

Concerns, Compliments and Complaints Policy

This policy is for people who use Milewood services, their families and friends, current Milewood Staff, sponsors and the public.

Managers should ensure that this policy is made available to all people we support, or the easy read version where required.

The policy is not for former employees who have left Milewood within the last 6 months. They must raise their concerns through our Human Resources processes.

Milewood colleagues must also refer to our internal complaints process and *guidance* when managing a concern or a complaint.

- We are open to concerns and complaints; we want to learn from the things that go wrong
- We are open and transparent about the concerns and complaints we receive and the processes we follow
- We recognise that understanding what is not working supports us to take the right action to improve.

Introduction

This policy explains how someone can raise a concern, make a complaint or share a compliment about Milewood and what they can expect from us when they do this. Every concern, complaint and compliment received will be managed in line with this policy even when escalated to a senior leader in the organisation where required.

Recording and responding to compliments is not a regulatory requirement however we will record these and respond where appropriate as it is important to evidence these to our Regulators.

This policy is also available in *Easy Read* format.

Our Approach

We are committed to providing a high-quality service, and we understand that complaints help us to improve what we do.

We show this commitment by:

- Making our complaint process as easy as possible for complainants. This includes providing this policy in languages other than English as quickly as possible when this is required.



- Treating all complaints seriously, confidentially, with empathy and an open mind. This includes investigating complaints from anonymous complainants.
- Making sure that colleagues know and understand their role and responsibilities in managing and resolving complaints.
- Recording and monitoring all complaints and identifying any regular themes to support learning.
- Reviewing the concerns, compliments and complaints policy and procedures annually
- Fulfilling our internal and external reporting responsibilities. This includes notifying relevant authorities should a complaint involve a *safeguarding* concern.
- Following the principles of [the NHS England 'Ask Listen Do' project](#). This means:

We actively encourage feedback on our work and provide assurance that a person's care, support or advice is not negatively affected because of a complaint or concern.

We listen to the complaints we get and undertake thorough and balanced investigations.

We act on what we have been told and make improvements to our ways of working, making sure we tell the complainant what we are doing.

We are also committed to understanding the experiences of people who may be subjected to inequities because of their age, disability, race/ethnicity, *religion* or belief, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, poverty or other status. We know that such inequalities can lead to further inequities in how people experience a complaints process. We are clear that **every** complaint must be treated fairly with equal respect and every complainant with empathy. We will also consider any reasonable adjustments required or requested to support any complainant during the complaints process

Information you will find in this policy

- What is a complaint or concern?
- How can someone make a complaint or raise a concern?
- How do we respond to a complaint or concern?
- The appeals process if you are unhappy with the outcome of your complaint
- Why we might not investigate a complaint
- Privacy and data protection
- Useful contacts
- How to share a compliment and what we do with this information



What is a complaint?

We define a complaint as any communication of dissatisfaction with an activity or experience with Milewood that has fallen short of the expectations of the person complaining or identifies a shortfall in the *values* we hold. A complaint can be made about the service we provide, a direct person or anything that has an impact on the people we support or their home.

Complaints can be difficult to make and may sometimes be hard to identify. If a person raises a grumble, raises several concerns, raises a concern in anger, or simply states they are unhappy about something we have done, that is a complaint and should be treated as such. All expressions of dissatisfaction should be treated as formal complaints, even though they may be resolved immediately.

We recognise that people sometimes feel more comfortable suggesting improvements or ideas about how we can do things better and you can raise a concern with Milewood rather than a formal complaint. We encourage people to share their suggestions with the local team or *manager*. Such contact details can be obtained by contacting our Support Hub on 01425 485520. You can also raise a concern by contacting speakup@milewood.co.uk if you feel more comfortable.

How can someone make a complaint?

To make a complaint, people can:

- Speak directly with a senior member of staff in your home if the complaint does not directly involve them
- Telephone our Support Hub on 01425 485520
- Email speakup@milewood.co.uk
- Fill out our online feedback form on our *website*
- Write to, or email, a local or senior manager (contact details are at the end of this policy)
- Complete our Easy Read Feedback Form and post it to us at:
Complaints, Milewood, 4 Sidings Court, Doncaster DN4 5NU or email it directly to speakup@milewood.co.uk

We encourage people to complain as soon as possible after the event has occurred so we can put things right quickly. However, a complaint can be made **within 12 months** of the event/concern, or 12 months from the date the complainant becomes aware of their concern.

