



## A guide to making complaints

This guide has been produced to help you understand more about the process for making complaints to various services and organisations if you are unhappy with the service you have received. We also want you to know about the support that is available to you locally.

Whilst we do our best to make sure this guide is up to date and contains correct information we accept no responsibility incorrect information or the quality of service and advice you receive from external organisations listed in this guide.

### How to make a complaint:

Each organisation or service will have its own complaints policy and procedure which should be followed. **We recommend you ask for a copy of this.**

In this there will be information of where to make your complaint to and when you can expect to receive a response.

Complaints should always be raised to the organisation or service in the first instance to give them the opportunity to put things right as soon as possible. This is often called **Local Resolution**.

### Top Tips for making a complaint:

- ✓ Raise your concern or complaint as soon as possible. There may be a time limit for lodging your concerns.
- ✓ Be clear and concise about what you are unhappy about and keep your complaint as brief as possible.
- ✓ Provide clear information about your complaint, including facts of what happened, names of people involved and any evidence that you may have- including copies of letters relating to your complaint.
- ✓ Explain the impact of the issue on you.
- ✓ Highlight any legislation that you feel has been breached.
- ✓ Be clear about what solution you are looking for to enable the service to have the opportunity to put things right.
- ✓ Ask them to outline how and when they will respond to you.
- ✓ Keep copies of letters, correspondence and calls in relation to your complaint.
- ✓ Explore your options for escalating your complaint if you are unhappy with the outcome.

## Support available to you

There are a number of different organisations, services and individuals that can support you to raise or escalate your complaint. Here are some options available to you:

### The Independent Living and Carers' Partnership

The Independent Living and Carers Partnership (ILCP) is a group of charities in Lambeth that provide a range of information, advice and advocacy services for people in Lambeth aged 55 and over, Disabled people, people living with long term conditions and carers of all ages.

**dasl** is proud to be part of the ILCP



**Phone** 020 7095 5720

**Email** [hello@lambethilcp.org.uk](mailto:hello@lambethilcp.org.uk)

**Online** <http://lambethilcp.org.uk/>

### One Lambeth Advice

**Phone** 0800 254 0298

**Email** [hello@lambethilcp.org.uk](mailto:hello@lambethilcp.org.uk)

**Online** [www.onelambethadvice.org.uk](http://www.onelambethadvice.org.uk)

### Ward Councillors or Members of Parliament (MP's)

It is the role of ward councillors and MP's to represent people in their constituency, including concerns that you may have about a local service or organisation. Your elected representative will be able to explain to you what they can and cannot do on your behalf.

Your local ward councillors can be found online at

[www.moderngov.lambeth.gov.uk/mgMemberIndex.aspx?bcr=1](http://www.moderngov.lambeth.gov.uk/mgMemberIndex.aspx?bcr=1) or by calling Lambeth Council on 020 7926 1000.

You can find your local MP online at [www.parliament.uk/mps-lords-and-offices/mps/](http://www.parliament.uk/mps-lords-and-offices/mps/)

### Legal Advice

You can instruct a solicitor to raise a complaint or challenge on your behalf.

To find a solicitor specialising in the particular area of law we recommend you contact the Law Society Find a Solicitor service on 020 7320 5650 or visit [www.solicitors.lawsociety.org.uk/](http://www.solicitors.lawsociety.org.uk/)

You would need to discuss with the solicitor their fees and whether or not any Legal Help or Legal Aid may be available to you. This will depend on your case and financial situation.

# Complaint Processes

## National Health Service (NHS)

**Where to complain to:** Each service (GP, dentist, hospital) will have its own complaints policy to tell you where to make your complaint to.

**The individual service or practice** Each service (GP, dentist, hospital) will have its own complaints policy to tell you where to make your complaint to.

**The commissioner of the service** For complaints about services such as hospitals, out of hour's services, mental health services, community services such as district nursing complaints should be made to the local Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG). Complaints against Continuing Healthcare decisions should also be made to the CCG. Lambeth CCG details are as follows:

**Phone:** 0800 456 1517 **Email:** [NELCSU.SEcomplaints@nhs.net](mailto:NELCSU.SEcomplaints@nhs.net)

**Post:** NEL Complaints Team, 1 Lower Marsh, London SE1 7NT

**More information** <http://www.lambethccg.nhs.uk/contact-us/comment-or-complain/Pages/default.aspx>

**NHS England** For complaints about primary care services (e.g. GPs, dentists, opticians and pharmacists)

**Phone:** 0300 311 2233 **Email:** [england.contactus@nhs.net](mailto:england.contactus@nhs.net) with the subject header "For the attention of the complaints team"

