



# **The Motor Ombudsman Annual Report**

2024

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# Foreword from the Chief Ombudsman and Managing Director



**Bill Fennell**  
Managing Director

I am pleased to present the Annual Report and Accounts for The Motor Ombudsman, for the year ending 31st December 2024.

## ► The automotive sector showed a mixed performance

Following an upward trend in new car registrations and used car transactions in 2023, 2024 continued this positive trajectory with nearly two million new vehicles leaving forecourts, and 7.6 million second-hand examples changing hands, equating to an encouraging 6% rise versus the year before.

Electric vehicles remained one of the key talking points in 2024, notably with the arrival of the government's ZEV mandate which prescribes the proportion of zero emission cars to be sold by retailers during the year, and the reversal of the ban of diesel and petrol vehicles back to 2030. The gradual rise in the prominence of EV ownership thanks to a growing number of makes and models available, and discounts to incentivise the switch to battery power, saw the UK reach a significant milestone of one million electric vehicles on the nation's roads for the first time.

UK car manufacturing had its challenges, shown by a decline in factory output to 780,000 vehicles – the lowest level since 1954, as the industry grappled with reduced global demand, and factories pausing manufacturing to make preparations for EV production.

## ► 2024 saw a record level of demand for our services

Against the backdrop of the cost of living crisis, putting increased pressure on the finances of motorists, coupled with the growing awareness of The Motor Ombudsman, this saw the number of contacts coming into our service from consumers reach record levels at over 175,000 – a year-on-year rise of around 18%. We also accepted another 11,500 cases on to our system (a 30% increase versus 2023) that fell within our remit, and related to an accredited business. This called for sustained recruitment drives to maintain a high standard of service, and back office system changes to allow greater efficiencies in our work as an Ombudsman.

## ► Our accredited business base expanded

With new vehicle manufacturers making their entry into the UK market, this serves as an important opportunity to grow awareness of The Motor Ombudsman and coverage of our accreditation network. We were pleased to welcome a number of businesses to our New Car Code during 2024, namely Alpine, OMODA and GMW, highlighting the value placed on accreditation to The Motor Ombudsman, and the importance which brands place on building a trusted reputation amongst consumers who are likely to be first-time owners.

Alongside this, we also saw an increasing number of garage networks become a part of our Codes, and the formation of key industry partnerships to widen the coverage of accreditation and protection for motorists. Expanding the number of businesses signed up to The Motor Ombudsman will continue to form a primary objective for our organisation in 2025.

## ► Our Star Awards continued to gain profile

In the fifth edition of our annual Star Awards, the competition saw the largest ever volume of consumer nominations, highlighting the growing profile of the contest amongst Motor Ombudsman-accredited businesses and consumers. From a shortlist derived from nearly 3,300 entries, and based on the respective merits of the submissions, judges chose the 10 respective trophy winners, and the recipient of the National Garage Star Award. The coveted prize was handed to AJ Fleetcare – an independent garage in Leeds, at the Chartered Trading Standards Institute (CTSI) Hero Awards at the Houses of Parliament, as part of The Motor Ombudsman's continued association with the prestigious annual industry event.

### ► **Turning our attention to 2025**

With ever-increasing demand for our services and the rising complexity of disputes, we will continue to invest in streamlining processes and back office systems, including the integration of Artificial Intelligence (AI), to deliver decisions in a shorter timeframe. In addition, the recruitment of individuals of the highest calibre will play an integral role in expanding resource and capacity to meet the needs of consumers and businesses.

Next year will also see us mark two important milestones, as two core pieces of legislation which guide our services and decision-making, in parallel with our Motor Industry Codes of Practice, mark a decade of being in force. These are namely, the

Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) Regulations – which created formal guidelines to help businesses and their customers resolve disputes quickly and fairly via an impartial third party, and the Consumer Rights Act – which outlines the obligations on retailers, and the rights of consumers when purchasing goods, such as a car, from sellers.

### ► **Acknowledgment**

Ahead of the following Annual Report, I would like to extend my sincere thanks to the entire Motor Ombudsman team, our Board of Directors, and to our businesses, for their dedication and support during 2024, which has ensured the continued growth and success of our organisation.





## SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW

### 1.1 About us

Established in 2016, The Motor Ombudsman is the independent and [impartial](#) Ombudsman dedicated solely to the automotive sector, and self-regulates the UK's motor industry through its comprehensive Chartered Trading Standards Institute (CTSI)-approved [Codes of Practice](#). Thousands of businesses, including vehicle manufacturers, warranty product providers, franchised dealers and independent garages, are accredited to one or more of the Codes, which drive even higher standards of work and service, and give consumers added protection, peace of mind and trust during the vehicle purchase and ownership experience.



### 1.2 Our Mission, Vision, Values and Purpose

Our Mission, Vision, Values and Purpose sit at the heart of our company culture, the work that we do, and the services that we provide to businesses and consumers. They also play a key role in helping us to support our objective of attracting and retaining employees that are of a high calibre.

#### Our Mission

To provide the best Ombudsman & dispute resolution service through passionate, engaged people driving excellence in customer service across the automotive sector.

◀ Our **Mission** is the driver behind how we will achieve our long-term Vision of being the leading Ombudsman and dispute resolution body. We will be doing this by providing the best dispute resolution service through passionate, engaged people driving excellence in customer service across the automotive sector.

#### Our Vision

To be the leading Ombudsman and dispute resolution body, by excelling in every aspect of our service, being recognised for the quality of our work, and inspiring total consumer confidence across the automotive industry.

◀ Our **Vision** provides greater clarity to our long-term goal and how we envisage our future, thereby helping our staff to understand and buy into our direction of travel. Our Vision is to be the leading Ombudsman and dispute resolution body, by excelling in every aspect of our service, being recognised for the quality of our work, and inspiring total consumer confidence across the automotive industry.

#### Our Values

We take great **PRIDE** in everything we do, inspiring total trust and confidence in our staff, our customers, and our accredited businesses.

◀ Our **Values** have been redefined to resonate with what is important to our staff and the way they interact and connect with one another, our customers, our accredited businesses and our suppliers. We adopted the **PRIDE** abbreviation for our five Values to reflect the approach, behaviour and attitude of staff. i.e. they feel proud to be part of The Motor Ombudsman and have pride in the work that they do.



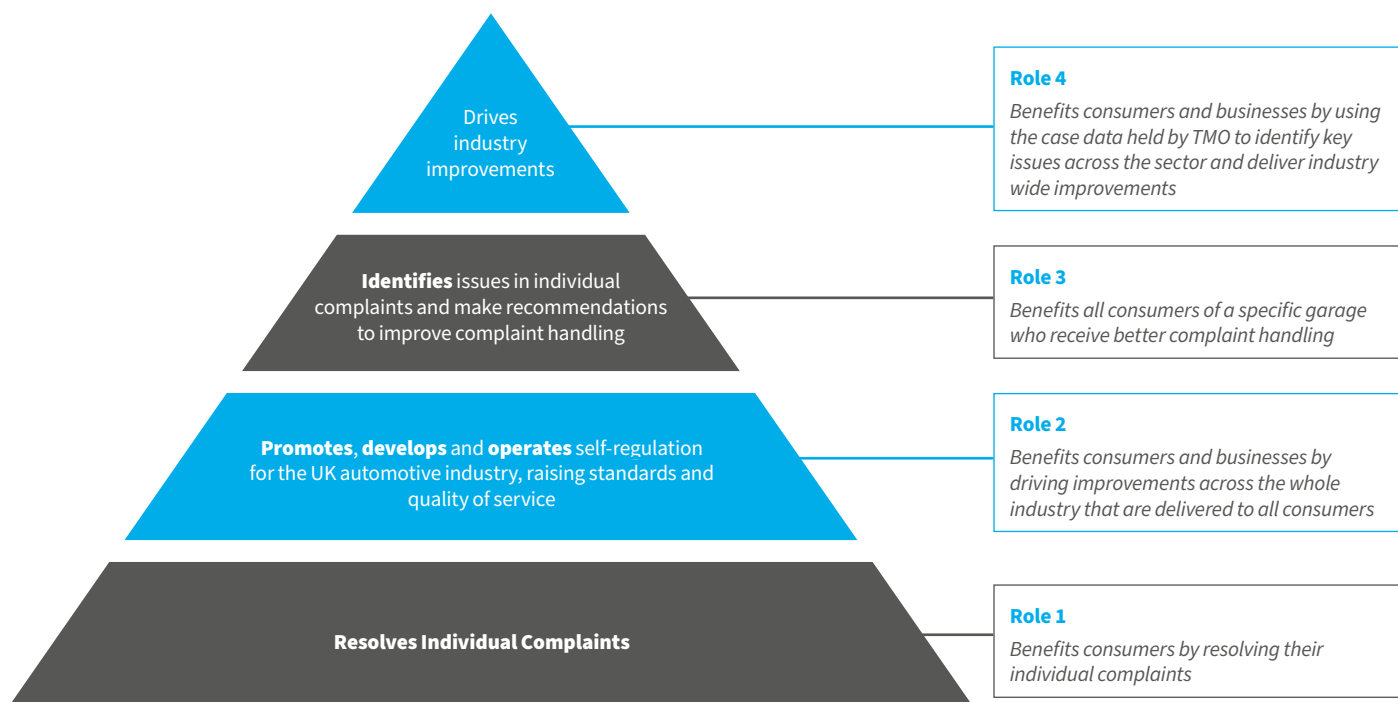
#### Our Purpose

To drive standards, promote integrity, and to build confidence and trust in a way that continually improves everyone's experience of the motor industry.

◀ Our **Purpose** has been designed to clearly explain what we are here to do as the Ombudsman for the automotive sector, which is namely to promote integrity, and to build confidence and trust in a way that continually improves everyone's experience of the motor industry.

## 1.3 Our core roles within the automotive sector

Whilst The Motor Ombudsman looks to resolve complaints between consumers and accredited businesses, this forms only part of our core responsibilities as an Ombudsman. We are tasked specifically with the self-regulation of the UK automotive industry, and to identify key issues to assist in driving even higher standards throughout the consumer purchase and ownership experience, at an independent garage, dealership, vehicle manufacturer and warranty level, and across the automotive industry as a whole.



## 1.4 How we stay impartial as an Ombudsman

**Impartiality** lies at the heart of what we do, which means that we treat consumers and businesses equally, and show no element of bias towards either party when coming to a decision.

To help maintain our impartiality, we are overseen by several independent entities to ensure that our work is fair at all times, and is based on all the facts presented to us.

The graphic below illustrates the core areas of governance that drive our [impartiality](#).



\*The Motor Ombudsman's Board of Directors includes an independent Chair and Non-Executive Directors from outside of the automotive sector. The role of the Chair is to ensure The Motor Ombudsman's compliance with OA and CTSI requirements, and that The Motor Ombudsman has a clear strategy for the delivery of service standards.

Non-Executive Directors are elected to offer independent and impartial insight and guidance to help The Motor Ombudsman achieve its short and long-term customer, commercial and financial objectives.

## 1.5 Our four Motor Industry Codes of Practice

The Motor Ombudsman's four comprehensive CTSI-approved [Motor Industry Codes of Practice](#) cover the entire customer purchase and vehicle ownership experience, and commit accredited businesses to higher operating standards than those required by law.



First launched in 1976, and endorsed by the Office of Fair Trading (OFT) in **2004**, the **Motor Industry Code of Practice for New Cars** ensures that vehicle manufacturers supply new cars and warranties to consumers responsibly. The Code helps to safeguard new car buyers from misleading advertising, and ensures that documentation supplied to consumers is easy to understand, that the terms of a warranty will be respected, and that any complaints will be handled swiftly.



**The Motor Industry Code of Practice for Service and Repair**, introduced in **2008**, ensures that consumers receive an honest and fair service when visiting an accredited business's premises for work or repairs on their vehicle. It covers the use of clear advertising, open and transparent pricing, completing extra work only with prior agreement, and the use of competent and qualified staff. All businesses accredited to the Service and Repair Code can be found on The Motor Ombudsman's online [Garage Finder](#).



Unveiled in **2009**, the **Motor Industry Code of Practice for Vehicle Warranty Products** aims to provide guidelines for the supply of automotive warranties, including coverage of both insured and non-insured products. The Code currently represents about 75% of the industry's major providers that administer over two million products to consumers.



Launched in **2016**, the **Motor Industry Code of Practice for Vehicle Sales** focuses on the sale of both new and used cars at an accredited garage, dealership or used car outlet, as well as the supply of finance and warranties. It covers areas, such as the use of transparent wording of advertising and pricing, clear and transparent invoicing, and that the sale of a used car is supported by a vehicle provenance check to ensure that it has not been stolen, written-off and is free of any outstanding finance payments. Businesses accredited to the Vehicle Sales Code can be found on The Motor Ombudsman's online [Garage Finder](#).



## 1.6 Our five key strategic imperatives

As well as our Mission, Vision, Values and Purpose, we also have a platform of five key imperatives that cover the core aspects of our business. They are as follows:

### 1. To raise awareness of The Motor Ombudsman amongst consumers in the UK

- Consumers and businesses recognise The Motor Ombudsman as the “*Industry Quality Mark*” and the “go-to” organisation for quality garages, dealerships and automotive-related businesses.
- The Motor Ombudsman is seen as the authority for resolving motoring-related disputes.
- The Motor Ombudsman is endorsed by all accredited businesses and key stakeholders.

#### We looked to achieve this by:

- ▶ Undertaking marketing, PR and social media initiatives to increase the volume of consumers that recognise The Motor Ombudsman as the automotive sector’s “Quality Mark” and the authority for resolving motoring-related disputes.

### 2. To demonstrate our effectiveness as an Ombudsman and communicate the value of what we offer to businesses and consumers

- The Motor Ombudsman will have a clear, compelling and tailored business case communicated effectively across all accredited businesses, with The Motor Ombudsman’s Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) service embedded into their complaints process<sup>1</sup>.
- The Motor Ombudsman will provide consistent and regular engagement with accredited businesses, and supply market and individual insight, best practice as well as performance and activity reports.

#### We looked to achieve this by:

- ▶ Making our processes and working practices more streamlined and efficient to deliver faster case outcomes for consumers and businesses;
- ▶ Providing consistent and regular engagement with our accredited businesses;
- ▶ Supplying insight to the industry, best practice guidelines and marketing opportunities for businesses, as well as annual performance reports detailing our activities;
- ▶ Growing the scope of content on our popular online Knowledge Base on our website to provide consumers with helpful information and advice when they need it;
- ▶ Continuing to source and increase the volume of testimonials on our website to illustrate how our service has been effective for businesses and consumers; and
- ▶ Delivering events and online webinars to our accredited businesses to reinforce the value of the services provided by The Motor Ombudsman, and to provide insight into the experiences of consumers to raise service levels.

<sup>1</sup> Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) is defined as a method of resolving a dispute fairly between consumers and businesses without having to go through the legal (court) process.

### 3. To deliver excellence as an organisation

- The Motor Ombudsman will provide an environment which attracts, develops and retains the best talent.
- The Motor Ombudsman will have clearly defined efficient processes and a continuous improvement culture.
- The Motor Ombudsman will be supported by effective IT systems to deliver the business objectives.
- The Motor Ombudsman will continually strive to provide and improve service levels to consumers and businesses, which are consistent across the organisation.
- The Motor Ombudsman will be fully compliant with the Codes of Practice, ADR Regulations and all governance requirements.
- The Motor Ombudsman will improve staff, customer and business satisfaction at every stage of the dispute resolution process.

#### We looked to achieve this by:

- ▶ Continuing to invest in our case management systems;
- ▶ Building on our training programmes, particularly for new starters, to ensure the quality of the work we deliver is of the highest standard; and
- ▶ Refreshing our quality assurance frameworks to ensure we have sufficient and robust oversight of our work across the organisation.

### 4. To grow the number of businesses accredited to us in order to provide increased market coverage for consumers across the UK

- The Motor Ombudsman is the dominant authority for ADR and setting and raising industry standards and performance across core, adjacent and future markets related to the automotive sector.
- The Motor Ombudsman's ADR services are available to the highest possible number of automotive consumers, and at no cost to them.
- The Motor Ombudsman will partner strategically with other automotive organisations to increase accredited business volume.

#### We looked to achieve this by:

- ▶ Adopting a specific focus on growing the number of independent garages and vehicle manufacturers accredited to us, thus providing consumers with an even wider choice of Motor Ombudsman-accredited businesses across the UK.

### 5. To ensure the financial security of The Motor Ombudsman

- As a not-for-profit organisation, accreditation and case fees will cover The Motor Ombudsman's base operating costs.

#### We looked to achieve this by:

- ▶ Managing our budget effectively in line with our long-term strategy. As an Ombudsman, this allows us to maintain a free-of-charge service for consumers, and to evolve our organisation in line with customer demand.

## SECTION 2: HIGHLIGHTS OF THE YEAR

### 2.1 2024: Our year in numbers



**4.6**

out of 5 consumer satisfaction rating for The Motor Ombudsman's services



**24**

new case studies added to the website



**56**

members of staff - the highest ever headcount at The Motor Ombudsman



**64%**

of vehicle owners who had a dispute were aware of The Motor Ombudsman according to the 2024 consumer survey



**80%**

of accredited garages and dealers stated that The Motor Ombudsman adds value to their business



**3,262**

consumer nominations received for the Garage and Customer Service Star Awards



**11,522**

cases accepted for adjudication by the dispute resolution team



**16,485**

social media followers by year-end



**40,166**

cases created for consumers with a dispute



**89,864**

phone calls taken by the in-house dispute resolution team



**175,328**

contacts received from consumers and businesses during the year



**627,799**

article views on The Motor Ombudsman's Knowledge Base



**684,834**

searches on the online Garage Finder



**911,371**

unique website users



**6.5m**

people reached through The Motor Ombudsman's PR programme

## 2.2 2024: Our activity highlights by month

### January

- TMO released results of its [survey of service and repair businesses](#) revealing that operational costs were the main challenge in 2023.
- Alpine** and **OMODA** gained accreditation to the New Car Code.

