

AGE UK WEST SUSSEX, BRIGHTON & HOVE

Feedback and Complaints Policy and Procedure

AUKWSBH Feedback and Complaints Policy and Procedure

September 2025

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1. Introduction

1.1 Our aim at Age UK West Sussex, Brighton & 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 buildings 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 this happens, we want to know so we can put it right.

2. Scope

2.1 This policy and procedure applies to all customers and beneficiaries of AUKWSBH.

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, please phone 0800 019 1310 where you do not need to leave your details.

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 Head of Customer Services, Age UK West Sussex, Brighton & Hove, Ground Floor, 95 Queens Road, Brighton, BN1 3XE or via email to info@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 AUKWSBHs 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. The complaint will then be forwarded to the appropriate manager of the service, if it has not gone directly to them, and the manager will respond directly to you. The manager or Head of Customer Sewill also log the complaint.

6.3 AUKWSBH will ensure that complaints are dealt with effectively, reasonably and in a manner sensitive to all involved. We aim to provide an outcome within 14 days of receipt.

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 AUKWSBHs services to customers, 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 Comments or complaints in relation to our fundraising activities are covered by this policy and procedure. AUKWSBH agrees to fundraise in accordance with the Code of Fundraising Practice and the Fundraising Promise. If a complaint has not been resolved satisfactorily by this internal review process it is possible to escalate the complaint to the Fundraising Regulator.

6.9 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 & Hove, Laburnum Centre, Lyon Street, Bognor Regis, PO21 1UX.

9. Safeguarding

9.1 If AUKWSBH receives information that a customer 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 customer regarding another customer, 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 Head of Customer Services 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 AUKWSBHs services to customers, beneficiaries, staff and the public.

12. Review

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

Appendix 1: Our Complaint Procedure

Stage 1 (informal discussion)
<p>You may be able to resolve your concerns informally by talking to a member of our staff or the service manager.</p> <p>Your concern will be listened to and taken seriously. Every effort will be made to assist you in dealing with your issue. No record of your concern will be kept at this stage.</p>
Stage 2 (Formal Complaint)
<p>If you feel that your complaint has not been resolved at the informal stage, you may make a formal complaint in writing to the Head of Customer Services. This can be emailed to info@ageukwsbh.org.uk or in writing, addressed to:</p> <p>Head of Customer Services, Age UK West Sussex, Brighton & Hove, Ground Floor, 95 Queens Road, Brighton, BN1 3XE.</p> <p>You can also call 0800 019 1310.</p> <p>On receipt of the formal complaint, we will log and acknowledge your complaint within 5 days of receipt.</p> <p>We will investigate your complaint as soon as possible and will aim to have a response to you by no later than 20 working days. Should this not be possible the manager dealing with the complaint will contact you to explain why.</p>

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 20 working days of receipt of the request for review.

The CEO's decision is final.