



Customer Insight report 2015 – 2016

5 July 2016

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Context

We have listened to our customers and have made the following 3 commitments – our Customer Promise.



We will be easy to reach



We will be clear and treat you with respect



We will listen and act to get things done

The purpose of this Customer Insight report is to bring together the information collected about the customer experience of using Brighton & Hove City Council services in 2015/16.

By customer we mean, any user of council services, whether voluntary or involuntary. This includes residents and visitors to the city, service users and their representatives. This report presents what we currently know about our customer services. This is to ensure we better understand the needs of our customer, and to learn and grow consistently from the feedback we receive. Intelligence from this report is feeding into the modernisation programme Customer First in a Digital Age (CFDA) to improve our digital offer for customers.

Customer Insight is one element of our Performance Management Framework that sets out how the council manages performance, to achieve our purpose as set out in the Corporate Plan, and provide a guide for all those involved in the performance management process.



Further work is underway in 2016/17 to improve the consistency and quality of the data included in this report and to include the services not currently featured, where appropriate.

Results summary

What do residents think of the council?

In the 2015 City Tracker survey of 1,000 residents of Brighton & Hove, satisfaction with the city council is

60%



This is a 20% increase from the 2014 result of 40%. The result for 2013 was 61%, and 2012 was 70%.

What are our customers telling us about our services?



Overall, there has been a 20% decrease in complaints, from **1,955** in 2014/15 to **1,588** in 2015/16.



There has been a corresponding 20% increase, from **648** to **778** in compliments about council services.

Why do our customers contact us?

Additional data collection has started in 2015/16, trialled by five of our most used services including:

- Revenues
- Benefits
- Housing Management
- Housing Needs
- Cityclean

To improve the quality of service provided, we are looking to better understand why our customers are contacting us. Information is now collected on why the customer is calling.



Of the 7,630

calls received in February where we recorded the reason for contact:

12% were about resident parking permits

6% were to query the balance or instalments of their Council Tax bill

4% were for general Homemove advice to Housing Needs

3% about missed refuse or recycling collections

What do customers think of our services?

3 of the 6 services who deliver the top 20 highest volume transactions have reported that at least

60%

of customers were

VERY SATISFIED

with the standard of customer service they received.



and

60%

of customers found it

VERY EASY

to access the service.



How are our customers contacting us?

Our customers contact us by phone, online, in person, email, social media and by post.



Phone

The average number of phone calls to our ten most contacted services has reduced by 32% since **2010/11** (61,872pm to 42,232pm).

In the last year, there has been a 5% reduction in incoming phone calls.

Online

Housing Management and Schools Admissions have both seen an approximate 25% rise in webpage views.



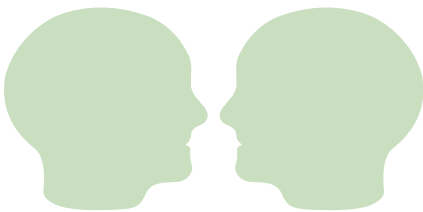
Visits

Of the 5 most visited transactional services:

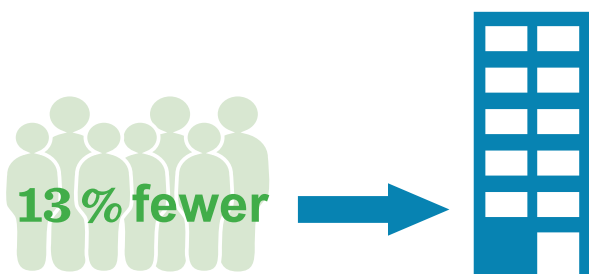
- Benefits
- Development Control
- Housing Management
- Parking
- Revenues

There has been a **49% reduction**

in face to face contact from 2010/11 (18,050pm to 9,222pm).



The results show a **13% decrease** overall in footfall at Civic receptions and Customer Service Centres (CSC) since **2014/15**. This is attributable in part due to the restricted opening hours at Hove Town Hall during the building works.



Online forms

All services reporting data have received increased volumes of online forms since 2015/16, by at least 15%. Particular increases have been seen in Council Tax, Registrars and Parking.

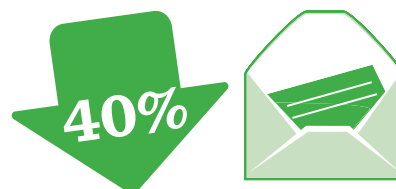
Emails

There have been marked decreases in unstructured emails across a range of service areas. Council Tax, for example, report an 11% decrease in emails. This is due in part to the introduction of more online forms, giving the service the information they require and prompting the customer to provide this in their initial contact.

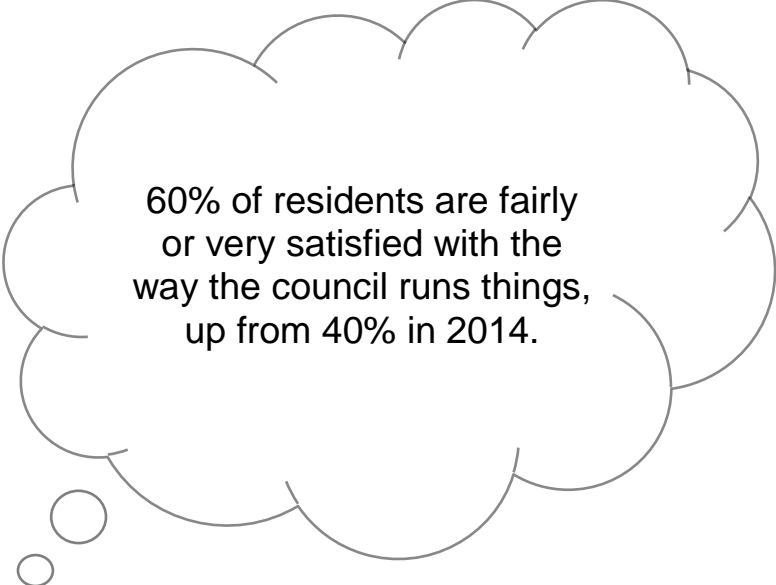


Post

There has been an overall reduction in incoming contact by post since 2014/15, in some cases by up to 40%. This is likely to be due to take up of the council's digital services and the move towards more digital communication in general.



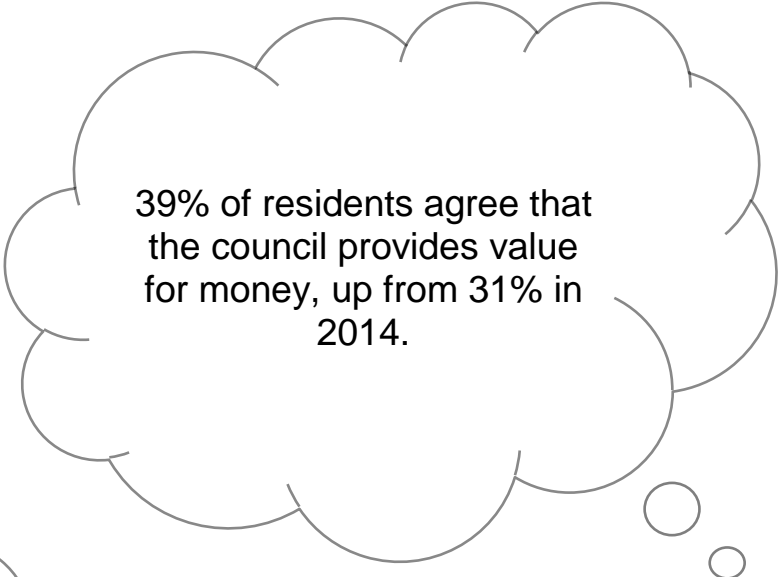
What do residents think of the council?




60% of residents are fairly or very satisfied with the way the council runs things, up from 40% in 2014.

Nationally, in the Local Government Association (LGA) Resident Satisfaction survey of September 2015, this figure stood at 71%.

In the most recent national LGA Resident Satisfaction survey, 51% agreed that their council provides value for money.



39% of residents agree that the council provides value for money, up from 31% in 2014.



Almost six in ten residents (59%) trust the council a great deal or a fair amount - in 2014, the figure stood at 52%.

Nationally, in the LGA Resident Satisfaction survey 58% say they trust their council a great deal/fair amount.

Surveying residents of the city

The City Tracker survey is an annual survey of 1000 residents collects the views of residents on council and partner services, satisfaction with the city as a place to live, as well as propensity for social action. The latest survey was conducted between September 14 and October 21 2015.

Brighton & Hove Connected commissioned Infocorp Ltd to carry out its 2015 annual survey of city-wide residents. The survey covers the adult population aged 18+, usually resident in Brighton & Hove

The objective of the City Tracker Survey is to find out what residents think of Brighton & Hove as a place to live. This includes tracking key performance indicator (KPI) monitoring of essential city services.

Some of the questions included in the 2015 survey can be compared with data from research carried out by national bodies and central government departments, which gives perspective on how Brighton & Hove compares with the rest of the country.

The comparison surveys are:

- Local Government Association national benchmarks for resident satisfaction from June 2015 (**LGA** comparison)
- Cabinet Office Community Life Survey 2014-15 (**CLS** comparison)
- Department for Culture, Media & Sport Taking Part Survey June 2015 (**TPS** comparison)

2015 results are also compared with previous waves of the City Tracker Survey undertaken at the same time of year.

About the data:

Whilst postcode data is collected from respondents, the sample size at the ward level is too small to allow meaningful or robust analysis. We are, however, able to draw out some broader geographical information, where there are significant variations in results, around the wider postcode areas of BN1, BN2, BN3 & BN41.

Resident satisfaction with the council

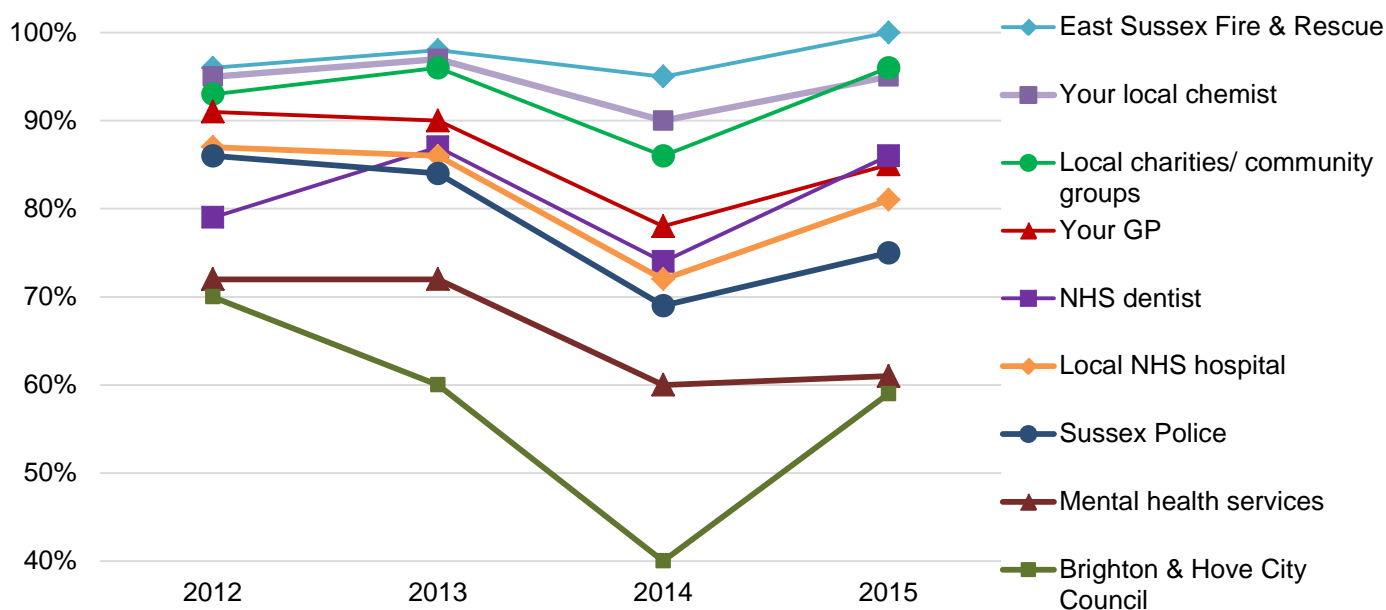
Satisfaction with the council has returned to previously seen levels after a drop in 2014. In 2013, this was 60%, in 2014 this reduced to 40%, and for 2015 this has returned to 60%, an increase of 20 percentage points.

The nearest comparable result nationally is from the LGA national Resident Satisfaction survey, which asks:

“Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the way your local council(s) runs things?”
71% were ‘fairly’ or ‘very satisfied’ in September 2015.

Six in ten residents (61%) are satisfied with Brighton & Hove City Council, including 14% who are very satisfied.

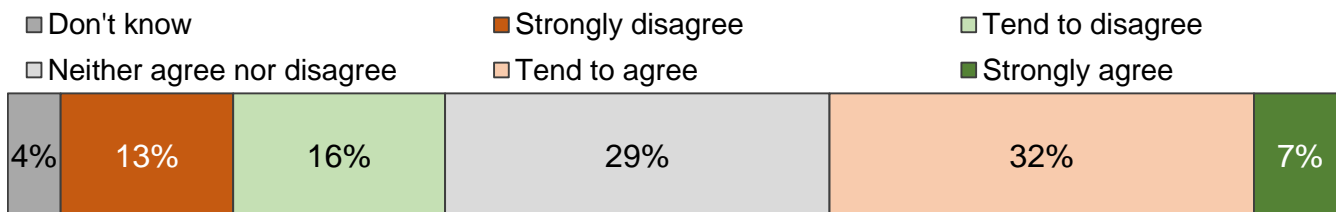
Service users 'very or fairly satisfied'



- Residents in the 18-34 (19%) and 55+ (16%) age categories are more likely to feel *very satisfied* with the council than those in the 35-54 group (8%).
- 22% of users in the 18-34 year-old age band are *very satisfied* with the council, compared with 9% of 35-54 year olds and 17% of those aged 55+
- More than a quarter (27%) of users from BME backgrounds say they are *very satisfied* with the council, compared to 14% of white British residents
- A quarter (24%) of users with a disability are *very satisfied* with the council, compared with 14% of those who do not consider themselves to be disabled
- A majority (86%) of residents are satisfied with Brighton & Hove as a place to live. Only 7% are dissatisfied.
 The 2015 figure (86%) is a notable improvement on 2014 when 79% of residents said they were satisfied with the city as a place to live
 However, the proportion saying they are satisfied is not quite as high as in 2013 (89%) or 2012 (90%)
 The proportion of residents who are dissatisfied is broadly similar in 2015 (7%) to 2014 (6%). This stood at 4% in 2013 and 5% in 2012
- Residents living in the BN3 postcode area are most likely to be *very or fairly satisfied* (91%), compared to 84% in BN1 and BN2 and 83% in BN41

Perceived value for money

Almost four in ten (39%) residents agree that the council provides value for money, up from 31% in 2014. However, as in the previous surveys, there are a sizeable proportion of residents who feel they are not getting value for money – 29% in 2015, compared with 32% in 2014.

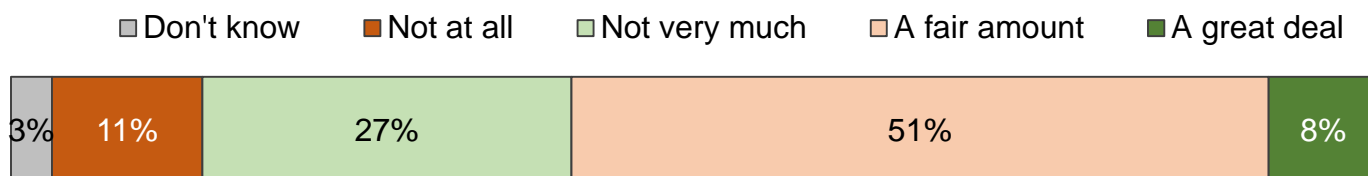


Despite the year-on-year improvement in the Brighton & Hove figures, residents are considerably less likely to feel the council provides value for money than is the case nationally. In the most recent LGA survey, 51% agreed that their local authority was providing value for money.

Trustworthiness

Almost six in ten residents (59%) trust the City Council *a great deal* or *a fair amount* - in 2014, the figure stood at 52%.

However, more than a quarter (27%), say they don't trust the council very much, while one in ten (11%) say they have no trust at all.



