

1625 Independent People Feedback Policy

For complaints, comments, compliments, and suggestions



Definitions

- **Complaint** - an expression of dissatisfaction by a person who uses our services, advocate, stakeholder, or member of the public, about our service, or action that we have or have not taken.
- **Request for action** is not a complaint and will be dealt with by the relevant colleague. An example of this may be a request for a repair to a property, or a report from a neighbour about Anti-Social Behaviour.
- **Enquiry** - when we are contacted for information, for example a request by a person who uses our services for a balance on their rent account. Or another agency wanting to refer a potential young person to a service.
- **Compliment** - positive feedback, an expression of satisfaction by a person who uses our services, advocate, stakeholder, or member of the public about an individual, a service, an outcome, something that we have done
- **Suggestion** - an idea put forward about how something can be done better or differently
- **Comment** - could be any or none of the above – an observation about services

Making a Complaint

Informal resolution

You may want to raise a matter with someone who works at 1625ip without having to make a formal complaint.

You can ask to speak to a colleague to raise a matter – before making a formal complaint.

At any time, if you are still not satisfied with the response or outcome, you can make the matter formal – by letting us know you wish to make a formal complaint.

We will try to resolve any complaint informally at the point at which the problem arose.

Many apparent concerns arise from misunderstandings that can quickly be resolved by talking through the matter. In most cases, complaints will be managed on an informal basis in the first instance, to provide people with a quick and satisfactory resolution.

Who can complain?

Anyone receiving or impacted by a service delivered by 1625ip; impacted by may include neighbours to our properties, referrers, partner organisations, etc.

Where a complaint is received from a representative acting on behalf of a young person, 1625ip will confirm that the young person is happy for this to happen, and that the complaint submitted reflects his/her views where this is not apparent.

Anonymous complaints

Anonymous complaints are difficult to deal with because their investigation is always dependent upon limited and questionable information. However, they will be recorded in the same way as other complaints and referred to relevant managers who will take appropriate action, which should include investigating as much as possible. No reply can be made.

When isn't it a complaint?

- Timescales - if a complaint has already been considered under the feedback policy or if the complaint occurred over 6 months ago (unless considered a reoccurrence or there is new evidence supporting the original complaint). This is because such complaints are often difficult to investigate fully or fairly
- Illegal activity - if all or part of a complaint requires legal/police investigation, the complaint will be suspended while that happens. You will be told this is happening
- Court proceedings – 1625ip will not consider complaints if the complaint relates to issues which are the subject of proceedings in any court or tribunal – for example, a case has been taken to court and possession granted. People wishing to appeal against decisions taken by a Court should approach the Court.

- Safeguarding referrals. These will be handled in accordance with our Adult and/ or Child Safeguarding Policies
- A complaint which relates to alleged failure to comply with data protection law. These are managed by our Data Compliance Team. Dissatisfaction with the handling of these specific requests can be escalated to the Information Commissioner's Office
- A complaint against a refusal to allocate a service where a person is not eligible
- The first request for a service or for information, for example a first report of antisocial behaviour or a request for explanation of a service charge – this would be usually dealt with as a request for action
- An issue about the conduct and behaviour of another person using our services, such as a neighbour dispute might not always be a complaint and might be better handled in through our policies relating to housing management, anti-social behaviour, bullying and harassment, and so on depending on the nature of the dispute. If a young person is unhappy with this service, this can be accepted as a complaint
- When it relates to services not provided by 1625 Independent People or partners acting on its behalf; persons or bodies over which we have no control. We can support you to complain to the appropriate organisation instead

Unreasonable Complainant Behaviour

Sometimes, people make repeated complaints about the same thing even after we've investigated and responded, or make unreasonable demands, or behave unacceptably.

When this occurs, 1625ip need to decide about how we handle these complaints. We may treat this as Unreasonable Complainant Behaviour – action will be agreed on a very individual basis, and we will look at the matter holistically considering all we know about the experiences, challenges, barriers, needs, etc of the person who wants to complain.

