variance of 2% is a comparison with the previous year, when 11 calls were abandoned before the call was answered by the ACD.

3.7.1 Performance Indicators

Indicator	Standard	2003/2004	2002/2003
Gujarati Line	100% within 15 seconds	100%	98%

3.8.1 The Gujarati line is fully automated and has a pre-recorded message, therefore all calls were answered within the 15 second target.

3.8 StreetCare

3.8.1 Volume of calls

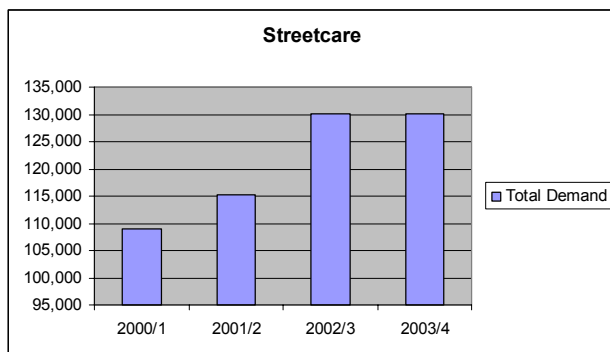
Team	Total for year 03/04 (000)	Total for previous year 02/03 (000)	Actual Change since 02/03 (000)	% of total demand for 03/04	% change since 02/03
Contact Centre-StreetCare	130.1*	130.1	0	0%	0%

* Includes Extended Hours total calls.

3.8.2 The StreetCare line accounts for 12.91% (130,126) of the total demand.

3.8.3 The calls to the StreetCare line appear to have reached a plateau with no increase or decrease in volumes on the previous year.

Chart 3



3.9 Analysis of Response Performance

Team	Calls Presented 03/04 (000)	Calls answered 02/03 (000)	% answered within 15 secs by officer	Variance with last year (calls answered) within 15 seconds
StreetCare	137.6	130.1	78%*	+ 8%

*As percentage of all calls presented -100% by ACD

- 3.9.1 94.5% of calls presented were answered with a total of 7,490 calls lost (these are calls where the caller did not speak to an officer and did not choose to leave a message for someone to call them back.)
- 3.9.2 78% of calls were answered within 15 seconds, an increase of 8% on last year. This was also 18% up on the 2001/2 figure showing steady progress is being maintained.
- 3.9.3 The reason for this improved ability to answer calls is: a more stable team; better training; increased efficiency; a change to the special collection service; and improvements in the StreetCare back office.

3.10 Call Duration

- 3.10.1 The average duration of calls to the StreetCare Enquiry Line was 2 minutes 41 seconds. These figures do not include additional time required after the call has completed to update the system or to progress enquiries though other service areas.
- 3.10.2 This is an increase of 8 seconds on the average call duration in 2002/3 (2 minutes 34 seconds).

3.11 Top 5 Enquiries

03/04	Volumes	02/03	StreetCare
1	32,619	1	Special Collection
2	10,611	2	Refuse Collection
3	7,568	3	Abandoned Vehicles
4	5,525	4	Dumped Rubbish
5	3125	-	Recycling
		5	Street lights

- 3.11.1 The top enquiry was "Special Collection" registering 25% of all calls to StreetCare. None of the top 4 enquiries have changed position since last year, but last years fifth placed enquiry, (Street lights) dropped from the top 5, to be replaced by "Recycling".

3.12 Performance Indicators

Indicator	Standard	2003/2004	2002/03
Contact Centre – StreetCare (% answered within 15 secs by officer.)	75% by officer 100% by ACD	78% by officer 100% by ACD	70% by officer 100% by ACD
Contact Centre – StreetCare Surveys	95%	85%	86%

3.12.1 There was a significant increase of 8% in the number of calls being answered within 15 seconds by officers. This figure now exceeds the performance target figure by 3%. However a small reduction of 1% was recorded in the Contact Centre Survey this year for customer satisfaction.

3.13 Telephone Operators – Switchboard

3.13.1 Volume of Calls

Team	Total 03/04 (000s)	Total 02/03 (000s)	Actual Change (000's)	% of total demand for 03/04	% change since 02/03
Contact Centre- Operators	344.9	358.9	- 14.0	34.23%	- 4.0%

3.13.2 Switchboard calls have decreased by 4% on the previous year and now accounts for 34.2% of total demand (39.2% last year). This may be due to the establishment of fringe call centres across the Council such as Housing Resources and Environmental Health.

3.14 Analysis of Calls

Team	Calls Presented (thousands) 03/04	Number of calls answered (thousands) 03/04	% answered within 15 seconds by officer.	Variance with last year calls answered within 15 seconds
Operators	349.9	344.9	95.7%	- 0.5%

3.14.1 98.6% of calls presented were answered with a total of 7,490 calls lost. 96% of calls were answered within 15 seconds, a decrease of 0.5% on last year.

3.15 Performance Indicators

Indicator	Standard	2003/2004	2002/2003
Contact Centre – Operators	95% within 15 seconds	95.7%	96.5%

3.15.1 The target of 95% of calls answered within 15 seconds has been exceeded for the third year in a row although the figure decreased by 0.8% on the previous year.

3.16 Extended Hours

3.16.1 Calls taken during the Extended Hours have been included in the volumes for Streetcare and Generic Lines. The statistics below are provided for information purposes and do not appear as a separate entry in the Summary Table above (Table 1).

3.17 Volume of Calls

Team	Totals for year 03/04	Total for Previous Year 02/03	Actual Change	% change since 02/03
Cashiers Line #	4,215	3,257	958	29.4%
Generic Enquiry Line*	4,611	4,523	88	1.9%
StreetCare	6,596	6,479	117	1.8%
Total	15,422	14,259	1,163	8.2%

Excludes calls between 8am and 9am.

* Includes Library, Social Services, OSS and Gujarati calls.

3.17.1 Extended Hours (between 5pm - 8pm & 8am - 9am) was introduced for the Cashiers' line on 26/7/01.

3.17.2 The Extended Hours service accounts for approximately 1.5% of total demand within the OSS. The overall increase from the previous year in the number of calls placed is 8.2%. This increase is due to the Cashiers Line where the volume of calls increased by 27% over the previous year. The increases for StreetCare and the Generic Enquiry Line were both less than 2%.

3.18 Analysis of Calls

Team	Calls Presented 03/04	Number of calls answered 03/04	% answered within 15 seconds by officer.
Cashiers	4,693*	4,215	77%
Generic Line	5,367	4,611	72%
StreetCare	7,325	6,596	71%
Total	17,385	15,422	72%

* Excludes calls between 8am and 9am.

3.18.1 89% of calls presented to the Extended Hours line were answered by officers, and the remaining 11 % of calls were where the caller did not speak to an officer and chose not to leave a message for an officer to call them back.

3.18.2 70% of calls were answered within the target of 15 seconds. The best performing service was the Cashiers Line with 80% of calls answered within 15 seconds. The Generic Line achieved 70% and StreetCare achieved 64% of calls answered within the target.

3.19 Cashiers line

	2003/4	2002/3	% Variance	Calls received Unanswered	% Calls received unanswered
17.00 – 20.00 hrs	4,215	3,257	29	478	11.3
08.00 – 09.00 hrs	1,439	1,195	20	77	5.4
Cashiers Line*	5,654	4,452	27%	555	9.8

* Total of calls taken during the hours 5pm to 8pm and 8am to 9am.

3.19.1 The Cashiers Line experienced an increase in call volumes of 27% over last year's figures (1202 calls). The evening period (17.00 to 20.00) increased by 29% and the morning period had a 20% increase. 9.8% of the calls received were unanswered.

3.19.2 The average call duration was 2 minutes 46 seconds. This is an increase of 8 seconds on the average duration in 2002/3.

3.19.3 Money collected during the extended hours was **£1,233,374** for the year 2003/4. This is an increase of £118,942 over last year's figure of £1,114,432. This represents a revenue increase of 10.7%.

3.20 Performance Indicators

Team	Standard	2003/2004
Extended hours	90% within 15 seconds	70%

3.20.1 The Extended Hours line answered 72% of calls presented within 15 seconds. This is a reduction of 2% on last year's figures.

3.21 On-Line, Email & Written Correspondence

3.21.1 Volume of Calls

Team	Totals for year 03/04 (thousands)	Total for Previous Year 02/03 (thousands)	% of total stats for 03/04	Actual Change	% change since 02/03
On line & emailed enquiries	7.55	6.5	0.75%	1,056	16.3%
Written correspondence	0.47	0.7	0.05%	- 202	- 30.1%
Total	8.02	7.2	0.8%	854	11.9%

3.21.2 E-contact experienced an increase in demand of 11.9% over the previous year and now accounts for 0.8% of the total number of enquiries to the Council taken by the OSS..

3.21.3 The volume of emailed and on-line enquiries has continued to increase in the period 03/04 by 1,056 (2,100 last year).

3.21.4 Written correspondence is those items received via the post or fax. The volume of written correspondence continues to decline with a reduction this year of 30%. The One-Stop Shop Contact Centre dealt with 469 pieces of correspondence in this period compared to 671 last year.

3.22 Top 10 On-Line/E-mail Enquiries

On-line and E-mail enquiries.			
03/04	Volumes	02/03	Type
1	1,442	3	Revenue (Council Tax)
2	1,190	2	StreetCare
3	1,032	1	General Enquiries
4	327	5	Housing & Council Tax Benefit
5	286	-	Housing Resources Centre
6	263	4	Brent Housing Partnership-Repairs
7	227	6	Parking Enforcement
8	182	7	Education Services
9	158	8	Planning
10	141	10	Environmental Health
		9	Transportation

3.22.1 The most popular reasons for contact in both years are Revenue (Council Tax), StreetCare and General Enquiries although the order has been reversed on the previous year. Quite some way off in volume terms is Housing & Council Tax Benefit followed by a new entry, Housing Resources Centre. The only enquiry type to drop out of the Top Ten was Transportation.

3.23 Top 5 Correspondence Enquiries

Postal and Faxed Correspondence			
03/04	Volumes	02/03	Type
1	50	-	Revenue
2	30	-	Benefits
3	18	-	Streetcare
4	14	-	OSS
5	12	-	Housing Resource Centre
	5	1	Older Peoples Services
	0	2	Occupational Therapy
	2	3	Parking Enforcement
	0	4	Sensory Impairment – Social Services
	6	5	Physical Disabilities – Social services

3.23.1 Last year, the posted and faxed correspondences were concerned primarily disability/impairments and older people's services. This year none of previous year's Top Five enquiry types are presented in this year's Top Five, where Revenue, Benefits and StreetCare are now the main areas of enquiries.

3.23.2 Although Post and Fax are available for communication and should not be ignored completely, reporting such low volume figures in such detail is of questionable value.

3.24 Performance Indicators

Team	Standard	2003/2004	2002/2003
On-line and email enquiries	100% within 1 working day	96%	*99%
Correspondence	100% within 5 days	100%	100%

3.24.1 All emails received in the Contact Centre get an automated acknowledgement and within 24 hours, an answer from an officer or an email of explanation to tell the customer their email has been passed on to another department. For those emails where an answer is provided by the Contact Centre, 96% are sent within one working day. This is 3% down on the previous year. However, for those emails sent on to a back office function (44% of all emails received), the response time is much more variable. From a customer survey carried out in quarter 4, 28% of customers waited longer than 2 days for a response but this figure masks the fact that some were still waiting after two/three weeks. This is due to back office functions that have different performance criteria for email enquiry response. The lack of response issues also brought down the overall service satisfaction level to 56% (44% Poor/Unacceptable).

3.24.2 100% of written or faxed correspondence was answered within the target of 5 working days.

3.24.3 The uptake in the use of electronic means of communication has been encouraging and could account for the decrease in written correspondence.

3.25 OSS Revenues and Benefits Line

3.25.1 Volume of Calls

Team	03/04 (000)	02/03 (000)	% Variance	% of total demand 03/04
OSS Revenues & Benefits	197.6	*187.4	5%	19.61%

(Full years total including calls handled by EDS.)

3.25.2 Revenues & Benefits customer service returned in-house from EDS to Brent in October 2002. For the 6 months from 1st October 02 to 31st March 2003 the OSS handled 91,800 calls for Revenues and Benefits. For the first 6 months of the year EDS handled 95,600 calls which bring the years total to 187,400.

3.25.3 The number of calls for Revenues and Benefits has increased by 5% compared to 2002/2003.

3.26 Analysis of Response Performance

Team	Calls Presented 03/04 (000s)	Calls Answered 03/04 (000s)	Engaged Calls	% Answered within 15 secs by officer
OSS Council Tax	114.6	90.1	192.0	22.3
OSS Housing Benefit	132.6	107.5	209.6	18.2
Total OSS Revenues & Benefits	247.2	197.6	401.6	20.25%

- 3.26.1 Of the calls presented, only 80% were answered with just 20.3% answered within 15 seconds. It is acknowledged that this is not an acceptable standard of performance and does not meet corporate targets and telephone performance indicators. Currently demand exceeds resources. Considerable work is however underway to provide more accurate information, improve standards, resources and overall performance with answer rates and enquiry handling.
- 3.36.2 Council Tax Lines answered 78.6% of overall calls presented with 48% calls engaged and Housing Benefit lines answered 81% of overall calls with 47% of calls engaged.
- 3.36.3 The impact of the problems associated with bringing the Revenues & Benefits line back in house (such as the replacement and training of staff), and the service delivery issues in Housing Benefits and Council Tax are slowly beginning to be resolved. A customer service Improvement Plan is in place with actions to improve service delivery and customer satisfaction. It should be noted that the speed of response for the R & B team is determined by the number of customer service officers available to answer calls. Constraining issues have been raised and submitted to BFS detailing resources and performance levels. It should also be noted that there may be an element of double counting when taking in to account the engaged calls, it is not possible to establish how many calls are repeat attempts. This is priority work for the service during the next year.