**Post:** NHS England, PO Box 16738, Redditch, B97 9PT

**More information:** <https://www.england.nhs.uk/contact-us/complaint/complaining-to-nhse/>

## Support available to you

Patient Advice and Liaison Services (PALS)

Kings College Hospital

**Phone:** 020 3299 3601 **Email:** [kch-tr.PALS@nhs.net](mailto:kch-tr.PALS@nhs.net)

**In Writing:** PALS, King's College Hospital NHS Foundation Trust, Denmark Hill, SE5 9RS

**More information:** [www.kch.nhs.uk/patientsvisitors/help-and-support/pals](http://www.kch.nhs.uk/patientsvisitors/help-and-support/pals)

St Thomas' Hospital

**Phone:** 020 7188 8801 **Email:** [pals@gstf.nhs.uk](mailto:pals@gstf.nhs.uk)

**In writing:** PALS, St Thomas' Hospital, Westminster Bridge Road, London SE1 7EH

**More information:** <https://www.guysandstthomas.nhs.uk/patients-and-visitors/patients/your-care/pals.aspx>

## London Independent Health Complaints Advocacy Service

This service can provide you with information about complaint processes and advocacy support to raise your complaint if you require this.

**Phone:** 0203 553 5960 **Email:** [LondonIHCAS@pohwer.net](mailto:LondonIHCAS@pohwer.net)

**In writing:** London IHCAS Advocacy Hub, POHWER, Hertlands House, Primett Road, Stevenage, Hertfordshire, SG1 3EE

**More information:** [www.pohwer.net/lambeth](http://www.pohwer.net/lambeth)

## National NHS Continuing Healthcare Information and Advice Service

This service provides information and advice for people that may be eligible for HNS Continuing Healthcare funding. This service can provide information about the assessment and appeal process.

**Phone:** 0345 548 0300

**More information:** <http://www.lambethccg.nhs.uk/your-health/Information-for-patients/continuinghealthcare/Documents/Beacon%20Continuing%20Healthcare%20advice%20service.pdf> or <http://www.beaconhc.co.uk/>

## Healthwatch Lambeth

Information can also be provided by Healthwatch Lambeth in relation to your rights regarding NHS services but they are unable to provide you with one to one support.

**Phone:** 020 7274 8522 **Email:** [info@healthwatchlambeth.org.uk](mailto:info@healthwatchlambeth.org.uk)

**In writing:** Healthwatch Lambeth, We are 336, 336 Brixton Road, SW9 7AA

**More information:** [www.healthwatchlambeth.org.uk](http://www.healthwatchlambeth.org.uk)

## Lambeth Adult Social Care

### Where to complain to:

**In person to:** any council officer

**In writing to:** Adult Social Care Complaints, London Borough of Lambeth, PO Box 734, Winchester, SO23 5DT

**Via email to:** [socialcarecomplaints@lambeth.gov.uk](mailto:socialcarecomplaints@lambeth.gov.uk) + [complaints@lambeth.gov.uk](mailto:complaints@lambeth.gov.uk)

**Online:** <https://www.lambeth.gov.uk/forms/make-a-complaint-about-lambeth-council-form>

**More information:** <https://www.lambeth.gov.uk/adult-social-care-and-health/complain-about-adult-social-care-services-guide>

**By phone:** Adult Social Care 020 7926 5555, Complaints 020 7926 9694

## Lambeth Children Social Care

### Where to complain to:

**In person or in writing to:** any council officer (including a Social Worker)

**Online at:** <https://www.lambeth.gov.uk/forms/make-a-complaint-about-Lambeth-council-form>

**More information:** <https://www.lambeth.gov.uk/children-young-people-and-families/g2k/how-can-i-have-my-say> or via 020 7926 5555

## Lambeth Council

### Where to complain to:

**In person to:** any council officer

**Phone:** 020 7926 9694

**In writing to:** London Borough of Lambeth, PO Box 734 Winchester SO23 5DG

**Via email to:** [complaints@lambeth.gov.uk](mailto:complaints@lambeth.gov.uk)

**Online (non housing related):** <https://www.lambeth.gov.uk/forms/make-a-complaint-about-lambeth-council-form>

**Online (housing related):** <https://www.lambeth.gov.uk/forms/lambeth-housing-feedback-form>

**More information:** <https://www.lambeth.gov.uk/elections-and-council/contact-us/make-a-complaint-guide>

## Solicitors

**Where to complain to:** Complaints should be made to the particular firm. A nominated individual is normally responsible for the handling of complaints.