### February

- TMO highlighted the considerations when consumers put down a [deposit](#) for a car purchase.
- TMO reported on the EV disputes seen in 2023.
- TMO passed its annual **Approved Codes** audit.

### March

- TMO marked [International Women's Day](#) with Q&A-style interviews with females in the motor industry.
- TMO released results of a study about the [key drivers behind used car purchases](#).

### April

- TMO announced a new partnership with insurance broker [Howden](#).
- TMO received **Gold** accreditation from **Investors in People (IIP)**.
- TMO introduced its new forum for **garages**.

### May

- TMO hosted its **Annual Business & Law Conference**.
- TMO launched its fifth annual [Star Awards](#) contest.
- Members of **ICAP** met with TMO, and TMO published its [2023 ICAP Report](#).

### June

- TMO launched its '[Make Time for Tyres](#)' campaign at the **UK Garage & Bodyshop Event** in Birmingham.
- TMO attended the OA and TyreSafe conferences.
- [Händler Protect](#) joined the Vehicle Warranty Code.

### July

- [INEOS Automotive](#) joined TMO's Codes of Practice.
- TMO marked [15 years](#) of the Vehicle Warranty Products Code.
- TMO hosted the second of the three **ICAP** meetings planned for 2024.

### August

- TMO revealed the results of a study highlighting [generational 'Car Confidence'](#).
- [BMW ORA](#) joined TMO's New Car Code.
- TMO highlighted the importance of a [valid MOT](#).

### September

- TMO marked the 20th anniversary of the [New Car Code](#) gaining full approval.
- TMO hosted a webinar on the **new car market**.
- TMO highlighted tips for added vehicle safety for the [school run return](#).

### October

- TMO was on show at the first **Aftermarket Event**.
- TMO presented the Customer Service trophy to Adam Green Motors at the **Servicesure Awards**.
- TMO marked **OmbudsDay** on **social media**.

### November

- Members of **ICAP** met with TMO.
- TMO launched its '**Car-istmas**' campaign.
- TMO announced the winners of its 2024 Star Awards – the fifth edition of the competition.

### December

- TMO presented the **National Garage Star trophy** to AJ Fleetcare at CTSI's **Hero Awards**.
- TMO handled over **175,000** contacts and accepted **11,500** cases in 2024 – a new annual record.



## 2.3 Overview of our key activities in 2024



### ► We introduced the #DrivingDecisions Used Car Buying Guide

In **March**, and in conjunction with a story in the media about the key drivers of consumers when buying a second hand car, we introduced the [#DrivingDecisions Used Car Buying Guide](#) on our website to highlight the key considerations that consumers should take into account when purchasing a vehicle from a retailer. The free-to-download resource touches on subjects, such as putting down a deposit, going on a test drive, and taking out an extended warranty to provide additional cover in the event of significant mechanical problems.

### ► We made 'Time for Tyres' at the UK Garage & Bodyshop Event

In **June**, and ahead of the summer getaway, we used the UK Garage & Bodyshop Event in Birmingham to unveil our 'Make Time for [Tyres](#)' campaign in collaboration with TyreSafe and the British Tyre Manufacturers' Association (BTMA). The multi-platform initiative highlights the importance of tyre safety and maintenance by consumers, as well as the dangers of under-inflation. Tyre expert, Sophie Lyden, spearheaded the media-facing campaign, whilst 'timeless' social media assets were also created for use by The Motor Ombudsman and vehicle repairers.



### ► We marked the 15th anniversary of the launch of the Vehicle Warranty Products Code

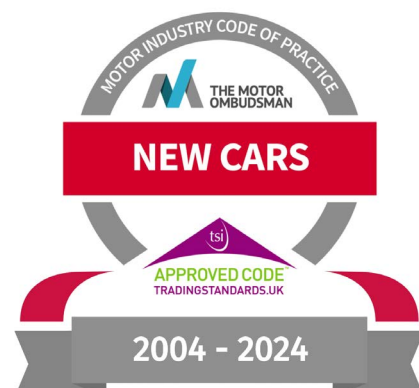
In **July**, we marked 15 years since our [Vehicle Warranty Products Code](#) was launched to the public on 14th July 2009, with the primary objective of driving standards even higher in the management and administration of extended vehicle warranty policies to customers.

The anniversary was commemorated in the press, on social media, and in-person with accredited businesses at a Motor Ombudsman Vehicle Warranty Products Code committee meeting.

### ► We celebrated two decades since the New Car Code gained full Stage Two approval





In **September**, we celebrated 20 years since it was announced that our [New Car Code](#) had gained 'Stage Two' and full approval from the former Office of Fair Trading (OFT), becoming the first Code of Practice in any sector to be awarded this prestigious status.

The New Car Code was introduced to drive up standards in the supply of new cars to customers by vehicle manufacturers, and the cover provided by their new car warranties. As at 31st December 2024, a total of 46 carmakers are committed to the Chartered Trading Standards Institute (CTSI)-approved Code, covering 98% of all new cars sold in the UK.

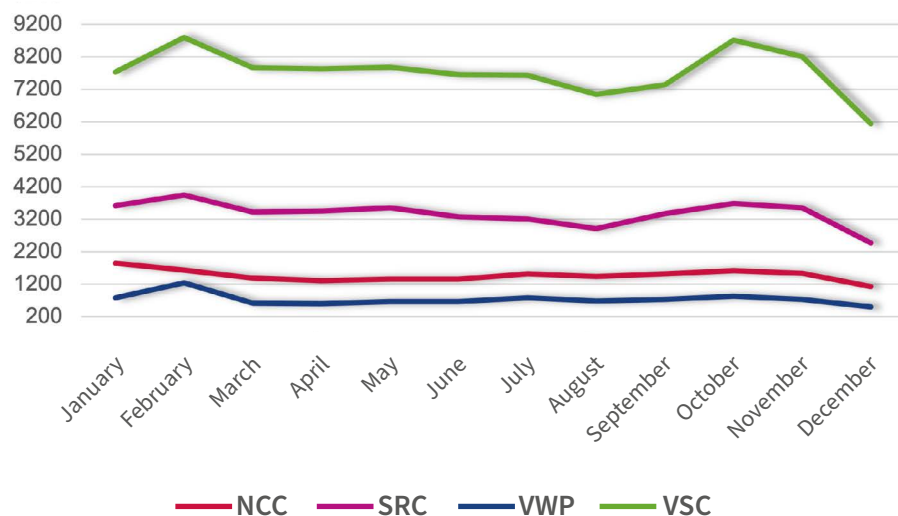


## SECTION 3: CONSUMER CONTACT AND CASE VOLUMES

### 3.1 Consumer contact volumes (2022 – 2024)

	2022	2023	2024	2024 v 2023	
Vehicle Sales Code	27,305	78,759	92,795	▲ 14,036 (+18%)	
Service and Repair Code	15,690	33,520	40,528	▲ 7,008 (+21%)	
New Car Code	12,551	17,922	17,708	▼ 214 (-1%)	
Vehicle Warranty Code	4,019	7,907	8,898	▲ 991 (+13%)	
Code Contacts	59,565	138,108	159,929	▲ 21,821 (+16%)	
Non-Code Contacts	45,000	9,899	15,399	▲ 5,500 (+56%)	
<b>OVERALL TOTAL</b>	<b>104,565</b>	<b>148,007</b>	<b>175,328</b>	<b>▲ 27,321 (+18%)</b>	

## Consumer contact volumes by Code in 2024



**Vehicle Sales Code:**  
18% increase (+14,036) v 2023

**Service and Repair Code:**  
21% increase (+7,008) v 2023

**New Car Code:**  
1% decrease (-214) v 2023





**Vehicle Warranty Products Code:**  
13% increase (+991) v 2023

### ► Consumer contact volume analysis

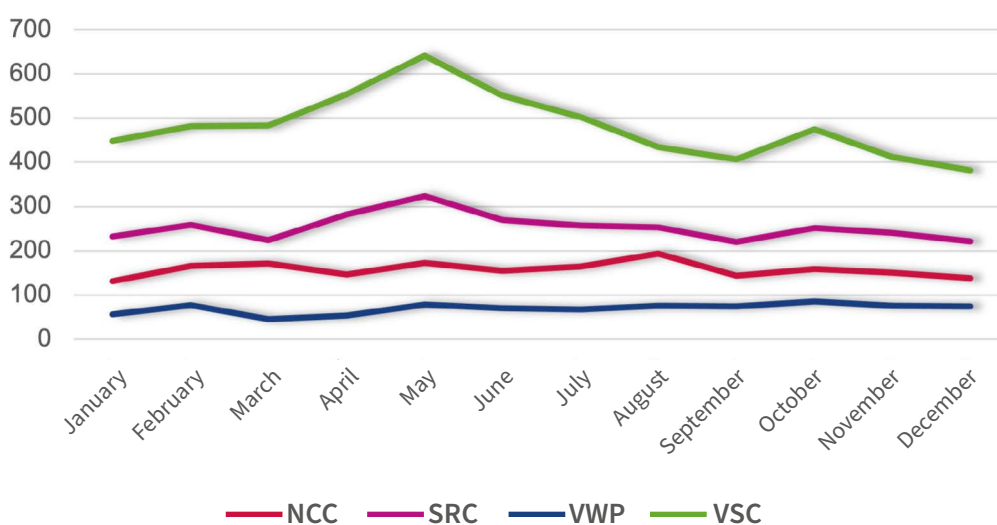
- At **21%**, the **Service and Repair Code** saw the largest annual rise in contacts, originating from complaints in relation to the maintenance and servicing of a vehicle. With contacts at a three-year high of **40,528**, this reflects the current consumer landscape, where households finances are under pressure, meaning when something goes wrong with a vehicle, consumers are more inclined to pursue free avenues to help recoup perceived losses.
- In contrast, the **New Car Code** saw a very slight **1%** year-on-year fall in the level of contacts to **17,708**, highlighting the occurrence of fewer complaints about claims made against a manufacturer's new car warranty following the purchase of a vehicle.
- As the volume of consumers getting in touch with The Motor Ombudsman increased year-on-year, the number of contacts **not related to a Code of Practice** (for example, this could be related to a finance or leasing dispute), similarly saw a **56%** rise to **15,399**, when compared to the figure seen in 2023 (9,899).



## 3.2 Accepted adjudication case volumes by Code (2022 – 2024)

	2022	2023	2024	2024 v 2023	
Vehicle Sales Code	2,958	4,289	5,768	▲ 1,479 (+35%)	
Service and Repair Code	1,821	2,430	3,034	▲ 604 (+25%)	
New Car Code	1,226	1,533	1,888	▲ 355 (+23%)	
Vehicle Warranty Code	388	640	832	▲ 192 (+30%)	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>6,393</b>	<b>8,892</b>	<b>11,522</b>	<b>▲ 2,630 (+30%)</b>	

### Adjudication case accepted by Code in 2024



**Vehicle Sales Code:**  
35% increase (+1,479) v 2023

**Service and Repair Code:**  
25% increase (+604) v 2023

**New Car Code:**  
23% increase (+355) v 2023


**Vehicle Warranty Products Code:**  
30% increase (+192) v 2023



## ► Accepted adjudication case volume analysis

- Overall, for all four Codes of Practice, the number of new cases accepted for an adjudicator's decision, set a new three-year-high in 2024, reaching a total of **11,522**. This equated to a **30%** year-on-year increase – a smaller rise compared to that seen between 2022 and 2023 (39%). The jump in accepted cases reflects a greater number falling within the remit of The Motor Ombudsman as its accredited network expands, and the rise in consumers logging their dispute against a backdrop of strained finances synonymous with the cost of living crisis.
- Reflecting the greatest number of contacts, the **Vehicle Sales Code** was subject to the largest number of cases accepted for adjudication (**5,768**) – also a three-year-high, with most disputes traditionally stemming from issues around used car purchases. This represented a marked **35%** rise versus the volume seen in 2023 (4,289), and is nearly double the number recorded in 2022 (**2,958**).
- For the third year in succession, the **New Car Code** saw the smallest annual jump in accepted cases, at **23%**, and reaching **1,888** disputes for review. This was only very slightly lower than the relative increase between 2022 and 2023 (25%), highlighting a similar level of consumer satisfaction with the warranty administration and claims processes operated by vehicle manufacturers.

## ► Total adjudication cases by Code as a percentage of UK new car registrations, used car transactions, and total UK car parc (where applicable)

 <b>THE MOTOR OMBUDSMAN</b>	Total adjudication cases accepted in 2024	Cases as a percentage of new car registrations and used car transactions in 2024*	Cases as a percentage of new car registrations in 2024**	Cases as a percentage of total vehicle parc in 2024***
Vehicle Sales Code	<b>5,768</b>	<b>0.06%</b> <i>(0.047% in 2023)</i>	-	-
Service and Repair Code	<b>3,034</b>	-	-	<b>0.007%</b> <i>(0.006% in 2023)</i>
New Car Code	<b>1,888</b>	-	<b>0.10%</b> <i>(0.08% in 2023)</i>	-
Vehicle Warranty Code	<b>832</b>	<b>0.008%</b> <i>(0.007% in 2023)</i>	-	-

\* Total new car registrations (**1,952,778**) and used car transactions (**7,643,180**) in the UK in 2024 (source: SMMT): **9,595,958**

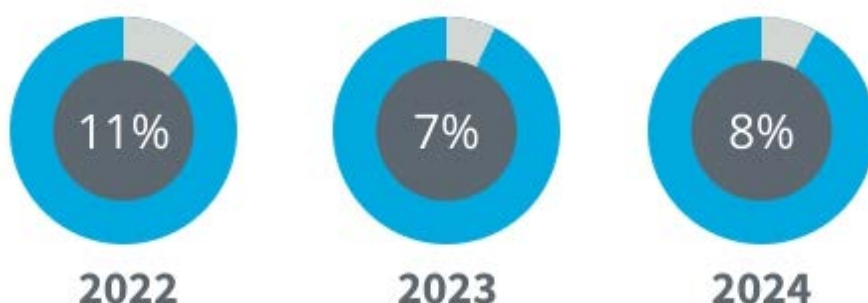
\*\* Total new car registrations in the UK in 2024 (source: SMMT): **1,952,778**

\*\*\* Total car parc in the UK in 2024 (source: SMMT): **41,968,264**

- ▶ **Vehicle Sales Code** cases represented a small proportion of total new car registrations and used car transactions in 2024, at just **0.06%**, up from 0.047% in 2023, and 0.035% in 2022.
- ▶ **Service and Repair Code** cases accounted for **0.007%** of the total UK car parc in 2024, which is just above the figures of 0.006% in 2023 and 0.005% in 2022.
- ▶ **New Car Code** cases accounted for **0.10%** of all UK new car registrations in 2024 – a little higher than the figure reported in 2023 (0.08%).
- ▶ Cases in relation to the **Vehicle Warranty Products Code** equated to **0.008%** of total new car registrations and used car transactions in 2024, a minimal increase from 0.007% in 2023, and slightly higher than the statistic of 0.005% witnessed in 2022.

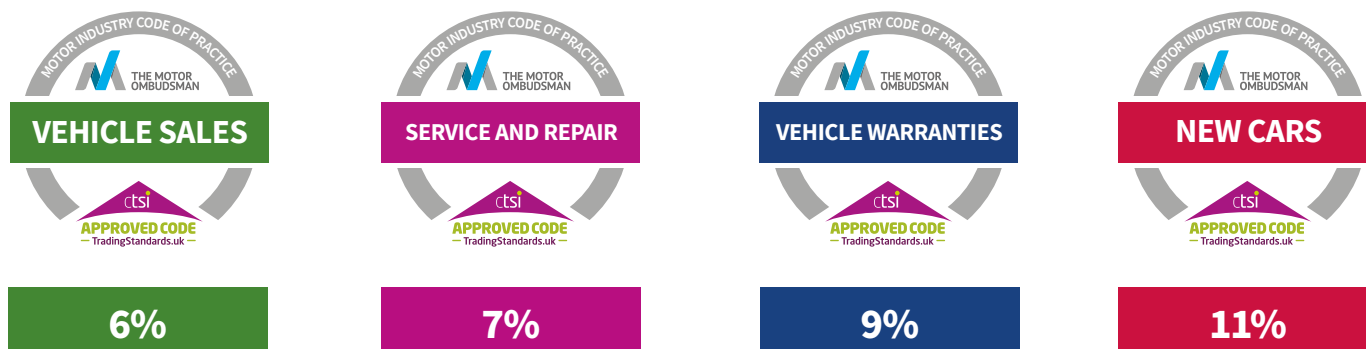
#### ▶ Contact to case escalation (2022 – 2024)

- ▶ In 2024, and in contrast to last year, the average escalation ratio from a contact to a case across the four Codes of Practice rose marginally from 7% to **8%** due to the higher contacts and the increased number of cases being accepted for adjudication from the disputes logged with The Motor Ombudsman.



#### ▶ Contact to case escalation rates by Code of Practice in 2024:

In 2024, and for the second consecutive year, the New Car Code saw the highest contact to case escalation ratio out of the four Codes of Practice, at 11% (versus 9% for the previous year before). After dropping from 11% to 5% between 2022 and 2023, the contact to case rates for the Vehicle Sales Code saw a respective minimal rise to 6% (from 5% in 2023), and from 8% to 9% for the Vehicle Warranty Product Code. In contrast, the service and repair escalation ratio remained consistent at 7%.