4 WELFARE RIGHTS – BENEFITS TAKE UP

4.1.1 The Welfare Benefits Service booked 1603 appointments for 2003/2004. This is an increase of 50% compared to the previous year (2002/2003).

4.1.2 The Welfare Benefits Service has had periods of instability as the service was under review. As a result there were delays with recruiting permanent team. This should be addressed as soon as a decision on the future of the service is agreed.

4.2 Summary and comparison of new appointments:

	Apr 03 to Mar 04			Apr 02 to Mar 03		
	New Appointments	%		New Appointments	%	% Change
Appointments seen	946 (1)	59%		736 (1)	69%	29%
Did not attend	361 (2)	23%		164 (2)	15%	120%
Cancelled	192 (3)	12%		67 (4)	6%	187%
Drop in	56 (4)	3%		78 (3)	7%	-28%
Relative attended	36 (5)	2%		6 (7)	1%	500%
Telephone advice	12 (6)	1%		11 (5)	1%	9%
Surgery	0 (7)	0%		0 (8)	0%	0%
Home Visit	0 (7)	0%		7 (6)	1%	-100%
Letter	0 (7)	0%		0 (8)	0%	0%
Total	1603	100%		1069	100%	50%

4.2.1 29% (210) more appointments were seen compared with the previous year.

4.2.2 There was a 28% (22) decrease in the number of drop ins

4.2.3 There was an increase of 186% (125) in cancelled appointments and in the number of customers who did not attend their appointments 120% (197). As well as cancellations and non attendance by customers these increases can be attributed to the sporadic operation of the service. This was due to staff shortages and turnover of temporary staff.

4.2.4 The provision for home visit has been suspended due to staff shortages. However, a telephone interview is offered as an alternative.

4.3 Estimated Benefits:

Location	Apr 03 to Mar 04			Apr 02 to Mar 03		
	Est'md Benefits £K	%Take up		Est'md Benefits £K	% take up	% Change
Harlesden	£610,735.81 (1)	30%		£299,657.67 (3)	18%	104%
Willesden	£383,425.72 (2)	19%		£351,657.80 (1)	22%	9%
Kilburn	£293,007.73 (3)	15%		£146,053.80 (6)	9%	101%
Town Hall	£284,939.27 (4)	14%		£341,062.41 (2)	21%	-16%
Brent House	£247,966.03 (5)	12%		£209,376.25 (5)	13%	18%
Kingsbury	£166,890.00 (6)	8%		£254,390.48 (4)	16%	-34%
Telephone	£16,814.20 (7)	1%		£12,810.20 (8)	1%	31%
Home Visit	£0.00 (8)	0%		£14,707.90 (7)	1%	-100%
Total	£2,003,778.76	100%		£1,629,716.51	100%	23%

- 4.3.2 The totals estimated benefits for 2003/04 was £2,003,778 compared to £1,629,716 the previous year 02/03. This represents an increase of 23%.
- 4.3.3 The locations with the highest take up of benefits for 2003/04 was Harlesden with £610,735 (30%). This was followed by Willesden with £383,425 (19%) and Kilburn £293,007 (15%). This has changed from the pervious year 02/03 where Willesden has the highest take up benefits of £351,657 (22%) followed by the Town Hall £341,062 (21%).
- 4.3.4 The location with the least take up of benefits was Kingsbury with £166,890 (8%).
- 4.3.5 Since the Welfare Benefit's initiative began in November 2000, it is estimated that just under 6 million pounds (£5,923,131) has been raised in benefits.

4.4 Actual Benefit Totals

- 4.4.1 For the financial year 2003/04 follow-ups feedback was received from 304 (50%) of customers. 105 (58%) replies were received in the 1st quarter, 108 (50%) for 2nd quarter 66 (45%) for the 3rd quarter, and 25 (37%) replies were received for the 4th quarter.
- 4.4.2 There has been a low response to the 4th quarter as the follow ups for March are sent to the customers at the end of the following month, as it takes 4 – weeks in a majority of cases from the date the customer has applied to receive a result from their application for benefit. Replies for previous months are still being returned, as some cases take longer to receive a result e.g. appeals, reviews, DLA application, requests for further information e.t.c. Customers tend to hold on to their forms and return them months later when they have had a result.
- 4.4.3 From the 304 replies received a total of £507,810 actual benefit was received by customers against an estimated total of £837,823. The actuals for this year are therefore 39% less than the estimate.
- 4.4.4 The actuals for this year 2003/04 have increased by 22% compared to last year 2002/03.
- 4.4.6. The actual variance between the estimated and actual benefit is £248,957. This is taking into account, that some customers have not heard anything yet so it would not be accurate to make the assumption that the Welfare Officer has over estimated until the customer has had a definite Yes or No.

4.5 Benefit applications completed

- 4.5.1 New applications completed for the 1st April 2003 to 31st March 2004 (Position brackets)

Type of Benefit	Apr 03 to Mar 04	%	Apr 02 to Mar 03	%	% Change
Disability Living Allowance	346 (1)	23	252 (1)	25	37
Attendance Allowance	189 (2)	13	110 (3)	11	72
Income Support	151 (3)	10	145 (2)	14	4
Carers Allowance	90 (4)	6	46 (8)	5	96
Other	87 (5)	6	52 (5)	5	67
Incapacity Benefit	74 (6)	5	48 (6)	5	54
Pension Credit	74 (6)	5	0 (18)	0	N/A

Housing Benefit	68	(7)	5	47	(7)	5	45
Minimum Income Guaranteed	62	(8)	4	0	(18)	0	N/A
Social Fund	46	(9)	3	31	(12)	3	48
Council Tax Benefit	41	(10)	3	35	(11)	3	17
Jobseekers Allowance	41	(10)	3	37	(9)	4	11
Child Tax Credit	35	(11)	2	0	(18)	0	N/A
Working Tax Credit	34	(12)	2	52	(5)	5	-35
Not Stated	31	(13)	2	63	(4)	6	-51
Child Benefit	27	(14)	2	23	(13)	2	17
Not Eligible for any Benefits	24	(15)	2	0	(18)	0	N/A
Retirement Pension	22	(16)	1	36	(10)	4	-39
Maternity Allowance	10	(17)	1	0	(18)	0	N/A
Statutory Maternity Pay	8	(18)	1	11	(14)	1	-27
Industrial Injuries Disablement Benefit	5	(19)	0	0	(18)	0	N/A
Bereavement Allowance	3	(20)	0	0	(18)	0	N/A
Bereavement Payment	2	(21)	0	0	(18)	0	N/A
Educational Maintenance Allowance	2	(21)	0	0	(18)	0	N/A
Widows Pension	2	(21)	0	9	(15)	1	-78
Criminal Injuries Compensation Scheme	1	(22)	0	0	(18)	0	N/A
Disabled Persons Tax Credit	1	(22)	0	1	(17)	0	0%
Health Cost	1	(22)	0	0	(18)	0	N/A
Mortgage Interest	1	(22)	0	0	(18)	0	N/A
Sever Disablement Allowance	1	(22)	0	0	(18)	0	N/A
Widows Mothers Allowance	1	(22)	0	2	(16)		-50
Statutory Paternity Pay	0	(23)	0	0	(18)	0	N/A
Statutory Sick Pay	0	(23)	0	2	(16)		-100
Widowed Parents Allowance	0	(23)	0	0	(18)	0	N/A
Total	1480		100	1002		100	48

4.5.2 A total of 1480 benefit applications were submitted this year 2003/04. This is 48% (478) more applications than the previous year 2002/03.

4.5.3 The most frequent application completed was for Disability Living Allowance with 346 forms (23%) submitted. This was followed by Attendance Allowance with 189 (13%) forms completed and Income Support with 151 forms (10%) which is a similar trend to the previous year 02/03.

4.6 Age Ranges

Age	Apr 03 to Mar 04	%	Apr 02 to Mar 03	%
60+	409 (1)	39%	283 (1)	34%
50-59	210 (2)	20%	138 (2)	16%
40-49	153 (3)	15%	134 (3)	16%
30-39	150 (4)	14%	121 (4)	14%
20-29	86 (5)	8%	80 (5)	10%
Not stated	26 (6)	2%	64 (6)	8%
Under 20	16 (7)	2%	18 (7)	2%
Total	1050	100%	838	100%

4.6.1 The highest number of people seen was in the range of 60+ (39%). This coincides with the number of applications which were completed for Disabled Living Allowance and Attendance Allowance.

4.6.2 The second category was those aged between 50 – 59 years of age with 20%.

4.6.3 The fewest customers seen were under 20 which accounted for only 2% of all appointment.

4.6.4 Compared to the previous year 2002/03 and previous year the age range of customers seen has changed very little. People aged 50 and upwards have the greatest demand for the different types of benefits available.

4.7 Ethnicity

Ethnicity	Apr 03 to Mar 04	%	Apr 02 to Mar 03	%
White British	241 (1)	23	155 (2)	18
Black Caribbean	180 (2)	17	180 (1)	21
Asian other	120 (3)	11	77 (5)	9
White other	120 (3)	11	90 (3)	11
Asian Indian	96 (4)	9	75 (6)	9
Black African	76 (5)	7	81 (4)	10
Black British	71 (6)	7	16 (10)	2
Other	57 (7)	5	35 (9)	4
White Irish	53 (8)	5	57 (7)	7
Black other	18 (9)	2	7 (12)	1
Not Stated.	10 (10)	1	50 (8)	6
Asian Pakistani	8 (11)	1	15 (11)	2
Total	1050	100	838	100

4.7.1 The ethnicity monitoring shows a fairly even spread of customers using the Welfare Rights Service. All groups were represented.

4.7.2 The highest category this year 2003/04 was White British (23%) followed by Black Caribbean (17%). This is different to the previous year 2002/03 where the highest category was Black Caribbean with (21%) followed by Whit British (18%).

4.7.3 The lowest ethnic groups represented were Black Other with 2% and Asian Pakistani with 1%.

4.8 Tenancy Type

	Apr 03 to Mar 04		%	Apr 02 to Mar 03		%
Council Housing	344	(1)	33%	162	(3)	19%
Owner Occupancy	279	(2)	27%	243	(1)	29%
Housing Association	148	(3)	14%	163	(2)	19%
Private Tenancy	134	(4)	13%	112	(4)	13%
Living with Relatives	66	(5)	6%	71	(5)	8%
Other	24	(6)	2%	26	(7)	3%
Not Stated	20	(7)	2%	37	(6)	4%
Homeless	16	(8)	2%	12	(8)	1%
Living with Friends	13	(9)	1%	8	(9)	1%
Sheltered Housing	6	(10)	1%	4	(10)	0%
Total	1050		100%	838		100%

4.8.1 This year 2003/04 the highest number of customers seen was Council Tenants (33%). Last year the highest category was Owner Occupancy (29%).

4.8.2 The second highest category this year 2003/04 was Owner Occupancy with 27% followed by Housing Association with 14%.

4.8.3 The fewest customers seen were those who are living with friends and in sheltered housing with 1%.

4.8.4 In comparison to the previous year it shows very little change in the categories. Some of the lower placed group reflect the number of people who live in tenancy type e.g. there are few people who live with friend. However some of the lower categories i.e. sheltered housing may be hard to reach groups of customer who may spend most of their time within their homes.

4.9 FOLLOW UP APPOINTMENTS:

4.9.1 Summary of Follow-up Appointments

	Apr 03 to Mar 04		%	Apr 02 to Mar 03		%
Appointments Seen	720	(1)	67	411	(1)	70
Did not attend	125	(2)	11	51	(3)	8
Cancellations	108	(3)	10	29	(4)	7
Drop Ins	61	(4)	6	54	(2)	5
Telephone	43	(5)	4	16	(6)	3
Relative attends	12	(6)	1	23	(5)	4
Surgery	0	(7)	0	0	(7)	0
Home Visit	0	(7)	0	0	(7)	0
Letter	0	(7)	0	0	(7)	0
Totals	1069		100	584		100

4.9.2 76% of customers who were seen with new appointments returned to the Welfare Rights Service for a follow up appointment.

- 4.9.3 953 follow up appointments were booked and a further 43. follow ups conducted by telephone. Also another 61 customers dropped in to see the Welfare Rights Officer without pre-booking an appointment.
- 4.9.4 309 (75%) more follow up appointments were conducted this year 2003/04 than previous year 2002/03. This change could be due to the fact that a lot of concentration has been emphasised regarding the accuracy of the statistics logged by the Welfare Officers. Previously Officers were placing a lot of their follow-ups as appointments in their stats e.g. appeals/application completion as appointments when they have already seen the customer, this is being monitored.
- 4.9.5 Of the appointments booked 108 (15%) cancelled and 125(17%) did not turn up for their appointments. This compares to 29 (7%) cancellations and 51 (12%) non attendance in the previous year 2002/03. This may be due to the instability of the service.

