



Handling Customer Complaints Procedure

Kentish Council is committed to providing quality service to our community. We are continually striving to improve our level of service through employee training, new technology and consultation.

1 Complaint Definition

A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction about the standard of a service we have provided, or with an action or the lack of an action which can be investigated and acted upon.

A complaint is different to an enquiry or request.

An enquiry is an appeal for information, an answer to be provided to a specific question, or a decision to be made in relation to a specific matter, such as an explanation of a policy or procedure.

A request can be:

- An appeal for assistance to inspect, remove, replace, repair or reinstate Council facilities or amenities which may be damaged or missing as a result of several circumstances;
- A request for service (such as garbage and recycling collection);
- Reports about noise, dogs, nuisances, unauthorized building work or similar issues; or
- For us to provide new infrastructure.

We do not consider the above examples as complaints, simply as part of our everyday workload as your Council.

2 Lodging a Complaint

A complaint may be lodged by phone, in person or in writing through a letter, an email or on our website.

You will need to provide your full details; your name, address and telephone contact number.

All complaints received by Council will be treated with the utmost seriousness.

The more information we can receive about the circumstances surrounding your dissatisfaction with us, the faster we will be able to process your complaint and come to a resolution. Details that will help us to serve you include:

- Dates, times and location of events;
- What happened;
- Names of the Council officers to whom you have spoken and the dates that the communications occurred;

- Copies or references to letters or documents relevant to the complaint; and
- What you hope to achieve as an outcome of your complaint.

3 Complaints Management

Complaints are dealt with by the manager of the relevant area, who will try to settle the issue as quickly as possible. Whilst most complaints can be resolved quickly, there are times when detailed investigation is required. If it will take time, we will keep you informed of the progress of your complaint. If your complaint is of a particularly serious or complex matter or remains unresolved, then your complaint should be made in writing to the General Manager.

Attachment 1: Complaints Management Process provides a visual representation of how complaints are handled.

3.1 Response Times

Response times for your complaint may vary depending on the complexity of our investigation. You can expect acknowledgement of your complaint within five (5) business days, and a resolution within 20 business days.

We at Kentish Council will do our best to deliver a resolution to your complaint within our stated timeframes, however some complaints require detailed investigation and cannot be resolved as quickly. If it will take time, we will keep you informed of the progress of your complaint, and we will provide you with an estimated timeframe and contact to whom you can refer to for information.

3.2 Consideration of a Complaint

In considering your complaint the relevant manager or the General Manager will:

- Examine and analyse the information available and request clarification when required;
- Review any relevant Council policies which may be associated with the complaint;
- Consider whether the Council is at fault;
- Consider any necessary action to be taken to correct the faults identified; and
- If necessary, consider a review of the Council's procedures to avoid recurrence of any similar complaint in the future.

The relevant manager or the General Manager may enter into informal discussions or mediation on your complaint with a view to finding a resolution. You will be informed of this decision in writing.

3.3 Treatment of Your Details

Your details will not be given to a third party under any circumstances, unless required by law, in order to protect the complaint process. At all times you will be treated professionally, with respect and with consideration given to confidentiality.

APPROVED BY COUNCIL:	17 December 2019	Minute: 7.4.5
EFFECTIVE DATE:	18 December 2019	
ADMINISTERED BY:	Team Leader Customer Service & Business Support	

4 Attachment 1 – Complaints Management Process

