

Local Government Ombudsman (LGO) and Housing Ombudsman Service (HOS) cases & Stage Three decisions - Monthly Update

LGO Current Position: to 30 September 2013

In the following PDF will be found a chart showing current Ombudsman activity shown in Service Area within Directorates. Due to the reorganisation of services within directorates which took place on 29 April, the services have been re-integrated within the new structure.

LGO cases by Ward:

The second page contains the Ward chart. I have returned to the cumulative and month format. Members are invited to contact me if they would like more specific details.

Definitions of Local Government Ombudsman terms:

The decision terminology currently used for the foreseeable future is set out below (with the previous terminology). The LGO's office also periodically publishes update information and I hope to be able to store a copy of this within the LGO section on the Intranet where links will allow Members to obtain more information.

Current Decision Reasons	New Decision Reasons from 1 April 2013
Out of jurisdiction	Not in jurisdiction (OJ) and no discretion
	Not in jurisdiction (OJ) and discretion not exercised
No to initiate an investigation (formerly Ombudsman's discretion)	Not investigated
To discontinue investigation injustice remedied (formerly local settlement)	To discontinue investigation
To discontinue investigation (formerly Ombudsman's discretion)	
Investigation complete, satisfied with authority's actions, not appropriate to issue a report	Investigation complete and satisfied with authority actions of proposed actions and not appropriate to issue report S30(1B)
Investigation complete – report issued	Investigation complete and appropriate to issue a report S30(1)

Havering will continue to split decisions which find fault with the Council into those in which no financial penalty has been imposed and those where the Council is being asked to make some sort of financial settlement. You will also continue to see references to LGO enquiries and to cases which the LGO has referred back to the Council as being "Premature". However, because the LGO is no longer monitoring those, the reference will simply be an acknowledgement of receipt.

Local Government Ombudsman Cases:

During **September** there were **eight** new contacts from the LGO's office. Four enquiries; one premature complaint referred back to the Council; a notification of a complaint that was outside jurisdiction and a notice of a provisional view. One investigation commenced and two investigations were completed – neither of which involved the Council in a penalty. The following chart shows which services were involved and from which wards complaints emanated.

Other LGO news:

Confirmation has now been received that the LGO has vacated Millbank Tower in London to other premises and has taken the opportunity to concentrate **all** contact in the Coventry address. Complaints cannot be made by e-mail; instead complainants need to complete an "on-line" complaints form on the LGO web site.

Housing Ombudsman Service

There has been no change in status for any of the three HOS notifications during September.

Stage 3 complaints:

Two new notifications of escalated complaints commenced during September. One relates to housing issues, the other to an action under the Children Act which will be considered by a Panel of Independent Persons in due course. The IAP did not convene in September, though there should be business for it to consider in October.

Stage 3 statistics:

I have now begun appending some basic statistics to Calendar Brief showing how Stage Three referrals for Councillor review are developing. These can be found following the LGO stats.

Standards issues:

There was one hearing conducted under the Standards procedures during September.

Other News:

We are continuing to add to the final decisions from the Ombudsman and these can be viewed on the Intranet and can be accessed via:

<https://intranet.havering.gov.uk/index.aspx?articleid=21830>

You will find a general page with other links to various LGO organisations and links to further pages set out in complaint categories and within each of these will be found PDFs containing the LGO final decisions. A glossary of abbreviations used with the decisions will be found on the general page. In future, decisions will be added as they are received.

Another page has been added on which more comprehensive monthly statistics can be found in PDF format. These charts are made available to senior management and if any Councillor wishes to have more information concerning these statistics, would they please contact me.

Since 1 April, the Housing Ombudsman Service has assumed responsibility for considering complaints in respect of Council owned social housing and it will be interesting to see what the implications for Havering will be. I still remain unconvinced that a distinct set of statistics will need to be produced to record his involvement, but I will continue to keep this under review.

