

**The Local Government Ombudsman's
Annual Review
Cornwall Council
for the year ended
31 March 2010**

Local Government Ombudsmen (LGOs) provide a free, independent and impartial service. We consider complaints about the administrative actions of councils and some other authorities. We cannot question what a council has done simply because someone does not agree with it. If we find something has gone wrong, such as poor service, service failure, delay or bad advice, and that a person has suffered as a result, we aim to get it put right by recommending a suitable remedy. We also use the findings from investigation work to help authorities provide better public services through initiatives such as special reports, training and annual reviews.

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Section 1: Complaints about Cornwall Council 2009/10

Introduction

This annual review provides a summary of the complaints we have dealt with about Cornwall Council. We have included comments on the authority's performance and complaint-handling arrangements, where possible, so they can assist with your service improvement. **It also covers complaints about the former County Council and the Caradon, Carrick, Kerrier, North Cornwall, Penwith and Restormel District Councils. Complaints about these former councils are now dealt with by Cornwall Council, as successor authority**

I hope that the review will be a useful addition to other information your authority holds on how people experience or perceive your services.

Two appendices form an integral part of this review: statistical data for 2009/10 and a note to help the interpretation of the statistics.

Enquiries and complaints received

During 2009/10 we received enquiries and complaints on a total of 145 complaints concerning the new unitary council. Of these 41 complaints were found to be premature and were referred back to be dealt with under the council's own complaints procedure; on 28 enquiries advice was given and 76 complaints were referred to the investigative team. Of the complaints forwarded to the investigative team 12 had previously been referred to the council as premature.

Of the 145 complaints and enquiries dealt with, 50 were about planning and building control and 15 about transport and highways; 15 concerned children and family issues; eight were received about both adult care services and education. There were six complaints about both housing and benefits and five about public finance. The remaining 32 concerned a variety of other council functions.

The advice team also dealt with enquiries and complaints about the former councils. There were eight complaints forwarded for investigation about the former County Council and two complaints were premature and in just one advice was given. The advice team received eight contacts concerning Caradon District Council. Advice was given in two cases and six complaints were forwarded to our investigative team. One complaint about Carrick District Council was considered to be premature and was referred back to the council to be considered under the council's complaints procedures and seven were passed to the investigative team. Five complaints were forwarded for investigation against Kerrier District Council. Seven complaints against North Cornwall Council were considered to be premature and advice was given on one enquiry. A further four complaints were passed for investigation. Against Penwith District Council four complaints were taken for investigation and one complaint was considered to be premature. Three complaints were passed for investigation against Restormel Borough Council.

Of the 52 complaints/enquiries about the former councils; six concerned housing, three were about benefits, 27 about planning and building control, one about children and family services and one about education, three about adult care services, four about transport and highways and seven on other council functions.

The total of 197 enquiries and complaints received for the new council and the seven former councils compares with a total of 284 received during 2008/9 for the former councils.

Complaint outcomes

Decisions were made on 50 complaints against the Cornwall Council. On 15 of those no evidence of maladministration was found. Investigation of four complaints was discontinued for other reasons. Typically these are cases where even though there may have been some fault by the council there is no significant injustice to the complainant. Seventeen complaints were not investigated because they concerned issues outside jurisdiction.

For the former councils, decisions were made on a total of 64 complaints. Twelve of those were against the former County Council. One of these complaints concerned matters outside jurisdiction and no evidence of fault was found in seven complaints and four others were the subject of local settlements.

For Caradon one complaint was outside my jurisdiction, in five no evidence of maladministration was found and a further five were discontinued for other reasons and three complaints were locally settled.

Ten complaints against Carrick were decided; one was outside jurisdiction, in two there was no maladministration and we exercised discretion not to pursue four complaints. Three complaints were settled.

Decisions were made on ten complaints against Kerrier. Two were the subject of local settlements, five were discontinued when no evidence of maladministration was found and discretion was exercised not to pursue investigation of another.

Of four complaints decided against North Cornwall one was the subject of a local settlement, and in the remaining three no evidence of fault was found.

There were six decisions made against Penwith, four were decided as having no maladministration and two were locally settled.

Four of the eight decisions made against Restormel were on the grounds of no maladministration, one was outside jurisdiction and in three local settlements were agreed.

Local settlements

A 'local settlement' is a complaint where, during the course of our investigation, a council takes or agrees to take some action that we consider to be a satisfactory response to the complaint. In 2009/10, 26.9% of all complaints the Ombudsmen decided and which were within our jurisdiction were local settlements. Of the complaints we decided against your authority and the former councils 31 were settled locally and £17,146 paid in compensation. I will refer to the more noteworthy examples below.

Adult care services

In a complaint against Cornwall Council we considered that the council had not given the complainant adequate and timely information about the twelve month disregard which applied before his elderly mother's property would be taken into account when calculating her contribution to her care fees in a residential home. The council agreed to pay compensation of £200 and to review the information it provided.

Another complainant suffered from chronic fatigue and after a spell in hospital was discharged home. She complained about the level of support provided by the former County Council when

she was first home. In considering the complaint the County Council had already agreed to pay some compensation to reflect the shortfall in support provided, but agreed to enhance this to the level the complainant was later assessed as needing in response to the complaint to my office, amounting to £1,067.

Children and family services

In one complaint the council had accepted that it had been at fault in the way it had dealt with a child protection conference for the complainant's child. It had failed to follow proper procedures, failed to provide the complainant with a copy of the social workers report, misrepresented information provided by his doctor, failed to inform him about the reasons for the conference and failed to take account of his representations. Prior to the complaint being made the council had conceded fault and offered compensation of £750. But the council had accepted that the threshold was not met to make the child subject to a protection plan and we therefore considered that the compensation should be increased to £1,250 which Cornwall Council agreed to pay.

In another complaint Cornwall Council removed a young teenage girl and her brother from a long term foster placement without notice or consultation. The children were very upset as they were happy in the foster home and a planned family holiday had to be cancelled. The girl pursued a complaint with the council and then with my office. The council accepted that it had been at fault and the children were returned to the foster carers. The council readily agreed to pay £3,050 compensation to pay for a family holiday.

Education

The complainants received confusing correspondence from Cornwall Council about arrangements for their appeal for a place for their daughter at their preferred school. There was also failure, in allocating the place when one became available. The child was offered a place at the preferred school.

Enforcement

In one complaint Cornwall Council provided inaccurate information about a planning application fee, amended the wording of an enforcement notice which was before a planning enquiry and failed to send the complainant a final response to the complaint. The council accepted that there had been faults (principally by the former authority Caradon District Council) and apologised, repaid planning fees and compensation amounting to a total of £318.

There was delay by Kerrier District Council in taking enforcement action for residential use of boats and vehicles in an area of outstanding natural beauty. An amenity association made the complaint and Cornwall Council agreed to appoint new senior officers to deal with enforcement matters.

Restormel Brough Council failed to inform the complainants of the outcome of an enforcement investigation into an allegation of a breach of condition relating to a nearby development for almost a year. And there was a delay of five months in investigating a different allegation of a breach of condition and a further failure to inform them of the outcome of another investigation. By way of remedy Cornwall Council agreed to pay compensation of £250.

Highway Management

There was delay by the former County Council in carrying out works to the highway near to the complainant's home to prevent flooding. A plan had been agreed in 2008 which had not been implemented. The complainant had arranged for a survey and the council agreed to pay the cost of that and compensation for the flooding which had continued for three years longer than it should – the total paid was £8,261.

Planning

In one case relating to planning permission Cornwall Council could not demonstrate that it had adequately considered the impact the development would have on the complainant's amenity given the differences in height. The council agreed to pay compensation of £1,000 to reflect the distress and uncertainty caused.

There was delay by Cornwall Council in pursuing a developer for a breach of conditions to finish roads on an estate and a play area. The developer was insolvent and the council undertook to carry out the necessary works to the roads itself. The council also undertook to consider what action may be possible against the new owner of the site in respect of the play area and to pay the complainant £100 for her time and trouble in pursuing the complaint.

Carrick District Council failed to require a fresh planning application when the applicant changed the plan showing the area of the development site, and there was delay in discharging conditions relating to boundary treatments. This did not affect the outcome of the planning application but Cornwall Council agreed to pay the complainant £200.

Another complainant had many concerns about the way Restormel had been involved in the development of an urban village. The council was the joint owner of the land and had contracted with a developer to build the properties. We decided not to investigate many elements of the complaint as we considered that it had been for the complainants to protect their interests at the time of purchase but we did have concerns about the location and construction of the boundary to the complainants' property and the location of a sewer in relation to the boundary. Cornwall Council agreed to pay compensation of £500 and to ensure that works were carried out to the boundary of the complainants' property.

