

Environmental Services Annual Complaints Log 2016/17

Complaints summary

Total number of complaints	137
Of these 137 complaints:	
Escalations to Chief Executive	0
Escalations to the LGO	0
Bin collections	43
Assisted collection	11
Garden Waste scheme	9
Lack of response/action	9
Damage to property	3
Crew/Officer conduct	29
Grass cutting/grounds maintenance	13
Other	20

Examples of complaints that resulted in explicit learning points or service improvements (51)

Date	Subject Matter	Response	Lessons Learnt/ Changes made	Date of Closure
4-Apr-16	Complainant was driving behind a TVBC vehicle when an item flew off the back. Complainant alerted the driver and was unhappy with their response.	SESO spoke to driver. Driver explained a cross wind caught the canopy of the item and swept it out onto the slip road. They then stopped the vehicle to retrieve it.	Driver reminded that an unsafe load is illegal and could have consequences.	5-Apr-16

		<p>Didn't want to open back of vehicle as fully loaded, risk of dropping items causing further hazard, so put item into verge for retrieval later. Difficult to communicate with the other driver as they would not wind down window/noisy environment.</p> <p>Tried to call customer, no response - answerphone message left.</p>	<p>Advised to check the load each time driving away from a site and to use the netting where appropriate. File note put onto record.</p>	
4-Apr-16	<p>Complainant repeatedly having bins missed and has not had a collection for a month.</p>	<p>WCTL(S) emptied bins, reminded crews.</p>	<p>Crews spoken to.</p>	16-Apr-16
6-Apr-16	<p>Contacted TVBC 22.03.16 to report green waste bin had been missed. No progress and customer called again 10 days later to chase collection. Still waiting but received an email stating original request has been closed.</p>	<p>WCS(S) Completed. Informed the crew. Customer contacted and satisfied.</p>	<p>Crews spoken to.</p>	11-Apr-16
6-Apr-16	<p>Complaint regarding vehicle 'tailgating'. Once vehicle stopped, customer drove up behind to ask the driver if there was any need to drive in that way. Customer stated the driver was rude in response.</p>	<p>W&R Manager investigated. WCTL(S) spoke to driver, who felt driver was driving erratically, assured they did not swear at resident.</p> <p>W&R Manager contacted resident, apologised, assured that appropriate action would be taken with records kept of the incident.</p>	<p>File note put onto driver's record.</p>	6-Apr-16

		Resident was happy with the outcome.		
3-May-16	Complaint that grass was cut but not properly as there are still daisies, dandelions and nettles 3ft high. Cut has not been cleared from footpaths. Complainant spoke to Street Scene Manager last year.	SSS(S) tidied the area and left message with customer assuring the area will be monitored in the future.	SSS(S) to monitor the area.	5-May-16
4-May-16	Several green waste collections have been missed but subscription is up to date.	WCTL(N) Completed. Crew made aware.	Crew spoken to.	7-May-16
5-May-16	Customer and family were sat on grass at Anton Lakes Adventure play park, when the grass cutting crew came to mow very close to where they were sat. They did not ask the customer to move and just drove close to the complainant's children.	SSS(N) reprimanded crew and called customer to apologise.	Crew reminded to be aware of people around them whilst working.	6-May-16
17-May-16	Complaint regarding the mess left after a grass cut. Complainant had to tidy up grass cuttings. Today the bank has been strimmed which has left the car covered in grass - would like to speak to supervisor.	SSS/(S) spoke to customer and apologised - customer happy.	Crew advised to be more careful when strimming.	24-May-16