4.10 Benefit applications completed

- 4.10.1 Table 10: Summary of Benefit Applications Completed for Follow Up Appointments
1st April to 31st Mar 04 (*Top 5 in brackets*):

Type of Benefit	Apr 03 to Mar 04	%	Apr 02 to Mar 03	%	% Change
Disability Living Allowance	418 (1)	41%	241 (1)	37%	73%
Attendance Allowance	116 (2)	11%	61 (3)	9%	90%
Income Support	78 (3)	8%	83 (2)	13%	-6%
Incapacity Benefit	59 (4)	6%	39 (4)	6%	51%
Other	50 (5)	5%	24 (8)	4%	108%
Carers Allowance	49 (6)	5%	21 (9)	3%	133%
Council Tax Benefit	33 (7)	3%	28 (7)	4%	18%
Housing Benefit	33 (7)	3%	38 (5)	6%	-13%
Social Fund	31 (8)	3%	11 (12)	2%	182%
Pension Credit	25 (9)	2%	0 (15)	0%	N/A
Retirement Pension	24 (10)	2%	11 (12)	2%	118%
Not Stated	21 (11)	2%	37 (6)	6%	-43%
Minimum Income Guaranteed	17 (12)	2%	0 (15)	0%	N/A
Jobseekers Allowance	12 (13)	1%	24 (8)	4%	-50%
Industrial Injuries Disablement Benefit	11 (14)	1%	0 (15)	0%	N/A
Child Benefit	9 (15)	1%	15 (10)	2%	-40%
Working Tax Credit	8 (16)	1%	12 (11)	2%	-33%
Bereavement Payment	4 (17)	0%	0 (15)	0%	N/A
Child Tax Credit	2 (18)	0%	0 (15)	0%	N/A
Disabled Persons Tax Credit	2 (18)	0%	1 (14)	0%	100%
Widows Pension	2 (18)	0%	3 (13)	0%	-33%
Bereavement Allowance	1 (19)	0%	0 (15)	0%	N/A
Criminal Injuries Compensation Scheme	1 (19)	0%	0 (15)	0%	N/A
Maternity Allowance	1 (19)	0%	0 (15)	0%	N/A

Sever Disablement Allowance	1	(19)	0%	0	(15)	0%	N/A
Statutory Maternity Pay	1	(19)	0%	1	(14)	0%	0%
Statutory Paternity Pay	1	(19)	0%	0	(15)	0%	N/A
Widows Mothers Allowance	1	(19)	0%	1	(14)	0%	0%
Educational Maintenance Allowance	0	(20)	0%	0	(15)	0%	N/A
Health Cost	0	(20)	0%	0	(15)	0%	N/A
Mortgage Interest	0	(20)	0%	0	(15)	0%	N/A
Statutory Sick Pay	0	(20)	0%	1	(14)	0%	-100%
Widowed Parents Allowance	0	(20)	0%	0	(15)	0%	N/A
Total	1011		100%	652		100%	55%

4.10.2 From the follow-up appointments a further 1011 application forms were completed.

4.10.3 The most popular benefit applied for was Disability Living Allowance with 418 forms (41%). The second most popular benefit was Attendance Allowance with 116 (11%) followed by Income Support (8%). This trend is similar to the previous year 2002/03.

4.104 There has been a 55% overall increase compared to the previous year.

4.11 Age Ranges

4.11.1 The highest numbers of follow-up interviews were conducted for customers in the age range of 60+ with 348 interviews conducted (42%).

4.11.2 The second highest category was those aged 50-59 with 25%.

4.11.3 The fewest follow ups were for those customers aged below 20 (1%). This is expected as there is a smaller population of young people

4.11.4 The trends in age range are similar to previous year 2002/03.

4.12 Table 11: Summary of Follow Up Appointments Customers seen by age 1st April to 31st Mar 03 (Position in brackets):

Age	Apr 03 to Mar 04		%	Apr 02 to Mar 03		%
60+	348	(1)	42%	178	(1)	35%
50-59	206	(2)	25%	94	(2)	19%
40-49	141	(3)	17%	92	(3)	18%
30-39	82	(4)	10%	72	(4)	14%
20-29	38	(5)	5%	35	(5)	7%
Not stated	10	(6)	1%	31	(6)	6%
Under 20	7	(7)	1%	6	(7)	1%
Total	832		100%	508		100%

4.13 Ethnicity

4.13.1 The largest ethnic group of people seen at follow-up appointments were Black Caribbean with 20% of the total. This was followed by White British with 15% and Asian other (13%). The lowest category was Asian Pakistani with 7% follow up appointments this year 2003/04.

4.13.2 Most of the ethnic groupings are similar to the previous year 2002/03.

4.14 Table 12: Breakdown of Follow Up Appointments Customers seen by Ethnicity 1st April to 31st Mar 2003 (*Position in brackets*):

Ethnicity	Apr 03 to Mar 04		%	Apr 02 to Mar 03		%
Black Caribbean	167	(1)	20%	118	(1)	23%
White British	122	(2)	15%	49	(5)	10%
Asian other	107	(3)	13%	68	(3)	13%
Asian Indian	105	(4)	13%	61	(4)	12%
White other	99	(5)	12%	35	(7)	7%
Black African	69	(6)	8%	73	(2)	14%
Black British	50	(7)	6%	15	(9)	3%
White Irish	47	(8)	6%	37	(6)	7%
Other	47	(8)	6%	19	(8)	4%
Black other	8	(9)	1%	7	(12)	1%
Asian Pakistani	7	(10)	1%	11	(11)	2%
Not Stated.	4	(11)	0%	15	(10)	3%
Total	832		100%	508		100%

4.15 Tenancy Type

4.15.1 Out of the follow- up appointments 334 customers (40%) who were seen were Council Tenants and 210 (25%) were Owner Occupancy.

4.15.2 This is similar to the tenancy make up of customer who had new appointments.

4.15.3 Again the fewest number of customers seen are those who are living with friends with 0% and also those sheltered housing (0%).

4.15.4 The overall spread of tenancy types is similar to previous years – see table below.

4.16 Table 13: Summary of Follow Up Appointments Customers by Tenancy Type 1st April to 30th Mar 03 (*Position in brackets*):

Tenancy Type	Apr 03 to Mar 04		%	Apr 02 to Mar 03		%
Council Housing	334	(1)	40%	118	(3)	23%
Owner Occupancy	210	(2)	25%	135	(1)	27%
Housing Association	124	(3)	15%	120	(2)	24%
Private Tenancy	70	(4)	8%	56	(4)	11%
Living with Relatives	44	(5)	5%	41	(5)	8%
Other	24	(6)	3%	18	(6)	4%
Not Stated	13	(7)	2%	10	(7)	2%
Homeless	7	(8)	1%	6	(8)	1%
Living with Friends	3	(9)	0%	3	(9)	1%
Sheltered Housing	3	(9)	0%	1	(10)	0%
Total	832		100%	508		100%

5 CUSTOMER SATISFACTION

5.1.1 A number of customer satisfaction surveys were carried out during 2003-2004 covering the following One Stop Shop units:

- Shops
- Contact Centre (Streetcare / Generic / R&B/E-Mail)
- Welfare Rights

5.1.2 The surveys included customer feedback via Comment Cards and a Snapshot Day Survey for the Shops, an E-Mail survey, telephone interview surveys covering both the Streetcare and Generic lines and the Revenue & Benefits Contact Centre. A review of Customer Complaints is also included in this section.

5.1.3 Performance targets for 2003/4 were:

All Units	Customer satisfaction	95%
Shops	Waiting time (main counter)	80% seen within 20 minutes
Contact Centre Generic	Response time	90% calls answered in 15 secs
Contact Centre Streetcare	Response time	75% calls answered in 15 secs

5.2 SHOPS

5.3 Comment Cards Summary

5.3.1 During the year 2003/2004, 9267 Comment Cards were completed by customers visiting the One Stop Shops representing 11.7% of all customers.

5.3.2 The number of customers who completed cards increased by 5.9% on last year's figure. This is a creditable performance as the number of customers seen at the Counter has remained static since the previous year. The 2003/4 figure was also 2.1% above the number of cards collected in 2001/2 (9.6%).

5.3.3 **Table 1 – Performance Against Previous Years**

	01/02	02/03 (B)	03/04 (A)	Change (A to B)	2003/4 Target s
Comment Cards received	6,340	4,595	9,267	+ 4,672	
Customers seen on main counter	65,738	78,695	78,920	+ 225	
% of customers completing Cards	9.6%	5.8%	11.7%	+ 5.9%	
Friendly & helpful Officers	96.8%	96.0%	98.7%	+ 2.7%	
Seen within 20 minutes	82.0%	82.3%	79.8%	- 2.5%	80%

Actions taken clearly explained	97.0%	97.5%	98.0%	+ 0.5%	
Leaflets/info on display useful	77.8%	78.0%	76.2%	- 1.8%	
Customers Satisfied	97.5%	97.3%	98%	+ 0.7%	95%

5.3.4 There was an increase of 0.7% in the percentage of customers who expressed **satisfaction** with the level of service received, moving from 97.3% to 98%. **This exceeds the 2003/4 Target of 95% by 3%** and represents an excellent customer satisfaction achievement.

5.3.5 Two of the remaining four performance indicators also achieved an increase. The percentage of customers who thought the Officers who served them were **“Friendly and Helpful”** increased significantly by 2.7% to 98.7%, and customers also thought the **“actions taken had been clearly explained”** had improved by 0.5% to 98%.

5.3.6 The usefulness of **“Leaflets/Information on display”** was thought less useful by 1.8% over the previous year, but, of more concern was the length of time the customer had to wait to be seen by a Counter Officer. The percentage of customers who believed they were **“Seen within 20 minutes”** decreased by 2.5% to only 79.8%. However, this was only 0.2% below the 2003/4 Target of 80%.

5.4 Shops Detail

Table 2 - Performance by Shops

	TH	BH	HAR	KING	KIL	WILL	TOTAL
Comment Cards received	2682	851	1211	1603	944	1976	9267
% New Customers	31.1%	64.6%	49.4%	45.8%	52.8%	66.2%	48.8%
% Repeat Customers	68.9%	35.4%	50.6%	54.2%	47.2%	33.8%	51.2%
Friendly & helpful	98.7%	99.3%	98.0%	99.2%	98.4%	98.7%	98.7%
Seen within 20 mins.	60.3%	92.6%	82.7%	91.9%	85.3%	86.7%	79.8%
Actions taken clearly explained	97.7%	98.1%	97.3%	98.4%	98.2%	98.6%	98.0%
Leaflets/info on display useful	71.1%	67.7%	82.1%	79.2%	85.5%	76.6%	76.2%
Customers satisfied	97.2%	98.2%	97.5%	98.9%	98.3%	98.5%	98.0%
Averages	85.0%	91.2%	91.5%	93.5%	93.1%	91.8%	91.0%
Customers seen at main counter	15,313	10,605	15,478	9,842	11,135	16,547	78,920
% of Customers Completing Cards	17.5%	8.0%	7.8%	16.3%	8.5%	11.9%	11.7%

- 5.4.1 For all shops, 46.5% of customers were seen immediately on their arrival at the main counter. This is up 1% on the previous year. In all, 80% of OSS customers estimated they were seen within 20 minutes of arriving. This is a slight decrease on last year's figures when the estimate was 82% but consistent with the 80% achieved in year 2001/2. The greatest percentage of customers estimating they waited longer than 20 minutes, were from the Town Hall, of which 39% believed they had waited more than 20 minutes.
- 5.4.2 98% of OSS customers felt that the information and actions had been "very" or "quite" clearly explained to them by the Shop Counter Officers. This is a 1% decrease on last year's customer feedback, but taking the parameter "very clear" only, there was an increase of 2% over last year's figure of 85%. Only 1.5% of customers felt the information/actions had not been clearly explained to them.

5.4.3

Total Financial Year		April 03-March 04							
1)	How did you first hear about the One Stop Shop ?								
	Word of Mouth	Leaflets/ Posters	Council Staff	Repeat Visit Same Enq	Repeat Visit Different Enq	No response	Total	Personal Enquiries	Card % (Total)
T Hall	413	192	230	1145	702	0	2682		#DIV/0!
Brent Hse	278	56	166	118	183	50	851		#DIV/0!
Harlesden	292	101	125	346	267	80	1211		#DIV/0!
Kingsbury	422	161	125	483	386	26	1603		#DIV/0!
Kilburn	341	73	84	246	200	0	944		#DIV/0!
Willesden	857	252	199	420	248	0	1976		#DIV/0!
Total	2603	835	929	2758	1986	156	9267	0	#DIV/0!
Percentage	28.09%	9.01%	10.02%	29.76%	21.43%	1.68%	100.00%		
2)	How Friendly and helpful were the staff who assisted you?								
	Very	quite	Not Very	Not at all	No response	Total			
T Hall	2449	197	19	15	2	2682			
Brent house	776	69	2	0	4	851			
Harlesden	1087	100	12	5	7	1211			
Kingsbury	1499	91	6	3	4	1603			
Kilburn	882	47	5	10	0	944			
Willesden	1786	165	11	8	6	1976			
Total	8479	669	55	41	23	9267			
Percentage	91.50%	7.22%	0.59%	0.44%	0.25%	100.00%			
3)	How long did you have to wait ?								
	Seen Immediately	Up to 10 mins	10 to 20	Over 20	No response	Total			
T Hall	760	438	419	1057	8	2682			
Brent house	468	213	107	55	8	851			
Harlesden	650	214	138	198	11	1211			
Kingsbury	1042	280	151	124	6	1603			
Kilburn	529	162	114	139	0	944			
Willesden	862	525	326	257	6	1976			
Total	4311	1832	1255	1830	39	9267			
Percentage	46.52%	19.77%	13.54%	19.75%	0.42%	100.00%			
4)	Was any information give/actions taken clearly explained?								
	Very	Quite	Not very	Not at all	No response	Total			
T Hall	2315	304	41	20	2	2682			
Brent house	714	121	2	3	11	851			
Harlesden	1079	99	17	2	14	1211			
Kingsbury	1393	185	11	6	8	1603			
Kilburn	859	68	11	6	0	944			
Willesden	1733	215	11	10	7	1976			
Total	8093	992	93	47	42	9267			
Percentage	87.33%	10.70%	1.00%	0.51%	0.45%	100.00%			
5)	Are the variety of leaflets/information on display useful?								
	Very useful	Quite	Not Relevant	Did not Notice	No response	Total			
T Hall	1433	473	322	445	9	2682			
Brent house	435	141	98	140	37	851			
Harlesden	844	150	90	85	42	1211			
Kingsbury	1029	240	192	123	19	1603			
Kilburn	684	123	88	49	0	944			
Willesden	1141	372	269	188	6	1976			
Total	5566	1499	1059	1030	113	9267			
Percentage	60.06%	16.18%	11.43%	11.11%	1.22%	100.00%			
6)	How would you rate the service you received?								
	Very Good	Good	Poor	Unacceptable	No response	Total			
T Hall	2138	469	38	37	0	2682			
Brent house	662	174	8	5	2	851			
Harlesden	1030	151	18	2	10	1211			
Kingsbury	1357	228	12	2	4	1603			
Kilburn	829	99	16	0	0	944			
Willesden	1644	302	19	5	6	1976			
Total	7660	1423	111	51	22	9267			
Percentage	82.66%	15.36%	1.20%	0.55%	0.24%	100.00%			

5.4.4 For the individual shops, the spread was between 97% and 99% of customers commenting that the information and/or actions had been “very” or “quite” clearly explained. Willesden achieved 99%.

