

## Summary of Compliments and Complaints 2019/20 to 2022/23

### Report of the Chief Fire Officer

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### 1. Executive Summary

This report advises Members of summary details regarding the compliments and complaints received during 2022/23, with comparisons to the previous three years.

### Recommendations

The Committee is asked to note the report.

### 3. Background

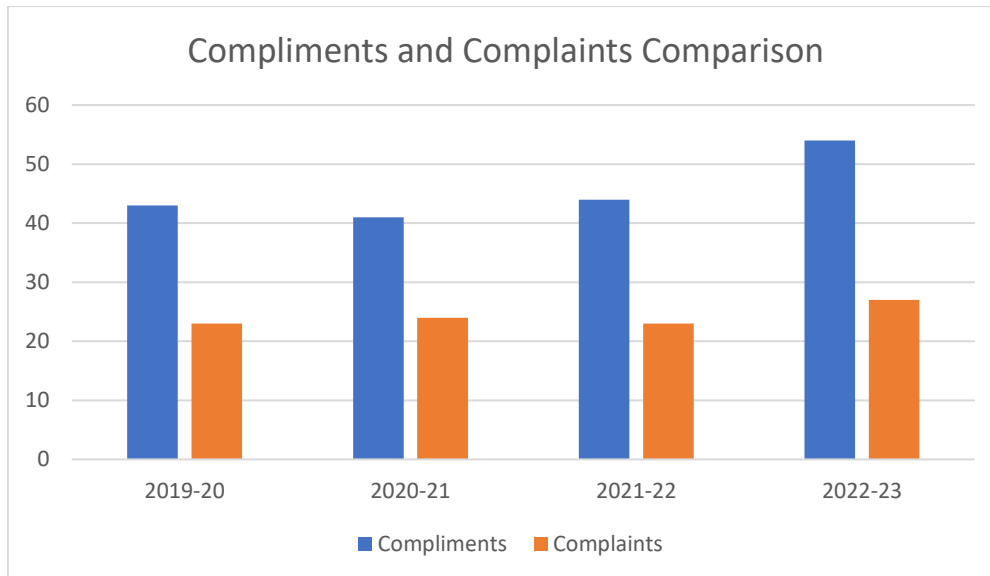
The Fire Authority's vision and strategic aims stress a commitment to providing high quality services to the community of Shropshire. The Service takes seriously both complaints and compliments made about the quality, nature or delivery of the services provided. Comments are also used to review the effectiveness of the provision of these services.

The Fire Authority has a Comments and Complaints Procedure in place to ensure complaints are handled in a fair and objective manner and that views expressed about the quality of services provided are acknowledged.

Compliments are recorded when they are addressed to the Chief Fire Officer or are brought to the attention of Executive Support Officers as per the established process.

## 4. Summary of Compliments and Complaints received during 2019/20 to 2022/23

**Figure 1** (below) illustrates the number of compliments and complaints received in 2022/23, compared with the previous three-year period.



### Compliments

The details of all complimentary communications received via the Executive Support Officers are circulated to the personnel concerned, their line management, Executive Officers and Members. Compliments are also published in the Service's weekly internal newsletter, 'The Pink', for all staff to appreciate and on the Service's website for public information. Care is taken at each stage, to ensure that any personal, identifying or sensitive details are removed.

The number of compliments received may be greater than shown in Figure 1, as this only captures those formally addressed to the Chief Fire Officer or passed to Executive Support. Compliments are often sent directly to stations, watches or departments and may not always be relayed to Executive Support Officers. However, work has been ongoing to raise awareness amongst staff to pass compliments to Executive Support and this may be a factor in the increased number of compliments recorded in the last few years. There is a notable increase in the number of compliments recorded in 2022/23.

Compliments are now reported on a six-monthly basis to the Service Management Team in summary form, identifying the recipients of the compliment.

The number and variety of compliments received make it difficult to benchmark specific areas of performance over a given period of time. However, Appendix A to the report provides a breakdown by type of the compliments received in 2022/23, together with some examples.