We may decide people are behaving unreasonably when they (this is not a complete list)

- Make repeated complaints on similar issues that have been previously considered or repeatedly change the substance of their complaint
- Make unreasonable demands upon 1625ip employees in terms of what is expected, asking for timescales that cannot be achieved, insisting on only speaking to one colleague, or the number of letters/e-mails/phone calls made risks creating an excessive

workload that would negatively impact on time/capacity to the disadvantage of other young people using our services

- Make threats, use derogatory remarks, are rude, use language that makes colleagues feel threatened or afraid, use inflammatory or unsubstantiated statements

Making a complaint

If you want to complain, you do not need to put the complaint in writing or complete a specific form.

A verbal complaint is valid and will be accepted in the same way as a written complaint, but if you want to put your complaint in writing, please ask if we can support you to do that.

Complaints can also be submitted through the “I’ve got something to say” page of our website.

The colleague receiving/managing the complaint will talk to you about any specific needs and what we can do to support you in making a complaint. This might mean things like

- Disability and any required adjustments
- Gender of the investigating manager
- Translation and interpretation services
- Providing information in different, accessible, appropriate formats, including large print, easy read, Braille, and other transcribed formats

What happens when we receive a complaint?

All complaints are logged onto our recording system – this is so we can ensure that they are responded to correctly, in the right timescales, but also so we can review and learn from all the complaints that are made.

Once a complaint has been received, within 3 working days, a manager will be identified and asked to lead on managing the complaint – this will usually be the manager of the service to which the complaint relates - the complaint lead.

The complaint lead will contact you to acknowledge the complaint within 5 working days of being appointed as the person leading this complaint.

They will investigate the complaint, with the aim of responding to you within 10 working days of the acknowledgement of the complaint.

All responses will be written, and you and the complaint lead might agree that it would be best to meet in person.

If the investigation cannot be completed within 10 days (for example, someone that must be spoken with as part of the investigation may be on annual leave), you will be made aware of any delays as soon as possible and given a new deadline.

If you don't agree with the outcome of the complaint, you can appeal

You have 10 working days from the date of the response letter to appeal. The letter you will get about the complaint investigation will explain how to appeal and the timescales. The appeals are carried out by someone who hasn't been involved in the complaint so far.

If after an appeal, you are still not satisfied

You will be informed of the process to bring the matter forward to the Board of 1625IP.