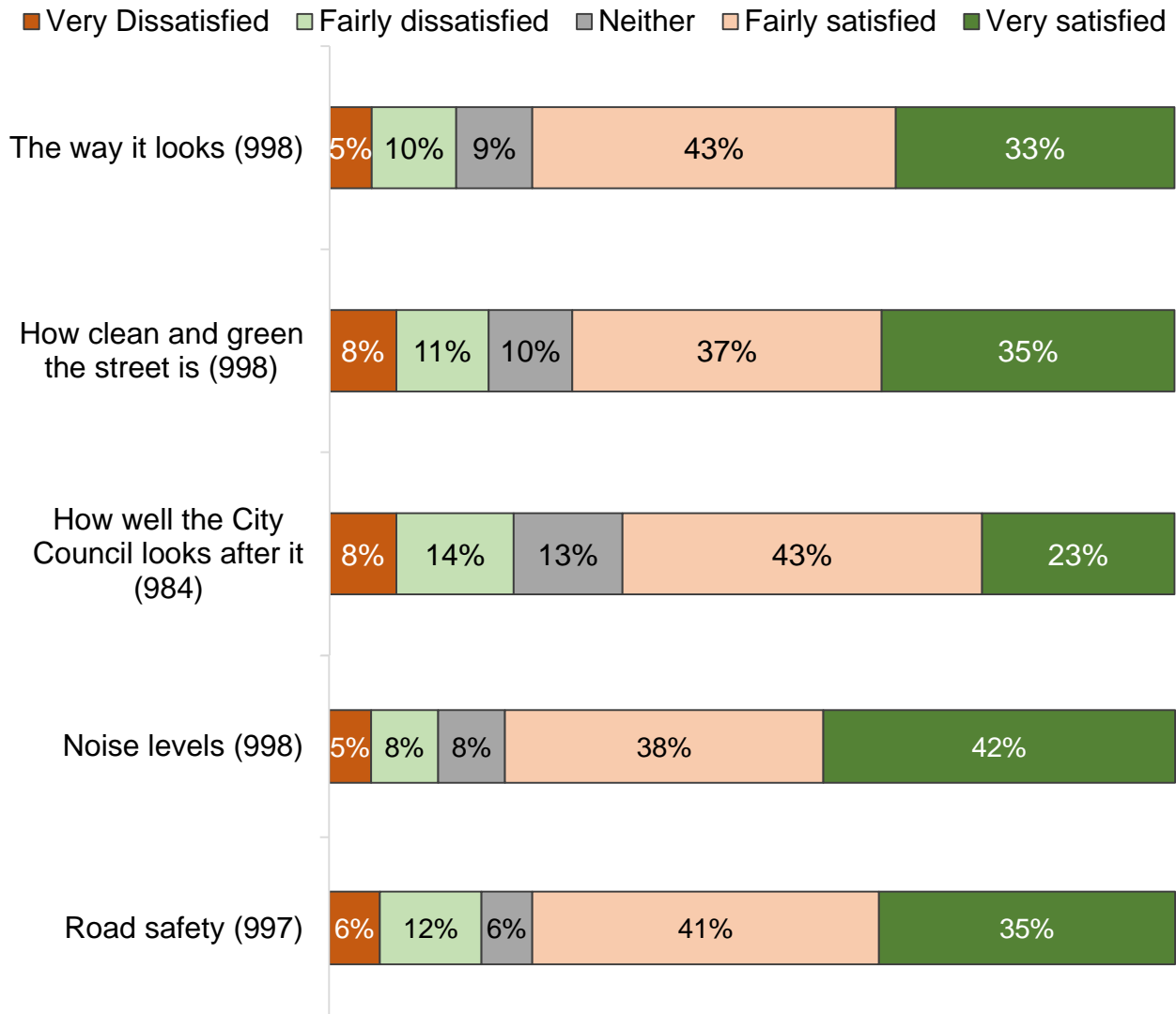
Residents in the 18-34 age band are most likely to trust the council *a great deal* (13% do so, compared with 4% in the 35-54 age band and 6% of those aged 55+)

Lack of trust in the council is highest in BN41, where 18% don't trust the council at all, compared with 7% in BN3.

Brighton & Hove residents are similar to the national LGA average, in the latest national survey, 58% say they trust their council *a great deal/fair amount*.

Satisfaction with the street in which you live

Following the general upward trend in this year's findings, satisfaction with residents' immediate neighbourhood has increased in all areas since 2014, in most cases returning to levels seen in 2013.



More than 75% are 'fairly' or 'very satisfied' with road safety in their immediate neighbourhood, up from only 58% in 2014, and even exceeding the levels recorded in 2013 (74%) and 2012 (73%).

Despite an increase in satisfaction with noise levels in their street since last year (up to 80% in 2015 from 65% in 2014), there has not been a return to the levels recorded in 2013 (81%) or 2012 (84%).

Reflecting yet again the disruption to refuse and recycling collection in 2014, the overall satisfaction with resident's perception of how well the council looks after their street has increased from last year (66% up from 48% in 2014) but still hasn't returned to levels recorded in 2013 (73%) or 2012 (76%). Satisfaction with 'how clean and green the streets are' and 'the way the street looks' are showing a similar trend, with considerable increases in satisfaction from last year, but not recovered to levels recorded in 2012 or 2013.

Residents of BN41 are less likely to be *very satisfied* with the way the council looks after their street (12%) than those in BN2 (25%), BN3 (25%) and BN1 (21%).

- Respondents were also asked how satisfied they were with the parks and open spaces provided by the council, and how satisfied they were with the Seafront, there are geographical differences in these results - Residents of BN3 report the highest level of *very satisfied* scores (Parks and open spaces) by locality (44%), compared with a low of 29% in BN41.
- The highest level of *very satisfied* scores by locality is reported in BN3 (34%) while BN1 residents are least likely to be very satisfied (19%) with the Seafront.

How do we compare nationally?

Where we are performing above the average	City Tracker 2015	Nationally	Percentage point(s) difference
People agreeing they can influence decisions affecting their local area	51%	35%	+16
Agree people pulling together to improve their neighbourhood	72%	63%	+9
Local activism (belong to group that make decision that affect their local area)	15%	8%	+7
Satisfaction with the local area as a place to live	89%	82%	+7
Satisfied with road maintenance	46%	39%	+7
Agree that people from different backgrounds get on well together	91%	86%	+5

Where we are similar to national results	City Tracker 2015	Nationally	Percentage points difference
Satisfied with Library services	66%	62%	+4
Trust in their local council	59%	58%	+1
Feeling unsafe in your local area after dark	11%	10%	+1
Satisfied with sports & leisure services	63%	62%	+1
Satisfied with services for children and young people	47%	47%	0
Feel strongly they belonging to your neighbourhood	70%	72%	-2
Formal volunteering in last 12 month	39%	42%	-3

Where we are performing below the average	City Tracker 2015	Nationally	Percentage points difference
Satisfied with waste collection	64%	77%	-13
Satisfied with services for older people	32%	45%	-13
Agree the council provides value for money	39%	51%	-12
The council acting on the concern of local residents	53%	59%	-6
Well informed about council services and benefits	55%	61%	-6
Satisfied with street cleaning	66%	72%	-6
Satisfied with pavement maintenance	48%	54%	-6

72% of residents agree that people pull together to improve their neighbourhood – this is 9 percentage points above the national average.

How satisfied are our customers with the service we provide?

All of the services that deliver the top twenty highest volume transactions have provided customer satisfaction data, these include Revenues & Benefits, Parking, Cityclean, Planning and Housing. Additionally 13 other services reported a significant response to key questions on Customer Satisfaction and Ease of Effort in 2015/16, 6 further services recorded response rates too low to include.

3 of the 6 services who deliver the council's top twenty highest volume transactions have reported that at least 60% of their customers were 'very satisfied' with the standard of customer service received and also found it 'very easy' to access their services.

These services include:

*Benefits,
Revenues &
Housing Management.*

3 of the 11 services reporting results in 2014/15 and 2015/16 have seen improvements in both customer satisfaction and ease of effort results.

9 services reported that more than 80% of customers found it 'very easy' to access services

Benefits, Bereavement Services, Blue Badge team, Business Rates, Customer Service Centres, Libraries, Local Land Charges and Visitor Information.

In 2015/16, the following services reported results of the standard customer questions for the first time: Blue Badge, Brighton Centre Box Office, Environmental Health & Licensing, Housing Adaptations, Housing Needs, and Visitor Information.

Surveying our customers

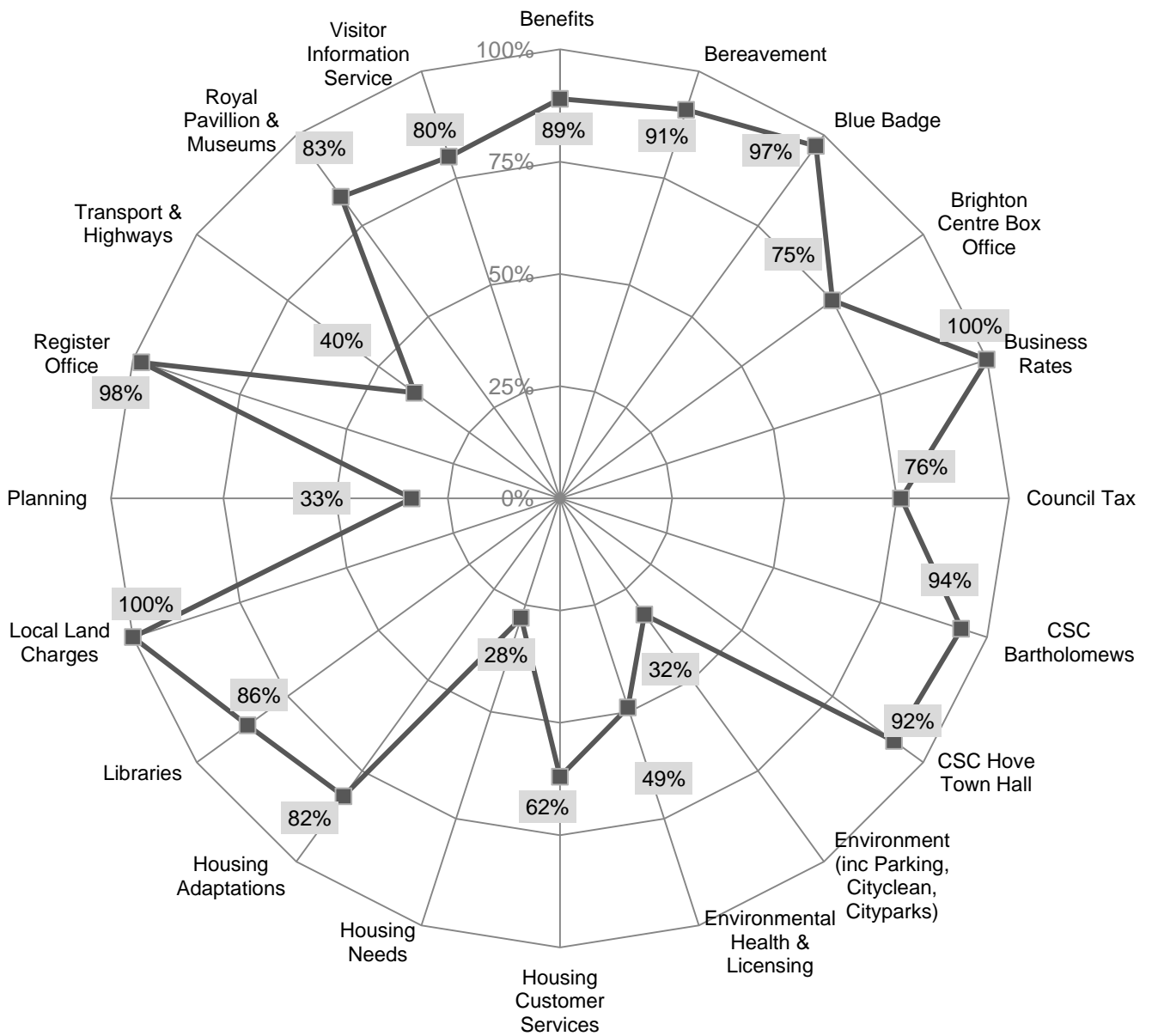
How was the standard of customer service received?

Service users were asked the following question:

(1) How was the standard of customer service you received?

- Responses included: Very good, fairly good, neither good nor poor, fairly poor, very poor

The below chart shows the percentage of 'very good' responses



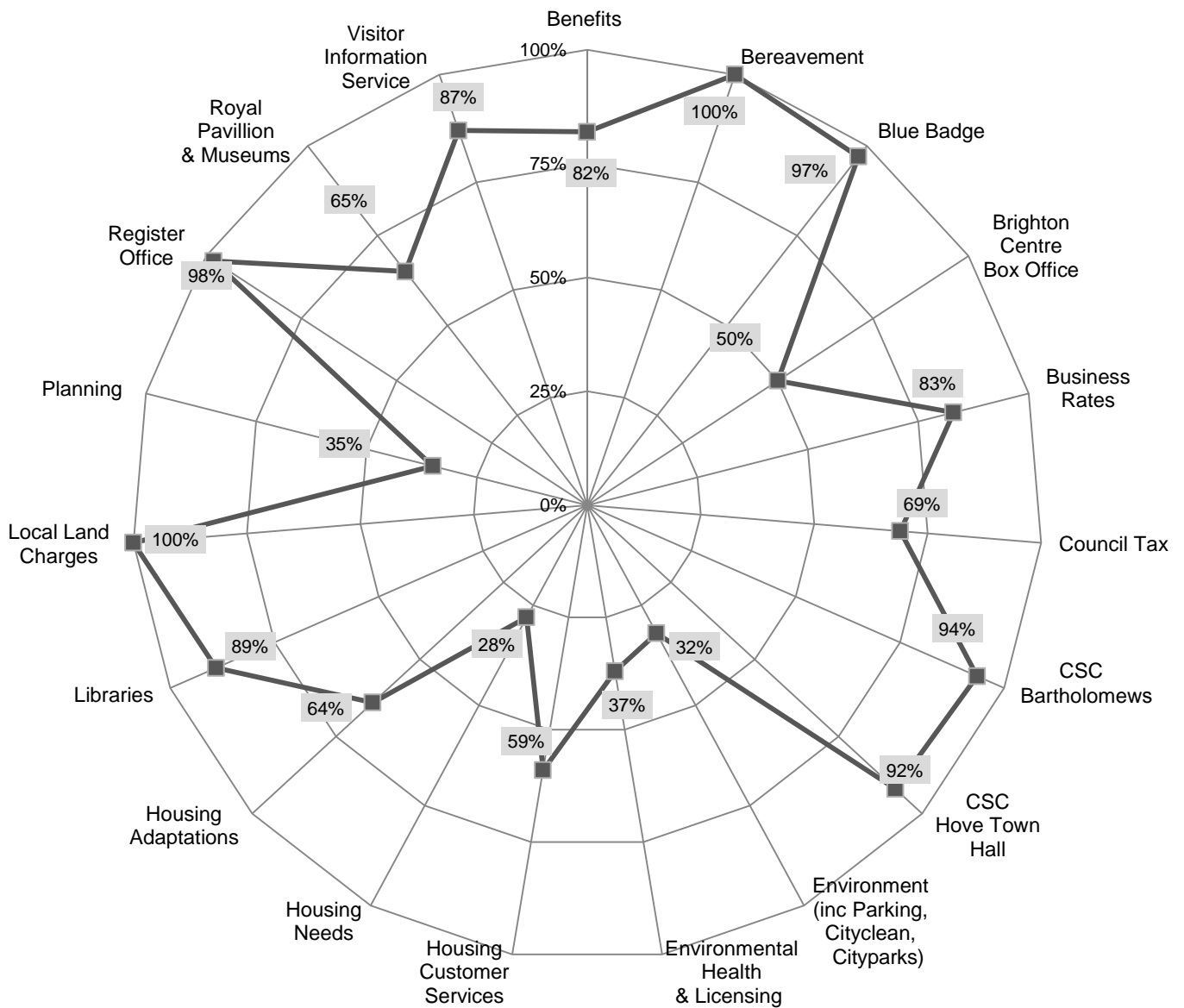
How easy or difficult was it to use a service?