- 5.4.5 On average, 76% (7,065) of customers visiting the shops found the information on display either “quite” or “very useful”. The percentage is slightly down on last year when the figures were 77% for a much smaller volume of visitors at 3,538.
- 5.4.6 There was quite a wide discrepancy across the locations, with only 68% of customers of the Brent House OSS finding the leaflets useful compared to 85% of Kilburn’s customers.
- 5.4.7 On average, 98% (9,083) of customers responding rated the service as either “good” or “very good”. This is an increase of 1% over the previous two years.

5.5 Snapshot Day Survey

- 5.5.1 Customers using the counter and reception areas of the six Shops during a single day were interviewed to get their views on the services provided. A total of 130 customers were interviewed, 98 (75%) of whom had been seen by an Officer at the counter, and 32 (25%) customers had their enquiry dealt with by reception. The summary below covers the consolidated results from all six Shops.

5.6 Survey Results

- 5.6.1 85% of customers had visited a OSS on at least one previous occasion, either for the same enquiry (48%) or for different enquiries (37%). Nineteen customers interviewed were visiting a One Stop Shop for the first time (15%).
- 5.6.2 **OSS Environment** – 95% of customers thought the Shop environment was either ‘Good’ or ‘Very Good’. Only one thought it ‘Poor’
- 5.6.3 **Waiting time, reception** – A high proportion (61%) of customers were seen immediately by Reception on their arrival at the Shop, 31% were seen within 5 minutes and only 8% had to wait longer than 5 minutes.
- 5.6.4 **Waiting time, counter** – 64% of customers seen at the Counter were seen within 10 minutes, with 29% seen immediately. Therefore 81% of customers were seen within the 20 minutes target.
- 5.6.5 **Officer capability** – The customers were asked to rate the officer who dealt with their enquiry either at reception or the counter. A very high proportion (80%) rated their officer as ‘Very Good’ and 17% as ‘Good’. Only 3% considered their officer ‘Fair’. This is an endorsement of the OSS concept and ‘Face-to-Face’ dealings with the public. During the Survey many customers expressed genuine relief that their problem had been resolved so quickly, efficiently and in such a friendly manner.
- 5.6.6 **Enquiry resolution** – Customers were asked if their purpose or objective for the visit had been achieved. 45% said their enquiry had been ‘completely resolved to their satisfaction’, 38% said it was ‘nearly resolved, awaiting further action’, assuming the committed further action is completed, 83% of enquiries will have been resolved by the One Stop Shop. We have been aiming for a resolution target of 80% which this exceeds. 14% of enquiries were ‘unresolved’ and 3% of customers were ‘satisfied with service but not happy with the outcome’.
- 5.6.7 **Overall Customer Satisfaction** – 81% of customers thought the OSS service was either ‘Good’ or ‘Very Good’ with 18% satisfactory. Only 1% rated the service as ‘Poor’. No customers thought the service they had received ‘unacceptable’.

5.7 Contact Centre Surveys

5.7.1 Customer satisfaction surveys were carried out for both Streetcare and Generic (One Stop Shop and Social Services) lines and for the Brent Council E-mail service administered by the Contact Centre.

5.8 StreetCare Line Survey

5.8.1 Of 600 surveys sent to a random selection of customers, 93 StreetCare customers returned a completed questionnaire.

5.8.2 Customers were asked how they found the telephone number of StreetCare. The most frequent response was "Word of Mouth" with 19% closely followed by "Used us Before" and "Other" with 18%. 17% came via the Brent Switchboard and 11% via the Brent Magazine. A further 10% "could not remember".

5.8.3 **Connection time** - In response to the question about telephone waiting time, 77% of customers said they were connected to an officer straight away. 9% said the line was busy, 4% were left waiting, 4% heard message, 3% could not remember and 3% did not respond.

5.8.4 When asked how many rings they heard when waiting to be connected to an officer, 53% said the call was answered "within 5 Rings". A further 32% said it was "within 10 Rings". 3% thought it was more than 10 rings and 11% could not remember.

5.8.5 **Connection Response** - 64% thought the officer gave his/her name when answering the call but 23% thought the officer did not. 13% could not remember. Similarly, 74% thought the officer stated the council department the customer was speaking to when the call was answered, and 13% thought not. 13% could not remember.

5.8.6 **Answer phone** - Of 27 people who were connected to the answer phone, 44% thought the message was "Very Clear" and a further 30% "Quite Clear". 11% thought it "not quite clear" and 15% could not remember.

5.8.7 When asked if their call was returned within the specified time on the recorded message, 32% thought it was, 44% said it was not, and 24% could not remember.

5.8.8 Finally, the answer phone customers were asked if the officer clearly explained who was calling back. 33% of customers thought it was clearly explained, but 38% thought it was not, and 29% could not remember.

5.8.9 **Officer Friendliness and Helpfulness** – 93% of customers thought the officer who spoke to them was "Very friendly" or "Quite friendly". 6% thought the officer was "Not so friendly". 7 customers (8%) did not respond to this question.

5.8.10 90% thought the officer who served them was "Very" or "Quite helpful". 9% thought the officer was "Not so helpful" and 1% could not remember. 15 customers (16%) did not respond to this question.

5.8.11 **Query Resolution** - Of the 71 customers who responded to this question, 73% said their enquiry had been resolved in the first call. 27% said it had not been resolved. A high proportion, (24%) did not respond to this question.

- 5.8.12 **Officer Call Back** - 25 customers said the officer had to call them back. When asked if the officer arranged a specific time, 32% said “yes”, 64% said “No” and 4% could not remember. These customers were then asked if the officer rang them at the arranged time. 33% said the officer did, 50% said the officer did not, and 17% could not remember.
- 5.8.13 **Actions Clarity** – Of the 81 customers who responded to this question, 91% thought the actions / information had been “Quite” or “Very clearly” explained to them. 6% thought it was “Not so” or “Not at all clearly” explained. 3% could not remember.
- 5.8.14 Asked if they would use the OSS Telephone service again of the 84 customers who responded to this question, 73% said they “definitely would use the service again” and a further 16% “probably would”. Only 5% “Might or might not use the service” and 2% each for “probably would not”, “definitely would not” and “Don’t know”.
- 5.8.15 **Overall, 39% of customers rated the service they received as “Excellent” with a further 45% as “Good” or “Very Good”. 11% rated it “Fair” and 5% as “Poor”.**
- 5.8.16 **A snapshot telephone survey** was carried out in quarter 4 for the Streetcare Line. 45 interviews were conducted over two days to customers who had used the service in the previous week. A summary of findings are set out below:
- 5.8.17 For **Connection time**, 58% of customers thought their call had been answered within 5 rings, 24% between 5 and 10 rings and 13% longer. 5% could not remember.
- 5.8.18 For **Quality of Information**, 85% thought it was either “Very Good” or “Excellent”. A further 11% rated it as “Satisfactory” with only 4% who thought it “Poor”.
- 5.8.19 The **Officer’s were Rated** on the basis of their response to customers in a helpful and friendly way. 89% of customers rated them “Very Good” or “Excellent”, 9% rated them as “Fair” and only 2% as “Poor”.
- 5.8.20 **Service Provision** – 73% of respondents thought the service they experienced was either “Very Good” or “Excellent” and a further 24% thought it was “Satisfactory”. 3% (one person) thought the service was “Poor”.

5.9 Generic Line Survey

- 5.9.1 A total of 119 customers returned a completed questionnaire during the year.
- 5.9.2 Customers were asked how they found the telephone number of the generic team. The most frequent response was “Brent Switchboard” with 27%, but there was little between “Word of mouth” and “Other” with 16% each. Next, came “Used us before” and the “Brent Magazine” with 14%. A further 10% “could not remember”.
- 5.9.3 **Connection Time** - In response to the question about telephone waiting time, 85% of customers said they were connected to an officer straight away. Only 3% said the line was busy and 9% were left waiting. 2 people (1.75%) said they heard the message.
- 5.9.4 When asked how many rings they heard whilst waiting to be connected to an officer, 63% said the call was answered “within 5 Rings”. A further 23% said it was “within 10 Rings”. 14% could not remember.

- 5.9.5 **Connection Response** - 52% thought the officer gave his/her name when answering the call but 28% thought the officer had not. 21% could not remember. Similarly, 67% thought the officer stated the council department the customer was speaking to when the call was answered, and 14% thought not. 19% could not remember.
- 5.9.6 **Answer phone** - Of 27 people who were connected to the answer phone, 48% thought the message was "Very Clear" and a further 26% "Quite Clear". 26% could not remember.
- 5.9.7 When asked if their call was returned within the specified time on the recorded message, 44% thought it was, 16% said it was not, and 40% could not remember.
- 5.9.8 Finally, the answer phone customers were asked if the officer clearly explained who was calling back. 64% of customers thought it was clearly explained, 7% thought it was not and 29% could not remember.
- 5.9.9 **Officer Friendliness and Helpfulness** - 98% of the 111 customers who responded to this question thought the officer who spoke to them was "Very friendly" or "Quite friendly". Less than 2% thought the officer was "Not so" or "Not at all friendly".
- 5.9.10 Similarly, 97% of the 104 customers who responded thought the officer who served them was "Very" or "Quite helpful". 1% thought the officer was "Not so helpful" and 2% "Not at all helpful".
- 5.9.11 **Query Resolution** - Of the 90 customers who responded, 81% said their enquiry had been resolved in the first call. 19% said it had not been resolved. A high proportion, (24%) did not respond to this question.
- 5.9.12 **Officer Call Back** - Thirty one customers said the officer had to call them back. When asked if the officer arranged a specific time, 48% said "yes", 23% said "No" and 29% could not remember. These customers were then asked if the officer rang them at the arranged time. 50% said the officer did, 25% said the officer did not, and 25% could not remember.
- 5.9.13 **Actions Clarity** - 96% of customers thought the actions / information had been "Quite" or "Very clearly" explained to them. 4% thought it was "Not so clearly" explained.
- 5.9.14 Asked if they would use the OSS Telephone service again, 81% of customers said they "definitely would" use the service again, and a further 15% "probably would". Only 2% "might or might not use the service".
- 5.9.15 **Overall, 47% of customers rated the service they received as "Excellent" with a further 49% as "Good" or "Very Good". Only 4% rated it "Fair" or worse.**
- 5.9.16 **A snapshot telephone survey** was also carried out in quarter 4 for the Generic Line. 31 interviews (Social Services – 12, Generic – 19) were conducted over two days to customers who had used the service in the previous week. A summary of findings are set out below:
- 5.9.17 For **Connection time**, 42% of customers thought their call had been answered within 5 rings, 19% between 5 and 10 rings and 29% longer. 10% could not remember.
- 5.9.18 For **Quality of Information**, 68% thought it was either "Very Good" or "Excellent". A further 26% rated it as "Satisfactory". No one thought it "Poor" or less. The remaining 6% thought the question did not apply to their enquiry..

- 5.9.19 The **Officers were Rated** on the basis of their response to customers in a helpful and friendly way. All 100% of customers thought the officers were either “Excellent” or “Very Good”.
- 5.9.20 **Service Provision** – 90% of respondents thought the service they experienced had been either “Very Good” or “Excellent”. A further 10% thought it was “Satisfactory”.

5.10 E-Mail Survey

- 5.10.1 Over a period of 18 days, Brent Council received approximately 150 new enquiry emails from customers. Of these, 120 customers were emailed with a request to participate in a customer satisfaction survey. 27 customers responded.
- 5.10.2 Simple enquiries seem to be handled quickly and effectively, but more complex enquiries requiring a response from a back office function are not handled well, often leaving the customer frustrated by the lack of a response. For example, 28% of survey customers waited longer than two days for a response but this figure masks the fact that some were still waiting after three weeks. This lack of response also brought down the customers’ rating for the quality of information supplied (48% Poor / Unacceptable) and for the overall service (44% Poor / Unacceptable).
- 5.10.3 There is a need to clarify ‘ownership’ of emails and to identify who has the responsibility to ensure the customer receives a response within the target timescale.
- 5.10.4 **Nature of Email Enquiry** – 33% of enquiries were concerning Streetcare and 23% were revenue enquiries. A further 15% were general enquiries and 11% were for Social Services.
- 5.10.5 **Response Time** - The customers were asked how long they had to wait to get a reply. 24% said it was within 24 hours, a further 36% between 1 and 2 days, but a further 28% waited longer than 2 days. Some customers said they were still waiting, three weeks after their email had been sent. 3 customers (12%) could not remember the length of time they waited. 60% of all respondents were happy with the speed of response but 36% were unhappy.
- 5.10.6 **Quality of Information** – The customers were asked about the quality of information provided in response to their email enquiry. The results were very mixed across the full range of response options with a slight weighting in favour of those not satisfied. 40% were happy (“Excellent” or “Very Good”) and 12% thought it “satisfactory” but 48% rated the information provided as “Poor” or “Unacceptable”.
- 5.10.7 **Enquiry Resolution** – 36% of customers said their enquiry was completely resolved, 8% said their enquiry was nearly resolved, but 28% said their enquiry was still on-going, (some five weeks after their email enquiry had been received). 24% of respondents were clearly unhappy, reporting that their enquiry was “Closed – Unsatisfactory Result”.
- 5.10.8 **Quality of Service** – 44% of e-mail respondents rated the service “Excellent” or “Very Good”, 12% as “Satisfactory”, but a further 44% rated the service either “Poor” or “Unacceptable”. As all communication with customers was conducted over the internet, their judgement of “service” has probably been based on:
- whether a reply had been received and how long it took,
 - the quality of the information provided,
 - the level of satisfaction with the response content.