Grant Söderberg, (extn) 3091, e-mail: grant.soderberg@havering.gov.uk

Ombudsman Activity: by Ward

Detailed summary of Ombudsman activity by service area within Directorate & Service and by wards. Wards **not shown** have **no** Ombudsman activity within them. Wards and services highlighted contain the highest activity **to date**. **Only cases from 1 April 2013 shown.**

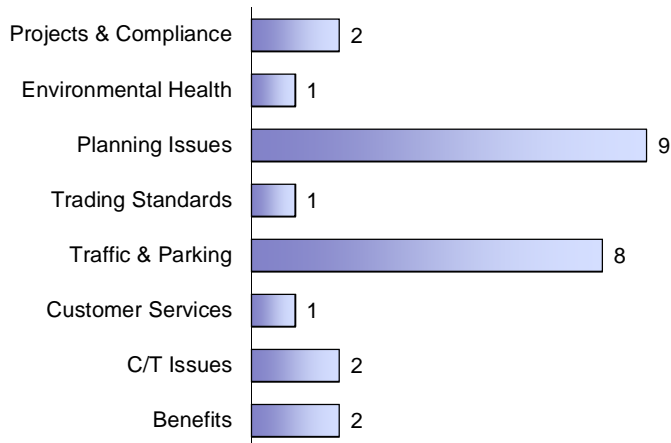
Directorate	Service	Service Delivery Area	Brooklands	Cranham	Gooshays	Hacton	Harold Wood	Havering Park	Heaton	Hylands	Mawneys	Pettits	Romford Town	Squirrels Heath	St Andrews	O/S Borough	Not Given	Grand Total		
Culture, Community & Economic Development	Customer Services	Customer Services												1				1		
		C/T Issues			1												1		2	
		Benefits								2									2	
	StreetCare	Traffic & Parking						2	1	1		1						3	8	
	Regulatory Services	Trading Standards																	1	1
		Planning Issues			1		2						3	1	2				9	
		Environmental Health										1							1	
	Projects & Compliance			2														2		
Resources	Exchequer Services	Benefits & Revenues	1															1	7	
	Asset Management	Property Services		1															1	
	Legal & Democratic Svcs	School Appeals		1															1	
Children, Adults and Housing	Homes & Housing	Maintenance						2											2	
		Housing Needs			1	2								2				1	8	
		Estate Services								1				1					2	
		Home Ownership			2															2
	Learning & Achievement	Child & Community Psychology/SEN				1													1	
	Children & YP's Services	Safeguarding & Standards						2											2	
	Adult Social Care	Unspecified																	1	1
		Preventative Care												1						1
Children's Services	Child Protection			1															1	
	Permanency																	1	1	
General	General	General	2					1											3	
Grand Total			3	3	7	3	2	7	4	1	1	5	3	5	1	12	2	59		

Ombudsman Activity: by Ward

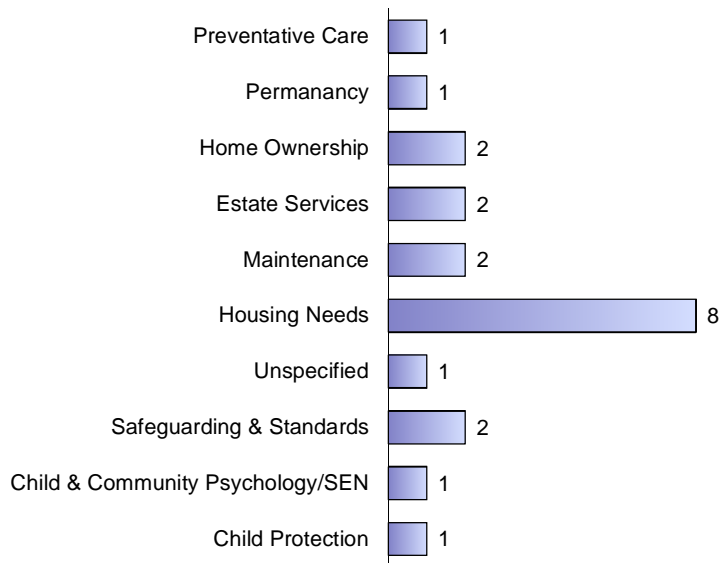
Ward Totals for the month of: SEPTEMBER								
Directorate	Service	Service Delivery Area	Cranham	Gooshays	Romford Town	Squirrels Heath	O/S Borough	Grand Total
Culture, Community & Economic Development	Regulatory Services	Planning Issues		1				1
Resources	Exchequer Services	Benefits & Revenues					2	2
	Legal & Democratic Svcs	School Appeals	1					1
Children, Adults and Housing	Homes & Housing	Housing Needs				1		1
		Estate Services			1			1
		Home Ownership		1				1
	Children's Services	Permanancy					1	1
Grand Total			1	2	1	1	3	8

Ombudsman investigations: By Service Area in Group Directorates From 1 April 2013