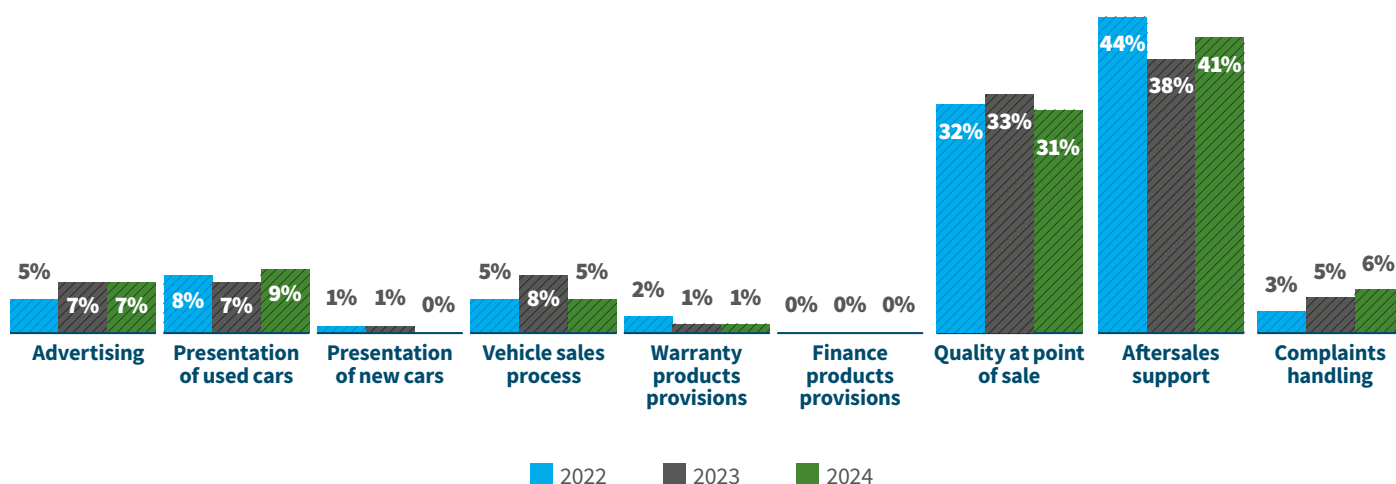
## ► Percentage of cases handled by Code breach

The following tables outline the percentage of cases that were generated by the respective breaches of The Motor Ombudsman's four Codes of Practice between 2022 and 2024.

### ► Vehicle Sales Code

Source of breach	2022	2023	2024	Trend (2024 v 2023)
1.0 Advertising	5%	7%	7%	—
2.0 Presentation of used cars for sale	8%	7%	9%	▲
3.0 Presentation of new cars for sale	1%	1%	0%	▼
4.0 The vehicle sales process	5%	8%	5%	▼
5.0 Provision of warranty products	2%	1%	1%	—
6.0 Provision of finance products	0%	0%	0%	—
7.0 Quality of a vehicle at the point of purchase	32%	33%	31%	▼
8.0 Aftersales support	44%	38%	41%	▲
9.0 Complaints handling	3%	5%	6%	▲

### ► Source of Vehicle Sales Code breaches (2022 - 2024)

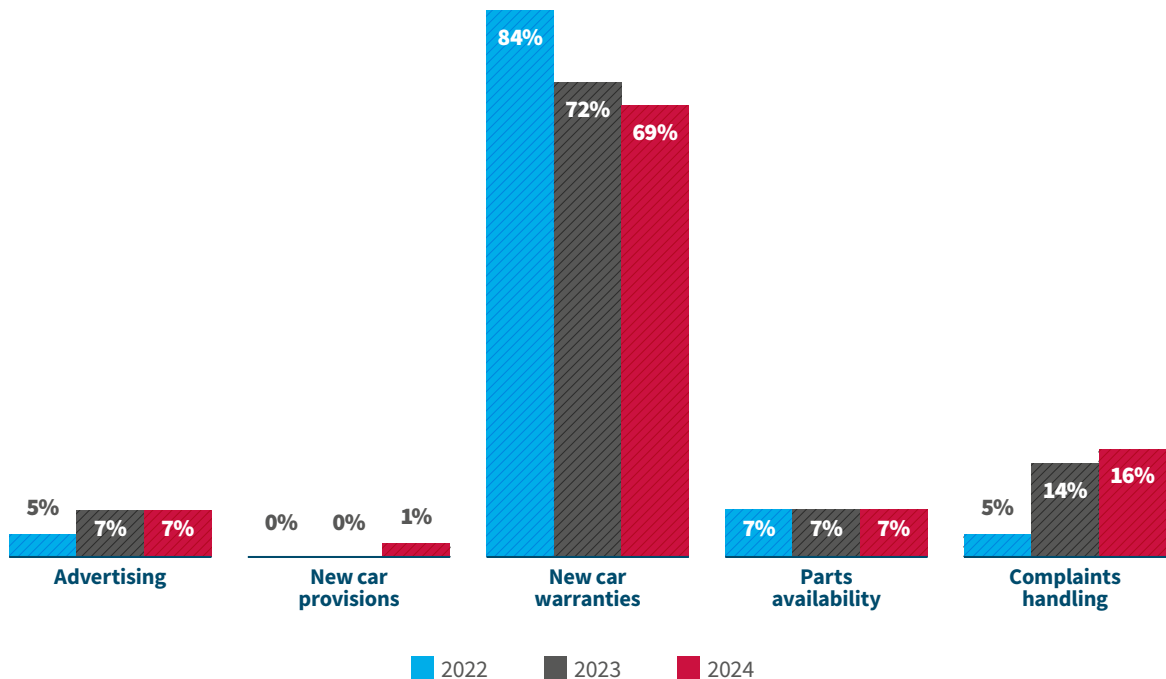


- At **41%**, the standard of aftersales support provided by retailers (8.0) drove the highest percentage of breaches of the Vehicle Sales Code in 2024, reversing the previous year-on-year fall between 2022 (44%) and 2023 (38%).
- For the fourth year in a row, the quality of a vehicle at the point of purchase (7.0) represented the second biggest breach of the Vehicle Sales Code (**31%**), although this was encouragingly lower than the percentage seen in 2023 (33%).
- Breaches relating to the presentation of used cars (2.0) *also* reported a slight year-on-year rise, from 7% to **9%**.

► New Car Code

Source of breach	2022	2023	2024	Trend (2024 v 2023)
1.0 Advertising	5%	7%	7%	▬
2.0 New car provisions	0%	0%	1%	▲
3.0 Manufacturers' new car warranties	84%	72%	69%	▼
4.0 Availability of replacement parts and accessories	7%	7%	7%	▬
5.0 Complaints handling	5%	14%	16%	▲

▼ Source of New Car Code breaches (2022 - 2024)



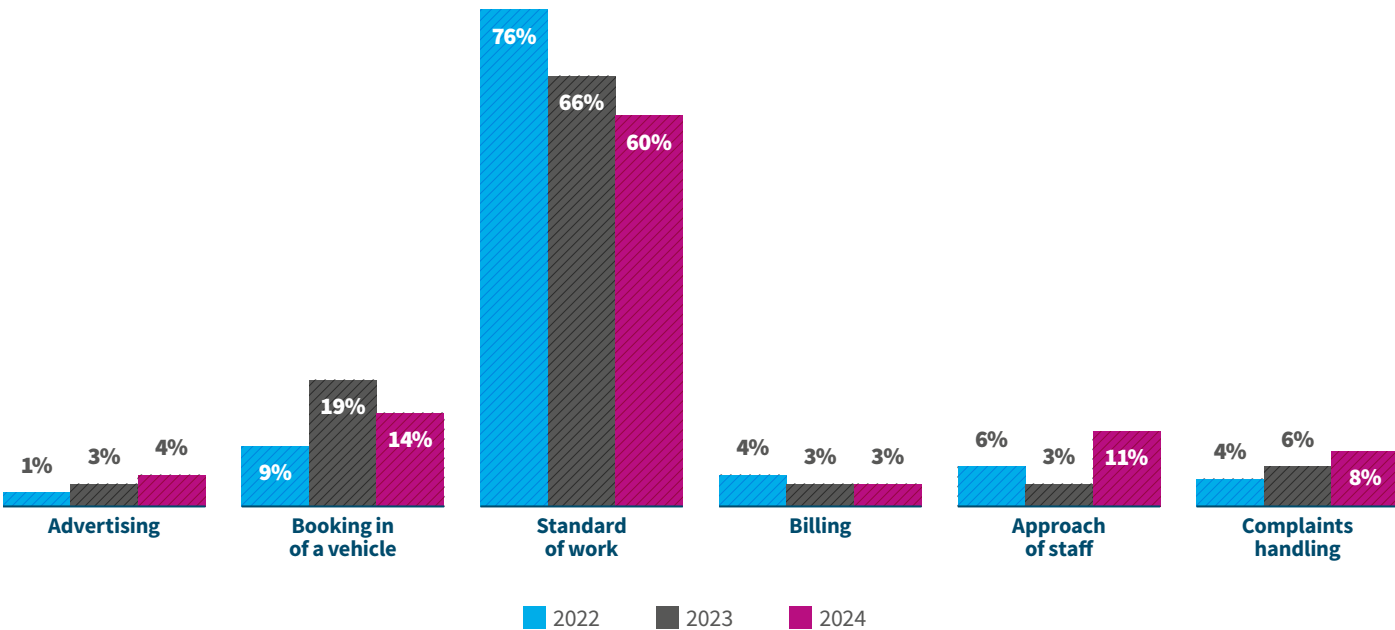
- Even though manufacturer new car warranties (3.0) saw a fall in the percentage of breaches to **69%** - the lowest level in three years, from 72% in 2023, and 84% in 2022, they still continued to represent the largest proportion of those associated with New Car Code.
- The handling of customer complaints by a vehicle manufacturer (5.0) – the second most prominent source of breaches, saw a small 2% year-on-year increase, rising to a three-year high of **16%**. This suggests that there is still room for change in this area to heighten the level of customer satisfaction in the event that dispute are logged with vehicle manufacturers.
- New Car Code breaches in relation to advertising in relation to manufacturer new car warranties (1.0), and the availability of replacement parts and accessories (4.0), both remained static at **7%**.



► Service and Repair Code

Source of breach	2022	2023	2024	Trend (2024 v 2023)
1.0 Advertising	1%	3%	4%	▲
2.0 Booking in of a vehicle	9%	19%	14%	▼
3.0 Standard of work	76%	66%	60%	▼
4.0 Billing	4%	3%	3%	▬
5.0 Approach of staff	6%	3%	11%	▲
6.0 Complaints handling	4%	6%	8%	▲

▼ Source of Service and Repair Code breaches (2022 - 2024)

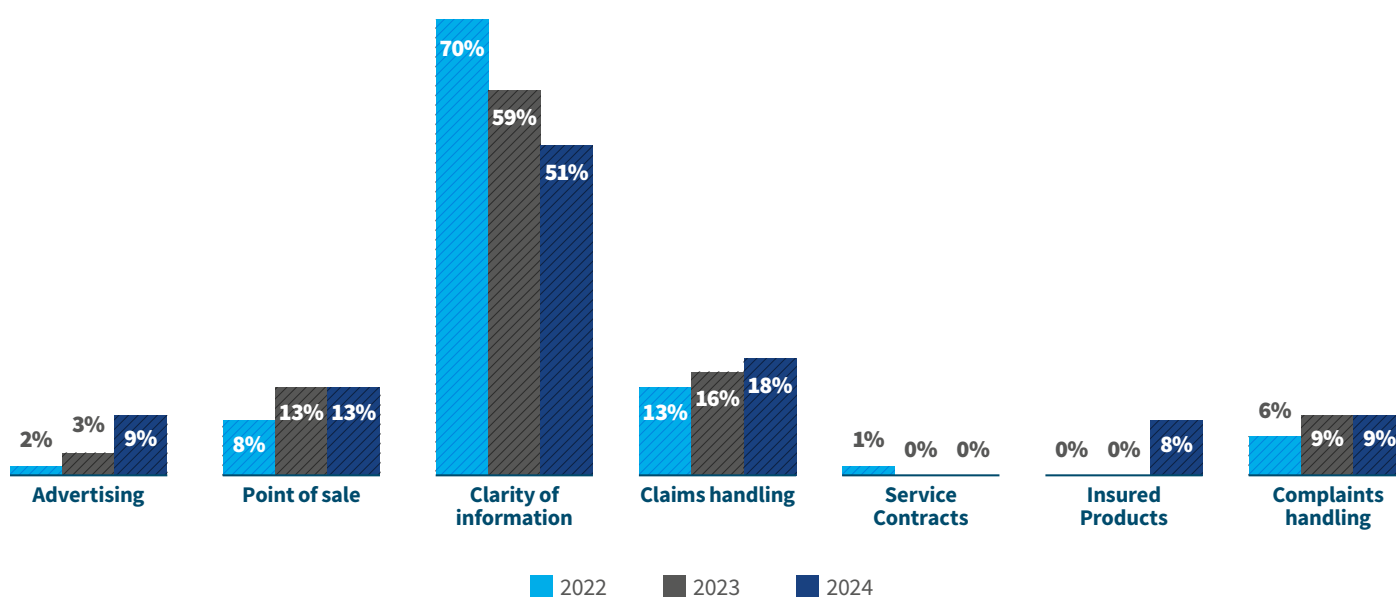


- Breaches originating from the standard of work carried out on a customer’s vehicle (3.0) remained the leading source of breaches at just under two-thirds (**60%**), but encouragingly, fell to a three-year low thanks to a positive six percentage drop compared to the figure recorded in 2023 (66%). This highlights that the quality of ad hoc and routine maintenance undertaken by businesses has continued to see an improvement in this area.
- Similarly, breaches in relation to the booking in of a vehicle (2.0) equally posted a small decrease in 2024 to reach **14%**, dropping from 19% in 2023.
- In contrast, breaches pertaining to the approach adopted by workshop staff (5.0) witnessed the largest year on-year rise, climbing from 3% in 2023 to **11%** in 2024 – a three-year high.
- The handling of complaints (6.0) also recorded another consecutive two percentage point rise, from 6% to **8%** between 2023 and 2024, which is double the figure seen in 2022, thereby suggesting dissatisfaction remains in this area, with scope for improvement for this important aspect of customer service.

### ► Vehicle Warranty Products Code





Source of breach	2022	2023	2024	Trend (2024 v 2023)
1.0 Advertising	2%	3%	9%	▲
2.0 Point of sale	8%	13%	13%	—
3.0 Clarity of information	70%	59%	51%	▼
4.0 Claims handling	13%	16%	18%	▲
5.0 Service Contracts, Guarantees and Non-insured Products	1%	0%	0%	—
6.0 Insured Products	0%	0%	0%	—
7.0 Complaints handling	6%	9%	9%	—

### ▼ Source of Vehicle Warranty Code breaches (2022 - 2024)

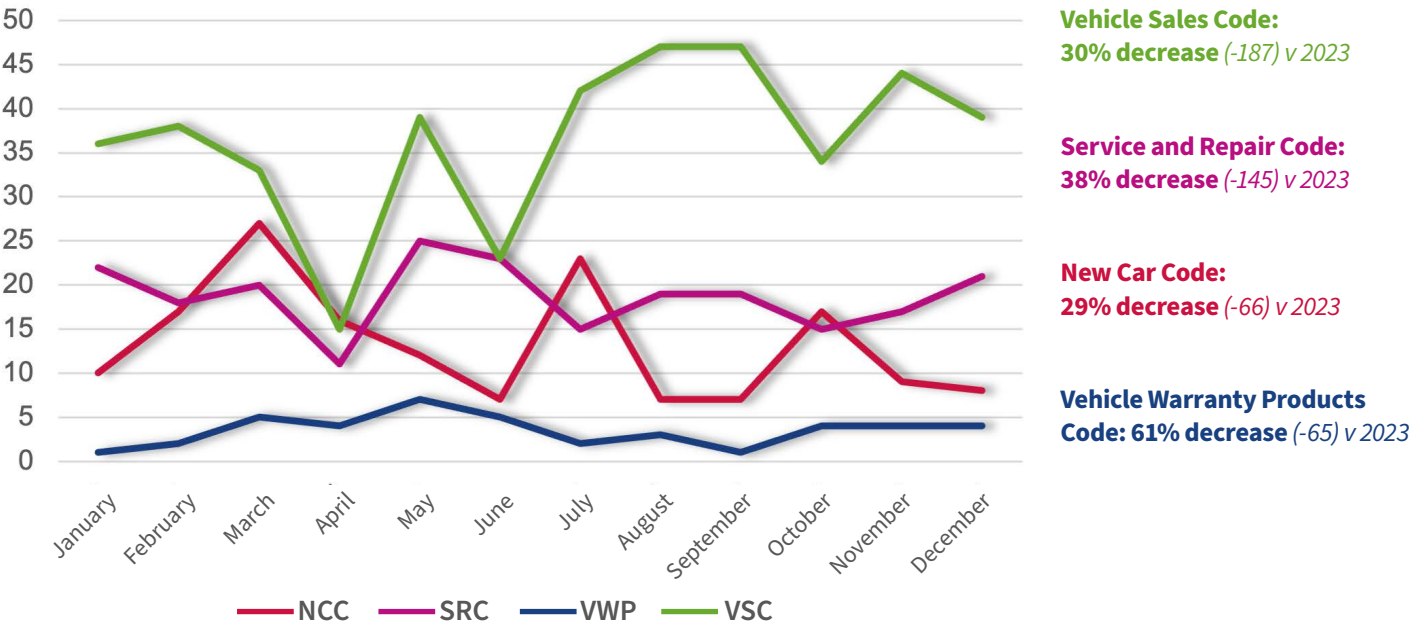


- Consistent with the trend seen in the two preceding years, businesses not providing accurate advice and information to customers at the point of buying an extended warranty policy (3.0), accounted for the highest proportion of breaches of this Code in 2024 (**51%**). This represents a positive eight percentage point drop compared to the year before (59%), whilst this figure also remains below the three-year-high or 70% recorded in 2022.
- Breaches stemming from the advertising of extended warranties (1.0), recorded the largest relative annual rise between 2023 and 2024, increasing from 3% to **9%** - around four times the level seen in 2022.
- Breaches in respect to the handling of claims (4.0) also saw a slight rise, from 16% to **18%** - the highest figure in the last three years, and remaining above the figure of 13% seen in 2022.
- For a fourth consecutive year, there were **no** breaches regarding Insured Products (6.0), and neither were there any breaches in 2024 originating from Service Contracts, Guarantees, and Non-Insured Products (5.0).

