

Local Government &
Social Care
OMBUDSMAN



How to complain about a council



Easyread version

Who we are

We are called the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman.

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Social Care
OMBUDSMAN



An ombudsman is someone who looks into complaints for people.

About us

We are the people to talk to if you have a complaint about a council.



We are the people to talk to if you have a complaint about an organisation that provides care for adults.





If you are not sure if we can help, please call us and ask.



We decide things fairly and do not take sides.



We do not charge money to look at your complaint.

What we can do

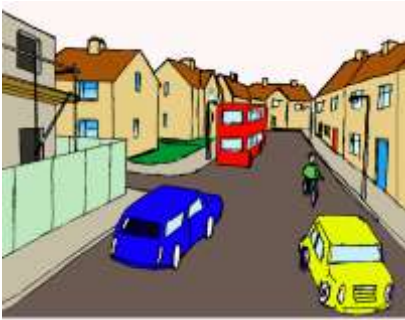


We can look at complaints about most council services.



These are things like:

- applications for planning permission



- transport and roads



- anti-social behaviour



- environmental health (this could be things like the council not emptying your dustbins)



- having nowhere to live



- how to get a house



- some schools



- social care for adults.

What we look at



We can look at complaints about things that have gone wrong if they have caused problems for you.



We might say the council has done something wrong if they:



- made mistakes



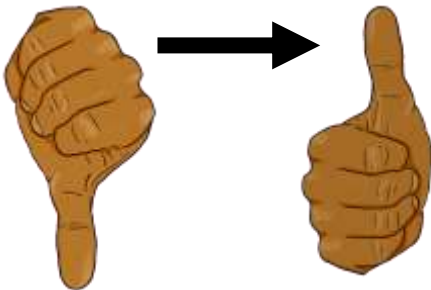
- gave you poor or no service



- took too long to do something



- gave you information that was wrong.



If we decide the council has done something wrong, we will try to get the council to put it right.

What we cannot do



We cannot look at what a council has done just because you do not like it.



We cannot look at what has gone wrong if it has not caused problems for you.



Sometimes we cannot look at a complaint because there is someone else who should look at it. If this happens, we will tell you who that is.

Making a complaint



If you have a complaint you should go to the council first. They have to look at your complaint before we will.



| 12 weeks | | | | | | |
|----------|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 |
| 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 |
| 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 |
| 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 | | | |

If you are not happy with the council's answer or if they do not give you an answer in 12 weeks, you can complain to us.

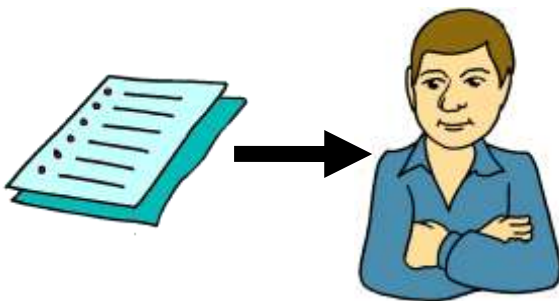


If you leave your complaint for over a year we might not be able to help.

How we will look at your complaint



We will look at what you tell us and how it affected you.



We will let you see the information we use to make our decision.



There is another Ombudsman which looks at complaints about organisations that provide health care.



This is called the Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman.



We have a team of people from the Local Government Ombudsman and the Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman who work together.



This team can look at organisations which provide health care and organisations which provide care services for adults. This includes councils.



We will tell you if we think this team needs to look at your complaint.



We will ask you if it is okay to let people who work for the Parliamentary and Health Service see your information.



Our work is private so we will not tell anyone you have made a complaint.



If we give you information when we are looking at your complaint you must not give it to people who work for the media.



What will happen on my complaint?

We will make a decision on your complaint.



We might agree with you that the council has done something wrong.



We might say how the council should put things right.



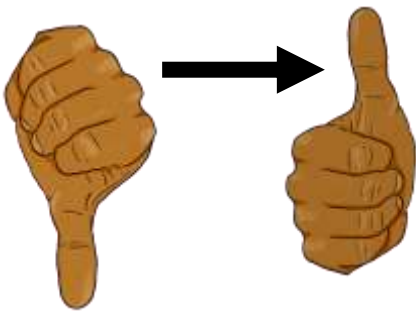
We might not ask the council to do anything if they have already put things right.



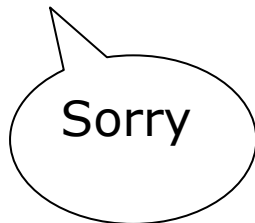
We might not ask the council to do anything if what went wrong did not affect you a lot.



We might not agree with you. We might decide that the council has not done anything wrong.



If we think the council has done something wrong we might ask them to:



- say sorry to you



- take the action they should have done before



- make a decision they should have done before



- give you the service they should have done before



- look at the decision they did not make properly



- make their rules better so this mistake does not happen to other people



- pay you some money.



Putting decisions on our website

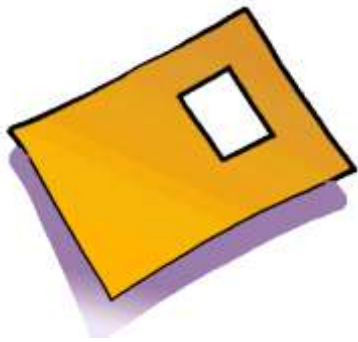
We put our decisions on our website.



We will not use your real name or the real name of anyone else involved in the complaint.



We will not put information on our website if we think people might know who you are.



We might write a report about your complaint.



We will write a report if we think other councils could learn from the mistakes that were made.



This is so the mistakes do not happen to other people.



How to complain

It is best you call us on the phone and tell us about your complaint.



We can take down the details over the phone so you do not have to write it down.



Call:
0300 061 0614



Internet:
www.lgo.org.uk



What you need

We want everyone to be able to use our service.



Tell us if you want us to communicate with you in a different way.



We will do our best to communicate with you in the way that you have asked.



What we can do depends on the time and money we have.

We call this leaflet 'How to complain about a council'.

We last changed this leaflet in June 2017.

We have another leaflet called 'How to complain about adult social care and support'.

Please ask us to send you a copy in Easyread.