

I want to make a Complaint - What do I do?

We are aware that it can be very difficult, scary even, for people to make a complaint; however we really do want to know if we are getting it wrong in any way. Feel free to ask a friend or Advocacy Shetland (based in Market House, Lerwick - tel: 01595 743900) to help you if you are worried or nervous. Making a complaint will not lead to your being discriminated against.

Sometimes the root of a complaint can be a misunderstanding. If so, it can often be resolved informally. Contact the service coordinator: he or she might be able to sort out the problem straight away.

But if not, or you feel the matter needs to be put on an official footing, read the rest of this leaflet, which explains what you need to do and what actions we will take to resolve the problem.

Our aim is to achieve a resolution at the earliest stage possible.

Stage One: Review by the Service Coordinator

The complaints procedure starts with the service coordinator. He or she will write to acknowledge your complaint within five working days and look into the circumstances surrounding it.

If it is not possible for you to make your complaint in writing, or for someone you choose to do this on your behalf, you will be invited to meet with the coordinator who will write it down. You will be asked to sign this to confirm that it is an accurate statement of the complaint.

We aim to respond in full to a complaint within 20 working days. If for any reason it is not possible to keep to this timescale, the delay will be explained.

If your complaint is upheld, you will receive a full apology and, where appropriate, details of whatever action we can take to put matters right, or at least prevent similar problems arising in the future.

If it is the service coordinator that you are unhappy with, the complaint will go straight to Stage Two.

Stage Two: Review by the Board of Directors

The letter you receive from the service coordinator will also inform you of your right to ask for a review should you not be satisfied with the outcome of stage one.

Shetland Link Up (including Lifeline, Art Therapy and Women of Worth) is an independent charity and Limited Company, run by and accountable to its own Board of Directors. The next stage is the responsibility of a panel of three Directors, selected on the basis of their relevant experience.

The process followed by the panel in reviewing the complaint is very similar to stage one - the same target times for responses apply and there is the same obligation for an apology, where owed, and for putting things right, if possible.

The Chair of the panel will check that the investigation has been carried out fully and properly.

He/She will check that the main points of the complaint have been addressed and look at any outstanding issues you have raised.

This concludes the Shetland Link Up complaints procedure, however, if you still feel that all the issues have not been properly dealt with, you can make a complaint to the organisation that provides funding for that part of the service against which you have a complaint.

Should you wish to take this step, the service coordinator will give you the information and contact details you need to pursue your complaint.



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(Revised July 2009)

Complaints Policy

Shetland Link Up, Lifeline, Art Therapy and Women of Worth aim to be helpful to those who use our services.

However, we recognise that from time to time someone may feel unhappy at the way they have been treated.

It is important to us that we learn from it when we get things wrong, and also that we put things right, if we can, or at least give an explanation or make a personal apology.

That is why we have a complaints procedure: what you tell us helps us to look at how we do things and to improve our service.

Complaints Policy and Procedure

for clients of
Shetland Link Up
Lifeline
Art Therapy
Women of Worth