

Annual Report on Complaints 1<sup>st</sup> April 2024 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025

| Summary of Complaints in YTD                                                              | April - Sept | Oct - March | YTD | Annual Target |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|-------------|-----|---------------|
| Number of Complaints Received per 6 Months:                                               | 9            | 10          | 19  | <20           |
| Percentage of complaints dealt with in accordance with agreed deadline of 15 working days | 88.8%        | 90%         |     |               |

| Complaint Ref, Date Made and Stage | Service and Reason for Complaint                                                                                                                                                | Date Response Sent | Outcome                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | Any Change in Processes/Practices as a Result of Complaint Investigation |
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| Ref. C571<br>02/05/2024<br>Stage 1 | Planning:<br><br>Receiving a refusal despite working with Authority Officers over the design of windows.<br>Felt that the action is grossly unprofessional.                     | 20/05/2024         | Refuted allegations of poor service and unprofessional conduct. Amended plans and additional information provided did not resolve the issues raised by Officers. Complainant advised to submit a revised application and reminded they have the right to appeal the refusal decision. | None.                                                                    |
| Ref. C572<br>07/05/2024<br>Stage 1 | Landscape & Engagement<br><br>Complaint concerning uncontrolled dogs in the Peak District.                                                                                      | 08/05/2024         | Response explained legislation and countryside code. Agreed that uncontrolled dogs are frustrating for everyone and that Rangers will advise dog owners when required.                                                                                                                | None.                                                                    |
| Ref. C573<br>08/05/2024<br>Stage 1 | Planning<br><br>Advised to submit a planning application incurring expense, to subsequently be told by Planning Officer that no planning application is required for the works. | 31/05/2024         | Apology given and costs reimbursed.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | Staff training                                                           |

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| Ref. C574<br>17/05/2024<br>Stage 1                              | Planning<br><br>Alleged that a Conservation Officer wrote a consultation response to a Planning Application that the complainant felt unprofessional and that the comments made questioned the Agent's competence in the public realm.   | 20/05/2024                                          | Apologised for the tone of the response, but stated that the facts of the matter were accurate.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | None.                                            |
| Ref. C575<br>22/05/2024<br>Stage 1                              | Landscape & Engagement<br><br>Incident in the Goyt Valley.<br><br>Failure to implement a Traffic Management Order – to close the highway thus endangering the public.<br><br>Failure to have regard to the safety of a disabled visitor. | 31/05/2024                                          | Apologised that the complainant found the incident distressing, explained that on the day in question a casual member of staff was unable to work due to a family emergency, and another member of staff could not be found to cover.<br><br>Due to the staff shortage, the gate was left unlocked to enable any emergency vehicles to pass.<br><br>Explained that the Traffic Regulation Order was instigated by Derbyshire County Council. | None.                                            |
| Ref. C576<br>03/06/2024<br>Stage 1                              | Assets & Enterprise<br><br>Complaint regarding noise caused by renovation works at Authority owned property.                                                                                                                             | 05/06/2024                                          | Apologised for the inconvenience and annoyance caused.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | Reminded contractor of agreed hours of works.    |
| Ref. C577<br>21/06/2024<br>Stage 1<br><br>Stage 2<br>05/08/2025 | Planning<br><br>Alleged refusal by Officers to show authorisation to legally enter on to complainant's property.                                                                                                                         | 11/07/2024<br><br>Stage 2<br>response<br>14/08/2025 | Officers had tried several times to contact owner to confirm site visit.<br><br>Officers state that they had shown the authorisation badges and that the complainant had taken photographs of them.<br><br>Officers had retreated from site when asked to do so by complainant.                                                                                                                                                              | Reminded staff to remain courteous at all times. |