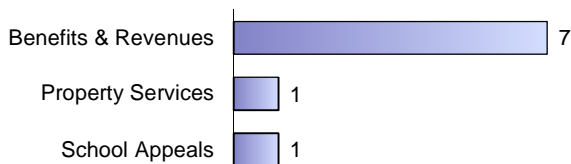
Culture, Community & Economic Development- Total from 1 April 2013 to date: 26



Children, Adults and Housing - Total from 1 May 2013 to date: 21



Resources - Total from 1 May 2013 to date: 9

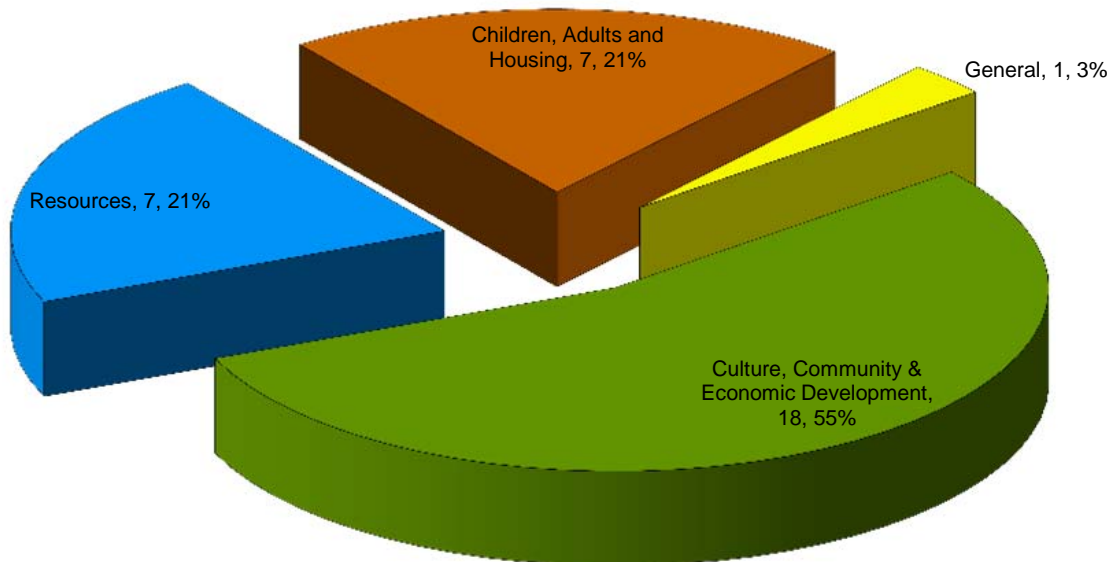


General & Member Issues - Total to date: 3

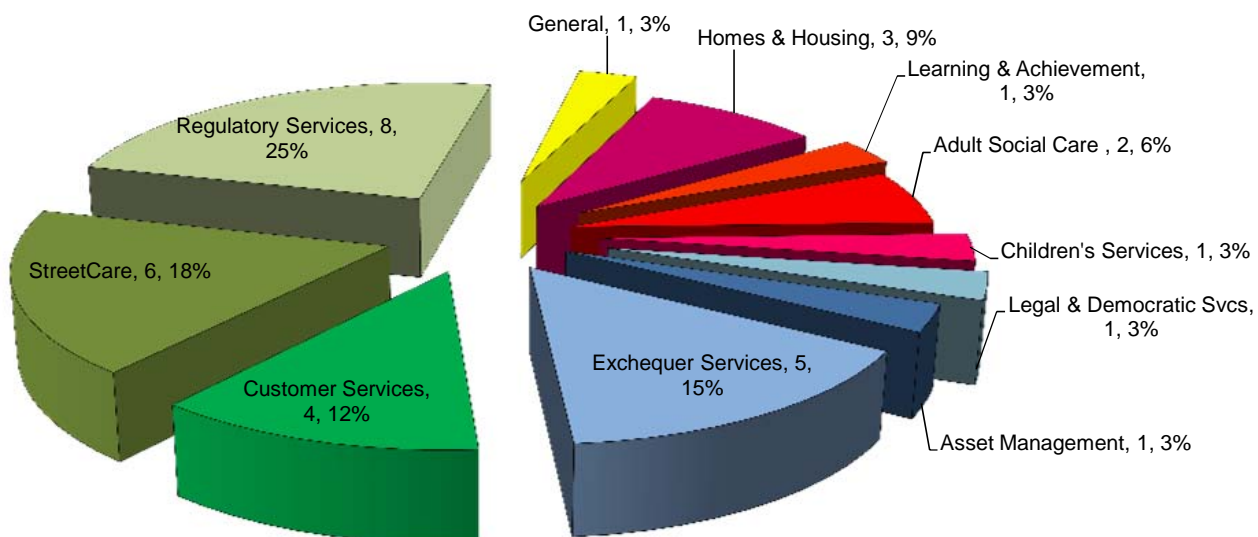


Evaluation of Ombudsman Activity

Directorate Involvement - Total of complaint elements from the LGO (whether investigated or not) to 30 September 2013: 33
Referrals from the Ombudsman dealt with as Corporate Complaints (Prematures) or Enquiries are not shown



Service Area Involvement - Total of complaint elements from the LGO (whether investigated or not) to 30 September 2013: 33
Referrals from the Ombudsman dealt with as Corporate Complaints are not shown



Evaluation of Ombudsman Activity

Identifying multiple contacts from the Ombudsman: Year to 30 SEPTEMBER 2013

KEY: E = Enquiry, P = Premature, D = LGO Decision (without investigation), I = Investigation

Children, Adults & Housing

Homes & Housing	E → D	E → I	P	D	E → P	P	E	E → P	E	E
Adult Services	D	I								
Children's Services	E → P	D	E							
Learning & Achievement	I									

Culture, Community & Economic Development

Regulatory Services	D	I	D	I	I	I	E → P	E → D	E → D	D
StreetCare	E → D	I	E → D	D	D	D				
Corporate & Customer Transformation	D									

Resources

Exchequer Services	D	E → D	I	D	I	E → D	D	E	D
Asset Management	D								
School Appeals	I								
General & Member Issues	E → P	D							

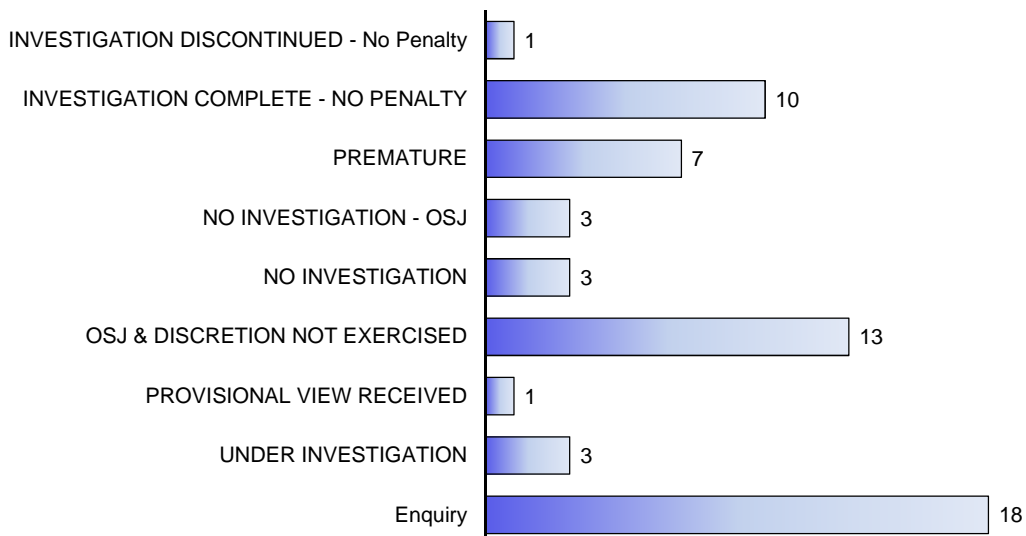
Complaint Elements	22	Individual Complaints	17
Complaint Elements	22	Individual Complaints	17
Complaint Elements	12	Individual Complaints	10
Complaint Elements	3	Individual Complaints	2
Complaint Elements	59	Individual Complaints	46

NOTE: Three complainants in ONE planning issue. LGO treated it as one investigation, though it will show in the LGO's annual figures as three complaints