## Complaints

Appendix B provides a breakdown of complaints received in comparison with previous years. There are no nationally prescribed classifications for recording complaints but, to facilitate local benchmarking across the period from 2019/20 to 2022/23, complaints received have been categorised into six key areas.

These are:

- Damage to property
- Poor driving behaviour
- Conduct prejudicial to the reputation of the Service
- Failure to deal correctly with an incident / inspection / procedure
- Environmental
- Other

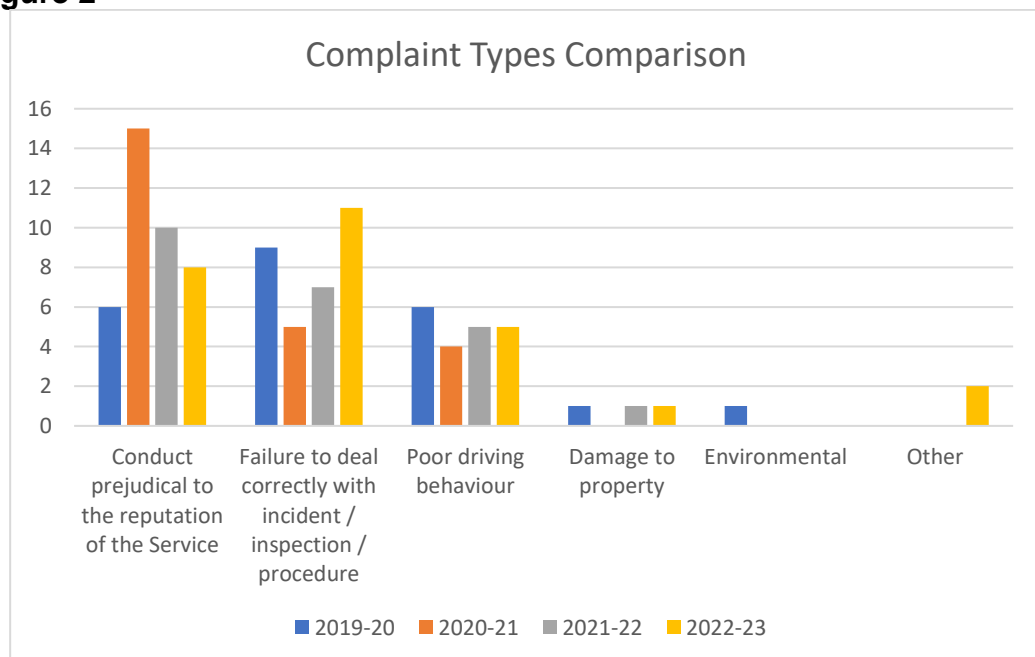
Of the 27 complaints lodged during 2022/23:

- 11 related to 'failure to deal correctly with an incident / inspection / procedure'
- 8 related to 'conduct prejudicial to the reputation of the Service'
- 5 related to 'poor driving behaviour'
- 1 related to 'damage to property'
- 2 were classed as 'other'

Of the two complaints classed as 'other':

- One concerned a contractor acting on behalf of the Service.
- One concerned a member of staff in a role associated with their employment. The complaint was subsequently withdrawn.

