

Complaints and Compliments

Help us to improve our Social Services

Making a Complaint

Any member of the public, including a child, who has received, or was entitled to receive a service from Social Services, may make a complaint.

You may make a complaint on behalf of someone else, where that person:

- Is a child
- Has requested you to act on their behalf
- Lacks capacity
- Has died (as long as you have a legitimate reason for acting on behalf of this person).

We always aim for high standards but sometimes things do go wrong. If you are unhappy with the service you have received from Social Services then please tell us. We can then use this feedback to improve our services.

This factsheet explains how the Council will work with our customers to resolve complaints. Guidance from the Welsh Government tells us how we must do this.

What is a complaint?

A complaint is:

- An expression of dissatisfaction or concern
- Either written or spoken or made by any other communication method
- Made by one or more members of the public
- About a public service provider's actions or lack of action; or
- About the standard of service provided

A complaint is not:

- An initial request for a service
- A formal review or appeal against a decision or determination
- A means to seek change to legislation or a 'properly made' policy decision
- A means for lobbying groups / organisations to seek to promote a cause
- A complaint made by an organisation or individual not receiving a service from Social Services and who is not acting on behalf of a customer.

Looking after your personal information

If you make a complaint, we will respect your right to confidentiality. Although we will need to share the information you give us with others who might be dealing with your complaint, we will only do this if necessary. We will not pass on any information unless we have to do so by law, and will only pass on as much as is necessary.

The complaint process

A complaint should usually be made within 12 months of a person becoming aware of the problem.

A complaint can be made in writing (letter or email) or orally (by phone or in-person).

There are **two stages** to the process.

Stage 1 - Local Resolution

We will acknowledge receipt of your complaint within **2 working days**.

In an attempt to resolve matters, we will offer to discuss your complaint with you (either face to face or by telephone). This discussion must take place within **10 working days** of the date of acknowledgement. Following the discussion, we will write to you within **5 working days**.

If you are not satisfied with our response, you can ask for it to progress to **Stage 2**

Stage 2 - Formal Investigation

Within 5 working days of your request for your complaint to be formally investigated, the Complaints Officer will compile a formal written record of your complaint and the outcome that you would like to achieve.

The investigation will not start until you and the Council both agree on what is to be investigated.

The complaint will be investigated by an Independent Investigator (not an employee of Pembrokeshire County Council). An Independent Person will also be appointed for representations from Children Services.

The Independent Investigator will investigate the complaint:

- by undertaking a fact finding exercise
- interviewing those concerned
- prepare a report for the local authority.

The local authority will consider the investigation report and determine whether or not the complaint is upheld and the action to be taken as a consequence. You will then receive a written response to your complaint from the Council. This will outline any further action we intend to take to put things right and any service improvements to be put in place.

We aim to complete all formal investigations within 25 working days (from the start date).

To contact our Complaints Officer

Information Governance & Complaints Team,
County Hall, Haverfordwest, Pembrokeshire,
SA61 1TP

☎: 01437 775503

📠: 01437 776699

✉: SocialCareComplaints@pembrokeshire.gov.uk

Can I ask someone to help me with my complaint?

Children who have received a service and some adults may qualify for help to bring a complaint forward through the assistance of an advocate. We can help put you in touch with an advocate if you qualify for the service.

What if I'm not sure who to complain to?

You may have a complaint about a service we have arranged for you with another provider, such as a residential care home, a home care agency, or a day service. Each organisation will have its own complaints process and we will be happy to help you make a complaint about any of these services.

If your complaint is about something we have provided jointly with another organisation, e.g. a package of care from both health and social care staff, we will look at your complaint together and usually send you one response.

What can I do if I'm still not happy?

If you are dissatisfied with the Council's response to your complaint, you can ask the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales to look into it.

Public Service Ombudsman for Wales
1 Ffordd yr Hen Gae, Pencoed, Bridgend,
CF35 5LJ

☎: 0300 790 0203 (calls charged at local rate)

📠: 01656 641199

✉: ask@ombudsman-wales.org.uk

The **Children's Commissioner for Wales** can support and advise children and young people on their rights.

Children's Commissioner for Wales

Oystermouth House, Charter Court,
Phoenix Way, Llansamlet, Swansea,
SA7 9FS

☎: 01792 765600

✉: post@childcomwales.org.uk

www.childcomwales.org.uk

Could I complain to anyone else?

The **Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW)** regulates all care services in Wales. You can complain directly to them about social care received from care homes and home care agencies, as well as services run by the Council.

CIW

South West Region, Government Buildings,
Picton Terrace, Carmarthen, SA31 3BT

☎: 0300 7900 126

📠: 0872 4377 301

✉: ciw@gov.wales

The **Care Council for Wales** regulates professional social care workers and has the power to look into allegations of misconduct.

Care Council for Wales

South Gate House, Wood Street, Cardiff,
CF10 1EW

☎: 0300 303 3444

📠: 029 2038 4764

✉: info@ccwales.org.uk

www.ccwales.org.uk

What if I have a compliment ?

If you are pleased with a service you have received from Social Services or the way that we have dealt with you then please tell us so that we can learn from this. Please send to:

**Information Governance & Complaints,
Pembrokeshire County Council,
Haverfordwest, SA61 1TP**

✉: compliments@pembrokeshire.gov.uk

www.pembrokeshire.gov.uk - Click on 'Your Council' then 'Compliments and Comments' and follow the instructions on screen.

Can I get other advice or help?

The following organisations may be able to help you in making a complaint.

General Advice

Pembrokeshire Citizens Advice Bureau

43 Cartlett, Haverfordwest, SA61 2LH

or

38 Meyrick Street, Pembroke Dock,
SA72 6UT

☎: No direct line

✉: advice@pembcab.org.uk

www.pembrokeshirecab.org.uk

General Advocacy

Dewis

Suite 3b, Cedar Court, Milford Haven,
SA73 3LS

☎: 01646 629123

✉: advocacy@dewiscil.org.uk

www.dewiscil.org.uk

Mental Health

Advocacy West Wales

36/38 High Street, Haverfordwest, SA61 2DA

☎: 01437 762935

✉: admin@advocacywestwales.org.uk

www.advocacywestwales.org.uk

Older People

Age Cymru Pembrokeshire

37 Merlins Hill, Haverfordwest, SA61 1PE

☎: 01437 769972

Adults with Learning Disabilities

Pembrokeshire People First

Portcullis House, Old Hakin Road,
Haverfordwest, SA61 1XE

☎: 01437 769135

www.pembrokeshirepeople1st.org.uk

Carers (including young carers)

Pembrokeshire Association of Voluntary Services (PAVS)

36-38 High Street, Haverfordwest, SA61 2DA

☎: 01437 769422

Email: enquiries@pavs.org.uk

Children with Learning Disabilities

Action for Children

Penffynnon, Hawthorn Rise, Haverfordwest,
SA61 2AX

☎: 01437 761330

www.actionforchildren.org.uk

Advocacy for Children and Young People tgp Cymru

FREEPHONE: 0800 8000 038

✉: midandwestwales@tgpcymru.org.uk