



3Cs Performance Summary

Annual Performance Summary 2007 - 08

Complaints Volumes

Total Number of Complaints Received (Stage One)	2,754
Total Number of Complaints to Stage Two Appeal	137
Total Number of Complaints to Stage Three Appeal	10

The 3Cs procedure has generated a huge uplift in customer feedback. The Ombudsman identifies this as 'a good indication of the rebuilding of trust between Nottingham City Homes and its client base'.

To put this figure into context, 759 complaints were recorded in 2006 / 7, and 256 in 2005/6.

5% of Stage 1 complaints have been escalated by customers to Stage 2. At the moment it is unclear whether this figure reflects either satisfaction with the initial response, or a lack of customer willingness to escalate their complaint (or even that they were aware that they could escalate their complaint). A VMS survey to confirm the level of customer satisfaction with the Stage 1 complaint response will be issued in May. An example of the survey is included as an appendix to this report.

Justified / Unjustified Complaints

Stage 1:

Outcome	Volume	%
Justified	957	37.3%
Partly Justified	788	30.7%
Unjustified	822	32%
Total	2567	100%

There were 187 open Stage 1 complaints awaiting decision on 31 March 2008.

Stage 2:

Of 131 closed Stage 2 complaints, 81 had the appeal upheld (61.8%), and 50 were not upheld (38.2%). Six were still live on 31 March 2008.

Outcome	Volume	%
Justified	81	61.8%
Unjustified	50	38.2%
Total	131	100%

Complaints were upheld at Stage 2 after being unjustified at Stage 1 for several different reasons.

Certain complaints were escalated to Stage 2 because the customer was dissatisfied with the quality of the response itself – in terms of correctly identifying the complaint, and presenting the reply in a customer friendly style.

To address this, key complaint handling staff have been trained in complaint resolution by the Local Government Ombudsman, and in straightforward complaint response by the Campaign For Plain English.

In addition the Customer Service Improvement Team devised a set of complaint handling and response standards, to provide consistency in the way customer's complaints are logged, investigated, and responded to.

Some relatively straightforward complaints, for instance about cyclical repairs, were upheld and remedied at Stage 2 because the investigator had the authority to arrange repairs quickly for customers with special need or when health and safety was a concern. This would not have been within the remit of the officer responding to the Stage 1 complaint. This flexible approach to interpreting policy and procedure is indicative of a readiness to put the customer first and tailor the response to individual customer need, which is reflected in the wider company culture change.

An important learning from Stage 2 is the value of the 'problem solving meeting' which allows the complainant and the investigator to meet face to face to review all aspects of the complaint, including the customer's preferred outcome, to reach a common understanding about what can be done to resolve it. Of the 10 Stage 3 complaints received during the year, only one of these had featured a problem solving meeting at Stage 2.

Using feedback from Stage 3, Panel members has strongly recommended the value of a face to face meeting with complainants earlier in the complaint process. This endorsement of the problem solving meeting is a key recommendation for effective complaint resolution in 2008/9.

Stage 3:

Prior to the 3Cs, complaints would pass to the Ombudsman after the appeal stage. Stage 3 brings the complaint before an appeals panel, and allows the Company to ensure that all aspects of the complaint have been addressed and that the customer has had the opportunity to present their concerns in person.

10 complaints were escalated to Stage 3 during the year, representing 20% of unjustified Stage 2 complaints. Five of these were presented to an appeals panel. Five were either resolved prior to a panel meeting, or were withdrawn by the customer.

Of the five complaints presented to a Panel, three were upheld and two were not upheld.

One of the appeals upheld was because the appellant was able to disclose previously unknown information which presented their complaint in a new light and resulted in it being upheld. Before the 3Cs, the complainant would in all likelihood have referred their case to the Ombudsman.

Stage 3 complaints have consistently highlighted the value of taking time to talk to the customer in person to ensure that all aspects of their complaint have been registered. This reflects back on the importance of the Stage 2 problem solving meeting and the value of a customer focused organisation which actively listens to its client base.

