

# Public Protection Service Charter



## Wrexham County Borough Council Housing and Public Protection Department

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## Introduction

The aim of this Charter is to specify the standards which the Public Protection Service is striving to achieve. All areas of our service have particular standards applied to them, and you can expect us to meet those standards. This is in addition to your right to expect us to be courteous and efficient at all times.

Our aims are summarised in the Service mission statement:-

**It is the aim of the Public Protection Service to improve the health, safety, welfare and consumer interests of the County Borough's residents, visitors and business community and to protect and improve the quality of our environment.**

To help us achieve this we:-

- ◆ work within the legal framework and apply the law fairly
- ◆ make the service accessible
- ◆ remain responsive to customer needs
- ◆ deal with customers with honesty and integrity
- ◆ work in partnership with groups which represent our customers
- ◆ use the resources available to the maximum benefit of our customers
- ◆ train and develop our staff to ensure their effectiveness
- ◆ treat our staff and customers equally regardless of gender, colour, ethnic, regional or national origins, age marital status, disability, political or religious belief, class or sexual orientation



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## About Our Service

The Public Protection Service is committed to providing an equal service to all members of the public. The Charter enables you to recognise a responsive service, one that meets your expectations and one that is delivered with the right attitude and with a genuine desire to be helpful. Your views about the service and improving standards are welcomed.

### **Your Views are Important to us:**

As well as responding to specific service requests, we also aim to provide services in line with your needs and expectations. To achieve this we need feedback from you, the customer, on how we are doing and whether we are keeping you properly informed about your enquiry or request for service. Please help us by filling in a customer satisfaction survey form which we send to a sample of customers, or use the comments slip at the back of this booklet.

### **Our Targets:**

- 80% of telephone calls to published numbers will be answered within 15 seconds
- Less than 8% of telephone calls to published numbers will be abandoned
- All emails to published email addresses will be acknowledged within 24 hours
- 90% of emails to published email addresses will be issued with a full response within 5 working days. Where a full response is not possible within this time, the customer should be advised within 5 working days when they can expect a response
- All letters to published addresses will be acknowledged within 5 working days of receipt
- 90% of letters to published addresses will be issued with a full response within 10 working days. Where a full response is not possible within this time, the customer should be advised within 10 working days when they can expect a response

## **Contacting the Department:**

The Public Protection Service is located at:-

Housing and Public Protection Department  
Wrexham County Borough Council  
Ruthin Road  
Wrexham  
LL13 7TU

Tel: 01978 298989

Fax: 01978 315701

Email: [public\\_protection\\_service@wrexham.gov.uk](mailto:public_protection_service@wrexham.gov.uk)

The reception at Ruthin Road has wheel chair access and disabled toilet facilities. There is an induction loop system for the hard of hearing and information can be provided on request in large print and Braille. Information leaflets can be provided other than in English, for different communities. The reception area at Crown Buildings, Chester Road, Wrexham is also available to deal with complaints, accessing Consumer Advice and take payments for services.

### **Opening Hours:**

The Reception is open to personal callers between 8.30am to 5.15pm Monday to Thursday, and 8.30am to 4.45pm on Fridays. Telephone opening hours are 8.30am to 5.30pm Monday to Friday.

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## Your Officers



### **Andy Lewis**

Head of Housing & Public Protection Officer

(01978) 297005

e-mail:- [andy.lewis@wrexham.gov.uk](mailto:andy.lewis@wrexham.gov.uk)

### **Toni Slater**

Service Manager, Public Protection

(01978) 315710

e-mail:- [toni.slater@wrexham.gov.uk](mailto:toni.slater@wrexham.gov.uk)



Principal Manager (Environmental Protection, Environmental Enforcement and Contaminated Land)  
(01978) 315725

Principal Manager (Commerce, Animal Health and Fair Trading)  
(01978) 315760

Principal Manager (Food Safety)  
(01978) 315750

Principal Manager (Licensing, Health and Safety)  
(01978) 315776

Principal Health and Safety Officer (Corporate Health and Safety)  
(01978) 315565

Health, Social Care and Well-being Manager  
(01978) 297032

Or email [public\\_protection\\_service@wrexham.gov.uk](mailto:public_protection_service@wrexham.gov.uk) and your enquiry will be forwarded onto the correct person.