**Figure 2**



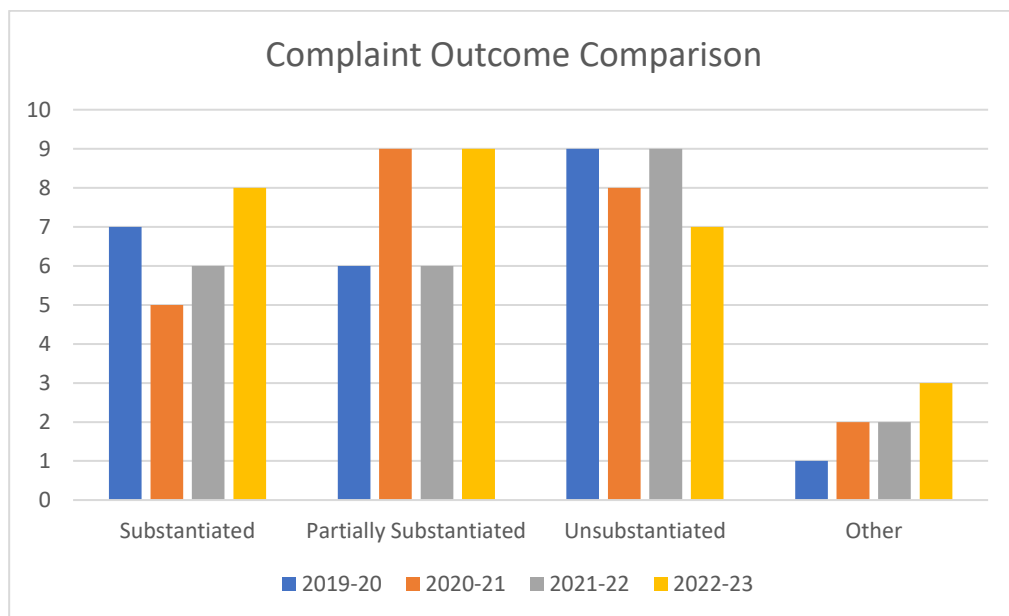
Of the 27 complaints lodged during 2022/23:

- 8 were substantiated
- 9 were partially substantiated
- 7 were unsubstantiated
- 2 were withdrawn
- 1 unknown (as the complaint was referred to the contractor).

62.9% of the complaints were either fully or partially substantiated. This was an increase of 15.1% on the previous year (2021/22). However, that year had seen a decrease of 10.5% from 2020/21. There was an aggregate increase of 4.6%

Please note the small sample size involved and the corresponding impact on the statistics of just one or two complaints.

**Figure 3**



The outcome category 'Other' refers to where the complaint was withdrawn or the outcome was not shared with the Service (see complaint referred to contractor). As mentioned previously, in 2022/23 two complaints were withdrawn.

In all cases, even those that were found to be unsubstantiated, the Service looks to identify any improvements that may help to avoid similar complaints arising in the future.

Complaints are reported six-monthly to the Service Management Team. In addition, complaints that are either fully or partially substantiated are reported to the People Management Team in closed session. Complaints arising from operational activities that are either fully or partially substantiated are reported to the Operational Learning Board

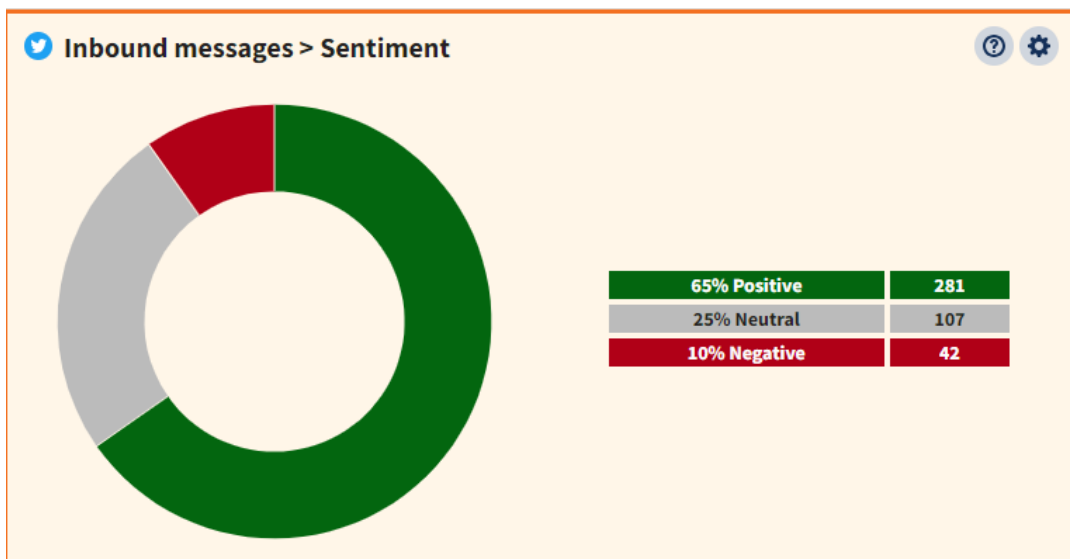
## 5 Social Media connectivity

Since 1 January 2023, the Service has received a number of comments on the corporate social media accounts, praising the Service's work. Numerous comments were received saying, "well done", "thank you", and congratulating members of the Service on their achievements.

