

1. Purpose of the Policy

The purpose of the Comments and Complaints Policy is to:

- Protect the interests of individual service users
- Inform future service delivery
- Facilitate the improvement of the quality of our services
- Ensure AUKBH meets its Service Standards
- Enable users and carers to challenge apparent arbitrary decisions
- Protect staff and volunteers by having robust procedures for dealing with complaints including vexatious complaints

2. Introduction

Age UK Brighton & Hove (AUKBH) wishes to create a constructive environment to hear the comments, complaints and criticisms from all those it works with, in particular users and carers. We welcome any comments a person may care to make, to help us to provide services that match their needs and expectations. We view complaints as an opportunity to learn and improve for the future and a chance to put things right for the person or organization that has made the complaint. Our aim is to resolve the matter as quickly as possible.

3. Scope and Definition

A complaint is any expression of dissatisfaction, whether justified or not, about any aspect of Age UK (Brighton and Hove). It can be expressed in writing, verbally, on the telephone or in person, or by email. A complaint may come from any person or organization with a legitimate interest in Age UK (Brighton and Hove). This policy does not cover members of staff who if they wish to complain must use the Grievance policy.

4. Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of all members of staff and volunteers to ensure they are familiar with the complaints procedure, so they know what to do in the event of a complaint.

Each service should ensure that clients are aware of the existence of the procedure and this is publicized in any leaflets or brochures advertising the service.

All complaints will be reviewed by the Chief Executive Officer and reported annually to the Board and funding bodies.

5. Compliance

All complaint information will be handled sensitively, telling only those who need to know and following any relevant data protection requirements. We will ensure that all complaints are investigated fairly and in a timely way.

6. Review

This policy is reviewed every 3 years or as necessary.

Comments and Complaints procedure

If anyone wishes to complain the steps to take are as follows:

- 1.** If possible discuss the problem with the worker concerned (member of staff or volunteer). The worker will do their best to resolve the matter to your satisfaction.
- 2.** If you feel unable to discuss the problem with the worker, or they are unable to resolve the situation to your satisfaction, please contact a Senior Manager who will aim to resolve any outstanding issues.
- 3.** If you are still dissatisfied please write to The Chief Executive Officer, Age UK Brighton & Hove, 29-31 Prestonville Road, Brighton BN1 3TJ or email info@ageuk-bh.org.uk, marked for the attention of the Chief Executive Officer or telephone him/her on 01273 720603.

The Chief Executive Officer will write to you within one working week to acknowledge receipt, and advise you of the steps being taken to resolve the problem.

The Chief Executive Officer will investigate your complaint fully, and write to you within 15 working days with the details of their findings, any action AUKBH has taken, and any further proposals to resolve your complaint.

- 4.** If these proposals are not acceptable you may appeal in writing, giving your reasons, to the Chief Executive Officer, Age UK Brighton & Hove, 29-31 Prestonville Road, Brighton BN1 3TJ. The Chief Executive Officer will refer the matter to the Board of Directors/Trustees.
- 5.** An independent panel comprising of Age UK (Brighton and Hove) Trustees will consider the complaint within 20 working days of receiving the appeal. We will invite you to this meeting along with a friend or adviser if you choose. The Panel will write to you of their findings within 5 working days of this panel meeting.
- 6.** This is the final appeal. If you are still dissatisfied, you may complain to the Trading Standards Office or your Local Authority.

Procedural Guidelines

- 1.** It is essential the process is, and can be seen to be, fair and the procedures are simple and clear.
- 2.** We will make every effort to ensure the complainant is put at ease and they

feel comfortable.

3. If we cannot resolve the problem by discussion, we will offer to help the complainant make a formal complaint in writing.
4. We will explain the procedure timetable to the complainant.
5. We will reassure the complainant about confidentiality.
6. We will ensure the complainant understands a friend or adviser can accompany them at all times.
7. We will provide interpretation services as necessary.
8. We will offer to visit the complainants home if they have mobility difficulties.
9. We will provide a neutral venue if the complainant prefers.

Review

All complaints will be reviewed by the Senior Management Team to ensure that AUKBH benefits from any lessons learned and reported annually by the Chief Executive Officer to the Board.

*Reviewed Senior Management Team
December 2016*

Complaints Form

Client's Name:

Address:

Telephone:

Is client complaining about AUKBH in general or a service in particular? If so, state which service:

What is the nature of the client's complaint? What is the client's desired outcome?

Corrective Action

By whom:

Date: