

# A Guide to help you....

Make a complaint

Return the form or write to:

**The Complaints Team**  
**Strategic Support**  
**West Berkshire Council**  
Market Street  
Newbury  
Berkshire  
RG14 5LD

e-mail: [complaints@westberks.gov.uk](mailto:complaints@westberks.gov.uk)  
[www.westberks.gov.uk/complaints](http://www.westberks.gov.uk/complaints)

We are committed to being accessible to everyone.  
If you require this document in an alternative format  
or translation, please call The Complaints Team on  
Telephone 01635 519441..



## Complaints

Before you make a complaint there may be another way we can help you. You might want to report a problem that you'd like us to fix or report a missed bin collection. You can report these issues by using the links on the Council's website.

If you still want to make a complaint, it is helpful if you explain why you are unhappy and what you think should be done to resolve the problem. More information on the Corporate Complaints Process can be found below and on the Council's website: [www.westberks.gov.uk/complaints](http://www.westberks.gov.uk/complaints)

If your complaint is about Social Care Services you receive, there is a different complaints process. Contact details for these services are;

Children and Family Services Complaints

e-mail: [csc@westberks.gov.uk](mailto:csc@westberks.gov.uk)

Telephone: **01635 519787**

Adult Social Care Complaints

e-mail: [complaintsadultsocialcare@westberks.gov.uk](mailto:complaintsadultsocialcare@westberks.gov.uk)

Telephone: **01635 503391**

If you wish to make a complaint about a Councillor, or about how a Council meeting was conducted, this should be directed to the Council's Standards Committee. More information on this process can be found on the Council's website: [www.westberks.gov.uk/ceccomplaints](http://www.westberks.gov.uk/ceccomplaints)

## How we deal with Corporate complaints

There is a simple three stage process for corporate complaints.

### Stage 1- Informal resolution

You may write a letter, use the form on the website, email us or use the enclosed form to complain. Please send your complaint to the Complaints Team using the address on the back of this leaflet.

We will acknowledge your complaint and a senior officer in the Service will investigate and respond within 10 working days. If we need more time to investigate your complaint, we will write to you to advise you when we hope to provide a final response.

If we find the Council has failed to provide the level of service you should expect we will apologise, and seek to put things right. We welcome your views of what needs to be done to resolve any problem.

### Stage 2- Formal investigation

If you are still unhappy once the investigation at Stage 1 has finished, you can ask to have your complaint reviewed more formally by the Complaints Manager. Our response at Stage 1 will advise you how to do this. We will acknowledge your request for a review (Stage 2), and seek to respond within 20 working days. If we need more time to investigate your complaint we will write to you to advise you when we hope to provide a final response.

### Stage 3- An Ombudsman Review

We will try to resolve most complaints internally, but if you are still unhappy after your complaint has gone through the Stage 1 and Stage 2 processes, you may then refer your complaint to the Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman (LGO), who will carry out an independent review.

The LGO will not normally accept a complaint which has not been considered under the Council's internal Complaints process first.

To make a complaint to the Ombudsman, contact the Advice Team:

[www.lgo.org.uk/make-a-complaint](http://www.lgo.org.uk/make-a-complaint)

Tel: **0300 061 0614** between 8.30am-5pm Mon-Fri

Or write to:

The Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman,  
PO Box 4771, Coventry, CV4 0EH

The Ombudsman will investigate your complaint and suggest ways to resolve it. This may include the Council taking some action to put things right, or a payment for costs or time and trouble. If the Ombudsman considers that there has been fault by the Council, they may also suggest ways to improve our processes in future.

The authority and the LGO will not usually consider a complaint where another process (an Appeal, judicial review or other statutory provision) exists to resolve the issue.