

# Have Your Say



## Comments, Compliments and Complaints about Care Services provided by Adult and Community Services (ACS)

### We care about what you think

**Your views will help us to plan and improve care services in the future.** We welcome your compliments on any aspect of our care services you are pleased with. We would like to hear your comments on our care services and your suggestions about how they can be improved. We also want to know if you are unhappy about anything and want to make a complaint. Whatever you think, please let us know.

Please contact us by:

- Completing the online form at [www.suffolk.gov.uk/feedback](http://www.suffolk.gov.uk/feedback)
- Emailing us at [customerights@suffolk.gov.uk](mailto:customerights@suffolk.gov.uk)
- Telephoning SCC Complaints Team (Customer Rights) on 0345 266 1821
- Posting the feedback form to the SCC Complaints Team (Customer Rights)

### What will happen next?

**Compliments** will be passed on to the member of staff concerned, via their team manager.

Written **concerns** and **comments** will be acknowledged in writing within 3 working days. A member of staff may contact you to discuss your suggestions, if you wish.

**Complaints** will be acknowledged within 3 working days of receipt. You will be offered the opportunity to discuss with us how best we can resolve your complaint.

### How we deal with complaints

The law says that we must try to sort out problems as quickly as possible. We must also make sure that we investigate complaints properly. The law allows us a total of 6 months to try to sort out your complaint(s). In most cases, we expect to be able to resolve problems quickly and to your satisfaction.

We will consult with you about the way(s) we intend to do this and how long we believe it will take. Usually an initial managers response would come from the service area. We will agree with you how you want your complaint responded to and agree a timescale.

- For straightforward complaints, we will aim to respond within 10 working days.
- For more complicated complaints, we will aim to respond within 20 working days.

If you are not satisfied with the response to resolve your complaint, we will talk to you about what more can be done. This may be a more thorough, in-depth investigation, or it may be that further discussions and/or other methods, like mediation, will help. For in-depth investigations and most other forms of resolution, e.g. mediation, it could take longer.

Normally we can only look at a complaint within 12 months of the events you are complaining about. In exceptional circumstances we may consider a complaint that exceeds this timescale. If your complaint is about something that happened more than 12 months ago, please explain why you did not contact us at the time.

## Joint complaints

If your complaint is about more than one organisation, for example, concerning both Adult Care and Health services, we must provide a co-ordinated response. This means that one organisation takes responsibility for co-ordinating the arrangements for looking into your complaint. If your complaint falls into this category, we will let you know at the beginning which organisation will take responsibility.

## Complaints about private care agencies or voluntary / independent organisations.

If Suffolk County Council has arranged for another agency to provide your care, for example:

- Residential care
- Daycare organised by a voluntary organisation
- Private homecare agency

You have the right to use this complaints system if you wish. Normally we will ask the provider of the service you are complaining about to provide you with the response to your complaint in the first instance.

## Complaints about services regulated by the Care Quality Commission

If your concern, comment, compliment or complaint is about the quality of care or standards in a residential or nursing home for adults, or home care provided by the Council or an agency, you can also contact:

CQC National Customer Service Centre  
Citygate  
Gallowgate  
Newcastle upon Tyne, NE1 4PA  
Telephone: 03000 616161  
Email: [enquiries@cqc.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@cqc.org.uk)

## Sharing information with other organisations

The law says we must protect all information you provide, in line with the Data Protection Act. If we need to share details of your complaint with another organisation, we will ask your permission before doing so. The only time we are permitted to share information without your consent is if the complaint contains information that needs to be passed on in accordance with Safeguarding Children or Protection of Vulnerable Adults procedures. If this applies to your complaint, we will explain our decision.

The information in this leaflet applies to complaints made about Adult Care Services from 1 April 2009. For further details about the information given in this leaflet, or for any general advice about how your complaint is being handled, please contact SCC Complaints Team (Customer Rights) on 0345 266 1821.

## Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman

If you are not happy about the way Suffolk County Council have dealt with your complaint, you can contact the Local Government Ombudsman at any time.

The Local Government Ombudsman will usually expect the Council to have had the opportunity to resolve your complaint in the first instance.

**Address:** PO Box 4771, Coventry, CV4 0EH

**Telephone:** 0300 061 0614

**Web:** [www.lgo.org.uk](http://www.lgo.org.uk) for more information

If you would like this information in **another language or format**,  
including **audio tape, large print or easy read**,

please call **03456 066 067**