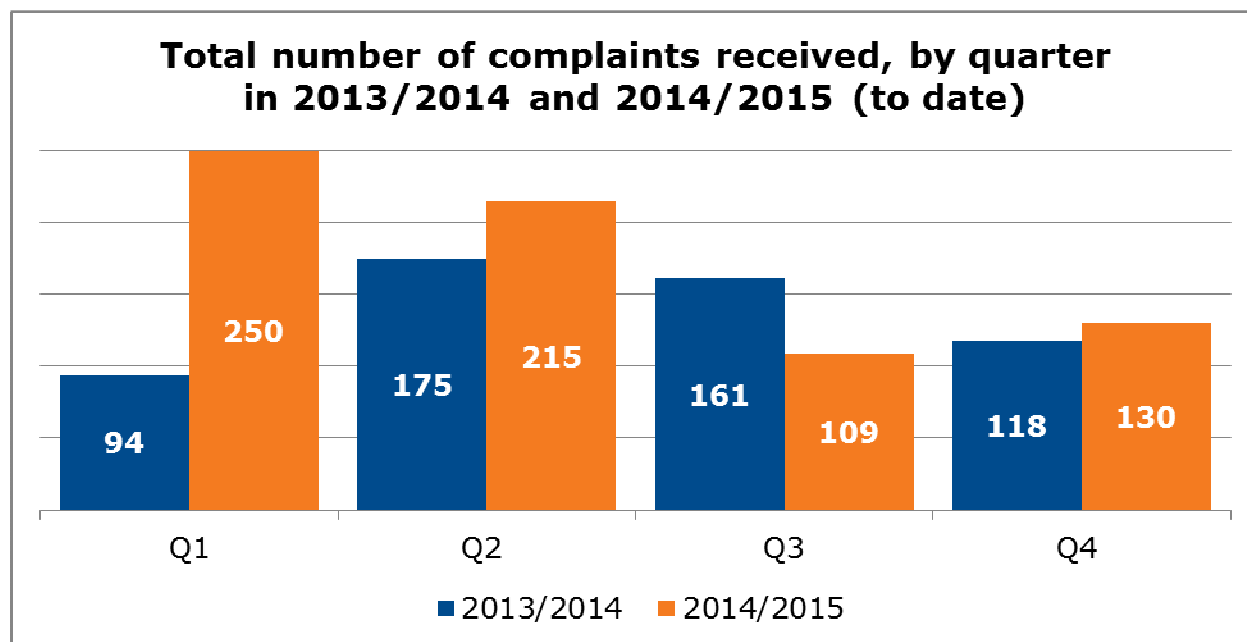


## Quarter 4 Customer Feedback (complaints, compliments and social media) Report

### 1. Overall Performance

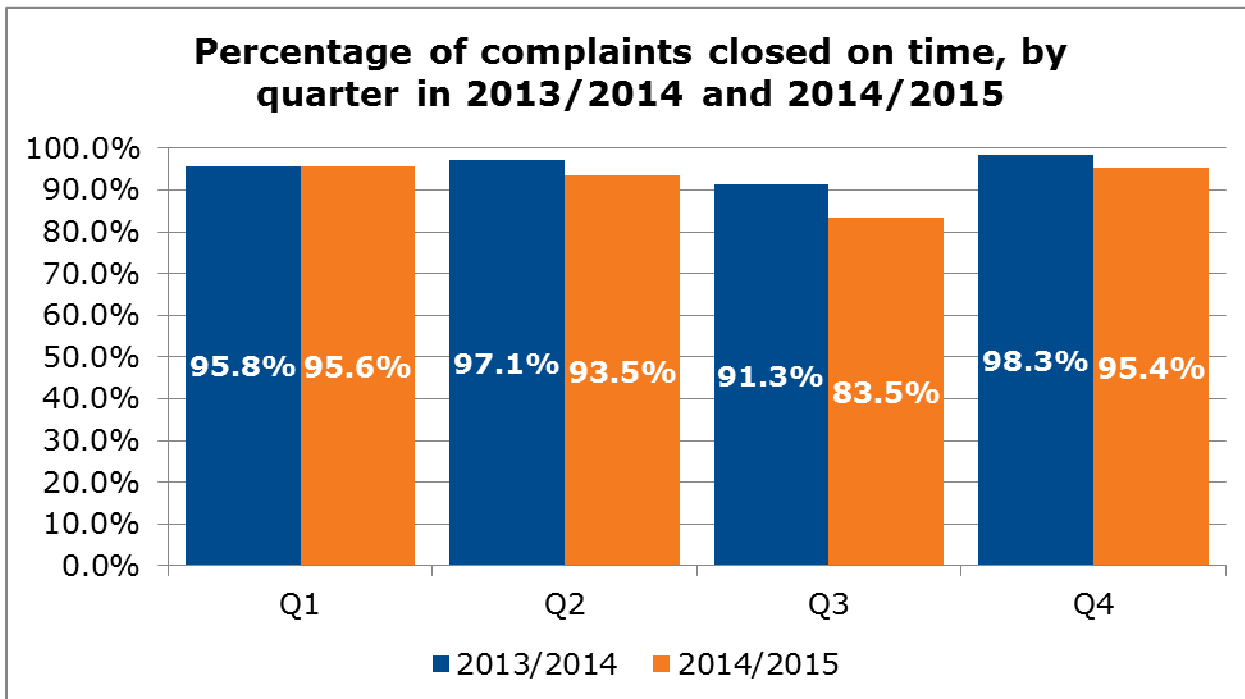
There were 130 complaints received in total this quarter. This was an increase in the number of complaints received compared to quarter 3 2014/15 and to quarter 4 of 2013/14. The graph below shows the number of complaints received for the past 2 years.



For comparison, a table showing number of complaints received and the percentage of complaints answered on time, since quarter 1 of 2013/14, can be found below.

	Year	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
<b>Overall number of complaints received</b>	<b>13/14</b>	94	175	161	118
	<b>14/15</b>	250	215	109	130
<b>Percentage of complaints responded to on time</b>	<b>13/14</b>	95.8%	97.1%	91.3%	98.3%
	<b>14/15</b>	95.6%	93.5%	85.3%	95.4%

The percentage of complaints responded to on time has increased in the last quarter of 2014/15. The quarterly result was above the 95% target set as Key Performance Indicator in the Strategic Plan. The percentage of complaints closed on time was lower than quarter 4 of 2013/14.



Of the 6 complaints that were closed late only 1 complainant was sent a holding response. This complaint was against Development Management and was about the specifics of a particular application which required a detailed investigation and response. The services that had complaints closed late with no holding response sent were:

- Benefits (1)
- Electoral Registration (2)
- Housing Register (1)
- Parks and Leisure (1).

This is the first full quarter in which the Policy and Information Team has had an Information Officer, responsible for administering the complaints and FOI processes. This may be a factor in for the higher percentage of complaints closed on time compared to the previous quarter. This performance will continue to be monitored.

