



COMPLAINTS POLICY

1. INTRODUCTION

Improving Lives Plymouth is committed to providing a high standard of service, recognising the potential impact of challenging experiences. We understand that navigating concerns can be sensitive, and we aim to create a supportive environment for addressing and resolving complaints effectively.

2. RESPONSIBILITIES

- A. The Improving Lives Plymouth Senior Management Team and Trustee Board will adopt and review the implementation of this policy.
- B. The Chief Executive retains overall responsibility for the implementation and review of this policy.
- C. Project Managers are responsible for the implementation of this policy within their project area.
- D. All staff and volunteers are required to adhere to the policy.

3. Purpose

We are dedicated to:

- Listening to and validating the concerns of individuals, taking all complaints seriously.
- Maintaining factual records of all complaints and outcomes.
- Prioritising empathy and understanding in our efforts to resolve complaints through a fair and equitable procedure.

Individuals have the right to withdraw their complaint at any time. However, we acknowledge the potential need for appropriate action in serious situations, with due consideration for the impact on individuals involved.

4. Aims

This policy aims to ensure that:

1. ILP recognises that listening to and acting upon complaints is an important part of progressing our service and enables us to make positive changes.
2. The procedure is fair, easy and as transparent as possible.
3. The procedure is made accessible to all regardless of age, disability, gender,

ethnicity, belief or sexual orientation.

4. Making a complaint will not harm or prejudice the service that is given to the complainant.
5. Concerns and complaints are dealt with efficiently, appropriately, and investigated within the agreed time frame.
6. Complainants are treated with respect and courtesy and receive appropriate support throughout the handling of the complaint.
7. Complainants receive a timely and appropriate response, identifying the outcome of any investigation.
8. Action is taken where necessary in the light of the outcome of the complaint. This might include an explanation or an apology and, if relevant, appropriate information on any action taken.
9. Learning from complaints will be used to improve ILP's work and drive forward a culture of continuous improvement.
10. Every effort is made to ensure anyone making a complaint understands the outcome of their complaint.

5. MANAGERS

All managers are responsible for:

- A. Ensuring that no one experiences less favourable treatment.
- B. Ensuring that any conversations are kept strictly confidential.
- C. Putting in place any required support/adjustments, where reasonably possible.

6. COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

Our full **Complaints Procedure** (Appendix A) outlines the steps to take when making a complaint. This document, along with a shorter guide titled **How to Make a Complaint** (Appendix B), is available on the **ILP intranet**.

Staff and volunteers are encouraged to share the **How to Make a Complaint** guide with anyone who is dissatisfied with our service. Please also direct them to our **online [Complaints and Feedback](#)**.

In addition, a printed version of the **'Have Your Say' leaflet** (Appendix C) is available at the reception areas of **Ernest English House** and the **Mannamead Hub**. This leaflet can also be downloaded from the intranet.

Our **Complaint Management Process** (Appendix D) is a guide for managers to ensure complaints are handled consistently, the correct procedures are followed, and all necessary records are maintained.

At each stage, someone may withdraw their complaint, and the date of withdrawal will be noted on the complaint log.

7. SCOPE

This policy applies to all ILP staff and Volunteers.

Policy Review

As part of the normal annual policy review process, the impact of this policy on staff, volunteers and people who use our services has been considered, ensuring its implementation does not discriminate against, or adversely effect anyone.

We will ensure equal access to all our policies, including this one. We will assess capability to understand the policy and provide support when it is required.

In applying this policy, Improving Lives Plymouth will have due regard for the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, promote equality of opportunity, and provide for good relations between people of diverse groups, in particular on the grounds of the following characteristics protected by the Equality Act (2010); age, disability, gender, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, and sexual orientation, in addition to offending background, trade union membership, or any other personal characteristic. An Equality Impact Assessment is used for all policies and procedures.

Original Policy Adopted: 1996

SIGNED:



DATE: October 2025

REVIEW DATE: October 2026

Policy Reviewed on (date)	Reviewed by
November 2024	Sarah Austin and Lee Sewrey
October 2025	Sarah Austin

APPENDIX A

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

Improving Lives Plymouth aims to provide a high standard of service. However, we recognise that sometimes things can, and do, go wrong. You are invited to use our complaints procedure to assist you with making your complaint.

We will listen to your concerns and take them seriously.

At each stage you may withdraw your complaint, and the date of withdrawal will be noted on the complaint file.

Stage One (Informal)

1. You can raise your concerns at any time and a member of staff from the relevant department will contact you to discuss the matter. This discussion can be instigated via a telephone call, by letter, by email or in person. If you don't know who to contact or do not wish to contact the individual involved, please email hr@improvinglivesplymouth.org.uk or you can also complete our online form [Complaints and Feedback](#) or complete a 'Have your say' leaflet, found in the reception areas at English Ernest House, Buckwell Street, Plymouth, PL21DA or at Mannamead Wellbeing Hub, 156 Mannamead Road, Plymouth, PL35QL. For us to resolve your issue to the best of our ability, please include as much detail as possible regarding your complaint, including any relevant communications or documentation.
2. All complaints will be acknowledged within three working days from the date it is received, and a convenient method of discussion and date and time will be arranged. We will respond to Stage 1 complaints within 7 working days of the arranged discussion/meeting.
3. This discussion may resolve the issue, and no further action may be needed. However, if this does not address your concerns you can indicate that you wish to make a formal complaint and should follow the procedure at Stage 2 below.

