



# **Customer Care Compliments & Complaints Policy and Procedures**

***Bringing Sport to Life***

Northumberland Sport is committed to delivering excellent customer service. This customer care policy sets out what this commitment means in practice and what our customers can expect from us.

Northumberland Sport has also introduced a complaints procedure as part of our Customer Care Policy.

## **Our promise to you**

We are committed to promoting access to our services and offering choice wherever possible in the services we provide and the way we deliver them. Staff are responsible for providing an efficient, effective and professional service.

### **We will ensure that you are dealt with:**

- Quickly, effectively and efficiently
- Without discrimination
- In a courteous helpful and respectful manner.

### **We will always:**

- Keep you informed
- Ensure that staff take responsibility for resolving or dealing with your query adequately
- Provide as much information as possible to help you make informed choices
- Ensure all our services are delivered within safe environments
- Be responsive to the needs of our customers
- Act in accordance with the law.

### **We would like you to:**

- Provide us with the information we require to assist you
- Treat all our staff fairly and with respect
- Provide your views and suggestions to help us to improve our services.

# Our customer care standards

## Face to face contact

We will:

- Respect your privacy, offering complete confidentiality where possible.
- Listen to you and respond to your needs.
- Be welcoming, courteous and helpful at all times.

## Contact by telephone

We will:

- Aim to answer the telephone within 20 seconds (six rings) during normal working hours (8:30am – 4:30pm, Monday to Friday).
- If a member of staff is not available, their telephone should be answered by a colleague within the target time.
- If your call is diverted to an answer machine we will reply to your message within 24 hours, except at weekends or during bank holidays.
- Attempt to resolve your query at the first point of contact. If this is not possible we will refer your query to someone who can help and ensure that you have the name of the staff member dealing with the query.

## Contact in writing

We will:

- Aim to respond to standard written enquiries within five working days (one week) of receipt, resolving the issues raised if at all possible. If the issue is more complicated and likely to take longer to resolve, we will provide you with an approximate timescale in which you can expect a response from us.
- Ensure that within the response provided customers are given a named contact of the staff member dealing with the issue.

## Contact by email

We will:

- Aim to respond to emails sent to the general Northumberland Sport email address [northumberlandsport@northumberland.gov.uk](mailto:northumberlandsport@northumberland.gov.uk) within 24 hours, except at weekends or during bank holidays. All emails should at least receive an acknowledgement within one working day stating when a full reply will be made if it is not possible to deal with the inquiry immediately.

- Aim to provide a full response to email inquiries within five working days of receipt, resolving the issues raised if at all possible.
- Ensure that within the response provided customers are given a named contact of the staff member dealing with the issue.

## **Delivering an effective service to customers with different needs**

All our customers have the right to expect the same level of service.

Northumberland Sport is careful not to make assumptions about people's needs or abilities but will consult customers to identify individual needs.

We will make every attempt to supply information in an appropriate format and we will make sure that disabled people and people whose first language is not English can get access to interpreting, translation and communication support.

## **Compliments**

It is important for us to know when we are getting it right. If you have positive feedback about a service, project or staff member, it is useful for us to know.

To give us positive feedback, you can tell the team directly via the contact details listed on page 6 of this publication.

## **Complaints**

We aim for most complaints to be dealt with informally to the satisfaction of the complainant, however, if this is not possible this procedure sets out how a complaint will be investigated.

### **How does the complaint procedure work?**

#### Stage 1

Initially, you should always take up your complaint with the person responsible for the service you want to complain about. You can make a complaint in a variety of ways;

- Call into the Northumberland Sport office
- Telephone
- Letter or email
- Through an advocate

All complaints will be acknowledged in writing within 5 working days.

On receipt of a complaint, the person assigned to investigate it will contact the complainant to clarify the issues raised and make an appointment to meet them if required. Details of all contact and discussions with the complainant will be fully recorded.

The complainant will be given a copy of the Northumberland Sport complaints procedure and advised of what will happen next and within what timescales.

### Stage 2

If you are not satisfied with how your initial complaint has been handled we will adopt a formal procedure to investigate it further.

We will record your complaint in writing by asking you to fill in a form giving full details of your grievances and acknowledge we have received this within 5 working days.

The complaint will be investigated by a senior officer who will investigate the complaint in accordance with agreed Northumberland County Council standards.

We will write to you within 25 days with a full reply, or, if a more detailed investigation is needed, a progress report.

### Stage 3

If you are still unhappy with the action we have taken your complaint can be referred to the Executive Director or the Northumberland County Council Corporate Complaints Officer who will examine it thoroughly and review the actions taken to date.

The Executive Director or the Northumberland County Council Corporate Complaints Officer will reply to you in writing explaining either what further action is being taken or that no further action is appropriate. You will receive a reply within 25 days or, if this is not possible, an estimate of how long it will take to complete the review.

## **How do I make a complaint?**

You can make a complaint in the following ways;

### **In person to Northumberland Sport**

At Northumberland Sport, Main Building, Hepscoth Park, Morpeth, NE61 6NF.

### **In writing to Northumberland Sport**

By using a Northumberland Sport complaint form (copy attached) and sending it to;

Northumberland Sport, County Hall, Morpeth, Northumberland,  
NE61 2EF

## Online

By contacting us through our website at [www.northumberlandsport.co.uk](http://www.northumberlandsport.co.uk)

## Telephone

By contacting our office on 01670 623517

## More information

You can find out more information about Northumberland Sport by:

Calling us on: (01670) 623517

Emailing us at: [northumberlandsport@northumberland.gov.uk](mailto:northumberlandsport@northumberland.gov.uk)

Visiting our website at: [www.northumberlandsport.co.uk](http://www.northumberlandsport.co.uk)

Calling in to our offices at  
County Hall  
Morpeth  
Northumberland  
NE61 2EF

# Northumberland Sport Customer Complaint Form

## About you

Title:	Forename(s):	Surname:
Address:		
		Postcode:
Phone number:	Daytime:	Evening:
Email address:		

## What is your complaint?

*Please provide details of your complaint including any relevant dates, times or places*

Are you forwarding any documents with this form?    Yes     No

Would you like us to return these documents?    Yes     No

## What would you like Northumberland Sport to do to resolve this issue?

## If you have made this complaint before...

When did you first inform Northumberland Sport of your complaint (if unsure, please approximate)?

What is the name of the person you first contacted (if known)?

How did the person respond to your complaint?

Signed:

Date:

## What will happen next?

- We will acknowledge your complaint within five working days of receiving it.
- We will tell you who is investigating your complaint.
- We will send you a full response within 25 working days.
- If the investigation will take longer than 25 days we will let you know when you will receive a full response.

**Please return this form to:**

**Northumberland Sport  
County Hall  
Morpeth  
Northumberland  
NE61 2EF**