

COMMENTS, COMPLIMENTS & COMPLAINTS POLICY & PROCEDURE

POLICY: COMMENTS, COMPLIMENTS & COMPLAINTS POLICY & PROCEDURE

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SCOPE OF THIS POLICY

This Policy and Procedure applies to all areas of Age UK North Tyneside Group, all customers, staff, volunteers, trainees and visitors.

THIS POLICY COVERS:

- 1. Customer Comments
- 2. Customer Compliments
- 3. Customer Complaints
- 4. Complaint Reporting
- 5. Complaint Handling and Control
- 6. Unresolved Complaints
- 7. Review of Complaints

PURPOSE

The Group is committed to provide a high standard of service delivery to all our customers, (whether internal or external customers) to ensure that their experience of Age UK North Tyneside is a valued one. Where either an issue of service, quality, availability or general environment problem does not meet the expectations or requirements of our customers a consistent or thorough response needs to be initiated with decisions/actions to prevent any re-occurrence.

This Policy and Procedure has been established to ensure that all customer comments, compliments and complaints are reported to a central point, monitored and recorded in a standard format and that all complaints if necessary will be investigated by the Chief Executive’s Office who is responsible for closely monitoring and reviewing all complaints thoroughly to ensure a satisfactory conclusion is achieved.

The Head of Corporate Support is also responsible for producing an annual analysis of comments, compliments and complaints received to present to the Chief Executive.

POLICY STATEMENT

Age UK North Tyneside believes that if a customer wishes to make a comment, compliment or register a complaint they should find it easy to do so. It is Group's policy to welcome comments, compliments and complaints and looks upon them as an opportunity to learn, adapt, improve and provide better services. This policy is intended to ensure that comments, compliments and complaints are acknowledged, dealt with properly and are taken seriously.

Age UK North Tyneside believes that failure to listen to or acknowledge complaints will lead to an aggravation of problems, customer dissatisfaction and possible litigation. The Group supports the concept that complaints, if dealt with early, openly and honestly can be sorted between the complainant and the Group.

The aim of this Policy is to ensure that its Comments, Compliments and Complaints Procedure is properly and effectively implemented and that customers feel confident that their comments, compliments and complaints are recognised, acknowledged, listened to and acted upon promptly and fairly where required and if appropriate.

- Customers and their representatives are aware of how to make comments, compliments and complaints and that the Group provides easy to use opportunities for them to register these.
- The Chief Executive's Office is responsible for the administration of the Procedure.
- Every written complaint is acknowledged within 48 hours of receipt of the complaint and the investigation commenced within 5 working days.
- All complaints are responded to in writing by the Group
- Comments and complaints are dealt with promptly, fairly, sensitively with due regard to the worry and upset that they can cause to both staff and customers.
- All complaints are monitored quarterly and trends are analysed to identify areas for service improvement

Age UK North Tyneside has also produced a Guidance for Customers wanting to make a complaint which guides you through the whole process and explains your right to complain, how to make a complaint, who can help you make a complaint, what support is available, what you should consider prior to making a complaint and what to do if you are not happy with the outcome.

PROCEDURE

This Procedure describes the actions to be taken by the Group when there are positive or negative views or improvement suggestions from customers or their representatives.

1. Customer Comments

Definition of a comment: *a remark, observation or criticism that may require immediate action but does not require a full investigation.*

Lets us know your thoughts on what we could do better. The Head of Corporate Support records the details of all comments received to a central Register and then pass them on to the Department concerned so that they can look at how improvements can be made.

2. Customer Compliments

Lets us know when we are getting things right. Any compliment received is shared with the relevant Department.

If the compliment is about an individual staff member they are then informed in writing by the Line Manager and a copy of the compliment and letter is stored in their Personnel File.

Compliments can help us share good practice and improve services.