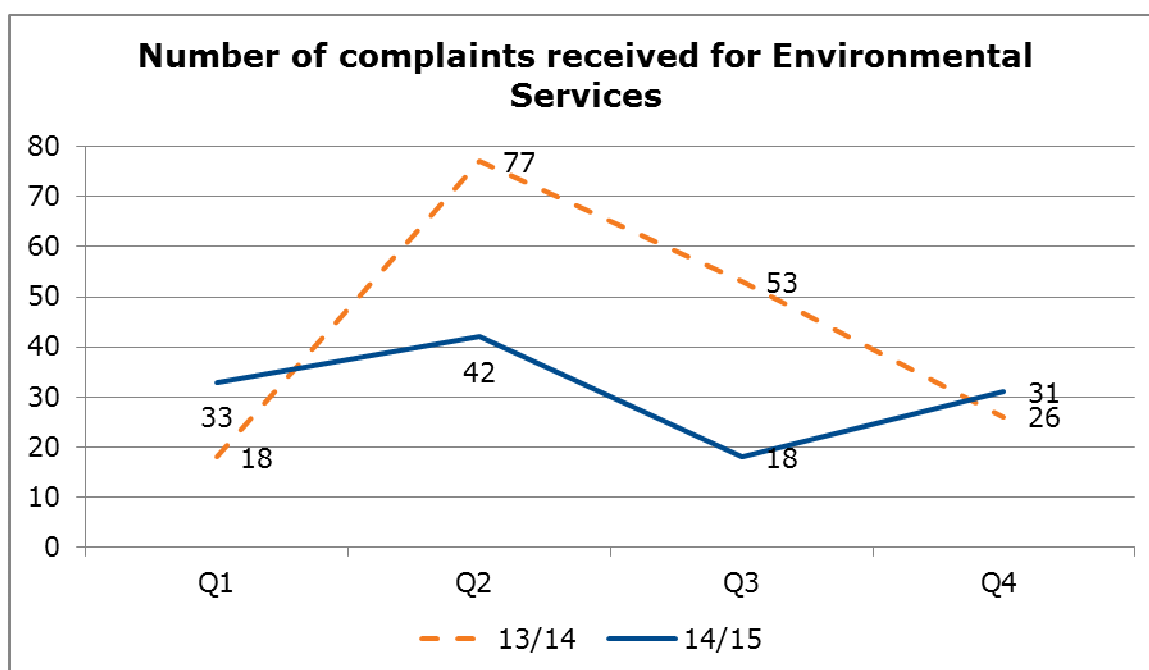
## 2. Complaints by Service

The services with the highest numbers of complaints this quarter were:

- Environmental Services, including Waste Collection (31)
- Parking Services (24)
- Development Management (16)
- Revenues (13).

### Environmental Services

Environmental Services received 31 complaints this quarter. A graph showing complaint numbers over the last two years can be found below.



Of the 31 complaints received for Environmental Services, 21 were about Waste Collection and there were some common themes.

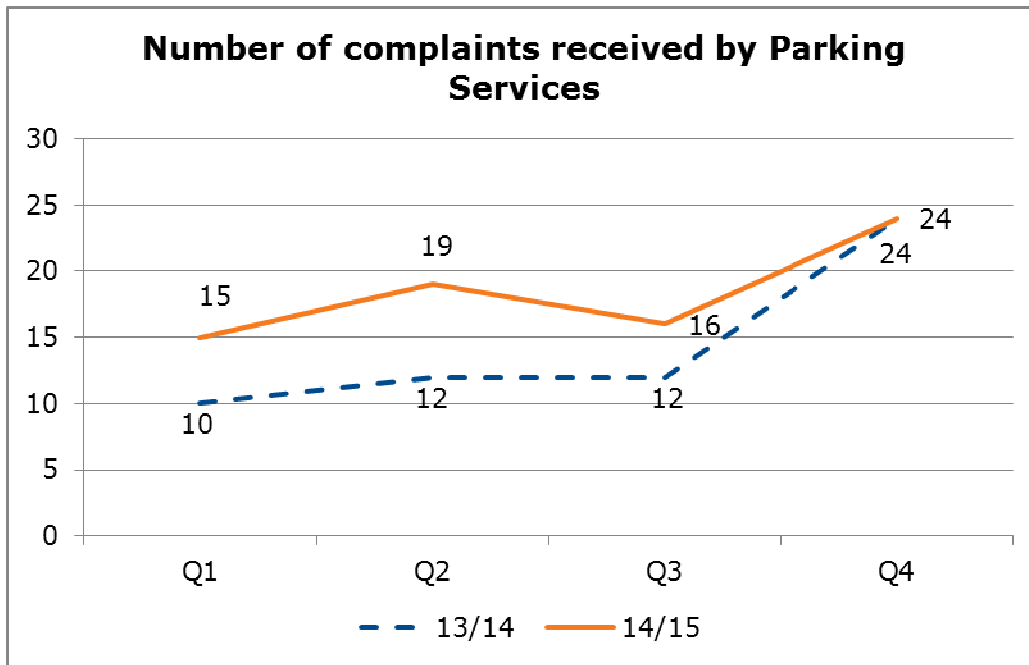
- Five complaints that information about Christmas collections was not circulated effectively, especially for those who did not have internet access. None of these complaints came from complainants without internet access. The response outlined methods the Council uses to publicise Christmas collections, and the methods for informing people without the internet.
- Two complaints about waste collection crews urinating in public while on their rounds. A reminder was sent to all depot staff and in one case the crew returned to the area concerned to clean the area.
- Seven complaints were about missed waste collections
- Three complaints were about missed collections due to broken bins.