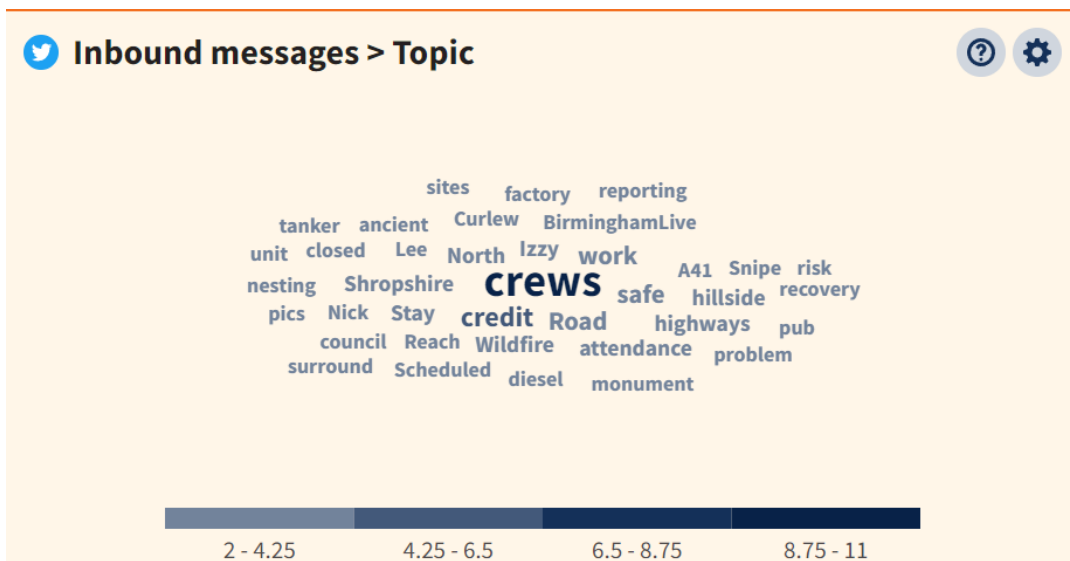
However, specific compliments were also received which were passed on to the line manager of those involved in the particular piece of work, incident or project.

Since 1 January 2023, the Service has received 944 comments on Facebook posts, the majority of which were positive.

So far this year the Service has received 430 messages on Twitter and 65% of these were positive messages.



Below is an overview of the topics mentioned in the messages received.



Although it is difficult to compile all positive comments and compliments on social media, it is apparent the Service receives significantly more positive engagement than negative.

Any complaints made on social media are dealt with through the usual formal channels and will be included in the complaints report and overview.

No formal complaints have been made through or regarding social media so far this year.

## **5. Management of Compliments and Complaints**

Compliments addressed to the Chief Fire Officer are recorded by Executive Support and replied to by or on behalf of the Chief Fire Officer. Staff are encouraged to pass compliments to Executive Support, these are also acknowledged where contact details are available and shared with the staff concerned and their line management. Compliments are also shared with Members as part of that circulation.

### **Complaints Performance Standard**

Where contact details are provided, receipt of the complaint is formally acknowledged to complainants within five working days. All complaints are fully investigated irrespective of whether the complainant has identified themselves. Where possible, a written response is provided to complainants, advising of the outcome of the investigation. The Fire Authority sets a performance standard of 28 working days in which to furnish the complainant with a written response or advise of an extension of time where necessary. This standard was consistently achieved, apart from five exceptions where it was narrowly missed by a few days. This is most likely down to capacity issues amongst Service personnel. There was one exception where the standard was missed by a more significant amount, but this was due to the health issues of the complainant.