### 3.3 Ombudsman final decisions (2022 – 2024)

	2022	2023	2024	2024 v 2023	
Vehicle Sales Code	316	634	447	▼ 187 (-30%)	
Service and Repair Code	207	379	234	▼ 145 (-38%)	
New Car Code	129	228	162	▼ 66 (-29%)	
Vehicle Warranty Code	46	107	42	▼ 65 (-61%)	
TOTAL	698	1,348	885	▼ 463 (-34%)	

#### Final decisions by Code in 2024



### ► Ombudsman final decisions analysis

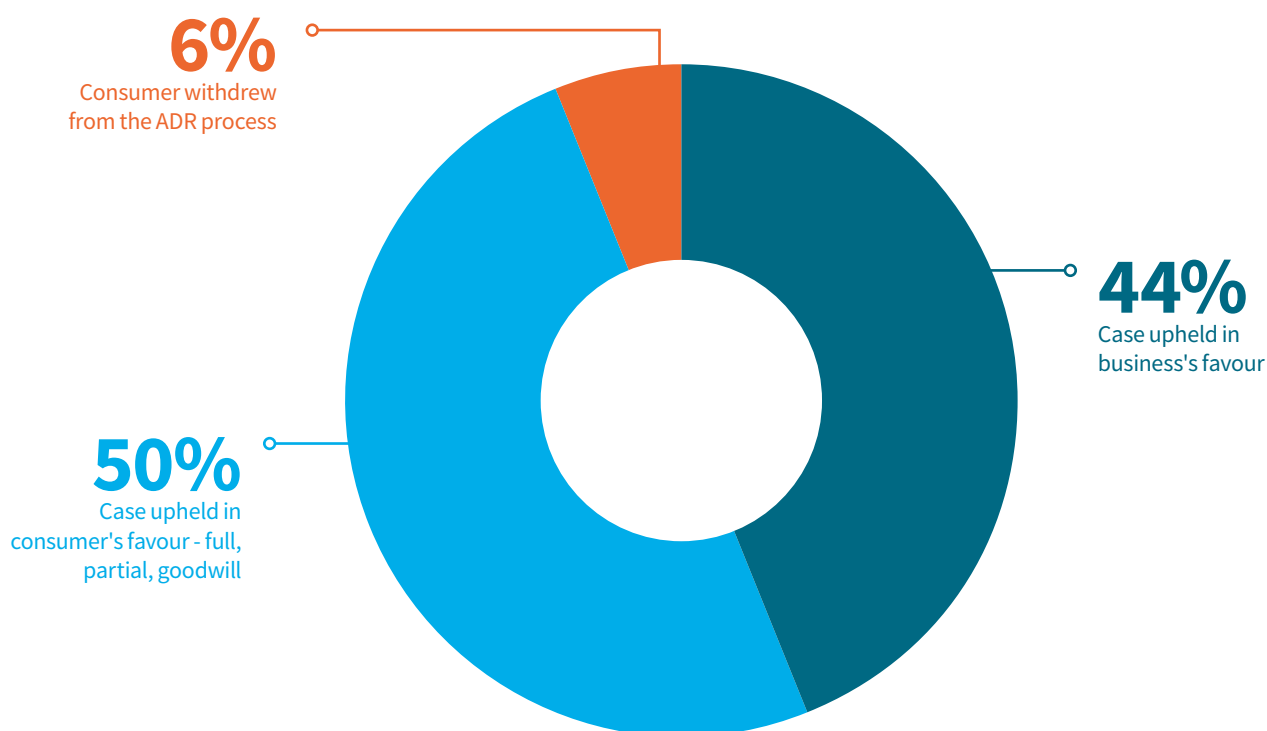
- Reversing last year's positive annual increases seen across the Codes in 2023, all four Codes of Practice saw a decline in the number of ombudsman final decisions delivered to consumers and businesses in 2024. This is reflective of the increasing complexity of disputes that are referred to this area of The Motor Ombudsman's dispute resolution service, therefore requiring a greater amount of time and resource for members of the ombudsman team to come to fair and impartial final decisions based on the evidence presented.
- The **New Car** and **Vehicle Sales** Codes of Practice were subject to the smallest falls in the volume of decisions (of around 30%). In contrast, the **Vehicle Warranty Products Code** saw the largest decline, which is generally reflective, on a relative basis of the smaller amount of disputes handled in relation to this Code versus the other three in The Motor Ombudsman's portfolio.



## SECTION 4: CONSUMER AND BUSINESS REDRESS

### 4.1 Consumer and business redress

#### ► The proportion of case outcomes awarded / cases withdrawals for all Codes



In 2024, it was a similar picture versus the breakdown seen in 2023, from the point of view that the majority (50%) of cases were upheld in the consumer's favour, although this was down by a percentage point versus the preceding 12 months. Cases upheld in favour of the business, based on the facts presented in the dispute, fell again slightly on an annual basis from 47% in 2023 to 44% in 2024.

Furthermore, the percentage of withdrawn cases increased year-on-year (from 2% in 2023 to 6% in 2024), which may once again be put down to delays in consumers receiving an outcome to their dispute, especially at the adjudication stage of the ADR process, thereby prompting them to pursue the resolution of their dispute via alternative avenues, such as the court system.

► Case outcome summary:

In 2024, the total value of the preferred awards claimed by consumers as a resolution to their dispute reached £30.5 million, which is around double the figures of £14.9 and £16.4 million seen in 2023 and 2022 respectively.

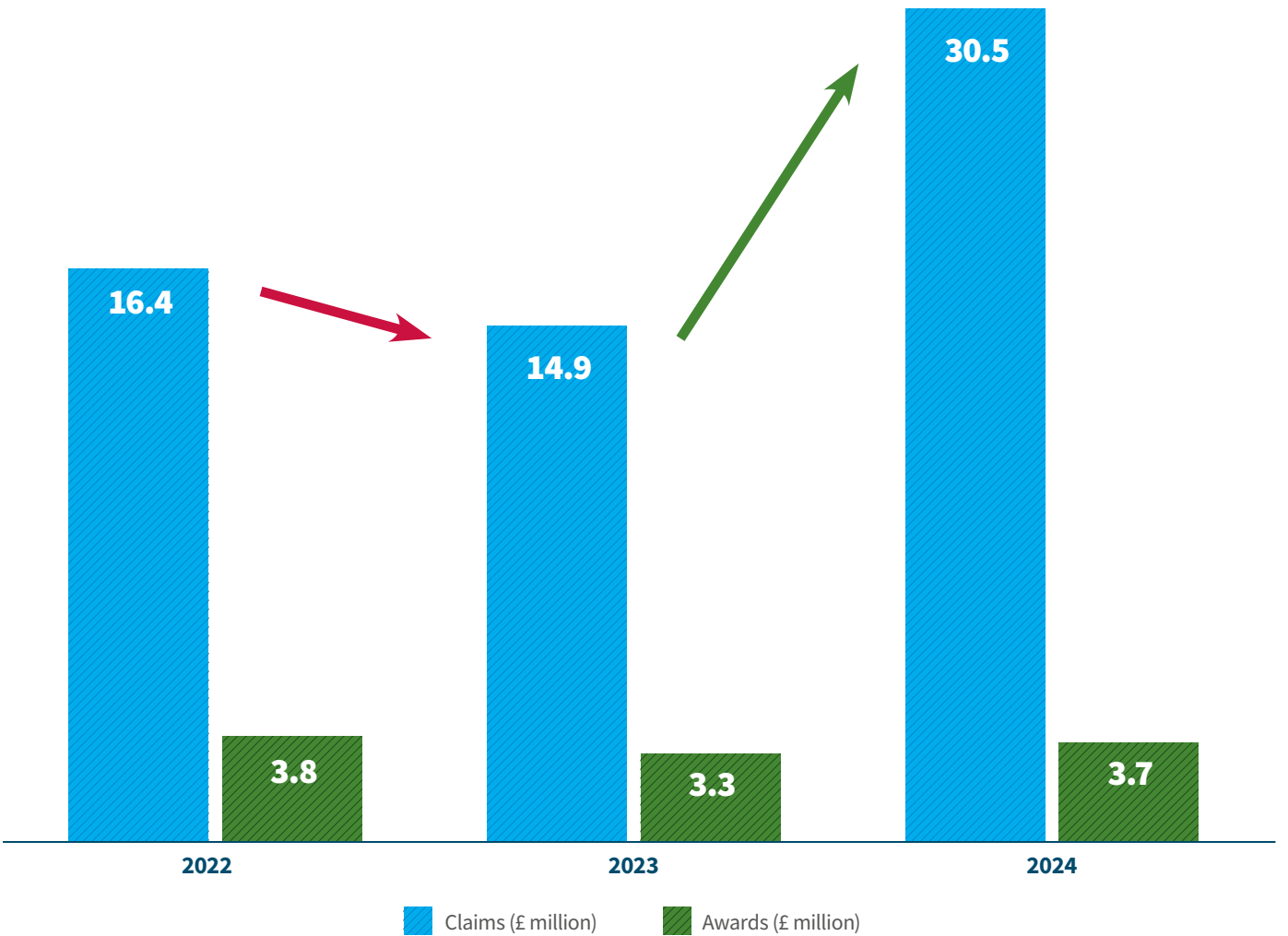
The greater difference between the claim value in 2024 compared to the two preceding years, may be put down to there being a greater case volume, coupled with a larger number of higher value vehicles being the subject of the dispute.

However, as seen in the middle column of the table below, the actual awards made to consumers tend to be lower, as individuals may over-claim to maximise what they feel they are entitled to, based on both financial and non-tangible loss. This may lead to the request of a higher remedy of rejection, a full refund, or a replacement vehicle.

However, in many cases, there is insufficient evidence, particularly technical, supporting the consumer’s complaint, meaning a lesser remedy, such as a repair, will be awarded to rectify the problem, hence the often-wide disparity between the claim and award values, when a case is upheld in the consumer’s favour. In 2024, the total value of claims awarded to consumers was £3.7 million, which was higher than the total in 2023, but nevertheless mirrors the figure seen in 2022.

▼ Total value of claims of consumer claims and awards (2022 – 2024)

Year	Total value of claims made by consumers when submitting a case	Total value of awards made to consumers when a complaint is upheld in their favour	Difference per year between consumer claim values and awards
2024	£30.5 million	£3.7 million	£26.8 million
2023	£14.9 million	£3.3 million	£11.6 million
2022	£16.4 million	£3.8 million	£12.6 million





SECTION 5: CONSUMER AND BUSINESS INSIGHT

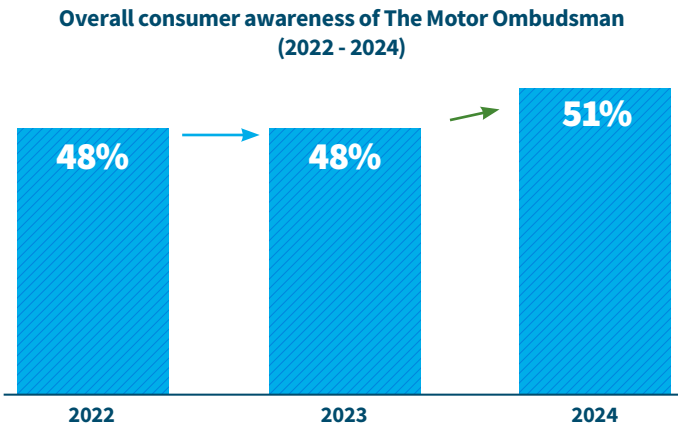
5.1 Annual consumer brand awareness survey highlights

Background

2024 was the eighth consecutive year that The Motor Ombudsman has carried out a consumer awareness study. A total of 1,001 individuals from across a representative sample of UK driving licence holders were surveyed for the study between 5th and 9th September 2024.

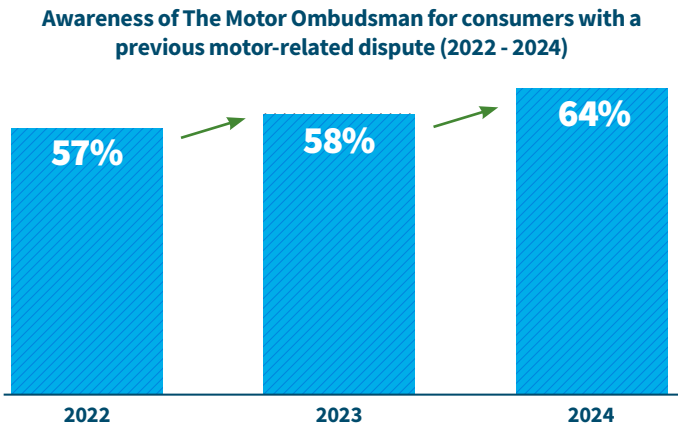
Key research findings

Overall consumer awareness of The Motor Ombudsman in 2023 has remained in line with the awareness score achieved in 2024



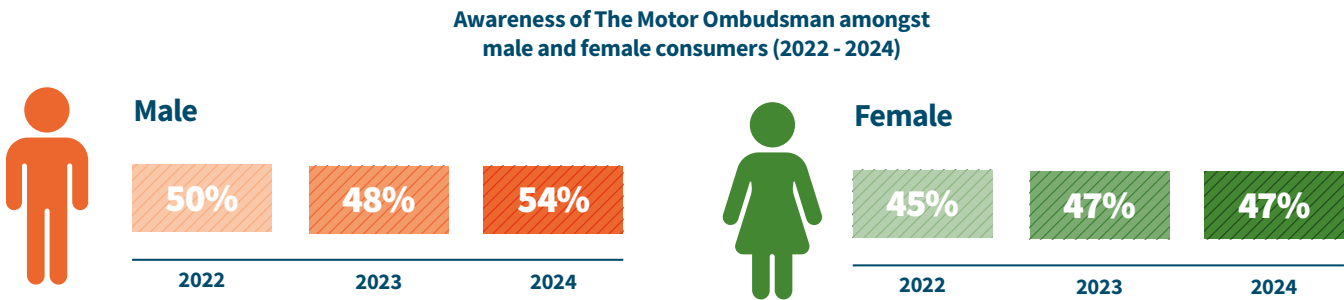
In 2024, more than half of individuals surveyed (51%) said that they were aware of The Motor Ombudsman, which is a three-year-high when compared to the figure of 48% recorded in 2023 and 2022.

Awareness of The Motor Ombudsman for consumers who previously had a motor-related dispute has increased by six percentage points to 64% in 2024



Similarly, in an encouraging trend, for those consumers who had previously had a motor-related dispute, awareness of The Motor Ombudsman also increased to a three-year-high, after rising by six percentage points year-on-year to 64% when compared to the level seen in 2023 (58%). Assumptions for awareness being higher in 2024 compared to previous years, could be put down to the level of cases and contacts coming into The Motor Ombudsman rising by 40% year-on-year, driven by the backdrop of a cost-of-living crisis and ongoing financial strains on motorists. As well as increased media coverage, there was equally a greater number of consumers consulting The Motor Ombudsman’s website during the year for assistance in resolving a motoring-related complaint, which was likely to be another factor contributing to the higher score in 2024. For those who had not had a dispute relating to a vehicle, consumer awareness of The Motor Ombudsman rose slightly to 39% in 2024 (the same figure seen in 2022), from 37% in 2023.

► Consumer awareness of The Motor Ombudsman amongst male and female consumers saw little change in 2023 versus the year before



Gender is an important measurement within the survey metrics to gauge the level of awareness and engagement across the consumer landscape. This is because The Motor Ombudsman may sometimes see certain consumers under-represented in the cases brought to them. As such, information on gender breakdown may help steer awareness and activities where this may be lower.

When compared to 2023, and consistent with the other data presented previously, familiarity with The Motor Ombudsman increased amongst men to 54% in 2024, versus 48% the year before, and 50% in 2022. In contrast, awareness remained the same amongst female respondents as that seen in 2023 at 47%, which, as a positive, was still higher than the level of 45% witnessed in 2022 and 2021.

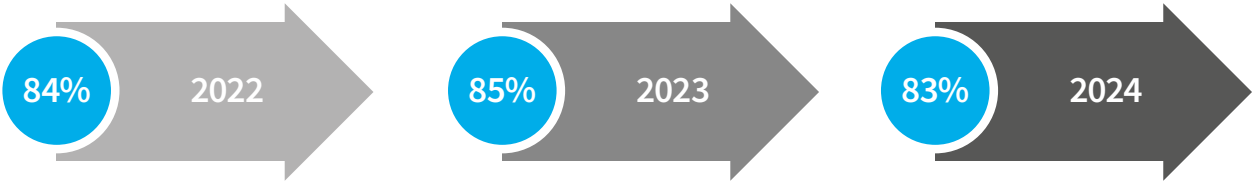
► Echoing the trend seen in previous years, 18 to 24-year-olds were the most likely to have heard of The Motor Ombudsman in 2024 when compared to individuals in other age groups

Awareness of The Motor Ombudsman by age group (2024 v 2023)			
Age group	Percentage of age group who were aware of The Motor Ombudsman		
	2023	2024	2024 v 2023
18 to 24	58%	57%	▼
25 to 34	52%	67%	▲
35 to 44	57%	52%	▼
45 to 54	41%	48%	▲
55+	40%	42%	▲

Contrary to the trend witnessed in previous years, the research revealed that awareness of The Motor Ombudsman is now highest in the 25 to 34 age group during 2024. This is thanks to a year-on-year 15 percentage point jump in awareness, taking over from 18 to 24-year-olds – a group which saw a slight decline in familiarity with The Motor Ombudsman (from 58% in 2023 to 57% in 2024). This may be reflective of the increased pressures on disposable income for some of the UK’s youngest consumers due to the heightened cost of living, and delays in being able to take a driving test, meaning they may be possibly less likely to get behind the wheel of a car compared to individuals in other age groups, thereby lowering the chance of having a motoring-related dispute.

