

Notes to help interpret the Commission's local authority statistics

1. Complaints received

This information shows the number of complaints received by service area and in total within the periods given. These figures will include complaints that were made prematurely to the Ombudsman (see below for more explanation) and which we referred back to the council for consideration.

2. Decisions

This information records the number of decisions made by the Ombudsman, by outcome, within the periods mentioned. This number will not be the same as the number of complaints received, because some complaints are made in one year and determined in the next. Below we set out a key explaining the outcome categories.

MI reps: These are cases where we have concluded an investigation and issued a formal report finding maladministration causing injustice. (The figures for the years 2001/2 and 2002/3 may include reports which had a finding of local settlement. For legal reasons, reports are no longer issued with this finding.)

LS: These are decisions by letter discontinuing an investigation because an acceptable local settlement has been obtained. They relate to cases where there has been administrative fault and a remedy is recommended by the Ombudsman and agreed by a council during the course of an investigation; or cases where the council itself offers a satisfactory remedy before an investigation has been completed.

M reps: These are cases where we have concluded an investigation and issued a formal report finding maladministration but causing no injustice to the complainant.

NM reps: These are cases where we have concluded an investigation and issued a formal report finding no maladministration by the authority.

No mal: These are decisions by letter discontinuing an investigation because we have found no, or insufficient, evidence of maladministration.

Omb disc: These are decisions by letter discontinuing an investigation where we have exercised the Ombudsman's general discretion not to pursue the complaint. This can be for a variety of reasons, but the most common is that we have found no or insufficient injustice to warrant the matter being pursued further.

OJ: These are complaints which were not pursued because they were outside the Ombudsman's jurisdiction

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