



Comments, Complaints and Compliments FAQs



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We welcome your feedback to help improve our service to you, whether you have a comment, a complaint or want to compliment us.

We have a set procedure to follow. Our frequently asked questions explain the common issues:

What is a comment or compliment?

You can make a comment or give us a compliment if you:

- have ideas on how we can improve our services
- want to comment on our policies
- want to let us know what you think about our services
- want to let us know if you are satisfied with a service or a particular member of staff.

What happens to my comments or compliments?

- If you have a comment or suggestion we will carefully consider what you have said and see if we can improve the service we provide
- We will tell you in writing within 10 working days what we have decided
- If you have a compliment for us, we will pass it on to the person or service involved.

What is a complaint?

A complaint is when you tell us you are not happy; for example if:

- you think you have been treated unfairly or impolitely
- we have not done something we should have done
- we have done something badly, or in the wrong way

How do you deal with complaints?



We deal with complaints in three stages.

Stage one

We will try to deal with your complaint informally.

You can make a comment, complaint or compliment by contacting us:

- using the [online form](#)

- using the  [customer feedback form](#)
- in person at our Civic Offices and our area offices in Bushey and Potters Bar
- by phone on 020 8207 2277
- by letter; or
- by email on  customer.services@hertsmere.gov.uk

We will do our best to settle your complaint without you needing to do anything else. We will respond to your complaint in writing within 10 working days.


If we cannot sort out your complaint within 10 working days, we will write to you and let you know:

- when you can expect an answer from us
- the name of the person who is dealing with your complaint.

By law, we need to deal with some complaints in a different way. If so, we will tell you and give you more information.

Stage two

If, after stage one, you are still not happy, the next step is for you to make a formal complaint. To do this you will need to put your complaint in writing to the Complaints Officer by either:

- writing a letter
- filling in a  [customer feedback form](#)

If you need help in completing the form, please ask us.

When we receive your complaint we will write to you within five working days to tell you who will be dealing with your complaint and to give you a reference number. This information will make it easier if you need to contact the person dealing with your complaint. This officer will:

- consider all the details
- take any necessary action
- make sure you receive a written reply within another 15 working days.

If we cannot send you a written reply within 15 working days, we will write to you to tell you why we need more time and to let you know when you will receive a written reply.

Stage three

If you have been through stages one and two and are still not happy, you can ask our Complaints Officer to refer the matter to our Managing Director. The council has a Managing Director who is the most senior member of staff within the council. They will decide whether a further investigation should be carried out and whether such an investigation is likely to lead to a response which you will find helpful.

If the Managing Director thinks that it would not be helpful, the Complaints Advisory Panel (made up of three councillors) will then consider whether or not an investigation by us would be appropriate. The Complaints Officer will write to you within 20 working days to tell you the panel's decision.

If we cannot make a decision within 20 working days, we will write to you to let you know when you will receive a written response.

If the Complaints Advisory Panel decide that we should carry out an investigation, a senior officer, who has not already been involved, will be responsible. He or she will prepare a report for the Managing Director. The senior officer will contact you as part of their investigation. The Managing Director will write to you within a further 30 working days to explain what she is going to do about your complaint.

What if I am still not happy?

We hope that we can solve your problem, but if you have followed our complaints procedure and are still not happy, you can contact the Local Government Ombudsman's office at:

Local Government Ombudsman

PO Box 4771

Coventry

CV4 0EH

Telephone: 0300 061 0614

Website: www.lgo.org.uk

You can get leaflets about how to complain to the Local Government Ombudsman from any of our offices.

You could also ask a friend or relative for help, or contact an independent person or organisation, for example:

- your [local councillor](#)
- your [MP](#)
- a solicitor
- [Citizens Advice Bureau](#)

How do I report everyday concerns for example a missed bin?

Contact us - our details are listed below, or use our [online form](#).

How do make a request for information?

If you are requesting information under the [Data Protection Act or Freedom of Information Act](#), you should do this in writing to the Information Officer at our address below or by emailing foi@hertsmere.gov.uk.

How can I challenge a parking fine?

You should do this in writing to [Parking Services](#) at our address below, or emailing cpz@hertsmere.gov.uk.

How do I make a complaint about a councillor?

You can write to the [Standards Committee](#) at our address below.

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