



# A Guide to our Complaints Procedure

**What to do if you feel our service has  
failed to meet your expectations**

Suffolk Coastal District Council provides a wide range of services for its residents. It is our intention to offer the best service possible, but there may be occasions when you feel dissatisfied. If this is the case, we would like to know and to have the opportunity of putting matters right.

This leaflet is designed to help you make a formal complaint if you feel:

- *we have done something wrong*
- *we have failed in our service delivery*
- *we have failed in our service performance*

### ***Step 1* CONTACT US**

If you have a problem, get in touch with our Customer Services Team on (01394) 383789 who can help. Most problems can be resolved “on the spot” but for those that may take a little longer we will make sure you are kept fully informed.

### ***Step 2* A FORMAL COMPLAINT**

We hope we can resolve your complaint by the first step.

If you are dissatisfied with our response you should contact us and we will arrange for the relevant Head of Service to investigate your complaint. You should explain your complaint and outline the steps taken so far to obtain satisfaction.

We have included a form in this leaflet to help you to do this. Alternatively you can telephone, write or email us. Our contact details are on the back of this leaflet.

The Head of Service will normally reply to you fully within 15 working days. It may take a bit longer if the matter is complex or we need to contact other organisations. We will keep you informed of what action is being taken.

If you would like independent advice to make a formal complaint, you can get help from your local Citizens Advice Bureau at Felixstowe on (01394) 275958 or Leiston on (01728) 832193.

You also have the right to complain to your local Councillor. If you do not know who he/she is, contact the Customer Services Team on (01394) 383789. If you complain to your local Councillor, he or she may contact the officer concerned on your behalf. You will then receive a reply from the Head of Service, telling you the action that will be taken. Your local Councillor will get a copy of the same letter.

### ***Step 3* TAKING YOUR COMPLAINT FURTHER**

If having taken steps 1 and 2 you are still not satisfied, you can ask for your complaint to be dealt with by the Council's Chief Executive, who will carry out an independent investigation and tell you the outcome within 20 working days.

### ***Step 4* THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT OMBUDSMAN**

You may also take your complaint to the Government Ombudsman, who works independently of the Council. He can be contacted at The Commission for Local Administration in England, 10th Floor, Millbank Tower, Millbank, London SW1P 4QP, telephone 020 7217 4620, website [www.lgo.org.uk](http://www.lgo.org.uk). However, the Ombudsman will usually expect you to try to get your complaint settled by the Council first. Any complaint to the Ombudsman must involve more than a disagreement with the Council and needs to show that something went wrong and an injustice was caused.

If you would like to make a complaint, please complete this form and return it to us at the address shown overleaf. Please help us to help you by giving as much information as you can - if there is insufficient space you can provide more information on separate sheets of paper and send them together with this form.

Name *(Block capitals)*

.....

*Your identity will not be revealed to the public or press)*

Address

.....

.....

..... **Post Code**.....

Telephone *(home)*.....

Telephone *(work)*.....

Email

.....

## **YOUR COMPLAINT**

Which service of Suffolk Coastal District Council do you have a complaint about?

.....

.....

What do you think we have done wrong or failed to do?

.....



## How do we make sure we treat everyone fairly?

We recognise and value all of the people in Suffolk Coastal and want to make sure that they can all access our services. The information we ask for here helps us check that we treat all groups fairly and do not discriminate against you. Please answer the following questions to help us meet the changing needs of our customers.

Your answers will be completely confidential and will only be used for statistical purposes in which individuals will not be identified. Please note that you do not have to fill in this monitoring information.

Are you:      **Male**            **Female**     

Do you have a disability?      **Yes**            **No**     

**Age Group:**

**Under 18**            **18-25**            **26-40**     

**41-55**            **56-65**            **65+**     

**What do you consider your ethnic origin to be?**

**White**

**British**            **Irish**     

**Other including mixed white**       **please specify:**

**Mixed**

**White and Black Caribbean**

**White and Black African**

**White and Asian**

**Any other mixed background**  **please specify:**

**Asian or Asian British**

**Indian**  **Pakistani**

**Bangladeshi**  **Other Asian**  **please specify:**

**Black or Black British**

**Caribbean**  **African**

**Other Black or Black British**  **please specify:**

**Chinese or other Ethnic Group**

**Chinese**  **Other**  **please specify:**

## Why we want to hear from you

Although we want to hear from you if you feel you need to complain, we would also like to hear any comments you have about our overall service performance. We want to provide the best possible service and your comments will help us to know what we are doing well, and also what we need to improve on.

## For more information about Council services

You can visit the Council's website on [www.suffolkcoastal.gov.uk](http://www.suffolkcoastal.gov.uk) or you can telephone the Customer Services Team on (01394) 444838. The staff will be pleased to help you.

**Suffolk Coastal District Council  
Melton Hill  
Woodbridge  
Suffolk IP12 1AU**

**telephone (01394) 383789**

**email: [customerservices@suffolkcoastal.gov.uk](mailto:customerservices@suffolkcoastal.gov.uk)**

**website: [www.suffolkcoastal.gov.uk](http://www.suffolkcoastal.gov.uk)**



**Suffolk Coastal ... *where quality of life counts***