



**EVERY CUSTOMER, EVERY TIME -
“Everybody Matters”**

Making Experiences Count

Quarterly Customer Service Report

REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL

1st July 2013 – September 2013



1. Introduction

This report provides some of the key customer service information for the organisation, including:-

- Analysis of the complaints and compliments received during this quarter and any other relevant feedback, and
- Customer Service Centre management information, including transactional statistics for information.

2. Customer Feedback Analysis

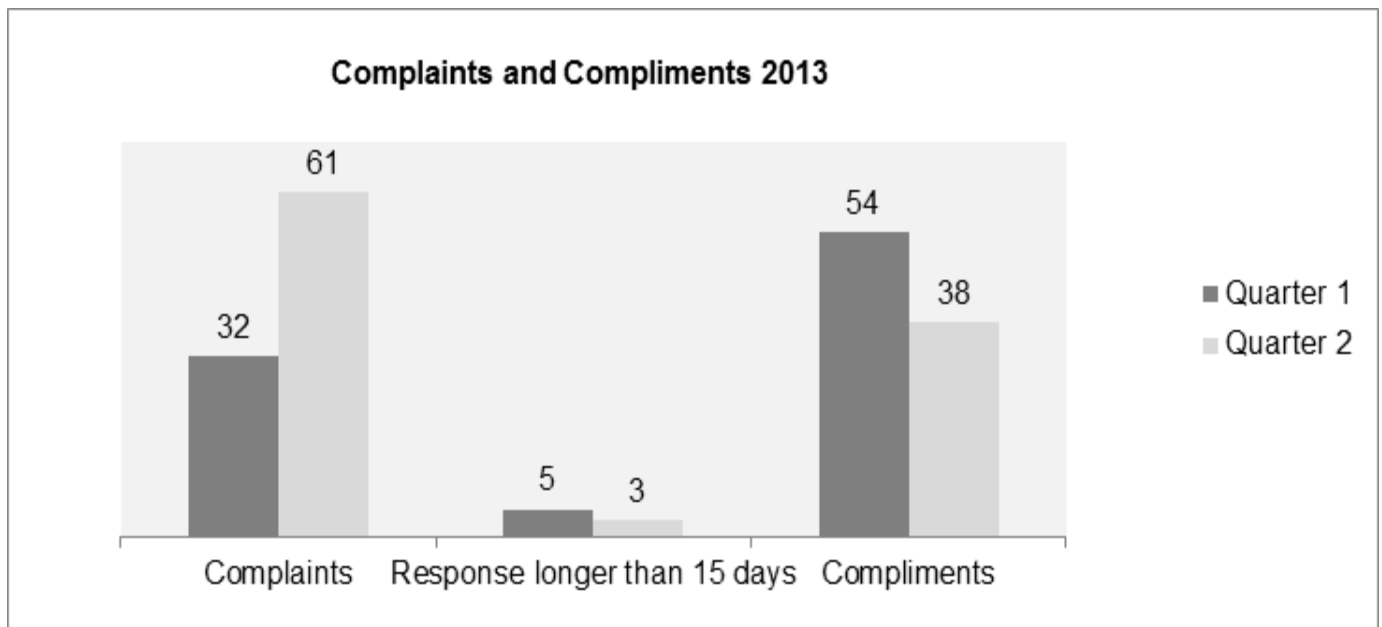
61 complaints were received during this quarter because we did not meet the customer's expectations, or failed to meet our own standards, or the customer was unhappy with an outcome.

55 complaints (90%) were answered in 15 working days or less – 3 complex Housing complaints are still open at this time

3 complaints took longer than 15 working days to respond to and details of these complaints are listed below.

We also received **38 compliments**.

This chart shows number of complaints and compliments for Quarter 1 and Quarter 2; we will continue to chart this as a comparison through the year.



The number of complaints received is nearly double than that received last quarter.

The main reason for the rise in numbers is that teams in transformation are much more aware of the need to capture demand data and therefore more contact from customers is being recorded.

We have also had more Refuse and Landscaping complaints this quarter. We can see that this is due to the recent changes with the Route Optimisation project which has seen a change of collection days, along with new routes, new team members and new patterns of duty for refuse and recycling teams. Landscaping complaints usually increase slightly in the summer months due to seasonal growth.

