

AGE UK WEST SUSSEX, BRIGHTON AND HOVE

Feedback and Complaints Policy and Procedure

March 2023

Version Control		
Date	Action	by
Jan 21	V1.0 created for review.	Sarah Watson
Jan 21	Reviewed and Approved	Senior Leadership Team
Jan 22	Updated with new contact and email address. No other changes made to document.	Judy Maiden
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AUKWSBH Feedback and Complaints Policy and Procedure January 2022

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1. Introduction

1.1 Our aim at Age UK West Sussex, Brighton and Hove (AUKWSBH) is to provide you with an outstanding service and we welcome feedback from customers, carers, partners and members of the public about the services we provide as an organisation.

1.2. Most people who come to our centres or access our services are happy with our services and do not experience any problems. However, we recognise that sometimes things can go wrong, and when it does, we would like to know about how we can put it right.

2. Scope

2.1 This policy and procedure applies to all customers and beneficiaries of Age UK West Sussex, Brighton and Hove.

2.2 Staff and volunteers should also follow the Feedback and Complaints Policy and Procedure.

3. Feedback

3.1. If you wish to make a comment of a general nature, whether it is a compliment or complaint and wish to remain anonymous, or do not necessarily wish to have an individual response, then please obtain a Comments Form from one of our centre Reception and place it in the Comments Box. Comments boxes are emptied once a week; the results are summarised and submitted to the Chief Operating Officer.

3.2. Where appropriate you are also encouraged to air your compliments or concerns by speaking to a member of staff.

3.3. Written complaints may be made using an AUKWSBH feedback form addressed to the Chief Operating Officer, Age UK West Sussex, Brighton and Hove, Laburnum Centre, Lyon Street, Bognor Regis, PO21 1UX

Alternatively, Feedback and Complaints can be submitted electronically via our website (www.ageukwsbh.org.uk) under the 'contact us' tab or emailed to our Chief Operating Officer at admin@ageukwsbh.org.uk

4. AUKWSBH Policy

4.1 AUKWSBH annually reviews and analyses the number and nature of all official complaints. The monitoring and review of complaints contributes to our self-assessment process, which leads to on-going improvements.

5. Complaints

5.1 Definition: AUKWSBH defines a formal complaint as any expression of dissatisfaction received in writing (including social media), requiring a formal written response.

5.2 Purpose: The formal Complaints Procedure is intended to ensure all complaints are handled in a consistent, fair, and non-discriminatory way and resolved with a satisfactory and just outcome.

5.3 Scope: The Complaints Procedure provides the framework for anyone who has experienced dissatisfaction with AUKWSBH's services to raise their concerns. This includes complaints from customers, carers, support workers, employers, volunteers, contractors, local residents, visitors and partners.

6. Responsibility

6.1 AUKWSBH welcomes issues being brought to its attention as a mechanism for improving its quality and services.

6.2 AUKWSBH will acknowledge the formal complaint within 5 working days. If the Chief Operating Officer is unavailable to deal with your complaint, duties will be carried out by the Head of Operations or a member of the Management Team.

6.3 AUKWSBH will ensure that complaints are dealt with effectively, reasonably and in a manner sensitive to all involved.

6.4 AUKWSBH will support an individual in making a complaint if necessary. This could be in the form of a scribe or simply providing a safe environment in which a complaint can be composed.

6.5 AUKWSBH will keep an accurate record of complaints received to ensure that the analysis of complaints helps to continuously improve the AUKWSBH's services to clients, beneficiaries, carers and the public.

6.6 AUKWSBH will take action where appropriate.

6.7 The Board of Trustees is responsible for ensuring that the complaints policy and procedure is operating effectively and may become directly involved if a complaint is against the Chief Executive Officer or members of the Board of Trustees.

6.8 Complaints in relation to our CQC Registered Services will be managed in accordance with the CQC Requirements.

7. Confidentiality

7.1 Every attempt will be made to ensure that the confidentiality of a complainant and the contents of their complaint will be protected. However, where a complaint is of a personal nature against an individual, it is likely that the complainant's identity will be revealed at some stage in all but the most exceptional cases, so there can be a fair investigation.

