Your guide to complaining about local public services
Local Government Ombudsman

The Local Government Ombudsmen in England investigate complaints about local authorities (but not town or parish councils) and certain other local bodies in England. They can look at complaints about how the council has done something but they cannot question what a council has done simply because someone does not agree with it. Some kinds of complaint cannot be considered, for example, personnel issues and complaints about the internal running of schools.

Contact details:
Address: Local Government Ombudsman, PO Box 4771 Coventry CV4 0EH

Adviseline: 0300 061 0614

Email: advice@lgo.org.uk

Website: www.lgo.org.uk
Standards for England

Standards for England (SfE) give local standards committees and councillors support and guidance on understanding the Code of Conduct, and on how to deal with complaints about the conduct of members of their council or authority. The SfE also monitor the performance of local authorities in the local assessment of complaints.

Accordingly, if you have a complaint about a councillor or a member of a council, in the first instance you should approach their standards committee who will investigate your complaint. If you remain unhappy at the outcome of their decision, then you can ask them to review their decision. SfE will only investigate complaints if they are serious enough for the local standards committee to decide that they are not best placed to deal with the matter.

Contact details:
Address: Standards for England, Fourth Floor, Griffin House, 40 Lever House, Manchester, M1 1BB

Telephone: 0161 817 5300
Fax: 0161 817 5499
Minicom: 0161 817 5449
Email: enquiries@standardsforengland.gov.uk
Website: www.standardsforengland.gov.uk
The Information Commissioner oversees the Data Protection Act 1998 and the Freedom of Information Act 2000, and investigates complaints that public bodies are not providing information when requested to do so.

Contact details:
Address: The Information Commissioner’s Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF

Telephone: 0303 123 1113 or 01625 545745

Website: www.ico.gov.uk
Independent Complaints Adjudication Service for Ofsted

The role of the Ofsted Adjudication Service is to deal with complaints made by any member of the public who has been affected by the actions or decisions of Ofsted, provided that the complainant must first exhaust Ofsted’s internal complaints procedure.

The Ofsted Adjudication Service may investigate any alleged failure by Ofsted to follow proper procedures, discourtesy, discrimination or injustice, delay and the failure to accept and apologise for mistakes made.

Contact details:
Address: Independent Complaints Adjudication Service for Ofsted, c/o CEDR, 70 Fleet Street, London, EC4Y 1EU
Email: info@icaso.co.uk
Website: www.ofstedadjudicationservice.co.uk
Care Quality Commission

The Care Quality Commission is the new independent regulator of health and social care in England. They can investigate complaints about care homes and services and also complaints from those who have been detained under the Mental Health Act.

Contact details:
Address: Care Quality Commission National Correspondence, Citygate, Gallowgate, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE1 4PA

Telephone: 03000 616161

Email: enquiries@cqc.org.uk

Website: www.cqc.org.uk
The Planning Inspectorate

The Planning Inspectorate’s main work is the processing of planning and enforcement appeals and holding examinations into regional spatial strategies and local development plans. They also deal with a wide variety of other planning related casework including listed building consent appeals, advertisement appeals, and reporting on planning applications called in for decision by the Department for Communities and Local Government.

Contact details:
Address: The Planning Inspectorate Customer Support Unit 3/05 Kite Wing, Temple Quay House 2 The Square, Temple Quay Bristol BS1 6PN

Telephone: 0117 372 6372

Email: enquiries@planning-inspectorate.gsi.gov.uk

Website: www.planning-inspectorate.gov.uk
Housing Ombudsman

The Housing Ombudsman Service was set up by law to look at complaints about “registered” housing providers, including housing associations and other landlords, managers, and agents. Their service is free, independent and impartial.

If you think your landlord has provided a poor service or managed your home badly, the Housing Ombudsman can look at your complaint. They can also advise landlords on how to run an effective complaints procedure.

Contact details:
Address: Housing Ombudsman Service, 81 Aldwych, London, WC2B 4HN

Telephone: 0300 111 3000 or 020 7404 7092 (Minicom)

Email: info@housing-ombudsman.org.uk

Website: www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk
Independent Police Complaints Commission (IPCC)

The IPCCs job is to make sure that complaints against the police are dealt with effectively. We set standards for the way the police handle complaints and, when something has gone wrong, we help the police learn lessons and improve the way they work.

Contact details:
Regional office details are available on their website.

Telephone: 08453 002 002 or 020 7404 0431 (Minicom)

Fax: 020 7404 0430

Email: enquiries@ipcc.gsi.gov.uk

Website: www.ipcc.gov.uk
Prison and Probation Ombudsman

The Prisons and Probation Ombudsman investigates complaints from prisoners, those on probation and those held in immigration removal centres. He also investigates all deaths that occur among prisoners, immigration detainees and the residents of probation hostels (Approved Premises).

Contact details:
Address: Prison and Probation Ombudsman, Ashley House, 2 Monck Street, London, SW1P 2BQ

Telephone: 020 7035 2876 or 0845 010 7938 (lo-call)

Fax: 020 7035 2860

Email: mail@ppo.gsi.gov.uk

Website: www.ppo.gov.uk
The Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman

The Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman carry out independent investigations into complaints about UK government departments and their agencies, and the NHS in England.

Contact details:
Address: The Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman, Millbank Tower, Millbank, London, SW1P 4QP

Telephone: 0345 015 4033

Email: phso.enquiries@ombudsman.org.uk

Website: www.ombudsman.org.uk
Equality and Human Rights Commission

The Equality and Human Rights Commission has the responsibility to protect, enforce and promote equality across the seven “protected” grounds - age, disability, gender, race, religion and belief, sexual orientation and gender reassignment.

Contact details:
Address: Equality and Human Rights Commission Helpline, Freepost RRLL-GHUX-CTRX, Arndale House, Arndale Centre, Manchester, M4 3AQ

Telephone: 0845 604 6610 or 0845 604 6620 (Textphone)
Fax: 0845 604 6630
Email: englandhelpline@equalityhumanrights.com
Website: www.equalityhumanrights.com
Tribunals Service – Social Security and Child Support Appeals

The Tribunals Service deals with disputes about income support; jobseeker’s allowance; incapacity benefit; child support and decisions on housing benefit and council tax benefit.

Contact details:
Regional office details are available on their website.

Website: www.appeals-service.gov.uk
Audit Commission
1st Floor
Millbank Tower
Millbank
London
SW1P 4HQ

Telephone: 0844 798 1212
Fax: 0844 798 2945
Textphone (minicom): 0844 798 2946

www.audit-commission.gov.uk