

## COMPLAINTS POLICY

### 1.0 PURPOSE

1.1 Age UK Bradford & District strives to give the best possible service and treatment to those with whom it comes into contact with. Age UK Bradford & District recognises that occasionally mistakes occur or standards are not upheld.

1.2 The aim of the policy is to improve customer relations by dealing fairly and openly with complaints from the public, put things right where they have gone wrong and, where possible, using outcomes to make improvements to services.

### 2.0 WHAT IS A COMPLAINT?

2.1 A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction about any aspect of the service provided by Age UK Bradford & District. The term "customer" applies to anyone who uses services or to anyone who helps others to access them. A complaint can be made in person, in writing or over the telephone.

### 3.0 WHAT KIND OF CIRCUMSTANCES MAY GIVE A CUSTOMER RISE TO A COMPLAINT?

- a customer believes they have been treated unfairly on the grounds of their gender/ race/religion/age/sexuality or for any similar reason
- a customer feels that Age UK Bradford & District have failed to provide information about Age UK Bradford & District or its services
- a customer feels that Age UK Bradford & District have failed to provide a key service
- a customer has experienced an unreasonable delay in receiving a service
- a customer feels that a service provided by Age UK Bradford & District has been inadequate
- a customer believes that an Age UK Bradford & District employee or volunteer has been rude or unhelpful
- a customer disagrees with a decision that Age UK Bradford & District have made or a policy that Age UK Bradford & District operate

The above is not an inclusive list.

3.1 Please note that the Solicitors and Benefits Service provided at Age UK Bradford & District is completely independent of Age UK Bradford & District and as such, Age UK Bradford & District cannot be held responsible for any of the advice provided. If a customer is dissatisfied with the service, the customer would need to contact the Solicitors or Benefits Service directly.

3.2 Any complaints made regarding Age UK Bradford & District's Insurance Products would be dealt with by Age UK Enterprises. The Business Development Manager would be the appropriate person to refer this complaint. If that nature of the complaint is against the Business Development Manager then this would be referred on to the Head Of Operations.

### 4.0 STEP ONE: INFORMAL

4.1 The employee or volunteer delivering the service will take all the necessary details and try to settle the customer's complaint as quickly as possible.

4.2 If the customer feels the complaint is about a small matter they may wish to have their matter dealt with informally. In this instance, Age UK Bradford & District will attempt to deal with any initial concerns as quickly as possible. If the complaint is about a service, then a discussion will take place between the customer and the department manager. If the head of the department is the person about whom the complaint is being made, then the person complaining needs to be dealt with by the next layer of management, e.g. if the complaint is about a department manager, then the matter can be discussed with their manager, if the complaint is about the Chief Executive Officer, then the matter can be discussed with one of the Trustees.

4.3 It is hoped that Age UK Bradford & District can resolve the customer's concern at this stage. If this is not possible, Age UK Bradford & District will inform the customer of the next stage of the complaints procedure.

## **5.0 STEP TWO: FORMAL**

5.1 If the complaint could not be resolved informally, then the customer would need to complete the **Complaint Form** detailing their complaint. Age UK Bradford & District can offer assistance with this if the customer wishes. The customer should then post or hand-deliver their complaint to Age UK Bradford & District, marking the envelope, "Private & Confidential: for the attention of " the appropriate person.

5.2 On receipt of this form, Age UK Bradford & District will write to the customer within 3 working days, informing the customer of who will be investigating their complaint. Age UK Bradford & District will complete the investigation and provide the customer with a written reply within 28 working days. If Age UK Bradford & District cannot meet this timescale, then Age UK Bradford & District will inform the customer why there is a delay. If the customer's complaint is about an employee or volunteer, it will be passed immediately to the appropriate line manager.

5.3 The written report, sent to the customer by the person dealing with the complaint, will contain the following:

- the outcome of the investigation
- what Age UK Bradford & District has decided to do about it
- the next course of action should the customer be unhappy with the outcome of the investigation.

5.4 The customer's complaint may be seen by Senior Managers or Trustees of Age UK Bradford & District, as part of the investigation process but Age UK Bradford & District will make every effort to safeguard the individual's privacy; the customer's complaint will not become public knowledge unless the individual wishes. The customer should be aware that if their complaint is specifically about an employee, volunteer or a Trustee of Age UK Bradford & District, it will be necessary for that person to be told that a complaint has been made against him/her, to allow the investigation to proceed.

## **6.0 STEP THREE: APPEAL**

6.1 The customer can appeal if they are dissatisfied about any aspect of the formal procedure outlined above, including the final response. The customer cannot go directly to the appeal stage unless they have used the formal procedure.

6.2 If the customer wishes to appeal, they should complete the **Complaints Decision Appeal Form**, which will be attached to the letter sent to the customer after the formal procedure. As before, the customer can obtain assistance with this, as explained above. The customer should post or deliver this form to Age UK Bradford & District, marking the envelope "Private and Confidential: for the attention of the Chief Executive Officer," if the customer's appeal relates to some aspect of Age UK Bradford & District or its services, OR "Private and Confidential: for the attention of the Deputy Chief Executive Officer, if the customer's appeal relates to an employee issue.

6.3 The customer will receive written acknowledgement of their appeal usually within 5 working days, along with information as to when and how it will be dealt with. A panel, will normally be formed to consider the customer's appeal; the customer may attend this meeting. The customer's appeal and the original complaint will be considered in detail and they will receive a written response usually within 14 days – if a delay to this timescale is necessary, the customer will be notified in advance. Age UK Bradford & District will make every effort to comply with the decision or recommendations of the panel. The decision taken by the panel will be final.

## **7.0 CUSTOMER CARE & ACCESS**

7.1 Age UK Bradford & District Complaints policy is easy to access and well publicised.

7.3 Age UK Bradford & District will endeavour to use the feedback received to learn and make changes to improve Age UK Bradford & District services.

## **8.0 EQUALITY & DIVERSITY**

8.1 Age UK Bradford & District ensure that this policy is applied fairly and consistently to all its customers. Age UK Bradford & District will not directly or indirectly discriminate against any person or group of people in accordance with its Equality and Diversity policy.

8.2 Age UK Bradford & District will act sensitively towards the diverse needs of individuals and Communities. Age UK Bradford & District will take positive action to reduce discrimination and harassment.

8.3 If a customer is unable to read the document, an employee of Age UK Bradford & District would be happy to read it to them.

8.4 This policy is available on request in large type.

## **9.0 COMPLIMENTS**

### **9.1 WHAT SHOULD A CLIENT, SERVICE USER, RELATIVE, CARER OR OTHER ORGANISATION DO IF HE/SHE WISHES TO PRAISE AGE UK BRADFORD & DISTRICT, OR MAKE A COMMENT OR SUGGESTION?**

9.2 Age UK Bradford & District welcomes all comments and suggestions, and tries to take account of these where possible when planning work, etc.

9.3 Please write to, call or email us, alternatively please complete our **Suggestions & Comments Form**.

**Age UK Bradford & District**  
**75 Wrose Road**  
**Wrose**  
**Shipley**  
**Bradford**  
**BD18 1HX**

**Telephone:** 01274 391190

**Email:** [customerservice@ageukbradfordanddistrict.org.uk](mailto:customerservice@ageukbradfordanddistrict.org.uk)

## **POLICY REVIEW & ASSESSMENT**

This policy may be amended by Age UK Bradford & District at anytime in order to take into account changes in best practice and legislation.

Date Reviewed	December 2017
Agreed at board	11.12.17
Review	March 2020
Responsibility	HR Sub Committee