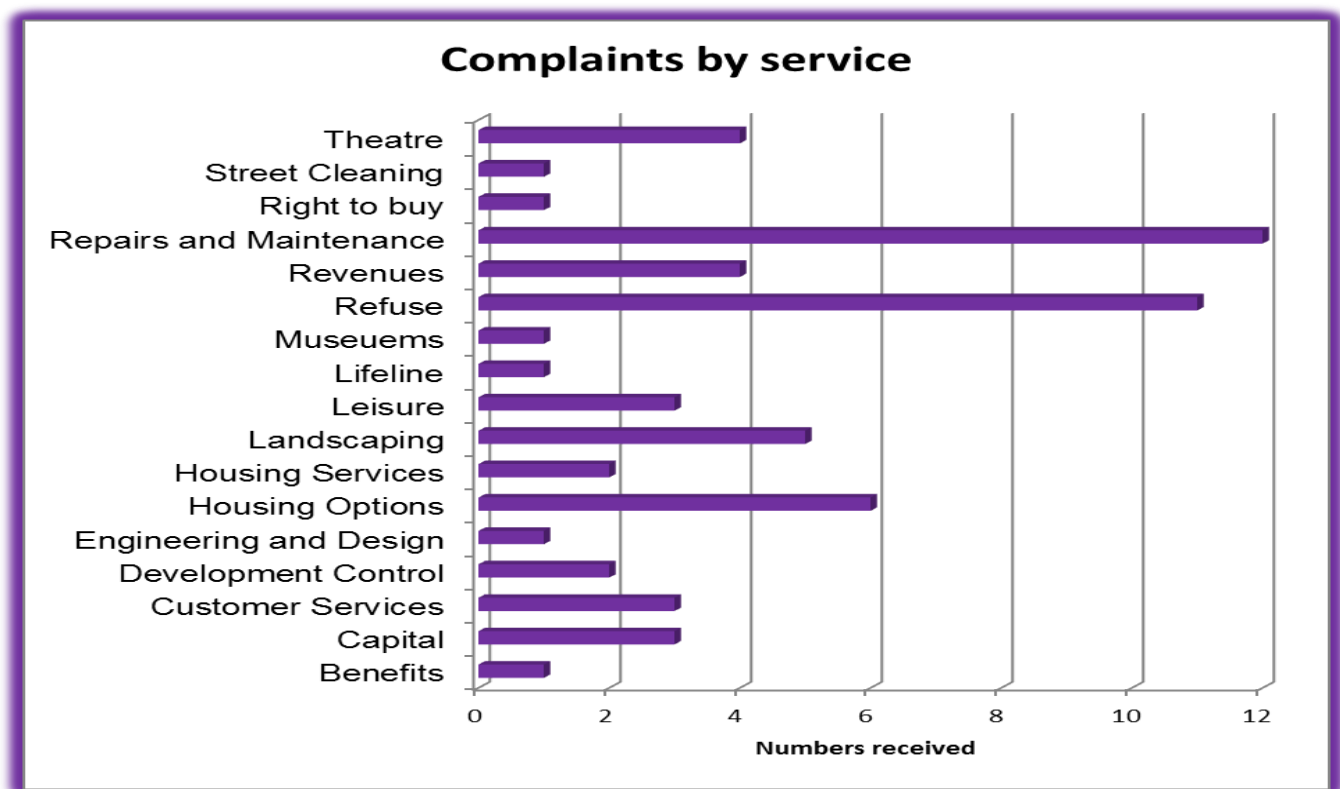
Over the past six months a trial of a new complaints process within the Housing Department has been underway. Through this trial we are seeing significant positive evidence that we can resolve complaints more quickly and effectively by taking a personal approach to each customer. This approach gives us a greater understanding of what the real problems are. This trial will be rolled out to other departments across both Councils by the end of the year.

The common themes in the complaints received this quarter were:

- Confusing information or no information received about changes to refuse service.
- Missed bins.
- Staff being unfriendly.
- Not doing what we promised to do.
- Not responding to customer's calls and queries.
- Unacceptable delays in taking action.
- Not keeping customers informed of changes/cancellations of service.

Number of complaints by service (detailed)

The following chart provides a breakdown of complaints by service.



Time taken to respond to complaints

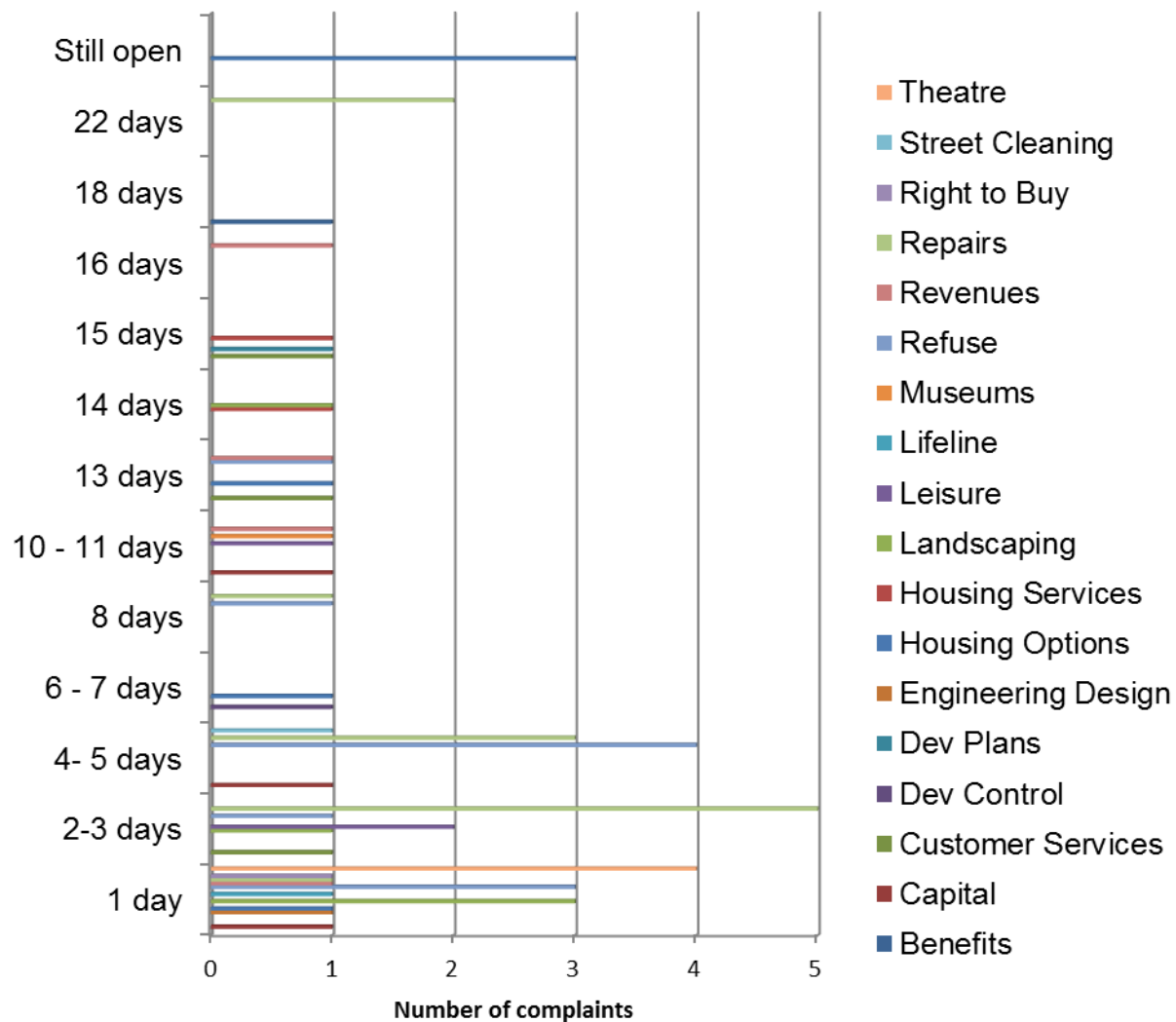
We aim to respond to customer complaints within 15 working days and **90%** of complaints received during this quarter were dealt with within that timeframe. Where it has taken us longer to respond than expected, (3 cases) customers were informed that there would be a delay.

The following table details the complaints which took longer than 15 working days to deal with and why.

Complaint details	Days taken to respond	Action taken	Outcome update from Head of Service
Benefits			
Customer feels that it is unfair that the Council are trying to recover overpayment when years ago they didn't tell her entitled to more.	18 days	Explained calculation and helped her understand her benefits and what was being decided better	
Repairs			
Customer unhappy that when work carried out by contractors on path when cement was mixed in road, left a terrible mess in road and surrounding area not cleaned up.	22 days Staff sickness	Apology given and area cleared	This has been discussed with the contractors to ensure it doesn't happen again
Customer has reported several repairs that he needs due to his disability.	22 days- Staff sickness	Repairs carried out and apology given	No further action

Time taken to respond to complaints by service.

Complaints by response time and service



This chart shows the breakdown of all complaints by response time. Data suggests that the end to end time for responding to complaints is generally based on the nature of the service and/or complaint rather than any one service dealing with complaints in an unsatisfactory way.

“You said – we listened” – what did we change as a result of complaints?

Some of the changes made as a result of complaints include:-

- Landscaping now record more precise information and spend longer talking to customers to gain right understanding.
- Landscaping now carry out site inspections with customers to make sure correct work is undertaken.
- New process has been introduced to improve communication between teams to ensure that when a repair to a property will result in essential facilities being unavailable for a night/several day's, the repairs team is aware that temporary accommodation can be offered to the tenant if reported promptly.

