

# What do you think of our service?

Customer Compliments,  
Comments and  
Complaints Guide



Ards and  
North Down  
Borough Council

# Let us know what you think of our services

We want you to help develop and improve the services you receive from Ards and North Down Borough Council. You can find a copy of our customer services standards and procedures on our website at [www.ardsandnorthdown.gov.uk](http://www.ardsandnorthdown.gov.uk)

In any organisation, things can sometimes go wrong and there is room for improvement. We may not have noticed. That is why we encourage all of our customers to contact us, as feedback will help us improve.

## You can use this comment card to:

- compliment us on something we have done right
- comment on something you feel could be improved
- tell us about a member of staff who has been particularly helpful.
- complain about something you think we have done wrong

## What you expect from us

We promise to take your comments and complaints seriously. We will find out where our service has disappointed you, where possible provide an explanation and take steps to improve our service.

## How to contact us

We want to make it easy for you, our customers, to give us feedback, ask questions, raise issues or make suggestions about council services. You can contact us in any of the following ways:



### Telephone

Call us on 0300 013 3333



### Email us

[enquiries@ardsandnorthdown.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ardsandnorthdown.gov.uk)



### Online

[ardsandnorthdown.gov.uk](http://ardsandnorthdown.gov.uk)



### SMS Text only

07718 159 275



### In person

The quickest way to get any enquiry sorted out, is by explaining it to any member of staff at the point of service. If the query raised cannot be dealt with immediately then an appropriate officer will provide a reply as soon as possible. You can speak to staff at any of our main buildings.



### In writing

Complete and return this comment card. It is available online or can be sealed and posted to us or can be left in one of our comment boxes at any of our main buildings listed on the back of this leaflet.

# Our complaints procedure

## Stage 1

Our aim is to address your complaint as quickly and easily as possible. The person you first contact will aim to resolve your complaint. In most circumstances mistakes or misunderstandings can be resolved quickly and informally. If this is not possible or the matter is a complex one, you are advised to contact the Service Unit Manager or Head of Service or to complete and return a compliments, comments and complaint form, which will be referred to the appropriate officer for investigation.

If your complaint is in writing, or you ask for a written reply, a response will be sent to you within ten working days of us receiving your initial complaint (or sooner if possible), except for Planning Service which operates a 15 working day response to written or verbal complaints. If your complaint is made in person or by telephone and cannot be resolved immediately, it will be passed to the relevant Service Manager or Head of Service and you will receive a verbal response within five working days, or sooner if possible.

If the issue is more complex or we need to contact other organisations, it may take longer to investigate the matter fully. If this is the case, we will still respond to your complaint within five working days if your complaint is in person or by telephone, or within ten working days if your complaint is in writing. We will let you know:

- what action is being taken
- who is dealing with the matter
- when you can expect a full reply.

## Stage 2

If you are still dissatisfied, you may write or ask that your complaint be forwarded to the head of service or director of the relevant department. They will then carry out a detailed investigation and respond in writing to your complaint within ten working days, except for Planning Service which operates a 15 working day response to written or verbal complaints.

## Stage 3

If the second response to your complaint is not satisfactory, you may write to the Chief Executive, or his nominee, at the Town Hall, Bangor, who will review your case and respond to you in writing within 10 working days. If longer is required, we will write and explain why and advise you of a new date by which a response will be issued.

---

## Taking your complaint further

If you are not happy with the final response that you receive from us, you may ask the Northern Ireland Ombudsman to investigate your complaint within 6 months. The Ombudsman will not normally initiate action until the Council has completed an investigation using its own complaints procedure.

The Ombudsman can be contacted at:

Telephone: [028] 9023 3821 • Text phone: [028] 9089 7789 • Freephone 0800 34 34 24  
Email: [nipso@nipso.org.uk](mailto:nipso@nipso.org.uk)  
Post: Freepost NIPSO  
Northern Ireland Public Services Ombudsman,  
Progressive House  
33 Wellington Place,  
Belfast, BT1 6HN

More information is available at: [www.ni-ombudsman.org.uk](http://www.ni-ombudsman.org.uk)

There is a separate process for dealing with complaints which relate to requests under the Freedom of Information Act or Environmental Information Regulations. If you are not happy with the way your request for information has been handled, you may seek an internal review through the office of the Director of Organisational Development and Administration via [FOI@ardsandnorthdown.gov.uk](mailto:FOI@ardsandnorthdown.gov.uk). If you are not happy with the internal review response, you may make a complaint to the Information Commissioner's Office.

## Tell us what you think

### What are you sending us?

- compliment       comment       complaint  
 highlighting staff who have been particularly helpful.

**Please give full details** (include date, time and location, if applicable)

---

---

---

If your issue is a complaint, what would you suggest we do to resolve the issue or prevent it from happening again?

---

---

---

### Your contact details

First name: \_\_\_\_\_ Surname: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Post code: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone number: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### How will my details be used?

The information provided will enable us to provide feedback and improve services. Your information will be processed in accordance with GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018 and will not be passed to any third party. If you wish to clarify your rights under this Act, the Council policy is available on the website.

From time to time we may use your details to give you further information or consult you about our services. If you wish to receive this information, please tick here.

**To enable information to be collected and monitored for Section 75 of the NI Act 1998, we would ask that you complete the questions below. The answers will be treated in confidence.**

Gender: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of birth: \_\_\_\_\_

Under the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 a person is considered to have a disability if he or she has “a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-today activities”.

### Do you have a disability?

Yes       No

If yes, to the above, please indicate the nature of the impairment[s]:

Physical disability       Mental Health disability       Learning disability       Other

### Dependants:

In relation to this comment/complaint did you have responsibility for the care of?

Child/children       Dependant Adult

These documents will be made available in alternative formats or other languages on request. For information about obtaining a copy please contact: Customer Services Manager, Ards and North Down Borough Council Town Hall, The Castle, Bangor, BT20 4BT.

Please detach, fold and seal this form by moistening the glue strips before posting.

---



Freepost RTUR-YXYS-GCAE  
Customer Services Section  
Ards and North Down Borough Council  
Town Hall  
The Castle  
BANGOR  
BT20 4BT

# Where can you contact us?

## **Town Hall,**

The Castle, Bangor, BT20 4BT

## **North Down Museum,**

The Castle, Bangor, BT20 4BT

## **2 Church Street,**

Newtownards, BT23 4AP

## **Signal Centre,**

2 Innotec Drive, Balloo Road, Bangor, BT19 7PD

## **Tower House,**

34 Quay Street, Bangor, Co. Down, BT20 5ED

## **Environmental Resource Centre,**

Balloo Avenue, Bangor, BT19 7QT

## **Ards Arts Centre,**

Town Hall, Conway Square, Newtownards, BT23 4NP

## **Ards Visitor Information Centre,**

31 Regent Street, Newtownards, BT23 4AD

## **Ards Blair Mayne Wellbeing and Leisure Complex,**

1 Dairy Hall Lane, Newtownards, BT23 4DB

## **Comber Leisure Centre,**

15 Castle Street, Comber, BT23 5DY

## **Londonderry Park,**

Portaferry Road, Newtownards, BT23 8SG

## **Portaferry Sports Centre,**

Cloughey Road, Portaferry, BT22 1ND