Awareness amongst 35- to 44-year-olds also reported a small annual drop, from 57% to 52% respectively, but rose amongst both the 45 to 54 age group, and the over 55s. However, according to the latest research, consumers in the 55+ category are the least likely to know about the Ombudsman for the automotive sector – at only 42% of people within this age group, although this is still an improved position versus the statistic recorded previously in 2023.

► In 2024, 83% of consumers said that they would feel more confident using a Motor Ombudsman-accredited business for a vehicle purchase or repair

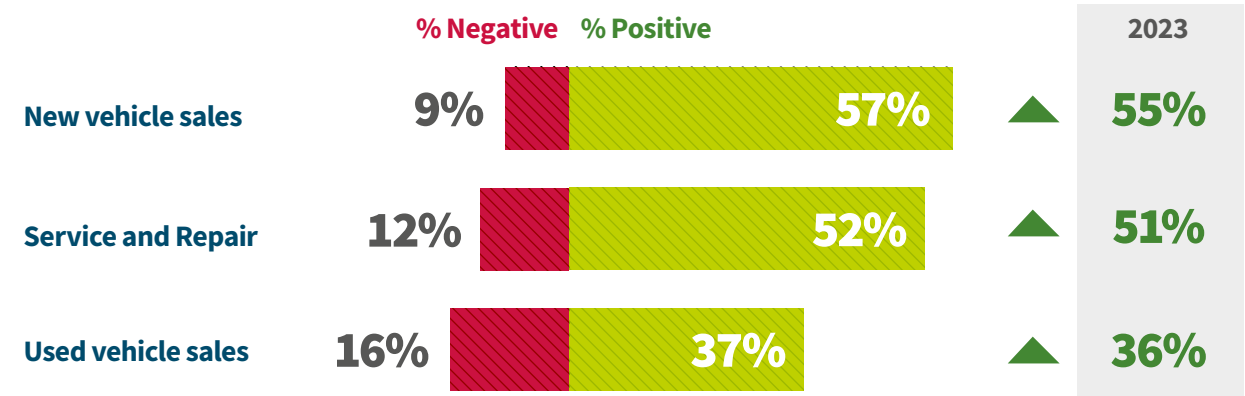


Similar to the figures recorded in 2022 and 2023, the 2024 study showed that just over eight in 10 consumers (83%) would feel more confident using a business that is accredited to The Motor Ombudsman for their vehicle purchase, service or repair. However, this was the lowest score during the past three years, and is two percentage points off the high of 85% recorded in last year’s research. This small fall could be attributed to less people, on a relative year-on-year basis, being aware of the benefits of using an accredited business amongst the respondents who participated in the study.

► For the sixth year in a row, the new vehicle sales sector was seen by consumers as the most positive area of the automotive industry

Reflecting the trend seen since 2019, the new vehicle sales sector once again emerged as the most positively viewed area of the automotive sector in 2024, with 57% of the consumers surveyed having a favourable opinion, up from 53% in 2023. This was also higher than the proportion of positive responses received for both the service and repair (52%) and used car sectors (37%) in 2023.

View of the automotive industry by sector in 2024  
(Percentage of consumers who answered negatively and positively)



According to the 2024 study, a near-similar proportion of consumers viewed the new vehicle sales sector in a positive light compared to the previous year. The metric recorded a two percentage point rise from 55% to 57%, and was also up from the figure of 53% noted in 2021, highlighting the increasingly encouraging view of the new vehicle sales market.

When looking at the perception of the new vehicle sales sector by gender, male and female respondents shared a more varied view, with 51% of females holding a positive view (up from 48% in 2023 and 2021, but below the figure of 52% in 2022), versus 62% of males (compared to 57% in 2023, and 56% in 2022).

When viewing sentiment by age group, 18 to 24-year-olds and 25 to 34-year-olds emerged as the most positive about the new vehicle sales sector (at 64% of respondents in this category). This is in contrast to those in the 45 to 54 age group, where just 47% of the respondents held this part of the automotive sector in high esteem, which was also down from the statistic of 51% witnessed in 2023.

When it came to the sale of new cars, only 9% of respondents held a negative view overall, up from 7% in 2023. Adverse sentiment recorded in the study was driven by factors, such as the perceived high price of new cars, a feeling which may be amplified by the higher cost of purchasing an electric vehicle, delays to new vehicles being delivered, the rate of depreciation after driving a new vehicle off the forecourt, as well as high-pressure selling techniques by retailers.

## ► Analysis of survey results by sector

### The used vehicle sales sector in 2024

Positive sentiment in relation to the used vehicle sector remained relatively low with just over a third (37%) of respondents saying they shared this opinion, up only very slightly from 36% in 2023.

In terms of the perception held by each of the sexes, males (34%) and females (40%) were less encouraged by the used vehicle sector in 2024 than in the previous year (38% and 41% respectively). When it came to the different age groups, 18 to 24-year-olds emerged as being the most upbeat about the used vehicle sector at (60%) compared with 56% in 2023. At the other end of the scale, it was those aged 55+ (25% in 2024, and 26% in 2023) and between 45 and 54 (33% in 2024, and 31% in 2023) who emerged as the most downbeat.

However, overall, respondents were more likely to have a neutral view of the sector, at 47% in 2024 (versus 48% in 2023), and when looking at the proportion of respondents discouraged by used vehicle sales, 16% held a negative view of this part of the automotive sector (the same as in 2023, compared to 18% in 2022, and 16% for this metric in 2021).

Reasons for the negative ratings cited by respondents, related to people having a lack of trust, cars being expensive and needing to haggle to get a good price, having a negative perception of used car salespeople, and receiving low part exchange values when trading their car in for another vehicle.

### The service and repair sector in 2024

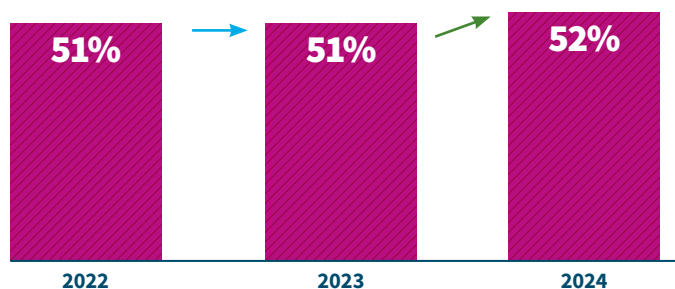
A mainly positive perception of the service and repair sector remained in 2024 with 52% of respondents sharing this sentiment, (compared to 51% in 2023). Furthermore, this score was significantly up from the statistic of 44% recorded in 2019.

When looking at the breakdown of opinion about the service and repair sector by gender in 2024, male respondents were once again more upbeat about this area of the automotive industry when compared to their female counterparts (57% versus 48%). For males, this is a 4% increase on the year before, but in contrast, this is a one percentage point drop for females.

For sentiment by age group, 68% of 18 to 24-year-olds felt optimistic about this area of the motor industry – the highest proportion of any age group surveyed, and up from 60% in 2023. They were followed by the 25 to 34s, where 60% of individuals in this category shared the same buoyant view, up very slightly from the figure of 59% seen in 2023. Conversely, the survey showed that over a third (35%) of 35 to 44-year-olds had a positive opinion about the service and repair sector, down from 52% last year.

Overall, just 12% had a negative view of the service and repair sector (12% in 2023), and 35% overall rated it as neutral. The research equally revealed 12% of males (a 1% decrease on 2023) and 12% of females (11% in 2023) shared negative sentiment. This could stem from individuals feeling as though they were being taken advantage of, high prices for maintenance and repairs, being overcharged, being told that unnecessary work was needed, as well as not knowing whether they could trust the proposed workscope by the business.

#### ► Percentage of respondents holding a positive view of the service and repair sector (2022 – 2024)



► Vehicle complaints made by survey respondents in 2024

For those that had a motoring-related complaint during 2024 (49% of the survey sample), the study revealed that:

- Almost a quarter (**27%**) were about a service or repair (up from 24% in 2023, and 25% in 2022);
- **12%** were in relation to a new car warranty (compared to 14% in 2023 and 2022);
- **16%** were about a used car purchase (staying consistent with the figure recorded in 2023, and up from 15% in 2022); and
- **4%** were in conjunction with a new car purchase (down from 5% in 2023 and 6% in 2022).

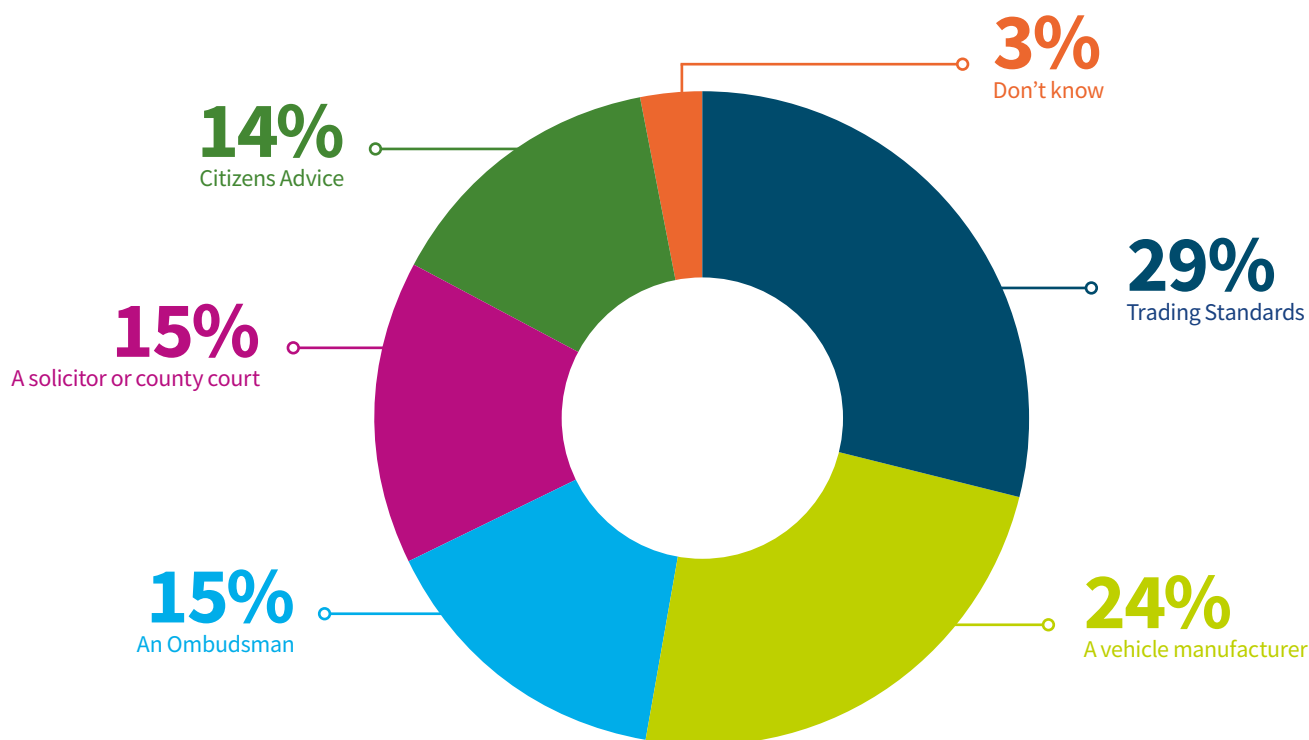
► In 2024, nearly 80% of people with a complaint about their vehicle, resolved it directly with a garage, service centre or dealership

How a respondent’s motoring complaint was resolved	Percentage resolved		
	2022	2023	2024
By the garage / service centre / dealership	72%	73%	77%
By the vehicle manufacturer	13%	13%	10%
Via a third party	4%	4%	3%
The complaint was not resolved	11%	10%	10%

For the survey respondents who had a motoring complaint in 2024, the majority – nearly 80%, had their issue resolved directly by the garage, service centre or dealership, a higher proportion versus that which has been seen during the last two years. The volume of disputes concluded with a vehicle manufacturer and via a third party, also fell very slightly year-on-year, whilst the level of unresolved complaints remained static at 10%.

- ▶ In 2024, and consistent with the trend last year, survey respondents explained that they were more likely to escalate an unresolved issue with a garage or car dealership to Trading Standards or a vehicle manufacturer, than to any other organisation

### Where consumers were most likely to take their unresolved dispute with a garage or car dealership in 2024



If a complaint with a garage or car dealership remained unresolved, the 2024 study found that close to a third (29%) of consumers would refer their complaint to Trading Standards (down from 30% in 2023), whilst 24% would take their dispute to a vehicle manufacturer as the next point of call (compared to 25% in 2023 and 2022).

The study also highlighted that 15% of respondents would seek assistance with their unresolved dispute from an Ombudsman (down from 16% in 2023, and 14% in 2022), with the same proportion of consumers also stating that they would resort to legal action i.e. consulting a solicitor, the county court or a legal representative to help bring their complaint to a close (up from 13% in 2023 and 2022). A slightly lower proportion at 14%, would seek assistance with their dispute from Citizens Advice.

### The importance of having an Ombudsman in the motor industry

- ▶ In 2024, **68%** of consumers deemed it essential for the motor industry to have an Ombudsman, because it provides a body to turn to if they can't resolve their issue directly with a garage or dealership (72% in 2023);
- ▶ Nearly two-thirds (**60%**) of respondents thought that it was important for the automotive sector to have an Ombudsman to help drive up standards (56% in 2023);
- ▶ **29%** felt it was important to be able to find out who the rated and recommended garages are their local area when they want to buy or service their car (30% in 2023); and
- ▶ A quarter (**25%**) of survey participants explained that it is important for the motor industry to have an Ombudsman, as it is not regulated (26% in 2023).



**Key conclusions that may be drawn from the 2024 consumer awareness survey data, are as follows:**

- ▶ Overall consumer awareness of The Motor Ombudsman increased to **51%** (the same level as in 2021), from 48% in 2023;
- ▶ Awareness of The Motor Ombudsman amongst consumers who had a dispute rose by six percentage points, from 58% in 2023, to **64%** in 2024;
- ▶ Individuals in the **25 to 34** age bracket, and **male** respondents, emerged as being the most aware of The Motor Ombudsman, taking over from 18 to 24-year-olds in 2023;
- ▶ Consistent with last year's trend, consumers were most likely to contact **Trading Standards** or a **vehicle manufacturer** if they had an unresolved dispute with a garage or car dealership;
- ▶ Over three-quarters of consumers (**77%**) said that they were able to bring their dispute to a close directly with a garage, service centre or dealership – a slight rise from the statistic of 73% witnessed in 2023;
- ▶ Although slightly less in 2024 as a proportion of respondents, **68%** of consumers felt the most important reason for having an Ombudsman in the motor industry was because it provides someone to turn to if they can't resolve their issue directly with a garage or dealership. This was followed by having a body that promoted higher standards within the motor industry (**60%**).




## 5.2 Consumer complaints about The Motor Ombudsman

Since 2021, The Motor Ombudsman's customer service complaints process has been divided into two distinct tiers to make the handling of service complaints clearer and more effective.

- **Tier 1 – Informal complaints** are described as informal expressions of consumer dissatisfaction, and are handled by team leaders. The Motor Ombudsman finds that the vast majority of issues can be resolved at this stage.
- **Tier 2 – Formal complaints** are those that then escalate to the senior ombudsman or the head of customer service and dispute resolution, and require a formal response.

### Informal and Formal consumer complaints as a proportion of total contacts and cases (2022 – 2024)

	Total complaints as a percentage of total contacts received	Total complaints as a percentage of total adjudication cases accepted
2024	0.36*	5.5%*
2023	0.32**	5.3%**
2022	0.28***	4.7%***



- In 2024, The Motor Ombudsman handled **175,328** contacts and accepted **11,522** cases.

\*2024: **Tier 1 Informal (607)** and **Tier 2 Formal (25)** complaints - a total of **632**.

\*\*2023: Based on **Tier 1 Informal (441)** and **Tier 2 Formal (32)** complaints - a total of **473**.

\*\*\*2022: Based on **Tier 1 Informal (262)** and **Tier 2 Formal (41)** complaints - a total of **303**.