Of the remaining ten complaints that were not about waste collection there were no trends or common themes in the nature of these complaints.

There were two complaints about the driving of our vehicles. As a result the depot is currently looking into driver training, monitoring and a driver handbook.

### Parking Services

Parking Services received 24 complaints this quarter. This is higher than any other quarter this year. However when comparing year on year, the trend is very similar. The graph below shows the comparison between 2013/14 and 2014/15.



There were some common themes and issues in the complaints received by Parking Services:

- There were three complaints about an altercation between a resident and a Civil Enforcement Officer (CEO) in a residential street. The parking enforcement contractor’s disciplinary process was applied in this case
- There were four complaints about the lack of availability for resident parking zones.
- Eight complaints were about the way in which Penalty Charge Notices (PCNs) were issued, generally by people who had received PCNs and were trying to bypass (or had exhausted) the appeals process.

The issues raised in the complaints are similar to those raised in quarter 4 in 2013/14.

Despite the fluctuations in the number of complaints received for this service, customer satisfaction has been consistently between 85-90%. There is a high

satisfaction rating with parking services 90.53% of customers were satisfied quarter 4 of 2014/15.

### Development Management

Development Management received 16 complaints in total this quarter. This is not a particularly high number of complaints for this service, whose complaints have fluctuated between 11 and 22 per quarter for the last 2 years. The majority of these complaints were about the way planning applications were handled, or their outcomes.

### Housing (Register)

Nine complaints were received about the Housing Register this quarter. In quarter 3, 8 complaints were received for this service; meaning the numbers of complaints received for this service has remained relatively stable since the previous quarter.

### Planning Support

Mid Kent Planning Support received 3 complaints about Maidstone applications this quarter, half the complaints received compared to quarter 3 of 2014/2015. Two of the complaints received this quarter were about not receiving notifications of planning applications that had been made. Both of these complaints were justified. One was a result of a system error and the other a result of human error.

