

Adult Social Care Compliments, Feedback and Complaints Guide

This guide is for adults who use social care services, their unpaid carers, family and / or their representative.

What is adult social care?

You may not know whether the help you get is an adult social care service. Adult social care includes all types of care and support, including personal care and other practical help. It is assessed under the Care Act 2014 when a local authority is involved. It includes care and support arranged and funded privately, and services commissioned by the council. It is for people aged 18 and over who need help because of age, illness or disability. Some examples are:

- provision of equipment
- help in your home with daily living
- community support and activities
- day centres
- residential and nursing care
- home adaptations
- information and advice
- advocacy
- support for carers
- social care assessments and funding

This guide explains what you should expect when you give compliments and feedback about a service or a member of staff. It also explains how to make a complaint.

The Isle of Wight council is committed to improving the quality of services we provide and we actively encourage you to tell us your view or give us feedback.

It is important to give feedback to practitioners about your experiences of adult social care. This helps the council to know what we are doing well and where we need to improve.

Feedback can be positive, negative or neutral. Compliments and feedback are just as important as complaints.

A complaint can cover any concerns you have about a service or a member of staff that have not met the standard you would expect.

How do I make a compliment or give feedback?

If you have a compliment or feedback about the council or any of their adult social care staff, you can get your voice heard:

- By letter to: FREEPOST RTGE-TBEC-BYAY, Adult Social Care Compliments and Complaints, Isle of Wight Council, Floor 2, County Hall, Newport, IW, PO30 1UD.
- By completing a Comment or Compliment Feedback Form and returning it to: FREEPOST RTGE-TBEC-BYAY, Adult Social Care Compliments, Isle of Wight Council, Floor 2, County Hall, Newport, IW, PO30 1UD.
- Email: AdultSocialCareCompliments&Complaints@iow.gov.uk

Making a complaint?

When things go wrong, we will

- listen to you and treat you with respect; we ask that you do the same for our staff
- treat you fairly
- keep you involved in the process
- be open and honest

We aim to put things right quickly, informally and without a fuss.

If a complaint cannot be resolved informally, we have a formal complaint procedure.

You can make a complaint if the council:

- does something wrong
- fails to do something it should have done
- does something it should not do
- provides a poor standard of service.

It is *NOT* treated as a complaint when:

- you are appealing against a decision which, although it is not the one you wanted, it has been arrived at properly.

Complaints which are unclear or very general may be difficult to investigate and the council may ask for more information to be provided by the complainant.

How to make a complaint

You can submit a complaint in the following ways:

- **Online** at our website at:
<http://www.iwight.com/Residents/Care-and-Support/Adults-Services/Adult-Social-Care/Complaint>
- **Letter** to: FREEPOST RTGE-TBEC-BYAY, Adult Social Care Compliments and Complaints, Isle of Wight Council, Floor 2, County Hall, Newport, IW, PO30 1UD.

- **Email:** AdultSocialCareCompliments&Complaints@iow.gov.uk
- **Telephone:** 01983 823340

***Please note that face to face meetings must be pre-booked.** You can make an appointment to meet with the Adult Social Care Complaints Team via the telephone number (01983) 823340.

The complaints procedure

If you make a complaint you:

- will not suffer any penalty or discrimination as a result
- will have your complaint acknowledged, taken seriously, and investigated
- will receive a reasoned, courteous and honest response
- can expect us to try to understand things from your point of view

If you feel you may require advocacy support to make your complaint, we will talk to you about how best to access this support from an independent agency, if it is appropriate to your needs.

For us to give proper consideration to a complaint and to be clear about how it can be resolved, we ask you to:

- tell us clearly what has gone wrong, with as much factual information as possible
- give us the information we may ask you for
- tell us what you would like us to consider doing to put things right
- make any special requirements known to us as soon as you can
- remain calm, and treat our staff in a courteous, respectful way
- remember that we are trying to help

What happens next?

Within three working days the adult social care complaints team will acknowledge receipt of the complaint, clarify any details needed to progress the complaint and inform you about what will happen to your complaint and how long this may take.

You can usually expect a full response to your complaint within 25 working days from agreement of the statement of your complaint. However, if the complaint is of a complex nature or needs further investigation, the council should agree with you a plan of how it will deal with your complaint, including the timescale for responding to your complaint.

If the complainant is unhappy with the formal written response, they must outline the areas they are dissatisfied with and inform the adult social care complaints team within 14 days of receipt of the complaint response. The council may then offer an 'alternative dispute resolution meeting' (ADRM) with the aim of bringing the matter to a satisfactory close. In some circumstances a meeting of this kind is beneficial to aid communication and understanding of complex and/or emotive subjects.

The Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO)

If you remain unhappy with the outcome of this complaint, you can pursue your dissatisfaction by asking the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO) to review your complaint.

The Ombudsman investigates complaints in a fair and independent way - it does not take sides. It is a free service.

The Ombudsman expects you to have given the council chance to deal with your complaint before you contact them. If you have not heard from the council within a reasonable time, it may decide to look into your complaint anyway.

The Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman is the final stage for complaints about councils and some other organisations providing local public services. It also investigates complaints about all adult social care providers (including care homes and home care agencies) for people who self-fund their care.

Please note that on occasion there are complaints the LGSCO cannot or will not be able to investigate. In such circumstances, the LGSCO will explain clearly if this is the case, and the reasons why this decision has been given.

You can contact the Ombudsman as follows:

Website: www.lgo.org.uk Telephone: 0300 061 0614

Their opening hours are Monday to Friday: 10am to 4pm (except public holidays)

Help and Advice

You can contact Healthwatch Isle of Wight online: <https://www.healthwatchisleofwight.co.uk/> or telephone 01983 608608 for help and advice on how to give compliments, feedback or make a complaint.

Another source of help and advice is Citizens Advice, and you can access information about them online: <https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/> or telephone 0344 411 1444.

You can also find out more about the NHS Complaint Process online: <https://www.nhs.uk/using-the-nhs/about-the-nhs/how-to-complain-to-the-nhs/#commissionerp://>.