



Complaints policy



How to complain and what we will do

About this policy



We are Carmarthenshire County Council.



We always try to give you the best service.



But we know that sometimes things can go wrong. You might not be happy with the service you get from us.



If you complain, you tell us you are not happy.



You may be unhappy because:

- we did something wrong. This includes anyone who works for or with us in any way



- we didn't do something we said we would



- you are not happy with something we did or how you were treated



Complaints help us learn from things we have done wrong. We can use this to make our services better in future.



This policy says what we will do when someone makes a complaint.

A **policy** is a set of rules about how we do things.

What happens if you complain



We will take your complaint seriously



We will treat you fairly and with respect.



You will not be treated differently because of your complaint.



We will talk to you and send you information in the way that is best for you.



It is best you tell us about a problem within 6 months of it happening.



If someone else complains for you, we will check that you have given permission.

This means you agree to the person speaking up for you.



We might need to see some proof that you have given permission. This could be a letter or an email.

Times when we cannot help



We cannot help with a complaint if you are:

- **appealing** a decision.

Appeal means when you ask us to think again about something.



This could be things like:

- a parking fine

or



- a school place for your child



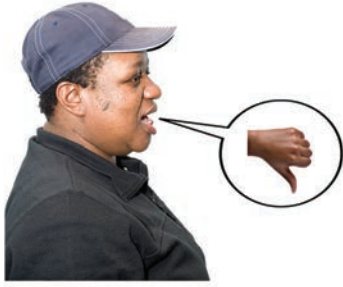
- **taking legal action.** Legal action means when you go to court to solve a problem



- complaining about something that happened more than 3 years ago



If we think we cannot help you, we will tell you.



1 **2**

How to complain

We have 2 stages on how to complain. This booklet tells you how they work.

How to complain: Stage 1



Tell us why you are unhappy.



You can talk to a member of our staff.



Or you can contact us:

Online:

www.carmarthenshire.gov.uk



By email:

complaints@carmarthenshire.gov.uk



By phone:
01267 224488



By post:
Carmarthenshire County Council
County Hall
Carmarthen
SA31 1JP



You can also ask our staff for a paper copy of our complaints form.



Our staff will listen to what you tell us and take it seriously.

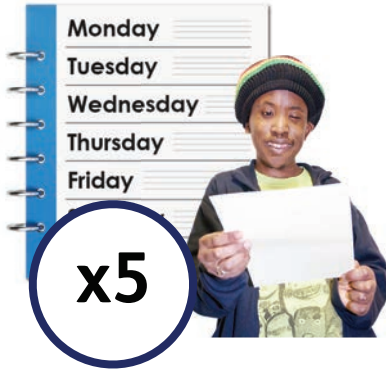


We will try and sort things out as quickly as possible.



What will happen next:

The Complaints Team will look into your complaint straightaway.



The team will write to you to let you know they have got your complaint within 5 days



We will try to sort out your problem within 10 working days.

How to complain: Stage 2



If we cannot fix the problem, we will ask another member of our staff to look at it.

Or if you are not happy with what we said at stage 1, you can ask us to look at your complaint again.



We will make sure staff who look at your complaint were not involved in what happened.



We will tell you who we have asked to look into your complaint.



The person who will be looking into your complaint will:

- contact you to make sure we understand your complaint properly



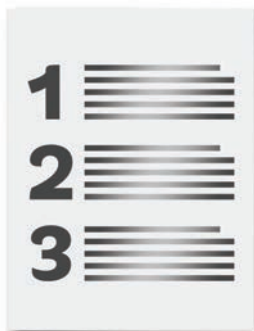
- look at what you told us about the problem



- look at what we said about it



- look at what you want to happen to sort out the problem



We might ask you for more information to help us look at your complaint.



We might arrange a meeting to talk about the problem with you.



The person looking into your complaint will decide if:

- we have looked at your complaint fairly

and



- there is anything else we can do to sort out the problem



We will try to let you know what we have found out within 20 days.



If it will take longer, we will tell you why. We will:

- tell you how long we think it will take



- keep in touch with you to let you know what will happen next

What happens when we have decided what to do about your complaint



We will write to you to let you know:

- what we have found out

and

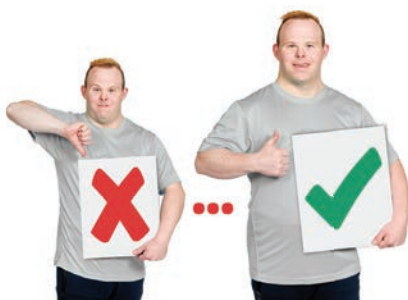
- what we will do to sort out the problem



We will do our best to put things right.



If we have made a mistake, we will say sorry.



We will tell you why things went wrong and how we will put them right.

Ombudsman



If you are still not happy, you can ask the Ombudsman to look into your complaint.



The Ombudsman will look at how we have dealt with your complaint. They will check we have:

- looked at your complaint properly and fairly



- done the best we can to help you with your complaint



The Ombudsman might ask us to think again about your complaint.

You can contact the ombudsman:



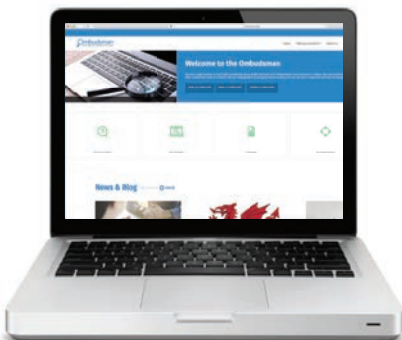
By phone

0300 790 0203



By email

ask@ombudsman.wales



Online

www.ombudsman.wales



By post:

**Public Services Ombudsman for
Wales**

1 Ffordd yr Hen Gae

Pencoed

CF35 5LJ



If you want to complain about getting services in Welsh, you can talk to the Welsh Language Commissioner's Office.



We can give you more information about these organisations.

Checking our policy is working



We will keep records every time someone complains.



We will make changes to this policy if we need to.



We will try to find better ways of working in future.

Useful contacts

If you need extra support to complain, you can talk to:



Citizens Advice

Phone:

0800 702 2020



Online:

www.citizensadvice.org.uk/wales/



Age Cymru

Phone:

0300 303 44 98



Online:

www.ageuk.org.uk/cymru/#



Shelter Cymru

Phone:

08000 495 495



Online:

sheltercymru.org.uk

If you are younger than age 18, you can get some support to complain.



Meic

Phone:

0808 802 3456



Online:

www.meiccymru.org

Children's Commissioner for Wales



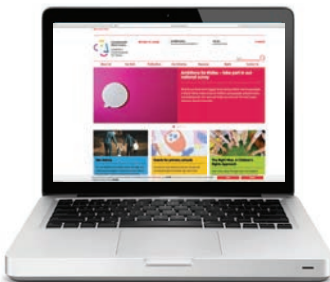
Phone:

0808 801 1000



Email:

post@childcomwales.org.uk



Online:

www.childcom.org.uk