



Complaints And Compliments Policy

Introduction

Age UK Bury aims to provide services and support in a friendly, effective and efficient manner. Occasionally, something may go wrong and the organisation aims to identify problems and improve its procedures.

Complaints can be made about anything that gives someone cause for concern. The individual decides the seriousness of the complaint which could be about:

- The behaviour of staff/volunteers
- Concern for the safeguarding and wellbeing of older people
- The standard of service we provide
- Discrimination
- Provision of inaccurate information
- Delays or failures
- Policies which are unacceptable

Purpose And Scope Of The Policy

- To protect the interests of individual service users
- To improve the quality of Age UK Bury services
- To enable users and carers to challenge the organisations way of working
- To protect staff and volunteers
- To provide a means of monitoring performance
- To resolve problems

The Procedures

Age UK Bury has two types of complaints procedure; an informal process and a formal process.

The Informal Procedure

It is hoped that most complaints can be dealt with informally.

a) Initially a complaint should be made to a member of staff on duty. If they are still not satisfied with the response they should ask to see the person in charge.

If the complaint cannot be dealt with immediately, a written response will be made within ten working days.

b) A written complaint will be acknowledged within five working days of receipt and be passed to the most appropriate person, usually the manager responsible for that relevant area of work, for comment and investigation.

c) A telephone complaint will wherever possible, be dealt with initially by the person receiving the call. If it is more appropriate it will be passed to a colleague responsible for the area of complaint to resolve within ten working days.

d) During the informal process, the complainant will be told of the formal process and, if he or she requests it, will be sent a copy of the procedure.

e) The person dealing with the complaint will try to resolve it on an informal basis within ten working days of receipt. In addition an initial brief notification will go to the Chief Officer and be kept on a complaints file.

f) In all cases, full details of the complaint and the outcome must be reported, in writing, to the Chief Officer.

The Formal Procedure

a) A formal complaint must be in writing, marked 'CONFIDENTIAL' and addressed to The Chief Officer, Age UK Bury, The Jubilee Centre, Mosley Avenue, Bury, BL9 6PQ, except in the case of a complaint directly concerning the Chief Officer, in which case the complaint should be addressed to the Chair of Age UK Bury.

b) An acknowledgement of the complaint will be sent within ten working days of receipt. The complainant will be reassured that their complaint will not affect their continued access to Age UK Bury's services.

c) The matter will be investigated by the Chief Officer/Chair in conjunction with the departmental head of the relevant area of complaint.

d) A written report will be drawn up and a full response to the complainant made within twenty five working days of receipt of the complaint.

e) The Chief Officer will inform the Executive Committee of any serious complaints and if the Chief Officer cannot resolve the issue it may be necessary for the Executive Committee to review the situation.

Safeguarding Concerns

If a complaint in anyway raises concerns about the wellbeing of a vulnerable adult or child, then the Age UK Bury Safeguarding policy and procedures will apply.

Appeals

If the formal complaint is not resolved to the satisfaction of the complainant, they may ask for a review.

The request for a review must be in writing, marked 'CONFIDENTIAL', and addressed to Chair for Age UK Bury, The Jubilee Centre, Mosley Avenue Bury, BL9 6PQ.

An acknowledgement of the request will be sent within ten working days of receipt.

The review will be undertaken by the Chair of Age UK Bury and be supported at his/her discretion by the Executive Committee's Officers.

The complainant may make representation to the Chair, either directly or through a representative.

The decision of the Chair will be forwarded directly to the complainant and this will be final.

Age UK Bury's Right to Challenge Complaints

Age UK Bury upholds and respects the right of the individual to bring a complaint, where the complaint is made in good faith and which the complainant believes to be true even if it turns out not to be confirmed and upheld by the initial investigation or the appeal panel.

However, if an allegation is made which the complainant knows to be untrue and/or is made in bad faith, and/or is libellous or slanderous, Age UK Bury reserves the right to take legal advice and to instigate proceedings against the complainant.

Age UK Bury reserves the right to disregard complaints that are offensive and aggressive to individuals connected with the organisation and may refer such letters to the police.

Contractual Obligations

In relation to those services that receive public funding, the Chief Officer of Age UK Bury has a duty to record all written complaints and commendations and shall recount these to the funding agency within the terms of review and monitoring arrangements.

Trading

All complaints regarding trading will be dealt with through the Age UK Enterprises Complaints Procedure.