Owner	Chief Executive
Reviewed by	Chair
Date reviewed	May 2026
Approved by Trustees	June 2026
For review	June 2029

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

1. Complaints by or on behalf of service users

1.1. A complaint provides Age UK Merton an opportunity to improve our services and to empower service users by giving them the opportunity to have influence over the way services are run. An organisation where service users feel able to complain or comment ifthings are not right is a healthy organisation.

1.2. Service users do not always feel confident about making complaints. They should besupported to make the complaint in any way that they wish.

2. Method of complaint submission

2.1. Complaints may be made verbally, in writing, by telephone or by email. A complaint maybe made by the complainant themselves or by another person acting on their behalf.

2.2. If a complaint is made verbally or by telephone, the staff member receiving the complaintshould record this in writing and check the accuracy of this with the complainant.

2.3. Any member of staff receiving a complaint, should record this complaint, and note to whomthe complaint was passed, and the date received in a central Complaints Log. A record should also be made within the client's Charity Log record.

3. Routine Complaints

3.1. If the complaint or concern is about a routine matter e.g. a complaint about a missed appointment, then it should first be passed to the staff member or volunteer concerned tosee if the matter can be resolved informally.

3.2. The staff member or volunteer receiving thecomplaint should speak to their line manager and attempt to resolve the problem as quickly as possible, ideally within 2 working days of receipt of the complaint.

3.3. If the matter is resolved informally, the staff member or volunteer concerned should recordthe date and how the complaint was resolved in the Complaints Log. They should update their line manager to inform them that the matter has been resolved. This result should be recorded on the client's Charity Log record.

3.4. If the matter is not satisfactorily resolved at this stage, then the process should be continued as under the serious complaints procedure below, and the complaints log noted accordingly.

3.5. The process for routine complaints should be completed within one week or escalated tothe serious complaints process below.

4. Serious Complaints

4.1. Any complaint of a more serious nature or a straightforward complaint that has not been able to be resolved informally should be passed to the Chief Executive for decision on whoshould take the complaint forward. Details of whom the complaint was passed to will be entered into the Complaints Log

4.2. The complaint will usually be dealt with by the manager responsible for the service in

consultation with the Chief Executive, or if the complaint is against that manager, by the Chief Executive. They will acknowledge the complaint in writing within 2 working days and investigate it.

4.3. The outcome of the complaint will normally be given within 10 working days of the investigating manager receiving the complaint.

4.4. The manager investigating the complaint should first speak to the complainant and record details of the complainant, a short statement of the complaint and an indication of any redress which is being sought. They should then speak to all parties concerned, including any witnesses where relevant, and provide a written response to the complainant.

4.5. The response letter should include an apology where appropriate and give details of any steps that will be taken to ensure the problem does not recur.

4.6. Details of the date and how the complaint was resolved should be entered in the Complaints Log and added to the client's Charity Log record.

5. Complaints Escalation

5.1 If the complainant is not satisfied with the outcome, or if the complaint is against the Chief Officer, this should be logged and the matter referred to the Chair of Trustees, who will either investigate personally or arrange for another Trustee to deal with the complaint.

5.2 In either case, the complainant will be informed of the escalation within 2 working days.

5.3 The investigation at the point of escalation will include, but is not limited to, a review of the process undertaken during the initial investigation. Where appropriate the Chair can undertake their own investigation as per the procedure for a serious complaint.

5.4 The Chair of Trustees (or investigating Trustee) will provide a full response to the complainant within 15 working days of it being referred to the Chair of Trustees and details of the outcome and the date resolved logged.

6. Reviewing Complaints

6.1. A brief report will be provided to the Board of Trustees for each meeting detailing the number and nature of complaints made and whether resolved within the required timescale.

6.2. For any complaint that has been handed to the Chair of Trustees, a report of the complaint, its handling and its outcome will be provided to the Board of Trustees at its next meeting.

6.3. Every 6 months the Chief Executive will provide a full Complaints report to the Board of Trustees to enable the Board to review lessons learnt from complaints and whether any changes in procedures need to be made. The report will include:

6.3.1. Statistical information about complaints and compliments received over the past 6 months

6.3.2. Trends, if any.

6.3.3. A brief summary of what each complaint was about

6.3.4. Actions taken in respect to each complaint

6.3.5. Any recommendations for change to practice or procedures as the result of complaints