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## How We Are Organised

The Housing and Public Protection Department covers a wide range of functions affecting residential and commercial activities in the Borough. We try to offer our services in a way which is convenient to our customers. This includes being flexible in arranging times to see customers, offering appointment times when necessary and appropriate and being prepared to visit customers in their homes or at their place of business.

The Public Protection Service is divided into specialist teams which focus on specific licensing, environmental health or trading standards issues affecting the residents and businesses within the Borough. A Senior Officer is responsible for each of these teams:

### **Environmental Enforcement**

- Environmental Enforcement
- Flytipping, litter, dog fouling
- Pest control and dog warden

### **Food Safety**

#### Food and Food Premises

- Food premises inspections and food sampling
- Food hygiene training
- Investigation of infectious diseases
- Complaints/enquiries
- Registration, or approval of food premises, where necessary

### **Licensing**

- Issues licences for the sale and supply of alcohol
- Licensing of regulated entertainment such as films, live or recorded music
- Charitable collections permits
- Gambling and lotteries licensing
- Private hire and hackney carriage licensing

### **Health and Safety**

#### Health and Safety at Work

- Inspections, complaints and advice
- Accident investigations
- Complaints/enquiries regarding asbestos

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## How We Are Organised

### **Corporate Health and Safety**

The Corporate Health and Safety Team fulfill a statutory function by providing a pool of competent officers to provide health and safety assistance to the Council and aims to protect the health, safety and welfare of employees, and to safeguard others, principally the public and service users, who may be exposed to risks from the council's activities.

### **Environmental Protection** Environmental Initiatives

- Contaminated land
- Air quality monitoring
- Permitting and inspection of industrial processes
- Private water supplies and drinking water sampling

#### Noise and Complaints

- Noise complaints from commercial premises
- Accumulations on land and commercial premises
- Air pollution (nuisance from bonfires e.g. statutory nuisance from bonfires, odour nuisance)
- Investigate noise complaints (domestic)
- Streetscene enforcement and statutory nuisance
- Education and awareness raising
- Drainage matters—private sewers and drains

### **Trading Standards** Commerce

- Inspections at non retail/commercial/farm and agricultural premises
- Business advice on trading standards legislation
- Weights and measures – including calibration laboratory
- Petroleum licensing
- Fireworks and general product safety
- Animal health and welfare –including dealing with notifiable diseases and animal feeding stuffs
- Food composition and labelling
- Road traffic overloading
- E-commerce investigations
- Complaints and home authority investigations

### **Trading Standards** Fair Trading

- Mis-description of goods and services
- Misleading prices
- Consumer safety, consumer credit, counterfeit goods
- Sale of age restricted products

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## Your Charter—What we do

### Noise from Premises

#### What we do:-

Deal with a wide range of noise problems from residential, commercial and industrial premises, and noise in the street. Examples include loud music, barking dogs, intruder and car alarms, and construction site noise. The Department can not take action in respect of aircraft, road traffic and railway noise.

*If your complaint is about an intruder alarm or car alarm we will respond to the matter as soon as possible and always within one working day that you make your complaint. For all other complaints concerning noise we will respond to the matter within three working days of your complaining. The investigating officer will also make contact with you within this time wherever possible.*

### Pollution Matters

#### What we do:

Investigate complaints about bonfires, dust or smells and initiate the necessary action. Monitor air and water quality. Permit certain industrial processes under Environmental Permitting Regulations.

*We will aim to respond to complaints about bonfires, dust and fumes on the same day that you make a complaint. In all other matters concerning pollution, the investigation will be started within three working days of you making a complaint wherever possible. You will be contacted by the investigating officer within this time.*

### Health and Safety

#### What we do:

Inspections of certain types of business premises within the County Borough such as offices, shops, warehouses, restaurants, and leisure and sports premises to ensure conditions are satisfactory and safe. Investigation of work-related complaints, accidents and other incidents involving either workers or members of the public. Advice and guidance on health and safety requirements for business proprietors in the Borough and their staff.