5.11 Revenue & Benefits Contact Centre Survey

5.11.1 A customer telephone survey was conducted during March 2004 for the users of Brent Council's Revenue & Benefits Contact Centre service. 45 customer questionnaires were completed.

5.11.2 **Speed of Connection** – 20% of customers reported their phone call was answered by an Officer within 5 rings. A further 13% reported their call was answered within 2 minutes. However, 29 customers (64%) reported their call took longer than 2 minutes to answer, with 20% waiting longer than 8 minutes..

5.11.3 Only 11 customers (24%) were unhappy with this rate of response. Two of these thought a response time within 2/3 minutes was reasonable, another, less than 4 minutes, another, 5 minutes and another 2 thought up to 10 minutes should be OK. From these comments it appears the average acceptable waiting time is around the 5 minute mark for connection to an Officer.

5.11.4 **Nature of enquiry** – 40% of calls were regarding Housing Benefit and 36% Council Tax. 12% were dual C. Tax and H. Benefit queries and 4% each for Rent, CIC and Information requests.

5.11.5 **Quality of Information** – The customers were asked about the quality of information provided by the Officer. 69% thought it was "Excellent" or "Very Good" and 29% thought it was "Satisfactory". Only one thought it "Poor".

5.11.5 **Officer Performance** – Customers were asked to rate the Officer who served them. 82% of respondents rated the Officer "Excellent" or "Very Good" and 18% rated the Officer "Satisfactory". No Officer was rated "Poor" or "Unacceptable". Customers were also asked if the Officer could have done anything further to help. 96% said "No" but 2 customers made the following comments:

1	"Officers need up-to-date account history and correspondence when talking to the client". This customer had sent letters in the past that were either lost or had not been entered on to the database weeks after the letters were sent.
2	Customer has sent two letters regarding Housing Benefit that [the Council say] were not received.

5.11.6 **Enquiry Resolution** – Customers were asked the status of their enquiry after the Officer had dealt with them. 40% of customers said their enquiry was "Completely Resolved", a further 44% were "Nearly Resolved, awaiting further action" and 16% were "Not resolved".

5.11.7 **Rating Customer Services** – Customers were asked if they thought the R&B team's customer services had improved over the past year. 36% thought they had, 11% thought they were about the same but a further 11% thought they had got worse. 44% of customers said they so rarely contacted the Council they had no means of judging.

5.12 Welfare Rights

5.12.1 Information on Welfare Rights customer satisfaction is collected via a survey questionnaire sent to customers who have attended a meeting with a Welfare Rights officer. 608 surveys were sent out, and 147 completed surveys were returned - a response rate of 24%.

- 5.12.2 Five questions were asked in the survey. The respondents were asked if their benefit claim had been successful. 57 (39%) said "Yes", 60 (41%) said "No" and 30 (20%) did not answer.
- 5.12.3 The respondents were asked what benefit they were receiving. The three most common answers were "Attendance Allowance" (28%), "Disability Living Allowance" (25%) and "Income Support" (20%). The total number of different benefits received (69) is greater than the number of respondents saying their claim had been successful (57), indicating some applicants were in receipt of more than one benefit.
- 5.12.4 The respondents were asked if their general income had increased as a result of the Welfare Rights interview. 29% thought it had increased, 47% thought it had not and 24% were not sure. Although 39% of respondents said their claim had been successful only 29% of them thought their general income had increased. It may be they had not yet received notification of the amount to be paid.
- 5.12.5 When asked if they were happy with the advice and service given, 77% of the respondents said they were happy, 10% were not happy and 14% did not respond.
- 5.12.6 The response to Ethnic Origin showed that 20% of respondents were "White UK" and "Black Caribbean" and "Indian" were the next most prevalent with 14% each. "Black British" (10%), "White European" and "White Irish" both provided 9% of the responses. The remaining 37 responses came from nine other ethnic groups.

5.13 Customer Focus Group

- 5.13.1 A customer focus 'loop' was conducted for the OSs facilitated and co-ordinated by the Council;s Consultation team and a cash incentive was offered. Two customer focus groups were established, one consisting of customers, the other made up of staff who were to consider and comment upon the issues raised by customers. Two external customer groups met, a morning and evening group, one in the North of the Borough, the other in the South to provide maximum convenience. The topics considered were: Why people use or do not use the OSS service, accessibility, user satisfaction, quality, future developments and direction of the service.
- 5.13.2 Customer feedback raised the following issues, OSS staff needed greater authority to act on behalf of service providers, waiting times should be reduced, communication between Council departments should improve, there was inconsistent standards and practice between OSS teams and individual staff.
- 5.13.3 These issues were considered at OSS Management Team meetings and actions were identified and introduced into plans throughout the year to address and improve these concerns. All participants received written feedback as to the issues raised and the action being taken by management.

5.14 Other Consultation

- 5.14.1 Kingsbury OSS customers were consulted regarding the planned reduction in opening hours and local users decided which days were more convenient for them.
- 5.14.2 A number of our surveys detailed have been jointly conducted in partnership with both Brent Housing Partnership regarding housing advice and facilities and Capita regarding Council Tax customer service provision and results contained in this report were shared with partners to improve service standards.

5.15 Complaints Summary About the One Stop Shop

- 5.15.1 This Customer Complaints report covers the period April 2003 to end March 2004. It has been based on the four Quarterly reports generated during the year and provides a summary of the detail contained in those reports.
- 5.15.2 There was a significant increase in the number of customers making formal complaints during 2003/2004.
- 5.15.3 In October 2002, the One Stop Shops took on the responsibility for the Revenue and Benefits Contact Centre located in Brent House. There is an Improvement Plan in place to better the performance of the Revenue and Benefits Contact Centre Team and reduce the number of complaints made. These complaints account for 62% of all complaints received during 2003/4 and vary from the length of time it takes for customer calls to be answered, to late payment of benefits, provision of inaccurate information and staff attitude issues.
- 5.15.4 Excluding the R&B CC complaints, there was still a 40% increase over 2002/3 complaint figures. Put in perspective though, the total number of complaints represents just 0.02% of customer enquiries dealt with.
- 5.15.5 The service welcomes complaints as a tool for identifying areas of improvement. It could be that as customer awareness of the process and how to access it has increased, so have the complaints. At present the process treats all customer complaints as being of the same level of severity however, the complaint may be minor such as the waiting time within the One Stop Shop or the phone congestion waiting for a Contact Centre Officer to answer the call. A full breakdown of the reasons for the complaint is given in this report. There may be some merit in categorising complaints as, for example, 'minor', 'serious' or 'critical', with a definition for each to aid the correct selection for each complaint.
- 5.15.6 During the 2003/4 year, 165 customer complaints were received (see Table 1 below). Responses were provided to 140 Stage 1 complaints, 9 Stage 2 complaints and 1 complaint was withdrawn.
- 5.15.7 Although one Stage 3 complaint was received during Quarter 4, the response had not been completed before the end of the year and is therefore included in the 15 complaints shown in the table as "Pending". The responses to all of these will be included in next year's figures.

Table 1

	2001/2	2002/3	2003/4
Stage 1	25	42	140
Stage 2	4	1	9
Stage 3	0	0	0
Withdrawn	0	0	1
Pending	0	2	15
Total Received	29	45	165
% Increase on last year	-	+55%	+266%

- 5.15.8 There has also been a significant increase in percentage terms, of the number of stage 2 complaints received during the year. However, this still represents a small percentage of the 140 stage 1's escalating to stage 2.
- 5.15.9 The Table below shows performance achievement over the year.

Table 2

	Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3
Within target working days*	95	6	0
Outside target working days*	45	3	0
Total complaints responded to in year	140	9	0
Pending at year end	14	0	1
Average working days to respond	13.4	12.4	0

* Stage 1 Target – 15 working days - (1878.55 days/140 complaints) = 13.4 working days
 Stage 2 Target - 20 working days - (111.2 days/9 complaints) = 12.4 working days
 Stage 3 Target – 30 working days.

5.15.10 Responses to 68% of complaints were sent to the customer within the target response guidelines. For Stage 1 complaints, the figure was 68% and for Stage 2 it was 67%.

5.15.11 This still left about a third of all complaints where the response was sent outside the target time. The majority of these complaints concerned the R&B CC and required in-depth investigation which took time to complete. All the customers were kept informed of the progress or delays, by telephone and letter.

5.16 OSS Complaints Outcomes

Table 3

Outcome	01/02		02/03		03/04	
	Stage One	Stage Two	Stage One *	Stage Two	Stage One *	Stage Two
Not Upheld	9	4	17	0	25	2
Fully Upheld	7	0	13	0	76	2
Partially Upheld	6	0	12	1*	39	5
Withdrawn	2	0	0	0	1	0
Pending	0	0	2	0	15	0
Inconclusive	1	0	0	0	0	0
Total	25	4	44	1	156	9

* Nominal compensation of £5 was paid for one Stage Two complaint, assessed as partially justified, regarding incorrect details on a receipt.

5.16.2 The number of complaints compared to the volume of enquiries handled continues to remain low at 0.02%.

5.16.3 In 2003/4, there were 140 Stage 1 complaints where responses were completed, in 2002/3, there were 42. For 2003/4, 54% of complaints were assessed as 'Fully Justified' whereas, in the previous year, only 31% were so assessed. Only 18% were assessed as 'Not Justified' against 40% in 2002/3.

5.16.4 There was an increase in Stage 2 complaints made during 2003/4 and, when compared to previous years, a high number of them were judged to be 'Fully' or 'Partially' upheld.

5.16.5 Complaints by OSS Location

Table 4

Locations	2001/2	2002/3	2003/4
Brent House	3	4	8
Kingsbury		3	2
Town Hall	8	11	13
Kilburn		4	2
Willesden	7	5	1
Harlesden	4	9	1
OSS CC/Out of Hours	4	3	4
CC Streetcare			11
CC Generic			4
CC Revenue & Benefits			102
Welfare Rights	1	1	
General OSS	2	3	1
Withdrawn			1
Pending		2	15
Totals	29	45	165

5.16.6 Both Brent House and the Town Hall OSS have seen year on year increases in the number of complaints lodged against them. However, when compared to the number of customers seen at the counter in those locations the rate is only 0.07% and 0.08% respectively.

5.16.7 The first customer complaint received for the R&B Contact Centre under the responsibility of the O.S.S. was received in April 2003 followed by a further 101 complaints during the financial year

5.16.8 The Streetcare Contact Centre has also experienced a rise in complaints from none the previous year to 11 in 2003/4.

5.16.9 Willesden, Harlesden, Kilburn and Kingsbury have all experienced decreases in the number of complaints lodged against them during 2003/4.

5.17 Reasons for OSS Complaints

5.17.7 Table 5 below lists the most common causes of customer complaints. Most complaints do not have a single cause, they can often be multi-faceted, so identifying the main cause (or most serious element) of the complaint is often difficult. However, nearly all reasons for complaint have some impact on the quality of service delivered even if it is not the main reason for the complaint. Therefore it is no surprise that nearly half (45%) of all complaints fall in the "Quality of Service / Service Delays" category.

Table 5

Nature of Complaint	2001/2	2002/3	2003/4
Quality of Services/Service Delays	1	2	75
Staff Attitude/conduct	17	8	34
R&B Telephone Waiting Time	2	4	19
Poor Information/Advice	8	27	14

No Call Back			2
Telephone Systems			7
Missing Documents			3
OSS Waiting Time			2
Data Protection	1	0	2
Parking Tickets			1
Data recorded Inaccurately/Not at all			2
Other		4	4
Total	29	45	165

Other – Stationery, Security Guard, Special Needs, Complaint response time, Pay phones, Special collection, Compensation, OSS Ban

5.17.8 An area of concern is that “Staff Attitude / Conduct” is the second most common reason for customer complaint with 21% of all complaints logged.

5.17.9 12% of complaints concerned the waiting time to be connected to an Officer in the R&B CC.

5.17.10 A further 8% of complaints were regarding the poor provision of information, in the main, through the R&B Contact Centre. This last, was the most common complaint in 2002/3 with 60% of all complaints.

5.18 Conclusions

5.18.7 The volume of complaints is still low compared to the number of customers serviced during the year, however, it is still concerning. An Improvement Plan is in place for the R&B Contact Centre Team along with a quality coach which should have an impact on reducing the complaints received during the next financial year. The Streetcare Team has also been tasked with reducing the number of complaints this coming year.

5.18.8 The response to any complaint has to be detailed, accurate and is often time consuming and can sometimes lead to a conflict of priorities, hence why the response times may have increased.

5.18.9 Management supervision and customer service skills training may need to be increased if the number of complaints citing staff attitude do not decrease.

5.19 Council Complaints handled by OSS

5.19.7 This information relates to complaints about the rest of the organisation that have been presented and accepted at the OSS and referred on for investigation by the relevant service areas.