Antisocial behaviour

There was a boundary dispute between the complainant who was a council tenant and the private owner of the next door former council house. Carrick District Council paid for the removal of an overgrowing hedge on the complainant's property and agreed to erect a replacement concrete post and wire fence. The fencing materials were moved by council workmen from the neighbour's land to complainant's garden without notice or agreement. Damage was caused to the garden and inconvenience to the complainant. The council apologised for the storage on the complainant's land and agreed to make good once the fencing work was done. It also agreed to instruct an independent surveyor to determine the boundary (not necessarily that of the line of the fences) so that the complainant had a clear understanding. The council was flexible and responsive to the suggested settlement.

Housing

The complainant and their neighbours had bought their houses from Carrick District Council. The complainants had a right of way over the neighbour's property but this had not been correctly included in their lease. This came to light when the neighbours extended their property. By way of settlement the council agreed to pay to have the easement included in the complainant's lease.

Housing benefit

North Cornwall District Council failed to deal with a request for an appeal to the appeals service and only did so in response to my officer's enquiries about the complaint. There was delay of 10 months and in that time the council pursued recovery action for the overpaid benefit. The council quickly forwarded the appeal and agreed to pay compensation of £150.

In two cases there was fault by Penwith District Council in how it dealt with requests to make payments of housing benefit direct to a landlord. The landlord complained and it was only when Cornwall Council took over the administration of benefits that it quickly agreed to pay compensation of £50 and £200 in respect of the two complaints.

Liaison with the Local Government Ombudsman

We made formal enquiries of Cornwall Council on 48 complaints during 2009/10 and the council achieved an average response time of 27.1 days. I congratulate the council on achieving a significant improvement in its response times. I have not included enquiries that are recorded against the former local authorities as these may pre-date the existence of Cornwall Council so would not provide any useful information for the current council's performance. Generally my officers have found the council to be very willing to consider proposed settlements and I hope this positive approach will continue.

Training in complaint handling

We ran two training courses for the council's officers on effective complaint handling in social care and one in effective complaint handling in adult social care in December 2009.

I have enclosed some information on the full range of courses available together with contact details for enquiries and bookings.

Conclusions

I welcome this opportunity to give you my reflections about the complaints my office has dealt with over the past year. I hope that you find the information and assessment provided useful when seeking improvements to your authority's services.

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June 2010

Section 2: LGO developments

Introduction

This annual review also provides an opportunity to bring councils up to date on developments in the LGO and to seek feedback.

New schools complaints service launched

In April 2010 we launched the first pilot phase of a complaints service extending our jurisdiction to consider parent and pupil complaints about state schools in four local authority areas. This power was introduced by the Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009.

The first phase involves schools in Barking and Dagenham, Cambridgeshire, Medway and Sefton. The Secretary of State no longer considers complaints about schools in these areas. In September the schools in a further 10 local authority areas are set to join the pilot phase.

We are working closely with colleagues in the pilot areas and their schools, including providing training and information sessions, to shape the design and delivery of the new service. It is intended that by September 2011 our jurisdiction will cover all state schools in England.

A new team in each office now deals with all complaints about children's services and education on behalf of the Ombudsman. Arrangements for cooperation with Ofsted on related work areas have been agreed.

For further information see the new schools pages on our website at www.lgo.org.uk/schools/

Adult social care: new powers from October

The Health Act 2009 extended the Ombudsmen's powers to investigate complaints about privately arranged and funded adult social care. These powers come into effect from 1 October 2010 (or when the Care Quality Commission has re-registered all adult care providers undertaking regulated activity). Provision of care that is arranged by an individual and funded from direct payments comes within this new jurisdiction.

Each Ombudsman has set up a team to deal with all adult social care complaints on their behalf. We expect that many complaints from people who have arranged and funded their care will involve the actions of both the local authority and the care provider. We are developing information-sharing agreements with the Care Quality Commission and with councils in their roles as adult safeguarding leads and service commissioners.

Council first

We introduced our Council first procedure in April last year. With some exceptions, we require complainants to go through all stages of a council's own complaints procedure before we will consider the complaint. It aims to build on the improved handling of complaints by councils.