## ► Informal and Formal consumer complaints by reason and stage

Complaint Tier	Case stage	Process	Delay	Outcome	Staff	Communication	Total
Tier 1 Informal complaints (2022 - 2024)	Enquiry (also known as Initial Assessment)						
	2024	5	23	19	2	13	62
	2023	9	1	7	5	9	31
	2022	8	0	2	4	3	17
	Early resolution						
	2024	0	0	0	0	0	0
	2023	0	0	0	0	0	0
	2022	0	0	0	1	1	2
	Mediation						
	2024	0	0	0	0	4	4
	2023	1	0	0	0	2	3
	2022	0	1	0	1	0	2
	Administration (formerly known as Investigation)						
	2024	14	197	19	3	20	253
	2023	9	85	19	9	23	145
	2022	4	29	2	7	11	53
	Adjudication						
	2024	5	119	23	5	26	178
	2023	14	22	25	21	22	104
	2022	4	25	25	10	20	84
	Final decision						
	2024	8	56	20	2	24	110
	2023	21	78	21	7	31	158
	2022	7	60	22	8	7	103

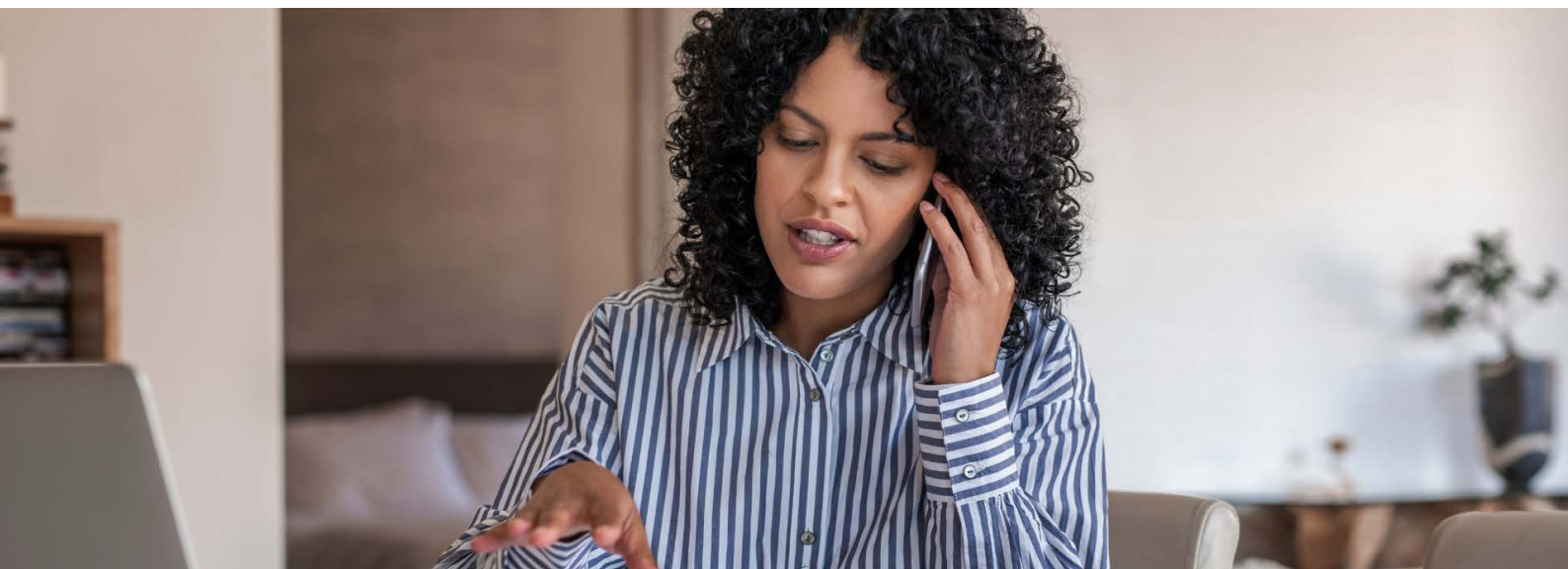
Complaint Tier	Case stage	Process	Delay	Outcome	Staff	Communication	Total
Tier 2 Formal complaints (2022 - 2024)	Enquiry (also known as Initial Assessment)						
	2024	0	1	1	0	0	2
	2023	0	0	1	0	0	1
	2022	0	0	0	3	0	3
	Administration (formerly known as Investigation)						
	2024	1	2	2	2	1	8
	2023	3	4	2	0	6	15
	2022	0	1	0	2	1	4
	Adjudication						
	2024	2	1	4	0	0	7
	2023	0	2	3	1	3	9
	2022	1	3	2	2	1	9
	Final decision						
	2024	0	5	3	0	0	8
	2023	1	0	4	1	1	7
	2022	3	6	10	4	2	25

When looking at the reasons behind the **607 Tier 1 Informal** complaints received from consumers during 2024:

- ▶ **14%** resulted from the level communication provided to consumers, an encouraging decrease versus the figure of 20% in 2023, and remaining similar to the level of 16% seen in 2022. Examples of communications issues cited by consumers included, not being told that their case was out of remit after waiting for a prolonged period following its submission, and not receiving calls back from Motor Ombudsman staff members.
- ▶ **18%** of consumer complaints occurred at the final decision stage, the lowest figure in the last three years - down from 36% in 2023 and 39% in 2022, highlighting the service level improvements that have been made in this area during the past 12 months.
- ▶ **29%** arose during the adjudication stage, up from 24% in 2023, but down from the figure of 32% witnessed in 2022.
- ▶ **42%** were seen at the case administration stage (formerly known as investigation), which was higher than the figure of 33% in 2023, and was over double the 20% statistic recorded in 2022.
- ▶ **65%** resulted from a delay in responding to consumers during the dispute resolution process, the highest figure in the last three years, and up from 42% in 2023, and from 44% in 2022. This likely stems from a continued backlog of older cases requiring decisions, coupled with the significant rise in the volume of contacts and cases that were received during the year against the backdrop of increased cost-of-living pressures for consumers.

When looking at the key drivers behind the **25 Tier 2 Formal** complaints received from consumers during 2024:

- ▶ **4%** resulted from the level of communication provided to consumers – a significant decrease from the figure of 31% reported in 2023 and 10% in 2022, showing the positive steps made in this area.
- ▶ **8%** related to the approach of staff, a further improvement compared to the figure of 6% in 2023, and continuing to remain far lower than the statistic of 27% in 2022.
- ▶ **28%** of complaints arose at the adjudication stage – a similar proportion to the final decision stage, and representing a slight increase versus 28% in 2023 and 22% in 2022.
- ▶ **32%** of complaints occurred at the final decision stage, up from the figures of 22% in 2023, but remaining far off the high of 61% seen two years prior in 2022.
- ▶ **32%** of complaints were equally reported at the case administration stage (formerly known as investigation), an encouraging decrease versus 47% in 2023, but remaining significantly up from 10% in 2022.
- ▶ **36%** stemmed from a delay in responding to consumers, the biggest driver of Tier 2 Formal complaints reported in 2024. This was nearly double the figure of 19% seen in 2023, and considerably higher than the 12% recorded in 2022.
- ▶ **40%** were caused by the outcome delivered to consumers, a marked rise of consumer discontent, when compared to 31% in 2023, and to 29% in 2022.



### ► Negative consumer testimonials about The Motor Ombudsman

The following is a sample of negative testimonials from consumers who used The Motor Ombudsman's ADR service throughout 2024, and logged a complaint about the handling of their case on [Trustpilot](#). The table below also highlights the cause of the consumer's comments, as well as the response by The Motor Ombudsman in relation to their concerns.

Consumer / Month review left on Trustpilot	Extract of complaint made by the consumer on Trustpilot	Reasons for the consumer's complaint about The Motor Ombudsman's service	Response by The Motor Ombudsman
<b>Mr. T</b> January 2024	<i>"Terrible service, took over 12 months to come back with a weak reason as to why they would not uphold the complaint. They are clearly industry stooges and assume most people like myself are too busy/poor to pursue things through the courts."</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mr. T logged a complaint on Trustpilot due to the extended delay to receive an adjudication decision, which was also not upheld in his favour.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The adjudicator acknowledged the delay, which was due to the high volume of cases awaiting an outcome, and issued a decision in the fastest possible timescale based on the order of cases logged by consumers.</li> <li>Neither Mr. T, nor the business, responded to the outcome provided by the adjudicator, and the case was closed.</li> </ul>
<b>Mr. S</b> March 2024	<i>"It's incredibly frustrating how unfair the system can be, always favouring big firms over individuals. I used to hear about this issue, but experiencing it first-hand really highlights the injustice."</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mr.S questioned The Motor Ombudsman's impartiality in their Trustpilot review, as he did not think the adjudication was fair based on the evidence provided.</li> <li>He claimed that the business had given him incorrect information, and therefore chose not to proceed with the proposed repairs.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The adjudicator highlighted that, based on the evidence provided, Mr. S had not incurred any losses due to not having further work carried out on his vehicle in line with the suggested course of action by the repairer.</li> <li>However, it was still acknowledged by The Motor Ombudsman that the evidence pointed to the supply of incorrect advice, meaning the case was partially upheld in Mr. S's favour.</li> <li>The adjudicator addressed the consumer's concerns about the decision when raised (i.e. that it was only a partial uphold), but no further response was received from Mr.S. The case was then closed.</li> </ul>
<b>Mr. P</b> June 2024	<i>"Took far too long to respond, with no progress reports or any feedback."</i>  <i>Waited since January for anything to happen. Promised someone would call me to discuss - nothing, no contact at all for four months. Then just an email."</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mr. P. expressed dissatisfaction about the fact that he was expecting a call back from The Motor Ombudsman with an update on his case, but never received one after a prolonged wait.</li> <li>The consumer was also disappointed with the time it had taken to receive any news on the progress of their case.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In response, the adjudicator explained that case notes and previous correspondence did not indicate a call back request, but had provided the required information by e-mail.</li> <li>The delay referenced by the consumer was due to The Motor Ombudsman needing to clarify the business that the consumer had a dispute with, and because a third-party authorisation form required completion, as the case was raised in the name of Mr.P's spouse.</li> <li>No response was received from Mr. P to either of these requests for information in the given timeframes, thereby leading to the case being closed.</li> </ul>



<b>Mr. R</b> August 2024	<p><i>“Lack of impartiality, dismissal of many pertinent points/facts raised citing lack of evidence. Total belief of the manufacturer (the big corporation) lies, their denials of what actually happened. Dismissal of their complete lack of professionalism and respect. I suffered severe financial loss, Ombudsman wasn't interested. Would never use them again, or recommend them.”</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mr. R questioned The Motor Ombudsman's impartiality due to the adjudication outcome not being in his favour.</li> <li>• The customer's frustration also stemmed from the fact that he considered himself vulnerable, and explained that the business had misled him into buying a vehicle that offered a different driving experience to his previous car.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The adjudicator addressed Mr. R's concern about impartiality, and explained that The Motor Ombudsman provides an evidence-based service and that decisions are made based on the facts provided, meaning it had not sided with the business due to them paying an accreditation fee.</li> <li>• The adjudicator also highlighted the fact that The Motor Ombudsman cannot consider verbal conversations at the time of sale as part of the decision-making process.</li> <li>• Upon notifying Mr. R that the outcome was not in his favour, the adjudicator offered the consumer the chance for case to be escalated to an ombudsman for a final decision, as part of the options available to him.</li> <li>• The consumer resubmitted evidence, but no new information was supplied, meaning the adjudication outcome could not be reconsidered.</li> <li>• As Mr. R did not wish to take their case further with an ombudsman, it was closed.</li> </ul>
<b>Mr. C</b> October 2024	<p><i>“Took 7 months to even begin dealing with my complaint. Completely pointless agency, I mean it's a great strategy from them, just do nothing until complaints resolve themselves and then pretend to be adequate at their jobs. In the future, if you're scammed or deal with a rogue trader, just take the loss on the chin and don't waste your time contacting anyone.”</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mr. C posted a complaint on Trustpilot due to being dissatisfied with the time it took to receive an outcome and the fact that the dispute was not upheld in his favour.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The adjudicator acknowledged the delay, which was due to the high volume of cases awaiting an outcome, and issued a decision in the fastest possible timescale based on the order of cases logged by consumers.</li> <li>• Neither Mr. C nor the business responded to the outcome provided by the adjudicator, and the case was closed.</li> </ul>
<b>Mr. R</b> December 2024	<p><i>“Waiting time e.g. on hold waiting for someone to answer the call way too long. I was then informed it could take up to 6 months for an investigator / person to be allocated to my case. 6 months !!!!!!! that's crazy. All in all, very poor so far. Maybe they will redeem themselves once someone is assigned.”</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mr. R was frustrated about the time it took for his call to be answered, and was subsequently disappointed about the timescale for his case to be reviewed. This was due to the high volume of cases being handled by The Motor Ombudsman.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Motor Ombudsman's Customer Contact Advisor explained that a case administrator would be allocated to them in the fastest possible timeframe, and sent follow-up information to confirm that a member of the team would be in touch once it had reached this stage.</li> <li>• No further correspondence was then received from the consumer in relation to this query.</li> </ul>



## 5.3 How complaints to The Motor Ombudsman are being addressed

The total number of complaints brought by consumers to The Motor Ombudsman about its level of service, increased from 473 in 2023 to 632 in 2024, a rise in volume of 34%. The cause of this dissatisfaction was principally due to the delays in individuals having their case reviewed by an adjudicator, accounting for 119 of the 173 informal Tier 1 service complaints (i.e. 68%) logged in relation this part of the process.

The Motor Ombudsman remains committed to working in line with the 90-day (complete case file-to-adjudication decision) timeframe stipulated by the Chartered Trading Standards Institute (CTSI). However, due to the 40% year-on-year jump in case volume between 2023 and 2024, coupled with the added factor that, in some instances, consumers are submitting much more substantial case files against the backdrop of a cost-of-living crisis, there can be occasions where motorists have reported a prolonged wait for their case to be looked at.

With an ongoing commitment to drive down decision times, and to further reduce the instances of delays, specifically at the adjudication stage, The Motor Ombudsman recruited an additional 13 members of staff solely within its dispute resolution team during 2024, leading to its highest ever headcount within this department.

Similarly, The Motor Ombudsman recognises that, with trends showing a continued upswing in annual case volumes, the focus for 2025 will be to invest further in the expansion of its dispute resolution team, coupled with staff training and development, to maintain its high standards of service, as well as the delivery of outcomes in the fastest possible timeframes. This will be complemented by additional investment to further streamline processes and back-office systems to drive greater efficiencies in a consumer's resolution journey with The Motor Ombudsman.



## 5.4 Positive consumer testimonials about The Motor Ombudsman

The following is a sample of positive Trustpilot testimonials from consumers who used The Motor Ombudsman during 2024.

***“Clear expectations given.  
The operator was compassionate  
whilst remaining neutral and  
advised me of the next steps.”***

*(Ms. S, January)*

***“The Ombudsman did a thorough  
assessment and listened to all  
sides of my case and issued a  
decision that was extremely just,  
and took into account each of the  
parties’ issues.”***

*(Mr. W, February)*

***“This is the first time that I have  
used The Motor Ombudsman  
and found them easy to contact.  
I was given all the information  
that I needed.”***

*(Ms. S, July)*

***“The gentleman I spoke to was  
very precise and informative and  
made me feel I was not alone  
with my problem.”***

*(Ms. K, October)*

***“I was positively quite amazed by the sheer professional response and guidance I  
received by my call handler at The Motor Ombudsman.”***

*(Mr. P, December)*

## 5.5 Annual accredited business survey highlights

Every year, a survey is sent to The Motor Ombudsman's network of accredited businesses to understand their views and level of satisfaction regarding various aspects of its service, and what is important to them.

The research was conducted via an e-mail survey, which was sent to Motor Ombudsman-accredited franchised car dealers and independent garages<sup>1</sup> between September and November 2024. Highlights of the findings are as follows.

### ► How businesses would describe The Motor Ombudsman in one word:



Overall, of the words used by respondents in 2024, **82%** were positive, down from the figure of **93%** the year before, but still up from the statistic of 86% recorded in 2022.

### ► The main benefits of accreditation stated by businesses were:

1. Being able to demonstrate that they are committed to the standards of an approved Code of Practice (stated by 91% of participants overall);
2. Consistent and fair adjudication outcomes (84%);
3. The credibility and reassurance provided for customers (83%);
4. Having access to The Motor Ombudsman's Information Line and dispute resolution service (79%); and
5. Being able to use the CTSI-approved Code logo (78%) and The Motor Ombudsman's logo (also 78%).

### ► Motor Ombudsman accreditation is valuable for businesses:

Out of the businesses surveyed, **80%** of respondents agreed that The Motor Ombudsman is valuable, which is down on 2023's figure of 87%, and mirrors the score of 80% last seen in 2022.

In 2024, 67% of respondents were satisfied with the overall value of their Motor Ombudsman accreditation – a drop from 75% in 2023, and remaining lower than the score of 83% in 2021. The 2024 survey results also revealed that **54%** of businesses stated that Motor Ombudsman accreditation gave them the edge over the competition, also a decrease compared to the figure of 75% seen the year before.

### ► Satisfaction with the dispute resolution service is good:

For businesses that had used The Motor Ombudsman's dispute resolution service in 2024, **71%** agreed that the process was easy to follow, versus 65% in 2023. Furthermore, 67% felt as though the case outcome was fair and reasonable – a lower score than in 2023 (69%) and 2022 (75%). The research also revealed that in 2024, less than half (42%) of businesses were satisfied with the time taken to resolve the dispute, which was lower than the figure of 56% recorded the previous year.

### ► Key areas identified for improvement in 2025:

The key areas identified for improvement by The Motor Ombudsman, and that need to continue to be addressed in 2025 are:



Quicker timescales to resolve disputes, and faster responses to business enquiries;



A greater degree of information about the reasons for adjudication and ombudsman decisions, to ensure businesses better understand why a case has not been upheld in their favour; and to demonstrate that The Motor Ombudsman is impartial;



An improved understanding of the value and benefits that Motor Ombudsman accreditation brings to businesses, as well as improved communication of the wide range benefits for businesses that do not have disputes; and



Continuing to raise awareness of The Motor Ombudsman amongst consumers through ongoing marketing and PR initiatives.

<sup>1</sup>Sample size of 362 respondents (independent garages and franchise dealers).

Action plans will be developed by The Motor Ombudsman to ensure that the enhancements listed above are implemented during the coming 12 months.

## 5.6 Accredited business compliance

Business compliance monitoring remained a core focus in 2024. During the year, The Motor Ombudsman increased engagement with customers, businesses and regulatory bodies, such as the Chartered Trading Standards Institute (CTSI), to address and resolve non-compliance issues as and when they arose.