26-May-16	Complainant's bins were emptied this morning but the operatives knocked one of the bins over and left nappies, food waste and other items all over the pavement.	WCTL(S) cleared the area. Spoke to the resident and confirmed that the mess would be cleared that afternoon and they would speak to crew.	Crew spoken to - ensure any spillage is cleared before leaving in future.	26-May-16
23-May-16	<p>Missed bin and logged.</p> <p>Email received further to missed bin above. This has been closed twice without either resolution or contacting the customer:</p> <p>Complainant unhappy with how the complaint has been handled.</p>	Supervisor visited customer and apologised as it looks like we had emptied another bin in the first instance. This property is a new build, so not found by the crew.	Customer happy with final result and crew now aware of the property.	24-May-16
14-Jun-16	Complaint about the waste collection lorry using a resident's driveway to turn the vehicle around when collecting waste. The resident has said it is damaging their driveway and parking area.	WCTM advised the driver to not use resident's property to turn round the RCV and to find an alternative space.	Crew spoken to.	14-Jun-16
21-Jun-16	Resident moved their vehicle so the street sweeper could clean. They spoke to the operative to let them know so they could clean but the operative just smiled and carried on and went elsewhere.	SS(S) spoke to resident. There was an issue regarding the sweeper driver, they have been spoken to. The resident was happy that the sweeper will return to try and clear more of the cul de sac.	Operative spoken to.	12-Jul-16

2-Jul-16	Complainant initially emailed ENV regarding fly-tipping incident near their property and that the grass had not been cut. They did not receive a response and so emailed again to complain about the process.	Apology given for delay. Explanation given that during the initial investigation there was some confusion as to the ownership of the land. The housing association's contractor had been maintaining this area. The fly-tipped branches and leaves will be cleared whilst ownership of the land is ascertained.	To ensure acknowledgments are made in the time detailed on the website.	5-Jul-16
6-Jul-16	Complainant alleged that they were driving behind a council van when the driver leaned out the window and shouted at them whilst driving.	SSS(N) spoke to complainant who admitted to the supervisor that they were tailgating the van. However, although they did not hear what was said, the driver was shouting loud which they found upsetting. Customer happy for Supervisor to speak to the crew.	SSS(N) Spoke to driver/crew.	6-Jul-16
12-Jul-16	Ongoing issue, reported 16 June, still happening. Garden Waste lorry drives up the lane, has to continue up to the car park to turn around which is damaging the surface of the car park (which private residents have to pay for to repair). Can smaller lorry be deployed to this area so that it can reverse back down. The refuse lorry does not have any issues.	WCS(S) spoke to crew. Aware of the issue customer has and will endeavour to find another turning area.	To identify different turning area to minimise damage to car park surface.	21-Jul-16

21-Jul-16	Signed up to Garden Waste 28 June 2016 and initially purchased bin, then felt not practical. Rang immediately to cancel the bin and arrange for two sacks instead. Complainant was told £25 for bin would be refunded straight away. Paid two subscriptions on 1 July, not yet refunded for bin so called CSU who said they would investigate and call back. No call. Few days later tried again - same conversation. 18 July tried for third time, again promised call back - nothing. Wrote to Chief Exec.	W&R Manager instigated refund and investigated delay. Ticket requesting bags was printed and passed for action. Refund authority unfortunately not forwarded. W&R Manager contacted customer to explain and apologise for delay. Refund organised.	To process refunds correctly and in timely manner.	25-Jul-16
26-Jul-16	Customer is on an assisted collection and the crew come and collect the bin but fail every time to return it.	WCTL(S) spoke to waste collection crew, reminded them of importance of returning bin once emptied. Contacted customer and assured bin would be returned correctly.	To ensure assisted collection bins are returned to correct area.	26-Jul-16
28-Jul-16	The customer has an assisted collection and the crew have not been returning the bin to where they find it. Further complaint received - service category changed to lack of response.	WCS(S) spoke to crew. Now aware where bin should be returned to - with handle placed on the outside.	To ensure assisted collection bins are returned to correct area.	5-Aug-16

