

Complaints, Compliments and Comments Policy and Procedure

1. Compliments and comments

Rural Care welcomes comments from Co-Farmers, parents, carers, schools, students and representatives, as knowing their views helps us to improve our service. Compliments let us know that we are doing something right and they will always be passed on to the appropriate people. Any feedback, positive or negative, is stored on the W: drive in the 'Feedback' folder.

2. Complaints

If a Co-Farmer, parent, carer, school, student or representative is unhappy with any aspect of the service they receive from Rural Care they need to inform the Rural Care Department Head, the Care Farm Manager or another member of staff. This can be done informally in person, by telephone or in writing.

People who wish to make a complaint will be supported with adequate, accessible information, about the complaints process; including information on how to complain to the Local Authority and the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO). Information on the Hertfordshire Adult Care services and the LGSCO complaint process is available at the links below:

- [Hertfordshire County Council – Complain or Comment](#)
- [Make a complaint to the LGSCO](#)

It is important that complaints are made as soon as possible after the event for an effective investigation to take place. It is in everybody's interest that complaints are resolved as swiftly as possible. Many issues can be resolved informally, without needing to escalate to the formal stages of the complaints process.

If the complaint cannot be resolved informally and the complainant wishes the complaint to be investigated further, we will then consider it to be a formal complaint and follow the formal complaint procedure described below.

If the complainant feels the complaint is of a serious nature and wishes to move directly to making a formal complaint, they must follow the formal complaint procedure described below.

Complaints may be made by a third party acting on behalf of a complainant, provided that the third party is able to demonstrate to the Rural Care that they have the appropriate consent to do so.



RURAL CARE

Where care for land and people meet

Enabling people with learning disabilities to work on a farm, learn new skills and make friends
Church Farm, Ardeley 0750789025 Aldenham Country Park 07788251721 ruralcareinfo@churchfarmardeley.co.uk
Rural Care is part of Church Farm Ardeley Community Interest Company
www.ruralcare.wordpress.com

3. Formal Complaint Procedure

Stage 1: Statement of Complaint

In the first instance all complaints must be submitted in writing to the Rural Care Department Head who will attempt to deal with the matter after making such consultations as are necessary. If the complaint relates to the Rural Care Department Head, it should be raised with Tim Waygood the Church Farm and Aldenham Country Park Managing Director.

People should be supported to access advocacy services if this may benefit them, or if they have a statutory right to this support.

Complaints should include the following information to help Rural Care respond quickly to your complaint:

- What happened?
- Where did it happen?
- Who was involved?
- When did it happen?
- What result do you expect / what do you hope will happen next?

We will notify you within 2 working days to inform you that we have received your complaint.

Stage 2: Meeting

You will be invited to attend a meeting to discuss your complaint. Every opportunity will be given for your complaint to be stated and thoroughly discussed. The outcome of the meeting will be communicated to you within 10 working days and the further action that will be taken, where appropriate, unless further investigation is required or where this deadline has been extended by mutual consent. In any event, if it is not possible to respond within 10 working days, you will be notified about why the delay is occurring and when a response can be expected.

Rural Care's responses will fully respond to and where possible resolve any complaints. Complaint responses will adhere to the principles of the LGSCO remedies guidance for Adult Social Care (available at the link below).

<https://www.lgo.org.uk/information-centre/staff-guidance/guidance-on-remedies>

If you are not satisfied with the response, you can appeal against the decision in writing within 5 working days of being informed of the outcome of your complaint.

Rural Care will notify within 10 working days Hertfordshire County Council of any complaint, investigation, outcome and remedies regarding all Council funded care.



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Stage 3: Appeal

If you wish to appeal, this will be referred to Tim Waygood, the Church Farm and Aldenham Country Park Managing Director and you will be invited to a further meeting. If the complaint is regarding the Rural Care Department Head, Tim Waygood can appoint another senior member of staff to investigate the appeal with the agreement of the complainant. After the appeal meeting you will be informed of the outcome. This outcome is final, and the formal complaint procedure is exhausted following this stage.

Stage 4: Contact Hertfordshire County Council

If you are unhappy with the outcome of your appeal you can always contact Hertfordshire County Council (contact details below) or the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO). Information on the Hertfordshire Adult Care services and the LGSCO complaint process is available at the links in section 2 of this policy.

Hertfordshire County Council
Complaints Team
CHO118, County Hall
Hertfordshire
SG13 8DF
Tel: 01992 556 685 / 0300 123 40 42
Email: hcs.complaints@hertfordshire.gov.uk

Revision History		
Date	Details	Author
June 2010	New Policy	Ann De Bock
May 2012	Policy Reviewed	Ann De Bock
May 2014	Policy Reviewed	Ann De Bock
April 2015	Complaints details for HCS added to policy	Ann De Bock
May 2016	Reviewed	Ann De Bock



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Feb 2017	Policy Reviewed	Lizinet Kamungere (Student Nurse) & Ann De Bock
01.08.17	Renamed	Ann De Bock
15-08-18	Reviewed	Bernice Byard
02.11.19	Removed and reorganized informal complaint section for ease of understanding	Ann De Bock
April 2020	Reviewed and revised wording Rural Care Manager and Deputy Rural Care Manager titles changed to Rural Care Department Head and Care Farm Manager	Annie Farrow
June 2021	Added in the Appeal process that if the complaint is regarding the department head, Tim Waygood can appoint another senior person to run the appeal process with consent of the complainant	Ann De Bock
May 2022	Included parents, schools and students in the policy. Reworded Section 2: Complaints. Added information to Section 2: Complaints about third parties making complaints.	Annie Farrow
July 2023	Points of contact in section 2 and 3 (stage 4) updated in line with latest requirements of Hertfordshire County Council. Section 3 stage 1 – right to advocacy services updated. Section 3 stage 2 Rural Care’s responses updated in line with latest requirements of Hertfordshire County Council.	Rocío Abuín



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