



COMPLAINTS ABOUT OUR SERVICES Customer Guidance

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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 and also because we are about getting things right for you.

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 approach
- review panel

Stage 1 - Informal Approach

Contact the person who is providing the service so that he/she 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 or on the telephone. 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.

Stage 2 - Formal Approach

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:

The Chief Executive
Ponders End Library
College Court, High Street
EN3 4EY

marking the envelope "Private and Confidential". We will send you an acknowledgement within two working days.

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

1. Mediation

This is where the Chief Executive appoints a Director 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.

2. Problem solving

This is where the Chief Executive appoints a Director 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.

3. 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. 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.

Stage 3 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 Stage 2 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 and Remuneration 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 and Remuneration Committee is final.

If your complaint is related to a service provided by our affiliated charity, Supporting Independent Lifestyles, SILS, the complaints procedure and contact details is the same as the above AUKE procedure.

If your complaint is related to a financial service provided by our Pan-London Trading Company, you will need to request information on our Financial Services Authority (FSA) procedure. These are the contact details:-

Age UK Customer Service Advisor
Fortis House
Tollgate
Eastleigh
SO53 3YA

If your complaint is related to the Home Care Service which is regulated by the CQC, you can also refer your complaint to the Care Quality Commission. These are the contact details:

Care Quality Commission National Correspondence
Citygate
Gallowgate
Newcastle upon Tyne NE1 4PA
Telephone: 03000 616161
Email: enquiries@cqc.org.uk

SERVICES FUNDED 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. A booklet about the Council's complaints procedure is available from all Social Services offices, libraries and the Civic Centre. To have a copy posted to you, please telephone the Council on 020 8379 1000. You can also get information about the complaints procedure and make a complaint on-line by visiting the Council's website at www.enfield.gov.uk

Organisations that can help you express your view:

You can ask any Citizens Advice Bureau or the Law Centre to help you. Most voluntary & community organisations that provide advice services are likely to be able to provide support. You may also contact Enfield Voluntary Action at Community House, 311 Fore Street, Edmonton, N9 0PZ, telephone number 020 8373 6268.

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 Ombudsman. The scheme has been established for 35 years, 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).. *An adult social care provider is anyone who carries out an activity which is regulated by the Care Quality Commission (CQC).* Within Age UK Enfield the homecare service is CQC registered.

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 logging onto www.lgo.org.uk or by ringing 0300 061 0614. You can also email them at advice@lgo.org.uk with your enquiry.