29-Jul-16	Customer is missing their garden waste sacks. Put out two for collection, was working in the front garden when the crew came - they took them and then didn't return.	WCTL(S) delivered two new bags. Spoke with customer - customer happy.	To return garden waste bags to property.	29-Jul-16
3-Aug-16	Assisted collection. Repeat complaint. Keeps reporting bin is not left back in the designated area. Reported the issue previously and yet today it has happened again.	WCTL(S) contacted customer. Advised had spoken to crew to ensure bin returned correctly in future. Resident happy.	To ensure that assisted collection is done correctly.	17-Aug-16
5-Aug-16	Assisted collection but the bin is not being returned with the lid positioned towards the step so the complainant can access it. The garden waste bin is also not being returned to the position it is collected from. Complainant is disabled and has mobility problems and failing to return bins as requested causes great difficulty for them.	WCS(S) spoke with crew. Aware of issues and will ensure bins returned as required in future.	To ensure assisted collection bins are returned in the correct way and to the correct area.	8-Aug-16
12-Aug-16	Black bin has still not been collected from designated collection point. Complainant put both bins in the bin collection point. Have further two full black bags in garage. Brown bin is also full of recycling.	WCS(S) emptied both bins. Contacted resident (left message) leaving contact details should there be future issues. Customer happy.	To ensure bins are collected when appropriate.	18-Aug-16

13-Aug-16	Complaint regarding an area of land that was not being maintained by the Council. Complainant cleared the area and laid membrane and pebbles but wishes the Council to pave over this area. Complainant also received no response from a previous contact made concerning the land.	Apology given for not responding to the previous enquiry. Clarified that the land is TVBC land and therefore the resident is not allowed to alter it. Arrangements will be made for the reinstatement of the land to green space at the council's expense. Maintenance will be monitored in future.	To ensure work requests are correctly put on to the system and actioned before they are closed off.	24-Aug-16
17-Aug-16	Resident has assisted collection but the operative has not returned bin to starting point. Elderly complainant has now had to move bin back which is difficult for them. This is an on-going issue.	WCS(S) spoke to resident and crew and updated the resident who is happy.	To ensure assisted collection bins are returned to correct area.	18-Aug-16
22-Aug-16	Complaint re waste refuse collection lorry where the driver was seen throwing rubbish out of the window.	WCS(S) spoke to driver. Litter was a piece of blue roll which was used to clean the mirrors. Apologised for dropping. Driver was reminded of implications of littering. File note made. W&R Manager responded to customer, apologising for incident. Resident thanked W&R Manager for response/action.	Collection staff reminded of their duties/responsibilities regarding littering during team brief.	23-Aug-16
23-Aug-16	Complaint about the attitude/actions of van driver (litter picker) in connection with learner driver.	W&R Manager passed to SSS(N). Happy to contact customer if required.	SSS (N) spoke to driver who described it differently but they are aware they need to be mindful of their behaviour.	25-Aug-16

		Email sent to SSS(N) re closure GC 31.08.16. SSS(N) spoke to customer and assured the driver would be assessed if we have any further complaints.		
23-Aug-16	Customer had called several times and had been promised the missed bin would be collected. Unfortunately it didn't happen due to staff shortages this week.	Bin collected 23.08.16. W&R manager contacted Customer. Thanked BSO for arranging emptying of bin.	Supervisors to remind crews.	23-Aug-16
24-Aug-16	Complaining that bins were not emptied. Not out by 7.00am, however were put out before collection team arrived. This has happened before and the complainant feels victimised. Customer has taken rubbish to the tip and so wanted to make official complaint.	WCS(S) spoke with resident and apologised. Both crew and driver will keep an eye out for an issue - may be due to bin being on its own.	Spoke to crew to ensure bins are collected.	23-Aug-16
30-Aug-16	Letter received by HoS with 26 recycling bin hangers enclosed and bin hangers were left on the bin. Would like to know the reason for this.	WCS(S) discussed issue with customer, agreed unacceptable. Enquiries made with crew, unable to offer explanation. Apology given to customer. Assured crew would be spoken to, ensuring no further repeat. Customer happy, helpful and could not praise crew enough for their work.	Spoke to crew to ensure this is not repeated.	1-Sept-16