Service users were asked the following question:

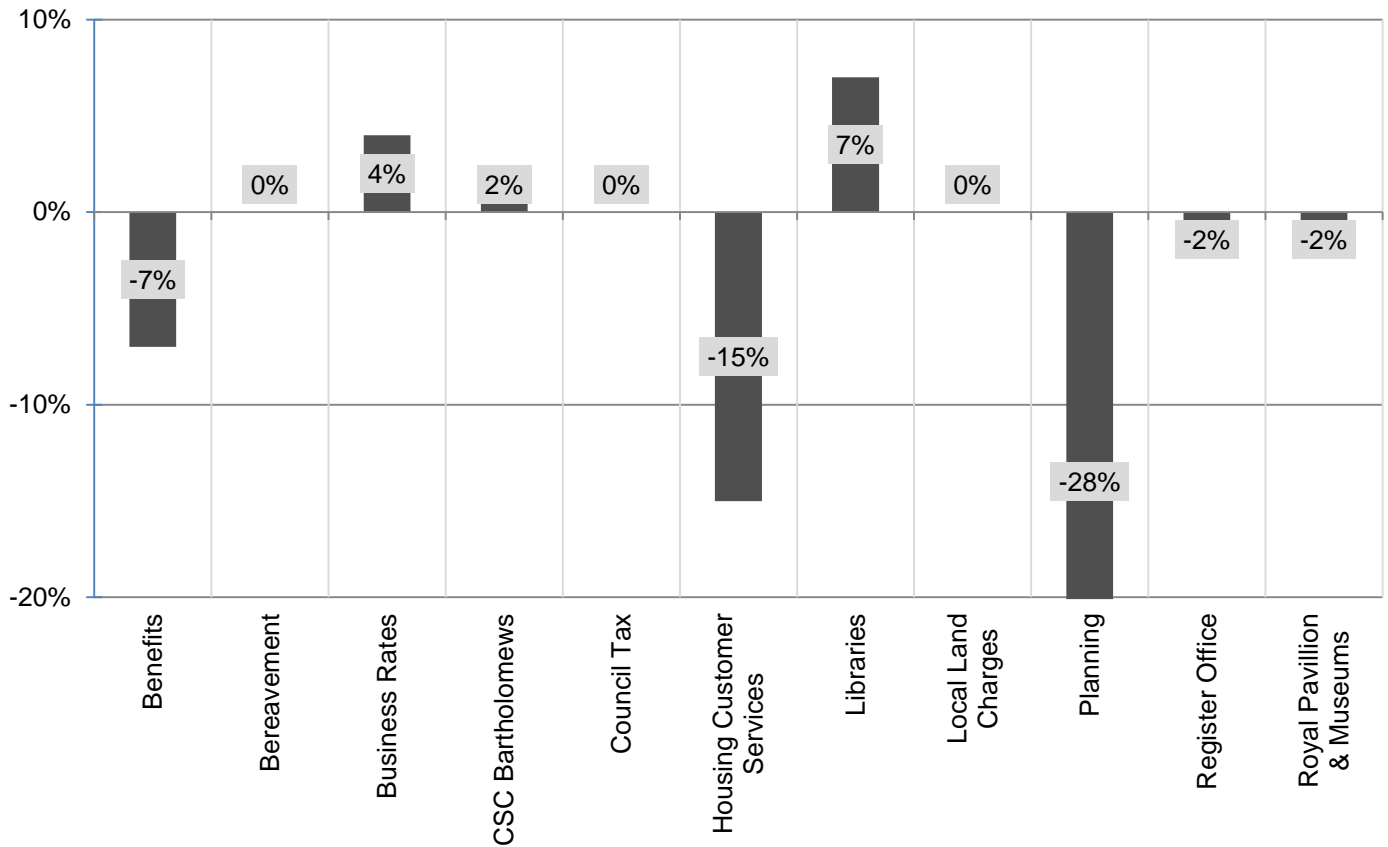
(1) How easy or difficult was it for you to use our service?

- Responses included: Very easy, fairly easy, neither easy nor difficult, fairly difficult, very difficult

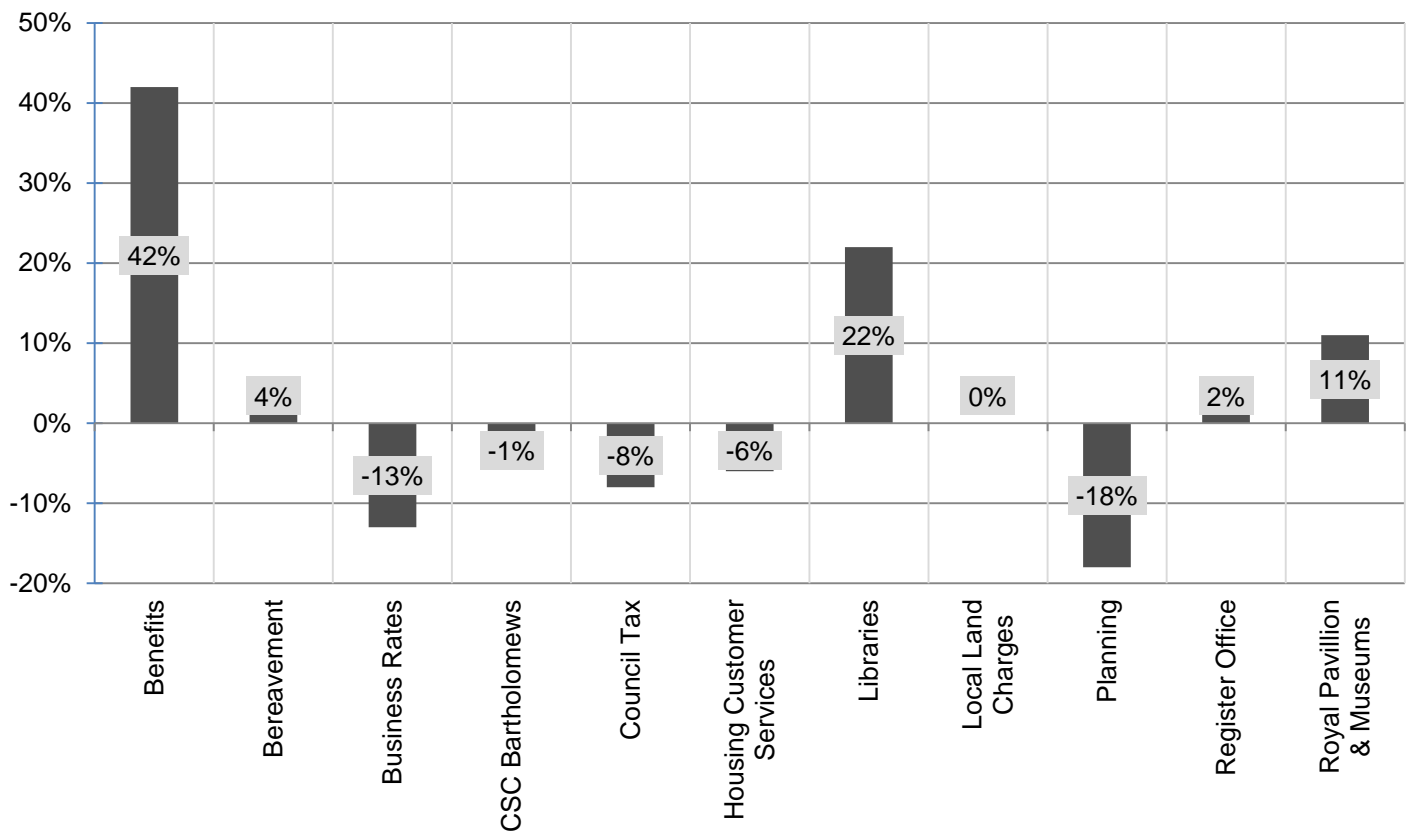
The below chart shows the percentage of 'very good' responses



How does customer satisfaction compare to last year?



How does ease of effort compare to last year?



Notes about surveying

For those services who have reported both the number of respondents and the results, we have only included those who have received more than 20 responses. For services reporting response rates below 20, the results could not be considered representative.

Services which have conducted surveys but have had a response rate lower than 20 include: Access Point (Adult Social Care), Electoral Services, Family Information Service, Free School Meals, Fostering & Adoption team, School Admissions.

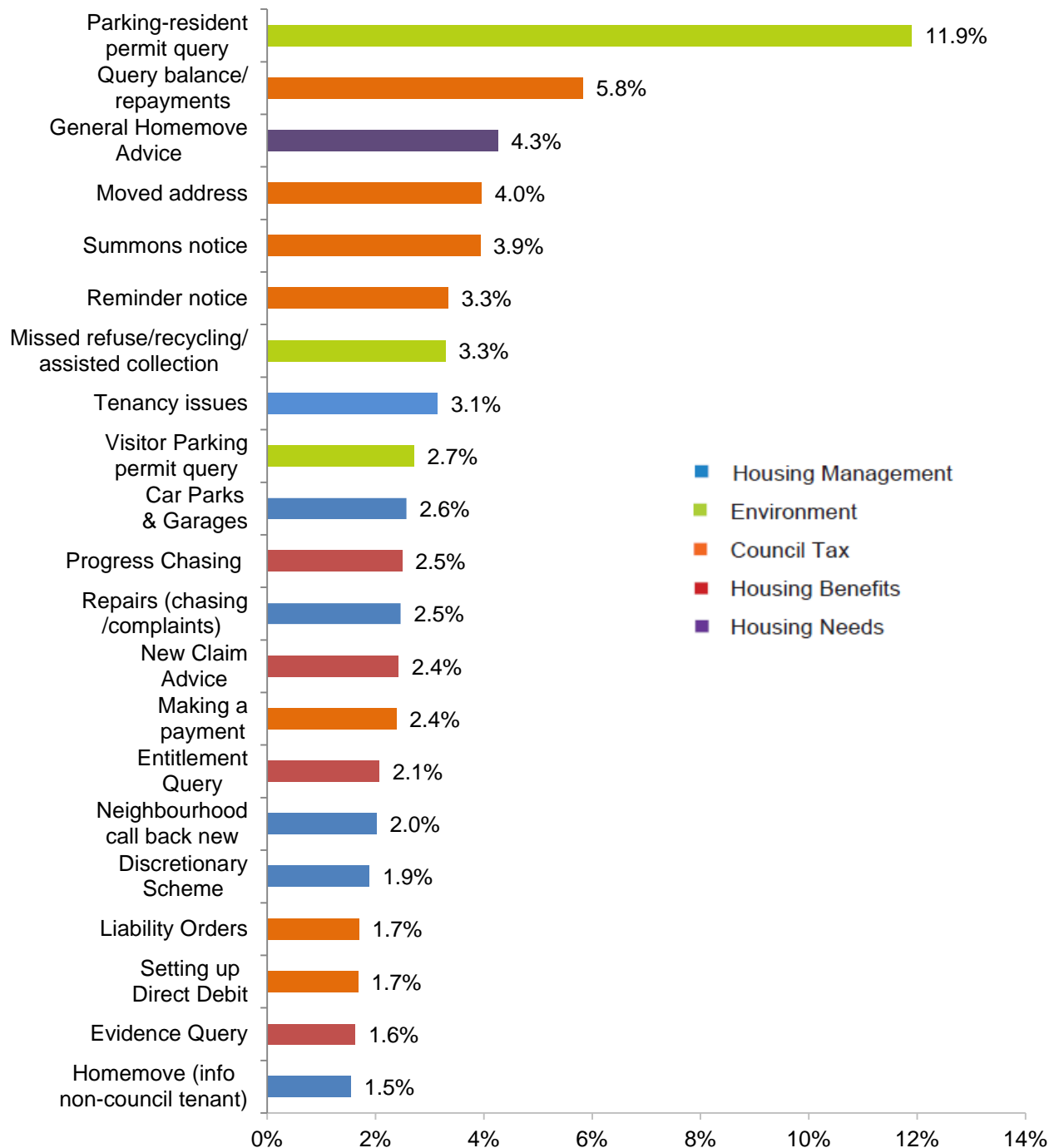
Services which have not conducted surveys with the standard corporate questions, but gather feedback from customers in other ways include:

Early Years services who conducted a consultation around their service redesign, asking customers for feedback on their experience of using the service and Library services that have carried out a Library Needs Analysis, inviting feedback from customers on proposed changes to the service and their opinions on the services they had used.

Work continues in 2016/17 to ensure all customer facing services use these standard questions when surveying customers, where appropriate.

What are the reasons for customers contacting us?

Of the 7,630 calls received in February where we recorded the reason for contact, 12% were about resident parking permits, 6% were to query the balance or instalments of their Council Tax bill, 4% were for general Homemove advice from Housing Needs, and 3% about missed refuse or recycling collections.



The top twenty recorded reasons for customer contact in February 2016 – as a percentage of total calls where a reason was recorded, only the top twenty are displayed in this chart.

Background

In 2015, a single virtual contact centre steering group was set up for the top 20 highest volume transactions (identified through internal research), to improve consistency, resilience and efficiency in the customer service we provide.

Part of the remit of the contact centre was to gather data about the reasons for customer contact, to enable better understanding of the demand on services, to inform both continuous service improvement, and to support the CFDA programme in prioritising appropriate, high volume transaction processes to be streamlined and digitised.

Currently five services who deliver the top twenty highest volume transactions (Revenues, Benefits, Housing Needs, Housing Management and Cityclean) are recording this information, with Parking services beginning to record in 2016/17.

The average rate of recording is around 50% of calls, so isn't a complete picture of the organisation's telephone contact, but gives a broad overview of why our customers are contacting us. These are the results from February 2016 where the total volume of calls against which a specific reason for contact was recorded was 7630 calls.

Key findings

- As the Environment Contact Hub, Cityclean also take calls on behalf of the Parking service – specifically around permits for visitors and residents. More than 40% of the calls to Cityclean are with regard to parking permits.

By further drilling down into how many of these calls can be resolved by Cityclean staff and how many have to get transferred to Parking staff, further data collection has shown that 75% of these calls are transferred over, causing confusion and frustration for the customer, and an inefficient use of resources for the organisation.

There is now further discovery work ongoing to design a refresher training course for Environment contact centre staff, to ensure the majority of queries can be resolved at the first point of contact.

- Council Tax's highest volume enquiries are for reporting a change of address, querying a bill or payment schedule and enquiries about court summonses for non-payment of council tax.
- Housing Benefits main reasons for contact are to chase the progress of a claim, and for advice on submitting a new claim.
- Housing Management's highest volume enquiries are about Homemove (Joint Housing Register) and tenancy issues, as well as receiving a high volume of calls which are intended for other Housing teams.
- Housing Needs high volume contact reason is for Homemove (the Joint Housing Register), more than 50% of calls are about the Homemove process. Housing Needs also have a high volume of calls from customers who actually wanted a different team or service.

How do our customers contact us?



The average number of phone calls to our ten most contacted services has reduced by 32% since 2010/11 (61,872pm to 42,232pm).
In the last year, there has been a 5% reduction in incoming phone calls.



Of the 5 most visited transactional services (including Benefits, Development Control, Housing Management, Parking and Revenues) there has been a 49% reduction in face to face contact from 2010/11. (18,050pm to 9,222pm)



www.brighton-hove.gov.uk had 4,477,746 visits in 2015/16, making us the 2nd most visited unitary authority website, and the most visited in the south east region.



All services reporting data have received increased volumes of online forms since 2015/16, by at least 15%. Particular increases have been seen in Council Tax, Registrars and Parking.



There has been an overall reduction in incoming contact by post since 2014/15, in some cases by up to 40%. This is likely to be due to take up of the council's digital services and the move towards more digital communication in general.



As of May 2016, we had 35,607 followers on Twitter (@BrightonHoveCC), 5,116 likes on Facebook and 379 subscribers and 253,835 views on YouTube.