Complaints by Type

Service	Number of Complaints	Proportion of all Complaints
Repairs & Maintenance	2249	81.6%
Tenancy & Estate Management	312	11.3%
Customer Service*	64	2.3%
Voids and Allocations	74	2.7%
Rents	39	1.4%
Sheltered Housing	16	0.6%
Total	2754	100%

*only used as a separate category until Aug 2007.

Repairs and maintenance work accounts for the majority of complaints, reflecting the high volume of jobs undertaken (averaging 3078 each week during 2007/8). To gain a little perspective, this means that 1.4% of repair and maintenance jobs generated a complaint. The Customer Relations Team will provide benchmarking information from comparable ALMO's to put this figure into context.

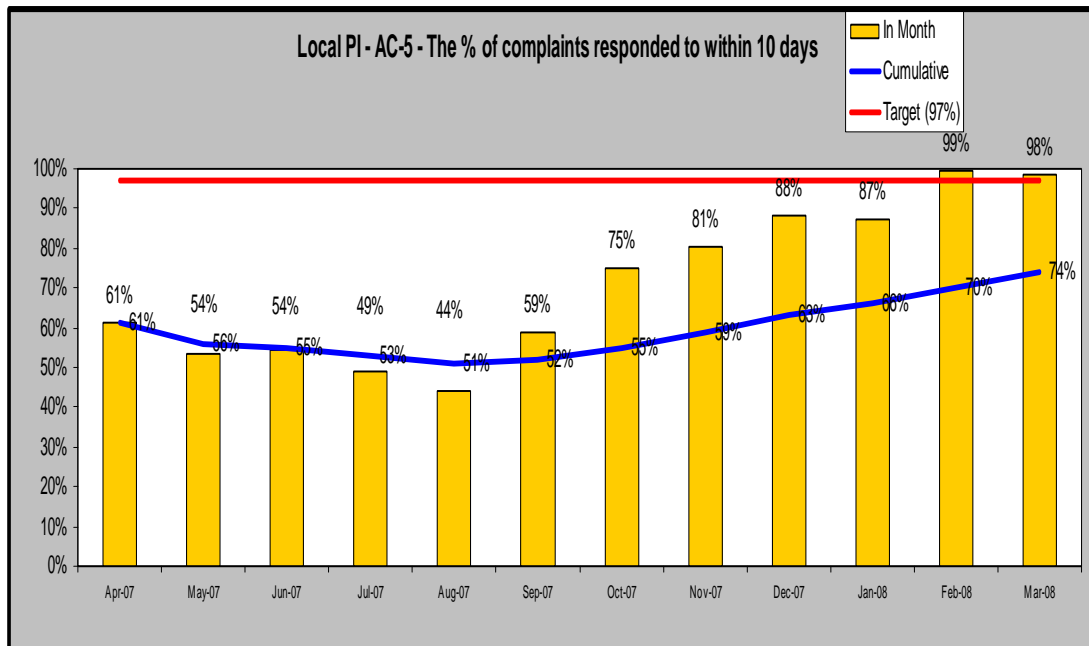
The Customer Relations Team is leading on the roll-out of a series of monthly Complaint Clinics to identify learning from complaints. Representatives of the CRT, the Customer Service Improvement Team, and operational staff will meet to discuss how to respond operationally to complaint trends, preventing recurrences and improving service delivery – 'you said, we did'.

The first of these took place in April, concentrating on gas servicing complaints. Recommendations from the clinic will be reviewed next month, and the process will be copied within the other service areas.

Within the Company's current shift towards a customer driven ethic, complaints logged against staff attitude / conduct are collated monthly and forwarded to Assistant Directors to help identify training or disciplinary issues.

Complaints Response Rates

The month on month response performance is shown below:



The 3Cs procedure was introduced in April; in August it was amended after a review which was impeding complaint response times had been identified and rectified. During the first four months of the year, all complaints were assigned to Area Housing Managers regardless of service area.

