Comments, compliments or complaints about Council services

www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk
This booklet tells you how to give your comments, compliments or complaints about the Council.

We welcome all feedback so that we know where 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.bracknell-forest.gov.uk

by email
customer.services@bracknell-forest.gov.uk

by telephone
01344 352000

by letter (see address on pages 11 and 12)

by using the feedback form at the back of this booklet

or at a reception area
Charter for customers

In providing services, Bracknell Forest Council will:

- Always put you first and treat you fairly and as an individual
- Adopt a friendly and approachable style
- Be open, straightforward and listen to you
- Provide well trained staff who will deal with your enquiry in an efficient and sensitive manner
- Deal with your enquiry at the first point of contact where 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, act on and learn from your feedback
- Continually aim to improve our service and performance

Our commitment to you

Bracknell Forest Council is committed to providing quality services which are cost-efficient and value for money. We welcome your comments and compliments because they let us know when we have provided a good service. For example, that could be:

- a quick service;
- some useful advice;
- a member of staff who was particularly helpful or;
- where the service you received was better than you had expected.

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 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.

Later, in this booklet you will find details of our complaints procedure.
How do you make a complaint?

We hope to resolve complaints at the earliest opportunity. If this is not possible, our complaints procedure has four stages and at each stage your complaint will be considered by someone different. If your complaint is about an education or social care issue, please turn to page 6.

If your complaint is because you feel that you have been discriminated against on whatever grounds, your complaint should go straight to stage 3, and you should write to the director of the service area involved.

Firstly... Stage 1

We want to put things right as quickly as possible and this may usually be done if you speak directly to the staff providing the service first. For example, if your complaint is about a library or a sports centre, you should first speak to the staff at the site. If you believe that the response has not properly dealt with your complaint, please ask to speak with an operations manager who will try to resolve the matter for you.

If you are still unhappy after discussing the matter with the staff providing the service then you should complain by following stage 2 of the procedure.

Stage 2

To start this stage, contact the manager or Chief Officer of the service area you wish to complain about. You may do this by using the form attached inside the back cover of this booklet; by the Council's website, by email, letter or telephone. We will ensure website, email, letters and telephone complaints get to the service manager. If you choose not to use the form, please make sure that you have covered all the points included in the form.

A list of contact details are printed on pages 11 and 12 of this booklet.

If you need help with your complaint, you may contact the Council’s Customer Services and ask them to write down your complaint for you. Or, the Citizen’s Advice Bureau will help you. Please make sure that you agree with what has been written down.

Once we receive your complaint, we will investigate and within ten working days send you a full written reply, or let you know if our reply will take longer, explaining the reason for the delay.

If we do not hear from you within ten working days of our final reply, we will close the complaint.

Stage 3

We hope that by now we would have resolved your complaint. However, if we haven't, you should write to the director of the service area within ten working days, asking for the outcome of your complaint to be reviewed. You may be asked to give a reason why you remain dissatisfied. This will then become a complaint at stage 3 of the procedure.

The director will personally investigate your complaint or appoint a Chief Officer or senior manager who has not previously been involved, to investigate. Again, within ten working days, we will send you a full written reply, or let you know if our reply will take longer, explaining the reason for the delay.

If we do not hear from you within ten working days of our final reply, we will close the complaint.
Stage 4 - And if you are still not satisfied ...

If you feel that your complaint has still not been resolved, you may write to the Chief Executive of the Council, within ten working days of the director’s reply, explaining why you are not yet satisfied. The Chief Executive will consider whether your complaint has already been dealt with properly, and if so, will write to let you know. Alternatively, the Chief Executive may suggest a solution. If not, a review panel will be set up to deal with your complaint.

The panel will review the findings of the director at stage 3 of the procedure, but will not carry out further investigation. A review panel will consist of two independent people and a borough councillor and you will be invited to attend to present your complaint, either in person or with the help of a representative.

The review panel will make recommendations to the Chief Executive as to whether or not your complaint should be upheld, and if so, what remedial action, if any, the Council should take. The Chief Executive will, following consideration of the report of the review panel, make a final decision on your complaint.

Do all complaints follow this procedure?