*We will prioritise which complaints, accidents and other incidents will be investigated in accordance with the Council's Health and Safety Enforcement policy.*

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## Your Charter—What we do

*Complaints about matters which pose an imminent and serious risk to a person's health or safety will have action initiated within one working day. For other investigated complaints the investigation will be started within three working days of you making the complaint wherever possible. You will be contacted by the investigating officer within this time wherever possible. If we do not investigate your complaint we will contact you within three working days of you making the complaint wherever possible to confirm this decision. We will also review all notified accidents within 2 working days of receipt of notification. Where an accident has resulted in a fatality, contact with the premises concerned will be made on the day of notification wherever possible.*

### **Corporate Health & Safety**

#### **What we do:**

The team provides specialist advice on the application of health and safety law in the workplace and on the development and review of policy and on the interpretation and implementation of the Council's policies and procedures. Practical support is provided in assessing the risks to health and safety inherent in work activities and recommending methods to eliminate or adequately control such risks.

The team also provides an important link between the council's departments and the Health and Safety Executive who are the enforcement body for health and safety legislation in local government. Where failures in health and safety do occur then the team can facilitate communication between the departments and HSE inspector and aid the resolution of problems, hopefully before formal enforcement action is initiated.

### **Trading Standards (Fair Trading)**

#### **What we do:**

The Fair Trading Section carries out enforcement of a wide range of Trading Standards legislation in the retail sector, including:

- Action to reduce the sale of age restricted products such as alcohol, cigarettes and knives to underage persons. This includes trader education and carrying out test purchasing exercises with underage volunteers to test trader compliance with the law.
- Investigations of sales of counterfeit goods such as DVDs, clothing and perfumes.
- Protection of vulnerable residents from the activities of bogus doorstep traders.

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## Your Charter—What we do

- Investigation of complaints from members of the public concerning other fraudulent or unfair trading practices or unsafe goods.
- The provision of a Consumer Advice Service which assists consumers in obtaining redress for defective goods or services.
- Inspections at retail premises to ensure compliance with legislation

*Complaints relating to safety which pose an imminent risk to the public will have action initiated the same day. In other cases, the investigation will be started within five working days of you making a complaint wherever possible. Consumers needing assistance in resolving problems with defective goods or services will be contacted within five working days*

### **Trading Standards (Commerce—Animal Health/Welfare)**

#### **What we do:**

The Commerce Section carries out enforcement of a wide range of Trading Standards legislation in the Commercial and Agricultural sectors including working with local businesses to ensure compliance with Trading Standards legislation. It does this by:

- Acting as Home Authority for a range of businesses in the area.
- Undertaking risk based inspections at commercial premises to ensure compliance with legislation
- Enforcing and advising on a range of food and agricultural standards to ensure food from plough to plate originating in the area is wholesome and nutritious.
- Enforcing animal health and welfare legislation to ensure that animal welfare is not being compromised and communicable diseases are kept at bay

Undertaking activities relating to a range environmental issues including storage of petroleum and explosives, road safety overloading issues, packaging and animal by-products.

*Complaints relating to safety which pose an imminent risk to the public will have an action within one working day. In other cases investigation will be started within five working days of making the complaint wherever possible.*

### Food and Food Premises

#### What we do:

Investigation of complaints about food safety, hygiene of food premises or labelling of food. Inspections of all types of food premises to ensure satisfactory food safety and food labelling standards. Education and training of food handlers and advice to persons setting up a food business. We work with local employers, head offices of national or regional companies based in Wrexham and other groups representing consumers and businesses to build up business confidence. We pass on technical information, especially about the practicalities of implementing new legislation

*Where we take samples of food for analysis, we will provide you with a copy of the results and give advice on any improvements which are required. You can contact the Department about matters relating to food or food premises by writing to us or by telephoning 01978 292040 or by e-mail. We will carry out a programme of inspecting food premises according to the degree of potential risk.*

*A same day response will be initiated to outbreaks of E-coli, para typhoid, typhoid fever and infectious diseases in vulnerable groups. When it is necessary for action to be taken it will be initiated within one working day of notification for all other diseases. Complaints about matters which pose an imminent threat to public health will have action initiated in one working day. In all other matters concerning food or food premises, the investigation will be started within three working days of you making a complaint wherever possible. You will be contacted by the investigating officer within this time.*

### Licensing

#### What we do:

We issue licenses and registrations for a wide range of functions some are:- sale or supply of alcohol, small society lotteries, charitable collections, pet shops, private hire and hackney carriages. Premises are regularly inspected to ensure that all conditions attached to the license or registration are being met. We investigate all complaints including those concerning premises illegally trading without a license and we will give advice and assistance to businesses, especially those seeking a new licence or registration.