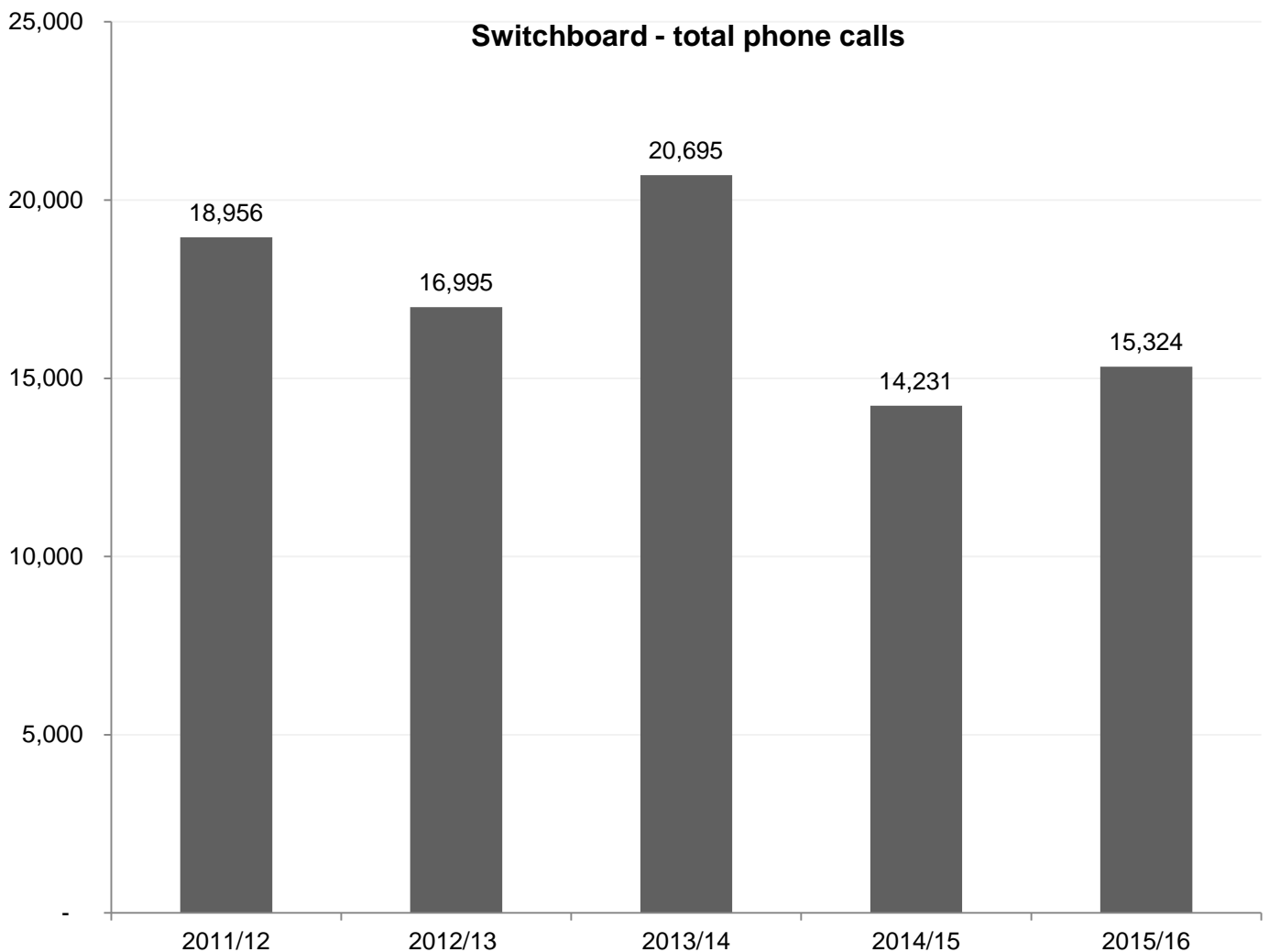
What methods do our customers use to get in touch?

We currently monitor a range of different methods of customer contact across our transactional services. These include by phone, online, in person, email, social media and post.

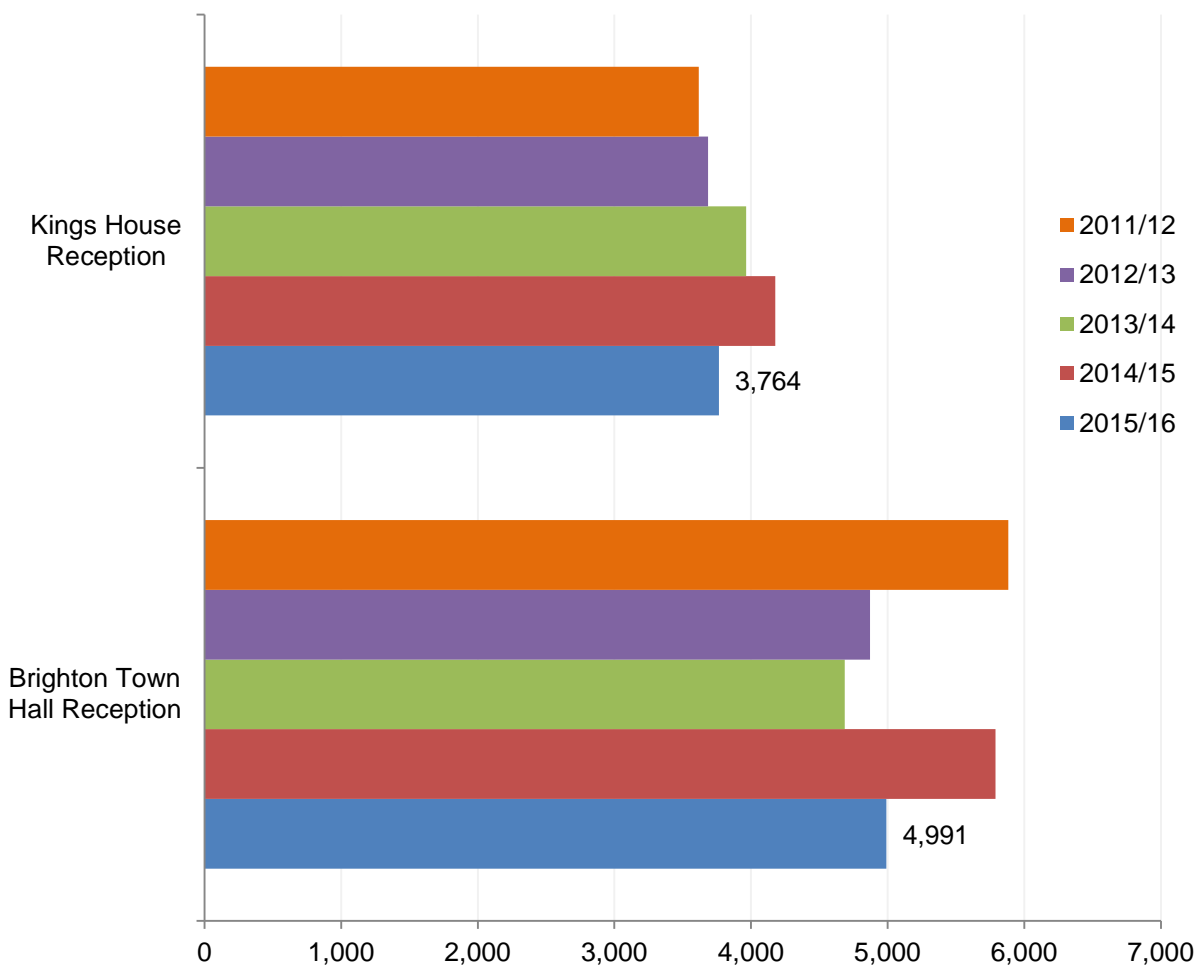
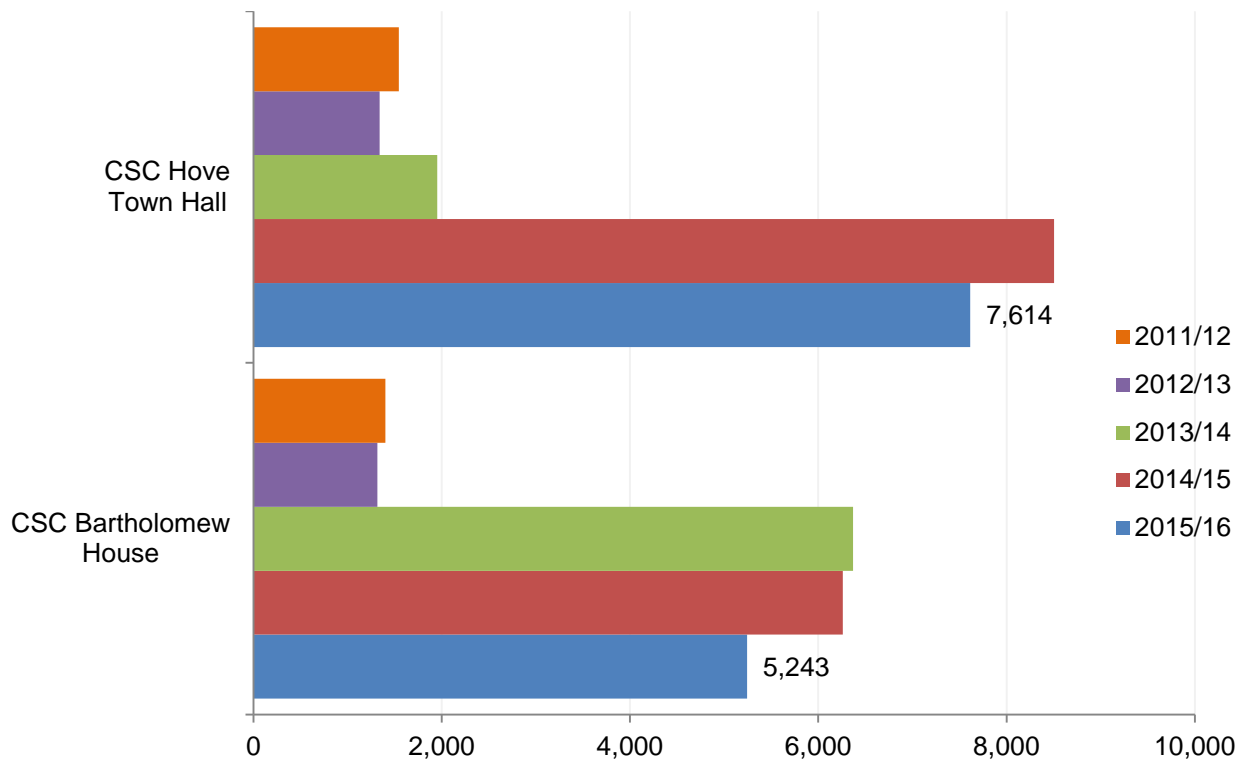
All counts detailed are the average number of contacts per month.

Switchboard, receptions & customer service centres (CSC)

- 13% decrease overall in footfall at Civic receptions and Customer Service Centres since 2014/15. The most significant decrease here is for the Brighton Customer Service Centre (17%).
- 8% increase in phone calls to Switchboard since 2014/15.



Customer Service Centre (CSC) & civic reception visitors

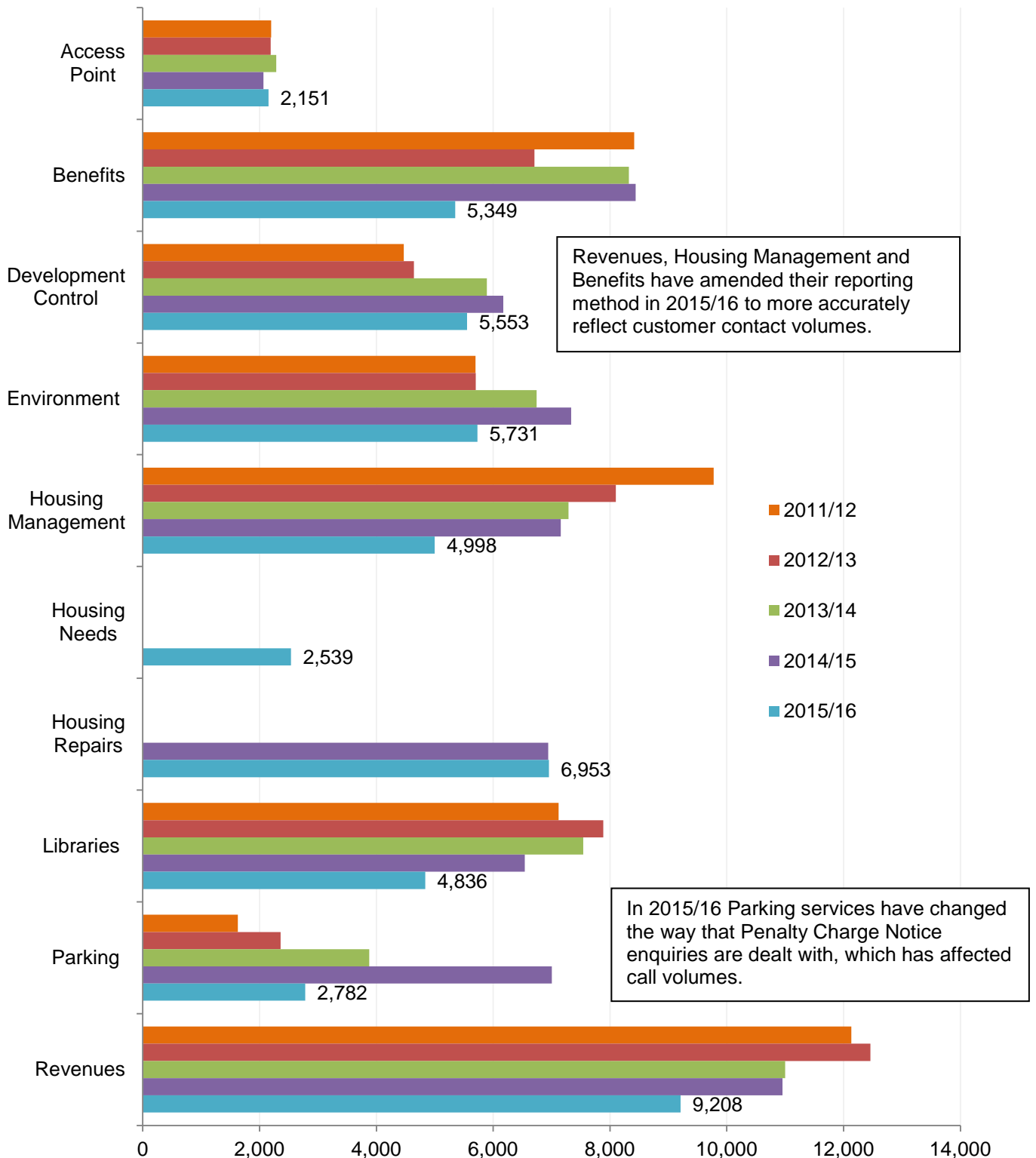


Telephone

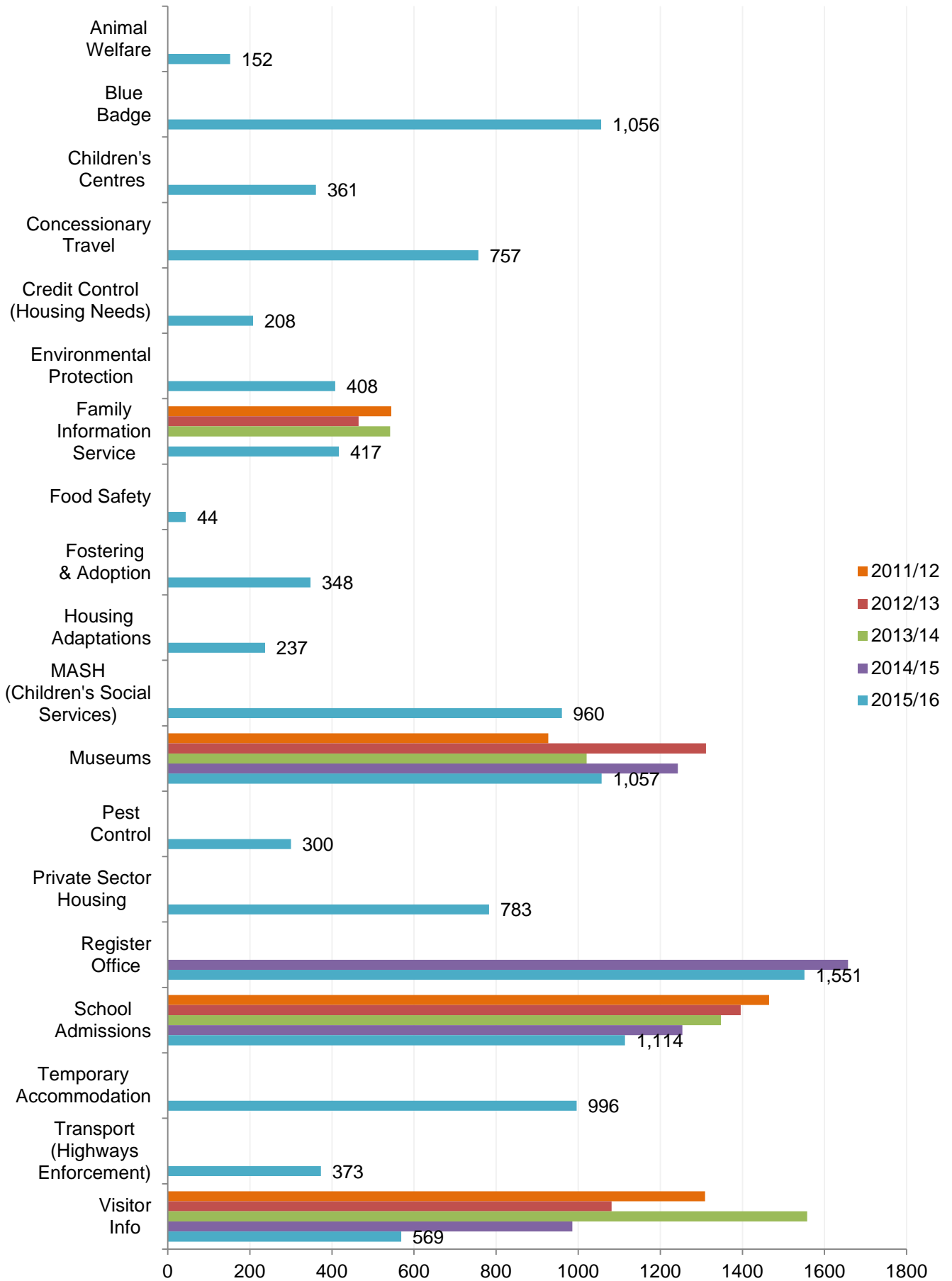
Almost all services reporting telephone call volumes in 2014/15 & 2015/16 have recorded a reduction in phone contact this financial year, on average a reduction of 5%.