8. Data Protection

8.1 All complaints will be kept and stored according to the relevant data protection legislation. If you have concerns about how your personal data is used or stored, or you wish to exercise your rights under the Data Protection Act 2018, please write to the Data Protection Officer, Age UK West Sussex, Brighton and Hove, Laburnum Centre, Lyon Street, Bognor Regis, PO21 1UX.

9. Safeguarding

9.1 If AUKWSBH receives information that a client is, or has been, put at risk of harm, the matter will be addressed by the Designated Safeguarding Officer.

9.2 If the complaint is made against a member of staff, the complaint will be forwarded to Human Resources and the Designated Safeguarding Officer to determine whether the complaint contains: any safeguarding concern; is in need of impartial investigation, and; who will take responsibility for leading the response/action to the investigation. Once this decision is made, it will then be forwarded to the appropriate AUKWSBH manager for investigation

9.3 After a full discussion with the person at risk involved, the information may have to be shared with the relevant statutory agency in accordance with our Safeguarding Policy. If the complaint is sent to the LADO, it will be rated against their threshold. If the LADO wish to investigate the complaint, they will lead the investigation or present a detailed course of action. If the complaint does not meet their threshold, the response and action to the complaint will be led by the Designated Safeguarding Officer in conjunction with the Human Resources team.

9.4 If the complaint involves a member of staff and contains no safeguarding concerns, the complaint will be dealt with as per the Disciplinary Policy and Procedure and our Code of Conduct.

9.5 If a complaint is received from a client regarding another client, and contains safeguarding content, the investigation will be led by the Designated Safeguarding Officer or a nominated deputy.

10. Frivolous or Vexatious Complaints

10.1 AUKWSBH may reject any complaint without full consideration if it is considered frivolous or vexatious. Examples of what AUKWSBH considers to be frivolous or vexatious include:

- complaints which are obsessive, harassing, or repetitive
- insistence on pursuing unmeritorious complaints
- seeking unrealistic or unreasonable outcomes
- insistence on pursuing what may be meritorious complaints in an unreasonable manner
- complaints which are designed to cause disruption or annoyance
- Demands for redress which lack any serious purpose or value.

If AUKWSBH considers your complaint falls into this category, you will be advised that your complaint will not be considered further. You will be given the opportunity to appeal against this decision by submitting written reasons to the Chief Operating Officer within 5 working days of the date on receipt of the email.

11. Monitoring and Reporting

11.1 The findings and analysis of complaints will be constantly monitored. Regular reporting will take place to the Senior Leadership Team and the Board of Trustees to ensure procedures are in place to improve the AUKWSBH's services to clients, beneficiaries, staff and the public.

12. Review

12.1 AUKWSBH will review the Feedback and Complaints Policy/Procedure annually. Any feedback from clients, staff and the public will be taken into account when updating the procedure.

13. Status of this Policy/Procedure

13.1 This policy/procedure was approved by the Senior Leadership Team in January 2022 and supersedes all previous documentation.

13.2 The operation of this policy/procedure will be kept under review by the Chief Operating Officer. It may be reviewed and varied from time to time by the Senior Leadership Team.

14.3 This policy/procedure has been equality impact assessed to ensure that it does not adversely affect staff/clients/others.

Date Approved:	January 2022
Approved by:	Senior Leadership Team
Implementation Date:	January 2022
Last Reviewed:	March 2023

Appendix 1: Our Complaint Procedure

Stage 1 (informal discussion)

- If you are a client you may be able to resolve your concerns informally by talking to a member of our team or service manager.
- If you are a carer, guardian, visitor or prospective client, you may be able to resolve your concern informally by asking to talk to an appropriate member of staff.
- Your concern will be listened to and taken seriously. Every effort will be made to assist you in dealing with your issue(s). No record of your concern will be kept at this stage.

