

Do you want to comment or complain about any of our services?

Why do we need a Comments and Complaints Procedure?

Age UK County Durham is keen to provide you with a high quality service that responds to your needs within the limitations of our resources. In doing so, we do our best to take into account the views and wishes of those who require our services. We welcome every opportunity to monitor and improve our service; and having a Comments and Complaints Procedure is one way of doing this.

If you would like to comment on our service, whether it is good or not so good, we will be pleased to hear from you as soon as possible after whatever happened.

Please do not be afraid that you may lose the service provided or that you will be thought of as a nuisance by complaining.

We welcome your comments so that we may improve and develop the quality of our service for the future.

Aims and objectives

Age UK County Durham aims to provide high quality services that meet your own individual needs, or those of someone you care for. We will always try to do this in a way that respects your independence and dignity.

What is a complaint?

A complaint can relate to a breach of policy or practise standards, putting the safety or welfare of older people at risk or bringing the organisation into disrepute.

It can also be when you feel you have been treated unfairly or the service you received was not up to the standard you expected.

Who can comment or complain?

The procedure is for any Age UK County Durham service users, their carers, friends and families; those who may have been refused a service; statutory agencies and other voluntary or independent bodies.

How do I make a complaint?

We hope that most queries, concerns or complaints can be dealt with at the time they arise to your satisfaction.

Please speak to a member of staff, ask to see the person on office cover or contact us by telephone or in writing – our contact details are on the back page of this leaflet.

What happens next?

If you feel the matter has not been satisfactorily dealt with in the first instance, please write to our Chief Executive Officer at the address overleaf. The letter and envelope should be marked '**Private and Confidential**'.

The Chief Executive Officer will acknowledge your letter within 48 hours and respond to you in writing within 28 days (in the event of the Chief Executive Officer being absent through holiday or illness, the correspondence will be forwarded to a Senior Manager).

What if I am still not satisfied?

You can ask the Chief Executive Officer for your complaint to be considered again by a review panel. This panel will normally meet within 28 days of the request.

You will be notified in writing about the time and place of the meeting, with at least 10 days' notice, should you wish to attend. You can be accompanied by a friend or relative if you wish.

Alternatively, you may wish for a friend or relative to attend on your behalf.

Following this meeting, the panel will consider your complaint and will let you know their decision in writing within 28 days of the panel meeting.

This will be the final stage in the Comments and Complaints Procedure.

However, this does not affect your right to contact your local MP, the Ombudsman/Commissioner for complaints or the organisation who funds the service you have complained about.

How long do you keep records of complaints?

Records of complaints and any action taken will be kept for three years and then destroyed.

How do I make a comment?

We hope that you will always be satisfied with our service and look forward to receiving your comments. Please speak to a member of staff or contact us using the details on the back of this leaflet.



YOU CAN CONTACT US AT THE ADDRESS BELOW

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e info@ageukcountydurham.org.uk



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