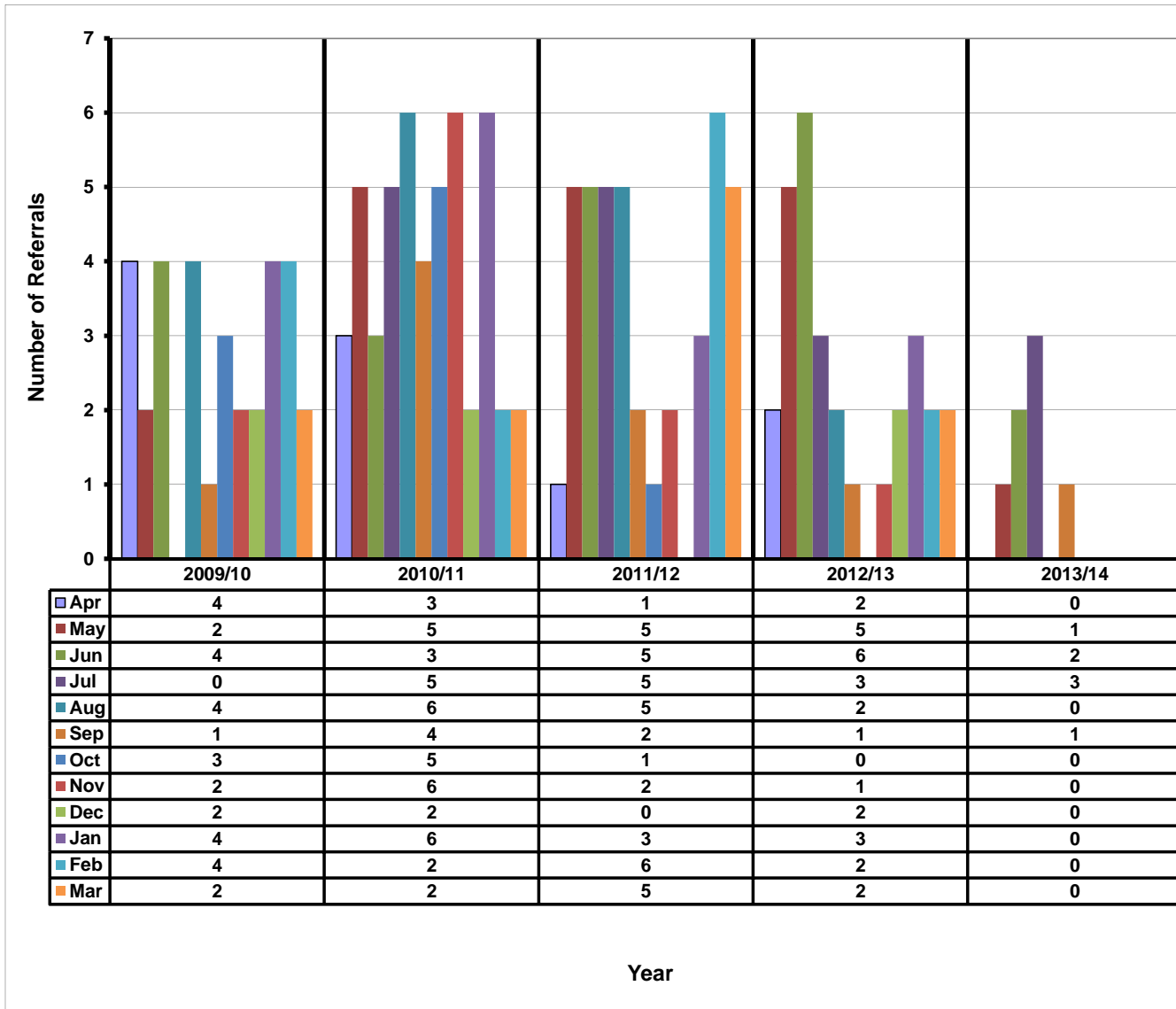
NOTE: 11 complaints have been investigated to date (but three were dealt with together as one issue)

Total of ALL complaints received between 1 April - 30 September 2013: 59

including enquiries and premature complaints referred back to the Council & dealt with under the Corporate Complaints procedure



LGO Referrals - Premature Complaints - year-on-year



Year	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	Grand Total
Prematures:	32	49	40	29	7	157
Cases Referred:	59	45	59	73	39	275
Total:	91	94	99	102	46	432

Local Government Ombudsman Referrals : 1 April 2013 – 31 March 2014 - Analysed by Month

46 Referrals from the Ombudsman (by reference number) - could include multiple elements: enquiry, premature and investigation