Advocates and representatives

We understand that some people may wish to make a complaint through an *advocate* or a nominated *representative*. If this is the case, we will request *consent* from the complainant to share information/outcomes. We will typically request written or verbal consent; however reasonable adjustments can be made to obtain consent through a process that meets the complainant's individual needs.

If you require support to find an advocate, you can contact an advocate service online or over the phone. Here are some examples of Advocacy Hubs you can contact:

- **Voice Ability**

<https://www.voiceability.org/>

Tel: 0300 303 1660

- **The Advocacy People**

<https://www.theadvocacypeople.org.uk/>

Tel: 0330 440 9000

- **PoHWER**

<https://www.pohwer.net/>

Tel: 0300 456 2370

How do we respond to a complaint?

We acknowledge complaints within **3 working days** by email, telephone, letter, or in person to clarify what we believe the complaint is about and provide the complainant with a copy of our complaints policy.

If you wish to raise a concern rather than a formal complaint, you can do so by emailing speakup@milewood.co.uk. Please refer to **How do we respond to a concern?** section below to see how we manage concerns.

We will outline the next steps to the complainant and explain how we will investigate their complaint. All complaints will have an identified investigator who will clarify with the complainant any aspects they are unclear about before completing their investigation. The complexity of the complaint determines which colleague completes the investigation. Where possible, a manager most local to the complaint will be the investigator. We aim to conclude complaint investigations



within **25 working days**. More complex investigations may take longer to resolve. However, should we need more time than expected, we will inform the complainant of this, provide them with a new date and an explanation for the delay.

If a complaint is raised that outlines possible abuse, neglect or any other criminal offences, we will report this to the local authority, police and CQC where applicable in line with our Safeguarding Policy. The safeguarding team and/or police will then manage how this complaint is investigated.

If a complaint is received about another organisation, or a joint complaint is made with another organisation, Milewood will work closely with that organisation to resolve the complaint. The complaint will be shared with the organisation to ensure improvements are made to all parties.

Outcome of complaints

When we have completed our investigation, we will share our outcome(s) with the complainant in writing. We conclude our complaint as:

- **Upheld** - our investigation has identified that our actions or services did not meet the expected standard(s)
- **Partially upheld** - our investigation has identified errors or shortcomings in *certain* areas of the complaint but not in others
- **Not upheld** - our investigation has identified that our actions or services are in line with the expected standard(s)
- **Inconclusive** - we are unable to determine an outcome based on our findings.

Where we make recommendations for learning, these will be shared with the complainant. The actions needed to implement this learning will be overseen by the relevant manager. They are responsible for informing the Regional Manager once the actions have been completed.

How to Appeal an outcome of a complaint

If the complainant is unhappy with our investigation process or our proposal to resolve it, they can appeal within **15 working** days of receiving their complaint outcome.

A senior manager will review the complaint investigation to make sure:

- The correct process was followed and the complaint was handled correctly
- All concerns have been responded to and resolved
- The complainant was treated fairly, justly, with empathy and respect.

Should the senior manager identify concerns with our original investigation, they may recommend that the complaint is re-investigated.



To request an appeal, complainants should contact our Freedom to Speak Up Guardian at speakup@milewood.co.uk and include their name, the service or colleague they have complained about, and their reason for the appeal request.

The appeal will be acknowledged in writing within 5 working days of receiving the appeal

The FTSU Guardian will allocate a senior manager to undertake the appeal process **within 30 working days**. If we are unable to resolve a complaint after our appeal stage, the complainant has the right to contact the appropriate regulator, Local Authority and then the *Ombudsman* for an Independent Review if they are not satisfied with the outcome.