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2-Sept-16	Vehicle was travelling at excessive speed in a residential area. The complainant feels the driver should be reported to the Police as they are driving without due care and attention.	WCS(S) spoke with driver. Asked to slow their driving down. Phoned customer, explained that this will be monitored.	Spoke with driver to ensure safe driving.	2-Sept-16
5-Sept-16	Bin went missing at last collection 2 weeks ago and has not been returned. Crew take the bins from outside properties but do not return them. This is not the first time this has happened.	WCTL(S) replaced bin, assured customer that they would speak to crew regarding returning bin correctly.	To ensure bins are returned to correct area.	7-Sept-16
8-Sept-16	Caller has reported frequently that the crew do not return bins to garden, leave them in the middle of footpath, making it very difficult for parents with pushchairs who are walking into road to get past. Advised will contact Councillor if it continues.	WCS(S) spoke with crew all made aware of issue.	To ensure bins are returned to correct area.	9-Sept-16
12-Sept-16	Repeat complaint as the refuse team placed neighbour's bin in complainant's spot, who had to struggle in pain to remove bins. Moving two very large black bins around is very difficult and would like bins returned to correct property.	Apology given and bins collected.	To ensure bins are returned to correct area.	4-Nov-16

19-Sept-16	Complaint that operatives 'fling' bins towards fence after emptying. The resident has approached the crew but it has not been resolved. The issue was raised previously, and seemed to improve however it is happening again, resulting in a split bin.	WCTL(S) contacted customer. Apologised for actions of operative. Assured crew would be spoken to. Bin replaced. File note placed on operative's personal record.	Spoke to crew to ensure professional behaviour. File note placed on operative's personal record.	27-Sept-16
28-Sept-16	Complaint regarding the garden waste collection crew throwing the garden waste sacks onto live flower beds.	WRM contacted resident to apologise. The use of agency staff to cover annual leave was a factor in this complaint.	Matter raised with garden waste collection team.	29-Sept-16
5-Oct-2016	Bulky waste was arranged and paid for by the previous owner but the crew did not collect. Gate was open on both occasions.	Gate was locked on first attempt to collect. Property changed hands, new owner called to re-book but system issue resulted in notes not being sent through, therefore unaware of collection requirement. WCS(S) arranged for collection, apologies to customer.	Issue regarding notes has been resolved to ensure they are forwarded through in future.	5-Oct-2016
12-Oct-2016	The complainant has previously complained about the grass not being cut properly at Valley Park. Areas around trees and lamp posts and under benches are constantly being missed.	SSS(S) spoke to customer. Area strimmed. Customer happy with the outcome.	Operative given map to clarify areas to be cut.	18-Oct-2016

19-Oct-2016	Customer removed from Clinical list following review. Last collection Sept 2014. Was not happy with our process and that we did not contact them before removing from the list. Did not want to call surgery to obtain new referral form and wanted to complain.	Doctor contacted and collection will continue as requested. Advised file note would be made as next collection may be more than 2 years away. Resident happy with resolution.	Clinical Waste Approval Letter amended to include wording to advise resident address will be removed from our database should there not be a collection for two years.	19-Oct-2016
3-Nov-16	Crew not collecting bin. Assumption made that it was 'holiday let'.	W&R Manager contacted customer to discuss. Agreed that collections should take place. WCS(S) and WCTL(N) to undertake site visit and agree collection/return point.	Crew made aware of agreement to collect from residence.	8-Nov-16
9-Nov-16	Resident complained that operatives using a leaf blower have blown grit and dirt all over their new car. Parking areas have been cleaned but footpaths have been left.	Supervisor spoke with customer who was happy with explanation and action taken.	To ensure agency staff are mindful of what is around them when leaf blowing.	10-Nov-16
14-Nov-16	Complaint that vehicle driver pointed at them to move forward. When complainant spoke to driver, they alleged the driver swore at them.	WCTL(S) spoke to driver. Driver adamant they did not swear at the customer at any time. W&R Manager sent email to customer regarding action taken. Advised information would be kept on record should there be another incident in the future. No response from customer.	Advised information would be kept on record should there be another incident in the future.	18-Nov-16

