

Age Concern Durham County

trading as

Age UK County Durham

Complaints Policy

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What is a complaint?

A complaint is when a client is not happy about a particular service and wishes to obtain a response on the matter. Some examples might be:

- the quality of service is poor
- they receive the wrong information
- they have a complaint about a member of staff.

Complaints can relate to breach of policy or practice standards, putting the safety or welfare of people at risk or bringing the organisation into disrepute. Complaints may be verbal or written down.

How we deal with complaints

We will take all complaints seriously and respond to them in a timely manner. We will deal with them fairly and maintain confidentiality. We will not treat a complainant less favourably because they have made a complaint.

Time limits for dealing with complaints

Where possible, we will endeavour to resolve complaints immediately. If this is not possible we will keep to the following timescales.

We will acknowledge written complaints within **48 hours**.

If the complaint cannot be resolved immediately and requires investigation then a response will be sent within **28 days**.

If the complainant is not satisfied and wishes the complaint to be re-considered by a review panel, the panel will meet within **28 days** of the request being made.

The complainant will be notified about the time and place of the panel and be given **at least 10 days' notice** should they wish to attend. The complainant may be accompanied by a friend or relative or may send a friend or relative in their place.

The panel will consider the complaint, investigating further if appropriate. They will then inform the complainant of their decision **within 28 days** of the panel meeting.

Time limits for storage of complaints

Details of complaints and the response given will be kept on electronic storage for a period of three years.

We value all comments made about our services and we will use feedback to improve our services for the future. For the Complaints Procedure please see QD PCD 009.