Accuracy and consistency of phone call volume data has been improved this year, by working closely with our telephony provider to better understand the data available.

Services with the highest call volumes

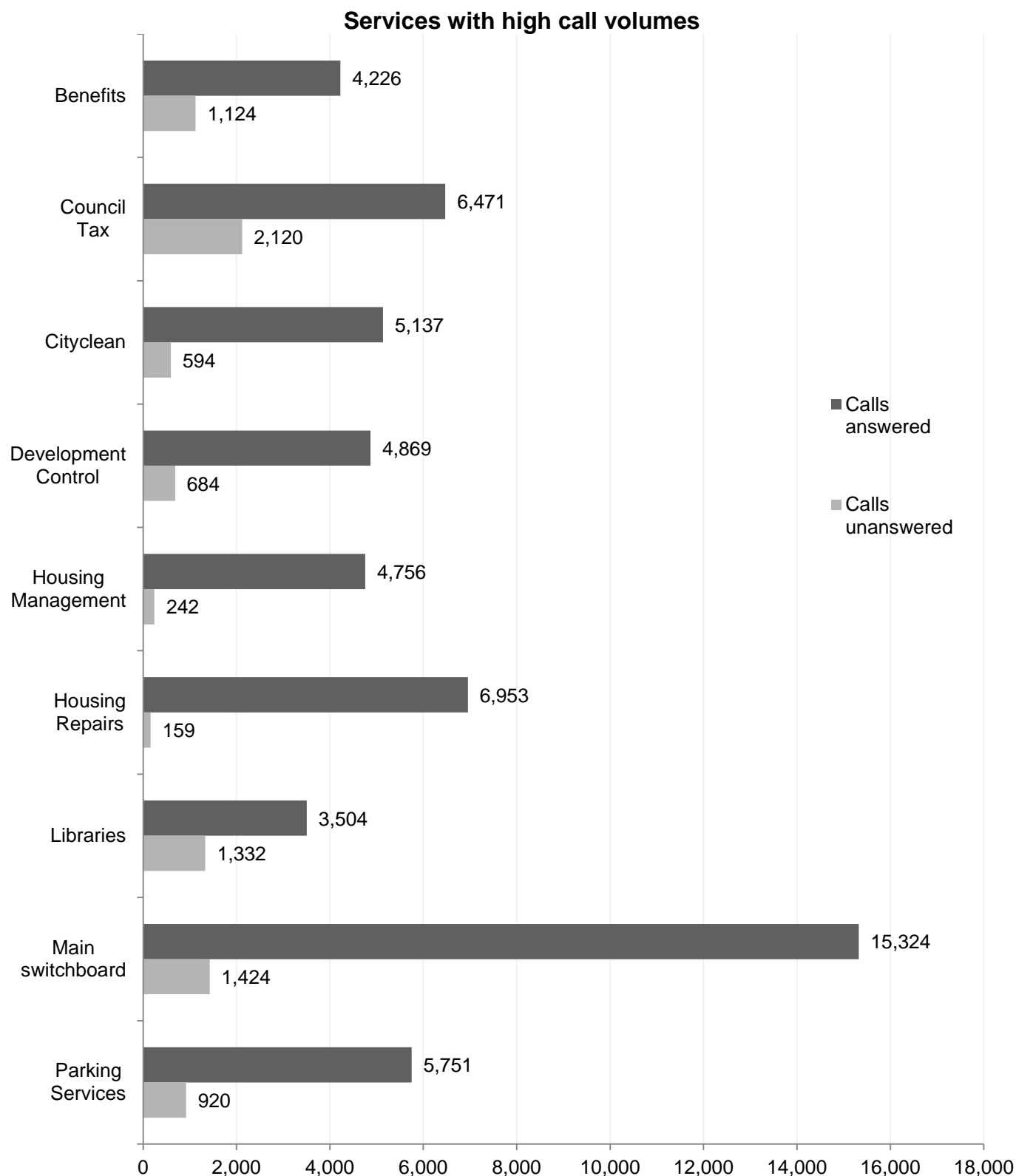


Services with lower call volumes

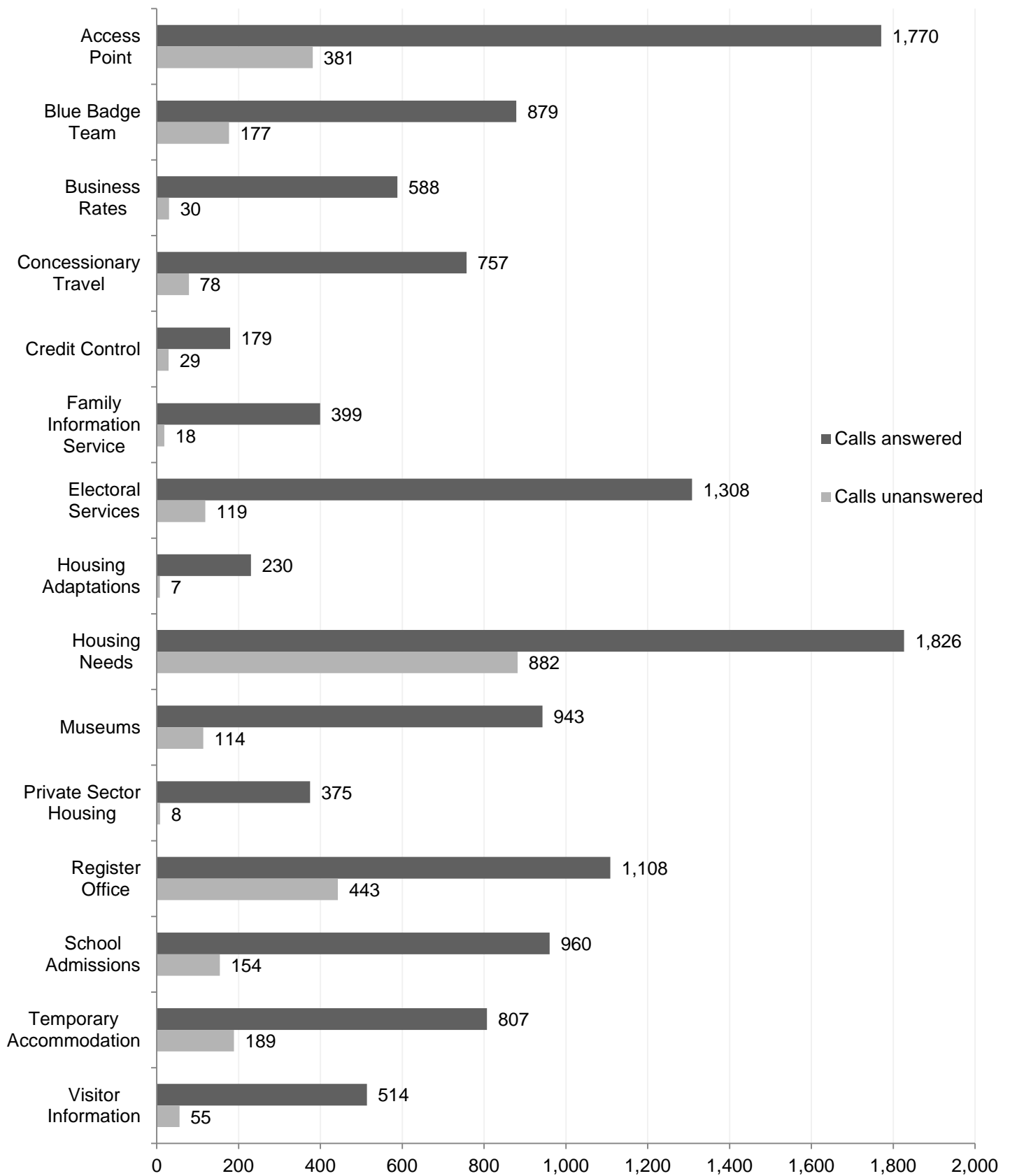


Calls answered & unanswered

The overall percentage of unanswered calls has increased amongst services reporting this data in both 2014/15 & 2015/16 from 16% to 17%, however it should be noted that in some cases, this is an integral part of the service's channel shift strategy – whilst customers are in a phone queue, they will hear a recorded message directing them to online services, therefore they may abandon their call before getting through to an advisor.



Services with lower call volumes

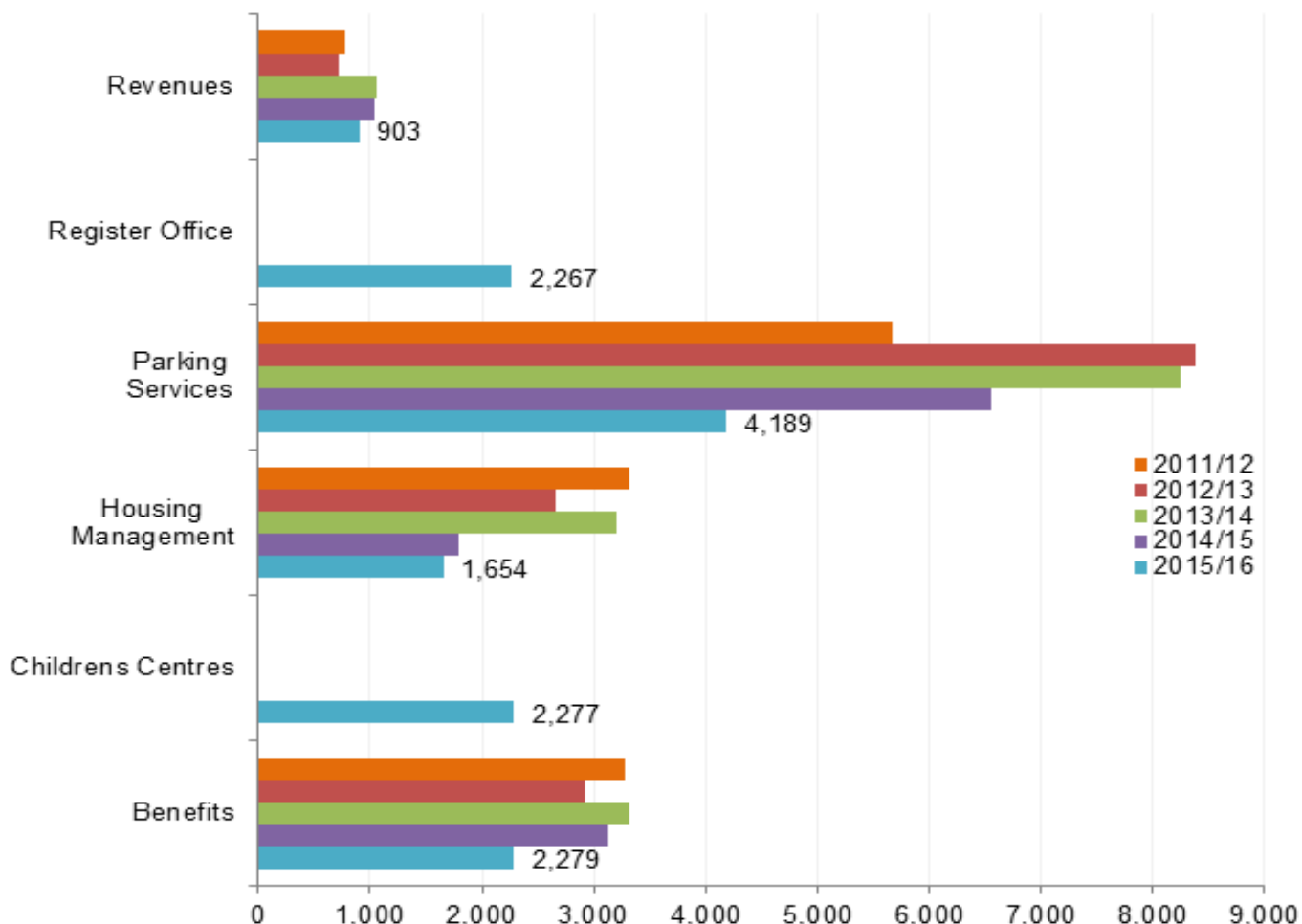


Note: Not all services are able to report unanswered calls as their lines are not yet on the system that can provide this information.

Visitors

All services that have reported this information in both 2014/15 & 2015/16 have reported a reduction in face to face visits from customers, this does however include cultural services such as Libraries and Museums, for who increased footfall is positive.