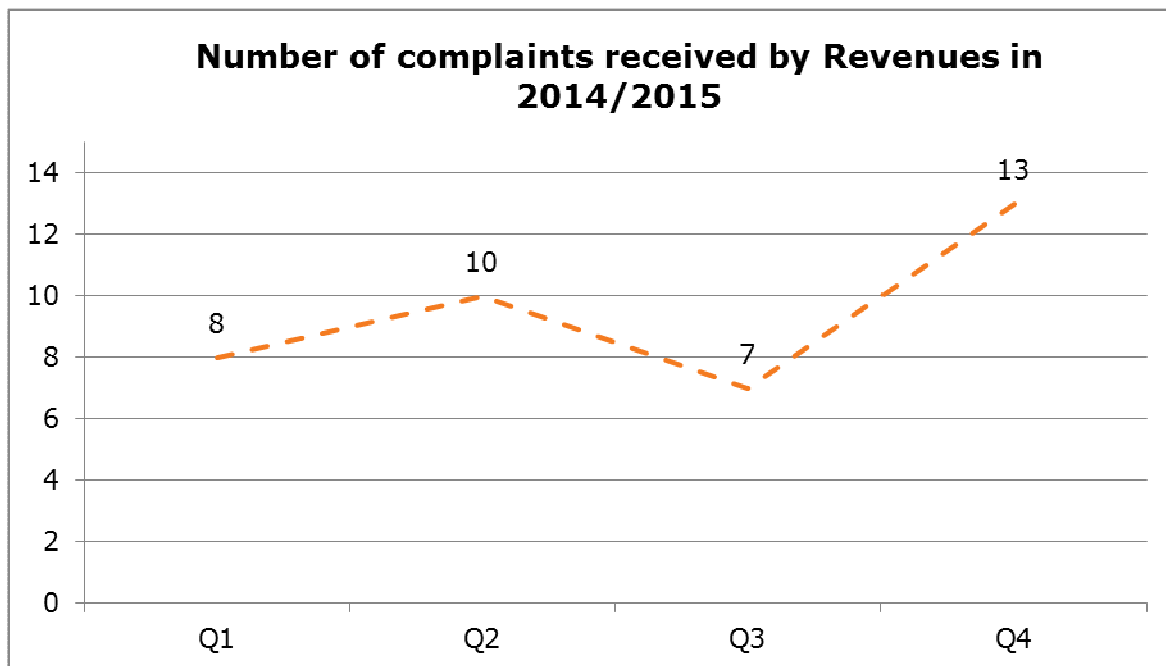
## Revenues

Revenues received 13 complaints this quarter, which was the highest number of complaints received in 2014/15 for this service.

Of these 13 complaints, 5 were about policy and the remaining eight were about service. Two of the 5 policy complaints were about policies introduced due to the localisation of council tax support- specifically the long-term empty premium and the removal of a council tax discount for second homes.

There has been a noticeable increase in policy complaints received by Revenues regarding the local Council Tax Support scheme. This is covered in more detail in the annual Customer Feedback report at appendix 2.

The number of complaints received by Revenues in 2014/15 can be seen in the graph below.



**A full breakdown of complaints by service can be found on the following page.**

**Complaints received by Service, Q4 2014/15**

Service	Number	On Time	Late	% on Time	Service	Policy	Staff	Time Taken	Lack of Contact	Discrimination
Benefits	6	5	1	83.3%	6	0	0	0	0	0
Corporate Property	1	1	0	100.0%	1	0	0	0	0	0
Customer Services	3	3	0	100.0%	2	0	0	0	1	0
Depot	1	1	0	100.0%	0	0	1	0	0	0
Development Management	16	15	1	93.8%	7	6	1	0	1	1
Economic Development	2	2	0	100.0%	2	0	0	0	0	0
Electoral Registration	3	1	2	33.3%	2	1	0	0	0	0
Environmental Enforcement	4	4	0	100.0%	1	1	2	0	0	0
Environmental Services	31	31	0	100.0%	20	1	9	1	0	0
Finance	1	1	0	100.0%	1	0	0	0	0	0
Housing (Homelessness)	1	1	0	100.0%	1	0	0	0	0	0
Housing Register	9	8	1	88.9%	7	1	0	0	0	1
Parking Services	24	24	0	100.0%	13	3	7	1	0	0
Parks and Leisure	5	4	1	80.0%	4	0	1	0	0	0
Planning Enforcement	4	4	0	100.0%	1	1	0	0	2	0
Planning Support	3	3	0	100.0%	3	0	0	0	0	0
Policy and Communications	2	2	0	100.0%	1	0	1	0	0	0
Property & Procurement	1	1	0	100.0%	1	0	0	0	0	0
Revenues	13	13	0	100.0%	8	5	0	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>130</b>	<b>124</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>95.4%</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>2</b>

### 3. Compliments

Several teams received compliments during quarter 4. The number of compliments received by each team is shown in the table below:

Team	Number of compliments
Grounds Maintenance	3
Environmental Services	5
Economic Development	2
Policy and Information	1
Customer Services	3
Housing (Homelessness)	1
Democratic Services	1
Environmental Enforcement	1
Communications	2

A selection of quotes from the compliments received can be found below:

*I would like to compliment the team who made such a good job of cleaning Victoria Street last Tuesday. The street looked much nicer for a bit of tlc.*

*(via twitter) 'Great to see the excellent work that @maidstonebc have done to the towpath from Maidstone to Allington'*

*I work for Social services in Maidstone and would just like to feedback on the excellent service I received today from Daisy and Natalia when bringing a client in both were extremely helpful in what was difficult circumstances for my client keep up the good work.*

*Just to say a huge thank you for cutting back the tree that was growing across the pavement at shoulder/face height. Brilliant job. Thanks again :-) :-)*

*I travel down Bluebell Hill every day from work and have seen your litter clear up signs, just wanted to say they put the point across, telling people how much it's going to cost, like them! I hope people take more notice of them.*



#### 4. Stage 2 Complaints

This quarter, the council received 25 stage 2 complaints, all of which were responded to within target time (20 working days). A breakdown of stage 2 complaints by service and by number of justified complaints against each service can be found in the table below.

<b>Service</b>	<b>Stage 2 Complaints</b>	<b>Number Justified</b>
Customer Services	1	0
Development Management	2	0
Environmental Enforcement	1	0
Environmental Services	2	1
Housing (homelessness)	1	0
Parking Services	4	1
Parks and Leisure	1	0
Planning Enforcement	4	0
Policy and Information	1	0
Revenues	8	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>4</b>

The number of stage 2 complaints received this quarter has dropped slightly on the previous quarter from 30 to 25. Only 4 of the 25 stage 2 complaints that were received this quarter were found to be justified.

Revenues received the most stage 2 complaints. The 2 justified complaints were regarding incorrect addresses on council tax accounts. Of the remaining complaints 2 were requesting discounts on their council tax/business rates; however these complainants' circumstances meant they were not eligible for any discounts.

The 4 stage 2 complaints that were received by Planning Enforcement were about perceived lack of action in enforcing planning breaches. None of these complaints were found to be justified. In the case of these complaints the customer's expectations does not match the standards set for the service. This has led to the customer's dissatisfaction with either the time it has taken to progress a case, the service (or lack of service) they feel they have received from the Planning Enforcement team or the lack of contact from the team after initially reporting a breach.

Comparative Statistics on stage 2 complaints can be found on the table below:

	Year	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
<b>Number of stage 2 complaints received</b>	<b>13/14</b>	23	16	39	17
	<b>14/15</b>	32	24	34	<b>25</b>
<b>% of complaints escalated to stage 2</b>	<b>13/14</b>	24.5	9.1	24.2	14.4
	<b>14/15</b>	12.8	11.1	31.1	<b>19.2</b>
<b>% justified stage 2 complaints</b>	<b>13/14</b>	47.8	37.5	41.0	23.5
	<b>14/15</b>	31.3	33.3	35.3	<b>16.0</b>

The number of stage 2 complaints received was not particularly high this quarter. Additionally, the escalation rate of stage 2 complaints had dropped compared to quarter 3 2014/15 (19.2% in quarter 4 compared to 31.1% in quarter 3). However the escalation rate for stage 2 complaints is still relatively high compared to previous quarters over the previous 2 years, as well as compared to quarter 4 of 2013/14.

The percentage of justified stage 2 complaints was also lower than any other quarter over the last 2 years. The low proportion of justified stage 2 complaints suggests that customers are satisfied with the responses and outcome they received at stage1.

## 5. Complaint Handling Satisfaction

Satisfaction with complaint handling was high this quarter, at 60%. This is the highest it has been for 5 years the last time satisfaction with complaint handling was over 60% was in quarter 4 of 2009/2010 when it was at 70%.

	Year	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
<b>Satisfaction rate</b>	<b>2013/2014</b>	20.0%	40.0%	36.17%	41.67%
	<b>2014/2015</b>	54.39%	0.00%	26.09%	60.0%
<b>Response rate</b>	<b>2013/2014</b>	10.6%	14.3%	29.2%	30.5%
	<b>2014/2015</b>	22.8%	8.1%	42.2%	11.5%

However it should be noted that the response rate was low again this quarter, at 11.5%. The Policy and Information Team are exploring alternative methods for obtaining feedback on the process and measuring satisfaction.

## 6. Payments, Refunds and Compensation

Payments, refunds and compensation paid as a result of complaints are listed in the table below, along with explanatory notes.