**Solicitors Regulation Authority** The Solicitors Regulation Authority (SRA) set Principles and a Code of Conduct for law firms and individuals who are regulated by the Authority. Enforcement action can be taken against those breaching the Principles. Complaints can be made to the SRA if you are concerned that the law firm may have breached these Principles.

**Phone:** 0370 606 2555

**In writing to:** Solicitors Regulation Authority, The Cube, 199 Wharfedale Street, Birmingham, B1 1RN

**Online:** [www.sra.org.uk](http://www.sra.org.uk)

**More information:** <https://www.sra.org.uk/consumers/sra-regulate/sra-regulate.page#principles>

## Complaining about the Solicitors Regulation Authority

If you are dissatisfied with how the SRA has investigated your complaint you must raise this with them. Once your complaint has been investigated and you remain dissatisfied you have 15 working days from the SRA's final response to as the Independent Review at the Ombudsman Services to investigate your complaint.

**Phone:** 0330 300 1336

**Email:** [independentreviewer@ombudsmanservices.org](mailto:independentreviewer@ombudsmanservices.org)

**Post:** Independent Reviewer, PO Box 1272, Warrington, WA4 9RP

## Escalating complaints to an Ombudsman

Ombudsman services are independent organisations that generally operate as a final stage of complaints against a specific service or organisation. They are impartial and investigate complaints to identify fault and explore a remedy. Complaints must have been lodged with the organisation initially to enable them to have the opportunity to investigate the concern and make the matter right.

It is important to check directly with the particular Ombudsman as to when they may consider investigating your complaint however this generally happens when complaints have not been responded to within a set period or they have been fully investigated and you remain dissatisfied with the outcome.

It is up to the individual Ombudsman service to identify if they are willing to investigate your complaint and they will advise you of this decision.

## Financial Ombudsman

The Financial Ombudsman is set up to resolve individual complaints between financial businesses and their customers. They can look into problems involving most types of money matters.

### Complaints can be raised:

**Phone:** 0300 1239 123 or 0800 023 4567

**Online at:** <https://help.financial-ombudsman.org.uk/help>

**In writing to:** The Financial Ombudsman Service, Exchange Tower, London E14 9SR

**More information is available at:** <http://www.financial-ombudsman.org.uk/>

## Furniture Ombudsman

The Furniture Ombudsman can investigate a case if you are not satisfied having gone through a retailers complaint process.

### Complaints can be raised:

**Phone:** 0333 241 3209

**Online at:** [www.thefurnitureombudsman.org/contact-us](http://www.thefurnitureombudsman.org/contact-us)

**Email:** [info@thefurnitureombudsman.org](mailto:info@thefurnitureombudsman.org)

**In writing to:** The Furniture Ombudsman, Second Floor 3-4 Viewpoint Office Village, Babbage Road, Stevenage, Hertfordshire SG1 2EQ

**More information is available at:** [www.thefurnitureombudsman.org/how-to-complain](http://www.thefurnitureombudsman.org/how-to-complain)

## Housing Ombudsman Service

This service is the final stage for complaints against landlords. A complaint must have been lodged with the landlord in the first instance.

If the landlord is unable to put the matter right or does not respond to the complaint, the next step is to contact an MP, Local Councillor or Tenant Panel. These individuals are the three types of **designated persons**.

If your complaint remains unresolved after eight weeks you can ask the Housing Ombudsman to resolve your complaint.

Your complaint can also be referred to the Housing Ombudsman service by the designated person if they feel this is required.

If the dispute cannot be resolved within two months, or if you and your landlord do not wish to take part in the early resolution process, the Housing Ombudsman will investigate the complaint.

**More information about the role of a designated person can be found at:**

<http://www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk/learning-faqs/factsheets/designated-persons/#.WaumJR3FLcs>

### Complaints can be raised:

**In writing to:** Housing Ombudsman Service, Exchange Tower, Harbour Exchange Square, London, E14 9GE

**Email to:** [info@housing-ombudsman.org.uk](mailto:info@housing-ombudsman.org.uk)

**More information is available at:** [www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk](http://www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk) or via 0300 111 3000

## Legal Ombudsman

This service is available if you are dissatisfied with the service that you have received from a legal service provider or claims management company and the response to your complaint by this company.

