

## Charity Complaints Policy

Policy Number	SP17
Title	Charity Complaints Policy
Approved by	Board of Trustees
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Author	Chief Executive Officer

Version	Amendments	Date
0.0	None	January 2018
1.1	3 year review- <b>minor amendments</b>	16 <sup>th</sup> September, 2021

### 1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 At Autism Wessex we are committed to providing the highest quality service to people we support and to our stakeholders in an accountable way.
- 1.2 We welcome feedback and view complaints and compliments as an opportunity to learn and improve our practice. Anyone who wishes to comment on the charity's work or services is encouraged to do so by accessible buttons on our website or by telephone or email.

### 2.0 Purpose

- 2.1 The policy aims to ensure that complaints can be resolved quickly, fairly and effectively. It also defines that as a Charity we:
- make a complaint as easy as possible to make and to welcome the feedback;
  - each feedback receives a prompt response and is treated confidentially.
  - ensure that our process is transparent and timeframes are realistic;
  - address complaints as close to the source as possible
  - take every step possible to achieve a productive outcome and to resolve all complaints within a timely manner.

### 2.2 Why people might want to complain:

From time to time, we may not meet stakeholders' expectations. Expressions of dissatisfaction

might include:

- not feeling treated with courtesy and respect;
- a service not delivered reliably or on time;
- not receiving a service that promotes physical, emotional, material or social wellbeing or safety;
- a service failing to meet the needs of People We Support;
- feeling discriminated against in any way.

Or any other issue that is inconsistent with the expectations of our standards. If at any time during the investigation of a complaint a matter arises which warrants investigation under disciplinary proceedings or criminal investigation, the procedure will be paused until those investigations are complete. Similarly, the complaints procedure will be suspended if a complainant is seeking legal redress.

Autism Wessex may, at any stage of the complaints procedure, review a complaint and provide a decision, without a formal investigation, where it is deemed that the complaint is deliberately repetitive or vexatious.

Serious complaints will be declared to the Charity Commission in line with charity regulation and to the relevant regulatory bodies. If appropriate, the relevant Local Authority may also be advised.

This Feedback Policy is based on a five-step approach;

Complaints will be recorded centrally by the Feedback Coordinator. Once the issue has been resolved, the Feedback Coordinator will update the Log.

The Feedback Log will include:

- Details of the person making the complaint;
- Date and nature of the complaint;
- Actions taken, by whom and timescales;
- Outcome of the complaint and closure actions.

### **2.3 Withdrawal of a complaint**

If a complainant wishes to withdraw their complaint, it should be confirmed in writing to avoid misunderstanding.

### **2.4 Confidentiality and GDPR**

When an individual interacts with the Charity some personal information is collected:

An individual has the right to ask for a copy of the information that is held about them and to have any inaccuracies in their personal details corrected. An individual can also request their records be removed from our database or to receive a copy of the information held about them. They can also ask us to stop using their data for a specific purpose.

We will aim to acknowledge receipt of all such requests within five working days and respond more fully within 10 - 28 days. An individual can exercise any or all of these rights by emailing [feedback@autismwessex.org.uk](mailto:feedback@autismwessex.org.uk).

### 3.0

- Should the complaint not be resolved at conclusion, it may be escalated as follows:
  - Head of Department
  - Chief Executive Officer;
  - Chairman of the Board of Trustees;
  - CQC and/or Ofsted.

Website: <https://www.autism-unlimited.org/about/compliments-and-complaints/>.

Please refer to [B:\Complaints\Comments, Compliments and Complaint Procedure.pdf](#) for an overview of this procedure.