If you are not sure which Local Authority this is, you can find out here [Find your local council - GOV.UK](#) by typing in the postcode of the home and accessing their details through the Gov website

You can contact the Ombudsman about a complaint via their website <https://www.lgo.org.uk/> or calling them on 0300 061 0614

Please be aware that different regulators have different escalation timeframes:

In England a complainant must escalate their complaint to the relevant Ombudsman **within 12 months** of the event/incident or when the complainant first became aware of the issue.

Complaints can also be raised with CQC if you do not feel your complaint was managed appropriately:

Care Quality Commission:

Website: <https://www.cqc.org.uk/>

Tel: 0300 061 6161

Email: enquiries@cqc.org.uk

Address: CQC Citygate Gallowgate Newcastle upon Tyne NE1 4PA

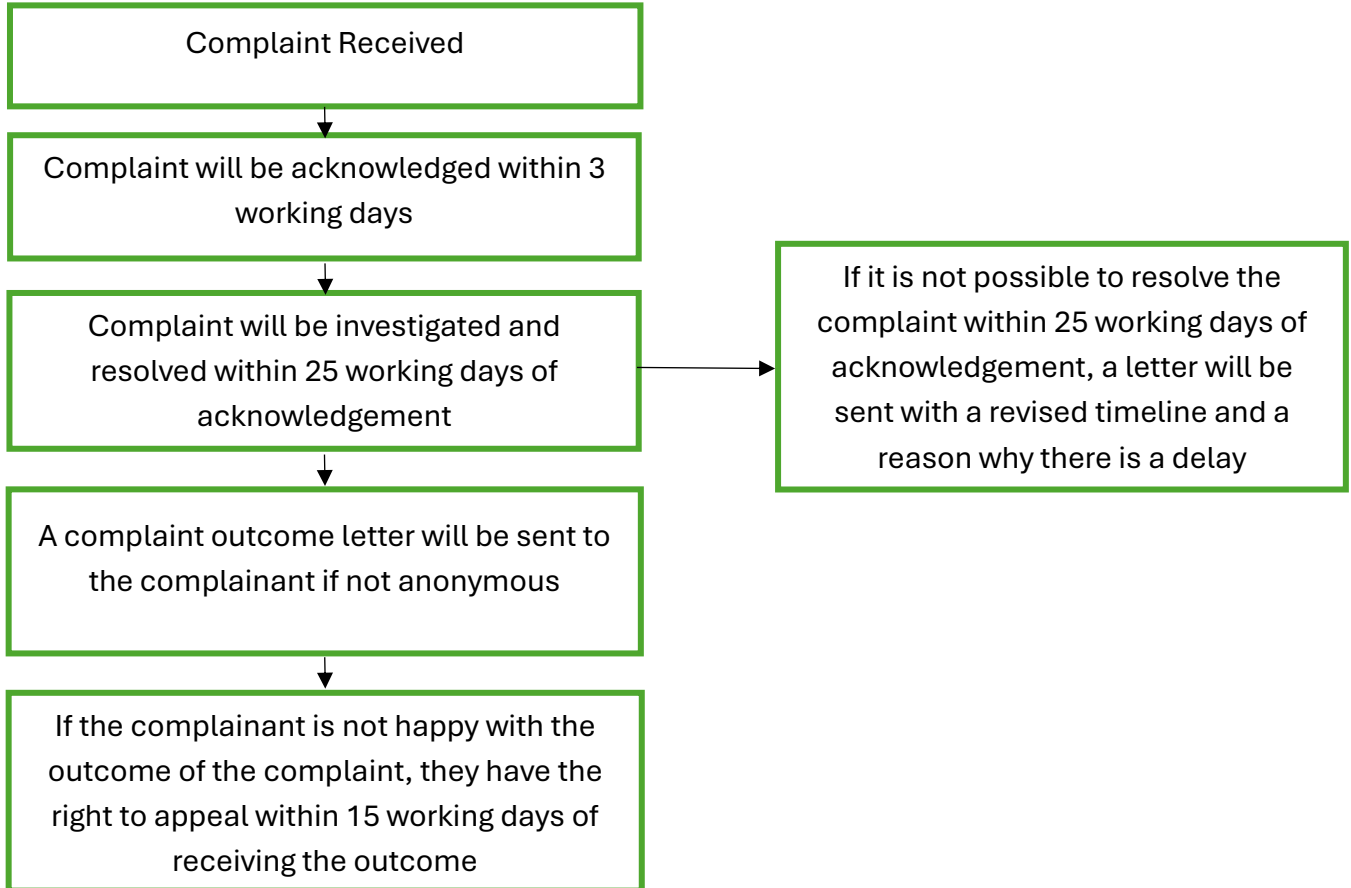
Or

CQC 2 Redman Place London E20 1JQ

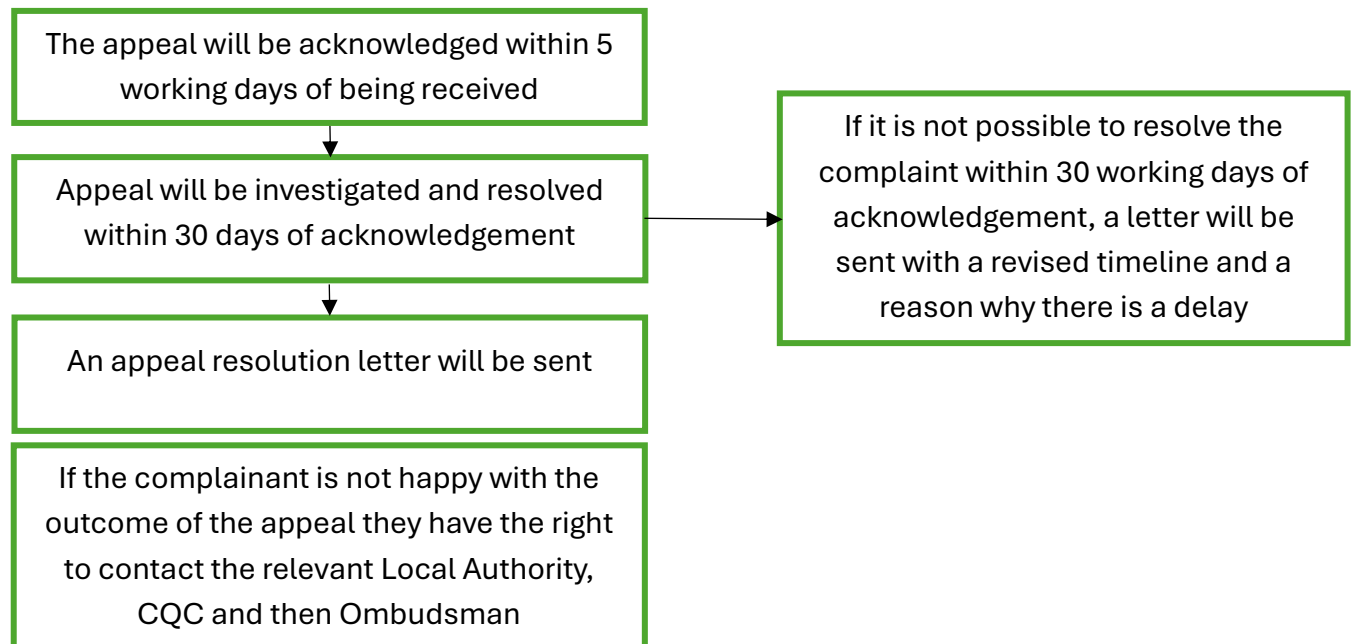


Dealing with a complaint flow chart

Receiving a complaint



Receiving an appeal to an outcome of a complaint



Why we might not investigate a complaint

There may be some occasions where a complaint is not investigated. We may have received several complaints detailing the same information that has already been investigated. In this instance, information will be shared about the complaint and investigation where appropriate with the complainant. Also reasons may include:

Time limit for making a complaint

We encourage people to complain as soon as possible after the event has occurred so we can put things right quickly. However, a complaint can be made **within 12 months** of the event/concern, or **12 months** from the date the complainant became aware of their concern.

Legal proceedings

If a complaint is part of a legal action, Milewood will continue to investigate the complaint unless doing so could affect legal proceedings. The decision on whether to investigate will be made by our CEO. The complainant and any relevant legal team will be informed of the outcome.