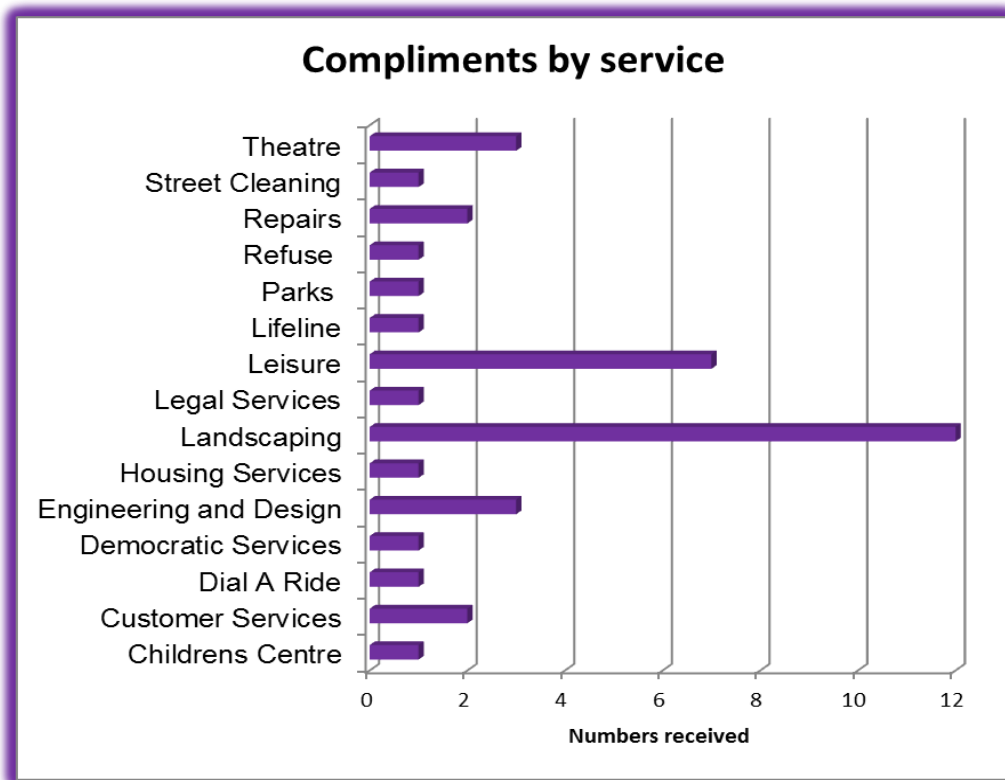
- Leisure working to improve disabled access for Kingsley Leisure.

Number of complaints escalated to Head of Customer Services

There were no complaints escalated to the Head of Customer Services for further investigation or action.

Happy Customers!

From the 38 compliments received we can see that customers appreciate the range of services the Council provides, especially when we deal with their requests in a timely and professional manner.



Here are details of some of the compliments we have received for information.

Team	Compliment Detail
Lifeline	Customer is very pleased with the service she received from Lifeline and called to thank us.
Children's Centres	Thank you for helping students with their placement.
Dial a Ride	Customer telephoned the Dial-a-ride office to inform staff that she is very grateful for the service we offer towards her mom. Without Dial-a-ride her mom would be housebound, as the daughter works nights as a nurse and they have no other family members.
Customer Services	I will never forget Hilary as she was most kind and helpful to me when I was having difficulties on a previous occasion. I was in debt and you

	pointed me in the direction of a free debt counselling agency Christians Against Poverty and it has helped turn my life around, and I would like to thank her.
Landscaping	Work to trees requested by Diane Brown home support officer. Residents rang to say a big thank you to the Landscape Dept for the good work carried out.
Landscaping	Customer rang to say a big thank you for all involved in getting her tree work done. She said that the Tree Surgeons had all been great especially Elliott.
Refuse	Thank you to the refuse crew for their patience and understanding with her young autistic son who has developed an obsession with bin collections. Their friendliness has helped him develop his confidence.
Street Cleaning	Thanks to the team for responding so quickly and removing the horse manure from the roads.
Housing Services	Thanks to everyone involved in my move as I know I am not always the easiest person to deal with.
Repairs	Customer phoned to say thank you to repairs for the very good job they did on his front garden wall and in particular to supervisor Steve, who was very helpful.
Facilities Team	I just wanted to thank you and your team for making myself and the delegates so welcome on my training session. Nothing was too much trouble for anyone. The reception staff walked me to my room and made sure I had everything I needed. All of this helped to make the event a success. I train at a lot of venues and trust me there are many commercial venues that could learn a trick or two from you and the team there.
Legal	Customer said that Karen Gibbs, Legal Officer had been "absolutely brilliant" in helping complete a matter that had been delayed by other parties, causing cost and distress to her clients; that Karen had "helped tremendously" in finally getting it completed as quickly as it was possible to do.
Theatre	Just a big THANK YOU for all the help and support given to us to stage the Historic Film Festival. Pleased to say there were no major issues and we were very pleased with the turnout from the Redditch public. Many people came up and said how much they had enjoyed it which made it all worthwhile.