Performance reports highlighted response delays, particularly regarding repairs complaints. The procedure was consequently amended to address complaints to the relevant service area.

Subsequently, performance has improved such that 98% of complainants received a response within the 10 day target in March 2008.

This performance has also been influenced by the emphasis on customer care as part of the Company's wide-reaching culture change programme.

Continuous improvement will be driven further during 2008/9 by the revised response target of five days.

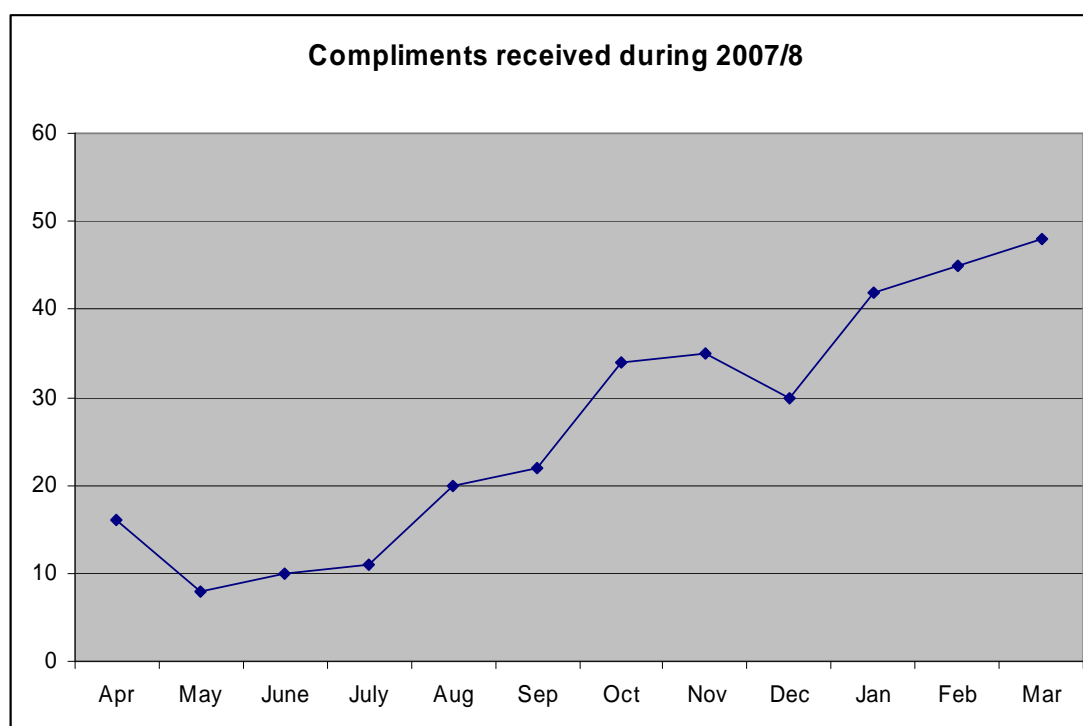
Compliments

Service Area	Number	Percentage
Repairs & Maintenance	159	49.5%
Tenancy & Estate Management	106	33%
Sheltered Housing	28	8.7%
Rents	13	4%
Voids & Allocations	8	2.5%
Tenant participation	2	0.5%
Houndsgate	5	1.5%
Total	321	100%

Compliment volumes have steadily increased through the year, alongside efforts to do more to publicise positive feedback and to recognise staff who receive customer praise.

All staff who receive customer compliments are sent a letter of thanks from a Company Director. This has helped to raise the profile of the positive feedback which the Company receives, which has historically been under-recorded.

The system is also used to record internal compliments from staff and partners. Plans for the coming year include entering the names of all staff who receive compliments into a monthly prize draw.



Local Government Ombudsman Enquiries

Service	Number	Percentage
Repairs & Maintenance	22	47%
Tenancy Management	11	24%
Voids & Allocations	10	21%
Rents	2	4%
Other	2	4%
Total	47	100%

- The average number of days taken to respond to an Ombudsman enquiry this year has reduced from 44 days in 2006/7 to 25 days against a year end target of less than 28 days.
- During the year, there were no complaints received from the Ombudsman which had originated within the 3Cs – an endorsement of the thoroughness of the new procedure.