### 5.6.1 Online self-assessments

Once an independent garage or franchise car dealership has expressed interest in joining The Motor Ombudsman, the completion of an online self-assessment is required when applying for accreditation to the Service and Repair, and / or Vehicle Sales Codes to demonstrate that they are compliant with the requirements of the Code(s). The section below excludes any assessments in relation to Vehicle Warranty and New Car Code-accredited businesses.

The assessment asks businesses to complete information on subjects, amongst others, such as their staff training programme, their internal complaints process, as well as the advertising and sale of vehicles. The same self-assessment applies upon the renewal of the annual Code accreditation, and all businesses are asked to complete the assessment within 30 days of it being sent to them.

During 2024:

- ▶ **343** online self-assessments were completed for Service and Repair Code-accredited businesses (versus 643 in 2023).
- ▶ **72** online self-assessments for Vehicle Sales Code-accredited businesses were undertaken (compared to 271 in 2023).

In the event of incomplete self-assessments, further guidance is provided by The Motor Ombudsman to resolve any outstanding requirements and queries, in order for the evaluation to be completed by businesses.



## 5.6.2 Managing non-compliance

Penalty points are given to businesses for non-compliance and non-response with regards to a case at either the adjudication or final decision stage. In line with the terms and conditions of becoming accredited to a Code of Practice, it is a requirement that The Motor Ombudsman receives a satisfactory response from a business to any correspondence within five working days. Failure to respond means that the case is escalated as per the body's defined processes. Penalty points are issued and accumulated as per the flowchart, and a business can also be suspended at any point in the process for continued non-response or compliance.

Action taken by The Motor Ombudsman	Number of working days with no business response	Penalty points awarded to the business
	5	0
The adjudication team validates all contact details and communicates with the business. The Motor Ombudsman maintains contact with the business requesting a response	↓	↓
	11	6
↓	↓	↓
Case notes are updated by the adjudication team on actions taken to date. The Motor Ombudsman maintains contact with the business requesting a response	16	18
↓	↓	↓
The first written warning is issued to the business once 30 points have been accumulated		30
The adjudication team updates the consumer on the case, and points are logged against the business. A referral is made by the adjudication team to the compliance team if a response has still not been received or the business is not voluntarily responding or complying with an adjudication outcome or final decision	↓	↓
The compliance team contacts the business with the aim of resolving outstanding issues	21	42
↓	↓	↓
A second written warning letter is sent to the business and the compliance team updates the adjudication team accordingly		60
↓	↓	↓
The business is placed under Closer Scrutiny for continued monitoring**	Continued non-response / compliance*	70
↓	↓	↓
A formal referral is made to ICAP, and appropriate sanctions / further actions are reviewed by panel members at the scheduled meetings		80



### \*Continued non-response and non-compliance

The adjudicator and the compliance team will take further action as appropriate, such as suspension or a referral made to ICAP, if a response has still not been received from the business and issues remains outstanding.

In the event of non-response or compliance with a case, businesses will be supplied with a guidance response factsheet as necessary by the adjudicator. Once the case has been referred to the compliance team, they will attempt to contact the business through the following means:

**By phone:** If contact is reached with the business, the compliance team will notify the contact of compliance procedures and e-mail information confirming the phone call.

**By e-mail:** The contact at the business is emailed with a deadline, if appropriate, along with any further relevant information in regards to the case or non-compliance issue.

For continued non-response or non-compliance, the adjudicator will also update any penalty points that need to be logged, but can equally remove them from the record of a business if compliance is achieved.

### \*\*Closer scrutiny

Closer scrutiny has been devised to ensure each compliance area has the ability to highlight matters for improvement to accredited businesses. This means focusing on performance enhancements without necessarily issuing penalty points or taking further action. Matters can include:

1. Repeat complaints / breaches reported to the adjudication team;
2. Areas of concern highlighted on online self-assessments or the physical audits; and
3. Operational or customer service issues identified by TMO staff through internal or external sources.

Before an accredited business is added to the closer scrutiny register, all business activities are reviewed, including consumer concerns, call / case volumes, compliance checks, and customer satisfaction performance scores, to ascertain the extent of any overarching performance issues.

Once placed on the register at the discretion of The Motor Ombudsman, a business will be informed of any corrective action and the evidence required to remove them from it. If the concern is not resolved, suspension and / or a referral to ICAP may be required.

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## 5.6.3 Suspensions of accredited businesses in 2024

Following a review of cases by the Independent Compliance Assessment Panel (ICAP), there were **no business suspensions** in 2024.

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## 5.6.4 Retrospective expulsions of accredited businesses in 2024

Following a review of cases by the Independent Compliance Assessment Panel (ICAP), there was **one retrospective expulsion** in 2024.

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## 5.6.5 The enhanced compliance process

Following an internal assessment of The Motor Ombudsman's compliance programmes, it was determined they continued to provide the required levels of oversight and intelligence. However, in an attempt to make these processes simpler to administer internally, and clearer for accredited business to follow, a cross-departmental working group was established in 2022, and its work has subsequently continued.

The overall objective of this initiative was to reduce the number of 'touchpoints' throughout the compliance process, and to cut the average time to resolve compliance escalations.

Whilst only resulting in slight changes to the way these escalations are managed, the greater use of The Motor Ombudsman's specialised contact team earlier in the process has continued to see positive results. This has equally helped prevent the need for referrals to The Motor Ombudsman's compliance department, and resulted in a clear increase in accredited business engagement throughout the ADR process.

In addition, disputes can be closed sooner, thereby allowing the compliance department to focus greater resource on a fewer number of escalations, and to turn their efforts to further improving The Motor Ombudsman's reporting and closer scrutiny protocols. This work will remain ongoing in 2025.



### 5.6.6 CTSI compliance



The Chartered Trading Standards Institute (CTSI) requires that all Motor Ombudsman-accredited businesses display the Approved Code logo on their website.

To significantly increase the volume of subscribers showing the Approved Code logo and that of The Motor Ombudsman, an electronic Smart Badge was developed, which allows

consumers to immediately verify that businesses are signed up to The Motor Ombudsman. In addition, they are also able to navigate to the trader's profile page on the Garage Finder directly from the Badge.

Emphasising the importance of featuring the Smart Badge to both new and existing accredited businesses, principally through targeted marketing communications, will be an ongoing focus during 2025.

### 5.6.7 Compliance with the Ombudsman Association's Service Standards Framework

The OA's Service Standards Framework came into effect in May 2017. It provides a 'roadmap' that members of the OA, such as The Motor Ombudsman, can use to raise their own performance, to embed good practice in their organisation, and demonstrate the quality of the service they offer. In meeting these standards, they can be more effective in supplying both individual redress and improving the service of organisations being complained about.

The Framework provides five key measures for members that specifically relate to the service supplied to both the complainants and to the organisations that are the source of the dispute. The individual metrics are as follows:

- 1 Accessibility;
- 2 Communication;
- 3 Professionalism;
- 4 Fairness; and
- 5 Transparency.



In 2024, The Motor Ombudsman (TMO) undertook the following actions in-line with the five measures detailed within the Service Standards Framework.

<b>1 Accessibility</b>	<p>TMO:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Introduced a new staff training initiative on the subject of consumer vulnerability to increase team member knowledge, and maintain the effective handling of consumer cases where this has been potentially identified</li> <li>✓ Investigated the viability of undertaking a BSI Kitemark assessment for inclusivity (ISO22458) to improve the identification of consumer vulnerabilities</li> <li>✓ Unveiled a policy and clear processes if a consumer should lose personal capacity whilst a case remains open with The Motor Ombudsman</li> </ul>
<b>2 Communication</b>	<p>TMO:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Introduced a revised business response form to make it quicker and easier for businesses to supply evidence for a case file.</li> <li>✓ Secured the funding for the development of an <b>Artificial Intelligence (AI)</b>-based communication tool</li> <li>✓ Continued work with the telephony provider to further enhance existing processes to make it quicker and easier for consumers to speak to a member of The Motor Ombudsman's Customer Contact Team</li> </ul>
<b>3 Professionalism</b>	<p>TMO:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Introduced new <b>knowledge and skills-based assessments</b> prior to interview when recruiting for new members of staff to further raise the calibre of individuals working for The Motor Ombudsman, to continue to ensure the highest standards of service provided to consumers and businesses</li> <li>✓ Unveiled new <b>team leads</b> within the case administration and adjudication departments to mentor and develop team members to drive learning and quality standards</li> </ul>
<b>4 Fairness</b>	<p>TMO:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Met with ICAP members on three occasions during the year to demonstrate the rationale behind the delivery of <b>fair</b> and <b>impartial</b> adjudication outcomes and final decisions based on the case evidence presented</li> <li>✓ Undertook training on customer service and data protection, which highlighted the importance of being fair and approachable when interacting with consumers</li> </ul>
<b>5 Transparency</b>	<p>TMO:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Added another <b>24</b> Code of Practice case studies to its website, giving even greater insight into its adjudication outcomes and final decisions, and approaches; and</li> <li>✓ Ran webinars for manufacturers and franchise dealers, as well as in-person events, to improve understanding of consumer law and the effective management of disputes</li> </ul>

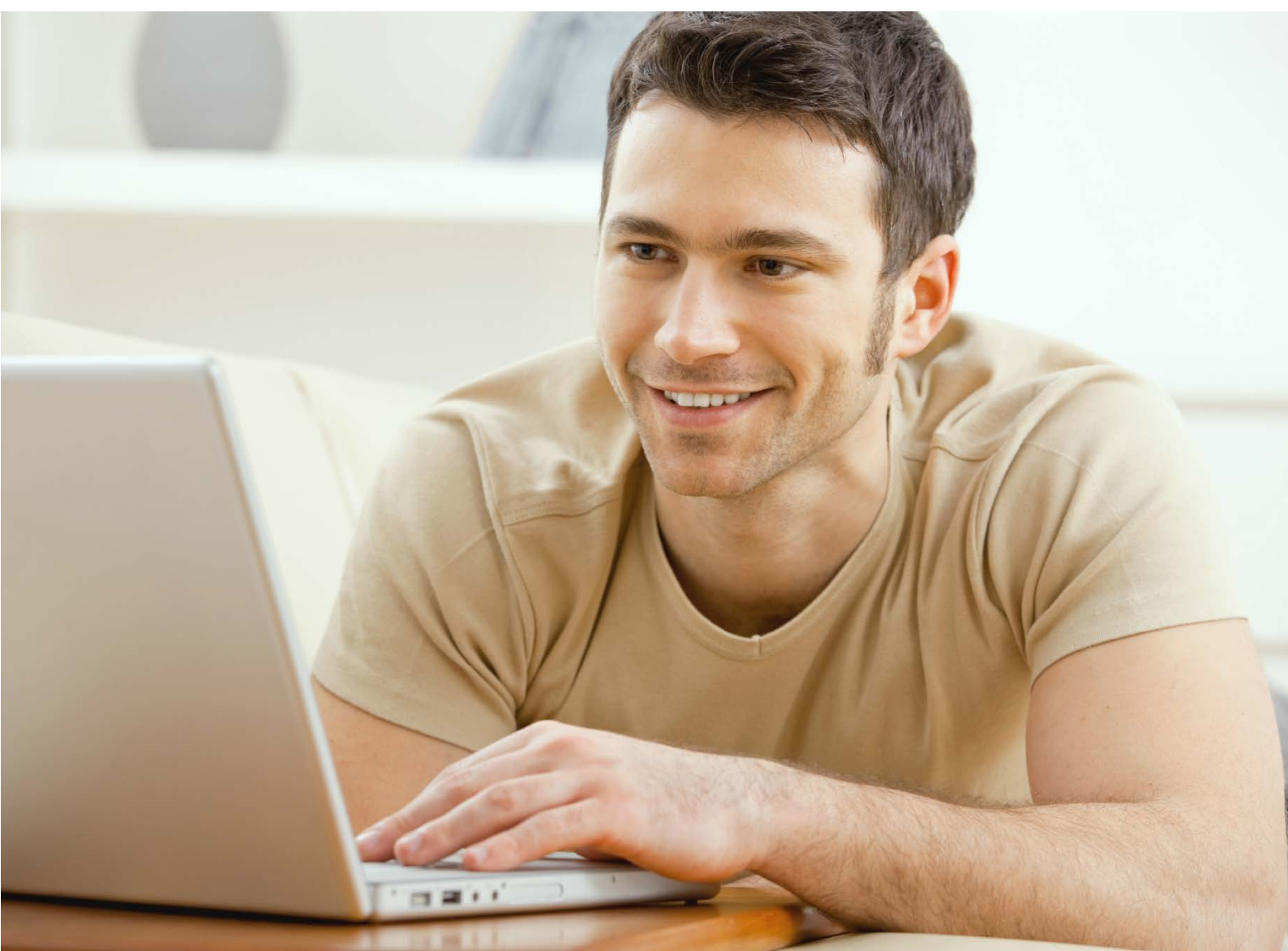
## SECTION 6: OPERATIONAL INSIGHTS

### 6.1 Staff learning and development

Staff engagement, learning and development continued to be a major focus in 2024, and training was undertaken throughout the year on a number of subjects, including:

- ▶ Mental health awareness;
- ▶ Microsoft Teams and Office software;
- ▶ Diversity and Inclusion;
- ▶ Insights Discovery;
- ▶ Leadership; and
- ▶ Mental health first aid.

The training programme for 2025 will be tailored and geared towards ensuring continued employee progression, including the development of IT skills and mechanical knowledge via practical and face-to-face classroom-based learning.



## 6.2 Staff diversity and inclusion

An inclusive and diverse workplace, and one which promotes equality, has always played an important role in how we operate as an organisation. In addition to providing benefits to employees, a diverse workforce also enables The Motor Ombudsman to better represent the consumers that use our service, as well as to businesses that are accredited.

In 2024, we conducted our fifth annual Diversity and Inclusion staff survey to obtain the views of staff and how they view different aspects of our organisation. This included their opinion of diversity in the workplace, their sense of belonging, the importance that they and their peers place on diversity, and the degree of equality when it comes to development and learning opportunities within the business.

From the staff who took part on the study, they responded with the following answers to these three questions:

**What is your age?**



- 18 to 24: **12%**
- 25 to 39: **66%**
- 40 to 59: **14%**
- Over 60: **8%**

**What is your racial or ethnic identity?**



- Any other ethnic group: **3%**
- Arab: **3%**
- Asian – any Asian background: **6%**
- Asian – Bangladeshi: **3%**
- Asian – Chinese: **8%**
- Black – Pakistani: **8%**
- Black – African: **11%**
- Black – British: **11%**
- Mixed / Multiple Ethnic Groups: **11%**
- White – any other White background: **6%**
- White – English/Welsh/Scottish/Northern Irish/British: **30%**

**Do you identify with or practice any religions?**



- Atheism: **11%**
- Buddhism: **4%**
- Christianity: **44%**
- Do not practice any religion: **3%**
- Islam: **24%**
- Other: **3%**
- Sikhism: **3%**
- Spirituality: **3%**

From the staff who responded in the study:

- ▶ **100%** explained that they feel they belong at The Motor Ombudsman (94% in 2023, 75% in 2022),
- ▶ **100%** said that diversity was important to them (88% in 2023, 79% in 2022);
- ▶ **100%** believed that The Motor Ombudsman hires people from diverse backgrounds (100% in 2023, 91% in 2022); and
- ▶ **100%** were in agreement that they feel respected and valued by their teammates (88% in 2023, 91% in 2022); and
- ▶ **100%** said they feel respected by their line manager (94% in 2023, 96% in 2022).

The Motor Ombudsman's Diversity and Inclusion staff survey will be repeated in 2025, and highlights of the findings will be presented in next year's Annual Report.

Reflecting our organisation's commitment to equality, our senior management team has a **50-50** representation of males and females.

At The Motor Ombudsman, **43%** of staff members are female and **57%** of employees are male as at 31st December 2024.

## 6.3 Our 10 key areas of focus for 2025



Looking ahead to 2025, the **10** key areas of focus for our organisation are as follows:

- 1** To continue to reinforce The Motor Ombudsman's **position** as the automotive dispute resolution provider, and the ADR body of choice for businesses across the motor industry;
- 2** To continue to remain **compliant** with Chartered Trading Standards Institute (CTSI) and Ombudsman Association (OA) governance, and audit requirements, whilst maintaining accreditation to required ISO, GDPR and SAR's standards;
- 3** To continue to **reduce** end-to-end case timings, improve service levels and the quality of decisions across all touchpoints, whilst using AI to mitigate the impact of growing case complexity;
- 4** To further improve the **quality** of The Motor Ombudsman team with the introduction of a new training and development programme;
- 5** To monitor case trends and compliance to promote automotive sector improvements;
- 6** To maintain consistent and regular business engagement and **satisfaction** with The Motor Ombudsman's service;
- 7** To proactively manage The Motor Ombudsman's new **case invoicing methodology** and to continue to improve debt collection, ensuring a positive cash flow for 2025;
- 8** To **increase** the volume of automotive businesses that are accredited to The Motor Ombudsman, through the rolling out of new business terms and conditions, and upgraded business case compliance methodology, and Codes of Practice;
- 9** To **launch** a new website, and focus marketing spend on initiatives which raise awareness of The Motor Ombudsman amongst consumers and automotive businesses; and
- 10** To ensure that The Motor Ombudsman continues to remain **profitable**.

## SECTION 7: FINANCIAL INSIGHTS

### 7.1 The Motor Ombudsman Accounts: Finance Report

Extract from the Accounts for The Motor Ombudsman Limited

Profit and Loss account for the year ended 31 December 2024			
	Note	2024	2023
		£'000	£'000
<b>Turnover</b>	4	<b>3,761</b>	3,030
Operating costs:			
Other external expenses		<b>(39)</b>	(72)
Staff costs	5	<b>(2,696)</b>	(2,189)
Amortisation and other amounts written off fixed assets	6	<b>(31)</b>	(34)
Other operating expenses		<b>(780)</b>	(626)
<b>Profit before interest and taxation</b>		<b>215</b>	109
<b>Profit before taxation</b>	7	<b>215</b>	109
Tax on profit	7	<b>(53)</b>	(29)
<b>Profit for the financial year</b>		<b>162</b>	80

All amounts relate to continuing operations.