Some complaints are covered by other procedures and as a general rule you should not use the procedure described in this booklet for:

**Complaints about social care**

By law, these must be dealt with under a separate procedure. You should contact either:

**Adult social care**

The Complaints Manager, Adult Social Care,
Time Square, Market Street, Bracknell, RG12 1JD
Telephone: 01344 351737
Freephone (24-hour answerphone): 0800 169 4491
e-mail: asc.complaints@bracknell-forest.gov.uk

**Children’s social care**

The Complaints Manager, Children’s Social Care
Seymour House, 38 Broadway, Bracknell, RG12 1AU
Telephone: 01344 352119
Freephone (24-hour answerphone): 0800 169 4491
e-mail: childrens.servicescomplaints@bracknell-forest.gov.uk

Website: www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk

Council opening hours
Monday to Friday: 8.30 am to 5.00 pm

Main telephone number
Tel: 01344 352000

Main minicom number
Tel: 01344 352045
Complaints about schools

Complaints regarding schools are dealt with by school governing bodies. The first step is to contact the headteacher of the school.

There are also special arrangements for:

- Appeals about admission to, or exclusion from school
- Appeals about special educational needs provision
- Complaints about the curriculum, religious education and collective worship

A separate booklet is available for these complaints. To receive a copy, or further advice, please contact Customer Services on 01344 352000, or email: education.complaints@bracknell-forest.gov.uk

Other ways of complaining

Your local borough councillor
You may ask your local borough councillor to take up the matter. However, for more serious complaints, they will probably suggest that you use the procedure within this booklet. A list of councillors is available on the Council’s website or by telephoning 01344 352000.

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

The Local Government Ombudsman
P.O. Box 4771, Coventry CV4 0EH
Website: www.lgo.org.uk
Telephone: 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 web-site about how he will operate.
Code of Conduct for councillors and other protocols

The 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 the Council’s Standards Committee. Any person wishing to make such a complaint should contact the Borough Solicitor at Easthampstead House, Town Square, Bracknell, RG12 1AQ. Further information is available on the Council’s website www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk

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.

If you believe that we have not handled your personal information in an acceptable way, you should first write to:

The Information Compliance Officer, Legal Services
Easthampstead House, Town Square, Bracknell, RG12 1AQ
Telephone: 01344 352000

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
Telephone: 01625 545 745
Website: www.ico.gov.uk

Whistle-blowing

The Council has adopted a separate procedure to deal with situations where a member of staff, a contractor engaged by the Council or tendering for a contract to be awarded by the Council, or a member of staff employed by a contractor, wishes to draw to the attention of the Council some illegality, impropriety, breach of contract standing orders or financial regulations or something which places the Health and Safety of someone at risk.

Concerns should be addressed to the Borough Solicitor at Easthampstead House, Town Square, Bracknell, RG12 1AQ. Details of the procedure can be found on the Council’s website www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk
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<td>Car Parks</td>
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<td>Cemetery and Crematorium</td>
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<td>Environmental Health</td>
<td>email: <a href="mailto:customer.services@bracknell-forest.gov.uk">customer.services@bracknell-forest.gov.uk</a></td>
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<td>Community Centres</td>
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<td>Council democratic functions and meetings</td>
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<td>Council property</td>
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<tr>
<td>Council tax</td>
<td>email: <a href="mailto:customer.services@bracknell-forest.gov.uk">customer.services@bracknell-forest.gov.uk</a></td>
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<td>Customer Services</td>
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<td>A particular school</td>
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<td>Other education services</td>
<td>Children Young People and Learning Seymour House, 38 Broadway, Bracknell, RG12 1AU</td>
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<td>Youth services</td>
<td>Telephone: 01344 352000</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Minicom: 01344 354141</td>
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<td></td>
<td>email: <a href="mailto:education.complaints@bracknell-forest.gov.uk">education.complaints@bracknell-forest.gov.uk</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>If your complaint is about</td>
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<td>Adult or Children’s Social Care (please note the special arrangements on page 6)</td>
<td>The Complaints Manager&lt;br&gt;Adult Social Care&lt;br&gt;Time Square,&lt;br&gt;Market Street,&lt;br&gt;Bracknell RG12 1JD&lt;br&gt;Telephone: 01344 351737&lt;br&gt;Freephone (24-hour answerphone): 0800 169 4491&lt;br&gt;Email: <a href="mailto:asc.complaints@bracknell-forest.gov.uk">asc.complaints@bracknell-forest.gov.uk</a></td>
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If you are not sure about where to complain, please contact Customer Services at customer.services@bracknell-forest.gov.uk or telephone 01344 352000.

