



Highways Complaints Report

Quarter 2

2023/24

October 2023

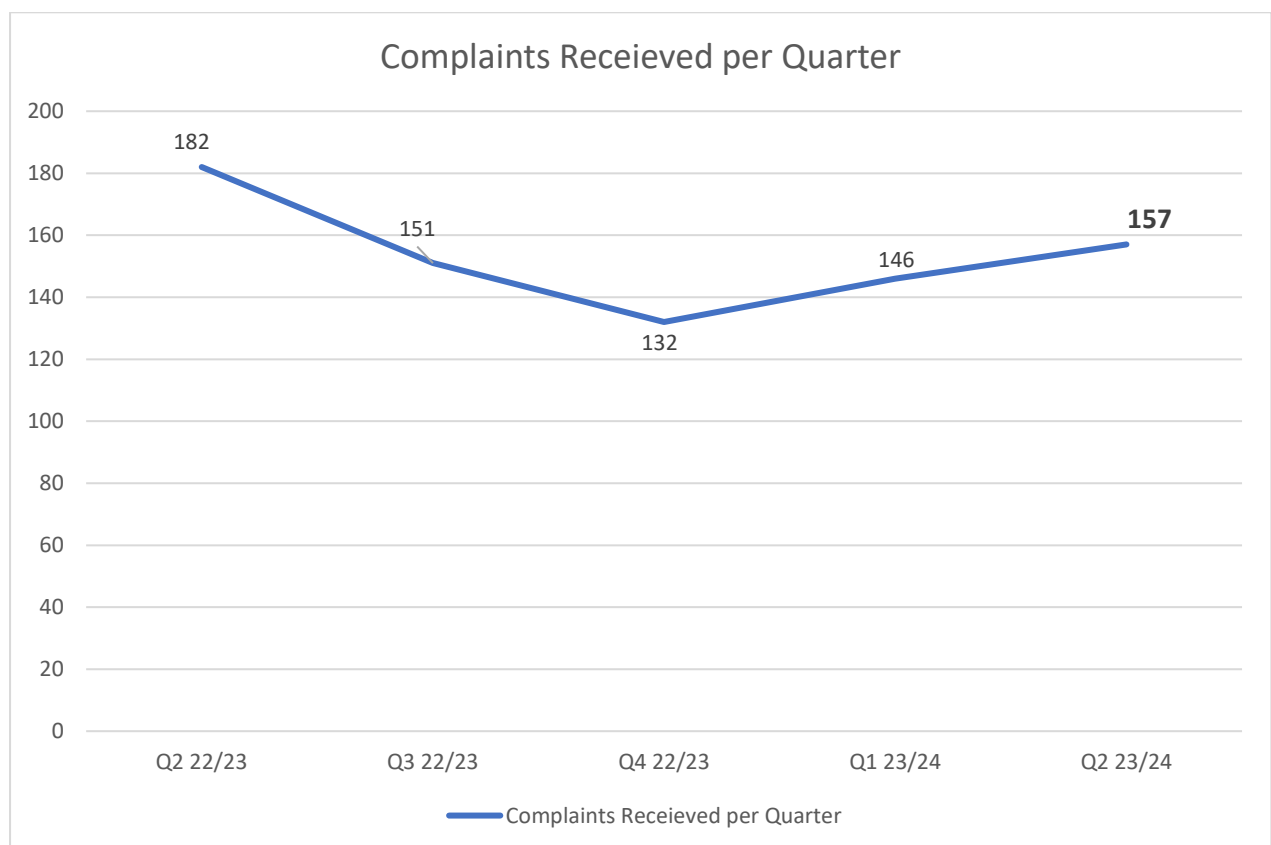
Introduction

The following report is a summary of findings from the complaints raised in the 2nd Quarter of 2023/2024 for Highways. Details on any common themes within complaints and overall figures for numbers received and the outcomes will be provided. This report will be incorporated into reports provided to the Audit Committee and CLT.

In this report the figures for each department will be broken down to provide a more in-depth look at the main issues we are currently experiencing.

