

Item No.	Classification	Date	MEETING NAME
1	Open	20 th May	Overview and Scrutiny
Report Title:		Complaints Statistics Planning Department	
Ward (s) or groups affected:		All	
From:		Strategic Director of Regeneration	

Information Sought

'That performance Statistics on complaints handling for the planning department are provided'.

Response

Complaints information is kept centrally within the Regeneration Department by the PA to the Strategic Director.

During the period: May 2003 – May 2004, 100 complaints concerning the Planning Division were received. Of these, 8 related to Building Control, 2 to Conservation, 23 to Enforcement, and the remaining 67 to Development Control and matters concerning the handling of planning applications. (This represents 1 complaint per 23 planning applications handled)

The Development Control complaints covered a number of areas, including:

- Consultees objecting to an application or proposal (6)
- Concern that permission had been refused/approved (5)
- The manner in which the complainant was dealt with/customer care (7)
- Timeliness and failure to respond (5)
- Insufficient information/consultee not kept informed (5)

In addition, 6 complaints were made against the failure of the Council to inform the complainant of the installation of telecommunications apparatus and equipment, none of which were upheld.

10 complaints were made against the failure of the Council to consult adequately. 3 of these complaints were found to be invalid. 2 are awaiting completion of the investigation.

Of the 100 complaints concerning the Planning Division which were received during the year, 7 were referred to the Local Ombudsman. 2 of these were upheld, one relating to an unreasonable delay in taking effective enforcement action, for which the complainant received a payment of £1,250, the other concerning a failure to consult during the planning process for which the complainant received £250 in compensation. The remaining 5 Ombudsman

complaints were dismissed. (These figures do not include the Imperial Gardens investigation, where the complaint was submitted prior to May 2003)

The number of complaints concerning the Planning Division comprised 2.3% of the total number of complaints received by the Council for the corresponding period, and 3.2% of the total number of Ombudsman complaints received.