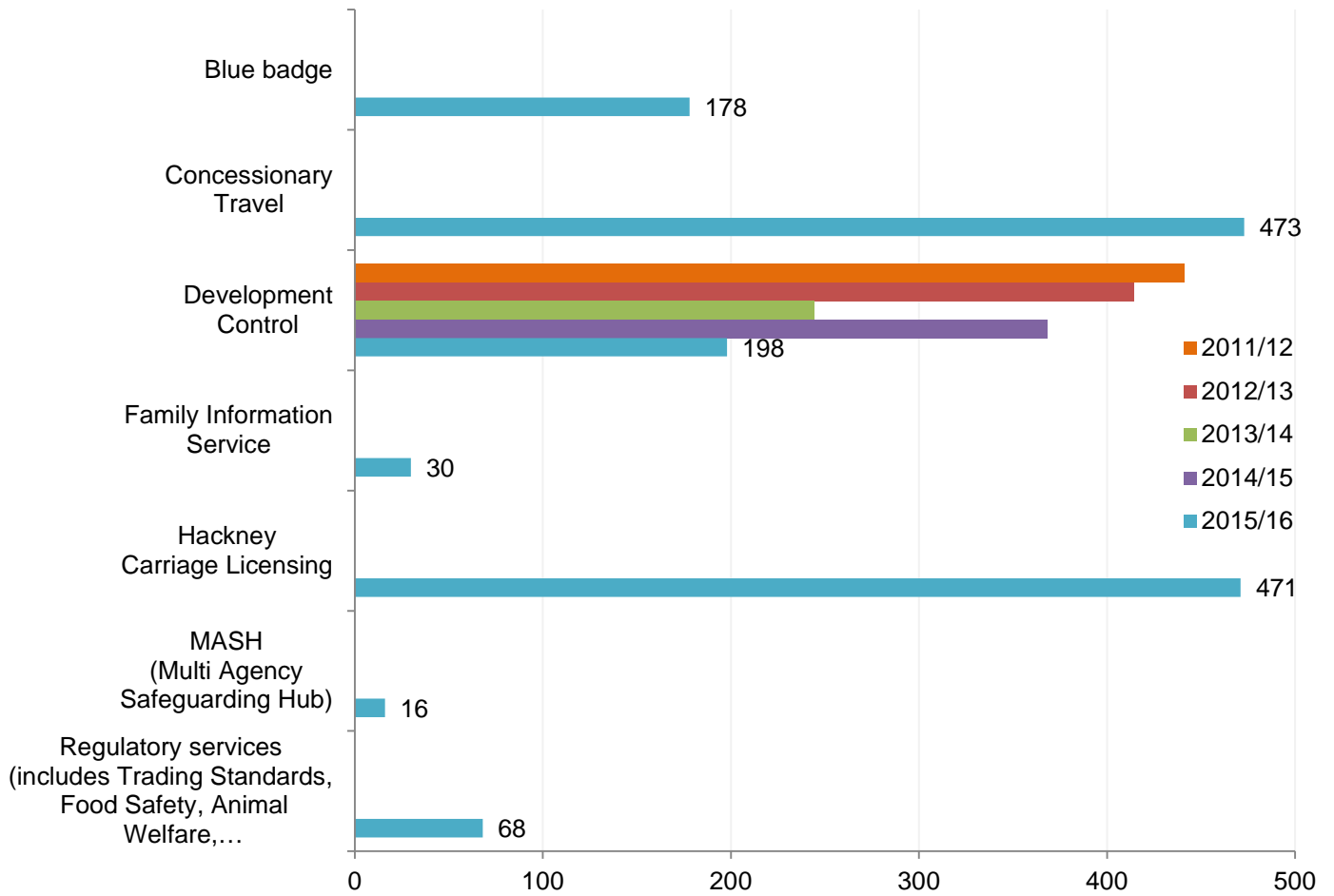
Footfall at higher volume services



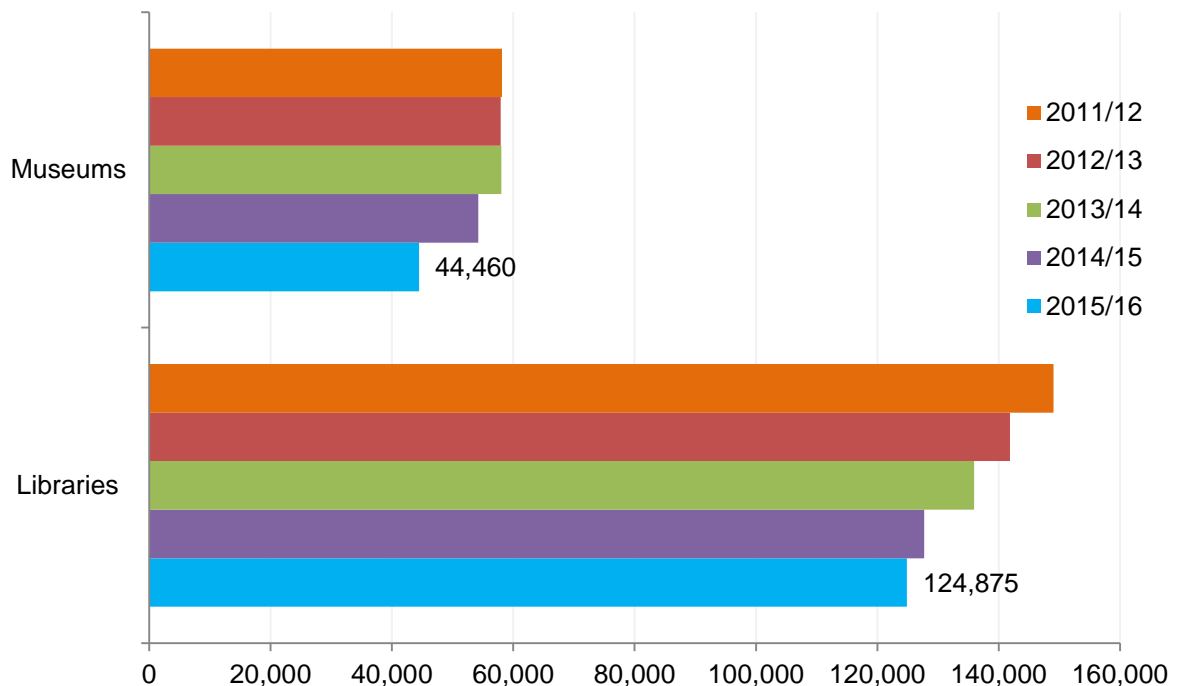
Case Study

Housing Management have seen a 50% decrease in face to face visitors since 2011/12 from an average of 3,310 customers a month to 1,164 in 2015/16, which can mainly be attributed to the closure of cash taking offices during this time. Despite this reduction in the range of methods by which rent payments can be made, due to proactive customer engagement, there has been no detrimental impact on rent collection or tenant arrears. Even with recent reductions to Housing Benefit entitlement for many households, tenant arrears have reduced by an average of 28% since April 2014.

Footfall at lower volume services



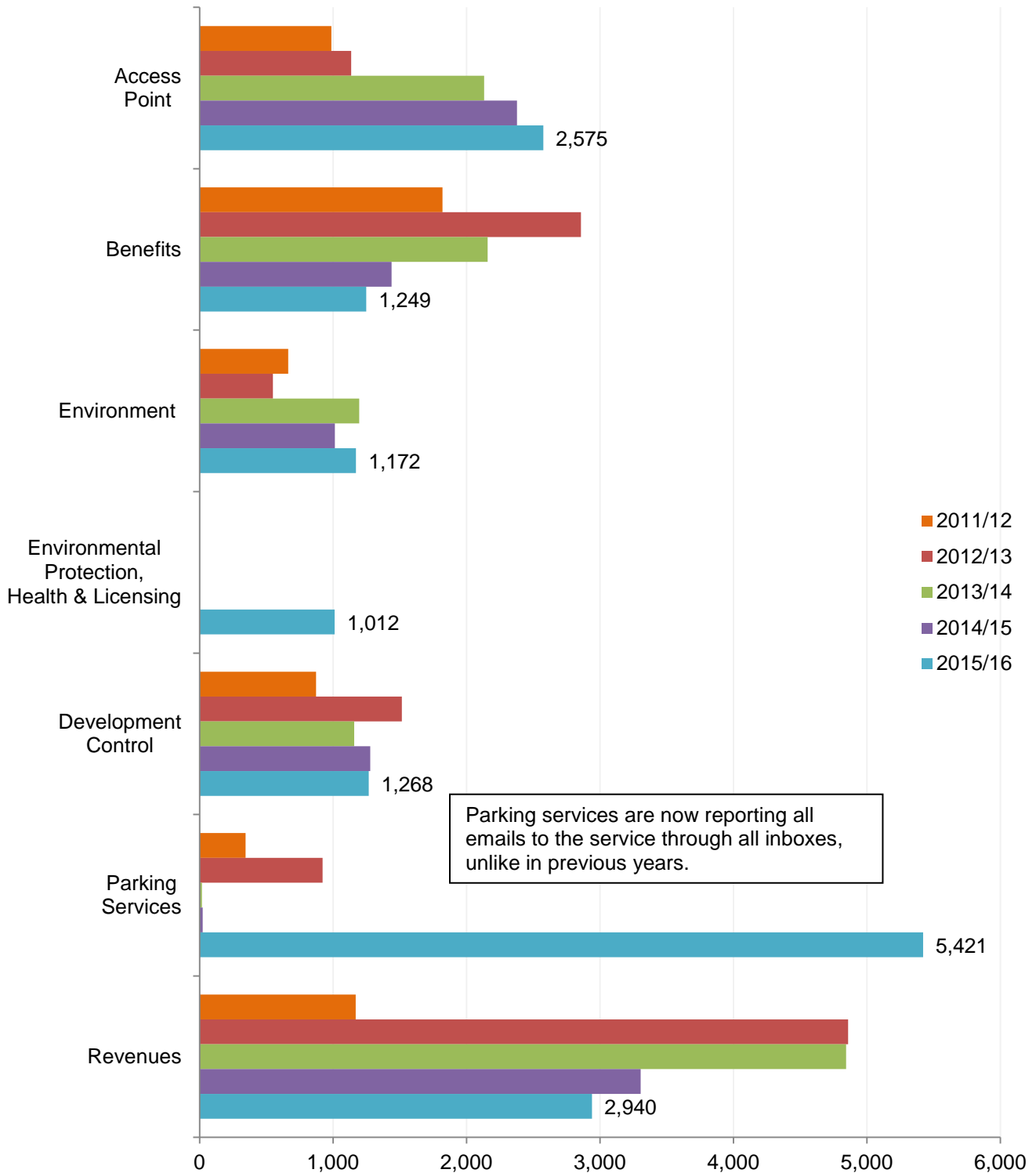
Footfall at not exclusively transactional services



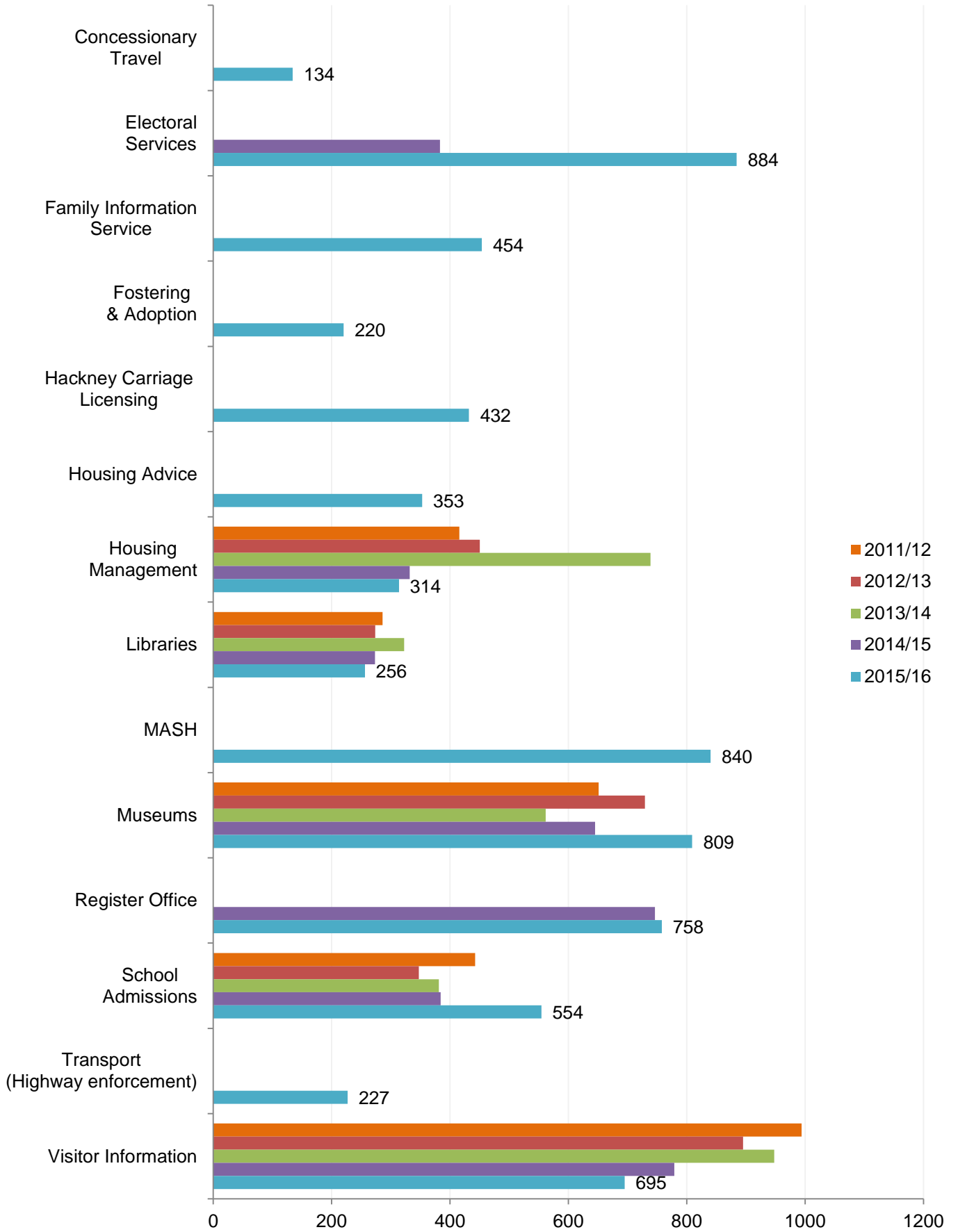
Emails

Services such as Revenues & Benefits who have made many transactions available through online forms have reported significant reductions in unstructured emails. Services that have recently moved away from more paper-based processes, such as Electoral Services are receiving increased contact via email.

Services with high volumes of email correspondence

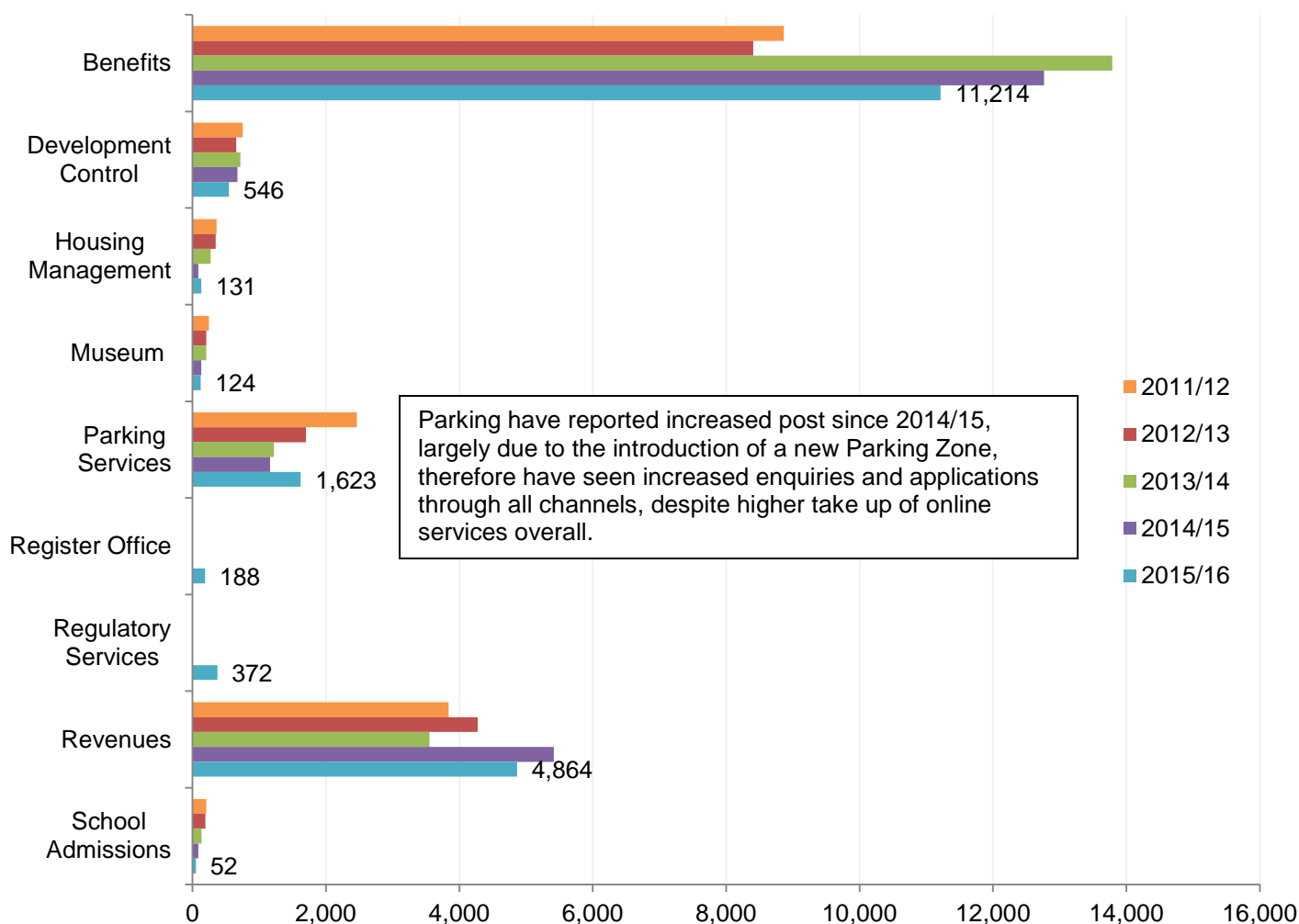


Services with lower email volumes



Contacts by post

There has been an overall reduction in incoming contact by post since 2014/15, in some cases by up to 40%.



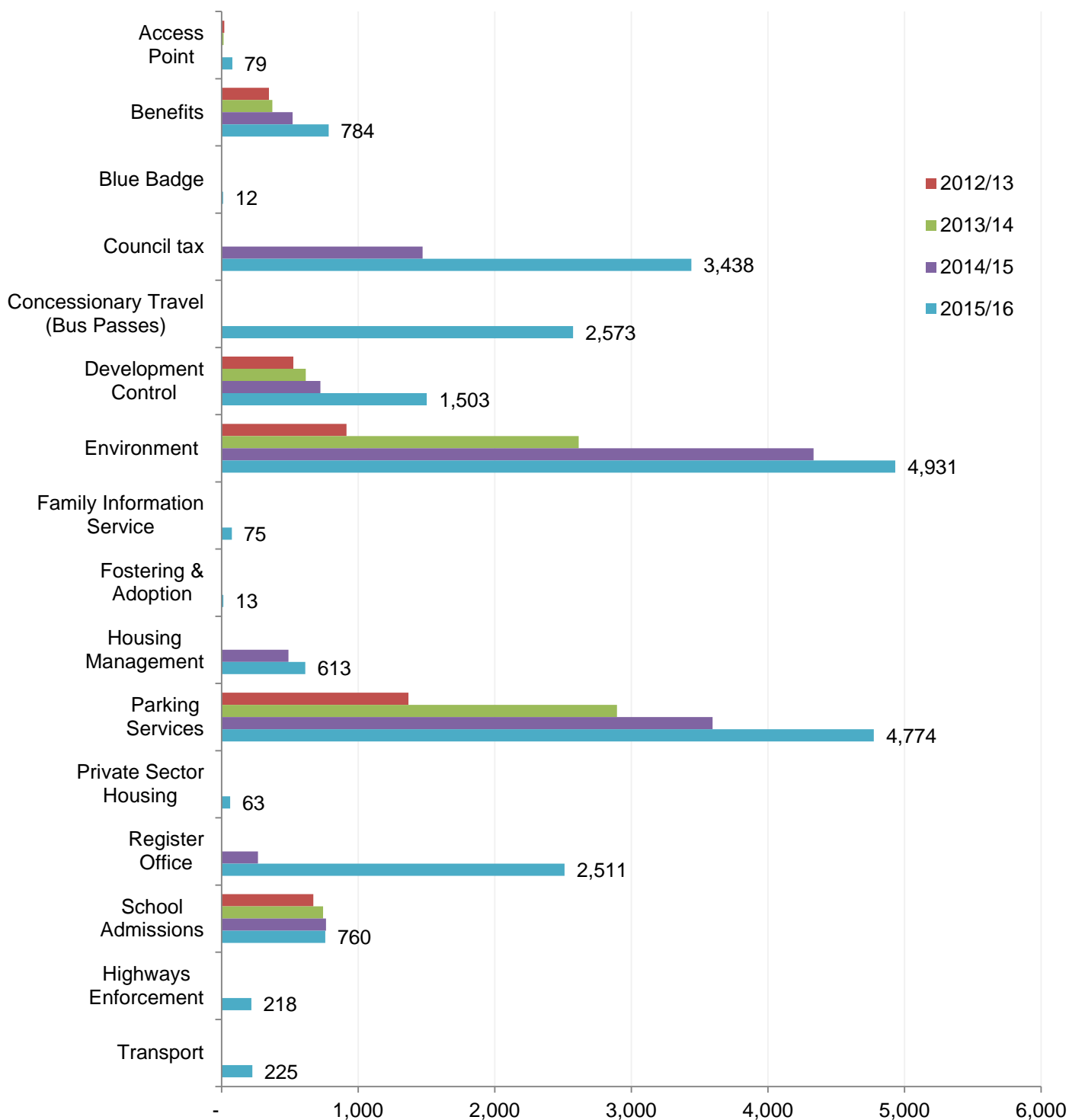
Case Study

The Concessionary Travel team (processing applications for bus passes for older and disabled people), for the first time this year, have offered the facility for customers to apply for their passes online, rather than only in person or by post.

