

Our Commitment

People will find it easy to complain and get things put right when the service they receive is not good enough.

Customer feedback policy - Your Voice

At Denbighshire County Council we welcome feedback about our services and we want to hear from you. Our customer feedback policy is called **Your Voice**. It explains what will happen when you contact the council to let us know if:

- you think we did something wrong or made a mistake;
- you think we have done something well; or
- you have a comment or an idea about how we could do something differently.

You can contact us:

- via our website www.denbighshire.gov.uk;
- by e-mail to your.voice@denbighshire.gov.uk;
- by writing to **Your Voice**, Denbighshire County Council, PO Box 62, Ruthin, LL15 9AZ;
- by phone 01824 706000; or
- in person at any of our One-Stop Shops, libraries, leisure centres, receptions and public buildings.

We will normally respond in the same way that you contact us, but if you want us to respond in a different way please let us know.

We will always deal with your feedback openly and fairly and use it to improve our services.

If you are...

- making a **complaint**

- paying us a **compliment** about something we have done well
- making a **suggestion** or **comment** about how we could make things better or do things differently

We will...

investigate the issue using the process overleaf.

pass the details on to the relevant department.

If you are approaching us for a service for the first time (for example, if you are reporting a faulty street light or a pot hole etc.), then this policy doesn't apply. You should first give us a chance to respond to your request. If you make a request for a service and are then not happy with our response, you will be able to tell us about your concerns. The way to do this is described below.

How we deal with complaints

We know that making a complaint can sometimes be difficult. If you do make a complaint, we will not treat you negatively as a result. If you choose not to give us your name when you complain, we will deal with your complaint in line with this policy, but we will not be able to let you know our findings.

We will deal with your complaint in an open and honest way, starting at:

Stage 1

If possible, we believe it's best to deal with things straight away rather than try to sort them out later. If you have a concern, please tell the person you're dealing with. They will try to resolve it for you there and then.

If you raise your complaint with a member of staff but it can't be answered straight away or within a short period of time, it will be referred to a member of staff from the service who will investigate. You will be told if this is the case and what will happen next.

We will normally answer your complaint within **10** working days, but if we can't we will let you know how long we expect it to take.

If you feel that our response hasn't dealt with your complaint as you expected, you can ask for us to investigate it at:

***Stage 2**

If you feel that we have not sorted out your complaint at stage 1, please let us know. We will ask another member of staff to investigate the issues.

This step of the process can take longer as it requires a more detailed investigation, possibly up to **20** working days. When we have finished our investigation we will contact you with our findings.

This is the final stage of our complaints process.

* Complaints of a complex or serious nature may be considered at stage 2 from the outset.

Outcome

Regardless of which stage your complaint is investigated at we will let you know what we have found. If we find that we did something wrong which led to your complaint, we'll tell you what happened and why. We will apologise and tell you how we plan to change things to stop it happening again.

If there is a simple solution to your problem we may ask you if you're happy to accept this.

If your situation is worse as a result of our mistake we will try to put it right. If we can't we will tell you why, and explain what we can do.

We will make sure that your dealings with us in the future do not suffer just because you have made a complaint.

Public Service Ombudsman for Wales

If we don't manage to resolve your complaint, you may complain to the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales. The Ombudsman works outside of government bodies like the council, and can look into your complaint if you believe that you:

- have been treated unfairly;
- received a bad service through some failure on our part; or
- have been personally disadvantaged.

The Ombudsman expects you to raise your concerns with us first and to give us a chance to put things right.

You can contact the Ombudsman by:

- phone: 0300 790 0203
- e-mail: ask@ombudsman-wales.org.uk
- the website: www.ombudsman-wales.org.uk
- writing to: Public Services Ombudsman for Wales, 1 Ffordd yr Hen Gae, Pencoed, CF35 5LJ.

Is there a time limit for making a complaint?

It's better to look into a complaint while the issue is still fresh in everyone's mind, so please tell us as soon as you can. Normally, we will only be able to look at your concerns if you tell us about them within six months.

If you're making a complaint on behalf of somebody else, we may need their agreement for you to do this. We will tell you if this is the case.

Will my complaint be confidential?

We will keep the information you provide safe and confidential and we will use it in line with the Data Protection Act 1998. The Act regulates the way we can use personal information. We may need to discuss your complaint with members of council staff, but we will not discuss your complaint with, or give information to, another organisation without your written permission.

Are all complaints about the council dealt with in this way?

There are some things **Your Voice** doesn't cover. We will let you know if a different process will be used and who you can contact and what to expect.

For example:

If you are ...	You need to ...
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ complaining about a school related matter	Speak directly with the school. They will let you know how they will deal with your complaint.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ complaining about social services	contact the social services complaints team on 0800 032 1099. They will look into your complaint.

What if I need help?

Our staff can help you make your concerns known to us. If you need extra assistance, we will try to put you in touch with someone who can help. You may wish to contact Complaints Wales (phone 0300 123 1299, www.complaintswales.org.uk), Citizens Advice Bureau (phone 08444 77 20 20, www.citizensadvice.org.uk), the Commissioner for Older People in Wales (phone 08442 640670, www.olderpeoplewales.com), the Welsh Language Commissioner (phone 0845 6033 221, www.comisiynyddygybraeg.org) or Shelter Cymru (phone 0845 075 5005, www.sheltercymru.org.uk).

You can use this policy if you are under the age of 18. If you need help, you can speak to someone on the Meic Helpline (phone 080880 23456, www.meiccymru.org) or contact the Children's Commissioner for Wales by phone on 0808 801 1000, or through their website www.childcom.org.uk.

What we expect from you

We expect you to be polite and courteous in your dealings with us. We will not tolerate aggressive, unreasonable or abusive behaviour.

We are happy to provide this document in alternative formats and languages. Let us know what your requirements are and we will do our very best to meet your needs.