Meeting the 28 working days complaints response standard will come under renewed focus in 2023-24.

### **Appeals**

Complainants dissatisfied with the outcome of the investigation are entitled to appeal to the Chief Fire Officer within 28 days. If the complainant remains dissatisfied following this, an appeal may be directed to the Local Government Ombudsman.

During 2022/23 there were no formal appeals to the Chief Fire Officer.

No appeals against the outcome of a complaint have been made to the Local Government Ombudsman during 2022/23.

## **Lessons Learned**

All lessons learned from complaints are communicated in the most appropriate manner to staff, with remedial action taken as necessary, e.g. retraining, discipline etc. Actions taken in relation to individuals are not published within this report, as that would not be appropriate.

## **6. Financial Implications**

There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

## **7. Legal Comment**

There are no direct legal implications arising from this report.

## **8. Equality Impact Assessment**

There are no equality or diversity implications arising from this report. An e-EQIA is not, therefore, required.

## **1. Appendices**

### **Appendix A**

Summary of Compliments received 2022/23

### **Appendix B**

Summary of Complaints received between 2019/20 and 2022/23

### **Appendix C**

Compliments sample from social media.

## **1. Background Papers**

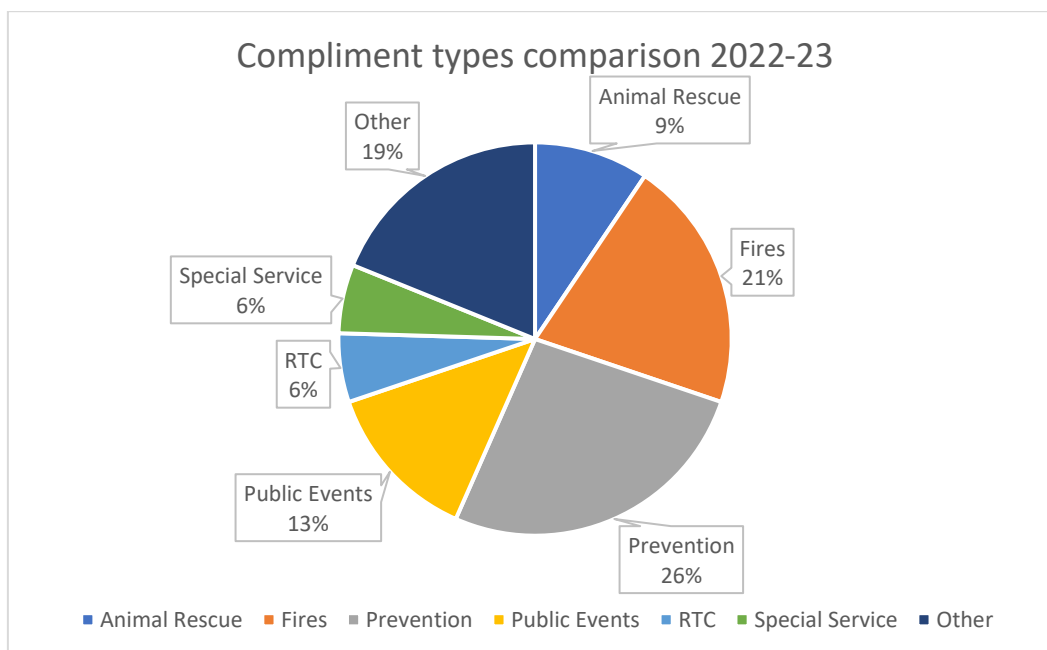
There are no background papers associated with this report.





## Summary of Compliments Received 2022/23

**Figure 4**



### Examples of Compliments Received

Below are some examples of compliments received during 2021/22. More can be viewed on the Service website via the following link:

<http://www.shropshirefire.gov.uk/management-support/compliments-and-thanks>

#### Thanks to Baschurch crew following incident on 1 April 2022.

“I would just like to say thank you so much to the Baschurch Fire Crew who attended my mother in the early hours of the morning of the first of April. Mum had had a nasty fall and broken her hip and needed help to get down the stairs I live in Edinburgh so couldn't be there but my cousin was there and said how kind and caring the crew were to my ninety one year old mum. So a huge thanks again and can you please pass on my appreciation”.