3. Local Government Ombudsman Complaints

There were no complaints referred to the Ombudsman this quarter:

4. Customer Service Centre Information

This section provides some statistical information in respect of the amount of customer demand received via the telephones, face to face and through our payment channels.

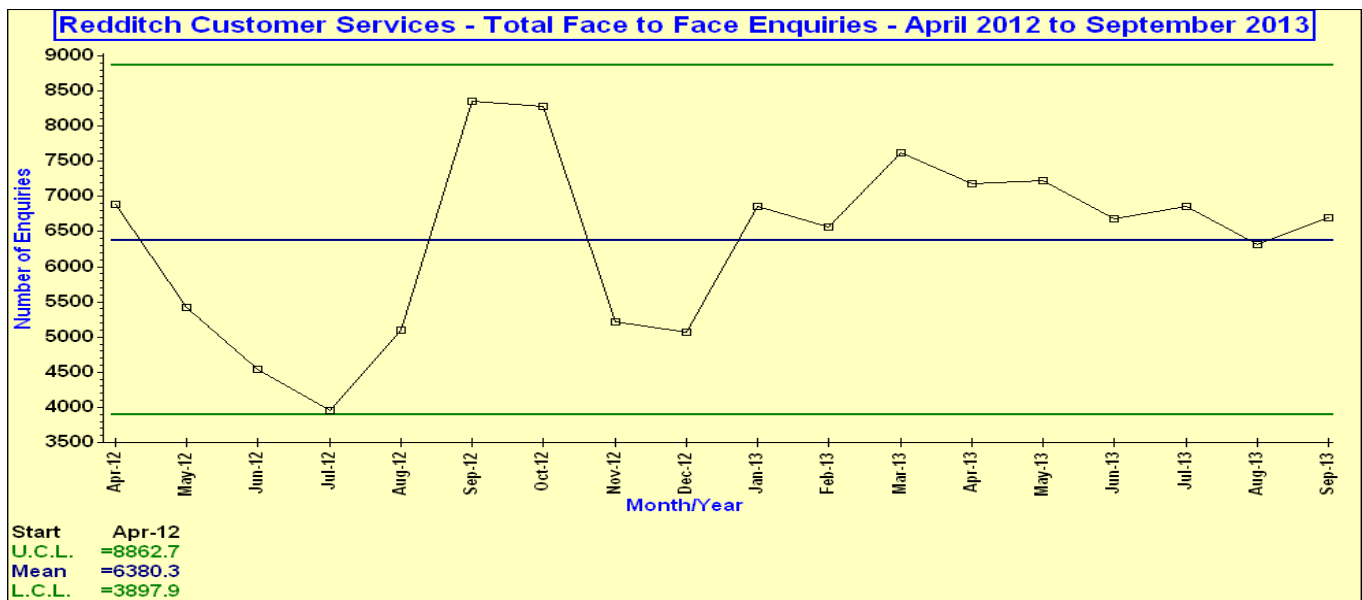
The operational purpose of the Customer Services Team is “Help me get the support I need with my issue or problem”. Most customer demand is now passed to expert teams and the customer service staff act as a filter to ensure that the customer gets to see or speak to the right expert.

We use this information to help us understand the demand on all council services.

The following tables and charts show the number of customer transactions recorded and trends over time.

