



The Winchester Beacon Complaints Policy

Complaints Policy

1. Purpose

We aim to deliver consistently high standards. When we fall short, we welcome complaints as opportunities to put things right, learn, and improve. This policy sets out how customers and stakeholders can complain, how we will respond, and how we use feedback to drive continuous improvement.

2. Scope

This policy applies to complaints from residents, prospective customers, suppliers, partners, and members of the public. It excludes employee grievances, whistleblowing, and routine service requests which are handled under separate policies.

3. Definitions

A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction, whether justified or not, where a response or resolution is expected. A complainant is the individual or organisation raising the issue.

4. Guiding principles

We handle complaints according to principles of accessibility, timeliness, fairness, confidentiality, accountability, and continuous learning.

5. How to complain

Complaints may be submitted by email, post, or via our website. Complainants should provide their contact details, a description of the issue, relevant dates, and the desired outcome.

Emails should be addressed to CEO@winchesterbeacon.org.uk

Telephone 01962 862050

Or write to Complaints

20b Jewry Street

Winchester

SO23 8RZ

6. Timeframes and stages

Stage 1: Acknowledge within 2 working days; resolution within 10 working days. Stage 2: Formal review within 20 working days. Stage 3: Final appeal within 20 working days.

7. Responsibilities

Frontline teams handle Stage 1. The Complaints Manager oversees the process. Senior leadership handles escalations and systemic improvements.

8. Investigation standards

Investigations must be impartial, evidence-based, well-documented, and compliant with data protection standards.

9. Outcomes and remedies

Possible outcomes include apologies, explanations, corrective actions, refunds or credits (within authority limits) and staff or process improvements.

10. Communication standards

Responses should be clear, respectful and written in plain language. All formal outcomes are communicated in writing.

11. Data protection and confidentiality

All complaints data is stored securely and processed in accordance with UK GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018.

12. Unreasonable behaviour

We may restrict contact methods or frequency for abusive, aggressive, or persistently vexatious behaviour. Restrictions are proportionate and time-bound.

13. Vulnerable customers

We make reasonable adjustments for vulnerable customers and escalate safeguarding concerns appropriately.

14. Learning and improvement

We analyse complaint trends, report to leadership, and implement corrective and preventive actions.

15. Review

This policy is reviewed annually or following major organisational or regulatory changes.