

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

What to do if you are unhappy with a Council service

The Council is proud of the standards that we achieve but realise that, even in the best-run organisations, things do go wrong.

We welcome your views and, on the reverse, is a form so you can let us know your comments, compliments or complaints.

With regard to complaints, in order to rectify any mistakes that happen, and to make sure they are not repeated, we have put in place a simple but wide-ranging complaints procedure:

Stage 1 - To the Department

The people who can best deal with any problems you have are those who directly provide the service. If you are not happy with the way you have been treated by the Council, you should contact the Department concerned.

You may complain in person, by telephone, in writing, or via our website

www.dover.gov.uk/customerservices In many cases it will be possible to deal with your complaint straightaway and a telephone call to let you know we have resolved your problem may be enough.

The department aim to respond within 10 working days.

Stage 2 - To the Corporate Services Team

If you are unhappy with the outcome of Stage 1, you can ask that the Council's Corporate Services Team consider the matter. A stage 2 investigation can take up to 20 working days. We would normally expect the department to have responded to the complaint before the matter is considered by Corporate Services.

Complaints can be made on-line at:

<https://www.dover.gov.uk/Customerservices/Complaints/Complaints.aspx>

or in writing to:

Corporate Services, Dover District Council,
White Cliffs Business Park, Dover, Kent CT16 3PJ
Tel: 01304 872322 or
email: complaints@dover.gov.uk

Issues that the complaint procedure cannot address

Certain issues fall outside the complaint's procedure such as:

- Something you have known about for more than 12 months unless there is good reason for the delay
- Something you could appeal about to a tribunal (such as the Housing Benefit Appeals Service) or go to court about, unless there is a good reason why you should not be expected to do so
- Something affecting all or most of the people living in the district, such as a complaint regarding the setting of council tax
- Planning decisions, which the complaints process cannot overturn
- The Council has separate complaint procedures for dealing with complaints against Councillors and Staff. If you wish to make such a complaint, please telephone Corporate Services for information on 01304 872322.

Government Ombudsmen

We hope our procedure will resolve any problems you may have but if you are still dissatisfied you can make a complaint to the relevant Ombudsman. The Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman is an independent service which investigates complaints against most of our services. The Housing Ombudsman Service deals with complaints in respect of housing issues experienced by our tenants.

Details of the Ombudsmen are:

The Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman
PO Box 4771
Coventry CV4 0EH
Telephone: 0300 061 0614
Website: <https://www.lgo.org.uk/>

The Housing Ombudsman Service
PO Box 152
Liverpool L33 7WQ
Telephone: 0300 111 3000
Website: <https://www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk/>

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE FORM

Please complete in BLOCK CAPITALS providing as much information as possible, using additional paper if necessary and then post to:

Corporate Services, Dover District Council, White Cliffs Business Park, Dover, Kent CT16 3PJ

Name:

Address:

Telephone number where you can be contacted:

Email:

What do you think we did well, wrong or did not do?

How have you been affected by this?

What should we do to put things right or improve the service?

If you wish to complain please complete the section below:

On what date were you first aware of this matter?

Have you complained to the relevant department? Yes No

If yes: To which person did you complain?

On what date did you complain?

Was your complaint in writing? Yes No

If yes: To which person did you complain?

On what date did you complain?

Your signature: Date:

This information will be held on computer in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998.