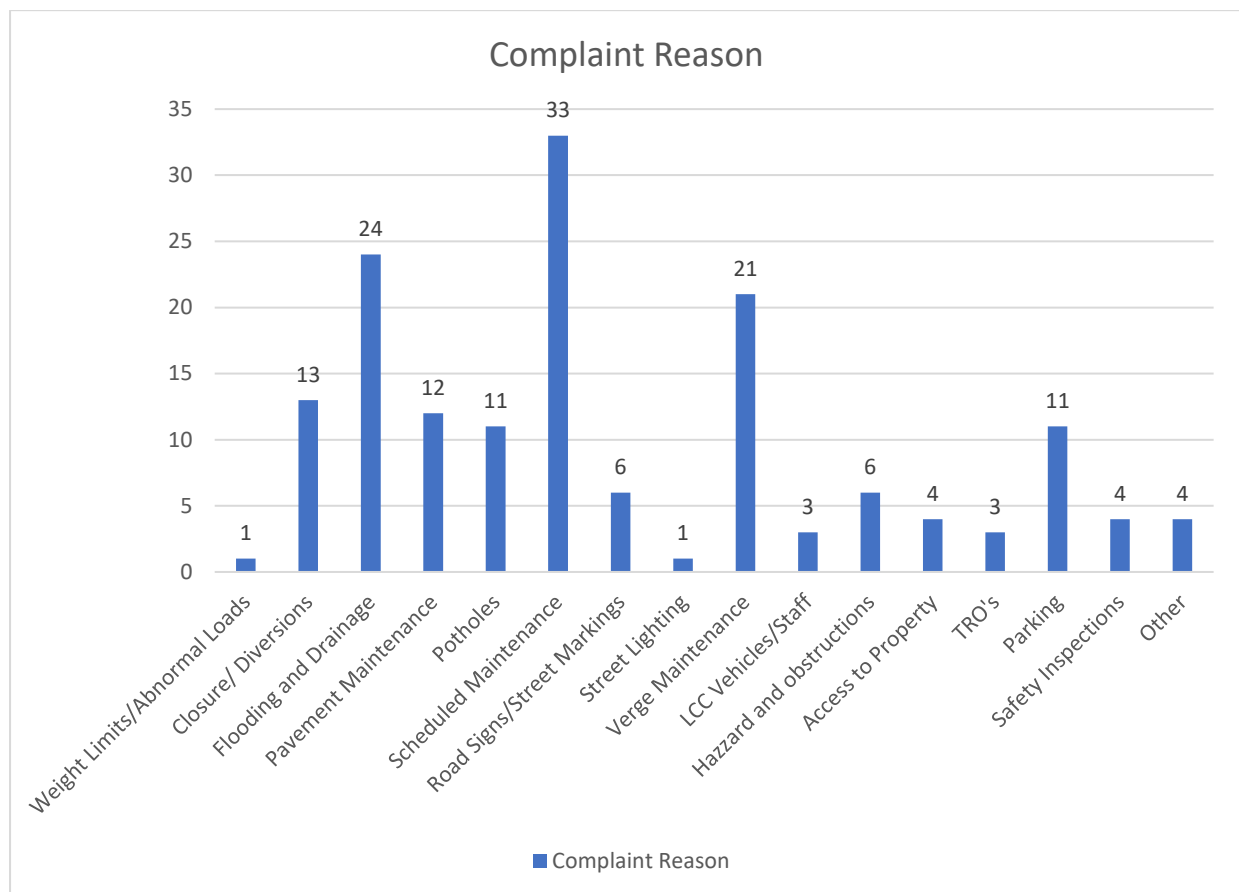
Q2 Overview

Lincolnshire County Council received a total of 7,470 Custer Service Centre calls and 8,532 Fix my street reports for the Highways Department. The Customer Relations Team received a total of 243 contacts in the second quarter of 2023/2024, from individuals wishing to give feedback, report issues or complain about various services. Of these 243 contacts, 157 entered the formal complaints process, this equates to 65% of all contacts received. The remainder were resolved informally through early resolution. The number of complaints entering the formal process has increased by 7.5% this quarter in comparison to the previous quarter and has decreased by 14% in comparison to the same quarter of the previous year.



Of the 157 complaints formally investigated, 6 cases were escalated to the next stage of the complaints process and required further investigation. 2 cases resulted in no fault being identified, 3 cases were partially upheld and 1 case was fully upheld. Fault was found in 4 cases due to works either not being completed within agreed timeframes or to the correct standard.

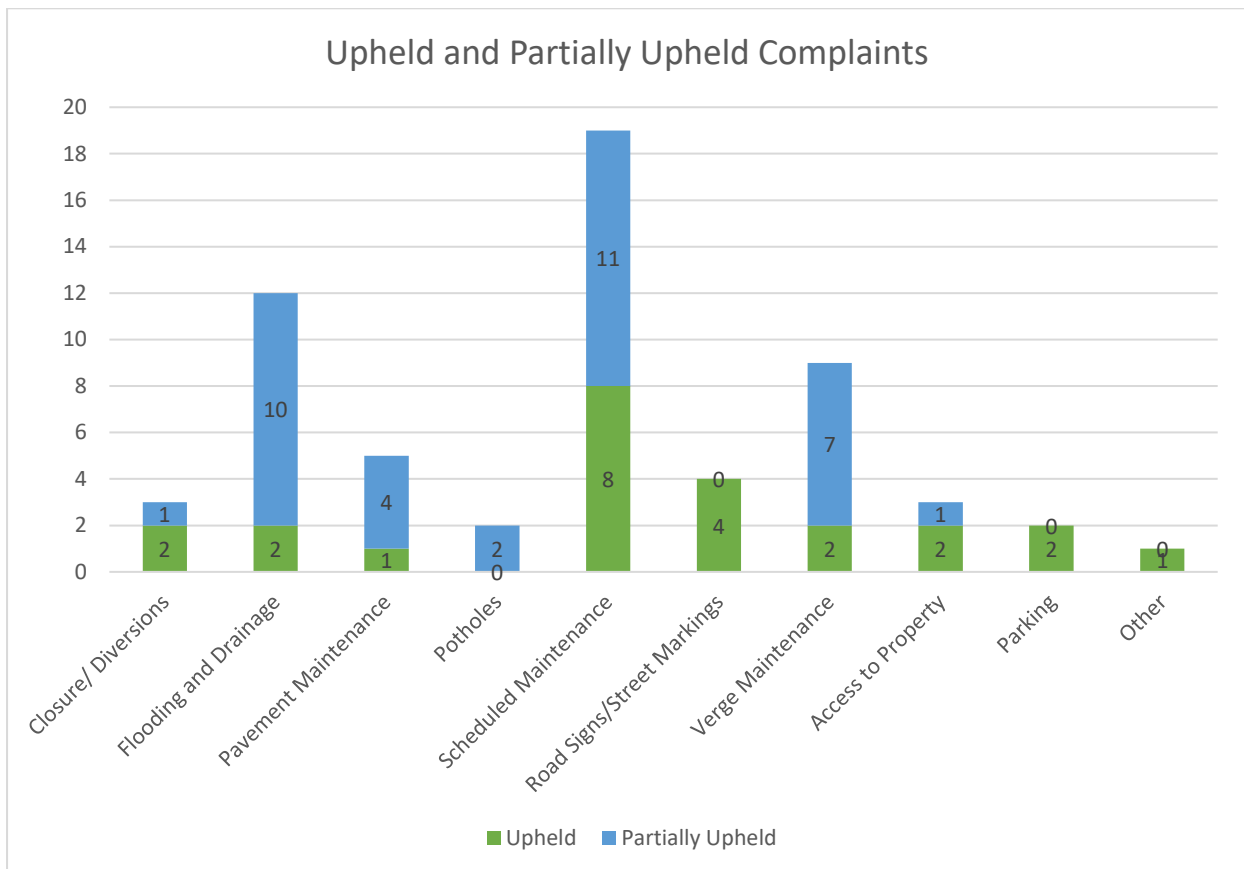
Given the significant volume of enquiries/contacts that teams in this area received in the quarter, the receipt of 157 complaints with an escalation of 4% of cases, reflects the positive work being done on receipt of the addressing the concerns raised. The positive approach in providing thorough responses and suitable remedy, where appropriate, whilst remaining in line with the Local Government Ombudsman (LGO) resulted in no cases raised where the LGO investigation resulted in further action being required from the Local Authority.



As evident, the most significant concern from the public when raising a complaint was scheduled maintenance. This includes concerns around the Local Authority and its contractors not communicating with residents, such as failing to provide advance notice of works, particularly those that may cause disruptions.

However there has been a decline in concerns relating to potholes, which has dropped from 35 cases last quarter to 11 cases. There remains an increase in other areas such as verge maintenance and pavements that has seen a rise since last quarter.

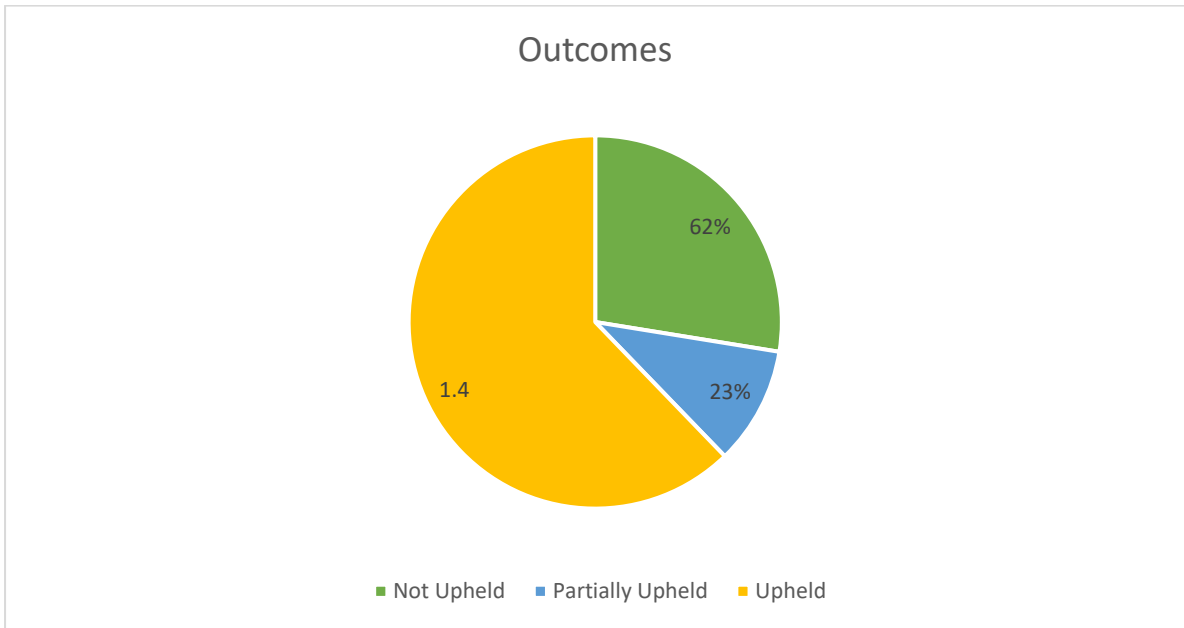
The following shows the areas in which complaints were either fully or partially upheld, of 157 cases, 60 were partially upheld or fully upheld, this is an increase of 87% from last quarter.



We have seen a high number of concerns for flooding and drainage upheld/partially upheld cases from last quarter, with a range of concerns that were noted where services were inadequate. These include complex issues causing delays in resolving blocked gullies, checks of rectification work that were not carried out which would have identified defects and communication not satisfactorily addressed through FMS updates.

