



Complaints Handling Procedure Customer Leaflet

April 2021

Contents

WHY DO WE HAVE A COMPLAINTS HANDLING PROCEDURE?	3
WHAT IS A COMPLAINT?	3
WHAT CAN'T I COMPLAIN ABOUT?	3
WHO CAN COMPLAIN?	4
HOW DO I COMPLAIN?	4
OUR CONTACT DETAILS.....	4
HOW LONG DO I HAVE TO MAKE A COMPLAINT?	5
WHAT HAPPENS WHEN I HAVE COMPLAINED?	5
STAGE 1: FRONTLINE RESPONSE.....	5
STAGE 2: INVESTIGATION.....	5
WHAT IF I'M STILL DISSATISFIED?.....	6
CARE COMPLAINTS	7
GETTING HELP TO MAKE YOUR COMPLAINT	

an attempt to reopen a previously concluded complaint or to have a complaint reconsidered where we have already given our final decision
abuse or unsubstantiated allegations about our organisation or staff where such actions would be covered by our Unacceptable Actions Policy
a concern about the actions or service of a different organisation, where we have no involvement in the issue (**except** where the other organisation is delivering services on our behalf).
a complaint about the conduct of a councillor these are dealt with by the Public Standards Commissioner for Scotland (39 Drumsheugh Gardens, Edinburgh EH3 7SW at www.publicstandardscommissioner.org.uk or by telephone: 0300 011 0550)

If other procedures or rights of appeal can help you resolve your concerns, we will give information and advice to help you.

Who can complain?

Anyone who receives, requests or is directly affected by our services can make a complaint to us. This includes the representative of someone who is dissatisfied with our service (for example, a relative, friend, advocate or adviser). If you are making a complaint on someone else's behalf, you will normally need their written consent. Please also read the section on **Getting help to make your complaint** below.

How do I complain?

You can complain in person at any of our offices, by phone, in writing, by email or via the Council/Partnership's website. It is easier for us to address complaints if you make them quickly and directly to the service concerned. So please talk to a member of our staff at the service you are complaining about. Then they can try to resolve the issue. When complaining, please tell us:

your full name and contact details
as much as you can about the complaint
what has gone wrong; and
what outcome you are seeking.

Our contact details

Telephone: 01546 605516

Email: complaints@argyll-bute.gov.uk

Social Work Complaints Email: argyllandbutehscp.feedback@nhs.scot or
SWComplaints@argyll-bute.gov.uk

Website: https://argyllandbute.custhelp.com/app/LAP_Forms/LAP_Complaints

we will confirm our understanding of the complaint we will investigate and what outcome you are looking for
we will try to resolve your complaint where we can (in some cases we may suggest using an alternative complaint resolution approach, such as mediation); and
where we cannot resolve your complaint, we will give you a full response as soon as possible, normally within 20 working days.

If our investigation will take longer than 20 working days, we will tell you. We will tell you our revised time limits and keep you updated on progress.

The outcome of the investigation should be communicated to you by letter or email, whichever is the preferred method of contact.

What if I'm still dissatisfied?

After we have given you our final decision, if you are still dissatisfied with our decision or the way we dealt with your complaint, you can ask the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO) to look at it.

The SPSO are an independent organisation that investigates complaints. They are not an advocacy or support service (but there are other organisations who can help you with advocacy or support).

You can ask the SPSO to look at your complaint if:

- you have gone all the way through the Council /Partnership's complaints handling procedure
- it is less than 12 months after you became aware of the matter you want to complain about; and
- the matter has not been (and is not being) considered in court.

The SPSO will ask you to complete a complaint form and provide a copy of our final response to your complaint. You can do this online at www.spsso.org.uk/complain/form or call them on Freephone 0800 377 7330.

You may wish to get independent support or advocacy to help you progress your complaint. See the section on **Getting help to make your complaint** below.

The SPSO's contact details are:

SPSO
Bridgeside House
99 McDonald Road
Edinburgh
EH7 4NS
(if you would like to visit in person, you must make an appointment first)

Their freepost address is:

FREEPOST SPSO

Freephone: 0800 377 7330
Online contact www.spsso.org.uk/contact-us
Website: www.spsso.org.uk

Our contact details

Please contact us by the following means:

Argyll and Bute Council

Telephone: 01546 605516

Email: complaints@argyll-bute.gov.uk

Social Work Complaints Email: argyllandbutehscp.feedback@nhs.scot or
SWComplaints@argyll-bute.gov.uk

Website: https://argyllandbute.custhelp.com/app/LAP_Forms/LAP_Complaints

We can also give you this leaflet in other languages and formats

BrowseAloud technology on our website reads out text and resizes text for the visually impaired and has a built in translation service for those who require a different language.

