



IPSWICH
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Complaints Procedure

April 2024

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1. INTRODUCTION

Ipswich Borough Council strives to provide high quality services. In order to maintain the services, we have a formal complaints process and use the data to continually review and improve.

The purpose of this procedure is to inform you of:

- How you can complain to Ipswich Borough Council about its services
- How the Council will deal with your complaint
- What to do if you are dissatisfied with the response you receive

2. WHAT IS A COMPLAINT?

Ipswich Borough Council defines a complaint as:

An expression of dissatisfaction, however made, about the standard of service, actions or lack of action by the organisation, its own staff, or those acting on its behalf, affecting an individual or a group.

3. WHAT CAN I COMPLAIN ABOUT?

The Council will accept complaints relating to:

- ✓ Failure by the Council to provide an agreed service
- ✓ Failure by the Council to respond to a request for a service
- ✓ The attitude or conduct of an employee or Councillor
- ✓ Failure to follow an agreed procedure

4. WHAT IS NOT A COMPLAINT?

The Council will not accept:

- ✘ Requests for a service, change or improvement - Please let us know by using the online [General Enquiry](#) or [Comment](#) forms. A service request may be defined by the LGO as:

"A request that the organisation provides or improves a service, fixes a problem or reconsiders a decision"

A service request is defined by the Housing Ombudsman as:

"A request from a resident to the landlord requiring action to be taken to put something right"

- ✘ Requests for information or an explanation of Council policy or practice - this is a [Freedom of Information](#) request
- ✘ The complaints procedure cannot be used to investigate a decision where there is a formal right of appeal (such as a [planning decision](#), a [parking penalty charge notice](#) or a [benefit application](#))

5. HOW WILL MY COMPLAINT BE DEALT WITH?

The Council ensures that:

- Your complaint will be acknowledged within 5 working days from the date it is received
- You will receive a response to your complaint within the timeframes set out for each stage
- You will be treated fairly and courteously
- Your complaint will be treated in confidence
- If we have done something wrong, we will apologise and put things right as soon as possible
- We will review complaints, so we can prevent the same problem happening in the future

6. WHAT ARE THE STAGES OF THE COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE?

Complaint - Stage 1

If you are not happy with any part of our service, the relevant service area will investigate and respond to you. The Council is committed to resolving complaints quickly when they have arisen, by putting things right or giving you a full explanation.

If a complaint is received, we will respond within:

- Acknowledgement – 5 working days from the date the complaint is received
- Full response – 10 working days from the date the complaint is received (if it is not possible to respond in this timeframe you will receive an explanation with the date that the Stage 1 response will be responded by, which will be no longer than an additional 10 working days).

All correspondence to a complaint will be by email or letter.



Complaint - Stage 2

If you are not satisfied with the Stage 1 response you receive, you can escalate your complaint to a Stage 2 to be investigated further. This will need to be done within 20 working days from the Stage 1 response.

If a complaint is escalated to Stage 2, we will respond within:

- Acknowledgement – 5 working days from the date the complaint escalation is received.
- Full response – 20 working days from the date the complaint escalation is received (if it is not possible to respond in this timeframe you will receive an explanation with the date that the Stage 2 response will be responded by, which will be no longer than an additional 20 working days).

All correspondence to a complaint will be by email or letter.



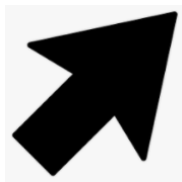
Complaint - (Ombudsman)

If you remain unsatisfied with your complaint you can contact the relevant Ombudsman:

- Complaints related to Housing – Housing Ombudsman: www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk
- All other Complaints – Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman: www.lgo.org.uk/

7. HOW DO I MAKE A COMPLAINT?

Online:



[CLICK HERE TO MAKE A COMPLAINT](#)

PLEASE NOTE: Completing your complaint online will allow you to be kept updated promptly by email. The online form will ask you all the relevant information needed to submit your complaint.

In writing:

Complaints Service
Ipswich Borough Council
Grafton House
15-17 Russell Road
Ipswich
IP1 2DE

PLEASE NOTE: To help us deal with your written complaint quickly and efficiently you will need to tell us the following information:

- **Your contact details**
 - Name*
 - Address*
 - Email address*
 - Contact number*
- **The service area you are complaining about**
- **The issue you wish to complain about**
- **How you would like the matter resolved**

By email:

complaints@ipswich.gov.uk

When a complaint is received in writing this will automatically be logged into Ipswich Borough Council's electronic complaints system to ensure the correct procedure is followed.

8. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

Ipswich Borough Council is committed to providing support to residents who require it. If you are unable to launch a complaint by any of the above methods, you can arrange for our Quality Assurance Complaints Officer to call you and take your complaint over the telephone. You can request this from our Customer Services team by calling 01473 432000.

PLEASE NOTE: Please allow 48 hours, excluding bank weekends and holidays, for your call to be returned.

9. PRIVACY STATEMENT

By submitting a complaint, you are consenting to the Council processing and storing your data in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulations. We will retain your information for three years and may pass your details to other departments within the Council in order to investigate the complaint. We will not share your data with any third parties unless permitted to do so by law such as the Ombudsman.

For further information about how we use your personal data, including your rights as a data subject, please see our [privacy statement](#). Our Data Protection Officer can be contacted at data.protection@ipswich.gov.uk.



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