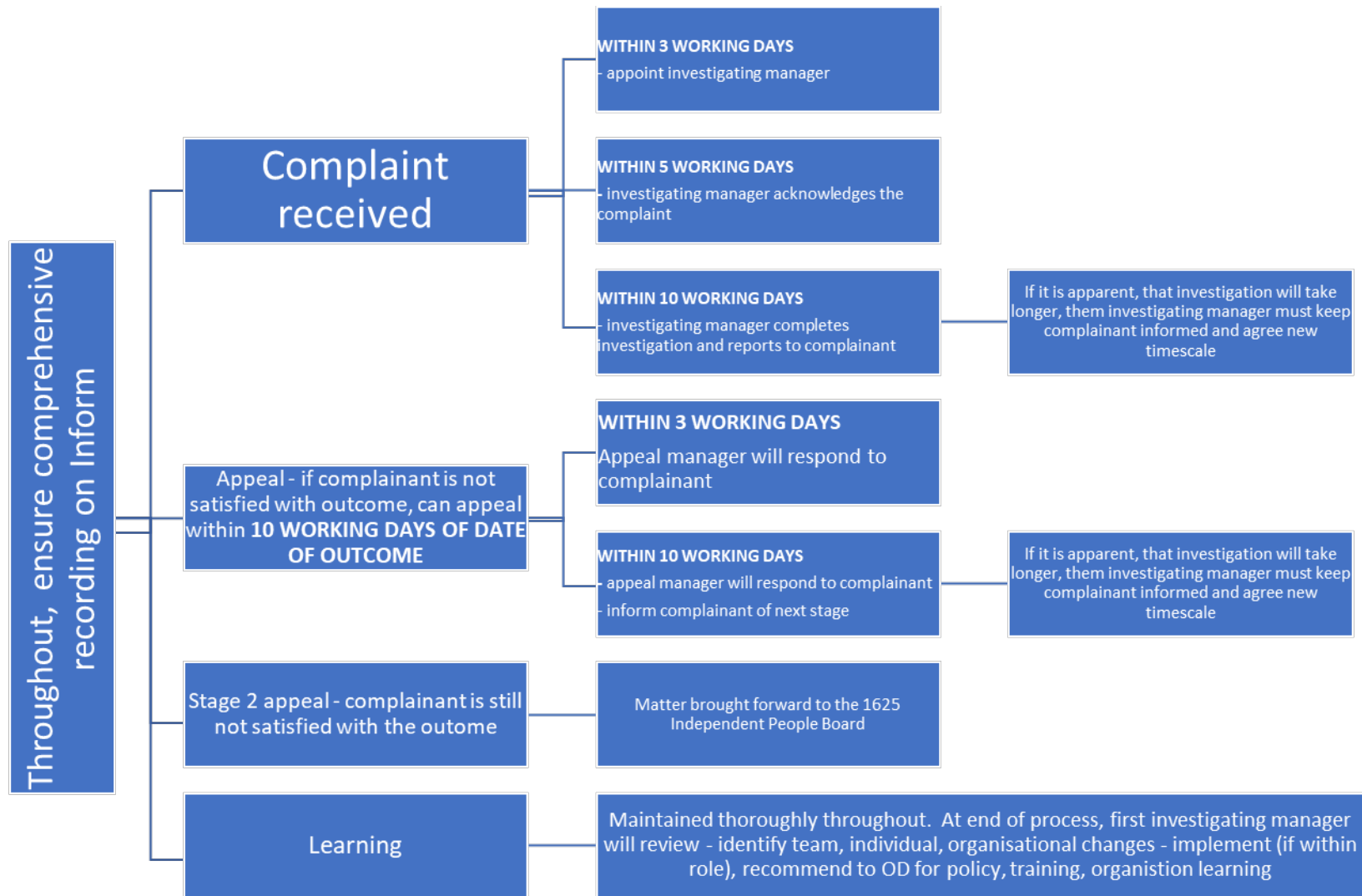
If the person making the complaint is still not satisfied, then we will advise them of any relevant bodies which can independently hear the complaint, for example, the Housing Ombudsman, Local Government Ombudsman, council, commissioner, or funder.

Learning from complaints that are logged on In-Form

1625ip wants to learn and improve. When they are closed, all complaints are reviewed to see what we can learn – do we need to make changes, is any training needed, and so on.

1625ip carry out an annual review of all complaints and report this to managers and the Board; this includes an action plan so that we can improve.

Flowchart of process



Support and guidance for the person making a complaint

Throughout the whole process, the person making the complaint will be given contact details of any organisations that may be able to assist them and advocate on their behalf, for example, Citizen's Advice Bureau, Shelter, Southwest Law, etc.

Anyone who makes a complaint has the right to be accompanied to meetings at any stage of the process – they can be accompanied by a friend, relative, advocate.

We will make every effort to ensure that any meetings relating to the complaint are arranged at a time that is convenient for all, and at venues that are fully accessible to all who are attending the meeting.

With the agreement of the person making the complaint and anyone supporting them, it may also be possible to arrange virtual meetings, using zoom, WhatsApp or similar.

Comments and Suggestions

A comment is a suggestion, idea, or observation about our services. Anyone can make a comment about our services, how they access our services, about colleagues who deliver them, and so on.

When we receive a comment, we will acknowledge it and say thank you for the feedback. We will then consider how we can use it to improve our services.

Compliments

Compliments are shared (with your permission) and discussed with the relevant colleagues.

Requests for action and enquiries

A request for action is not a complaint and will be dealt with by the relevant colleague. An example of this may be a request for a repair to a property, or a report from a neighbour re Anti-Social Behaviour.