There are no recognised gains and losses for the financial years other than those included above. Accordingly, no separate statement of comprehensive income is presented.



Balance Sheet as at 31 December 2024			
	Note	2024	2023
		£'000	£'000
<b>Fixed assets</b>			
Intangible assets	8	60	63
Tangible assets	9	18	10
		78	73
<b>Current assets</b>			
Debtors	10	1,155	844
Cash at bank and in hand		359	234
		1,514	1,078
<b>Creditors:</b> amounts falling due within one year	11	(1,906)	(1,633)
<b>Net current liabilities</b>		(392)	(555)
<b>Total assets less current liabilities</b>		(313)	(482)
Deferred taxation	12	14	21
<b>Net liabilities</b>		(299)	(461)
<b>Capital and reserves</b>			
Called up share capital	13	-	-
Profit and loss account		(299)	(461)
<b>Total shareholders' deficit</b>		(299)	(461)

The financial statements were approved by the Board of Directors and authorised for issue on 09 July 2025.

**Company Registration No. 06517394**

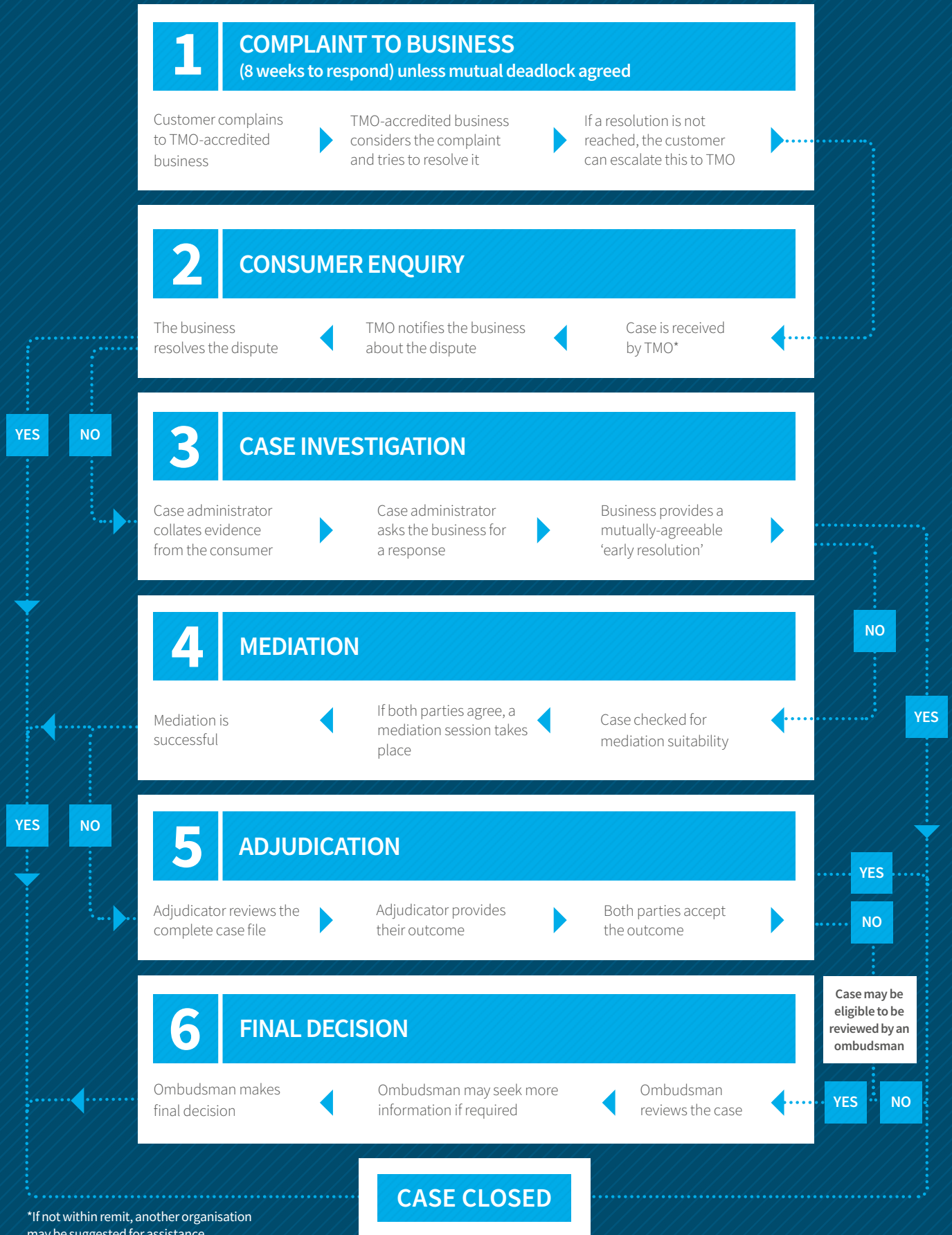
## SECTION 8: APPENDICES



These appendices are extracts from the full Motor Ombudsman's Independent Compliance Assessment Panel (ICAP) Annual Compliance Report 2024 which is available to view and download on [TheMotorOmbudsman.org](https://TheMotorOmbudsman.org).

## 8.1 The Motor Ombudsman's Alternative Dispute Resolution process

The Motor Ombudsman's dispute resolution process is entirely in-house and free of charge for consumers, including the ombudsman's final decision, which is legally binding on the accredited business if the consumer chooses to accept it.



## 8.2 Benefits of The Motor Ombudsman for consumers and businesses

### 8.2.1 Benefits of The Motor Ombudsman for consumers

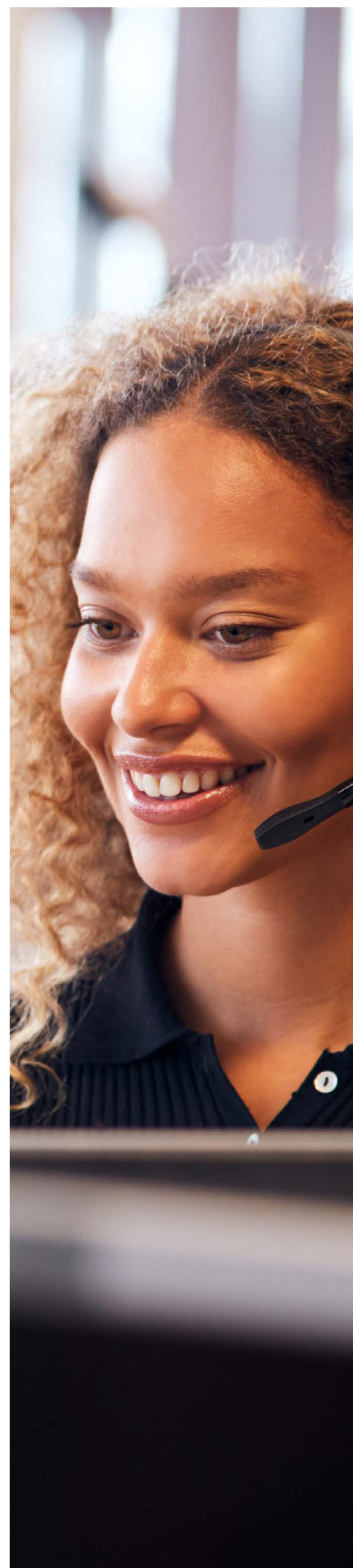
The Motor Ombudsman offers consumers the following key benefits:

- ✓ A clear channel and single point of contact for all motoring-related disputes
- ✓ Free access to the alternative dispute resolution (ADR) and ombudsman service, which is in-house from start to finish
- ✓ Guidance through the entire dispute resolution process to get a fair and impartial outcome
- ✓ The ability to participate in mediation as part of the early resolution process
- ✓ Avoids the need for increased detriment through costly legal and court appearance fees
- ✓ Increased confidence and peace of mind when buying or servicing a new or used car that the accredited business is meeting high standards of service and workmanship
- ✓ A [Code of Practice portfolio](#) that covers the entire customer purchase and vehicle ownership experience
- ✓ The ability to search for a local garage / dealership or bodyshop that is accredited to the Service and Repair and / or Vehicle Sales Codes
- ✓ First-hand customer reviews and ratings on the online [Garage Finder](#) to make an educated decision when choosing a garage
- ✓ The Motor Ombudsman website provides a valuable resource for motoring-related information on topics, such as vehicle maintenance and [electric vehicles](#)
- ✓ Access to an [online recalls database](#) on The Motor Ombudsman website to check whether a specific vehicle (by VIN) has been recalled
- ✓ Access to a library of online [case studies](#) to view previous adjudication outcomes and final decisions taken by The Motor Ombudsman
- ✓ The ability to consult over 200 informative articles across 11 different categories on The Motor Ombudsman's [Knowledge Base](#), which look at subjects such as, car ownership, distance sales, dispute resolution, mediation, and electric vehicles prior to submitting a case

### 8.2.2 Benefits of accreditation to The Motor Ombudsman for businesses

Accreditation to The Motor Ombudsman offers businesses the following key [benefits](#).

- ✓ Allows them to demonstrate their commitment to the highest levels of care and workmanship and an open and transparent way of undertaking business
- ✓ Unlimited and tailored information from a team of legally experienced and trained adjudicators, who are all in-house
- ✓ Guidance through the entire dispute resolution process to get a fair and impartial outcome
- ✓ The ability to participate in mediation as part of the early resolution process
- ✓ Avoids increased detriment through costly solicitor and court fees
- ✓ Full use of The Motor Ombudsman and CTSI Approved Code logos at their premises, and on their customer-facing literature and website
- ✓ A dedicated profile on the [Garage Finder](#) which can help to drive footfall, new business leads and revenue
- ✓ Valuable ratings and reviews from customers on their Garage Finder profile
- ✓ Amplified exposure through The Motor Ombudsman's marketing and PR activities
- ✓ Exclusive access to interactive and smart dashboards to allow accredited businesses to view the progression of customer contacts through the dispute resolution process, as well as the principal reasons for consumer complaints
- ✓ The DVSA will record whether a vehicle testing station (VTS) is a member of a Chartered Trading Standards Institute (CTSI)-approved Code of Practice during the MOT test centre inspection, which may help to consider a business as low risk, thereby resulting in reduced regulatory checks
- ✓ A certificate demonstrating commitment to one or more of The Motor Ombudsman's [Codes of Practice](#)
- ✓ The ability to enter The Motor Ombudsman's [Star Awards](#) to gain valuable exposure and recognition for the exceptional work and service provided to consumers



## 8.3 Code of Practice performance summary



The following Code of Practice performance summary provides a year-on-year comparison of key metrics for each of The Motor Ombudsman's four CTSI-approved Motor Industry Codes of Practice.

The following is a glossary of terms used in this section:



**CONSUMER CONTACTS** are received by The Motor Ombudsman's Consumer Contact team, which can include a general query, and enquiries relating to live cases.



**EARLY RESOLUTIONS** are when complaints can be resolved simply with minimum intervention from The Motor Ombudsman.



**ADJUDICATION CASES** are raised if the business that a consumer has a dispute with is accredited to The Motor Ombudsman, the business has been given a maximum period of eight weeks to try to resolve the issue directly with the customer, and the complaint requires a formal decision (i.e. it cannot be concluded via early resolution).



**FINAL DECISIONS** are only ever issued by an ombudsman, and are the last stage of The Motor Ombudsman's involvement in a case if a consumer or accredited business does not accept the outcome of the adjudicator.

A final decision is made independently from the adjudicators by looking at all the facts of the case, and is binding if the consumer chooses to accept it.



**ESCALATION RATE** is the proportion of consumer contacts that become adjudication cases.



### 8.3.1 Service and Repair Code



The **Motor Industry Code of Practice for Service and Repair**, introduced in 2008, ensures that consumers receive an honest and fair service when visiting an accredited business's premises for work or repairs on their vehicle. It covers the use of clear advertising, open and transparent pricing, completing extra work only with prior agreement, and the use of competent and qualified staff. All businesses accredited to the Service and Repair Code can be found on The Motor Ombudsman's online Garage Finder.<sup>2</sup>

The **Service and Repair Code** covers the following principal areas:

- |                         |                             |
|-------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Advertising;            | Staff competency;           |
| The booking in of work; | The standard of work; and   |
| Pricing;                | The handling of complaints. |

In 2024, no changes were made to the Service and Repair Code.

#### 8.3.1.1 Service and Repair Code performance data

	2022	2023	2024	Trend (2024 v 2023)
Consumer contacts	15,690	33,520	40,528	▲
Early resolutions	81	61	80	▲
Adjudication cases*	1,821	2,430	3,034	▲
Ombudsman final decisions	207	379	234	▼
Escalation rate (Contacts to cases)	12%	7%	7%	■

\* The adjudication cases figure relates to the volume of cases passed to adjudicators for review.

<sup>2</sup> [www.TheMotorOmbudsman.org/garage-finder](https://www.TheMotorOmbudsman.org/garage-finder)



### 8.3.2 New Car Code



First launched in 1976, and gaining full Stage Two approval from the former Office of Fair Trading (OFT) 20 years ago in 2004, the **Motor Industry Code of Practice for New Cars** ensures that vehicle manufacturers supply new cars and warranties to consumers responsibly. The Code helps to safeguard new car buyers from misleading advertising, and ensures that documentation supplied to consumers is easy to understand, that the terms of a warranty will be respected, and that any complaints will be handled swiftly.

In 2024, a total of **46** vehicle manufacturers were accredited to the New Car Code (versus 42 in 2023), meaning **98%** of all new cars sold across the UK were covered by it.

The **New Car Code** covers the following principal areas:

- ☒ Advertising;
- ☒ New car provisions;
- ☒ Manufacturer new car warranties;
- ☒ The availability of replacement parts and accessories; and
- ☒ Complaints handling.

No changes were made to the New Car Code in 2024.

#### 8.3.2.1 New Car Code performance data

	2022	2023	2024	Trend (2024 v 2023)
Consumer contacts	12,551	17,922	17,708	▼
Early resolutions	141	84	34	▼
Adjudication cases*	1,226	1,533	1,888	▲
Ombudsman final decisions	129	228	162	▼
Escalation rate (Contacts to cases)	10%	9%	11%	▲







\* The adjudication cases figure relates to the volume of cases passed to adjudicators for review.

### 8.3.3 Vehicle Warranty Products Code



Unveiled in 2009, the **Motor Industry Code of Practice for Vehicle Warranty Products** aims to provide guidelines for the supply of automotive warranties, including coverage of both insured and non-insured products. The Code covers around 75% of the extended vehicle warranty products sold annually, providing consumers with additional protection when taking out a policy with an accredited business.

**The Vehicle Warranty Products Code covers the following principal areas:**

- |  |   |
|--|---|
|  Advertising;                                      |  Service contracts, guarantees and non-insured products; |
|  Point of sale obligations;                        |  Insured products; and                                   |
|  The clarity of information provided to customers; |  Complaints handling.                                    |
|  The handling of claims;                           |   |

No changes were made to the content of the [Vehicle Warranty Products Code](#) in 2024.

#### 8.3.3.1 Vehicle Warranty Products Code performance data

	2022	2023	2024	Trend (2024 v 2023)
Consumer contacts	4,019	7,907	8,898	▲
Early resolutions	14	9	7	▼
Adjudication cases*	388	640	832	▲
Ombudsman final decisions	46	107	42	▼
Escalation rate (Contacts to cases)	10%	8%	9%	▲

\*The adjudication cases figure relates to the volume of cases passed to adjudicators for review.

## 8.3.4 Vehicle Sales Code



Launched in 2016, the **Motor Industry Code of Practice for Vehicle Sales** focuses on the sale of both new and used cars at an accredited garage, dealership or used car outlet, as well as the supply of finance and warranties. It covers areas, such as the use of transparent wording of advertising and pricing, clear and transparent invoicing, and that the sale of a used car is supported by a vehicle provenance check to ensure that it has not been stolen, written-off and is free of any outstanding finance payments. Businesses accredited to the Vehicle Sales Code can be found on The Motor Ombudsman's Garage Finder.<sup>6</sup>

### The Vehicle Sales Code covers the following principal areas:

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Advertising;	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The provision of warranty products;
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The presentation of used cars for sale;	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The provision of finance products;
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The presentation of new cars for sale;	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Aftersales support; and
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The vehicle sales process;	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Complaints handling.

No changes were made to the content of the [Vehicle Sales Code](#) in 2024.

### 8.3.4.1 Vehicle Sales Code performance data

	2022	2023	2024	Trend (2024 v 2023)
Consumer contacts	27,305	78,759	92,795	▲
Early resolutions	181	116	112	▼
Adjudication cases*	2,958	4,289	5,768	▲
Ombudsman final decisions	316	634	447	▼
Escalation rate (Contacts to cases)	11%	5%	6%	▲

\* The adjudication cases figure relates to the volume of cases passed to adjudicators for review..

<sup>6</sup> [www.TheMotorOmbudsman.org/garage-finder](http://www.TheMotorOmbudsman.org/garage-finder)

## 8.4 Case studies - adjudication outcomes and final decisions

For all case studies relating to The Motor Ombudsman's Codes of Practice in 2024, please refer to the 2024 ICAP Report, which can be found at:

[www.TheMotorOmbudsman.org/useful-information/media-publications/reports/independent-compliance-assessment-panel-reports](http://www.TheMotorOmbudsman.org/useful-information/media-publications/reports/independent-compliance-assessment-panel-reports)





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