

Reference: 01995308

Information Requests
information.requests@ofcom.org.uk

9 June 2025

Freedom of Information request: Right to know request

Thank you for your request for information about Eastenders complaints.

We received this request on 9 May 2025 and we have considered your request under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

Your request

Eastenders Complaints

I would like to request the number of complaints received for these specific episodes, and details of the complaints

- 18 November 1986
- 27 November 1986
- 4 December 1986
- 31 March 1987
- 21 May 1987
- 17 November 1987
- 24 January 1989
- 19 June 2009
- 1 January 2010
- 24 April 2010
- 30 May 2011
- 6 June 2019
- 3 September 2019
- 5 September 2019

Our response

By way of background, Ofcom publishes decisions about complaints we have received in the Broadcast and On Demand Bulletin ("the Bulletin") every fortnight on our website, and a weekly audience complaints report. [The Bulletin](#) covers a range of cases, including those which Ofcom has escalated for full investigation, those which Ofcom has decided not to pursue because they did not raise issues warranting investigation, and those which fall outside Ofcom's remit.¹ Ofcom assesses

¹ Please note that under the BBC's Charter and Agreement set by Parliament, complaints about BBC programmes are considered under a system of "BBC First", whereby a viewer or listener must normally

every complaint it receives, and while a complaint may provide contextual background to a programme, when Ofcom is conducting an initial assessment or investigation, it reaches its own view as to whether there may have been, and then whether there has been, a breach of the Ofcom Broadcasting Code (“the Code”).

Before we address your specific request, please note that we would only hold information on complaints made directly to Ofcom, not the BBC themselves. If you wish to submit a Freedom of Information Request to the BBC, you can learn more [here](#).

We do not hold searchable data on our database for complaints pre-2020 so cannot confirm whether any EastEnders complaints were received by Ofcom for the requested episodes between 2003-2019. However complaints for that period can be found in our [pre-2020 bulletins](#) on our website. We can confirm that Ofcom has no record of any investigations into these episodes, therefore any complaints on record would be listed in the table of not pursued complaints at the end of each bulletin.

We do not hold any information regarding complaints received for the requested episodes from 1986-1989. We do hold records of complaint bulletins from the Broadcasting Standards Commission (1997-2003), and the Broadcasting Standards Council (1988-1997) which preceded it, however these records only date back to 1991 and would not therefore cover the episodes requested. We also hold annual reports of the Broadcasting Complaints Commission (1981-1997), though these do not cover standards complaints.

You may be interested to note that some of our broadcast records from the period requested, those from the Independent Broadcasting Authority (IBA), were gifted to Bournemouth University in 2008. Whilst the IBA regulated commercial broadcasters, not the BBC, some of the records we have looked at, in searching for the information requested, reference the IBA. If you wish to submit a Freedom of Information Request to Bournemouth University, you can learn more [here](#).

We hope this information is helpful. If you have any further queries, then please send them to information.requests@ofcom.org.uk – quoting the reference number above in any future communications.

Yours sincerely,

Information Requests

Request an internal review

If you are unhappy with the response you have received to your request for information, or think that your request was refused without a reason valid under the law, you may ask for an internal review. If you do, it will be subject to an independent review within Ofcom. We will either uphold the original decision, or reverse or modify it.

If you would like to ask us to carry out an internal review, you should get in touch within two months of the date of this letter. There is no statutory deadline for us to complete our internal review, and the time it takes will depend on the complexity of the request. But we will try to complete the review within 20 working days (or no more than 40 working days in exceptional cases) and keep you informed of our progress. Please email the Information Requests team (information.requests@ofcom.org.uk) to request an internal review.

Taking it further

If you are unhappy with the outcome of our internal review, then you have the right to [complain to the Information Commissioner's Office](#).

complain to the BBC in the first instance and complete the BBC's complaints process before complaining to Ofcom.