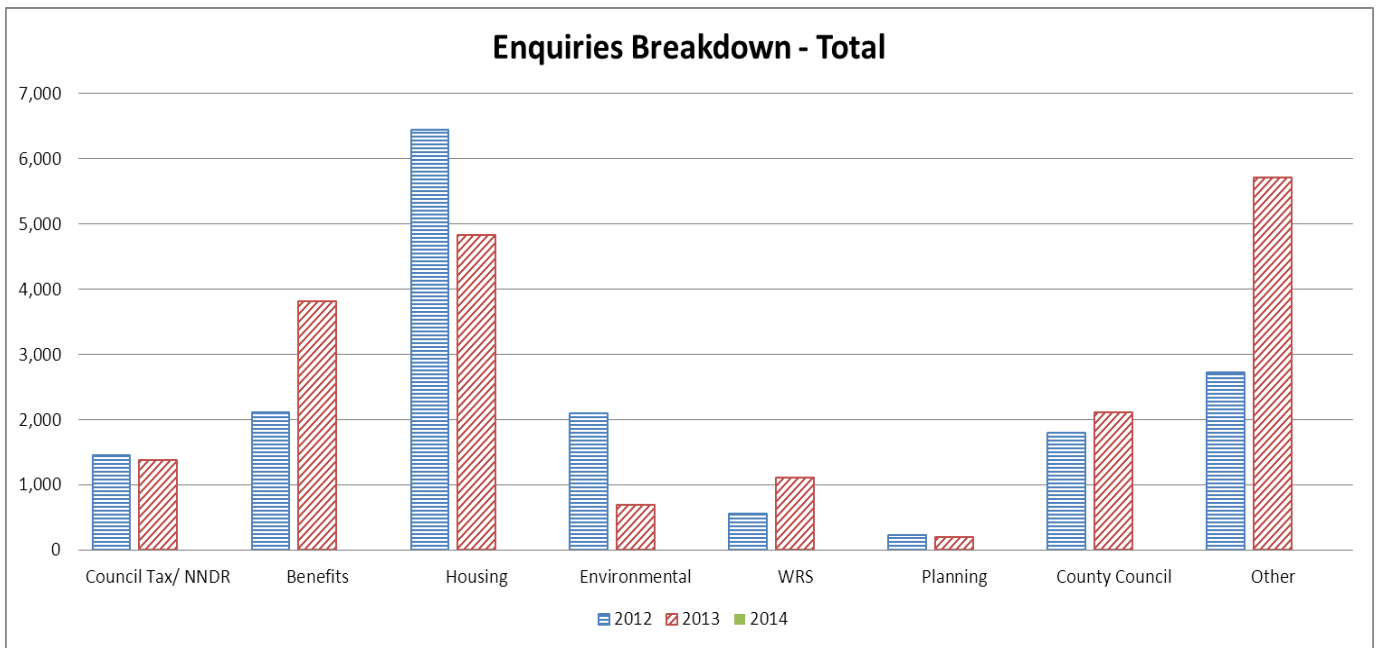
Face to face demand at the Customer Service Centre

The following chart shows the total face to face enquiries being dealt with at the customer service centre and One Stop Shops on a month by month basis from April 2012 to September 2013. It informs of patterns that occur and the data is then used to plan for busy times and to check the reasons for the peak, this may identify waste in systems which can then be addressed.



The following chart shows the breakdown of face to face enquiries received during the 2nd quarter of 2013/14, compared with the same period last year. Due to the change in recording during 2012/13 the data cannot be used as a comparison, only as an indicator of the spread of volumes.

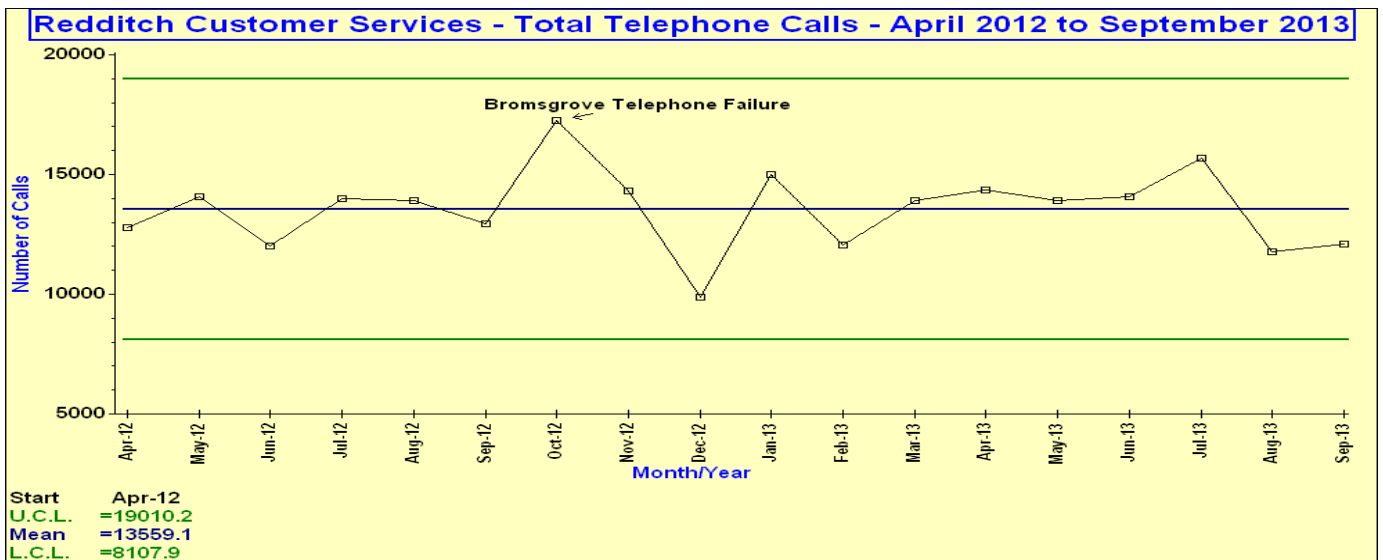
There appears to be a high volume of enquiries logged as “Other” and we are looking into the reasons for this.