	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
0 Ongoing Complaints (Investigations only) b/fwd from 2012/13												
46 New Complaints were reported from 1 April 2013 to date (including Prematures & enquiries)	11	7	5	9	6	8	0	0	0	0	0	0
Of which 7 were Premature - normally L2 complaints referred back to the Council	0	1	2	3	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
and 5 were enquiries by the LGO	0	0	0	0	1	4	0	0	0	0	0	0
22 were not investigated (decisions already made by the LGO e.g: OSJ or Provisional View given)	6	3	2	4	5	2	0	0	0	0	0	0
0 Provisional View on investigated cases currently pending LGO decision	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
and 9 Investigations completed	0	0	2	0	5	2	0	0	0	0	0	0
Leaving 3 Cases currently being investigated (not Prematures or PVs) or to be c/fwd (if open at 31 March)												

During the year to date **12** cases have received a substantive response in an average of **13 working days**
 There have so far been **22** cases which were not "investigated" - though some may have required a response to LGO questions
 There are currently **1** complaint awaiting an initial response
 There are currently **1** premature complaint being processed

The Ombudsman's anticipated response time is currently **20 working days**

117 Cases referred by the Ombudsman (may contain more than one COMPLAINT element)

	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
15 Cases (Investigations) b/fwd from 2011/12												
102 New Cases were reported from 1 April 2012 to date (including Prematures & enquiries)	5	14	9	8	8	5	7	10	4	12	10	10
Of which 29 were Premature - normally L2 complaints referred back to the Council	2	5	6	3	2	1	0	1	2	3	2	2
and 27 were "informal" enquiries by the LGO/AT	2	3	0	1	4	2	2	2	1	3	3	4
27 were not investigated (decisions already made by the LGO: OSJ, Omb's Discretion PV etc.)	0	3	2	1	1	0	3	3	0	5	5	4
0 Provisional Views open at the month end pending Final Decision and closure	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
and 34 Investigations completed	1	11	1	2	1	3	3	1	3	5	3	0
Leaving 0 Cases currently being investigated (not Prematures or PVs) or to be c/fwd (if open at 31 March)												

During the year to date **18** new cases have been responded to in an average of **29 calendar days**
 There has/have also been **23** new cases which have not needed any response at all
 There is/are currently **1** complaints (including L2 referrals) awaiting initial response
 The Ombudsman's anticipated response time is currently **28 calendar days**
15 cases were brought forward from 2011/12 (including 2 Prematures), responded to in an average of **27** days
 The average of all **33** investigations requiring a response is **28** days

	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
10 Cases (Investigations) were b/fwd from 2010/11												
99 New Cases were reported from 1 April 2011 to date - by month	4	9	9	13	12	3	2	9	4	6	19	9
Of which 39 were Premature - normally L2 (but incl. LGO/LGOAT informal enquiries)	1	5	5	5	5	2	1	2	0	3	6	5
13 were not investigated (decisions already made by the LGO: OSJ, Omb's Discretion etc.)	1	3	2	2	0	0	0	4	0	1	0	0
and 41 Investigations completed (or Provisional Views received) - analysed by month:	4	2	3	3	3	6	7	0	3	1	4	4
Leaving 15 Cases currently Ongoing (not Prematures) or to be c/fwd (if open at 31 March)												

During the year to date **51** new cases have been responded to in an average of **24 calendar days**
 There has/have also been **21** new cases which have not needed any response at all
 There is/are currently **2** complaints (including L2 referrals) awaiting initial response
 The Ombudsman's anticipated response time is currently **28 calendar days**
 The **10** cases brought forward from 2010/11, were responded to in an average of **23** days
 The average of all **61** investigations requiring a response is **24** days

Stage Three Activity: by Ward

Detailed summary of **Stage Three** Hearing requests by service area within Directorate & Service and by wards. Wards **not shown** have **no** complaints activity within them. Wards and services highlighted contain the highest activity **to date**. **ALL outstanding cases (including those commenced before 31 March 2013) are shown.**

Directorate	Service	Service Delivery Area	Brooklands	Cranham	Gooshays	Hacton	Havering Park	Hylands	Mawneys	South Hornchurch	Squirrels Heath	Upminster	O/S Borough	Grand Total	
Culture, Community & Economic Development	Culture & Leisure	Parks & Open Spaces						1		1				2	
	StreetCare	Traffic & Parking				1								1	
		Street Cleaning & Environmental Maintenance		1											1
	Regulatory Services	Projects & Compliance			2							1		3	
Resources	Asset Management	Property Services		1										1	
Children, Adults & Housing	Homes & Housing	Neighbour Nuisance			1						1			2	
		Housing Needs							1					1	
	Children & YP's Services	Permanency											1		1
		Safeguarding & Standards					1								1
General	General	General	1											1	
Grand Total			1	2	4	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	15	