Complaints Received Via	02/03	03/04	Change
Reception	217	122	-95
Post	36	99	63
Desk	447	449	2
Fax	22	49	27
Phone	38	76	38
Support Team	2	9	7
Online/email	69	151	82
Other	19	5	14
Total	850	960	328

- 5.19.8 There were 960 complaints channelled through the OSS Contact Centre, including those about the OSS service, an overall increase of 110 (13%).
- 5.19.9 Most complaint channels have increased in use except Reception hand-ins, where a decrease of 95 (44%) occurred, complaints to the Main Counter is virtually the same as last year and remains the most popular means of complaint.
- 5.19.10 The greatest increase was experienced in the Online/email category where 82 (119%) extra complaints were received. The other category with a sharp increase was the post with 63 (175%).
- 5.19.11 The number of complaints pertaining to other service areas totals 850 and breaks down as follows, highest Council Tax and Housing Benefit 361 (BFS), Housing 255, Environmental Services 156, Social Services 35, General Other 34 and Education 9. The remaining 110 received at the Contact Centre were regarding Revenues & Benefits customer service which the OSS itself now manages. This figure is included in the figures under customer satisfaction earlier within the report.

6 EQUALITIES ACTION PLAN

6.1.1 The following activities have been undertaken to by the OSS to meet the Equalities Action Plan for both Service Delivery and Employment:

- A regular review of recruitment advertisements placed in the ethnic press to ensure that we are raising awareness of employment opportunities within the service
- Increased the number of Asian staff employed within the service from 16.5% to 18.7%
- Increased the number of languages spoken within the unit from 9 to 20 (including British Sign Language)
- Introduction of a language card for customers to improve accessibility to the service
- All staff successfully completed the Disability Grass Roots Training
- Introduced an information helpline for visually impaired customers

6.1.2 List of Languages

6.1.3 There have been changes in the different languages spoken by staff in the OSS. Last year we reported that the number of languages spoken by staff had reduced by 4 due to staff turnover.

6.1.4 During 03/04 the numbers of languages spoken by staff in the OSS have increased by 11. The new languages spoken by staff in the OSS are Bengali, Croatian, German, Igbo, Italian, Malyalam, Taita, Tamil, Telgu, and Twee.

LANGUAGE	CUSTOMER SERVICE OFFICER / ADVISER	SHOP	EXTENSION NO.
BENGALI	Abdul Samad	Revs & Bens CC	
BRITISH SIGN LANGUAGE LEVEL 1	Champa Tailor Julian Masters	Town Hall Brent House	1207 1225
CROATIAN	Mladen Maric	Contact Centre	1200
FANTE	Nada Mensah	Brent House	1306
GERMAN	Ulrike Sporschill	Brent House	1227
GREEK	Barry Haralambous Mario Demetriou	Kilburn Willesden	1961 3412

GUJARATI	Champa Tailor Geeta Panchal Anita Shamji Smita Vishram Lata Shah Pushpa Shah Manjula Bhatt Naina Champaneri Abhay Kotecha Salma Kara Shanta Patel	Town Hall Kilburn Contact Centre Contact Centre Streetcare CC Streetcare CC Streetcare CC Harlesden OSS Revs & Bens CC Revs & Bens CC Revs & Bens CC	1207 1961 1200 1200 5050 5050 5050 1198 1800 1800 1800
HINDI	Seema Sharda Lata Shah Kashif Mohammed Pushpa Shah Suresh Aurora Manjula Bhatt Geeta Panchal Rehana Ramesh	Management Team Streetcare CC Town Hall Streetcare CC Kingsbury/Town Hall Streetcare CC Kilburn Revs & Bens CC	1296 5050 1207 5050 1207 5050 1961 1935
IGBO	Queeneth Odionyenma	Revs & Bens CC	1800
ITALIAN	Mario Demetriou	Willesden	3412
MALYALAM	Rehana Ramesh	Revs & Bens CC	1935
PUNJABI	Seema Sharda Nasmeen Khan Suresh Aurora Kashif Mohammed Sofia Altaf	Support Willesden Kingsbury/Town Hall Town Hall Revs & Bens CC	1296 1959 1241/1207 11800207
SPANISH	Mladen Maric	Contact Centre	1200
SWAHILI	Lata Shah Pushpa Shah Fortunata Muruli	Streetcare CC Streetcare CC Revs & Bens CC	5050 5050 1800
TAITA	Fortunata Muruli	Revs & Bens CC	1800
TAMIL	Rehana Ramesh	Revs & Bens CC	1935
TELGU	Rehana Ramesh	Revs & Bens CC	1935
TWEE	Peggy Odoi	Revs & Bens CC	1800
URDU	Seema Sharda Kashif Mohammed	Management Team Town Hall	1296 1207
YORUBA	Ajibola Obe Ade Adeoti Bisi Odesola Ayo George	Town Hall Revs & Bens CC Willesden IT Office	1207 1800 3412 1206

6.2 Disability Discrimination Act

- 6.2.1 The One Stop Shop continues to make good progress in addressing the recommendations from the access audits carried out for the 6 locations. A detailed action plan has been developed which is regularly monitored and reviewed. The One Stop Shop is well on target to achieve the DDA target date of 1 October 2004.
- 6.2.2 The following outlines a number of areas where improvements have been made:
- 6.2.3 **Signage** - OSS has improved signage at the locations with more use of symbols to make customers aware of the facilities that are available
- 6.2.4 **Leaflets** - As with signage the OSS has improved the use of symbols on our information leaflets
- 6.2.5 **Induction Loops Systems** - Induction loops systems at all locations have been upgraded and have testing equipment. This will improve monitoring to ensure the systems are working at all times.
- 6.2.6 Portable loops systems have been purchased to improve accessibility at other work positions.
- 6.2.7 **Entry Doors** - Automatic doors have been installed at Kingsbury and Kilburn locations. The doors at Kilburn will have a signalling mechanism to alert customers that the automatic door opens outwards.
- 6.2.8 The entry doors at the OSS locations now have a yellow strip to indicate to customers that they are approaching glass doors.
- 6.2.9 **Reception / Waiting Area** - OSS is working with Chris Harro well to improve the waiting arrangements for customers waiting to be seen at reception.
- 6.2.10 All locations have TVs with Teletext (except Kingsbury where one is on order)
- 6.2.11 **Interpreter Request Service** - The interpreter request service has been in operation nearly 18 months. We are pleased to state that customer feedback has been very positive. Following a service review meeting held on 27 November 2003, this initiative has been relocated to the Town Hall and is now be available on the 4th Tuesday in the month. The revised arrangements were effective from 27 January 2004, and publicity information has been updated to reflect the service changes.
- 6.2.12 Since the relocation the Interpreter Request Service to the Town Hall in January 2004, only 8 customers have used the service. We will continue to monitor and review the service.
- 6.2.13 **Consultation** - OSS will continue to work in partnership with Social Services via the Disability & Mental Health User Forum to look at ways to address the issues raised regarding accessibility to the OSS service.
- 6.2.14 **OSS Information Line for Blind Customers** - The OSS is improving its current arrangements for information provision service via audio tape. This information will be available via a dedicated information line that will cover opening times, facilities available, how to use the service, surgeries and service performance.
- 6.2.15 In the event they have a further enquiry, customers will be able to be connected to a Customer Service Officer. This line will be set up in May 2004.

6.2.16 **Monitoring** - The One Stop Shop will continue to monitor accessibility, training and service delivery to improve our service to customers.

6.3 DDA – Schedule of Schemes and Service Improvements

6.3.1 ACCESS TO COUNCIL BUILDINGS/PUBLIC SPACES

(a) Completed/Started 2002/3

Council Service	Facility	Notes
Brent House	Full access audit to obtain recommendations for improvements required	Access audit conducted for Brent House will need to be revisited and action the plan revised to take into account proposed changes at the location.
Harlesden OSS	Pick up / drop off point outside building	Still outstanding. However, this will be addressed as part of the proposed changes for the location.

(b) To be Started/Introduced 2003/4

Council Service	Facility	Notes
Access to OSS buildings		Will monitor and review

6.3.2 ACCESS TO SERVICES

(a) Completed/Started 2002/3

Council Service	Facility	Notes
One Stop Shop – general	Welfare Rights – home visits	Due to a reduction in staffing levels, there continues to be a suspension of home visits until further notice. Where appropriate, telephone

		interviews have been conducted. Alternative arrangements are made where this is not possible.
One Stop Shop – general	Consultation on access to services for deaf people	Regular review meetings continue to take place.
One Stop Shop – general	Interpreter Service	Following review in November 2003, service now relocated to the Town Hall One Stop Shop and will be held on the 4 th Tuesday in the month. Access times remain 2-5pm. The service will continue to be monitored and reviewed.
One Stop Shop – general	Improve access for disabled customers	The OSS will continue to work with other council service areas and external agencies to improve access to its services. Ongoing
Harlesden OSS	Induction loop system	New system installed
Town Hall OSS	Pull cords with triangular ring pulls in disabled WC facility linked to audible and visual alarm – over WC door and main reception	Still outstanding
Town Hall OSS	Tactile male and female signs for WC facility	Still outstanding – liaising with Facilities Management
Town Hall OSS	Power assistance to one set of the main entry doors	Still outstanding – liaising with Facilities Management
Town Hall OSS	Seating arrangements to be revised to incorporate higher level chairs and chairs with arms	Completed.
Town Hall OSS	Trading Standards video system too high	Still outstanding
Town Hall OSS	Induction loop stickers to be visible on desks	Completed
Town Hall OSS	Induction loop system	New system installed

Town Hall OSS	Improve signage at entrance to location	Completed
Brent House OSS	Induction loop systems	New system installed
Brent House OSS	Improve signage at reception	Signage improved, but will be reviewed in light of proposed changes at location
Willesden OSS	Notification of loop system availability	Completed
Willesden OSS	Freephone shelf too high	Completed
Kingsbury OSS	Double entrance doors	Automatic doors installed
Kingsbury OSS	Reception desk too high	Completed
Kingsbury OSS	Induction loop system not working	Completed
Kingsbury OSS	Chairs have no arms	Completed
Kingsbury OSS	Low level tables in waiting area have sharp edges	Completed
Kingsbury OSS	Improve signage	Completed

(b) To be Started/Introduced 2003/4

Council Service	Facility	Notes
One Stop Shop – general	Conduct service audits for OSS locations and Contact Centre	Will complete template on a quarterly basis
One Stop Shop – general	Improve monitoring of disabled users of the service	Establish how this can be achieved using E-shop. Still to be progressed.

6.3.3 ACCESS TO INFORMATION

(a) Completed/Started 2002/3

Council Unit/ Service	Facility	Notes
One Stop Shop – general	Information on audio cassette	Assess need and provide information upon request – progress still to be made
One Stop Shop – general	Information in Braille	Assess need and provide information upon request – progress still to be made
One Stop Shop – general	Welfare Benefits Service	Helping people in the borough claim benefits to which they are entitled – ongoing – see Access to Services
One Stop Shop – general	Intranet and Internet access	Develop and extend with Council services scope of prototype Intranet Access homepage and make public information available on Internet. OSS updated web pages. Information available: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • About the service we provide • Location sites • Opening times • Various surgeries held at the locations and times • Welfare Rights Service • Interpreter Request Service • Interpreter Request Card • Links to other service areas • FAQs (frequently asked questions) Ongoing

(a) To be Started/Introduced 2003/4

Council Unit/ Service	Facility	Notes
One Stop Shop – general	Explore use of IVR technology for improving access to information	Improved arrangements will be implemented May 2004
One Stop Shop – General	Improve use of symbols to promote accessibility of services available to disabled customers.	Leaflets reviewed, symbols now used.

6.3.4 STAFF TRAINING

(a) Completed/Started 2002/3

Council Unit/Service	Facility	Notes
One Stop Shop – general	Disability Equality Training – IDEA Programme	Completed. Will assess how will be incorporated for new starters.

(b) To be Started/Introduced 2003/4

Council Unit/Service	Facility	Notes
One Stop Shop – general	Specialist Disability Training	Identify other areas of specialist training that may be required for frontline staff. Ongoing.

6.4 Staff Ethnicity

6.4.1 The OSS staff are representative of the diverse community of Brent.

6.4.2 The table below shows the changes in the OSS staff profile as follows:

- A slight increase in the representation of Black staff from 36.3% to 36.4%
- A reduction in the representation of White staff from 46.2% to 41.1%
- An increase in the representation of Asian staff from 16.5% to 18.7%

6.4.3 As with the previous year, it is noted that Chinese and Asian other are not represented. The OSS will review recruitment campaigns to encourage applications from this group.

