



# Customer Feedback Policy

This policy is to inform customers of the methods of providing feedback to the Council and what the Council will do with any feedback received.

## Document Control / Supporting Information

|                              |                           |
|------------------------------|---------------------------|
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## Introduction

At Derby City Council, we aim to deliver high quality services with our customers at the heart of everything we do. We are passionate about developing and improving services and welcome all feedback from customers. We aim to deal with comments and concerns in a fair and consistent way. We want to learn from what went well, as well as any mistakes we have made, so that we can improve our services.

You can complain if you think:

- We did something wrong
- We didn't do something well enough
- We didn't do something quickly enough
- We were rude or inconsiderate

You can make a complaint yourself, or you can ask someone to help you, for example, advocates, a friend or your local Councillor or MP. If you are complaining on behalf of someone else, we need to make sure you have their permission to do so.

This could be with a signed declaration, or we may contact them to make sure they are happy for us to proceed with the complaint. If you are complaining on behalf of someone who may not be able to give their permission, we will check to make sure you have the authority to act on their behalf.

### What is not covered under the customer feedback policy?

- [A request for information or service](#) [A request under the data protection act](#)
- [A request under the freedom of information act](#)
- Anything that is under investigation by an insurance provider
- Anything that is currently in legal proceedings

**Complaints about Council policies** - these will be logged as a comment. You will still get a response from the service if you ask for one, and we will look at comments received when we are reviewing the policy.

**Complaints about schools** – each School is required to have its own complaints procedure. Please contact the school directly.

**Complaints relating to Derby Homes (Management Company of our Council Houses)** – these should be directed to [Derby Homes](#).

**Health** – Health Watch Derby can assist customers with a range of complaints and concerns regarding health and social care. <https://www.healthwatchderby.co.uk/>

**Reviews and tribunals** - Some services have their own review or tribunal processes, and these are not covered under the complaints policy.

These include:

- [Parking or other traffic fines](#)
- [Education, health and care plans and special educational provision](#)
- [Schools admissions](#)
- [Benefits applications](#)
- [Planning applications](#)
- [Conduct of councillors](#)

**Time limit** - Complaints should be made within 12 months of the issue arising. If a complaint relates to something more than 12 months old, we may not be able to investigate it.

### How can I give feedback?

You can tell us about a complaint, provide positive feedback or a comment using our Customer Services online form - this will immediately log your complaint or comment onto our system. You will receive an automatic notification that your feedback has been received.

If you prefer, you can also call or write to our customer feedback team using the details below:

|                               |  |
|-------------------------------|--|
| Online                        | <a href="http://Derby.gov.uk/myaccount">Derby.gov.uk/myaccount</a>   |
| By telephone, minicom or text | Telephone: 01332 643498<br>Minicom: 01332 640666<br>Text: 07812 300571   |
| In writing                    | Send a letter to:<br>Customer Feedback<br>Derby City Council<br>The Council House<br>Corporation Street<br>Derby DE1 2FS |

We are present on a variety of social media platforms. You can make a complaint in this way, but it will not be treated as a formal complaint.

We can provide information on request on how to give feedback in other community languages, and other ways such as Braille, Sign Video, large print and we will make reasonable adjustments for disabled customers.

We can also put you in touch with an independent person who can speak on your behalf, help with translation or interpretation, or provide any other help needed at any stage in the feedback procedure.

## **What happens when we receive your feedback?**

All feedback will be recorded on our system and acknowledged within two working days of when we receive it.

**Compliments** will be shared with the service or member of staff it relates to. You can also nominate staff for formal recognition via our website.

**Comments** (either positive or negative) in relation to a policy will be sent to the relevant Head of Service to enable them to take any action if necessary. When we review our policies, we take into consideration any comments made about a policy, however in some circumstances, we may need to take immediate action to improve our policies or working practises, for example where a comment relates to equality and diversity or safeguarding. If you have stated that you require a response to your comment, we will aim to respond within 10 working days.

**Complaints** are dealt with under our two stage complaints process. If for any reason we cannot review a complaint under this feedback procedure, we will write to you within 10 working days to explain why.

When things go wrong, our aim is to put things right as quickly as possible. Our staff are trained to deal with routine issues as they arise, so we ask that you raise the issue with the service before making a formal complaint.

**Stage One:** Our aim is to investigate your complaint and give you a full response within 10 working days from the date we receive it. If your complaint is about Children's or adult social care or Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), this should be within 20 working days. Sometimes we may need longer to investigate, we will contact you to let you know when this is the case, explain the reasons why, and how long we expect it to take.