6500 letters were sent out on 31st December 2015 to customers whose bus passes needed renewing. Of these, so far, 4288 applications have been returned, 60% of which have been submitted online, despite the customer having to retype the web link from the physical letter. This means that in future years, these customers can be contacted electronically to renew their passes, saving the council £1,183 in envelopes alone and saving the customer at least the cost of postage or the journey to our offices.

Online transactions

All services reporting data in both 2014/15 and 2015/16 have reported significant increases in web forms submissions, in particular Council Tax, Parking and the Register Office.



Note: Midway through 2015/16, the platform, and therefore the reporting method for online forms has been upgraded, this may mean that there are discrepancies in the figures available.

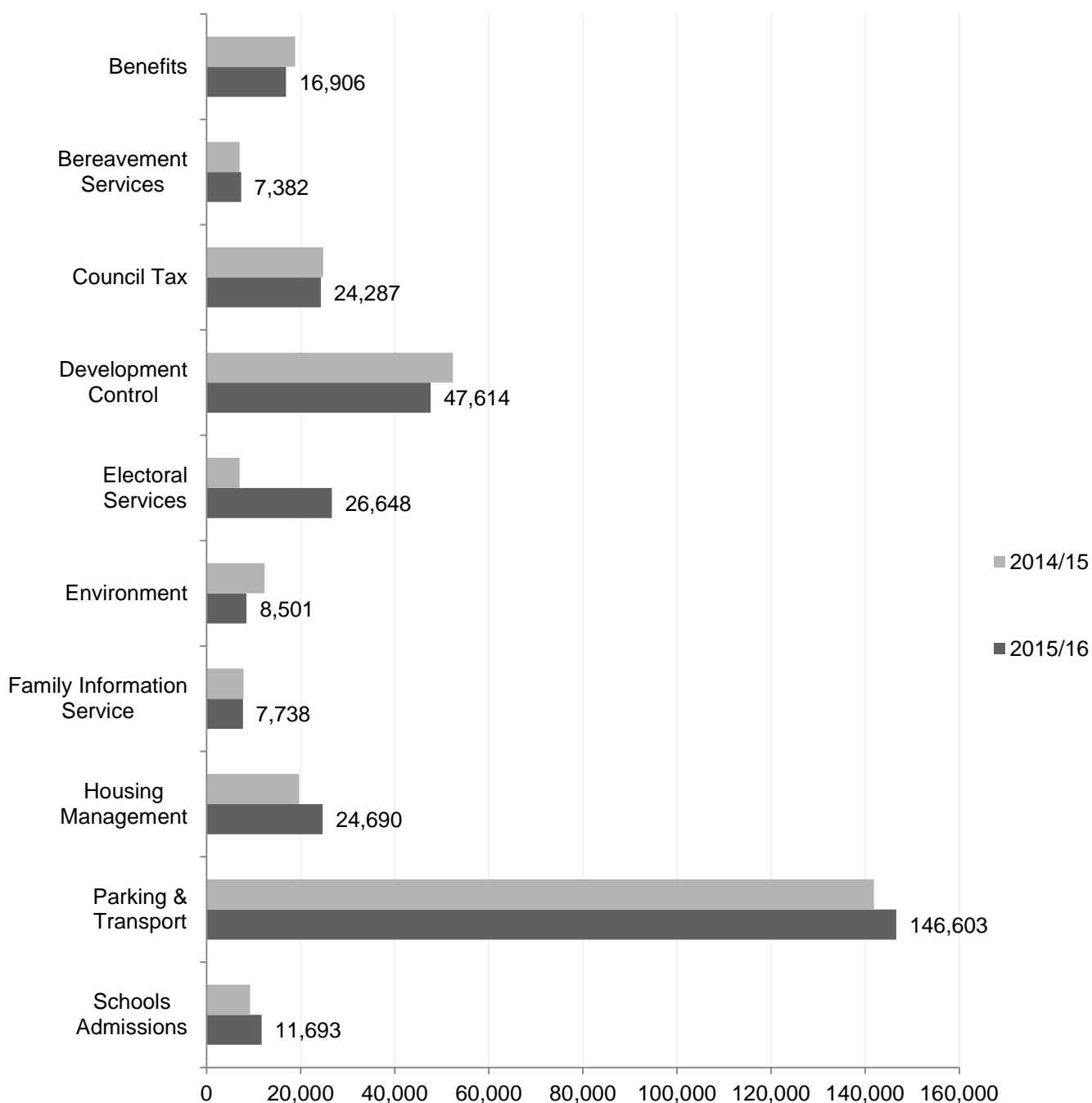
Web page views

Schools admissions and Housing Management have both reported a 25% increase in web page views since 2014/15.

Electoral services have received four times the number of page views in this year (Individual voter registration was introduced), when compared with last year in which a general election was held, and the Environment pages have reported a reduction in views since 2014/15 when there was industrial action taken which affected refuse and recycling collections.

These both reflect the way the website is visited to get information on a particular incident or unusual event, and highlights the importance of these pages being regularly updated, especially at such times.

Service pages with more than 6,000 views per month



Summary of online activity

This section presents data and information relating to Brighton & Hove City Council's online presence in 2015/16.

Website usage

- www.brighton-hove.gov.uk had 4,477,746 visits.
- This is up from 4,219,585 visits the previous year (1 April 2014 to 31 March 2015).
- We had 54% returning visitors and 46% new visitors.

What our website visitors are most interested in

1. Planning
2. Jobs
3. Car parks
4. Parking & parking permits
5. Contact the council
6. Recycling centres
7. Elections
8. School holiday & term dates
9. Libraries
10. Council Tax

How people find the website

- Search – 71% (mostly Google – was 70% previous year)
- Direct (bookmark or typed in URL) – 14% (was 11% previous year)
- Referral (links from other sites) – 13% (was 17% previous year)
- Social sharing – 2% (was 1.5% previous year)

What devices people use to access the website

- Desktop – 51% (previous year was 58%)
- Mobile – 34% (previous year was 26%)
- Tablet – 15% (previous year was 16%)

SOCITM Better Connected 2015 – a snapshot of all local authority websites

Every year our website is ranked against 415 other local authority websites. In 2015 we were ranked:

- 15th nationally by usage (new entry in the top 20)
- 10th nationally by share of the population (up 7 places from previous year)
- 2nd most visited English unitary authority website
- 1st most visited website in the south east.

Social media

As of May 2016, we had:

- 35,607 followers on Twitter (main account @BrightonHoveCC)
- 5,116 likes on Facebook.
- 379 subscribers and 253,835 views on YouTube

Twitter

From 1 April 2015 to 31 March 2016 we:

- sent out 3,992 tweets
- gained 9,415 followers
- had 98,584 visitors to our Twitter profile page, and
- had 11,546 mentions.

Comments from services

This section outlines information provided by the services who deliver the top twenty highest volume transactions, regarding the customer service they provide.

Housing Customer Services

“We reviewed our procedures for managing Discretionary gardening and decorating schemes. The review focused on channel shift and a lean review to remove waste from our processes. We made the process paperless by moving the form on-line and stopped requesting paper proofs from applicants. Savings are in officer time to process the applications and postal costs, as well as reducing the requirements on the customer.”

Revenues & Benefits

Revenues and Benefits have been working very closely with CFDA (Customer First in a Digital Age) to make their online or self service offer to customers as effective as possible. By using the information provided by collecting the reasons for customer contact, they have been able to prioritise the processes or transactions which have the highest customer demand and work on streamlining and improving these to have the highest impact on customer contact volumes, freeing up staff time to assist customers with those complex interactions which aren't well suited to self service. In 2015/16, the service has introduced online direct debit set up (where previously this would have required a phone call and the completion and return of a paper form), an online form for customers to fill in when moving into the area which is now integrated with the back office processing system, saving officer time in rekeying information from an email, as well as considerably shortening the length of time a customer has to wait for their bill.

Parking

Parking Permit Centre

“From 1 June 2016 The Parking Information Centre becomes The Parking Permit Centre. In the last financial year the Parking Information Centre issued approximately 37,340 permits over the counter this has risen 10% compared to permits sold over the counter the previous year due to the extension of parking zones. In order to provide a quicker and more beneficial service the parking information centre has become the parking permit centre dealing in all types of permits for parking. It is felt that this will reduce the waiting time for customers wanting to obtain a permit. For customers paying by cheque or postal order there is a drop box to avoiding queuing. The next phase is to progress with the development of an on-line permit renewal system. A drop box will be in place in the centre for people who just want to drop in their parking appeals, this will save the customer time queuing.”

Penalty Charge Notice Appeals

“We are now responding to up to 62% of online Penalty Charge Notice appeals by e-mail, this makes the appeal process quicker and more convenient for the customer. By sending informal representations by e-mail decreases back office processing cost of stationary, printing and postage and scanning costs, saving the council an estimated £6,400 per year in postage and envelope costs alone. We also suggest that evidence is now sent by e-mail rather than by post for

a quicker response. A drop box will be in place in the permit centre for people who just want to drop in their appeals, this will save the customer time queuing. In the last financial year 2015/16, over 165 cases were contested at the Traffic Penalty Tribunal. From the 14 March 2016 Brighton and Hove City Council became a pilot authority for the introduction of a new online portal to make appeals to the adjudicator online. This has made the process of transferring the process of transferring information simpler for both the driver and the council.“

Housing Needs

“During the trial phase of the service redesign within Housing Needs (encompassing Housing Advice, Homemove and Housing Options) we have operated an expanded advice service and broadened their scope. This has had the following outcomes:

By taking over Homemove’s phone service we have allowed them the time to clear their long-running backlog of applications and submitted evidence. This has led to much swifter assessments and has the side-effect of reducing low-value contacts from clients, who otherwise would be calling or attending drop-in regularly purely to ask how their assessment is progressing. This can be seen by the overall reduction in contacts.

- Drop-In contacts per month: Oct 2015 – 934, Feb 2016 – 733
- Phone calls to advice line per month: Oct 2015 – 1800, Feb 2016 – 1395

The advice service has also been offering a drop-in service for Homemove related queries (which was not offered previously) and this has contributed to the fall in contacts, as we have been able to deal with issues there and then, resulting in a better use of officer resource and a swifter service for customers.

By expanding the advice service’s remit to include straight-forward decision letters following applications for homeless assistance, this has taken some of the burden from Housing Options and allowed them to focus on the more complex cases, which necessitate their skills. Over this period the number of homeless applications undertaken by the advice service has equated to up to 29% of all decisions in a particular month.”

Cityclean

“Cityclean are working with the CFDA (Customer First in a Digital Age) team to improve both our processes and systems. There has already been a great deal of work which has resulted in a new version of our Achieve system which was rolled out to the contact centre team last week. This new version is faster which should help us to reduce the time taken over each call, and the number of abandoned calls, both of which will improve our customer experience.”

How do we use customer complaints and compliments to improve services?

Overall, there has been a 20% decrease in complaints, from 1955 in 2014/15 to 1588 in 2015/16

Similarly there has been a 20% increase in reported compliments, from 648 in 2014/15 to 778, in 2015/16.

Compared to 2014/15 there have been:

- 94 fewer complaints about refuse collection (135 to 41)
- 40 fewer complaints about recycling collection (71 to 31)
- 31 fewer complaints about delays in repairs (94 to 63)

The top three types of compliments we receive are about how customer focussed we are (219 compliments), the personal qualities of the staff (133) and how good our processes are (114).

What feedback have we received?

Complaints

The number of complaints about council services received in 2015/16 has reduced by 20% compared to 2014/15 and 15% compared to 2013/14. Results for the last three years are:

Year	Number of complaints	Change on previous year
2015/16	1563	392 decrease
2014/15	1955	107 increase
2013/14	1848	202 increase

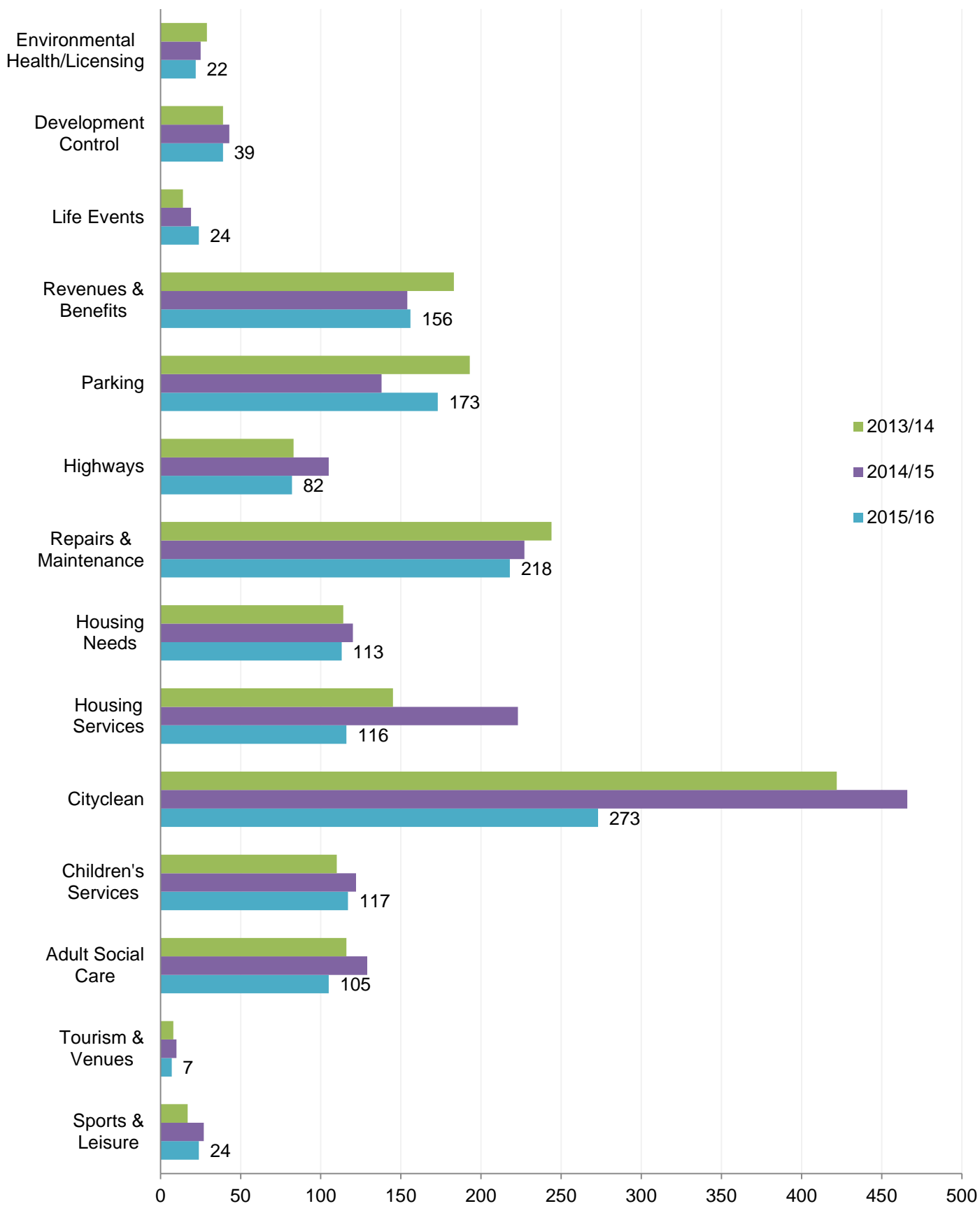
The services which have had the greatest impact in reducing complaint levels between 2013/14 and 2015/16 are:

Service	Percentage Reduction	Numerical Reduction
Cityclean	35%	149
Housing Services	20%	29
Revenues & Benefits	15%	27
Repairs & Maintenance	10%	26

See the next page for a year on year look at complaint numbers by service area.