Unreasonable complainant behaviour

Where a complaint is unreasonable, persistent or malicious, we will notify the complainant that this is our belief and explain why. We will not respond further to these complaints to enable the complainant to seek other sources of assistance. This is to protect our colleagues and to avoid engaging in difficult conversations that cannot lead to resolution.

Examples of this may include:

- Being abusive, *threatening* or acting in a manner intended to intimidate colleagues
- Refusing to accept certain issues are outside the scope of Milewood, our objectives or our complaints policy
- Submitting repeat complaints after our complaint process has been completed
- Making excessive demands on the time and resources of colleagues, such as lengthy phone calls, details correspondence every few days, and expecting immediate responses.
- Making a complaint that is discriminatory about a person or group of people.

The decision as to whether a complaint is unreasonable, persistent or malicious is made by the Head of Quality, Governance & Safeguarding, who must be notified by the investigating manager of their concern that this may be the case. If the complaint relates to our Quality Team or in the absence or unavailability of the Head of Quality, Governance & Safeguarding, another senior leader will make this decision.

If a complainant is unhappy with our decision, we will encourage them to contact the relevant Ombudsman. Use the link below to find the relevant Ombudsman:

<https://www.ombudsmanassociation.org/find-ombudsman>

How do we respond to a concern?

We manage and respond to concerns differently to complaints. Concerns are based on requests to improve a service, fix a problem or reconsider a decision that has been made.

Sometimes people may feel more comfortable in raising a concern rather than a formal complaint.

You can raise a concern in several ways:

- Contact your home manager
- Contact a different, local manager
- Contact your Regional Manager
- Contact Jill Roberts, Head of Quality

You can find the contact details for the above at the end of this policy.

Concerns or requests will be investigated and the person who has raised the concern will be informed what action will be taken. Sometimes a concern may be escalated to a formal complaint if:

- The concern has been raised multiple times (even if by different people)
- The concern reaches the threshold of what outlines a complaint
- If the person raising the concern is unhappy about the outcome or the handling of the concern

If a concern details information about potential abuse, harm or a criminal act, the concern will be dealt with in line with our complaints procedure and safeguarding policy and the relevant authorities notified, depending on the concern being raised.

Dealing with a concern

The person raising the concern will receive feedback from their concern within 3 working days either in writing or verbally.

All concerns are aimed to be dealt with within 10 working days from the date the complaint was acknowledged.

If a concern cannot be dealt with within 10 working days, the person raising the concern will be contacted with a reason why and they will be given a revised timescale.

Internal Escalation Routes

If you have a concern to raise, the first point of contact would be your line manager. This may be a shift lead or Deputy Manager depending on your home. If your concern is related to your line manager or they are involved in anyway, the concern must be raised to their line manager instead.



Once you have raised your concern, if you do not feel that this has been managed or dealt with in an appropriate way, or it has been left unresolved, you can escalate this further to the next line manager. At any point during this escalation you can raise a formal complaint if you do not feel that your complaint is being managed appropriately. You can also email speakup@milewood.co.uk and your concern will be managed appropriately.

Example of escalation route flow chart:

Step 1- Raise concern with your line manager. This could be your deputy home manager.

If your concern was not dealt with appropriately move to step 2

Step 2- Raise concern with their line manager. This would be the Regional Manager of your area

If your concern was not dealt with appropriately move to step 3

Step 3- Escalate the concern to Keeley Cremona

If your concern was not dealt with appropriately move to step 4

Step 4- You can contact Jill Roberts who is the Freedom to Speak up Guardian

How to share a Compliment

The best way to share a compliment with Milewood is to contact your home manager directly either via email or over the phone.

Milewood will store compliments on a home by home basis, making them readily available for our Regulators during inspections. Compliments are not required to be monitored however these are shared with Regulators to evidence good practice and feedback.

Please refer to the contact details below on where you can send your compliments to.

What we do with your information

When making a complaint, raising a concern or sharing a compliment, your information will be stored to evidence what has been received and what action has been taken.

Managers will log the complaint, concern or compliment within their Customer Feedback Log that they hold for each individual home. This ensures that there is a clear record of all complaints, concerns and compliments and how they were managed.