We are going to research the views of people whose complaints have been referred to councils as premature. We are also still keen to hear from councils about how the procedure is working, particularly on the exception categories. Details of the categories of complaint that are normally treated as exceptions are on our website at www.lgo.org.uk/guide-for-advisers/council-response

Training in complaint handling

Demand for our training in complaint handling has remained high, with 118 courses delivered over the year to 53 different authorities. Our core Effective Complaint Handling course is still the most popular – we ran some of these as open courses for groups of staff from different authorities. These are designed to assist those authorities that wish to train small numbers of staff and give them an opportunity to share ideas and experience with other authorities.

The new Effective Complaint Handling in Adult Social Care course, driven by the introduction of the new statutory complaints arrangements in health and adult social care in April 2009, was also popular. It accounted for just over a third of bookings.

Over the next year we intend to carry out a thorough review of local authority training needs to ensure that the programme continues to deliver learning outcomes that improve complaint handling by councils.

Statements of reasons

Last year we consulted councils on our broad proposals for introducing statements of reasons on the individual decisions of an Ombudsman following the investigation of a complaint. We received very supportive and constructive feedback on the proposals, which aim to provide greater transparency and increase understanding of our work. Since then we have been carrying out more detailed work, including our new powers. We intend to introduce the new arrangements in the near future.

Delivering public value

We hope this information gives you an insight into the major changes happening within the LGO, many of which will have a direct impact on your authority. We will keep you up to date through LGO Link as each development progresses, but if there is anything you wish to discuss in the meantime please let me know.

Mindful of the current economic climate, financial stringencies and our public accountability, we are determined to continue to increase the efficiency, cost-effectiveness and public value of our work.

Dr Jane Martin
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Appendix 1: Notes to assist interpretation of the statistics 2009/10

Table 1. LGO Advice Team: Enquiries and complaints received

This information shows the number of enquiries and complaints received by the LGO, broken down by service area and in total. It also shows how these were dealt with, as follows.

Premature complaints: The LGO does not normally consider a complaint unless a council has first had an opportunity to deal with that complaint itself. So if someone complains to the LGO without having taken the matter up with a council, the LGO will either refer it back to the council as a 'premature complaint' to see if the council can itself resolve the matter, or give advice to the enquirer that their complaint is premature.

Advice given: These are enquiries where the LGO Advice Team has given advice on why the LGO would not be able to consider the complaint, other than the complaint is premature. For example, the complaint may clearly be outside the LGO's jurisdiction.

Forwarded to the investigative team (resubmitted premature and new): These are new cases forwarded to the Investigative Team for further consideration and cases where the complainant has resubmitted their complaint to the LGO after it has been put to the council.

Table 2. Investigative Team: Decisions

This information records the number of decisions made by the LGO Investigative Team, broken down by outcome, within the period given. **This number will not be the same as the number of complaints forwarded from the LGO Advice Team** because some complaints decided in 2009/10 will already have been in hand at the beginning of the year, and some forwarded to the Investigative Team during 2009/10 will still be in hand at the end of the year. Below we set out a key explaining the outcome categories.

MI reps: where the LGO has concluded an investigation and issued a formal report finding maladministration causing injustice.

LS (local settlements): decisions by letter discontinuing our investigation because action has been agreed by the authority and accepted by the LGO as a satisfactory outcome for the complainant.

M reps: where the LGO has concluded an investigation and issued a formal report finding maladministration but causing no injustice to the complainant.

NM reps: where the LGO has concluded an investigation and issued a formal report finding no maladministration by the council.

No mal: decisions by letter discontinuing an investigation because we have found no, or insufficient, evidence of maladministration.

Omb disc: decisions by letter discontinuing an investigation in which we have exercised the LGO's general discretion not to pursue the complaint. This can be for a variety of reasons, but the most common is that we have found no or insufficient injustice to warrant pursuing the matter further.

Outside jurisdiction: these are cases which were outside the LGO's jurisdiction.

Table 3. Response times

These figures record the average time the council takes to respond to our first enquiries on a complaint. We measure this in calendar days from the date we send our letter/fax/email to the date that we receive a substantive response from the council. The council's figures may differ somewhat, since they are likely to be recorded from the date the council receives our letter until the despatch of its response.–

Table 4. Average local authority response times 2009/10

This table gives comparative figures for average response times by authorities in England, by type of authority, within three time bands.

