

## **Age UK Lewisham and Southwark**

### **Complaints Procedure**

Age UK Lewisham and Southwark works with many older people across the two boroughs, delivering a range of services and activities. We aim to have a positive impact on older peoples' lives and deliver services of a high standard.

However, we know that sometimes people are not happy with the service they have received from us and that we can get things wrong. This is why we have a complaints procedure. We want service users to feel confident that their complaints and worries are listened to and acted upon promptly and fairly.

Sometimes we are able to put things right, sometimes we can only apologise and explain. But we do always learn from our mistakes which is why we welcome your comments and complaints. Unless you tell us where we have gone wrong we will not have the opportunity to improve the quality of our service.

### **Who can make a complaint?**

You may be an older person receiving a service or a friend, relative or supporter of someone who uses our services. If you are a friend, relative or supporter, if possible please make sure the person using the service is aware that you are making a complaint on their behalf.

### **I am unhappy with the service. What do I do?**

Please talk to the manager of the service you are unhappy with. This gives them the chance to put things right quickly and where possible resolve the problem informally.

Where it is not possible or appropriate to respond informally, or if you are still dissatisfied, the manager will follow the complaints procedure.

The complaints procedure ensures that all complaints are handled efficiently and fairly.

### **How do I make a formal complaint**

Formal complaints should be made in writing if possible. You can use an Age UK LS complaint form which is provided with service user packs and also from all staff and offices. You can ask for help with this from a staff member if appropriate, or from a relative or friend.

You can also contact the Chief Executive, or another senior member of staff by telephone or in person. Contact details are shown at the end of this procedure.

We will acknowledge your complaint within five working days and will carry out a full investigation. As part of the investigation we may ask to speak to you about the complaint.

The target time for completing the investigation is 28 days, though it sometimes takes longer. If this is the case any delay will be explained.

If your complaint is upheld you will receive a full written apology and, where appropriate, be given details of any action that we are taking to put things right or ensure that the situation does not happen again.

### **Stage 2 – I am unhappy with the response to my complaint**

If you are unhappy with the response you should write to the Chief Executive at the address shown within 14 days. You can ask him/her to reconsider or you can request that the complaint be referred to the Trustee Board of Age Concern Lewisham and Southwark.

If you do this, at least 2 representatives of the Trustee Board will meet within 28 days to consider the complaint and the information from the investigation.

They may invite you and the Chief Executive to attend this meeting to present your case and the investigation findings. They may ask for further investigations to be made. If you are invited to the meeting, you may bring a friend with you, but this cannot be a solicitor acting in a professional capacity.

The representatives of the Trustee Board will write to you and the Chief Executive within 5 days giving their decision and any recommendations for change they feel are necessary. The decision of the Trustees is final.

Records of all complaints will be kept on file at Head Office for at least one year after the complaint is resolved or dealt with. The Chief Executive or senior managers will review complaints files periodically to identify trends and ensure appropriate action is taken to achieve permanent and ongoing improvements.

### **Who should I complain to at Age Concern Lewisham and Southwark**

**Jacky Bourke-White**  
**Chief Executive**  
**224/236 Walworth road**  
**London**  
**SE17 1JE**





### **Stage 3 Service Users in Receipt of Homecare and Day Care Services**

If you are unhappy with the service you receive or our response to a complaint and are in receipt of ACLS Homecare and day care services, funded through Southwark Council you can complain directly to the following agencies:

#### **Southwark Social Services**

Southwark Council  
PO BOX 4529  
London SE1P 5LX  
Tel: 020 7525 5000

The Local Government Ombudsman,  
PO Box 4771, Coventry CV4 0EH.  
Phone: **0300 061 0614**  
or **0845 602 1983**.