



BRACKNELL
TOWN COUNCIL

**Comments,
Compliments or
Complaints Policy**

This policy tells you how to give your comments, compliments or complaints about Bracknell Town Council.

We welcome all feedback so that we can learn how we could make our services better or where our current services are meeting your needs.

You can send us your feedback:

- Through our website www.bracknelltowncouncil.gov.uk
- By e-mail enquiries@bracknelltowncouncil.gov.uk
- By telephone 01344 420079
- By letter by writing to the Town Clerk, Bracknell Town Council, Brooke House, 54 High Street, Bracknell RG12 1LL
- Or in person at the address above.

CHARTER

In providing services Bracknell Town Council will:

- Always put you first and treat you fairly and as an individual
- Adopt a friendly and approachable style
- Be open and straightforward
- Listen to what you are saying
- Provide well trained staff who will deal with your enquiry in a professional and sensitive manner
- Deal with your enquiry at the first point of contact wherever possible
- Take ownership of your enquiry
- Ensure that you are advised of all relevant timescales
- Treat the personal information received from you in the strictest confidence
- Conduct surveys to obtain your feedback
- Take notice of, learn from and act on your feedback
- Continually aim to improve our service and performance

OUR COMMITMENT TO YOU

Bracknell Town Council aims to provide the best standards of service for our service users at all times. However, we accept that occasionally things may go wrong. If this happens, we want to hear about it and have an opportunity to put things right. In dealing with complaints we will:

- Make it easy for you to make a complaint
- Give you a prompt response
- Bring about an efficient and fair resolution of the problem
- Be fair, courteous and helpful in dealing with your complaint
- Keep you informed of progress in dealing with your complaint
- Treat your complaint confidentially and in line with equal opportunities
- Monitor complaints and use the information to make real improvements to our services.

If, however you think that we could do better, please let us know where we need to improve. Where we have made a mistake, please let us know so we can put things right and learn and make changes to try to stop it happening again. A complaint could refer to an occasion when you feel that we have:

- Not provided a good service;
- Done something wrong;
- Not done something we should have;
- Not done something in time, or within the time promised, or;
- Not treated a person in a professional manner.

HOW DO YOU MAKE A COMPLAINT?

If you wish to make a formal complaint you may choose to write a letter to the Town Clerk or complete a complaints form. Alternatively you can e-mail, telephone or call in to Brooke House where a member of staff will record your complaint. We will fully investigate any complaint made to the Town Council and will inform you in writing of the outcome of your complaint within 20 working days.

If you are unhappy with the outcome of your complaint you can appeal. You will be expected to lodge an appeal to the next stage of the procedure within 20 working days of the Council's response, unless you can demonstrate a valid reason why there was need for a longer delay.

We hope to resolve issues at the earliest opportunity. If this is not possible, our complaints procedure has three stages and at each stage your complaint will be considered by someone different.

If your complaint is because you feel that you have been discriminated against on whatever grounds, your complaint should go straight to Stage 2.

If you need help at any point making your complaint, you may contact the Town Council on 01344 420079, or in person, and ask them to write your complaint down for you. Or Citizens Advice will help you. Please make sure that you agree with what has been written down.

STAGE 1

We will aim to respond to you fully within 20 working days. However, where we need a longer period to investigate a particularly complex problem, we will write to you within 20 working days saying when we will be in a position to give a full response.

If you are unhappy with the response to your complaint you have 20 working days to take your complaint to Stage Two.

STAGE 2

Your complaint will be considered by the Leader of Bracknell Town Council who will respond within 20 working days.

If you are still dissatisfied you have 20 working days to take your complaint to Stage Three.

STAGE 3

Your complaint will be considered by a panel made up of the Town Mayor sitting with two councillors. Every effort will be made to arrange a time and venue for the panel meeting which is convenient to you. You will be advised of this date within 15 working days of receiving your Stage Three complaint.

THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT OMBUDSMAN

We aim to resolve your complaint. However, if you are not satisfied with our final response at Stage Three, you may contact the Local Government Ombudsman.

The Local Government Ombudsman
PO Box 4771,
Coventry
CV4 0EH

www.lgo.org.uk
0300 061 0614

The Ombudsman will expect you to have given us a chance to look at your complaint before they will investigate. So please make sure you have followed the procedure outlined in this booklet before you contact the Ombudsman. The Ombudsman provides a booklet and information on their website about how they will operate.

OTHER WAYS OF COMPLAINING

Your Local Councillor

You may ask your local Councillor to take up the matter. However, for more serious complaints, they will probably suggest that you use the procedure within this booklet. You can find out who your Councillor is on our website or by telephoning 01344 420079.

WILL MY COMPLAINT REMAIN CONFIDENTIAL?

We want you to feel comfortable about making a complaint about Council services. Your complaint is personal to you, and your name, address and details of your complaint will remain confidential to the Council employees who are carrying out the investigation, or, if the service is provided by another organisation on behalf of the Council, details may be shared with that organisation if that is necessary to deal with your complaint.

The Information Commissioner

If you believe that you may have been affected by the way we have handled your personal data then you may write to the Information Commissioner. The Information Commissioner is an independent authority that oversees and enforces compliance with both the Data Protection Act 1998 and Freedom of Information Act 2000. The Commissioner has the power to prosecute people who have committed an offence under this legislation.

The Information Commissioner may be contacted at:

Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF

www.ico.gov.uk
01625 545 745

CODE OF CONDUCT FOR COUNCILLORS AND OTHER PROTOCOLS

The Town Council has adopted a Code of Conduct governing the conduct of its councillors. The Council has also adopted various other protocols relating to councillors, including a protocol on how councillors should conduct themselves in relation to planning applications. Complaints that a councillor has acted in breach of the Code of Conduct or a protocol are dealt with under a separate procedure and are usually determined by a Standards Committee. Any person wishing to make such a complaint should contact the Town Clerk.

COMMENTS, COMPLIMENTS OR COMPLAINT FORM

Your name:

Your address:

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Postcode:

Daytime Telephone Number:

E-mail:

Please provide us with details of your comments or complaint:

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If you are making a complaint, have you suffered any harm or loss as a result?

If so, please provide details:

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What do think the Council should do now to put things right?

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Have you written or spoken to anyone at the Council about this matter before?

If so, please provide details:

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Signed Date

If there is not enough room, please use extra sheets of paper. If you have any documents that relate to your complaint, please send copies with this form.