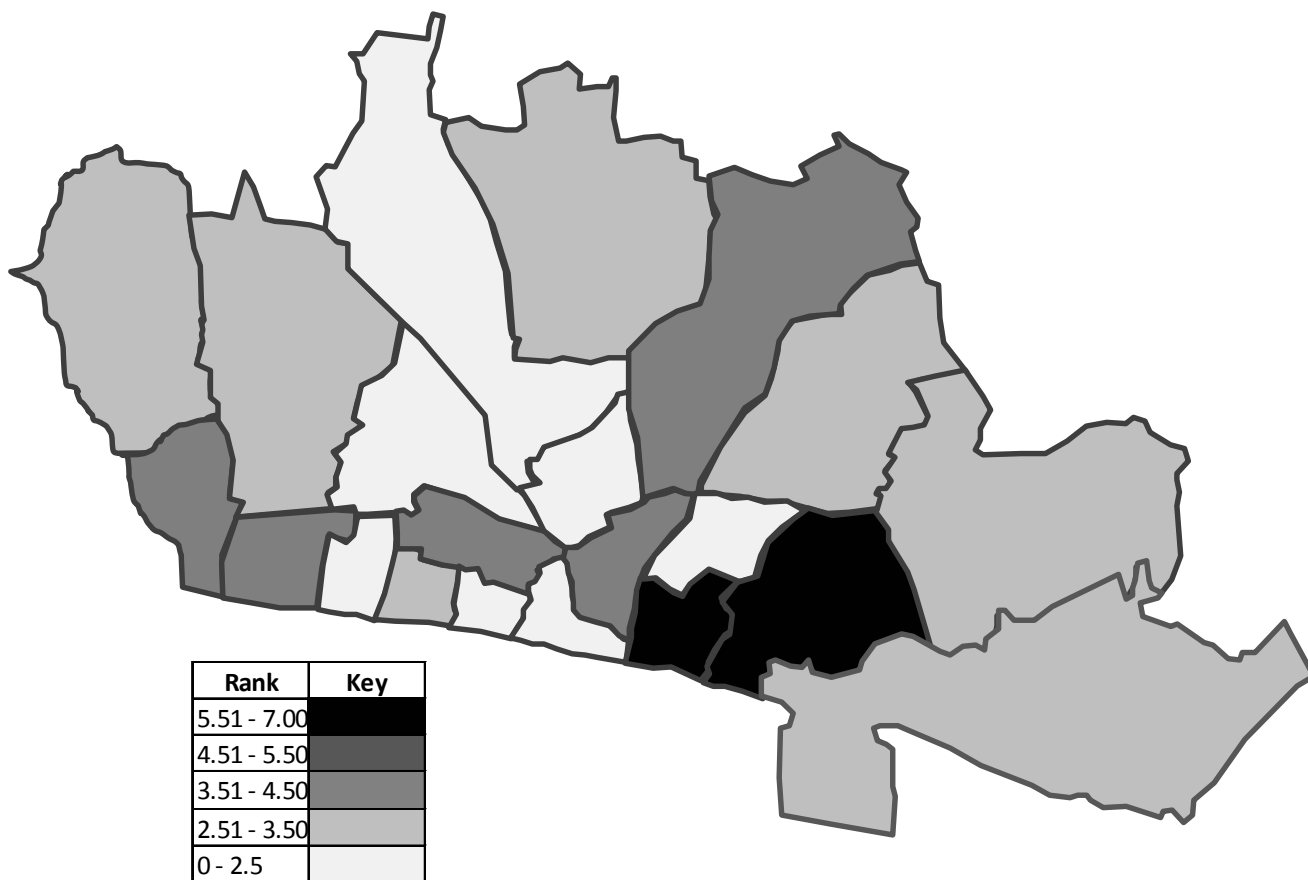
The chart below shows how complaint levels have changed for those services.

Complaints Received



Where do we receive complaints from?

The map and table below shows the number of complaints across the city's main areas (wards) per 1,000 head of the population. We have also shown the actual number of complaints in each ward.



Ward	Complaints per 1000 head of ward population	Totals
Brunswick and Adelaide	1.73	18
Central Hove	2.82	27
East Brighton	6.38	91
Goldsmid	3.73	60
Hangleton and Knoll	3.25	48
Hanover and Elm Grove	2.18	37
Hollingdean and Stanmer	4.07	69
Moulsecoomb and Bevendean	2.44	44
North Portslade	3.40	34
Patcham	2.88	42
Preston Park	2.30	35
Queens Park	6.03	94
Regency	2.39	25
Rottingdean Coastal	2.57	36
St Peters and North Laine	5.38	102
South Portslade	4.18	40
Hove Park	1.85	20
Westbourne	1.86	19
Wish	3.87	38
Withdean	2.41	36
Woodingdean	3.04	30

The most frequently raised types of complaint include:

- East Brighton – responsive and planned housing repairs (40 complaints) and the Neighbourhood team (7 complaints)
- Queens Park – responsive housing repairs (22 complaints)
- St Peter & North Laine – parking management (10 complaints), refuse and street cleaning (18 complaints)

How is feedback from complaints being used?

Cityclean

The main issue of complaint for City Clean is missed collections.

- The service has been operating a continuous review to understand the cause of missed collections. They have found that when close attention can be paid to checking, reminding crews and communicating with them the numbers and associated complaints of missed collections can be dramatically reduced. However, this requires a lot of staff resources.
- To make this easier Cityclean are working on their processes and systems with the Customer First in a Digital Age team to sustain improvements for our customers. One aim of the project is to use mobile technology linked to GPS; crews will have tablets in the cab and input information about any missed collections, with the reasons why, while they are at the location. This information will be immediately available online for the customer and the contact centre and will enable quicker resolution of problems.
- This may take some time to bring into practice. Therefore as an interim measure CFDA are developing a process for team leaders and charge hands to use electronic forms and “fix my street” via their work mobiles to receive alerts of problems within real time and respond if nearby rather than returning to the depot and being asked to revisit.

Housing Services

The main issues of complaint in Housing Services are about gardens, low level Anti-Social Behaviour, unmanaged car parks and a lack of action.

- Neighbourhood Teams are inspecting gardens, talking to residents and advising them on what to do, supporting them and also applying sanctions, or referring some to the discretionary gardening scheme.
- Housing are encouraging residents to report more instances of ASB and are encouraging neighbourliness. This is resulting in more Neighbourhood Team and Tenancy Enforcement Officer visits to ensure people are aware of tenancy conditions and consequences of escalation. These officers are promoting the use of mediation.
- Area Panels and Housing Committee have agreed a programme of managing Housing car parks, working with residents to find solutions to local parking problems.
- Housing Services are striving to improve response times to address the perception of a lack of action. Response times will depend on the issue, some things such as ASB can take longer than a resident might expect.

- As part of the drive to improve communications, Housing Services will provide much more information to customers using the Housing pages of the council website to resolve issues there and then. Access to web based information will enable Housing Customer Service Team members to assist customers and help to resolve 80% of enquiries at first point of contact.
- Since April 2015 HCST have sent more than 20,000 text messages to customers. This has improved the speed of passing on urgent/necessary information.

Revenues & Benefits

The main issue of complaint is that customers feel legal action to recover debt is unwarranted

- In October/November we started using an external trace and collect company who were chasing £5.1million of old debt. This is all now dealt with, but a high level of complaints came from that action.
- A Revenues and Benefits telephone hub was established in November. Extended opening hours have been introduced and the Council Tax and Benefits teams are sat next to each other to encourage immediate resolution of cross services issues rather than the customer having to call back and speak to another team. Call waiting times have significantly improved.
- On line forms are being made available over the next months including moving forms and, next financial year, bills will be available on line. Users of the digital service are automatically being asked about their experience and are actively being asked to comment on any areas that have not run smoothly so that any issues can be dealt with.

Repairs and Maintenance

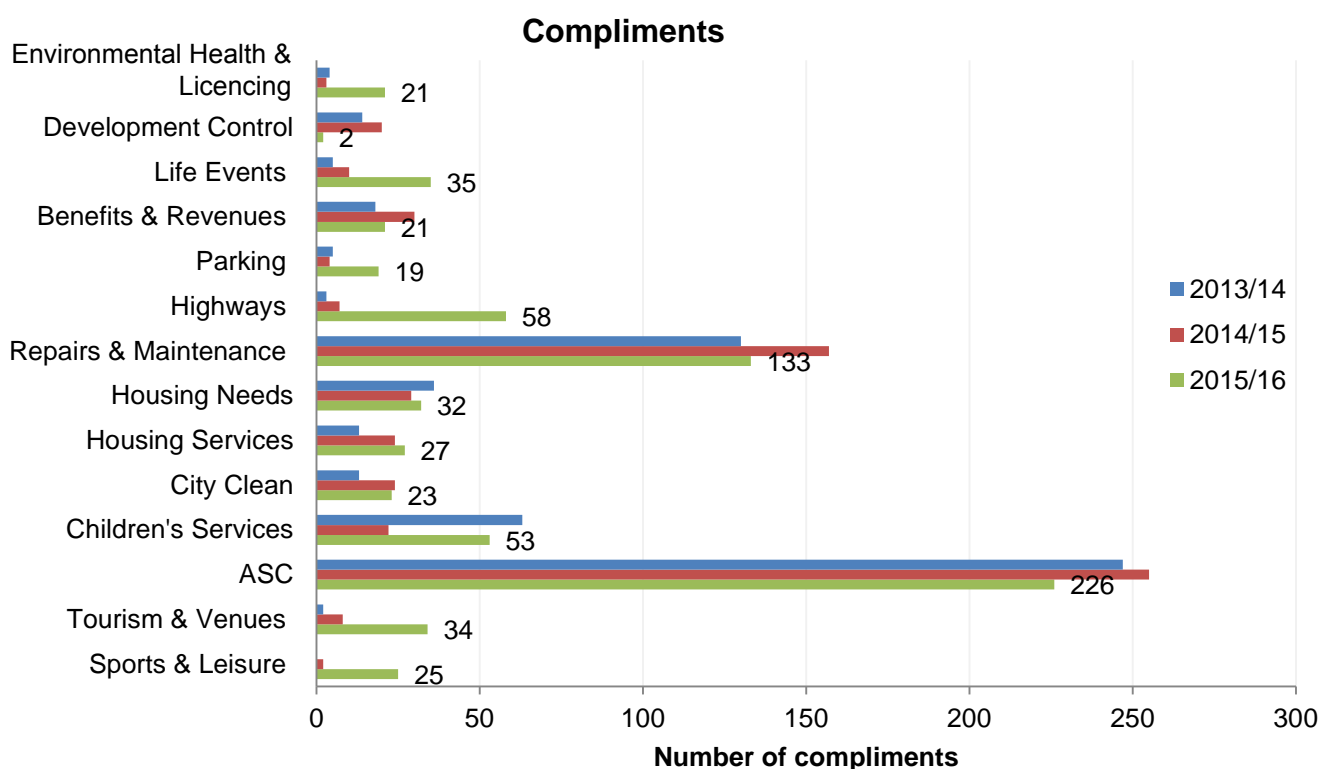
The main issue of complaint is delay in carrying out repairs.

- Repairs and Maintenance are developing an improved communication strategy so that customers are given a more responsive personal service and are kept clearly informed of what is happening with regard to response repairs.
- The service has recognised from complaints over recent years that they need to improve their communications around what works are planned and when. To address this they have improved the information on their website about building programmes in the form of an interactive map that residents can use to see what works are planned in their area over the next three years.
- There are regular “Tool Box Talk” for all operatives and contractors which provide refresher training and are centred on providing a better customer service. Examples of these include a review of scaffolding and parking arrangements for contractors.

Compliments

The number of compliments about council services recorded in 2015/16 has increased by 20% compared to 2014/15 and 35% compared to 2013/14. Results for the last three years are:

Year	Number of Compliments	Change on previous year
2015/16	780	132 increase
2014/15	648	74 increase
2013/14	574	195 increase



780 Compliments	655 Compliments from members of the public	Customer Focused	219
		Personal Qualities	133
		Good Process	114
		Quality of Outcome	109
		Quality of Input	48
	125 Compliments from internal customers and external professionals	Quality of Input	37
		Good Process	31
		Personal Qualities	29
		Customer Focused	17
		Quality of Outcome	11

The following are examples of some of the compliments we have received:

“I had an appointment this week with XXX as part of her duty planning officer role. Her calm demeanour, clarity and professionalism helped my client. My client has mental health concerns and the man, XXXXX, who took the duty call made every effort to ensure that my client was not discriminated against. Whilst we all hope for outstanding customer service an awareness of disabilities and the equalities act is something my clients often have to fight for. To have this high level of service has such a massive positive influence in a number of ways when people have been discriminated against and need the involvement of your team to support them. So I thought I would email as the service has been of such a high level.”

I wanted to mail you today to underline whilst it is fresh in my mind to express my gratitude for the constructive and helpful manner with which you have engaged with me on this project and helped considerably move the design of the scheme forward since we were first commissioned in the dying days of the last application. Bringing a piece of Miami to Kempton was never going to be easy and as ever Social Media is hot today with locals overjoyed by the outcome. Yesterday of course we witnessed the pure drama of a Planning Committee. BHCC is the only one I ever attend that allows questions of the speakers by the way which is a good thing in the quest for truth and fact. Most of my client side were watching on screens from several destinations world-wide - feedback: 'edge of the seat' stuff. It truly was dramatic and yet all included on this mail trail remained cool, rational and professional throughout.

Finally I wanted to take this opportunity to say a huge thank you to you and your team for all your hard work, perseverance, and patience with this issue. I can honestly say that I have had nothing but a positive experience every time I have had dealings with the council in this issue. I have found every individual and department I have come into contact with to be extremely helpful, friendly, transparent, highly responsive, and very professional. I can honestly say that the service I have received is exemplary and I will be writing a letter of praise to the leader of the council, and the acting Chief Executive accordingly, naming particular individuals such as yourself, xxxxxx, and others, that have stood out. Once again, thank you for all your hard work.

Thank whoever is responsible for the wonderful lawns of wild flowers at Preston Park. A joy to walk through. In fact in recent years in Brighton there have been many lovely banks of wild flowers. Many thanks to all your gardeners and volunteer helpers, it was worth all the time and trouble they took. Please pass on our regards, we will return to Brighton again at a later date.

Next steps

Improving customer satisfaction

- Working on our customer promise to set measurable standards for customer service delivery.
- Taking part in the annual Institute of Customer Services survey, in order to improve understanding of our customer service performance against other Local Government agencies and against the commercial sector, including benchmarking and channel by channel satisfaction questions.
- Promoting the Customer Service Excellence Quality Mark and the Institute of Customer Service qualifications as externally recognised standards of performance in customer service delivery.
- Supporting services in ensuring that they maximise the investment in their online services, to advise on changing working practices, channel shift strategy and change management to actively encourage customers to use online services.
- Working with the Institute of Customer Service to improve the 2016/17 report.

Improving data quality

- Improving our understanding of the telephone reporting system to ensure higher quality and greater consistency in our telephone data, using the Avaya Customer Management System, to include specifying which reports should be run to gather comparable data, and to recommend that where teams have a public phone line, this is set up with the Avaya supervisors program to enable regular, consistent monitoring and reporting.
- Assisting services in identifying a statistically valid number of survey respondents to enable more robust, detailed analysis and confidence in using the data for performance and equalities monitoring.
- Including in the performance indicators that support our Customer Promise, the reporting of the total number of positive responses to survey questions (including the 'good' and 'easy' responses in addition to the 'very good' and 'very easy' responses) as well as the number of respondents and any equalities information gathered.
- Working with the relevant internal teams and external suppliers to improve quality of and ease of access to, data on online form submissions.
- Including more teams in this report in future years, as the organisation moves through to its latest phase of Workstyles and implements improvements in technological infrastructure.

This and previous year's reports are published on our website:

www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/customerinsightreport

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