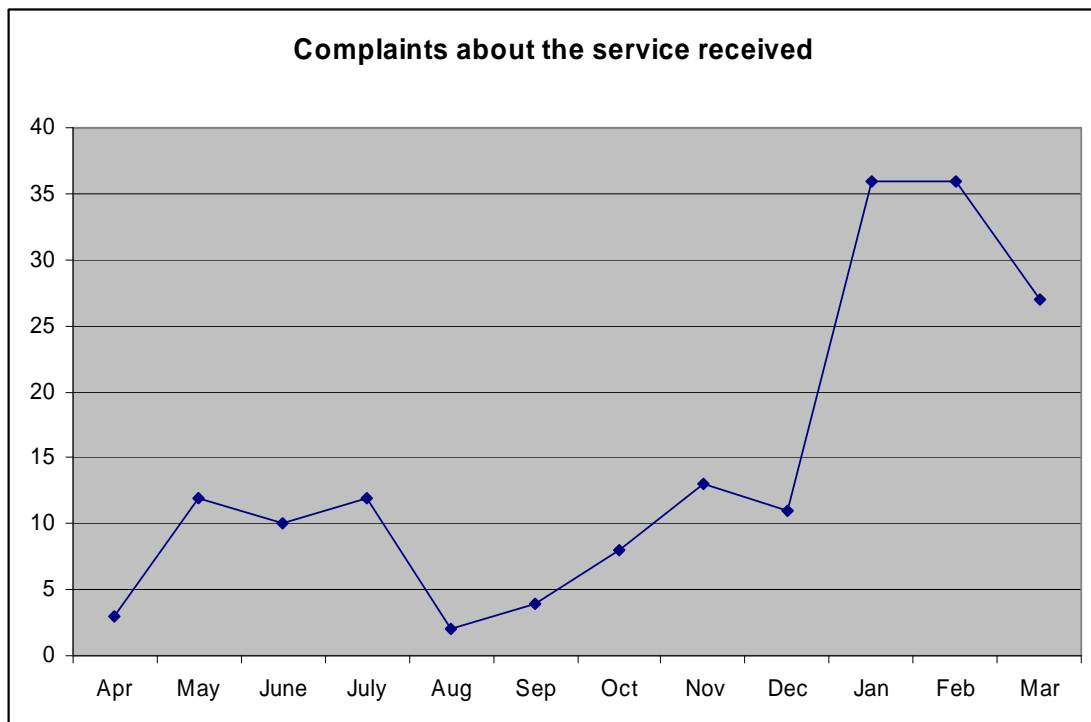
Outcome	Number	Percentage
Premature Complaint	18	30%
Local Settlement	17	28%
No / Insufficient evidence of Maladministration	9	15%
Ombudsman's Discretion	3	5%
Maladministration	1	2%
Redirected to NCC	2	3%
Outside Jurisdiction	2	3%
Request for Information Only	4	6%
Still Live	5	8%
Total	61	100%

Ombudsman Complaints as a percentage of all complaints received (including premature complaints):

Year	Volume	% of all complaints received
2005/6	32	12.5%
2006/7	44	5.8%
2007/8	61	2.2%

