

<b>Title</b>	Complaints Procedure
<b>Procedure Number</b>	PROGEN 0004
<b>Issue Date</b>	June 2016
<b>Effective Date</b>	June 2016
<b>Origin</b>	Quality and Compliance Manager (QCM)
<b>Last Reviewed/Reissued</b>	Jan 2023

### **Overview**

Age Cymru West Glamorgan's primary aim is to deliver an outcome based, quality assured service to our clients. Clients have a right to expect a prompt resolution of misunderstandings and a helpful approach towards dealing with complaints and solving problems from Age Cymru West Glamorgan's staff and volunteers.

### **Areas of responsibility**

- The Chief Officer is responsible for this procedure.
- The Complaints Policy governs this procedure.
- Exemptions to this procedure can be authorised by the Chief Officer.

### **Procedural details**

#### **Stage 1**

In all cases where a client raises a verbal complaint, the complaint must be recorded in the complaint register.

If a complaint is raised to a volunteer this should be passed to a staff member.

If the complainant becomes upset whilst speaking to the staff member regarding the complaint, or the conversation starts to break down, the staff member should end the call as amicably as possible and ask the client to put their complaint in writing.

The staff member should rectify the complaint, consulting their Line Manager as needed. If the staff member is unable to resolve the complaint, then their complaint should be escalated to their Team Leader or Line Manager as appropriate.

Where a written complaint is received this will immediately form a Stage 2 complaint and be passed to the relevant Service Manager.

## **Stage 2**

The appropriate Service Manager will take ownership of the complaint and act as the Complaints Manager.

At this stage the Service Manager should look to investigate the complaint and reach a resolution with the client within 10 working days.

The Complaints Manager will record the complaint on the Executive complaints register and create an evidence file where appropriate.

If the Complaints Manager is unable to reach a satisfactory resolution, the complainant can submit a request in writing to the Chief Officer requesting an escalation to Stage 3. This request should outline the reasons why they feel the complaint has remains unresolved.

## **Stage 3**

The Chief Officer has 28 days to investigate the complaint and resolve the issue(s). This can be extended on the agreement of the complainant or on the authority of the Chair.

The Chief Officer can invite another member of staff to assist them in the investigation, providing the staff member is not directly involved in the circumstances of the complaint.

If at this stage it is still not possible to reach a resolution, the complainant can write to the Chair of the Board to request a Stage 4 complaints panel. The complainant should note that a Stage 4 panel is only likely to be held in exceptional circumstances as outlined in the Complaints Policy, the extract of which is below:

*“We believe that most complaints can be investigated thoroughly and resolved within the first 3 stages of our complaint’s procedure. Stage 4 of the complaint’s procedure will only be used in exceptional circumstances and is at the discretion of the Chair/Vice Chair. The complainant can request a Stage 4 complaints panel by writing to the Chair of the Board of Trustees, outlining the reasons why they feel the previous stages did not resolve their complaint and/or if they feel the complaint process was not managed in accordance with our policy/procedures. Age Cymru West Glamorgan does not have the resources to hold a panel for every complaint.”*

## **Stage 4**

The Chair will write to the complainant within 5 working days on receipt of a written letter to confirm receipt.

The Chair will then review the reasons the client feels the complaint should be raised to Stage 4. The Chair will write to the client with 10 working days of receiving the complaint to outline their decision.

If the Chair decides it’s appropriate, the panel will convene within 21 working days of that letter. The panel will consist of at least two members of the Board of Trustees

The panel will review all action taken at every stage of the complaint and any staff or volunteers involved and the complainant may be asked to address the panel.

The complainant may be invited to attend the panel and may be accompanied by a person of their choice but must notify the panel of this in advance.

The meeting will be minuted by a staff member who is not connected to the complaint.

The complainant will be asked to respond in writing (email acceptable) accepting the resolution within 14 working days.

If the panel does not reach a resolution with the client, or the chair decides a panel is not appropriate, the Chair will write to them advising them of other action they may like to consider, including reporting their complaint to the Charity Commission.

### **Safeguarding**

If a complaint leads to a safeguarding report, it will be managed separately to this procedure. The Chief Officer will manage the complaint as appropriate and will direct to the relevant manager as appropriate.

### **Adaptions**

Age Cymru West Glamorgan is committed to treating clients fairly and to equal opportunities. The format of a complaint can be altered at the discretion of the Chief Officer or Chair to make reasonable adjustments to cater for a client's needs