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LGO Advice Team

| Enquiries and complaints received | Adult care services | Children and family services | Education | Housing | Benefits | Public Finance inc. Local Taxation | Planning and building control | Transport and highways | Other | Total |
|--|---------------------|------------------------------|-----------|----------|----------|------------------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------|-----------|------------|
| Formal/informal premature complaints | 2 | 6 | 1 | 2 | 5 | 2 | 16 | 1 | 6 | 41 |
| Advice given | 2 | 4 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 3 | 8 | 3 | 6 | 28 |
| Forwarded to investigative team (resubmitted prematures) | 2 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 5 | 2 | 2 | 12 |
| Forwarded to investigative team (new) | 2 | 4 | 7 | 2 | 1 | 0 | 21 | 9 | 18 | 64 |
| Total | 8 | 15 | 8 | 6 | 6 | 5 | 50 | 15 | 32 | 145 |

Investigative Team

| Decisions | MI reps | LS | M reps | NM reps | No mal | Omb disc | Outside jurisdiction | Total |
|-------------|---------|----|--------|---------|--------|----------|----------------------|-------|
| 2009 / 2010 | 0 | 14 | 0 | 0 | 15 | 4 | 17 | 50 |

Response times

| Response times | FIRST ENQUIRIES | |
|------------------------|------------------------|----------------------------|
| | No. of First Enquiries | Avg no. of days to respond |
| 1/04/2009 / 31/03/2010 | 48 | 27.1 |

Average local authority resp times 01/04/2009 to 31/03/2010

| Types of authority | <= 28 days % | 29 - 35 days % | > = 36 days % |
|----------------------------|--------------|----------------|---------------|
| District Councils | 61 | 22 | 17 |
| Unitary Authorities | 68 | 26 | 6 |
| Metropolitan Authorities | 70 | 22 | 8 |
| County Councils | 58 | 32 | 10 |
| London Boroughs | 52 | 36 | 12 |
| National Parks Authorities | 60 | 20 | 20 |

LGO Advice Team

| Enquiries and complaints received | Adult care services | Children and family services | Education | Planning and building control | Transport and highways | Other | Total |
|--|---------------------|------------------------------|-----------|-------------------------------|------------------------|----------|-----------|
| Formal/informal premature complaints | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 2 |
| Advice given | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| Forwarded to investigative team (resubmitted prematures) | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| Forwarded to investigative team (new) | 1 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 3 | 1 | 7 |
| Total | 3 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 11 |

Investigative Team

| Decisions | MI reps | LS | M reps | NM reps | No mal | Omb disc | Outside jurisdiction | Total |
|-------------|---------|----|--------|---------|--------|----------|----------------------|-------|
| 2009 / 2010 | 0 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 7 | 0 | 1 | 12 |

Average local authority resp times 01/04/2009 to 31/03/2010

| Response times | FIRST ENQUIRIES | |
|------------------------|------------------------|----------------------------|
| | No. of First Enquiries | Avg no. of days to respond |
| 1/04/2009 / 31/03/2010 | 7 | 35.7 |
| 2008 / 2009 | 25 | 35.8 |
| 2007 / 2008 | 18 | 39.1 |

| Types of authority | <= 28 days % | 29 - 35 days % | > = 36 days % |
|----------------------------|-----------------|-------------------|------------------|
| District Councils | 61 | 22 | 17 |
| Unitary Authorities | 68 | 26 | 6 |
| Metropolitan Authorities | 70 | 22 | 8 |
| County Councils | 58 | 32 | 10 |
| London Boroughs | 52 | 36 | 12 |
| National Parks Authorities | 60 | 20 | 20 |

LGO Advice Team

| Enquiries and complaints received | Housing | Benefits | Planning and building control | Other | Total |
|--|----------|----------|-------------------------------|----------|----------|
| Formal/informal premature complaints | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| Advice given | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 |
| Forwarded to investigative team (resubmitted prematures) | 0 | 0 | 2 | 1 | 3 |
| Forwarded to investigative team (new) | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 3 |
| Total | 1 | 1 | 4 | 2 | 8 |

Investigative Team

| Decisions | MI reps | LS | M reps | NM reps | No mal | Omb disc | Outside jurisdiction | Total |
|-------------|---------|----|--------|---------|--------|----------|----------------------|-------|
| 2009 / 2010 | 0 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 5 | 5 | 1 | 14 |

| Response times | FIRST ENQUIRIES | |
|------------------------|------------------------|----------------------------|
| | No. of First Enquiries | Avg no. of days to respond |
| 1/04/2009 / 31/03/2010 | 11 | 53.3 |
| 2008 / 2009 | 23 | 40.5 |
| 2007 / 2008 | 18 | 43.1 |

Average local authority resp times 01/04/2009 to 31/03/2010

| Types of authority | <= 28 days % | 29 - 35 days % | >= 36 days % |
|----------------------------|-----------------|-------------------|-----------------|
| District Councils | 61 | 22 | 17 |
| Unitary Authorities | 68 | 26 | 6 |
| Metropolitan Authorities | 70 | 22 | 8 |
| County Councils | 58 | 32 | 10 |
| London Boroughs | 52 | 36 | 12 |
| National Parks Authorities | 60 | 20 | 20 |

LGO Advice Team

| Enquiries and complaints received | Housing | Planning and building control | Transport and highways | Other | Total |
|--|----------|-------------------------------|------------------------|----------|----------|
| Formal/informal premature complaints | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| Advice given | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 |
| Forwarded to investigative team (resubmitted prematures) | 0 | 2 | 0 | 2 | 4 |
| Forwarded to investigative team (new) | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 3 |
| Total | 1 | 4 | 1 | 3 | 9 |

Investigative Team

| Decisions | MI reps | LS | M reps | NM reps | No mal | Omb disc | Outside jurisdiction | Total |
|-------------|---------|----|--------|---------|--------|----------|----------------------|-------|
| 2009 / 2010 | 0 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 4 | 1 | 10 |

Average local authority resp times 01/04/2009 to 31/03/2010

| Response times | FIRST ENQUIRIES | |
|------------------------|------------------------|----------------------------|
| | No. of First Enquiries | Avg no. of days to respond |
| 1/04/2009 / 31/03/2010 | 6 | 43.8 |
| 2008 / 2009 | 10 | 44.4 |
| 2007 / 2008 | 10 | 34.6 |

| Types of authority | <= 28 days % | 29 - 35 days % | > = 36 days % |
|----------------------------|-----------------|-------------------|------------------|
| District Councils | 61 | 22 | 17 |
| Unitary Authorities | 68 | 26 | 6 |
| Metropolitan Authorities | 70 | 22 | 8 |
| County Councils | 58 | 32 | 10 |
| London Boroughs | 52 | 36 | 12 |
| National Parks Authorities | 60 | 20 | 20 |

LGO Advice Team

| Enquiries and complaints received | Planning and building control | Total |
|--|-------------------------------|-------|
| Forwarded to investigative team (resubmitted prematures) | 1 | 1 |
| Forwarded to investigative team (new) | 4 | 4 |
| Total | 5 | 5 |

Investigative Team

| Decisions | MI reps | LS | M reps | NM reps | No mal | Omb disc | Outside jurisdiction | Total |
|-------------|---------|----|--------|---------|--------|----------|----------------------|-------|
| 2009 / 2010 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 5 | 3 | 0 | 10 |

Average local authority resp times 01/04/2009 to 31/03/2010

| Response times | FIRST ENQUIRIES | |
|------------------------|------------------------|----------------------------|
| | No. of First Enquiries | Avg no. of days to respond |
| 1/04/2009 / 31/03/2010 | 3 | 34.7 |
| 2008 / 2009 | 15 | 22.1 |
| 2007 / 2008 | 12 | 66.1 |

| Types of authority | <= 28 days % | 29 - 35 days % | > = 36 days % |
|----------------------------|--------------|----------------|---------------|
| District Councils | 61 | 22 | 17 |
| Unitary Authorities | 68 | 26 | 6 |
| Metropolitan Authorities | 70 | 22 | 8 |
| County Councils | 58 | 32 | 10 |
| London Boroughs | 52 | 36 | 12 |
| National Parks Authorities | 60 | 20 | 20 |

LGO Advice Team

| Enquiries and complaints received | Housing | Benefits | Planning and building control | Other | Total |
|--|----------|----------|-------------------------------|----------|-----------|
| Formal/informal premature complaints | 1 | 0 | 5 | 1 | 7 |
| Advice given | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| Forwarded to investigative team (resubmitted prematures) | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| Forwarded to investigative team (new) | 0 | 1 | 2 | 0 | 3 |
| Total | 2 | 1 | 8 | 1 | 12 |