#### Thanks to Shrewsbury White Watch following lift rescue on 14 April

We have received the following compliment following a lift rescue last Thursday (14 April) at 08:22hrs by White Watch Shrewsbury. “Thank you for rescuing me from the lift at Shrewsbury Jobcentre. I felt very embarrassed by the whole thing, but the crew were lovely. I scuttled off as soon as I was free and felt I didn't really thank you all properly at the time.”

#### Appreciation following Waterside Responder training to the public

Following the recent spate of serious river incidents, the Service had provided Waterside Responder training to people working alongside the river and to Shrewsbury Town Council workers, amongst others. One individual from Radfield Home Care, who undertook this training delivered by our Road & Water Safety Officer, said “The throwline training was excellent, the information supplied was informative and helpful. Well done, great service!”

### **Compliment following Safe & Well visit by two Firefighters from White Watch, Shrewsbury**

The recipient rang in to express her appreciation of the “two lovely people who couldn’t do enough.” She described them as being “so kind and caring” and she particularly valued the fact that “they did not treat her like a disabled person”. It was clear that she had learnt a lot from the visit and was enthusiastic about implementing the necessary changes. First on the list was the replacement of her old electric blankets!

### **Appreciation following Road Traffic Collision attended by Craven Arms, Bishops Castle, Green Watch Wellington and an Ops Officer on 3 Sept 2022**

"On Saturday afternoon my husband and I were travelling towards Craven Arms and were 2nd on the scene of an accident. A car was overturned in the right-hand lane of the highway. We stopped to assist a young man who was calling the emergency services. Bishops Castle crew arrived and were amazingly efficient. The whole crew worked together like clockwork with speed and safety to get the driver out. Within what seemed like seconds, they had assessed the situation and got in through the hatchback, secured everything and talked the passenger into moving herself safely out. One of the crew then put down their coat for her to lie on and spoke gently and kindly to her with no fuss or alarm. What wonderful young men. We so need our local fire stations. We left then as we could do nothing else, and the Police were arriving, also the Craven Arms crew. Well done and thank you".

### **Compliment about a page on the Service's website.**

The 'Incidents section is a simply brilliant idea, that demonstrates, in real time, the varied and essential service you provide. All services should do this.

### **Visit by 1st Shrewsbury Beavers to Shrewsbury Fire Station, hosted by Green Watch.**

“The Beavers were all really excited and really enjoyed it. We were really pleased to see they were taking in all the good advice on fire safety. We had a message (see below) from one mum that really summed it up well, I’m sure there were more of them planning their escape plans last night”.

“Thank you so much for arranging such a great trip out. My son was full of great fire safety advice. So far we have sorted our safety route and meeting point. We are also going to be checking the fire alarms every week (although I burn the cooking on a regular basis, so he isn’t sure that this will actually need to be done). My favourite thing was having to put his pjs out, so he could see whether he could put them on within 15 seconds. He did it in 10 seconds and looked delighted! Great job you guys!”

### **Thanks for Green Watch Shrewsbury’s attendance to an Animal Rescue incident - 13 October 2022**

“On the morning of Thursday 13 October one of your crews attended a call from me, as my elderly cat had wedged her head into the hubcap of a neighbour’s car. First of all, I had no idea you could legitimately call the fire brigade to help with something like this but my vet assured me I could.

The level of kindness and professionalism I witnessed from your team was amazing. Furthermore, the teamwork and problem solving was extraordinary, as they went to great lengths to achieve a positive outcome for both cat and car!

They managed to do this without fuss, drama or damage and were gentle and kind throughout”.

