

Appendix 2

Extract from www.lgo.org.uk on the interpretation of statistics

Upheld	These are complaints where we have decided that an authority has been at fault in how it acted and that this fault may or may not have caused an injustice to the complainant, or where an authority has accepted that it needs to remedy the complaint before we make a finding on fault. If we have decided there was fault and it caused an injustice to the complainant, usually we will have recommended the authority take some action to address it.
Not upheld	Where we have investigated a complaint and decided that a council has not acted with fault, we classify these complaints as not upheld.
Advice given	These are cases where we give advice about why LGO would not look at a complaint because the body complained about was not within the LGO's scope or we had previously looked at the same complaint from the complainant, or another complaints handling organisation or advice agency was best placed to help them
Closed after initial enquiries:	These complaints are where we have made an early decision that we could not or should not investigate the complaint, usually because the complaint is outside LGO's jurisdiction and we either cannot lawfully investigate it or we decide that it would not be appropriate in the circumstances of the case to do so. Our early assessment of a complaint may also show there was little injustice to a complainant that would need an LGO investigation of the matter, or that an investigation could not achieve anything, either because the evidence we see shows at an early stage there was no fault, or the outcome a complainant wants is not one we could achieve, for example overturning a court order.
Incomplete/invalid	These are complaints where the complainant has not provided us with enough information to be able to decide what should happen with their complaint, or where the complainant tells us at a very early stage that they no longer wish to pursue their complaint.
Referred back for local resolution	We work on the principle that it is always best for complaints to be resolved by the service provider wherever possible. Furthermore, the Local Government Act 1974 requires LGO to give authorities an opportunity to try and resolve a complaint before we will get involved. Usually we tell complainants how to complain to an authority and ask them to contact it directly. In many instances, authorities are successful in resolving the complaint and the complainant does not recontact us.

Complaints Remedied	<p>For the year 2015/16 we provide information about complaints remedied. Where we find that an authority has acted with fault and this has caused an injustice to a complainant, we will make a recommendation about the action an authority should take to remedy that injustice. An Ombudsman's recommendations are not binding however most authorities comply with our recommendations without the need for any further action by the Ombudsman. We will also uphold a complaint that has come to us where the authority has already accepted during its own complaints processes that it acted with fault and it has offered what we consider to be a suitable remedy. The figures for 'complaints remedied satisfactorily by Authority before LGO involvement' demonstrate the number of times we have received complaints against an authority but it has already taken all the steps it needed to.</p>