

COMPLAINTS ABOUT OUR SERVICES

Summary:

Your comments and complaints about our services can help us to achieve the high standards we aim for. Your views are important as they help us to check that we are giving the best service possible. The following information will tell you how to make a complaint, the response you can expect and what to do if you are still not satisfied.

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Version	Date	Main Changes	Changed by
4	Nov 2020	General Refresh	CEO
3	Aug 2015	N/A	Compliance

1. COMPLAINTS ABOUT OUR SERVICES

Who can make a complaint?

Anyone who:

- has received a service from us
- has been refused a service from us
- is on the waiting list to receive a service from us
- cares for someone in the above categories

You may want to tell us that we have got something wrong or could have done something better. Even if you think that your complaint is over a minor matter please tell us. It will help us to improve our services.

AUKE has an informal and formal complaints procedure which is highlighted below. A summary of this is also available in the AUKE's leaflet: Comments, Complaints or Concerns Customer Guidance Information.

The following information will tell you how to make a complaint, the response you can expect and what to do if you are still not satisfied.

There is a three-stage procedure:

- informal approach
- formal investigation
- review panel

2. INFORMAL APPROACH

Contact the person who is providing the service so that they can try to put things right for you. Alternatively, ask them for details of their manager and contact their manager. You can speak to the manager either in person, on the telephone or by email. If you prefer, a friend or relative can do this for you. Hopefully the matter can be dealt with immediately. If not, then we will send you an acknowledgement within two working days of hearing from you and we will send you a written response within seven working days.

3. FORMAL INVESTIGATION

You may regard the matter as so serious that you want to use a more formal approach or you may not be satisfied with the way we have dealt with your informal approach.

We must ask you to put your complaint in writing within 28 days of the matter arising, or the informal approach failing to reach a resolution acceptable to you. Normally we will not accept late complaints. You can ask us for a complaint form to complete or you can write your own letter. If you prefer, a friend or relative can write the complaint for you but you do need to sign it. Alternatively, you, a friend or relative can write to:

Customer Services
John Jackson Library
35 Agricola Place
Enfield, EN1 1DW

marking the envelope “Private and Confidential”. We will send you an acknowledgement within two working days of receipt.

You could alternatively email your complaint to admin@ageukenfield.org.uk.

Please note that during COVID lockdowns you will receive a quicker response if you submit your complaint via email as there can be delays in post collection.

At this stage there are three ways in which your complaint may be dealt with:

Mediation

This is where the Chief Executive appoints a Senior Manager from a part of the organisation different from the one concerned with your complaint to assist both parties to discuss the circumstances that led to the problem and try to reach an agreed resolution.

Problem solving

This is where the Chief Executive appoints a Senior Manager from a part of the organisation different from the one concerned with your complaint to carry out an enquiry and put forward a resolution.

Every attempt will be made to reach a resolution within 28 days of receiving your written complaint. We will ask you which of the two approaches above you would prefer.

Disciplinary

It may be that your complaint alleges misconduct by a member of our staff or a volunteer. In this situation, we will deal with it as a disciplinary matter and follow our disciplinary procedure. As part of the investigation, we will contact you for more details of your allegations. We will keep you informed about the progress of the disciplinary procedure and let you know when it has been concluded. However, we will not be able to discuss with you any sanction we have taken against our staff. We expect to complete all stages of the disciplinary procedure within three months.

If the complaint is about the Chief Executive, you should address your letter to the Chair of Age UK Enfield at the same address. The Chair will appoint a Trustee to deal with the complaint in the manner above.

4. REVIEW PANEL

If the matter has still not been resolved to your satisfaction, you may request that the matter be referred to a review panel. To do this you must write to the Chief Executive within 28 days of receiving our response. You must tell the Chief Executive why you are not satisfied with the response and what you think we need to do to put things right. The panel will meet within 28 days of your request being received.

The panel will consider whether:

- we have followed our procedure when looking into your complaint
- the formal investigation was undertaken correctly
- the response was, in their view, reasonable
- the disciplinary procedure had been followed correctly (if relevant).

You may ask the panel to meet you or a friend or relative so that you can explain why you are dissatisfied.

The panel will make a recommendation to the HR Committee of the Board of Age UK Enfield. The Chair of Age UK Enfield will write to you within 28 days of receiving the panel's recommendation to let you know what has been decided. The Chief Executive will write to you to let you know when the panel has made its recommendation.

The decision of the HR Committee is final.

5. TAKING YOUR COMPLAINT FURTHER

Services funding by the London Borough of Enfield

If the service you receive from Age UK Enfield is funded/part funded by the London Borough of Enfield, you are entitled to use the Council's Complaints procedure. You can get information about the complaints procedure and make a complaint on-line by visiting the Council's website at <https://new.enfield.gov.uk/contact-us/are-you-unhappy-with-something/>

Contacting the Ombudsman to make a complaint

If you have a complaint about an adult social care service you can raise your concerns with the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman. The scheme is free and easy to use and fully experienced in handling complaints about adult social care providers (Age UK Enfield is an adult social care provider).

Anyone can make a complaint about the services provided but the Ombudsman will not deal with complaints that have not been investigated first by the provider of the service through their own complaints procedure.

If you have already used the Age UK Enfield complaints procedure and are unhappy with the outcome you can contact the Ombudsman by visiting www.lgo.org.uk.

6. ORGANISATIONS THAT CAN HELP YOU EXPRESS YOUR VIEW

You can ask a Local Citizens Advice office to help you – see www.adviceguide.org.uk

The Care Quality Commission also has helpful resources on their website - <https://www.cqc.org.uk/contact-us/how-complain/complain-about-adult-social-care-service>