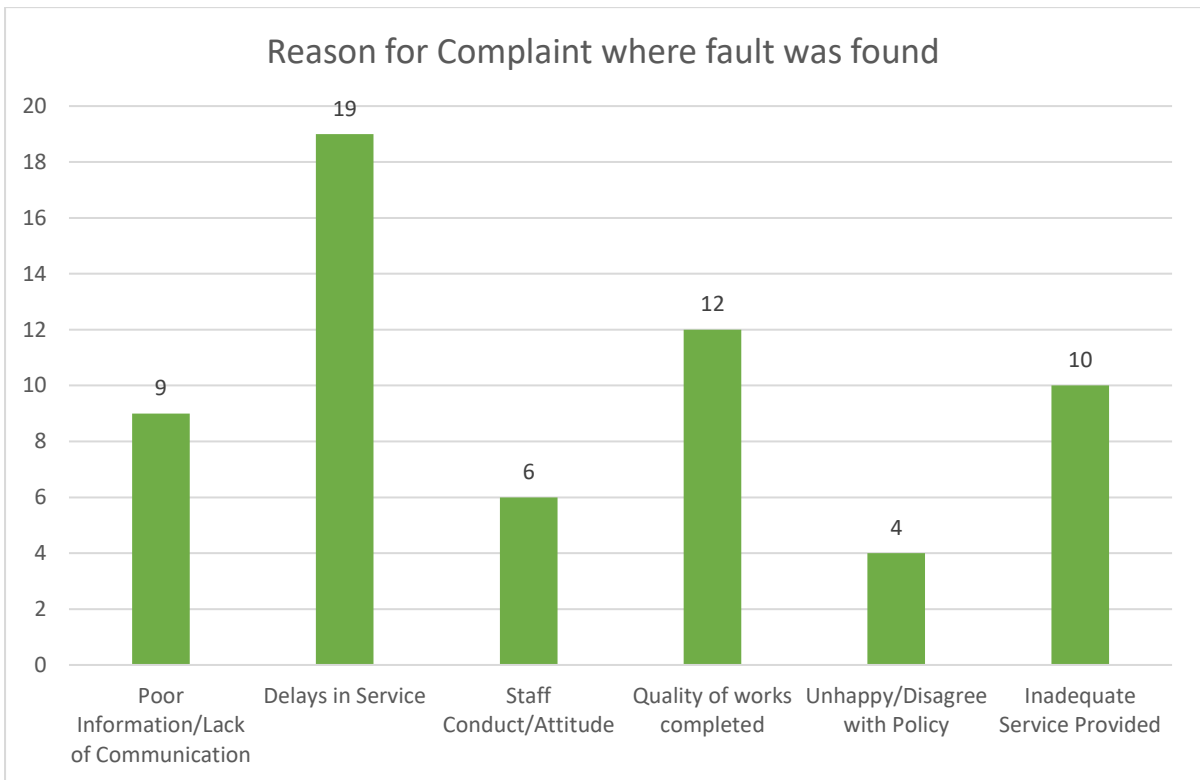
There has further been a surge in concerns raised for scheduled maintenance from the previous quarters, in which fault has been identified, where additional works and inspections have needed to be conducted in order to rectify conditions.

The following shows an overall breakdown of the outcomes of complaints. Whilst the numbers of concerns being reported has only slightly increased, the percentage breakdown of outcomes of complaints of upheld and partially upheld cases in comparison to previous quarters has risen from the previous quarter.



Partially and Fully Upheld Complaints

The following shows a breakdown of the main reasons for complaints received where the Council agreed that the service provided was not to the standard expected and, as such, resulted in an outcome of upheld or partially upheld;



Whilst we are still seeing a high volume of cases as a result of the quality of works being completed, we have also seen an increase regarding delays in service which has risen from 1 case last quarter to 19 cases this quarter, this accounts for 32% of all cases.

Summary

Though we have seen an increase in the number of contacts compared to the previous quarter, this number remains lower than those recorded in the same quarter of the previous year. We continue to see a significant portion of overall contacts resolved informally in Early Resolution.

Failure to provide an adequate service in a timely manner and complete works to a satisfactory level are the most notable reasons where fault was found. It has also been identified that issues such as contractors leaving sites in a poor state where debris has been left or surplus road signs are increasing as well as the need for Traffic management companies to review damages caused by contractors.