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|                                    |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |                                                         | Reviewed at Stage 2 – Officers had worked to expected protocols.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |       |
| Ref. C578<br>27/06/2024<br>Stage 1 | Assets & Enterprise<br><br>Objection to a new cycle hire centre being opened at Millers Dale, despite being given assurance from an Officer in 2019 that there would never be a cycle hire facility at that location.                                      | 18/07/2024<br><br>(holding response sent on 12/07/2024) | No letter or file note can be found that demonstrates the assurance was given. Officer concerned no longer works for the Authority.<br><br>An email notification had been sent to all parties with an interest on 18 <sup>th</sup> June to inform them that as part of the Authority's review into the Visitor Centre and Bike hire operations within the Authority it was intended to trial a new bike hire centre at Millers Dale Station.<br><br>Advised that if a planning application is submitted for a new cycle hire centre, there will be an opportunity for the complainant to make an objection.    | None. |
| Ref. C579<br>12/07/2024<br>Stage 1 | Assets & Enterprise<br><br>From Parish Council – objection to a new cycle hire centre being opened at Millers Dale, despite local business being given assurance from an Officer in 2019 that there would never be a cycle hire facility at that location. | 18/07/2024                                              | No letter or file note can be found that demonstrates the assurance was given. Officer concerned no longer works for the Authority.<br><br>An email notification had been sent to all parties with an interest on 18 <sup>th</sup> June to inform them that as part of the Authority's review into the Visitor Centre and Bike hire operations within the Authority it was intended to trial a new bike hire centre at Millers Dale Station.<br><br>Advised that if a planning application is submitted for a new cycle hire centre, there will be an opportunity for the Parish Council to make an objection. | None. |
| Ref. C580<br>14/10/2024<br>Stage 1 | Planning<br><br>Complaint regarding lack of coherent planning decisions being made.                                                                                                                                                                        | 07/11/2024<br><br>(Telephone conversation with          | Concluded that planning decisions made both via Officer delegation or by Members at Planning committee, had given due regard to all factors when considering the applications.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | None. |

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| Escalated to Stage 2<br>09/01/2025 |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | complainant by investigating officer seeking clarification on 17 October)<br><br>Stage 2 response<br>04/02/2025 | Stage 2 response reviewed complaint and Stage 1 response and concluded that Standing Orders and Code of Conduct had been followed.<br>Complainant thanked for feedback.                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |                                                                                                                               |
| Ref. C581<br>14/10/2024<br>Stage 1 | Senior Management Team<br><br>Allegation of further destruction by the Authority of land owned by the complainant and requesting compensation for a Tipi previously removed from site, which the complainant views as stolen.                                                             | 31/10/2024 and<br>13/11/2024                                                                                    | Reiterated that the Tipi is available to be collected from Authority storage facility. If Tipi not collected, it will be auctioned and any income used to offset costs incurred by the Authority for the direct action.<br><br>Explained that disturbance to the ground was caused by vehicles on site to remove unauthorised material and heavy items, as part of an enforcement case. | None                                                                                                                          |
| Ref. C582<br>29/10/2024<br>Stage 1 | Planning<br><br>Complaint regarding the advice given for a pre-application enquiry that windows did not require planning permission. As a consequence works commenced. The complainant was subsequently advised that they did need planning consent as the property is a Listed Building. | 08/11/2024                                                                                                      | The complainant sought full compensation for the monies that were spent in ordering the windows.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | Apology given and matter referred to Authority insurers.<br><br>Staff reminded of need to follow correct checking procedures. |

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| Ref. C583<br>14/11/2024<br>Stage 1 – direct to the Local Government Ombudsman | Planning<br><br>Complaint made to the Ombudsman regarding how the Authority dealt with a planning application and its decision to take enforcement action.                                                                                                                                   | n/a as the LGO responded                                                | The Local Government Ombudsman decided not to investigate as the complainant used his right to appeal to the Planning Inspector and had not suffered significant injustice in relation to the remaining issues that were complained about.                                                                                                                                                          | n/a                                      |
| Ref. C584<br>22/11/2024<br>Stage 1                                            | Planning<br><br>Complaint about the handling of a planning application and the subsequent Planning Appeal decision.                                                                                                                                                                          | 12/12/24 and 26/02/2025                                                 | Response stated that correct procedures had been followed in determining the planning application.<br><br>The Planning Appeal was dismissed.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | None                                     |
| Ref. C585<br>10/02/2025<br>Stage 1                                            | Assets & Enterprise<br><br>Complaint concerning the way in which a car parking fine was dealt with.<br><br>Complainant had issues in paying the parking fee on the day, which he explained via the appeal system.<br><br>Lack of empathy and negative impact on complainant's mental health. | 25/02/2025                                                              | Apologised that the system made the complainant frustrated and upset but outlined that the enforcement procedures followed are based on the Traffic Management Act 2004.<br><br>Advised that parking fees are used to support the maintenance of car parks and toilets, and that an annual permit could be purchased to make parking easier in the future.<br><br>The parking appeal was dismissed. | None                                     |
| Ref. C586<br>20/02/2025<br>Stage 1                                            | Planning<br><br>Complaint regarding handling and officer conduction of a planning application and enforcement notice, registration and disclosure of interests, predisposition,                                                                                                              | 04/04/2025<br><br>Clarification on points was requested on 3 March 2025 | Some complaints were already dealt with and responded to in a previous complaint C. 564.<br><br>Apology given for typographical error for an Officer job title, following reorganisation.<br><br>Allegation concerning Member was reviewed against the Member code of conduct, but was judged it did not prejudice the decision.                                                                    | Additional training provided for Member. |

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|                                     | predetermination or bias, discussions before a decision is taken, officer reports, public speaking at committee, delegated authority of enforcement notices and decision which differ from officer recommendations.                                                                                                    |            | Planning Appeal was upheld.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |      |
| Ref. C1586<br>05/03/2025<br>Stage 1 | <p>Planning</p> <p>Complaint regarding conflicting planning advice given by PDNPA Officers regarding demolition and rebuilding of a building and whether planning permission would be required.</p> <p>States that conflicting advice was given initially and then asked to submit multiple planning applications.</p> | 21/03/2025 | <p>Several planning enquiries were made by owner and also the builder. Some enquiries were closed, as requests for more information were made, but not forthcoming.</p> <p>Correct advice and protocols were followed by Planning staff.</p> <p>Planning application was subsequently submitted.</p> |      |
| Ref. C1588<br>21/03/2025<br>Stage 1 | <p>Assets &amp; Enterprise</p> <p>Lack of information available to locals in relation to proposed cycle track.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                     | 10/04/2025 | <p>The matter was discussed at 3 Local Access Forum meetings which are available to view on the Authority's website.</p> <p>Press releases had been sent to over 100 media contacts advising of the public consultation which from 5 February to 16 March 2025.</p>                                  | None |

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|                                                                                                                                                                                            |                                                                                                                                                 |                                                                                                                                                                                                  | <p>Parishes informed of the proposal in October 2024 at Parishes day.</p> <p>Advised the complainant that the item is to be discussed at a committee meeting in May 2025.</p>                                                       |      |
| <p>Ref. C1589<br/>21/03/2025<br/>Stage 1</p> <p>Complainant then submitted a complaint to the Local Government Ombudsman, which was referred back to Authority as a Stage 2 complaint.</p> | <p>Assets &amp; Enterprise</p> <p>Complaint from contractor regarding retention of monies for building project at Authority owned property.</p> | <p>Letter sent on 04/04/2025 advising that the matter was referred to an Officer, to deal with contractual points.</p> <p>Final response sent 05/06/2025.</p> <p>Stage 2 response 22/10/2025</p> | <p>A number of years have elapsed since the completion of the building works.</p> <p>Officer agreed to pay for some of the disputed items on production of an invoice, but not items which could not be seen on site or proven.</p> | None |

## Complaints Review

Since 2015, at Members' request, we have included a review and update on trends in complaints over the past 3 years in the Quarter 4 report.

| Numbers of Complaints Received Over Last 3 Years |                        |           |                                |                              |                    |                          |                   |                          |                   |                            |                |
|--------------------------------------------------|------------------------|-----------|--------------------------------|------------------------------|--------------------|--------------------------|-------------------|--------------------------|-------------------|----------------------------|----------------|
| Year                                             | No of Total Complaints |           |                                |                              |                    | No of Stage 1 Complaints |                   | No of Stage 2 Complaints |                   | No of Ombudsman Complaints |                |
| Period<br>1 April to<br>31 March                 | Received               | Withdrawn | Against<br>Planning<br>Service | Against<br>Other<br>Services | Against<br>Members | Planning<br>Service      | Other<br>Services | Planning<br>Service      | Other<br>Services | Planning Service           | Other Services |
| 2022/23                                          | 38                     | 5         | 31                             | 7                            | 25                 | 4                        | 4                 | 2                        | 0                 | 2                          | 0              |
| 2023/24                                          | 21                     | 1         | 11                             | 9                            | 0                  | 11                       | 9                 | 3                        | 4                 | 2                          | 0              |
| 2024/25                                          | 19                     | 0         | 10                             | 9                            | 2                  | 8                        | 8                 | 2                        | 1                 |                            | 1              |

The following trends in complaints have been identified:

2022/23 - The sharp increase in the number of complaints made against the Planning Service was due to community action regarding one particular enforcement site. This site was also the subject of the two complaints which were escalated to the Local Government Ombudsman, neither of which were upheld. If this community action was considered as one "super complaint" then the annual total would be much closer to the "less than 20" target. Other Services: Actions of Officers.

2023/24 – One complaint during this period was withdrawn, so the total received to compare against the target is 20. This is significantly less than last year. Trends identified are handling of planning applications and actions of Officers for Planning Service and actions of Officers in handling issues for Other Services.

2024/25 – The number of complaints received is slightly less than in the previous year. Trends identified are handling of planning applications and actions of Officers for Planning Service and actions of Officers in handling issues for Other Services. The non Planning Stage 2 complaint had initially been sent to the Local Government Ombudsman directly, but was referred back to the Authority as it hadn't gone through the Stage 2 complaint process.

Any changes in practices or learning from complaints are actioned after a complaint has been responded to and shown as part of the complaints report.