



Parliamentary  
and Health Service  
Ombudsman

# What do people think about complaining?

Results of a National Survey with  
4,200 members of the public

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# Approach

- Representative online survey of 4,263 members of the public on the 30 March 2015
- Survey undertaken by YouGov
- We have commissioned surveys in the past, however the size and scope of this research gives us more detailed insight into the public's experience and attitudes towards complaining.

# Public perceptions on the right to complain

The vast majority of the public agree that they have a right to complain about poor public service and think that people should complain

**92%** Agree that people have a right to complain about a public service if they are unhappy with it

**90%** Agree that people should complain about public services if they are unhappy with the service they receive

However, just **34%** of those who have experienced poor service in the past 12 months went on to complain

# People are unlikely to complain

Despite knowing that they can complain, and despite feeling that people should complain when experiencing poor service, the majority of people do not complain

**79%**

The general public having contact with a provider that the Ombudsman service investigates in the past year

**27%**

People who have used a public service and are unhappy with it. That's over a quarter!

**34%**

Of the 27% of unhappy people, only 34% go on to complain

# Barriers preventing complaining

1

29% felt it would be pointless and make no difference

2

14% thought it would be more hassle than it was worth

3

9% felt it would be too time consuming

4

7% didn't know where to go

5

6% didn't think it would be taken seriously

# Making complaining easier - removing the MP filter

The majority of the public are in favour of removing the MP filter

**59%** want the compulsory filter to be removed



**10%**  
Think the compulsory filter should remain

## The MP filter

Currently, any member of the public who is not happy with the way a government department or organisation has handled a complaint, must go through their MP before the Ombudsman can look at their complaint. The Ombudsman would like this filter to be removed