3. Complaint Reporting

Definition of a Complaint: *An expression of dissatisfaction, whether verbal or written, and whether justified or not and which requires further investigation*

- If you *verbally* receive a formal complaint, complete the AUK004 form and forward it to the Chief Executive along with any supporting documentation.
- If you receive a complaint through *email or letter*, please email the Chief Executive to inform her of the complaint and send the original documents in internal mail.
- Please report the complaint by email the day you receive it and forward any documentation by internal mail the same working day too.
- All formal complaints should be forwarded to the Chief Executive in this way.
- As a minimum if available the email details should include :
 1. Date of Complaint
 2. Name, Address, Email address and Telephone Number of the complainant
 3. Name of staff who is reporting the complaint
 4. Brief overview of the nature of the complaint
 5. The AUK004 form if the complaint is received verbally should be completed fully with a full description of the complaint

4. Complaint Handling and Control

- On receipt of the email and any supporting documentation the Chief Executive will ask the Head of Corporate Support to review and complete appropriate sections of the AUK004 form (if relevant) and then update the Complaints Register. The Complaints Register is kept on the Leadership Team section of the server and details:
 - Date of Complaint
 - Area within site where complaint/issue occurred
 - Type of Complaint
 - Name of Complainant and contact details
- Within the next working day of notification of the complaint the Head of Corporate Support will review the complaint and if necessary discuss with the relevant Head of Department and will appoint someone to investigate the complaint fully and impartially.
- An acknowledgement letter will be sent out within 48hours from the Chief Executive to the complainant acknowledging receipt of their complaint and informing them that an Investigation (if relevant) will be carried out.
- If the complaint can be answered without further investigation the Chief Executive will respond to the complainant having discussed the issue if necessary with the Head of Corporate Support
- The outcome of the investigation or response is logged on the Complaints Register and the complaint is closed after 7 days if no further correspondence received.

5. Unresolved Complaints

- If, at any time the complainant is unhappy with an investigation of the complaint or the response, the complaint shall be referred to the relevant Executive Director in the first instance.
- In the event that the complainant is still unhappy, the complaint will be passed directly to the Chief Executive for further investigation and review. The Chief Executive acts as the final arbiter for any complaints received
- All correspondence shall be attached to the original complaint and filed by the Head of Corporate Support.
- A copy of the response letter will be sent to the relevant Executive Director.

6. Overview of Complaints

- All customer complaints are subject to trend analysis and shall be measured by the Head of Corporate Support on a quarterly basis and reported to the Chief Executive.
- The Quality Management Review Committee review all complaints to ensure that any corrective and correction actions taken are appropriate and effective
- The Board of Trustees review all complaints annually and report to the full Board of Trustees

Authorised by:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Alma Caldwell', written over a light blue horizontal line.

Alma Caldwell
Group Chief Executive

The Age UK North Tyneside Group strives to ensure equality of opportunity for all, both as an employer and a provider of services. This policy has therefore been equality impact assessed by the Head of Corporate Support to ensure fairness and consistency for all those covered by it regardless of their individual differences

See Flowchart below for Customer Complaint Notification Procedures

NOTIFICATION PROCEDURES CUSTOMER COMPLAINT

Receiving



Complaint received. Staff member emails CE the same day with contact details and brief description of complaint.



If complaint received verbally staff member sends AUK004 form to the CE within the same working day of receiving complaint. If received by letter/email send in internal mail again the same day



The CE reviews AUK004 and forwards to HoCS to update Register within one working day of receiving AUK004 or letter/email detailing complaint.



The CE reviews complaint and agrees response with HoCS. If further investigation required the HoCS appoints an investigator

CE denotes Chief Executive's Office & HoCS denotes Head of



If complaint requires investigating further an acknowledgement letter/email is sent to the complainant. If no investigation required a response is sent within 5 working days by the CE

Recording



All documentation including AUK004, complaint email or letter and response are logged and stored in Complaints File by the HoCS



Target is to send a response to complainant within 75 working days. After a further 7 working days if no response received the file is classed as "CLOSED"



The HoCS files all information and stores for 7 years. Updates the Chief Executive regularly on trends/issues



The HoCS presents full Register at Quality Management Review Meeting to show relevant trends and key issues and resolutions



The HoCS presents annual report of all complaints to full Board of Trustees