

Annual Complaints & Compliments Report 2025/26



Mansfield
District Council

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Foreword

Welcome to Mansfield District Council's annual complaints and compliments report. Providing excellent customer service is at the heart of everything we do, and we know that listening to our customers is key to getting it right. Complaints, compliments and feedback help us understand where we are doing well and where we need to improve. They give us a clearer picture of what matters most to our residents and help shape the way we deliver services now and in the future.

We are committed to being open and accountable when things do not go as they should. When a complaint highlights an issue, we take it seriously, using what we learn to improve services and the experience we provide. Resolving complaints quickly, fairly and with empathy remains a priority for us.

While we have seen an increase in the number of complaints received this year, it is encouraging that no complaints were upheld by the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman. This reflects the professionalism of our colleagues across the council and our continued commitment to listening, learning and improving the services we deliver.

In this report, you will find an overview of the complaints we received over the past year, along with the services that generated the most feedback. You will also see examples of how we have responded to concerns and taken positive steps to improve.

We share this report not only to reflect on the past year, but to reaffirm our commitment to listening, learning and continually improving the way we work for our residents, businesses and communities.



James Biddlestone,
Mansfield District Council CEO

Introduction

Mansfield District Council is committed to providing a high standard of service to all our customers.

As part of our continuing effort to improve the services we provide, we rely on the feedback we receive. We want to know when we get it right so the standards can be maintained, and we welcome customers' suggestions on how we can improve.

We also want to know when something has gone wrong, so we are able to learn from our mistakes and improve our services.

We have a collaborative approach to resolving complaints working across departments to ensure that our customers receive a positive outcome.

We also take responsibility for the shortfalls that may be identified in our service failure and ensure that lessons learned are truly learned and that our services change and adapt to better meet the needs of our customers.

At all times we ensure to act professionally and sensitively when handling complaints. Our annual report demonstrates the volume of complaints that the council has received over a twelve-month period and shows which services we receive the most complaints about.

We also give practical examples of the changes we have made to processes and lessons learned.

How to complain

Customers are encouraged to submit a formal complaint through our online form which is integrated with our Customer Relations System. This enables service areas to handle customer complaints directly.

They can also complain on email, telephone or in person by contacting the Customer Services team who will take the complaint and add it to our CRM system.

Alternatively, any member of staff can take a complaint from a customer and allocate that complaint to the appropriate service. We classify a complaint as any dissatisfaction (of council services) expressed by the customer which they wish to be treated as a complaint.

Complaints can be about many things including, a lack of response to an enquiry, lack of service or the quality of service provided, ongoing problems, poor customer care or when customers believe that they have been disadvantaged by policies or decisions.

Requests for service are not treated as complaints such as missed bins, reports of Anti-Social Behaviour and requests for housing repairs.

Customers are reassured that we value feedback and see it as an opportunity to improve what we do and how we do it. Raising complaints does not impact on the level of service delivered to that customer in the future.

Complaints Policy

All raised concerns are treated as formal Stage One complaints, which must be thoroughly investigated and resolved within 10 working days.

However, if the matter is complex, an extension may be requested. During the resolution process, customers will receive information on the complaint stage, the decision reached, and the rationale behind it, along with any applicable remedies and lessons learned.

Additionally, customers will be informed about the procedure for escalating their complaint to Stage Two, if necessary.

Should a customer remain dissatisfied with the initial response, they have the option to escalate the complaint to Stage Two. At this stage, complaints are handled by a designated officer, typically the Assistant Director for that service area, acting on behalf of the Chief Executive.

Stage Two complaints are expected to be resolved within 20 working days.

Unresolved complaints may be further escalated to the appropriate Ombudsman service for resolution.

Complaints summary

Over the last three years, we have received, on average, around 800 complaints per year. Most complaints received are regarding our frontline services namely housing repairs, waste and recycling and other neighbourhood services.

A total of 955 complaints were received during the reporting period, representing a 14.6% increase compared to the previous year (833 complaints).