Investigative Team

| Decisions | MI reps | LS | M reps | NM reps | No mal | Omb disc | Outside jurisdiction | Total |
|-------------|---------|----|--------|---------|--------|----------|----------------------|-------|
| 2009 / 2010 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 4 |

| Response times | FIRST ENQUIRIES | |
|------------------------|------------------------|----------------------------|
| | No. of First Enquiries | Avg no. of days to respond |
| 1/04/2009 / 31/03/2010 | 4 | 12.8 |
| 2008 / 2009 | 11 | 19.7 |
| 2007 / 2008 | 12 | 37.1 |

Average local authority resp times 01/04/2009 to 31/03/2010

| Types of authority | <= 28 days % | 29 - 35 days % | > = 36 days % |
|----------------------------|-----------------|-------------------|------------------|
| District Councils | 61 | 22 | 17 |
| Unitary Authorities | 68 | 26 | 6 |
| Metropolitan Authorities | 70 | 22 | 8 |
| County Councils | 58 | 32 | 10 |
| London Boroughs | 52 | 36 | 12 |
| National Parks Authorities | 60 | 20 | 20 |

LGO Advice Team

| Enquiries and complaints received | Housing | Benefits | Planning and building control | Total |
|--|----------|----------|-------------------------------|----------|
| Formal/informal premature complaints | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 |
| Forwarded to investigative team (resubmitted prematures) | 0 | 0 | 2 | 2 |
| Forwarded to investigative team (new) | 1 | 1 | 0 | 2 |
| Total | 1 | 1 | 3 | 5 |

Investigative Team

| Decisions | MI reps | LS | M reps | NM reps | No mal | Omb disc | Outside jurisdiction | Total |
|-------------|---------|----|--------|---------|--------|----------|----------------------|-------|
| 2009 / 2010 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 6 |

Average local authority resp times 01/04/2009 to 31/03/2010

| Response times | FIRST ENQUIRIES | |
|------------------------|------------------------|----------------------------|
| | No. of First Enquiries | Avg no. of days to respond |
| 1/04/2009 / 31/03/2010 | 4 | 18.5 |
| 2008 / 2009 | 15 | 19.1 |
| 2007 / 2008 | 16 | 25.1 |

| Types of authority | <= 28 days % | 29 - 35 days % | >= 36 days % |
|----------------------------|-----------------|-------------------|-----------------|
| District Councils | 61 | 22 | 17 |
| Unitary Authorities | 68 | 26 | 6 |
| Metropolitan Authorities | 70 | 22 | 8 |
| County Councils | 58 | 32 | 10 |
| London Boroughs | 52 | 36 | 12 |
| National Parks Authorities | 60 | 20 | 20 |

LGO Advice Team

| Enquiries and complaints received | Housing | Planning and building control | Other | Total |
|--|---------|-------------------------------|-------|-------|
| Forwarded to investigative team (resubmitted prematures) | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 |
| Forwarded to investigative team (new) | 1 | 1 | 0 | 2 |
| Total | 1 | 1 | 1 | 3 |

Investigative Team

| Decisions | MI reps | LS | M reps | NM reps | No mal | Omb disc | Outside jurisdiction | Total |
|-------------|---------|----|--------|---------|--------|----------|----------------------|-------|
| 2009 / 2010 | 0 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 4 | 0 | 1 | 8 |

Response times

| | FIRST ENQUIRIES | |
|------------------------|------------------------|----------------------------|
| | No. of First Enquiries | Avg no. of days to respond |
| 1/04/2009 / 31/03/2010 | 5 | 31.4 |
| 2008 / 2009 | 10 | 33.8 |
| 2007 / 2008 | 8 | 42.9 |

Average local authority resp times 01/04/2009 to 31/03/2010

| Types of authority | <= 28 days % | 29 - 35 days % | > = 36 days % |
|----------------------------|-----------------|-------------------|------------------|
| District Councils | 61 | 22 | 17 |
| Unitary Authorities | 68 | 26 | 6 |
| Metropolitan Authorities | 70 | 22 | 8 |
| County Councils | 58 | 32 | 10 |
| London Boroughs | 52 | 36 | 12 |
| National Parks Authorities | 60 | 20 | 20 |