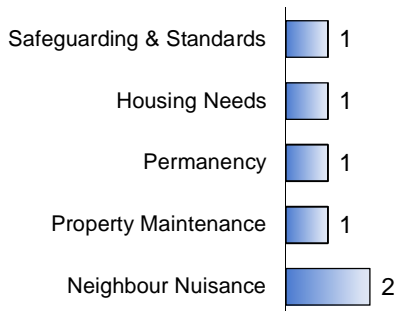
Ward Totals for the month of: SEPTEMBER					
Directorate	Service	Service Delivery Area	Squirrels Heath	Havering Park	Grand Total
Children, Adults & Housing	Homes & Housing	Neighbour Nuisance	1		1
	Children & YP's Services	Safeguarding & Standards		1	1
Grand Total			1	1	2

Stage Three Activity: By Service Area in Group Directorates

Culture, Community & Economic Development - Total to date: 7



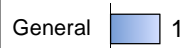
Children, Adults & Housing Services -Total to date: 6



Resources - Total to date: 1



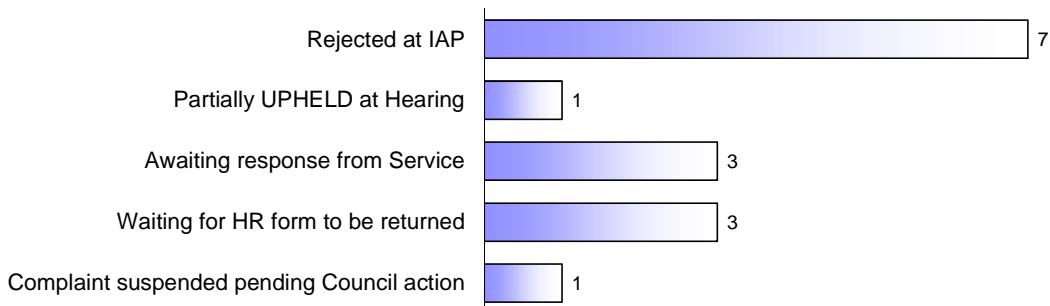
General & Member Issues - Total to date: 1



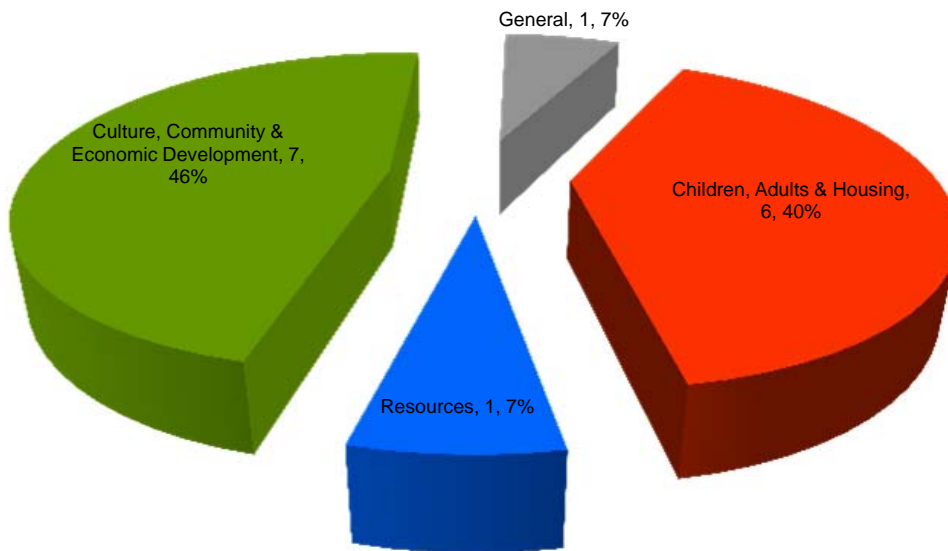
Evaluation of Stage Three Activity

Total of ALL Stage Three hearing requests received & processed between 1 April - 30 September 2013: 9

