




HOW TO MAKE A COMPLAINT AGAINST THE COUNCIL

We provide many facilities for the people of Runnymede and while we aim to offer the highest quality of services possible, we know that things do occasionally go wrong.

This complaints procedure should help you to tell us if you think something has gone wrong with any of the services or facilities we provide.

Some local services such as roads, schools and social care are provided by Surrey County Council. You can phone their contact centre on 03456 009 009. Alternatively you can write to them at Contact Centre, Floor 3, Conquest House, Wood Street, Kingston upon Thames, KT1 1AB. You can visit their website at <http://www.surreycc.gov.uk>. This has full details of the services they provide and all methods of contact.

If you want a copy of our full procedure for staff handling complaints, you can get a copy by asking at the Civic Centre main reception.

 01932 838383
Fax 01932 838384
www runnymede.gov.uk

*This leaflet is published by Runnymede Borough Council
Runnymede Civic Centre
Station Road
Addlestone
Surrey
KT15 2AH*

HOW TO COMPLAIN

It helps if you can write your complaint down, because often this means the facts are clearer. Do not worry if this is not easy for you. There are a number of ways in which you can complain.

1. In person by calling in to see us.
2. By writing to us.
3. By phoning us.
4. By contacting your local councillor who may take up a complaint on your behalf.

If your complaint has not been sorted out locally, you may contact the Local Government Ombudsman – an independent agent with powers to investigate complaints about local government.

1. *Calling in to see us*

You may feel that you can best explain your complaint by calling in to the Civic Centre (open Monday to Thursday 8.30am to 5pm - Friday 8.30am to 4.30pm). Please make an appointment before you visit.

2. *Writing to us*

You can make your complaint in writing by sending a letter, or by using the complaints form at the end of this leaflet. You may like to keep a copy.

3. *Phoning us*

If you already have a direct telephone number for the service about which you are complaining, please use it. Otherwise please phone our switchboard on 01932 838383 and we will put you through to the right member of staff, if they are available.

Your
signature: _____

Date: _____

Continue on a separate sheet if you need to.

Please send this form to:

Runnymede Borough Council
Runnymede Civic Centre
Station Road
Addlestone
Surrey
KT15 2AH

Complaints Form

(Please use CAPITALS)

Your Name: _____

Your address: _____

Phone number: _____

Details of your complaint: _____

What would you like us to do? _____

WHAT CAN YOU EXPECT FROM US?

Whatever method you use to contact us, you can expect us to take action if this is appropriate, and we will tell you what has happened. If the complaint needs further investigation, we will aim to:

- a) acknowledge your complaint within three working days and let you have a full reply within ten working days;
- b) if we cannot provide a full reply within ten working days, we will let you know what is happening and how long it might take.

We will produce a complaints monitoring report each year with statistics of the complaints we have received. No personal details appear in this report and your complaint will stay confidential.

WHO SHOULD YOU CONTACT?

While you can decide who you complain to, we suggest that you contact the responsible Department. If a simple mistake has been made (like a missed bin collection) this can usually be dealt with by a member of staff who helps to provide that service. If the problem is more complex, or if you say you want it dealt with formally, it will be handled by the head of the service you are complaining about. If you do not know the name of the right person, you can send any complaint to the Director of the Department who will ensure it goes to the right place.

The following is a guide to the responsibilities of the different Directorates.

Director of Technical Services

Planning and building control
Works and corporate property maintenance
Parking, street cleaning and highway amenities
Drainage
CCTV and community safety
Food safety and Environmental Protection including nuisances
Rubbish collection and recycling

Director of Housing and Community Services

Council housing management and repairs
Homelessness
Private sector housing standards
Grants for home modifications for the disabled
Day Centres, meals on wheels, and other services for older people
Open spaces, parks, leisure centres and other leisure and recreational services
Services for children and young people
Cemeteries

Corporate Head of Finance

Collection of Council Tax and Business Rates
Administration of Housing and Council Tax Benefits
Administration of invoices etc.

Corporate Head of Governance and Assets

Legal Services
Office Services/support functions
Elections and Electoral Registration
Legal Services
Committee Section/Corporate Governance
Land Charges
Property/Commercial Property Management

Contacting your local Councillor

Your local Councillor will not deal directly with a complaint about the way the Council provides a service. He or she can however talk to you about a complaint and help you in making contact at the Civic Centre, if you feel you need extra help. Councillors are also responsible for Council policy and can help to explain this to you. You can get your Councillors' phone number and address from the Council's Committee Section, from reception at the Civic Centre, or from your local library.

WHAT TO DO IF YOU ARE STILL NOT SATISFIED

If you do not think your complaint has been dealt with properly please say so. The Council will arrange for it to be looked at by the Departmental Director, who will write to you with his or her final view.

Once a complaint has reached this stage you cannot take it further with the Council, but you can complain to the Local Government Ombudsman if you believe that the Council has not handled matters properly. Full information can be found on the Ombudsman's website at <http://www.lgo.org.uk/making-a-complaint/>. The Ombudsman has an advice team who can be contacted on 0300 061 0614 or 0845 602 1983. You can also make a telephone complaint by using these numbers, or you can write to:

The Local Government Ombudsman
PO Box 4771
Coventry CV4 0EH
Fax: 024 7682 0001