Stage 1 complaints increased from 744 to 842, a rise of 13.2%, Stage 2 complaints rose from 89 to 113, an increase of 27.0%. This higher rate of increase at Stage 2 suggests a growing proportion of complaints progressing through the complaints process, particularly within high demand frontline services

Total number of complaints received:

	2023/2024	2024/2025	2025/26
Total number of complaints	670	833	955
Total number of stage one complaints	613	744	842
Total number of stage two complaints	57	89	113

Complaints by department:

Number of stage one complaints by department	2023/2024	2024/2025	2025/26
Housing*	174	230	372
Finance	40	38	42
Health & Communities	23	50	50
Law & Governance	4	2	0
Neighbourhood Services	357	401	384
Planning	6	12	13
Other**			94

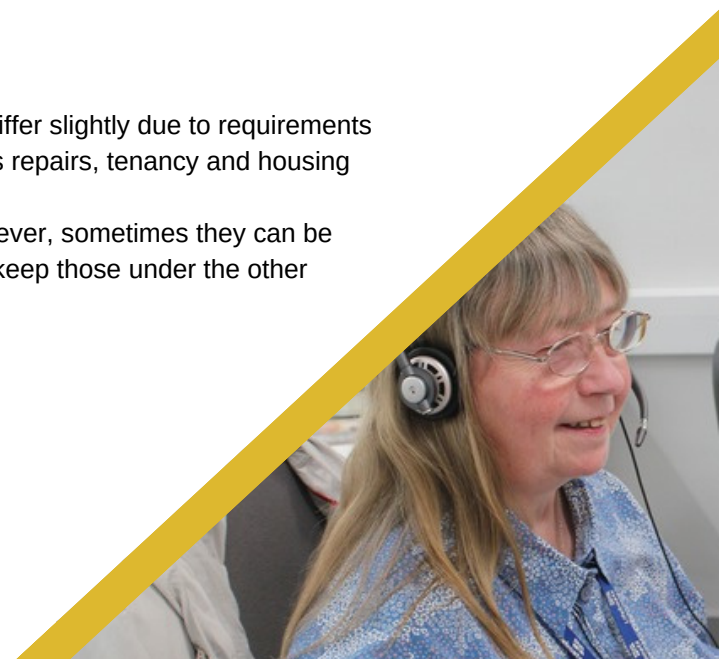
* The information we provide to the housing regulator may differ slightly due to requirements specified in the new complaints handling code. This includes repairs, tenancy and housing needs complaints

** Other is one of the options when making complaints, however, sometimes they can be referring to an existing service but for transparency, we will keep those under the other section..

Number of stage two complaints by department	2023/2024	2024/2025	2025/26
Housing	32	28	51
Finance	5	9	5
Health & Communities	1	7	3
Law & Governance	0	1	0
Neighbourhood Services	15	41	38
Planning	2	3	8
Other**			8

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Responding to complaints

Overall, 93.1% of Stage 1 complaints were responded to within the 10 working day target (887 out of 955 cases), demonstrating strong performance across the council.

Service	Met	Missed	Total	% within 10 days
Waste and Recycling	299	2	303	98.70%
Tenancy Services	94	1	95	98.90%
Parks and Open Spaces	50	1	51	98.00%
Environmental Health	29	1	30	96.70%
Housing Needs	42	1	43	97.70%
Council Tax	33	5	38	86.80%
Community Safety	17	3	20	85.00%
Planning	9	4	13	69.2%
Street Cleansing	13	1	14	92.90%
Housing Repairs	203	31	234	86.8%
Town Centre Service	12	1	13	92.30%
Benefits	4	0	4	100%
Crematorium	1	2	3	33.3%
Other	81	16	94	86%
Total	887	66	955	93.10%

In 2024/25, Mansfield District Council received 113 Stage 2 complaints across its service areas. On average the council responded to 72.6% of all stage two complaints within the 20-day response target times.

Performance at Stage 2 is significantly lower than at Stage 1, indicating that more complex or escalated cases present additional challenges in meeting response times. Areas of concern are Neighbourhood Services and Housing Repairs, where there is higher demand.

Improving early resolution at Stage 1, particularly within high demand services, may reduce escalation to Stage 2 and improve overall performance. In addition, targeted support for services with lower Stage 2 compliance would help improve consistency.

Service	Met	Missed	% within target
Housing Repairs	22	5	81.5%
Waste and Recycling	14	11	56.0%
Housing Needs	12	2	85.70%
Parks and Open Spaces	8	4	66.7%
Tenancy Services	8	2	80.00%
Planning	7	1	87.50%
Council Tax	4	1	80.00%
Community Safety	3	0	100%
Street Cleansing	1	0	100%
Other	4	4	50.00%
Total	82	31	

Complaints themed analysis

These are the most common complaint themes from 2025/26 analysis.

Theme	Brief Description
Service delivery failures	Missed bins, delays in waste collection, repeated failure to deliver core services such as cleansing and grounds maintenance.
Communication and responsiveness	Lack of updates, poor communication between services and residents, and customers feeling ignored or not kept informed.
Quality of service	Work not completed to an acceptable standard, poor workmanship in repairs, or dissatisfaction with how services are delivered.
Staff behaviour and customer experience	Concerns about staff attitude, professionalism, or how customers are treated during interactions.
Environmental and neighbourhood issues	Anti social behaviour, noise, fly tipping, abandoned vehicles, and general concerns about local environment and community safety.
Policy and decision dissatisfaction	Disagreement with council decisions, including planning decisions, enforcement actions, or eligibility outcomes.

Process Changes Undertaken

Here is a summary of the actions we took to help improve the services we deliver

Theme	Brief Description
Waste and Recycling	Over the past 12 months, Neighbourhood Services has improved complaints handling through a dedicated complaints officer, resulting in more consistent responses, quicker resolution times and fewer Stage 2 complaints. Improved collaboration with Customer Services and front line teams has helped address the root causes of complaints and strengthen service delivery. A management restructure and investment through Extended Producer Responsibility funding will further improve service standards, strengthen resident engagement and support the development of clear policies and service expectations.
Housing Repairs	The introduction of a Complex Cases Team to improve the handling of complex repairs complaints, with the intended outcome of better case management and resolution.
Staff conduct and training	Managers have undertaken complaints handling training as part of plan to reduce stage 2 complaints, as well as changes to complaints process that means Assistant Directors are more directly involved in investigation and preparation of responses.
Tenancy services	Improved communication with tenants, looking at root cause analysis and improved case ownership.

Improving complaints handling and customer experience

Over 400,000 visitors (of which more than a quarter are returning visitors) bring nearly 2 million page views to the council's website each year.

We will encourage customers to use our online services for information gathering and reporting issues rather than resorting to complaints.

The council provides a contact centre service on Monday to Thursday from 8.30am to 5pm and until 4.30pm on Fridays. We offer an online email enquiry service along with social media messenger to further support our customers.

All managers have undertaken Complaint handling training, aimed at improving how we respond to complaints to improve the service and reduce the number of stage 2 and Ombudsman complaints.

Improvement to services such as the website and how customers can report issues are constantly being reviewed and, where possible, improvements to systems such as our CRM are included in the Council's improvement plans.

Ombudsman from 2025/26

The Ombudsman has provided the council with their annual statement for 2025/26 which demonstrated the following:

18 complaints were made to the Local Government Ombudsman regarding Mansfield District Council, this is 2 less than in 2024/25.

9 complaints were dealt with by the Ombudsman
3 were not for the Ombudsman and returned
6 were assessed and closed with no further action
0 cases were investigated by the Ombudsman

A full report on the Ombudsman enquiries is prepared for scrutiny.

National Statistics

The Ombudsman received 27,625 complaints in 2025-26, a 33% rise compared to last year.

The scale of the increase is striking:

- Complaints about benefits and tax rose fastest, growing by 65% followed by housing (46%) and children's services (41%).
- Housing complaints were the most common issue brought to the Ombudsman, making up almost 20% of complaints received.

Compliments

The council records compliments from customers regarding the standards of service we deliver. We are pleased to announce that in 2025/26 we received 71 reported instances of positive feedback across our service areas, an increase of 45% compared to last year.

Department	Number of compliments
Tenancy Services	31
Housing Repairs	9
Customer Services	6
Unspecified	6
Repairs	4
Street Cleansing	4
Housing	3
Parks & Open spaces	3
Waste and Recycling	2
Environmental Health	1
Marketing & Comms	1
Town Centre Management	1
Total	71

What people said:

“ Thanks to Housing Services for their kindness, compassion & professionalism, after we recently lost a family member under tragic circumstances. ”

“ Please pass on my thanks to the housing repairs department for the plentiful work that has been done to our bungalow this last seven days. ”

“ It has meant everything to me and my daughter to have your support, you have always been here for us and we are both so grateful. ”

“ Thank you for always being so helpful when answering the phone, be it for issues you have assisted me with, or in directing my enquiries accordingly. ”

Creating a customer focused culture

Mansfield District Council is committed to being a customer-centric organisation by putting residents and communities at the heart of everything we do. We need to listen carefully to feedback, design services that are easier to access and use, and communicate clearly and openly.

By understanding what matters most to our residents and working across teams to deliver seamless, responsive services, we aim to build trust, improve satisfaction, and make a real difference to people's everyday lives.



Respect and Empathy

Treat every customer with dignity, understanding their needs and concerns



Transparency and Accountability

Be open in our communication and take responsibility for our actions



Continuous improvement

Always seek to enhance our services based on feedback and evolving needs



Responsiveness

Ensure that enquiries are handled promptly and issues are addressed with urgency



Collaboration and Inclusivity

Working across departments and with residents to create solutions that work for everyone



Customer-centric processes

Service redesign that is customer-focused