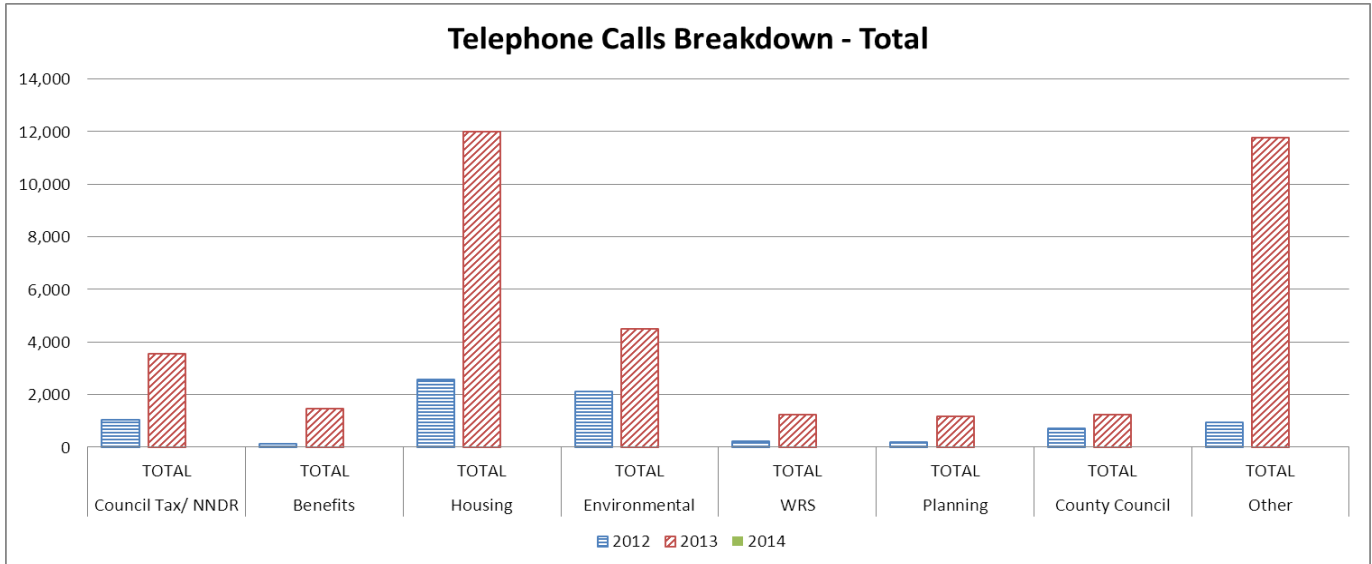
Telephone Demand Received

The following chart shows the total telephone calls recorded on the customer service systems from April 2012 until the end of September 2013.

In July we see an increase in calls, which was the impact of calls regarding Route Optimisation, with customers asking for clarification on the changes and an increasing number of calls for Housing services.



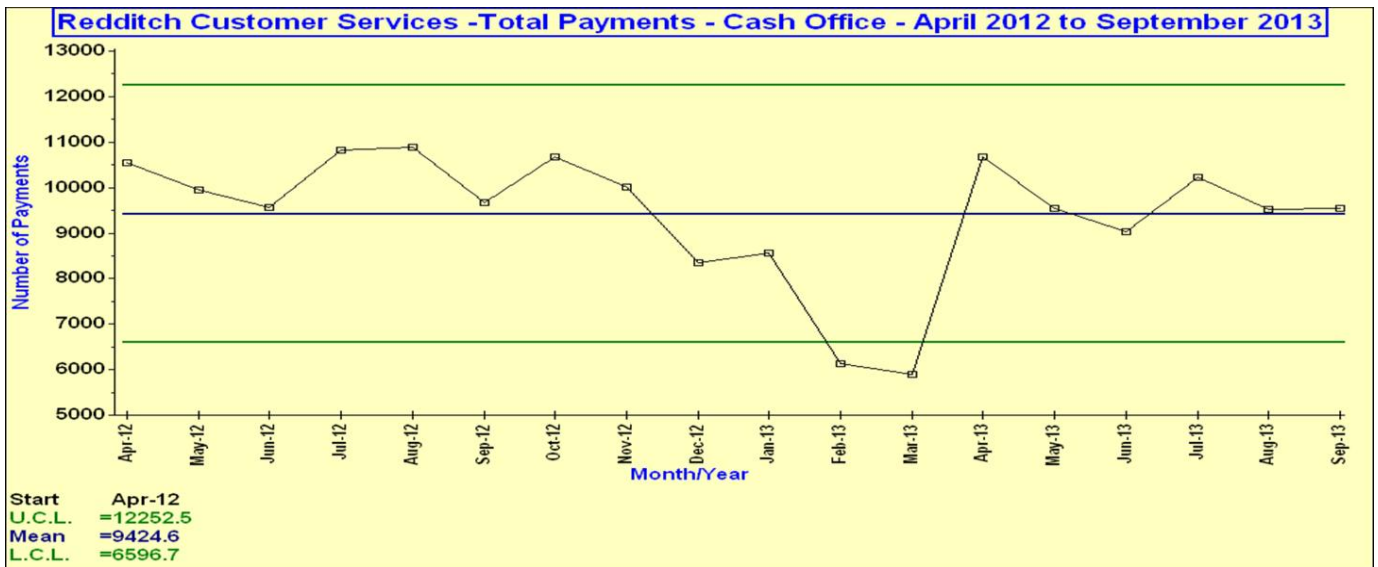
The following chart shows the breakdown of calls received via the switchboard and customer service centre phone lines by department during the quarter. (Calls made to direct dial lines are not recorded and therefore not included.) The 2012 data does not include switchboard calls which accounts for the significant difference when comparing years.