Comments, compliments or complaint form

Your name: ..........................................................................................................................
Your address: ..........................................................................................................................
Postcode: ............................................................................................................................
Daytime telephone number: .................................................................................................
Email: .................................................................................................................................
Please provide us with details of your comments or complaint: ..........................................................
...........................................................................................................................................
...........................................................................................................................................
If you are making a complaint, have you suffered any harm or loss as a result? If so, please provide details:
...........................................................................................................................................
...........................................................................................................................................
What do you think the Council should do now to put things right? ..........................................................
...........................................................................................................................................
...........................................................................................................................................
Have you written or spoken to anyone at the Council about this matter before? If so, please provide details ..........................................................
...........................................................................................................................................
...........................................................................................................................................
...........................................................................................................................................
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.
Confidential

How do we make sure that we treat everyone fairly?
We recognise and value all of the people in Bracknell Forest and want to make sure that everyone may access our services. The following information we ask for below will only be used to compile statistics for use in monitoring the complaints procedure or improving the delivery of the Council’s services. Please note that this information is optional either completely or in part.

Are you:  Male ☐ Female ☐

Under 18 ☐  18-34 ☐  35-49 ☐  50-64 ☐  65-79 ☐  80+ ☐

To which of these groups do you consider you belong?  (PLEASE ✔ ONE BOX ONLY)
White ☐
Black or Black British ☐
British ☐
Caribbean ☐
Irish ☐
African ☐
Gypsy/Traveller ☐
Any other Black background ✔ AND WRITE IN) .......................................
Showpeople/Circus ☐
Any other White background ✔ AND WRITE IN) .......................................
Asian or Asian British ☐
Mixed ☐
Indian ☐
Pakistani ☐
White and Black Caribbean ☐
Nepali ☐
White and Black African ☐
Bangladeshi ☐
White and Asian ☐
Any other Asian background ✔ AND WRITE IN) .......................................
Chinese ☐
Filipino ☐
Any other ethnic group ✔ AND WRITE IN) .......................................

Do you have any long-standing illness, disability or infirmity? (Long-standing means anything that has troubled you over a period of time or that is likely to affect you over a period of time) PLEASE ✔ ONE BOX ONLY
Yes ☐  No ☐

Does the illness or disability limit your activities in any way? PLEASE ✔ ONE BOX ONLY
Yes ☐  No ☐

How would you describe your religion/belief?  PLEASE ✔ ONE BOX ONLY
None ☐
Muslim ☐
Christian (all Christian denominations) ☐
Sikh ☐
Buddhist ☐
Jewish ☐
Hindu ☐
Any other religion or belief (please specify) .......................................

How would you describe your sexual orientation? PLEASE ✔ ONE BOX ONLY
Heterosexual/straight ☐
Bisexual ☐
Gay man ☐
Prefer not to say ☐
Lesbian/gay woman ☐

Thank you for completing this form
Copies of this booklet may be obtained in large print, Braille, on audio cassette or in other languages. To obtain a copy in an alternative format please telephone 01344 352000.

Nepali

यस प्रचारको सक्षेप्य वा सार निवोडङ चाहिँ दिदिने छ ठुलो अक्सर, ब्रेल वा क्यासेट सुन्नको लागी । अरु भाषाको नक्कल पनि हासिल गर्न सकिने छ । कुपया सम्पर्क गरुहोला 01344 352000।

Tagalog


Urdu

اس دستاویز کے خلاصے میں مختصر منتج جمیل ہوئے، بریل لکھنالی یا پنڈربائیو کیست پریکار دے شدہ صورت میں فراہم کئے جا سکتے ہیں۔ ذیا کی بارون کی بی۔ اس کے لیے بروہ مہریائی نیلیقوں نمبر 01344 352000 پر اپنا کیس۔

Polish

Streszczenia lub fragmenty tego dokumentu mogą być dostępne w wersji napisanej dużym drukiem, pismem Braille lub na kasecie audio. Można również otrzymać kopie w innych językach. Proszę skontaktować się z numerem 01344 352000.

Portuguese

Podemos disponibilizar resumos ou extractos deste documento em impressão grande, em Braille ou em audiocassette. Podem também ser obtidas cópias em outros idiomas. Por favor ligue para o 01344 352000.