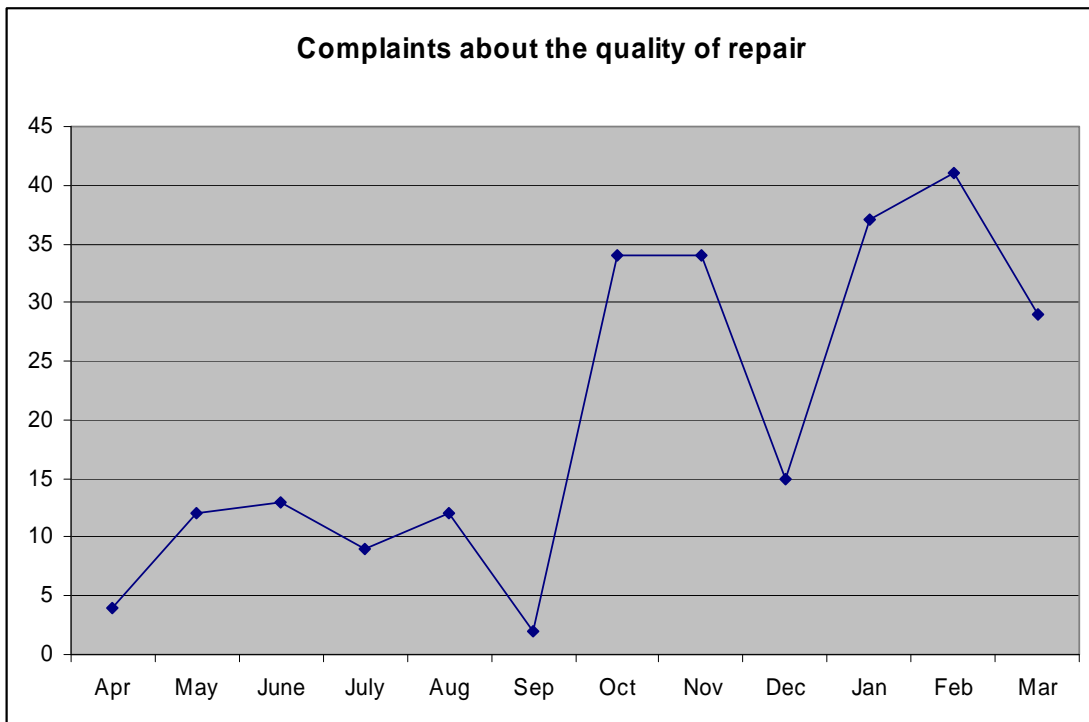
Complaint Trends

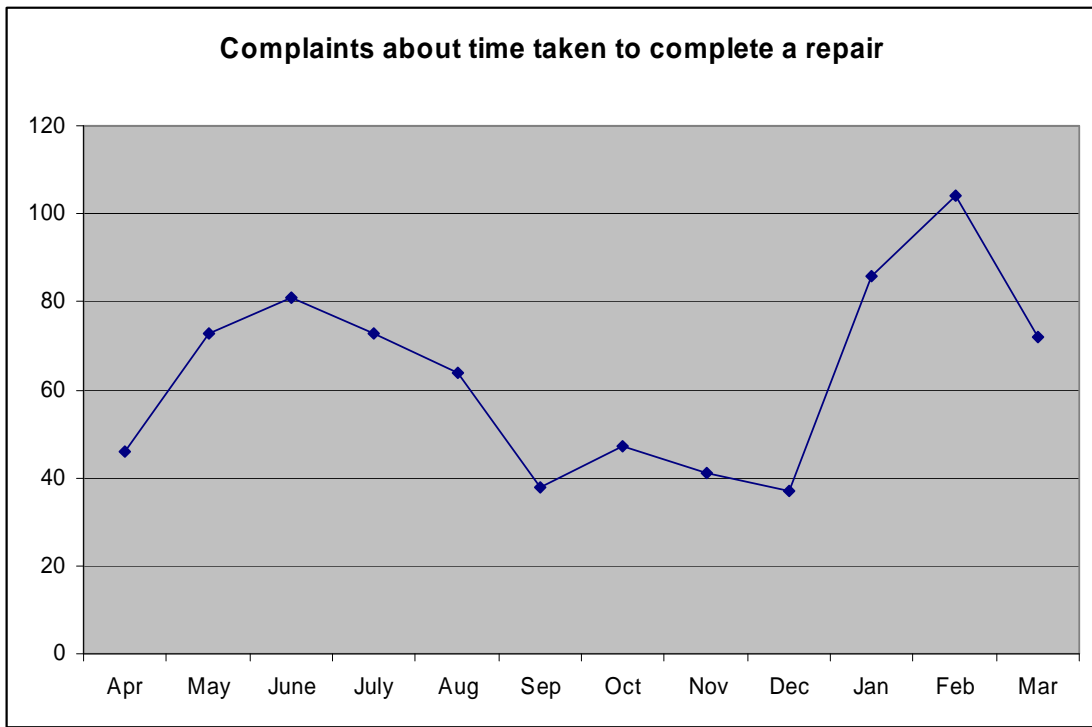
Within the Company's current shift towards a customer driven ethic, complaints logged against staff attitude / conduct are collated monthly and forwarded to Assistant Directors to help identify training or disciplinary issues.