The log should detail when the concern, compliment or complaint was received, what action was taken and how this was resolved. These will only be shared on a needs to know basis.

Privacy and data protection

Information held about complaints will be held and managed by Milewood in line with the Data Protection Act 2018 and UK-GDPR. We will not share a complainant's name or details with anyone who does not need them. However, in some circumstances, we may need to share your complaint on an anonymous basis with the relevant regulators, local authority and Ombudsman' services.

Milewood's Privacy notice for complainants

This is our new, updated privacy notice for concerns, compliments and complaints, which was last updated in January 2026.

At Milewood, we are committed to operating in a confidential way and respecting your privacy and protecting your personal information.

Thank you for submitting your feedback to enable us to improve our services.

Within this context and with your consent, we need personal information such as your name, location, and contact details so that we can:

- get in touch with you
- direct your feedback to the most appropriate team



- analyse complaints to improve our services as per legitimate interests.
- We may also share your complaint on an anonymous basis with the relevant regulators, local authority and Ombudsman' services.

We will keep your information securely for 7 years.

You have the right to:

- revoke your consent at any time
- access the data we hold about you. You can do this by completing our request form and you will need one piece of ID to complete the form
- have your data erased from our systems
- data portability
- restrict or object to the use of the data.
- You can query the use of your data by Milewood by emailing the Data Protection Officer at dataprotection@milewood.co.uk or contacting the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO).



<p>Milewood Contacts</p> <p>speakup@milewood.co.uk Martyn.Heginbotham@Milewood.co.uk- CEO Keeley.Cremona@Milewood.co.uk – Chief Operating Officer Julie.Donovan@Milewood.co.uk – Regional Operations Support Manager Dan.Blackith@Milewood.co.uk- Head of people</p>	
<p>Region A</p> <p>Regional Manager Rebecca.Vickers@Milewood.co.uk Jamie.Alderson@Milewood.co.uk (covering)</p>	<p>Region B</p> <p>Regional Manager Farah.Hutchinson@Milewood.co.uk</p>
<p>Region C</p> <p>Regional Manager Kelly.Rose@Milewood.co.uk</p>	<p>Region D</p> <p>Regional Manager Kieran.Mann@Milewood.co.uk</p>
<p>Region E</p> <p>Regional Manager Samantha.Hunt@Milewood.co.uk</p>	
<p>CQC Contact</p> <p>Tel: 03000616161 enquiries@cqc.co.uk</p> <p>You can also contact them through their website: https://www.cqc.org.uk/contact-us</p>	

Related Policies and Procedures

- Safeguarding Policy
- Concerns, Compliments and Complaints- Easy Read Policy

Appendix 1- Easy Read Feedback Form



Feedback Form

Share your worries, concerns or compliments! Help us to get it right!

This form is for you to give us feedback on something that you are happy about or something that you are unhappy about



You do not need to give your name but if you do, we can tell you what we are doing to put it right or thank you for your compliment.

If you are telling us about something on behalf of another person, it would be helpful to know their name and address too, if they consent to this.

Your name:



The name or address of the person you are writing on behalf of:



Your complaint or compliment will be kept confidential unless you say it's okay to share this information.

This means that we will help you with your complaint but we won't tell anyone that it was you who sent it.



If you are happy for us to share your complaint or compliment with your name, please tick this box. If not, leave it empty.

Yes you can share my name



If you share information that might be a safeguarding or something about a crime, we will need to report this. We may need to share your information with someone, including your name. We will let you know who we will share your information with.



What would you like to share with us? Tick the relevant box



**Something you are
unhappy with**

**Something you are
happy with**

Tell us about it:





Is there anything you would like us to do to help?



A large, empty grey rectangular area intended for the user to provide feedback or suggestions.

How can we get in touch with you if you want a reply?



A large, empty grey rectangular area intended for the user to provide contact information for a reply.



Thank you for filling in our feedback form.



Please send this form to
speakup@milewood.co.uk



Or post it to

Feedback
Milewood
4 Sidings Court,
Doncaster DN4 5NU



We will tell you when we have received your form and let you know what we are going to do next