Ethnic Origin	OSS Workforce Mar 2003 (Total 91 Staff)	OSS Workforce Mar 2004 (Total 107 Staff)	Borough Cross Section 2001*
Black Total	36.3%	36.4%	19.9%
Caribbean	24.2%	16.8%	10.5%
African	7.7%	10.3%	7.8%
British	4.4%	8.4%	-
Other	-	0.9%	1.6%
White Total	46.2%	41.1%	45.3%
British	39.6%	32.7%	29.2%
Irish	4.4%	3.7%	7.0%
Other	2.2%	4.7%	9.1%
Asian Total	16.5%	18.7%	27.7%
Indian	12.1%	12.1%	18.5%
Pakistani	2.2%	1.9%	4.0%
British	2.2%	4.7%	-
African	-	-	-
Other	-	-	5.2%
Chinese Total			3.4%
Chinese	-	-	1.1%
British	-	-	-
Other	-	-	2.3%
Mixed Total			3.8%
White & Black Caribbean	-	-	1.0%
White & Black African	-	-	0.7%
White & Asian	-	-	1.0%
Other	-	-	1.1%
Middle Eastern	-	-	-
Other Nationalities	1.1%	2.8%	-
Not Known	-	0.9%	-

6.5 Customer Ethnicity Monitoring

- 6.5.1 The statistics give the ethnic origin of new customers collected from e-shop. The statistics have been compiled by location. The Contact Centre has not been included in the analysis because 96% of their statistics were either 'not requested' or 'not known'. This is because the Contact Centre deals mainly with customers who have enquiries that do not require full details to be recorded, also emails and on-line enquiries where the ethnic origin is unlikely to be recorded
- 6.5.2 There were twenty two groups in our list of ethnicity on eshop. There were another three groups of an unspecified nature and these formed 17% of the total recorded, (Not requested, Declined to answer, Not Known). The diversity of the Borough was represented in the percentage of customer in each ethnic group. There was no dominant majority group. The largest group overall was 'Other Nationalities' at 13%. The second largest group overall was White British at 12%. This shows the diversity of our customers and the need for further classifications to be agreed across the council.
- 6.5.3 Compared to last year the statistics show little difference, however White British has been replaced by "Other Nationalities" as the top group. "Other Nationalities" has increased from 11% in 2002/3 to 13% in 2003/4 and "White British" has fallen from 14% in 2002/3 to 12% in 2003/4. White, Asian and Mixed totals remains the same for both years however the Black total has fallen by 4% which is due to a fall in Black Caribbean. See table 1
- 6.5.4 The 2001 census shows that the One Stop Shop customers reflect the Brent population. However it should be recognised that there may be sections of our community who do not want or need to be reached and are happy with the Council services they receive. Also the ethnic origin groups in eshop were initially based on the census however this list was expanded to cover other groups. The One Stop Shop has a number of ethnic groups which are not categories in the 2001 census. A number of One Stop Shop customers consider themselves from other nationalities. See table 1
- 6.5.5 Our customer base is varied and no one group dominates within the customer base. The largest recorded group is "Other nationality" (13%). The group "White British" comprises 12% of records and is the second highest group in the summary of all locations. This shows the diversity of our customers. It also makes it difficult to target or cater for specific group.

Customer and Staff Ethnicity Monitoring

* Source 2001 Census

ETHNIC ORIGIN	OSS Workforce (Total 107 staff)	Borough Cross Section *	Customer Average for Year 02/03	Customer Average for Year 03/04
Black Total	36.4%	19.9%	24.5%	20.7%
Caribbean	16.8%	10.5%	9.4%	6.5%
African	10.3%	7.8%	8.3%	8.3%
British	8.4%		4.4%	4.1%
Other	0.9%	1.6%	2.4%	1.8%
White Total	41.1%	45.3%	27.2%	26.7%
British	32.7%	29.2%	13.8%	12.3%
Irish	3.7%	7.0%	4.8%	3.9%
Other	4.7%	9.1%	8.6%	10.5%
Asian Total	18.7%	27.7%	16.7%	16.7%
Bangladeshi	-	0.4%	0.3%	0.3%
Indian	12.1%	18.5%	5.7%	6.2%
Other	-	4.8%	7.2%	6.1%
Pakistani	1.9%	4.0%	2.1%	2.4%
British	4.7%		1.0%	1.2%
African			0.4%	0.5%
Chinese Total		3.4%	0.6%	0.8%
Chinese		1.1%	0.4%	0.5%
British			0.1%	0.1%
Other		2.3%	0.1%	0.2%
Mixed Total		3.8%	1.7%	1.9%
White & Black Caribbean		1.0%	0.7%	0.8%
White & Black African		0.7%	0.4%	0.5%
White & Asian		1.0%	0.2%	0.1%
Other		1.1%	0.4%	0.5%
Middle Eastern			2.3%	3.1%
Other Nationalities	2.8%		11.0%	13.5%
Declined to Answer			4.6%	4.2%
Not Known	0.9%		3.0%	5.6%
Not Requested			8.4%	7.0%

The Statistics give the ethnic origin of new customers and have been compiled by location. The Contact Centre has not been included in the analysis because 96% of their statistics were either 'not requested' or 'not known'. This is because the Contact Centre deals mainly with customers who have enquiries that do not require full details to be recorded, also emails and on-line enquiries where the ethnic origin is unlikely to be recorded

Table 1 (NEED TO ADD IN WORKFORCE TO REFLECT REPRESENTATION AS PER LAST YEAR'S REPORT)

ETHNIC ORIGIN	April 2002 - March 2003 of new customers	April 2003 - March 2004 of new customers	April 2003 - March 2004 where ethnicity is given	Census 2001
White Total	27%	27%	32%	47%
British	14%	12%	15%	29.20%
Irish	5%	4%	5%	7.00%
Other	9%	10%	13%	9.10%
Black Total	25%	21%	25%	21%
African	8%	8%	10%	7.80%
British	4%	4%	5%	
Caribbean	9%	7%	8%	10.50%
Black Other	2%	2%	2%	1.60%
Asian Total	17%	17%	20%	29%
African	0%	1%	1%	
Bangladeshi	0%	0%	0%	0.40%
British	1%	1%	1%	
Chinese	0%	0%	0%	
Indian	6%	6%	7%	18.50%
Other	7%	6%	7%	4.80%
Pakistani	2%	2%	3%	4%
Mixed Total	2%	2%	2%	4%
Asian	0%	0%	1%	1%
Black African	0%	1%	1%	0.70%
Black Caribbean	1%	1%	15%	1%
Other	0%	1%	0%	1.10%
Chinese Total	1%	1%	1%	4%
Chinese	0%	0%	1%	1.10%
British	0%	0%	0%	
Other	0%	0%	0%	2.30%
Middle Eastern Other Nationalities	2%	3%	4%	
Declined to Answer	5%	4%		
Not Known	3%	6%		
Not Requested	8%	7%		

- 6.5.6 Comparing the Top Ten for each location gives seven groups in the top ten for all locations. The North – South divide is highlighted by the Asian Indian group which is in the top ten in the three shops in North of the Borough but not the three in the South. However the group is present in the top fifteen for all locations.
- 6.5.7 Black British is not in Kingsbury and Town Hall top ten however it is number twelve in Kingsbury and number eleven in Town hall.
- 6.5.8 More customers 'declined to answer' in Harlesden and Kilburn than the rest of the borough. This may indicate that Harlesden and Kilburn customers feel their ethnicity is not related to their needs.

Table 2

Group	In top ten in location	Not in top ten
Asian Other	All	
Asian Other	All	
Black African	All	
Black Caribbean	All	
Other	All	
White British	All	
White Other	All	
Black British	All except	Kingsbury, Town Hall
Asian Pakistani	Brent House, Kingsbury	Harlesden, Kilburn, Town Hall, Willesden
Asian Indian	Brent House, Kingsbury, Town Hall	Harlesden, Kilburn, Willesden
Middle Eastern	Brent House, Town Hall, Willesden	Harlesden, Kilburn, Kingsbury
Declined to Answer	Harlesden, Kilburn	
Not Requested	Harlesden, Kilburn, Town Hall	Brent House, Kingsbury, Willesden
Not Known	All except	Brent House, Kilburn
White Irish	Kilburn, Kingsbury, Willesden	Brent House, Harlesden, Town Hall

7. BEST VALUE

7.1 Revenue & Benefits

- 7.1.1 The Benefits Service and the dedicated Customer Service for Revenue and Benefits transferred back the Council in October 2003.
- 7.1.2 The recommendations from the Local Taxation and Benefits Best Value Review were that the dedicated Revenues and Benefits Call Centre transfer to the OSS. The Revenue and Benefits Call Centre transferred to the OSS in February 2003.
- 7.1.3 The OSS service inherited the service with a severe lack of resource to cope with the volume of enquiries presented. There have been significant increases in complaints regarding not being able to get through on the telephone and the quality of the service provided. An improvement plan has been developed to address the quality of service delivery. A medium to long term resource plan is being developed which will involve submitting a bid to the Department for Works and Pensions.
- 7.1.4 The review also recommended that the dedicated Revenue & Benefits Counter service also transfer to the OSS. There have been delays with the progress of the revised arrangements at Brent House, due to the need for the Benefits Service to concentrate on restructuring the service and reducing the backlog of benefit claims.
- 7.1.5 Planning has commenced for the revised arrangements at Brent House and this is scheduled to be implemented by mid 2005.

7.2 Social Services

- 7.2.1 The OSS continues to work closely with Social Services and regular liaison meetings take place.
- 7.2.2 The OSS and Social Services submitted a joint growth bid in 02/03 for additional resources to establish a dedicated team within the OSS Contact Centre to improve call handling. The bid was unsuccessful due to other priorities across the organisation. The OSS and Social Services will work together to identify what improvements can be made within existing resources, hopefully by running a pilot project next year.

7.3 Brent Housing Partnership

- 7.3.1 The OSS continues to work in close partnership with Brent Housing Partnership. There are established liaison meetings in order to ensure continued service improvements.
- 7.3.2 BHP successfully achieved a 3 Star Rating from an Audit Commission Inspection in May 2003, securing funding of £30.4 million from the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister.
- 7.3.3 The OSS played a key role in this achievement and received praise from Brent Housing Partnership, as well as very positive feedback from the Audit Commission Inspectors.
- 7.3.4 Brent Housing Partnership will be conducting a Best Value Review of the OSS, which is due to commence in June 2004 and be completed by September 2004. It is hoped that the outcome of this review will further strengthen working relationships with Brent Housing Partnership and identify any key areas for service improvements. An action plan will then be developed to address any identified.

7.4 Customer Service Review

7.4.1 The One Stop Shop makes a valuable contribution to the work of the Customer Service Steering Group which has covered both strategic and practical issues during the course of the year. The group is well attended with full service area representation and reports in to the CMT regularly. Ostensibly, the group works to raise customer service standards across the organisation in line with Corporate Strategy commitments and encompasses E-government initiatives and Equalities issues regarding customer service access. A new awareness campaign was launched for staff and customers which will continue into the next year. The customer service Improvement Plan produced as a result of the Customer Service Review in 2000 is updated regularly and has long since addressed the initial issues raised and is now far broader and enables forward planning. Benchmarking data has always been difficult to obtain given the diverse nature of One Stop Shops around the country – plans are being formulated to establish a London-wide customer service group to agree standards and monitoring arrangements across the capital. Full details of key outputs of the CSSG for the year are:

- Customer Care Standards updated and agreed.
- Survey undertaken of Managers awareness of Customer Care standards.
- Customer Care awareness programme. Posters and customer care booklets produced.
- Customer Care Training piloted - two courses run for managers and four for other staff. Very good feedback has been received. Further courses are being funded corporately and by individual Service Areas.
- Telephone training – Training video commissioned (at an advantageous cost as it was done in conjunction with the development of a video for the CRM National project work).
- Service Operational Plans reviewed by CSSG members to check that Customer Care is included. Guidelines developed for ensuring that Customer Care is included in future SDPs and SOPs.
- Development of themed displays at Council reception points such as Libraries.
- Out-of-hours telephone answering services monitored and improved.
- London-wide Customer Service Best Practice Group initiated by Brent (Chaired by Brent and now fully launched). This receives a small amount of funding from the ODPM
- Investigations made into document transfer between the OSS and Service Areas and improvements suggested and implemented.
- Review of staff security arrangements at reception points. This is being followed-up by a wider-ranging review of staff security.
- Contact Centre and electronic access promoted
- Pilot process review study undertaken in PHS. Development and promotional work started for encouraging process reviews in other parts of the Council.
- Work started on developing a Customer Services Intranet site.

8. INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY USE

8.1 E-shop(customer relationship management software)

- 8.1.1 The Upgrade to e-shop version 4 dominated the whole year. This upgrade started in March 2003 and was finally implemented in January 2004. The delay was mainly due to the inadequate documentation and support provided by Deloitte. Onyx is now proposing to support e-shop as one of their products. Onyx is a software house who is experienced in software products and upgrades. Consequently this situation is unlikely to re-occur.
- 8.1.2 Statistics from e-shop's reporting package Cognos was implemented from July 2003. Team Managers continue to monitor staff's performance. A review of reporting requirements will start in the first quarter of 2004/5.
- 8.1.3 E-shop continues to crash at locations. An error sheet has been implemented in Notes to allow staff to easily record any problems. The situation is improving. Errors peaked in February at 300 but are down 71% to 67 in March. ITU are monitoring the servers and network to try and establish a pattern
- 8.1.4 The One Stop Shop has worked closely with the Corporate Complaints team in the design of the Complaints and security modules in e-shop.

8.2 Viewstar

- 8.2.1 There were problems with the change of supplier from EDS to Capita in April and May 2003. These have now been resolved.
- 8.2.2 There has always been an issue with Viewstar screen resolution. We cannot run Viewstar with other OSS applications for a number of reasons.
 - 1 Viewstar is not supported to run on XP
 - 2 There was a clash in the resolution required to run Viewstar and e-shop
- 8.2.3 The R&B Call Centre use Windows 2000 as the operating system on their PCs and a change to Viewstar screens has enabled them to have the ability to run Viewstar and e-shop together. . The resources required for training the team in e-shop is being assessed.
- 8.2.4 In the face to face locations staff continue to use separate PCs to access Viewstar. This situation should be addressed when the application is re-written and will run in a browser.

8.3 Self Service

- 8.3.1 The One Stop Shop received money from the e-government fund to implement self service PCs in three shops. These PCs will be implemented in the new year.

8.4 Information

- 8.4.1 The I T team is responsible for service information co-ordination for staff, customers and other organisations. The One Stop Shop received 27 external visit from other authorities and agencies. There were 36 requests for information from other Local Authorities. The key area of interest was the new CRM E-shop software and the Contact Centre operations.

8.4.2 We have commissioned an Analyst from ITU to review the way the OSS collects and disseminates information. His report is due in May and will be implemented next year. The Information Officers continue to meet on a 2 monthly basis. The terms of reference have been changed to include e-shop and IT usage.

8.5 Switchboard

8.5.1 The switchboard was replaced on the 19th January 2004; this means that the operators are now able to access the switchboard via their PC rather than having a stand alone system. The go live went well with minimum disruption to service and the new system is much more popular with Operators than the old one.