Stage 2 (Formal Complaint)

If you feel that your complaint has not been resolved at the informal stage, you may make a formal complaint in writing to the Chief Operating Officer. This can be emailed to admin@ageukwsbh.org.uk or in writing, addressed to:

Alternatively, you can submit complaints electronically via our website www.ageukwsbh.org.uk under the 'Contact Us' tab. Once navigated to the 'Contact Us' page complete the 'Get In Touch' form.

Should you require assistance in writing the complaint, our First Point of Contact Team are available to help you.

Should a written complaint be received by a staff member of AUKWSBH this should be sent by email to admin@ageukwsbh.org.uk or passed to the Chief Operating Officer.

On receipt of the formal complaint:

- The Chief Operating Officer will log your complaint and send you an acknowledgement within 5 working days.
- The Chief Operating Officer will refer your complaint to the appropriate manager for investigation.
- If the complaint contains no safeguarding concerns and is not in relation to a member of staff, the complaint will be led by the appropriate manager.
- If the complaint is made about a member of staff, Human Resources will appoint a member of AUKWSBH's management team to investigate. The manager will contact you to discuss the complaint and clarify any issues. If the issue can be resolved at this stage, it will be logged and you will be sent a letter outlining the action taken, if appropriate.
- Where the issue cannot be resolved in the first instance, the Manager will meet with you to hear your complaint. You may bring someone to the meeting with you, to offer support. Every effort will be made to ensure that this meeting takes place within 15 working days of receipt of the original complaint.
- The Manager will also hear the views of the other people concerned with the complaint.
- You will be written to or contacted verbally within 5 working days of the meeting, outlining any action to be taken.
- A copy of the notes will be submitted to the Chief Operating Officer.

Stage 3 (Appeal)

What if I am still unhappy? If you are not satisfied with the outcome of stage 2, you can move on to stage 3 of the complaint procedure.

If you remain dissatisfied with the outcome of the complaint at stage 2, your complaint can be passed to the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) for final internal review.

You should make your request for stage 3 review of your complaint within 5 working days of receiving the outcome of the stage 2 investigation.

Requests to review the outcomes of stage 2 investigations will be considered and the following will be taken into account:

- Whether procedural irregularities in the investigation of the complaint or fresh evidence can be presented which was not made available to the manager at stage 2.
- If the CEO is satisfied that any of the above conditions apply, a further investigation will be undertaken of the complaint. You will be notified of the result of the investigation in writing within 15 working days of receipt of the request for review.

The CEO's decision is final.

Appendix 2: Text for the AUKWSBH Website

If you are unhappy with any aspect of our work, we would like to hear about it. We value all feedback, both good and bad, and welcome the opportunity to learn and improve.

How to make a complaint:

We encourage any complaints or feedback to be raised by speaking to member of our team or the service manager in the first instance or by completing a feedback form. If doing this doesn't resolve your complaint, then a formal complaint should be made.

Formal complaints should be raised within 3 months of the matter in question .

Complaints should be directed to:

Chief Operating Officer
Age UK West Sussex Brighton and Hove
Laburnum Centre
Lyon Street
Bognor Regis
PO21 1UX

Tel: 01903 731800

Email: admin@ageukwsbh.org.uk

How we will respond:

- We will treat your complaint seriously.
- We will endeavour to address complaints made by telephone, email and in person within 5 working days.
- Complaints made in writing will be acknowledged within 5 working days.
- If we need to make further investigations, we will confirm that we have received your complaint and seek to resolve the complaint within 20 working days.

What happens next?

If your complaint has not been resolved satisfactorily, you may appeal the outcome by writing to the Chief Executive Officer within 5 working days of receiving a response to your formal complaint.

Appeals should be directed to:

Helen Rice
Chief Executive Officer
Age UK West Sussex Brighton and Hove
Laburnum Centre, Lyon Street, Bognor Regis, PO21 1UX

Tel: 01903 731800

Email: helen.rice@ageukwsbh.org.