



Let us know.....

We're listening

Our service promise to you

At Maldon District Council, we want to ensure that all those who come into contact with us are dealt with efficiently, with courtesy and understanding. We are, through our Customer Charter, totally committed to giving you high quality services and our staff work hard to achieve this. We therefore would like to hear what you have to say.

It would help us to know when you feel we have done particularly well in any area of our service delivery and any suggestions you have for how we could do better. This will help us to build on what we are doing and make improvements.

Even though we always try to do our best, sometimes things can go wrong and our services do not meet the standards you expect. When this happens we would like to hear from you so that we can put things right and prevent things from happening again.

Your comments and suggestions will help us improve our services.



Compliments and Suggestions

We always welcome compliments and suggestions. We log and monitor comments to help us put together a picture in March each year of where and how you think we have done particularly well, and how you think we might improve. This allows us to build on our good practice and continue improving the quality of our services.

Complaints

A complaint will usually be about something you think we have done the wrong way, something we should not have done, or something we failed to do.

So, how do I complain?

Should you wish to make a comment or complaint, please follow the steps below – it is best if you pursue your own case in the order outlined. Complaints and feedback are monitored to help improve services. Details of your complaint may be shared with elected Members.

Informal Stage - talk to the relevant service first

By talking initially to the staff in the Service responsible for your grievance, you are already in contact with those people who will immediately understand the nature of your complaint. Most problems are dealt with at this level and brought to a satisfactory conclusion.

Stage 1

Complaints may be made by letter, fax, e-mail, textphone, telephone, in person or by using the special form available in Council offices. The form can also be downloaded from our website: www.maldon.gov.uk. They will be passed to the manager responsible for the service. We will let you have a written response within **seven working days** of receiving your complaint.

The investigation may take longer than 7 working days. If this is the case we will let you know the reason for the delay and let you know when you will receive a response.

Stage 2

If you are not satisfied with the way in which your complaint was handled or the decision that was made, you should let us know by writing to the Chief Officer involved. In the letter you should let us know why you were not satisfied with either the way we handled your complaint at Stage 1 or the response we gave you. The Chief Officer will review the Stage 1 investigation and you will hear from them within **seven working days** of receiving your letter.

The purpose of Stage 2 is to ensure that everything you raised in your original complaint has been looked at in detail and correctly addressed and, if not, to make sure that this now happens. The investigation may take longer than 7 working days. If this is the case we will let you know the reason for the delay and let you know when you will receive a response. If you are still not satisfied with the response you can ask for a further investigation, see Stage 3.

Stage 3

You should write to the Chief Executive asking for a further review of your complaint. In the letter you should let us know why you were not satisfied with either the way we handled your complaint at Stage 1 or Stage 2, or the responses we gave you. The Chief Executive will review the responses given to you at Stages 1 and 2 and make any further enquiries and investigations that are necessary, in order to provide a response within **seven working days**. The investigation may take longer than 7 working days. If this is the case we will let you know the reason for the delay and let you know when you will receive a response.

“creating a District which takes pride in itself”

If you ask us to deal with an issue that does not fall within our complaints procedure we will let you know what other options may be available to you. If you have difficulties in making a complaint or receiving a response at any stage of the procedure we will be pleased to help you in any way we can. **Please call 01621 875761 for assistance**

Local Government Ombudsman

If you are not satisfied with the way the Council has handled your complaint, you can contact the Local Government Ombudsman. The Ombudsman is an independent government-appointed representative who will act as an impartial investigator. The Ombudsman will usually advise that you, the complainant should have gone through the Council's 3 stages before he will investigate. The service is free (and confidential) and is fully described in a separate leaflet entitled "How to complain to the Local Government Ombudsman". Copies of this leaflet are available free of charge from the Council reception area, or write to:

Local Government Ombudsman
10th Floor, Millbank Tower,
Millbank,
London,
SW1P 4QP

Tel: 020 7217 4620

Fax: 020 7217 4621

Website: www.lgo.org.uk