

# Complaints and Compliments Policy

## General statement

Healthwatch Barnsley aims to provide its members, organisations and individuals with the best possible service. We positively welcome suggestions you may have for how we can improve our service.

Usually, a word with the person at the point of service delivery will suffice should a problem arise. However, we recognise that from time to time there may be occasions when members, users of our services or partner organisations feel that the quality or level of service provided fall short of what they could reasonably expect. We also want to know about these occasions so that we can make good the problem and plan to avoid its repetition.

## **If you have a complaint, we would like you to tell us about it.**

This is what you should do:

1. If you have a complaint to make, it should be made to one of Healthwatch Barnsley's employees who you may be most familiar with (contact names and details are listed at the end of this policy) who will try to resolve the issue informally.
2. If the issue is serious, or you are not satisfied after raising it with the Healthwatch Barnsley employee, you should make a formal complaint.
3. Your complaint should be made in writing, marked "Private & Confidential", and sent to The Healthwatch Barnsley Manager who will acknowledge it in writing within 7 days of receipt. Remember to keep a copy of your letter. If you need an interpreter or advocate helping you make your complaint, Healthwatch Barnsley can arrange this for you.

4. The Healthwatch Barnsley Manager – after consultation with the Healthwatch Barnsley employees and depending on the seriousness of the complaint and the people involved – investigate the complaint. (See separate check list).
5. The Healthwatch Barnsley Manager may also need to consult with service users, members or other partner organisations depending on the nature of the complaint.
6. The Healthwatch Barnsley Manager will communicate the results of the investigation to you within a reasonable time – normally 21 days.
7. Where appropriate, the Healthwatch Manager will make a written apology to the complainant, and agree any further action necessary to make good the cause of the complaint.
8. You have the right – if dissatisfied with the results of the inquiry – to put your case in writing or personally to a panel comprising at least three members from the Healthwatch Barnsley Strategic Advisory Board.

If attending personally, you have the right to be accompanied by a friend or advocate helping put your case. (The panel also has the right to have an advisor present).

9. The decision of the panel will be final.
10. All formal complaints and the responses made to them will be recorded and filed in a secure place. Any complaints regarding breach of equal opportunities for involvement in Healthwatch Barnsley, discriminatory practices or barriers to membership will be dealt with promptly and reported to the Healthwatch Barnsley Strategic Advisory Board Meeting and Barnsley CVS as the host organisation.
10. The Strategic Advisory Board will be informed by the Healthwatch Manager of the number and nature of any formal complaints and their

outcome, and consideration will be given to the implications these have for the regular planning and management of future services, involvement and membership as part of the Healthwatch Barnsley self-evaluation.

If a complaint relates to the Healthwatch Barnsley Manager, an alternative Senior Manager from Barnsley CVS will investigate the complaint in place of the designated person in this policy.

### **Compliments and Comments**

Healthwatch Barnsley welcomes positive and constructive feedback from its members and service users. Individuals and organisations wishing to provide compliments and/or constructive comments may do so by sending details directly to the individual concerned, or the associated organisation.

Individuals in receipt of this information should share this feedback with the appropriate Healthwatch Barnsley employee and/or at the next Strategic Advisory Board meeting. The Healthwatch Barnsley employees should ensure that details of any compliments/comments are passed to the Healthwatch Barnsley Manager for central records and any actions that need to be taken and reported to the Strategic Advisory Board.

Where constructive comments have been raised, the Healthwatch Barnsley employee should discuss these at the next team meeting of the Healthwatch Barnsley, exploring the possibilities of changing their practices to improve the area/s concerned. A record of this should be made on the relevant meeting minutes, detailing action points and future monitoring. Following the meeting the individual concerned should write to the customer thanking them for their feedback and stating the actions which have been agreed.

Healthwatch Barnsley's complaints/compliments procedure will be publicised to organisations and individuals who use its services by inserting it into the Healthwatch Barnsley welcome pack and on our dedicated website.

If anyone would like further help and information about anything contained in the policy statements, please contact the Healthwatch Barnsley team on 01226 320106 or email [hello@healthwatchbarnsley.org.uk](mailto:hello@healthwatchbarnsley.org.uk)

If you wish to receive this in an alternative format/language get in touch.

**This document was approved by: The Strategic Advisory Board**  
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