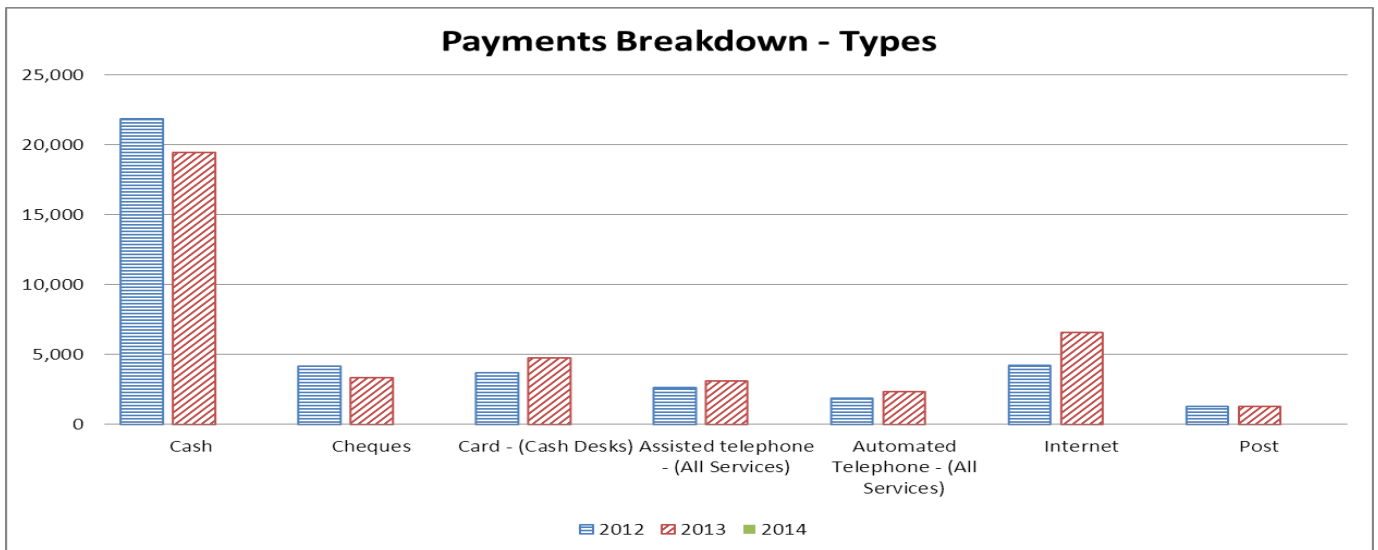
We can see a high volume in both face to face enquiries and telephone calls in the “Other” reporting. In August we did split out some enquiries into specific services, however the volume recorded remains high. It is increasingly difficult for our staff to know every member of staff and the service they work within, and the system they currently use does not identify both. For this reason staff log calls as ‘other’ when they do not know the department to which they relate. We are working to resolve this with IT service.

Payments

The following chart shows a month on month comparison of payments received by the cash offices and customer services staff during the period April 2012 to end of September 2013. Quarterly bills for Lifeline and sundry debt letters increased volumes of payments during July.



This chart shows the breakdown of payments across all payment channels and evidences a small reduction of payments made by cash. We are seeing a continued consistent increase in the use of automated payments channels, online and on the telephone.



Lynn Jones
 Customer Services Manager
 September 2013