If we have made a mistake, we will apologise and try to put things right. We will also explain what actions we intend to take as a result of your complaint, including how we will make sure the same situation does not arise again for you or for other customers. If we think we have acted in accordance with our policies and customer service standards, we will explain how we have come to this decision and what we can do to help.

Customers unhappy with our stage one response for an Adult Social Care complaint will be directed to the Local Government Ombudsman, in line with the Local Authority Social Services and National Health Service complaints (England) Regulations 2009.

**Stage Two:** If you are not happy with our response to your complaint at stage one, you can ask us to look at it again under stage two of the complaint's procedure. You need to contact us within 20 working days of your response, and let us know why you are not happy.

This information will then be reviewed, taking into consideration what has been investigated at stage one and your reasons for why this has not fulfilled your expectations. If we think that the council's response will stay the same, we may confirm a final decision at stage one, however if we agree that a further investigation is required then the matter will be escalated to stage two. Our aim is to investigate your complaint and give you a full response within 20 working days from the date we receive it. Sometimes we may need longer to investigate, we will contact you to let you know when this is the case, explain the reasons why, and how long we expect it to take.

**Local Government Ombudsman:** If you are still not happy with the outcome, you can ask the Local Government Ombudsman to look at your complaint. The Local Government Ombudsman is independent of all government departments and is confidential and free of charge.

You can approach the Ombudsman at any point during the complaints process. However, the Ombudsman will normally accept a complaint only if all stages of the Council's Complaints Procedure have been completed, or if there is insufficient progress made within 12 weeks.

**Local Government Ombudsman**

PO Box 4771

Coventry CV4 0EH

<http://www.lgo.org.uk/contactus/>

Telephone - 0300 061 0614

You can also text 'call back' to 0762 480 3014. And you can contact using a textphone via the Text Relay service (formerly Typetalk)

**Children's Complaints Review Panel:** If your complaint relates to children's social care, following stage 2 you can request for your case to be referred to a panel which will meet within 30 working days. The Panel is made up of three independent people who will review your complaint and how the Council has dealt with it. You will be asked to attend this meeting.

If after reading this policy, you require more information please contact us at [customer.feedback@derby.gov.uk](mailto:customer.feedback@derby.gov.uk) or call 01332 643498 (Minicom: 01332 640666)

# Complaints Process Summary

If you are not happy with our response to your complaint, you can progress to the next stage in our complaints process.

Raise the problem with the service.

The service will respond and try to resolve the problem.

Raise a stage 1 complaint.

We will acknowledge your complaint within 2 working days and will investigate what has gone wrong.

We will contact you within 10 working days (or 20 if your complaint relates to social care) and let you know what we have found.

If we agree that something has gone wrong, we will apologise and let you know what we can do to put the problem right. If we don't agree there was anything wrong, we will explain why and what we can do to help.

Raise a stage 2 complaint.

We will contact you within 20 working days (this can be longer for social care complaints) and let you know what we have found.

If we think the original decision was right, we will write to you and explain why. We will also let you know what we can do to help or where you can go for further help. If we agree that something has gone wrong, we will investigate the stage 2 complaint.

If we agree that something has gone wrong, we will apologise and let you know what we can do to put the problem right.

If you are still not happy...

You can contact the Local Government Ombudsman and ask them to look at our decision.

## Dealing with unreasonable complainant behaviour

Our aim is to deal with feedback including complaints in an open, fair and proportionate way to make the feedback procedure as open and accessible as possible. However, a small number of complainants may, because of the nature or frequency of their contact with the service, hinder the consideration of their complaint, or other people's interactions with the department. In these cases, actions and behaviour from such complainants are considered to be unacceptable.

Examples of unreasonable behaviour (which can be habitual and/or vexatious) include...

- Refusal to identify the precise issues that the complainant wishes to be investigated, despite reasonable efforts by staff to help them identify their concerns and the remedies required or refusing in any other way to co-operate with the investigation.
- Refusing to accept that certain issues are not within the scope of the complaints procedure or insisting that their complaint is dealt with outside the process.
- Making excessive demands for action or information that would impact substantially and unreasonably on the work of the Council, for example, raising numerous, detailed but unimportant questions and insisting that they are answered.
- Persistent pursuit of a complaint after the feedback procedure has been fully and properly implemented and exhausted.
- Changing the basis of the complaint as the investigation proceeds or submitting new or modified complaints before the Council has had an opportunity to investigate fully.
- Raising frequent complaints about the same or overlapping issue(s) with different departments.

Very occasionally, complainants may act deceitfully by forging documents, making covert recordings of meetings, adopting false identities and so on. This behaviour is unacceptable and could result in the investigation of the complaint being suspended.