Service	Stage	Reason	Amount
Revenues	1	Problems with linking 2 council tax accounts, led to correspondence being sent to the wrong address. The summons cost was withdrawn.	£110
Revenues	2	Same issue as above. Stage 2 confirmed that the bailiffs had agreed to remove their costs, and an additional £50 payment was made to recognise the time and trouble the complainants had gone through.	£50
Parking Services	1	Problems with the 506 Park and Ride service running late. Arriva sent the customer 2 free bus tickets to apologise. Value of the tickets unknown.	-
Parks and Leisure	1	Approach road to Mote House in poor state of repair leading to tyre damage. A payment was made, as a goodwill gesture, to cover the cost of replacing the damaged tyre.	£102
<b>Total</b>			<b>£262</b>

## 7. Social Media

Interactions on social media are gathered and classified by the Communications Team. Everything with the word Maidstone in from Twitter and Facebook is logged, and classified by subject. A word cloud images are created on a monthly basis, using the subject names. The larger the word appears, the greater the number of mentions in social media. There is an overall summary provided below, along with the images for each of the months in the quarter. Some tweets were missing from the overall picture in February and March as posts can only be logged from a few days previously, and if staff are working on other things or on leave these tweets can be missed. However the information that we do have is sufficient to give a good snapshot of the main topics of conversation.

### Summary

- Maidstone United is a popular topic. This is far from surprising as the team have the word 'Maidstone' in their name (the search term used to build the picture).
- There were several reoccurring topics that seem to be popular every month, including nightlife, shopping, traffic, bus and trains
- Across the three months there were more mentions than usual of the Museum specifically due to the Ralph Steadman exhibition

### January

- The early part of the month was dominated by the search for Pat Lamb.
- Huge increase in the number of mentions about traffic compared to normal due to Operation Stack (though the impact of this isn't clear in the image because of the number of mentions of Pat Lamb)
- Jake Quickenden was an X Factor contestant who appeared at Gallery nightclub.

### February

- Huge problems with delays on the trains for several days (partly due to weather)
- A copy of the Magna Carta was found in the KCC archives

### March

- Maidstone's first organised 10km race was held
- There was a solar eclipse
- Joe McElderry – a previous X Factor winner – appeared at the Hazlitt
- Stargazing and Mote Park both receive a lot of mentions- this was due to the 'Stargazing Live' event held at the leisure centre

January

traffic  
athens

nightlife  
STON  
trains MaidstoneUnited  
PhotoStudios  
JakeQuickenden

# Pat Lamb

February

nightlife  
Maidstone United  
Magna Carta bus  
Chris Smalling  
museum shopping traffic crime  
trains

March

# eclipse nightlife 10K shopping MotePark stargazing traffic MaidstoneUnited JoeMcElderry



## 8. Methods of Contact

Methods of contact for complaints received this quarter can be found below:

	Email	Post	Telephone	Face to Face	Social Media
<b>Number</b>	60	17	48	5	0
<b>%</b>	46.2	13.1	36.9	3.8	0

In quarter 4 the most common method of contact by complainants was by email. Over the previous 2 years there has been a gradual increase in the proportion of complainants contacting us via this method, which has led to it rising from 34% in quarter 1 of 2013/14 to 46% in quarter 4 of 2014/15. There are no other trends in the methods of contact, as other methods of contact seem to fluctuate from quarter to quarter. However it is worth noting that complaints received by email and telephone combined tend to make up between 60-80% of complaints received for each quarter.

	Year	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
<b>Email</b>	<b>13/14</b>	34.0%	35.6%	29.2%	39.8%
	<b>14/15</b>	35.2%	44.7%	44.9	46.2
<b>Post</b>	<b>13/14</b>	19.1%	27.5%	17.4%	10.2%
	<b>14/15</b>	6.4%	12.6%	14.7	13.1
<b>Telephone</b>	<b>13/14</b>	29.8%	31.2%	47.8%	40.7%
	<b>14/15</b>	52.4%	34.9%	32.1	36.9
<b>Face to Face</b>	<b>13/14</b>	11.7%	5.0%	5.0%	9.3%
	<b>14/15</b>	6.0%	7.9%	8.3	3.8
<b>Social Media</b>	<b>13/14</b>	0.0%	0.6%	0.06%	0.0%
	<b>14/15</b>	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%