

Compliments, comments and complaints about Adult Social Care



SOMERSET
County Council

Information sheet A11

January 2020

To provide you with the best possible services, we welcome being told what we are doing well, what we could do better, and where you think we are doing things wrong.

You may like to:

- Compliment us, or an individual worker, on the good service you have received
- Comment on how you think a service could be improved
- Complain when you feel something has gone wrong

We will listen and respond to what you tell us to improve our services and prevent problems in the future.

Compliments and comments

When we receive a compliment, we will pass your thanks on to the people concerned. We will also notify their manager.

When you make a comment it will be passed on to the relevant manager to see if it can help us do things better.

The information we receive from you can confirm that we are doing things in the best way, or we can learn from you have told us and improve our services.

You can make your compliments or comments to the people providing you with a service, their manager, or you can contact the Customer Experience Officer for Adults and Health by writing to them using the address at the end of this document. Please give as much detail as possible.



Complaints

Sometimes things may not work as well as they should or could have. When that happens you may want to make a complaint.

The Government sets out how we should deal with complaints about Adult Social Care (ASC).

This includes: social care services for older people, learning disabilities and Adult Social Care services.

The ASC complaints procedure will:

- Be open, accountable and fair
- Focus on you
- Put things right
- Find ways to keep improving

When should you make a complaint?

If you are unhappy about the service you have received, or if you haven't received the service you should have, please tell us.

If you want to complain about a care service that we have arranged for you, you should first follow the complaints process for the company that provides the service. If you are not satisfied after this, then please talk to us.

There will still be the opportunity to make a complaint if the appeal against your assessment does not solve the problem for you.

How do I make a complaint?

First of all, talk about your concern with the person providing the service or their manager. It may be something that can be sorted out immediately and they will appreciate the chance to put things right straight away. If you don't know how to contact their manager, ask your social care worker, they must tell you if you ask.

Can someone help me make a complaint?

Yes. A friend or relative can help you make your complaint or make it on your behalf if you wish. You may prefer someone from an organisation, such as the Citizens Advice Bureau or an advocacy service, to do it for you. You can also

contact Somerset Direct who can give you information about health and community care services, as well as details of local voluntary organisations and support groups.

Somerset Direct:

Phone 0300 123 2224

(8am to 6pm, Monday to Friday, or 9am to 4pm Saturday)

Text phone 07781 482858

Minicom 0800 783 4518

Email: adults@somerset.gov.uk

If you are still not happy

Tell the person concerned that you want to take your complaint further, or contact the Customer Experience Officer for Adults and Health. There are details about how to contact them on page four of this document.

You can write to us, phone us, email us or complete an online complaint form at: **Add link**. Your complaint will be taken seriously, formally recorded and all efforts will be made to sort it out quickly. We will contact you, usually by phone, to discuss the best way to sort things out for you and we will write to you within three working days to confirm we have understood what your complaint is about and how we will investigate it.

We will:

- Make sure we understand your complaint
- Tell you the name of the person who will investigate your complaint and how you can contact them
- Ask you what you would like to happen and tell you if we think it is realistic.
- Agree how long it will take for us to investigate and respond to you.

How will your complaint be dealt with?

We can investigate a complaint in two stages:

Most complaints received by the Council will be managed through our two-stage corporate complaints process which is detailed below.

The way we deal with complaints relating to social care is set down by Central Government and, as a result, the process and timescales for dealing with them may vary (depending on the type of complaint made). Further information about the process for social care complaints is included later in this document. The principles described in point 2 of this policy will still apply.

The Corporate Complaints Process – Stage One

When you make a complaint, we will:

- Acknowledge receipt of your complaint within 3 working days. If anything is unclear, we will contact you to ensure that we fully understand your concerns.
- Investigate your concerns and provide a fair and full response within 20 working days. This will usually come from a suitable manager from the service you have complained about. If the investigation will take longer, we will let you know.
- Let you know if we uphold all or part of your complaint and what we will do to put things right.
- If we do not uphold your complaint, tell you so and explain the reasons why.
- Let you know what you can do if you are unhappy with the stage one response.

The Corporate Complaints Process – Stage Two

If you are unhappy with the Stage One response you can tell us why and ask for it to be looked at again. Our Customer Experience Team will:

- Independently consider the reasons you have given for being dissatisfied with the response received alongside that response and the original complaint.
- Decide whether there are grounds for further investigation into the complaint – for example, if the response failed to address some concerns raised or was inaccurate in some details.

- Inform you of the decision and explain what will happen next:
 - If there are grounds for further investigation, we will explain how this will happen and when you can expect a response.
 - If we decide not to investigate further, we will tell you why and provide details of the Local Government Ombudsman.

We want to do everything we can to resolve your complaint but if you are still not satisfied you can take your outstanding concerns to the **Local Government Ombudsman**. You must do this within 12 months of the complaint being dealt with by the Council.

The Local Government Ombudsman

Advice Line: 0300 061 0614 - Monday to Friday from 10am to 4pm.

Email: advice@lgo.org.uk

You may also want to contact the Care Quality Commission:

Care Quality Commission
National Correspondence
Citygate
Gallowgate
Newcastle upon Tyne NE1 4PA

Phone: 03000 616161

Email: enquiries@cqc.org.uk

Other useful information:

- You must tell us that you want us to investigate the complaint within 12 months of the incident happening, or within 12 months of you finding out about the incident.
- We will confirm that we have received your complaint within two working days.
- You can take a complaint direct to the Local Government Ombudsman at any stage, but in most cases the Ombudsman's office will expect complaints to have been through the Council's own complaints procedures first.

You may also receive support and advice from:

- Musgrove Park Hospital- Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)
Phone: 01823 343536.
- Yeovil District Hospital- Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)
Phone: 01935 384706/478491 or email: pals@ydh.nhs.uk

Your opportunity to feedback

We welcome your comments about the services you receive. If you would like to tell us what you think, please either:

Contact us by going to our website, www.somerset.gov.uk, or

- Speak to your social care worker
- Phone Somerset Direct on 0300 123 2224, or
- Contact the Adults and Health Customer Experience Officer

Floor B2 East

County Hall

Taunton

TA1 4DY

Email: customerexperience@somerset.gov.uk

This document is also available on request in Braille, large print, tape, disc and can be translated into different languages.

Data Protection statement:

Your personal data will be held and used by Somerset County Council (SCC), in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998. SCC will not disclose this information to any unauthorised person or body. However, SCC may use this information to help improve our services, deal with complaints and comments, and prevent and detect fraud or crime.

Compliments, comments and complaints form

Please use this form to give details of your compliment, comment or complaint. Give dates and places of particular events and the names of any staff involved.

Your Name:
Address:
Phone number:
Today's date:

Please tick appropriate box:

Compliment [] Comment [] Complaint []

Are you making a complaint on behalf of someone else?

Yes [] No []

If yes, do you have their permission? Yes [] No []

Please use a separate sheet if necessary and return the completed form to the Customer Experience Officer whose address is listed at the end of page six.

For more information visit our website www.somerset.gov.uk or contact the Customer Experience Officer.