In a few cases complainants become abusive, offensive, threatening or otherwise behave unacceptably. In response, we may have to restrict access to our premises or staff. Where the behaviour is so extreme that it threatens the immediate safety or welfare of our staff or property, we may report the matter to the police or consider taking legal action.

For the purpose of this policy, abuse, aggression or violence is defined as 'an incident in which employees feel they have been verbally abused, threatened or attacked in circumstances relating to their duties either in or out of work', including, but not limited to:



- physical attack - whether visible injury occurs or not
- animal attack - when an animal is used as a threat
- verbal abuse - when an employee feels threatened or intimidated and the abuse is personally directed. This also includes cyber-aggression through texts, email messages or social networking sites
- any derogatory comments or behaviour in relation to age, disability, gender, gender identity, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, religion and belief, race, sexual orientation – in some areas this can constitute a hate crime
- attack or damage to property or belongings of the employee or the Council
- any work-related incident involving an employee, or their family, which happens away from the workplace.

Investigating officers will raise their concerns about behaviour with their service director, who will make the judgement as to whether complainant behaviour is unreasonable.

### **How we will deal with unreasonable behaviour**

In most instances when we consider someone's behaviour is unreasonable, we will explain why and ask them to change it. At this point, we will also warn them that, if the behaviour continues, we will take action to limit their contact with our offices. Following this, we may take one or more steps to manage our interactions with the complainant:

- Help the complainant find a suitable independent person to assist them in making and pursuing their complaint, where the complainant has different needs.
- Develop a signed agreement setting out a code of behaviour that the complainant must adhere to.
- Restrict or prohibit access to Council premises.
- Limit communication with the complainant to one format (e.g. letter, telephone) and to a named point of contact.
- Confirm in writing that the investigation is complete and that further communications with respect to the matter will be acknowledged but not answered.
- Refuse to register and process further complaints about the same matter.
- Suspend (either temporarily or permanently) the investigation and all contact with the complainant whilst we seek guidance from the Legal Department or the Ombudsman.

A complainant who has been treated as having behaved unreasonably may make a complaint to the Local Government Ombudsman about it (refer to

section 6), if they believe the Council's actions were not proportionate or were unjust.

The steps to deal with unreasonable complainant behaviour will not have any adverse effect on any other interactions the complainant may have with the Council, nor does it exclude them from providing genuine feedback about other issues.

We can give you this information in any other way, style or language that will help you access it. Please contact us on **01332 640000** or **[derby.gov.uk/signing-service/](http://derby.gov.uk/signing-service/)**

### **Punjabi**

ਇਹ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਅਸੀਂ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਕਿਸੇ ਵੀ ਹੋਰ ਤਰੀਕੇ ਨਾਲ, ਕਿਸੇ ਵੀ ਹੋਰ ਰੂਪ ਜਾਂ ਬੋਲੀ ਵਿੱਚ ਦੇ ਸਕਦੇ ਹਾਂ, ਜਿਹੜੀ ਇਸ ਤੱਕ ਪਹੁੰਚ ਕਰਨ ਵਿੱਚ ਤੁਹਾਡੀ ਸਹਾਇਤਾ ਕਰ ਸਕਦੀ ਹੋਵੇ। ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਸਾਡੇ ਨਾਲ ਇੱਥੇ ਸੰਪਰਕ ਕਰੋ: **01332 640000** ਜਾਂ **[derby.gov.uk/signing-service/](http://derby.gov.uk/signing-service/)**

### **Polish**

Aby ułatwić Państwu dostęp do tych informacji, możemy je Państwu przekazać w innym formacie, stylu lub języku. Prosimy o kontakt: **01332 640000** lub **[derby.gov.uk/signing-service/](http://derby.gov.uk/signing-service/)**

### **Slovak**

Túto informáciu vám môžeme poskytnúť iným spôsobom, štýlom alebo v inom jazyku, ktorý vám pomôže k jej sprístupneniu. Prosím, kontaktujte nás na tel. č.: **01332 640000** alebo na stránke **[derby.gov.uk/signing-service/](http://derby.gov.uk/signing-service/)**

### **Urdu**

یہ معلومات ہم آپ کو کسی دیگر ایسے طریقے، انداز اور زبان میں مہیا کر سکتے ہیں جو اس تک رسائی میں آپ کی مدد کرے۔ براہ کرم **01332 640000** یا **[derby.gov.uk/signing-service/](http://derby.gov.uk/signing-service/)** پر ہم سے رابطہ کریں



Derby City Council

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