The following three graphs depict the trends in the main repair complaint sub-categories of failed appointments, quality of repair, and time taken to complete a repair.

This information will be forwarded monthly to service heads, with cumulative performance tracked to identify the impact of recommendations generated by monthly Complaint Clinics.





Responsible Officer: Tom Welch
Date: 24 April 2008

'You Said, We Did'

- Carding procedure

Following a series of customer complaints about being 'carded' for repair jobs, the procedure was changed. On arrival at an apparently empty property, operatives now call a dedicated phone number to the customer service improvement team. A member of staff then telephones the customer, and logs the incident on iWorld and on a separate spreadsheet. If they are unable to reach the customer by phone, only then is the job considered 'tenant failed'.

- Sickle Cell Disease

Following a Stage 2 complaint about the allocation of an unsuitable property to a single mother who has sickle cell anaemia, the Customer Relations Manager contacted the support group OSCAR to ask if a meeting could be arranged with the tenant in a bid to learn about her experience of pursuing the complaint and to understand what might be done to prevent future customers undergoing a similar experience.

Following the meeting, in conjunction with the Equality and Diversity Team and OSCAR, a 'know your customer' factsheet about sickle cell disease was included in Team Briefing to raise awareness about the condition. As a result, at least one tenant has had a repair done urgently because of their condition and the health risks concerned.

- Leaseholder complaints

A leaseholder customer contacted NCH to ask for permission to change her windows. Once permission was granted, she asked NCH to provide her with a quote and carry out the works at her own cost (on a recharge basis).

Unfortunately, because knowledge about leaseholders was low within the company, her request was not addressed for over two years, until the creation of the Leaseholder and Rechargeable Repairs Team.

To address this, the Leaseholder & Rechargeable Repairs Team have recently completed Leaseholder Awareness Training Sessions at several locations around the city.

These sessions have given all frontline customer service colleagues an awareness of our obligations to our leaseholder customers to avoid such an occurrence from happening again.

- Decent Homes Information on the Internet

A customer in Aspley raised a complaint about the lack of information on the company website about the Decent Homes programme. The NCH website is undergoing an overhaul, which will include extensive information about Warm Safe and Secure, which was partly prompted by this customer's complaint.

- Gas servicing complaints clinic

The first repairs complaints clinic was held in April, focusing on gas servicing complaints. The clinic recommended that outbound calling in the evenings would help to contact as many customers due for a gas servicing appointment as possible, minimising the number of failed appointments, and therefore complaints.

VMS Complaint satisfaction survey card

CUSTOMER SCORECARD

Complaints

On a scale of 1 to 10 (1 being the worst and 10 being the best), will you please score the following questions. (Please circle).

		<i>Worst</i>									<i>Best</i>
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1.	How do you rate how easy it was for you to make your complaint?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
2.	How do you rate the helpfulness of our staff when receiving your complaint?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
3.	How do you rate the advice and information given to you?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
4.	How do you rate the time taken to resolve your complaint?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
5.	How well were you kept informed during the handling of your complaint?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
6.	How do you rate the quality of the final response you received?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
7.	How well did the action taken meet your needs?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
8.	How well do you feel our staff understood your complaint?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
9.	How well did staff handle your complaint?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
10.	Overall how do you rate the service you received?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10