**Summary of Complaints received between 2019/20 and 2022/23**

Type of Complaint	Total 19/20	Outcomes		Total 20/21	Outcomes		Total 21/22	Outcomes		Total 22/23	Outcomes	
<b>Damage to property</b>	1	0	Substantiated	0	0	Substantiated	1	1	Substantiated	1	0	Substantiated
		0	Partially substantiated		0	Partially substantiated		0	Partially substantiated		1	Partially substantiated
		0	Unsubstantiated		0	Unsubstantiated		0	Unsubstantiated		0	Unsubstantiated
		1	Withdrawn		0	Withdrawn		0	Withdrawn		0	Withdrawn
<b>Poor driving behaviour</b>	6	4	Substantiated	4	0	Substantiated	5	2	Substantiated	5	1	Substantiated
		0	Partially substantiated		3	Partially substantiated		1	Partially substantiated		2	Partially substantiated
		2	Unsubstantiated		0	Unsubstantiated		2	Unsubstantiated		2	Unsubstantiated
		0	Withdrawn		0	Withdrawn		0	Withdrawn		0	Withdrawn
<b>Conduct prejudicial to the reputation of the Service</b>	6	2	Substantiated	15	3	Substantiated	10	1	Substantiated	8	4	Substantiated
		1	Partially substantiated		5	Partially substantiated		3	Partially substantiated		1	Partially substantiated
		3	Unsubstantiated		6	Unsubstantiated		4	Unsubstantiated		3	Unsubstantiated
		0	Withdrawn		1	Withdrawn		2	Withdrawn		0	Withdrawn
<b>Failure to deal correctly with an incident / inspection / procedure</b>	9	1	Substantiated	5	1	Substantiated	7	2	Substantiated	10	4	Substantiated
		4	Partially substantiated		1	Partially substantiated		1	Partially substantiated		4	Partially substantiated
		4	Unsubstantiated		2	Unsubstantiated		4	Unsubstantiated		2	Unsubstantiated
		0	Withdrawn		1	Withdrawn		0	Withdrawn		0	Withdrawn
<b>Environmental</b>	1	0	Substantiated	0	0	Substantiated	0	0	Substantiated	0	0	Substantiated
		1	Partially substantiated		0	Partially substantiated		0	Partially substantiated		0	Partially substantiated
		0	Unsubstantiated		0	Unsubstantiated		0	Unsubstantiated		0	Unsubstantiated
		0	Withdrawn		0	Withdrawn		0	Withdrawn		0	Withdrawn
<b>Anonymous Total</b>		<b>1</b> <b>23</b>		<b>2</b> <b>24</b>		<b>2</b> <b>23</b>		<b>0</b> <b>27</b>		<b>0</b> <b>27</b>		



## Compliments sample from social media

Examples:

Name	Compliment
Paul Johnson	Excellent Fire Station and Excellent Brigade
Nigel Toffanin	Good work by all
Carol Anne Morris	Sincere dedication to all colleagues near and far. Well done Shrewsbury, such a very moving tribute.
Karen Jones	I went to crucial crew as a helper with my son and his school. It was brilliant well done to everyone involved.
John Thompson	Supporting our hard-working firefighters. Happy Easter
The Dyslexia consultant	I am so proud of you all and all you do SFRS
Emma Jarvis	Thank you for keeping us all safe
Alan Davies	Nice work as always guys
Joanna P	Thankfully all people were safe and rapid actions from the crew in getting the fire out
Alan Vickers	I have done this course already, ladies and gentleman do this. It's really good and could mean the difference between life or death for someone

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 Top fan

Julia Finch

Bridgnorth on call team just gone out ! Take care all !!

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 Top fan

Paul Johnson

Excellent Fire Station.  
Excellent Brigade.

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Nigel Toffanin  
Good work to all

...

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ay 19

Like Reply 6w Edited

👍👤 10



Carol Anne Morris  
Sincere dedication to all colleagues near and far. Well done Shrewsbury 🙏 such a very moving tribute.

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Write a comment...



**Karen Jones**

I went to crucial crew with my son and his school as a helper years ago. It was brilliant. Well done to everyone involved



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