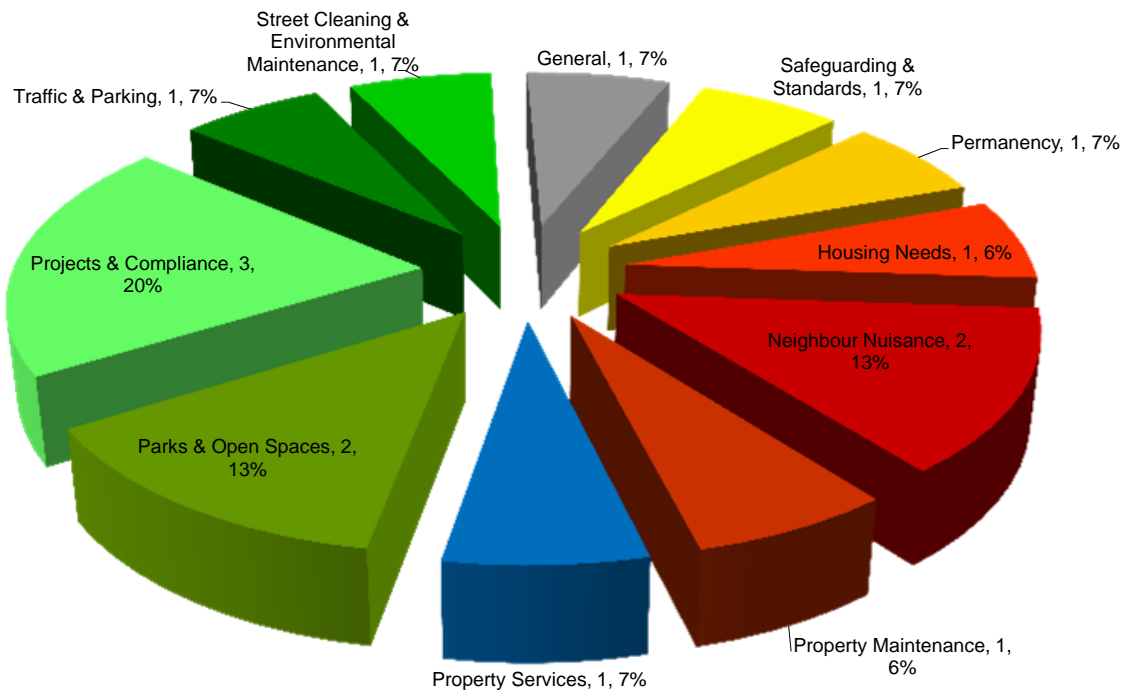
There were 6 ongoing complaints brought forward from 2012/13



Total of Stage Three hearing requests to date by Directorate: 15



Total of Stage Three hearing requests to date by Service: 15



Stage Three Complaints - by Service 1 April - 30 September 2013:
(Six cases were brought forward from 2012/13)

	Culture, Community & Economic Development			Children, Adults & Housing Services			Resources			
	Development & Building Control	Culture & Leisure	StreetCare	Children & YP Services	Homes & Housing		Asset Management	General: Member & non 'Service specific' issues		
Stage Three requests received:-	0	1	0	0	0		0	0	1	
Awaiting return of S3 Hearing Request form:-	1	0	0	1	2		0	1	5	
Complaint discontinued:-	0	0	0	0	0		0	0	0	
Awaiting Service response:-	0	0	1	0	0		0	0	1	
Awaiting IAP:-	0	0	0	0	0		0	0	0	
Rejected at IAP:-	2	1	1	0	2		1	0	7	
Awaiting Hearing:-	0	0	0	0	0		0	0	0	
Complaint UPHELD :-	0	0	0	0	0		0	0	0	
Complaint NOT upheld:-	0	0	0	0	0		0	0	0	
Complaint PARTIALLY upheld:-	0	0	0	1	0		0	0	1	
Total complaints:-	3	2	2	0	2	4	0	0	1	15

Stage Three Complaints: 1 April 2013 – 31 March 2014 - Analysed by Month

15 Total number of Stage Three requests

6 Cases b/fwd from 2012/13

9 New Stage Three requests made since 1 April 2013 to date
 Of which **0** Did not proceed
 and **7** Were rejected by the IAP
 and **0** was not upheld at Hearing
 and **1** were partially upheld at Hearing
 and **0** were upheld at Hearing
 Leaving **7** Ongoing cases

	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
1	1	1	0	1	4	2						
0	0	0	0	0	0	0						
3	0	0	3	1	0	0						
0	0	0	0	0	0	0						
0	0	0	0	1	0	0						
0	0	0	0	0	0	0						