8.6 ACD

8.6.1 We are in the final stages of identifying a supplier for the new ACD system. This will replace the Index system used by the OSS and Streetcare teams and the Mitel system used by the Revenues and Benefits team. This will then mean that a single ACD system is used across the whole OSS Contact Centre. The new ACD should be live by the end of the year.

9. STAFFING

9.1 During 2003/04 there were 135 established posts, additional 23 posts compared to last year. The increase in the number of posts was due to the Revenue & Benefits Call Centre joining the OSS from February 2003.

9.2 Staff Turnover

9.2.1 Staff turnover averaged 9.6% during 2003/04; this comparable to 14.6% during 2002/03. There were 5 Maternity Leave absences during 2003/04. This is a decrease compared to 6 in the previous year (2002/03).

9.2.2 A total of 13 front line employees left the service. The breakdown was:

- 1 Team Manager
- 2 full-time CSO's at the Contact Centre
- 3 full-time CSO's within the Shops
- 1 part-time CSO's within the Shops
- 1 ACSO
- 4 CCA
- 1 Telephone Operator

CSO = Customer Service Officer

ACSO = Assistant Customer Service Officer

CCA = Call Centre Adviser

9.3 Secondments

9.3.1 A CSO was seconded to Chief Executive Office as the Corporate Support Officer for one year and due to return October 2004.

9.4 Recruitment

9.4.1 During 2003/04 a total of 19 new staff joined the service, 2 existing members of staff achieved new positions from Call Centre Adviser to Customer Service Officer and 1 existing member of staff gained a permanent contract from a temporary contract.

- April 03 1 Team Manager
 3 full-time CSO (including 1 internal transfer to new position)
 1 part-time CSO
 1 ACSO
- May 03 1 full-time CSO (Contact Centre)
 2 CCA
- June 03 1 CSO (Contact Centre) (Internal transfer to new position)
 1 CCA (permanent contract)
- July 03 2 Team Leaders (Contact Centre) (On temporary contracts)
 9 CCA (Revenue & Benefits Call Centre)

9.4.2 During 2003/04, 4 recruitment campaigns were conducted for a variety of posts. On average the time taken from closing date for receiving the application forms to the date the employee commences employment is 3 months.

9.4.3

Positions Advertised	Number Appointed	Start Date
<u>Shops</u> Team Manager CSO ACSO	1 3 (FT) & 1 (PT) 1	7/4/03
<u>Contact Centre</u> CSO CCA	2 2	13/5/03 & 1/6/03 13/5/03 & 1/6/03
<u>Contact Centre</u> Team Leaders	2	7/7/03
<u>Revenue & Benefits Call Centre</u> CCA	9	21/7/03 22/7/03 28/7/03 4/8/03

9.5 Staff Achievements

9.5.1 OSS staff were presented with 3 awards at the Staff Achievement Awards which took ~ place in November 2003. The nominations were for a combination of individual and team awards.

9.5.2 The successful nominations were as follows:

One Stop Shop Town Hall Team (Ulrike Sporschill, Tony Foxwell, Champa Tailor, Elaine Jesuloba, Kashif Mohammed, Mark Burgin, Margaret Small, Felicia Chukura) – Public Award

Tony Foxwell – Public Nomination Award
Pramila Shah – Public Nomination Award

9.6 Sickness Absence

	April 02 – March 03	April 03 – March 04
Total Staff (FTE)	78	91
Total Sick Days (FTE)	807.5	1527
Total periods of sickness	292	368
Total OH Referrals	16	17
Self-Certified	493.5	539
Medically Certified	292	988
Industrial Injury	22	0
Average Sickness (days)	10.4	16.8
Average Periods	3.7	4
% Sickness Absence (Assumed average working days 224)	4.6%	7.5%

FTE: Full Time Equivalent

Available Working Days:

Based on 52 working weeks at 5 days per week

Less 8 Bank Holidays, less an average 28 days annual

Total: 224 Days

- 9.6.1 Sickness absence has significantly increased from the previous year (2002/03) from an average of 10.4 days sick per person per annum to 16.8 days sick per person per annum. This equates to 7.5% of available working days lost to sickness. Long term sickness absence has accounted for this increase.
- 9.6.2 HR guidelines are strictly adhered to and managers have taken proactive measures to try and reduce the sickness levels such as referring staff to Occupational Health to establish if there may be underlying medical factors. Managers have been working with OH to provide any necessary support to staff in order for them to improve attendance at work.
- 9.6.3 During 2003/04 the OSS made a total of 17 referrals to Occupational Health. This is a slight increase from the previous year (2002/03).
- 9.6.4 One member of staff was dismissed under the Council's Incapability procedures as a result of unacceptable sickness absence.

9.7 Security – staff safety

- 9.7.1 There have been no physical attacks upon staff this year due to the continued presence of security guards at all shop locations.
- 9.7.2 A total of 5 customers were unfortunately banned and a second ban imposed due to unacceptable threatening or abusive behaviour and a further 8 were issued with warning letters. This is very similar to the situation last year where 6 customers were banned and 6 warned – there is an increase of 2 warnings.

10. FINANCE & ADMIN

10.1 To date this team has been under-resourced and has consisted of 1.5 permanent post supported by 2 agency temps. The team was re-organised and the Finance and Admin Manager was appointed in March 2004. The remainder of the reorganisation and recruitment will be completed in 2004/2005. The new team will consist of 1.5 Finance staff and 1.5 personnel administration staff, in addition to the Finance and Admin Manager and a Business Manager.

10.2 Budget Performance

10.2.1 The Full year budget for the OSS service in 2002/03 was £4.6M.

10.2.2 At 31 March 2003 the OSS achieved a surplus of £45K on the full year budget, equivalent to a variance of 0.9% this was due to delays with recruitment therefore some salary under-spend occurred and there were also delays in relocating the Contact Centre which resulted in an accommodation under-spend.

10.2.3 There was no Capital expenditure during 2003/2004

10.2.4 The Revenue and Benefits Call Centre team joined the One Stop Shop from 1 April 2003. The budget that transferred to the One Stop Shop was 705K and there is an additional 24 employees (19.5 full time equivalent)

10.2.5 The personnel information regarding staffing, i.e. sickness absence, turnover, recruitment and selection in Section 9 is produced by the Finance & Admin team.

10.3 Audits

10.3.1 The accounts for 2002/2004 were audited by Internal audit in September 2003.

11 ACCOMMODATION

- 11.1.1 The accommodation space for support staff at the Town Hall is insufficient to accommodate the restructure. Brent Housing Partnership will be moving out of the back office at Kingsbury One Stop Shop in April 2004. Some of the One Stop Shop support team will be moving into this area.
- 11.1.2 The Harlesden OSS location no longer meets the needs of customers or staff in terms of its physical layout and customer usage. Considerations to re-design the existing area have not proved to be feasible.
- 11.1.3 A Project Team has been established to explore the options available to relocate the OSS location within close proximity to the existing location, where possible. A capital budget of £300k has been allocated to this project for the year 03/04.
- 11.1.4 The Revenue & Benefits Call Centre came under the management of the OSS in February 2003 and it was proposed that the OSS Contact Centre be relocated from the ground floor to the 8th floor within Brent House. The relocation of the OSS Contact Centre is scheduled for completion by July 2004.
- 11.1.5 Planning has commenced regarding the integration of the ground floor OSS and the dedicated Revenue & Benefits Counter service at Brent House. Timescales for completion will be mid 2005.

12 PARTNERSHIPS

The OSS continues to work with all Service Areas and other public sector organisations and agencies within Brent to provide a comprehensive advice and enquiry resolution service for the residents of Brent.

12.1 Inland Revenue

- 12.1.1 The OSS launched a joint initiative with the Inland Revenue Service back in 2001.
- 12.1.2 This joint initiative has enabled the Inland Revenue to improve access to its service in the North West London area, and is in line with the Government's Modernising Agenda in terms of a join-up approach to delivering public services.
- 12.1.3 The OSS and the Inland Revenue have regular liaison meetings, which have enabled us to be proactive in making service improvements.
- 12.1.4 The service operating hours has been reviewed to enable the Inland Revenue to utilise part time staff to work at the surgeries. The access times for customers are now 9.30-2.30. The surgery days remain the same and are held on Tuesdays and Thursdays.
- 12.1.5 During this period 1,010 customers were seen. This represents a 31% increase compared to the number of customers seen for the previous year 02/03.
- 12.1.6 The Inland Revenue are facing major service changes and there are plans for the service to amalgamate with Customs & Excise.
- 12.1.7 The Inland Revenue Service conducted a review of this initiative in February 2004 and have stated that there will be recommending a continuance of the partnership to their Area Board. However, this will be subject to a strategic review of their 'points of presence' operating within a number of organisations. Notice will be provided should the Inland Revenue decide to withdraw from this initiative.
- 12.1.8 The OSS generated income of £2,000 in additional revenue linked to accommodation charges for use of the facilities at Willesden for 03/04. However, it is anticipated that this income will not be available for 04/05.
- 12.1.9 The OSS and the Inland Revenue were exploring options for increased partnership arrangements, with the possibility of the Inland Revenue operating from the Brent House location. The timetable for the Inland Revenue Service move from Chesterfield House did not coincide with the refurbishment plans for the ground floor of Brent House. As a result this option was not feasible.
- 12.1.10 The Inland Revenue Service plans to move from Chesterfield House have now been finalised and they will move into Valiant House in Wembley High Street in July 2004. .

**Inland Revenue
Yearly Statistics Total
April 03 - 31 March 04**

	General	CIS	LTD CO	PAYE	SA	NTC	CGT	OTHER	
April	6	13	0	21	13	22	0	8	
May	22	12	0	38	26	45	0	3	
JUNE	12	13	0	27	10	41	2	4	
July	6	18	0	38	13	33	1	7	
August	5	13	0	13	9	11	0	4	
September	3	25	0	22	14	19	1	6	
October	21	12	0	16	9	16	3	18	
November	11	12	1	13	7	20	1	9	
December	4	3	1	14	1	17	0	6	
January	3	11	0	19	26	21	0	3	
February	0	11	0	16	3	12	1	2	
March	6	11	1	16	8	17	0	9	
Total	99	154	3	253	139	274	9	79	1010

12.2 Capita

12.2.1 The OSS has established a joint working relationship with the new revenues contractor, Capita. The new contract commenced in July 2003. Regular liaison meetings have been established.

12.2.2 The OSS has worked closely with frontline staff and Capita to establish a Council Tax empowerment matrix for customer service. The empowerment matrix outlines reasonable transactions that can be carried out by customer services to improve resolution of enquiries and efficiency and effectiveness in service delivery.

12.2.3 Over 100 staff participated in a comprehensive training programme during the period October 03 – February 04.

12.2.4 The ability for customer services to carry out additional transactions should support Capita in the collection of Council Tax eg setting customers up to pay by direct debit and dealing with queries more efficiently and effectively to improve processing times.

12.2.5 However, it is also critical that customer service is not held accountable for Capita's performance regarding the Council Tax collections rates.

12.2.6 The effectiveness of the new levels of empowerment for frontline staff will be closely monitored and reviewed.

12.3 Department of Works & Pensions

12.3.1 The OSS has established a new partnership arrangement with the DWP (Department of Works & Pensions).

12.3.2 The objective of this initiative is to improve access to customers in the North of the borough and reduce pensioner poverty.

12.3.3 The OSS will be hosting a weekly surgery at the Kingsbury OSS. The surgery will be held every Wednesday between 10am – 1pm. The service will operate on a drop in basis. The surgeries will commence in May 2004.

12.3.4 A Service Level Agreement has been established with the DWP and regular liaison meetings will take place.

12.4 Deaf Surgery

12.4.1 The OSS works in partnership with Quest who provide a surgery for deaf customers with professional British Sign Language interpreters. This was launched during 2003 as a result of consultation through the DDA Working Group. It was originally held at Willesden One Stop Shop on a fortnightly basis it has since moved to the Town Hall and is now held monthly. It was funded during 2004/05 by income received from the Inland Revenue surgery which we also host at the Willesden OSs.

January

One held on 27th January 04 for 2 customers. One enquiry was for a referral for a fax machine the other a referral for a flashing doorbell. The customer also requested that the interpreter contact her brother for further assistance.

12.4.2 February

One held on 24th February 04 for 4 customers. The enquiries were for StreetCare, Housing advice, Right to Buy and Council Tax.

12.4.3 March

One held 30th March for 2 customers. Both enquiries were for Council Tax.

12.5 Victim Support Surgery

12.4.1 This arrangement has been poorly administered by Victim Support with sporadic attendance of advisors and no performance data collected or recorded despite repeated requests. This situation will be monitored and an assessment and decision will be made next year as to the viability of continuation.

12.5 Deloitte & Touche with Onyx and Other Local Authorities.

12.5.1 The One Stop Shop continues to work on the development of our customer relationship management software called E-shop in partnership with Deloitte & Touche and Onyx.

12.5.2 Onyx now have E-shop as one of their products and they are marketing version 5 as a CRM application tailored for Local Authorities called "OneServe".

12.5.3 A User group has been established with other local authorities that have bought and are using E-shop. We work in close partnership meeting with them regularly regarding the development and use of the system.

13 PRIORITIES FOR NEXT YEAR

13.1 The priorities for next year remain largely the same as the year before, in terms of:

- Maintaining service standards
- Improving service effectiveness and efficiency by reducing repeat customer contact
- Reducing sickness absence
- Preparing and submitting our 4th Charter Mark application by September 2004
- Strengthening the quality and content of our management information through the effective use of our Customer Relationship Management E-shop system.
- Streamline Annual Performance Report for next year in consultation with Service Areas and Lead Member.
- Completing the management re-organisation to increase management capacity to deliver on service objectives and development
- Improving the Revenues & Benefits call centre telephone performance and general R&B customer service
- Helping to raise customer service standards across the organisation