### Complaints can be raised:

**Phone:** 0300 555 0333

**Online:** <http://www.legalombudsman.org.uk/?portfolio=complaint-form-legal>

**In writing to:** Legal Ombudsman, PO Box 6806, Wolverhampton, WV1 9WJ

**Email to:** [enquiries@legalombudsman.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@legalombudsman.org.uk)

**More information is available at:** <http://www.legalombudsman.org.uk/>

## Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGO)

This service is the final stage for complaints about councils, all adult social care providers (including care homes and home care agencies).

A complaint must have been lodged with the council or social care provider before it can be raised with the Local Government Ombudsman (LGO). The complaint can be raised with the LGO if the problem has not been put right or if you have not received a response within a reasonable time frame.

The LGO will assess whether they can or should investigate your complaint and the LGO will let you know the outcome of this decision.

### Complaints can be raised:

**Online at:** [www.lgo.org.uk/forms/showForm.asp?nc=QG1E&fm\\_fid=81](http://www.lgo.org.uk/forms/showForm.asp?nc=QG1E&fm_fid=81)

**In writing to:** The Local Government Ombudsman, 53-55 Butts Rd, Coventry CV1 3BH

**More information is available at:** [www.lgo.org.uk](http://www.lgo.org.uk) or via 0300 061 0614

## Motor Ombudsman

The Ombudsman is the automotive dispute resolution body. It self-regulates the UK's motor industry through its Chartered Trading Standards Institute (CTSI)-approved Codes of Practice. Your complaint can be lodged with the Ombudsman after allowing a business 8 weeks to respond to your complaint.

### Complaints can be raised via:

**Completed forms sent to:** The Motor Ombudsman, 71 Great Peter Street, SW1P 2BN

**Completed forms emailed to:** [consumer@tmo-uk.org](mailto:consumer@tmo-uk.org)

**More information is available at:** [www.themotorombudsman.org/consumers/make-a-complaint](http://www.themotorombudsman.org/consumers/make-a-complaint) or 0345 241 3008

## Ombudsman Services

The Ombudsman Service covers the following sectors: Communications, Consumer, Copyright, Energy, Home Improvement, realymoving, Solicitors Regulation Authority and UK Finance. If the complaint is unresolved and has been ongoing for eight weeks or you have received a deadlock letter, you can get in touch with the Ombudsman Service

### Complaints can be raised:

**Online at:** [www.lgo.org.uk/forms/showForm.asp?nc=QG1E&fm\\_fid=81](http://www.lgo.org.uk/forms/showForm.asp?nc=QG1E&fm_fid=81)

**In writing to:** The Local Government Ombudsman, 53-55 Butts Rd, Coventry CV1 3BH

**More information is available at:** [www.ombudsman-services.org](http://www.ombudsman-services.org)



## Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman

The Ombudsman is the final stage for unresolved complaints that have been made against NHS England, UK government departments and some other public organisations. Complaints must be made to the organisation first.

### Complaints can be raised:

Via specific forms available online at: <https://www.ombudsman.org.uk/making-complaint/complain-us-getting-started/complaint-forms>

More information is available at: <https://www.ombudsman.org.uk/making-complaint#complaint-checker> or 0345 015 4033

## Pension Ombudsman

The Ombudsman can investigate complaints about pension administration and can also consider complaints about the actions and decisions of the Pension Protection Fund and some decisions about the Financial Assistance Scheme. Complaints must be made before contacting the Ombudsman.

### Complaints can be raised:

Online at: <https://www.pensions-ombudsman.org.uk/our-service/make-a-complaint/complaints-form/>

More information is available at: <https://www.pensions-ombudsman.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/POS-complaints-leaflet-final-2016.pdf> or 0800 917 4487

## Prison and Probation Ombudsman

The Ombudsman is designed to investigate complaints made by prisoners, young people in detention (prisons and secure training centres), offenders under probation supervision and immigration detainees.

It is also established to investigate deaths of prisoners, young people in detention, approved premises' residents and immigration detainees due to any cause, including any apparent suicides and natural causes.

**Complaints can be raised:** within three months since the final stage of the complaint has been received.

**In writing to:** Prisons and Probation Ombudsman, PO Box 70769, London, SE1P 4XY

**Email:** (general & complaints): [mail@ppo.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:mail@ppo.gsi.gov.uk)

(fatal incidents): [PPOFIAdmin@ppo.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:PPOFIAdmin@ppo.gsi.gov.uk)

**Phone:** 020 7633 4100 or 0845 010 7938

**More information is available at:** <https://www.ppo.gov.uk/investigations/make-complaint/how-to-make-a-complaint-dvd/>