Stage Two (Formally registering a complaint)

1. If you are not satisfied with the response you receive at Stage one, or you would prefer your complaint to be formally investigated, you can request your complaint to be escalated to Stage two, either through your contact at Stage one, or by using our online form [Complaints and Feedback](#) or by emailing hr@improvinglivesplymouth.org.uk. Your complaint will be acknowledged with 3 working days.
2. Any person against whom you have made a formal complaint will be asked not to contact you. We also ask you not to contact this person.
3. The responsible Manager will be assigned to investigate your complaint and arrange a meeting with you, within 10 working days to discuss the matters you have raised. If this is an in person or online meeting, you are welcome to bring a friend or relative with you. You will receive a full written response with the result of our investigation within 20 working days after this discussion has taken place. This will advise you of any action taken by ILP.

If you are not satisfied with the response to your complaint, you will be given the opportunity to speak to the CEO and given the option to appeal using Stage three below.

Stage Three (Final Stage Appeal)

1. To appeal, please outline the reasons for your dissatisfaction in writing to the Chief Executive Officer, ILP, Ernest English House, Buckwell Street, Plymouth, PL21DA or electronically using this link [Complaints and Feedback](#). The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) will investigate and respond within 10 working days. In the case of a complaint about the CEO, the Chair of the Trustee Board will investigate and respond within 10 working days.
2. This will be the final decision of the complaints process and will ensure the CEO or the Chair of Trustee Board has reviewed the investigation, made any further enquiries and then delivered the reason for the final decision. The CEO or Chair of Trustees will write within 30 working days of receiving the appeal.

APPENDIX B

HOW TO MAKE A COMPLAINT

We are committed to addressing any concerns or complaints you may have about our service. Below is a simple guide to our complaints process:

Raising a Complaint

If you have a concern, you can raise it with us at any time. You can contact us by:

- **Phone**
- **Email** (hr@improvinglivesplymouth.org.uk)
- **In Person** at one of our offices, where a member of the team can support you to submit the complaint
- **Our Online Form:** [Complaints and Feedback](#)
- **'Have Your Say' Leaflet** available at our offices.

A member of our team will contact you to discuss the issue within **3 working days**. Together, we'll try to resolve the matter. If we resolve the issue informally, no further action is needed.

If your complaint is escalated the relevant line manager will investigate the complaint further and, where necessary, arrange a meeting with you within **7 working days**.

You will receive a written response within **10 working days** after the meeting, outlining any actions taken.

If you're still not satisfied, you can appeal.

Appeal

To appeal, please write to our **CEO** at:

- **Address:** Ernest English House, Buckwell Street, Plymouth, PL21DA
- **Email:** hr@improvinglivesplymouth.org.uk
- **Our Online Form:** [Complaints and Feedback](#)

The CEO will investigate and respond within **10 working days**. If the complaint involves the CEO, the **Chair of Trustees** will investigate.

The decision from this stage is final, and you'll receive a written response within **30 working days**.

We value your feedback and will do our best to resolve any concerns quickly and fairly.

APPENDIX C

Please return this completed form to
reception

Or a member of staff

To post this to us, please send the
completed form to:

Improving Lives Plymouth

Ernest English House

Freepost

(FWB40335)

Plymouth

PL1 2DA



Have Your Say
Comments, compliments
and complaints

Email: ilp@improvinglivesplymouth.org.uk Website:

www.improvinglivesplymouth.org.uk

Company Limited by Guarantee Reg No. 2610208 England Registered Charity No. 1066776

Company Registered Office: Ernest English House, Buckwell Street, Plymouth, PL1 2DA. Chief Executive:
Rob Smith

Improving Lives Plymouth aims to provide the best possible service, working to national quality standards in all activities. We would like to hear your views on the service you received whether it be a compliment, feedback or complaint. This is your opportunity to let us know what we do well or what we could do better.

Compliments and Feedback

Your views are really important. They can help shape our future development and ensure our service users’ needs are being met. This can also support applications for funding and quality accreditation assessments.

Complaints

We recognise that from time to time things can, and do, go wrong. This can lead to dissatisfaction and frustration. Please let us know if you are unhappy with the service you have received and we will make every effort to resolve your complaint. We can contact you to discuss your complaint, with your permission. As a user of Improving Lives Plymouth Services, your views are really important to us.

Please complete the form opposite to let us know how we are doing. The personal details you provide will be stored confidentially and will only be known to Improving Lives Plymouth and its service delivery partners.

Name						
Phone Number						
Email						
Please Select:	Comment		Compliment		Complaint	
Please detail the information you want to share with us						
Signed						Date:

APPENDIX D

Complaint Management Process

This is short guide to the complaint management process, see Complaints Procedure for full details.