5-Dec-16	The resident was taking a child to a taxi but the WCV was parked obstructing access and the taxi could not get in or out. Asked for lorry to be moved, and alleged that one crew member was threatening. Complainant admitted verbal abusive in response but did not retaliate any further. Not first occasion, resulting in bins not being emptied.	Driver completed violent/abusive incident form. WCS(S) contacted customer.	WCS(S) Agency loader will not be used again - agency notified.	6-Dec-16
19-Dec-16	Moved into property seven weeks ago, bins have only been collected one week out of the seven. Reports weekly.	WCTL(S) spoke to both crews. Whoever gets to this area first should empty bin, however neither bin had been emptied. Situation now resolved. Spoke to customer, confirmed bins would be emptied in future.	WCTL(S) spoke to both crews.	21-Dec-16
20-Dec-16	Bins left on grass verge, but not returned. Instead they are left on the roadway/pavement causing obstruction.	WCTL(S) visited resident and returned bins, apologised and assured bins will be returned in future.	Crew spoken to.	20-Dec-16
18-Jan-17	Joined the garden waste scheme in November, has not received regular collections. Called three times.	WCS(S) spoke to customer, apologised. Offered second hand green bin in exchange for current small 140l brown. This could be the problem if the crew are not aware.	Crew aware to empty new 240L bin	18-Jan-17

		Supervisor spoke to the crew, arranged for bin to be delivered and second hand 240 to remedy the issue.		
23-Jan-17	Crew not reversing into parking area as agreed previously, only taking bins at the entrance and not returning to their collection point but leaving them together. Houses at the top are being missed - ongoing issue, raised before. Further letter received as bins are still not being collected/returned as agreed.	Crew spoken to. Bin emptied. Team Leader spoke with the customer and crew. Supervisor also spoke with the crew following week.	Crew spoken to.	1-Feb-17
30-Jan-17	Caller has assisted collection. Bin has not been returned to front of property again. All neighbouring bins are returned correctly, caller is unable to move bin on their own.	WCTL(S) spoke to customer. Reassured they would speak to crew regarding return of bin.	Crew to be spoken to.	2-Feb-17
20-Feb-17	Crew initially refused to collect the neighbour's recycle bins as it was contaminated and then after a dispute the crew emptied the neighbours bin.	W&R Manager spoke to customer.	WRO/RDO asked to spot check bin before next collection - opportunity to discuss/educate resident.	20-Feb-17
28-Feb-17	Black bin has been left unemptied. Cleared leaves blown into the doorway from surrounding area and placed in black bin (does not have a	SESO arranged for bin to be emptied. WCTL(N) spoke to customer who is happy with outcome. Will now purchase a new 240L brown bin to help with excess	SESO discussed with SSS(N) regarding possible extra sweeping of the area.	1-Mar-17

	green bin). Bin has now not been emptied and tagged regarding garden waste.	recycling created in household.		
24-Mar-17	Customer reported incident today where a waste collector refused to take garden waste due to contaminated materials that were in the sack. This prompted an argument.	HoS discussed incident with resident. Clarified points and passed to W&R Manager to deal with complaint. W&R Manager discussed incident with driver. W&R Manager then contacted resident to discuss. No further action to be taken on this occasion. Contamination removed and bag will be emptied as usual on next collection day. Customer happy with outcome.	File note made to refer to if required in future. Staff advised that common sense should prevail where customers may have got it wrong and they should always be courteous to residents.	29-Mar-17
31-Mar-17	Witnessed driver of RCV using their mobile phone whilst driving.	W&R Manager spoke to customer. Driver was agency - no longer using this agency driver with immediate effect.	Business Support/Agency notified that this driver is not to be used by TVBC.	31-Mar-17