If you make a complaint concerning licensing, the investigation will start within three working days of you making the complaint. You will be contacted by the investigating officer within this time wherever possible

## **Public Health Drainage Problems**

### **What we do:**

We will investigate blockages and defects in private sewers and take enforcement action to remedy the problem. The majority of sewers are public, meaning that they are either pre-1937 sewers and serve two or more premises or have otherwise been adopted by the sewer age undertaker. In these cases Welsh Water are responsible and can be contacted on their customer service help-line 0800 0855935 (24 hours).

*In the case of serious drainage problems we will respond within one working day. In all other matters concerning drainage, the investigation will be started within three working days of you making a complaint. You will be contacted by the investigating officer within this time wherever possible.*

## **Environmental Enforcement Pest Control**

### **What we do:**

The Pest Control section carries out treatments for a number of rodent and insect pests. The service operates an appointment system with customers being offered a morning or afternoon timeslot.

*The service will endeavour to respond to requests for treatment of pests and public health significance (rats, cockroaches & fleas) within three working days. Requests for treatment for nuisance pests will usually be met within five working days.*

## **Dog Warden Service**

### **What we do:**

The Dog Warden Service is both proactive and reactive, patrolling the Borough dealing with issues of lost and found dogs. If the Dog Warden Service is notified about a found dog, a Warden will respond within one working day. If someone has lost their dog, the Council maintains a register of all stray dogs which can be checked for information. The Council also operates an Out of Hours Stray Dog Service, Microchipping and Neutering Events and Responsible dog Ownership Campaigns

### Streetscene Standards

‘Pride in Your Streets’ is about providing you, with a better service by giving you one easy point of contact for all services associated with your streets, highways and open spaces. There are many different services that contribute to Streetscene. The standards that Public Protection Service cover are as follows:

- We will contact owners of private open land to request that fly tipping is removed and, if it is not, take enforcement action against the land owner where possible
- Where a complaint is received about noise an acknowledgement letter will be despatched within 3 working days, together with a noise logging form
- If a complaint is made about smoke during working hours we will visit within one working day and we will let the customer/complainant know what has happened and an acknowledgement letter will be despatched within 5 working days, together with a logging form (where appropriate)
- We will attend to requests for public health pest control (e.g. rats, cockroaches and fleas) within 3 working days (unless longer timescales are requested by the customer and subject to payment being received)
- We will attend to requests for nuisance pests (e.g. wasps) within 5 working days (unless longer timescales are requested by the customer and subject to payment being received)
- We will contact owners of private open land to request that sharps are removed and, if they are not, take enforcement action against the land owner where possible
- Where we have been unable to remove the sharps or trace the owner of the land, we will inform the customer of what is happening within 5 working days

### Identification of Staff

All the Council's staff hold identity cards which they are expected to display prominently. The cards give the name and Department of the cardholder, and incorporate a photograph. This card does not entitle the holder to gain access to your premises, an additional certificate of authorisation will be held by staff in appropriate cases.

If Council staff are calling at your home or place of business, you are entitled to ask to see their identity card so that you can satisfy yourself that they represent the Council. If this request is refused, then do not admit that person and immediately telephone the police.

You are entitled to receive a courteous and efficient service from Council staff. If you consider that you are not receiving such a service then note the name, position and Department/Service of the member of staff concerned and write to the appropriate officer named on page 6 with these details, and the circumstances giving rise to your complaint.

### How to Complain if You are Not Satisfied with the Service We Provide

Unfortunately there are occasions when things go wrong. As part of our commitment to high quality services we are making sure that we listen to your complaints.

#### We will

- take all complaints seriously and deal with complaints as quickly as possible
- send an acknowledgement letter within 5 working days and a full response within 20 working days. If we are unable to give you a full response within 20 working days we will write to you within this timeframe to keep you updated
- treat anyone complaining with respect and ensure that complaints are treated in confidence where appropriate
- review the pattern of complaints and seek to improve areas where there are recurring problems.

If you have a complaint about the way you have been treated or about the service you have received which could not be resolved with the Officer concerned please follow the steps on the following page.

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## Making a Complaint

### Steps to follow when making a Complaint:

#### Step 1

Contact the Public Protection Service Complaint Representative. You can do this by visiting our reception based in Ruthin Road or telephone, write or email. All our contact details are on page 5 within this booklet.

#### Step 2

If you are still dissatisfied having been through step 1 you can contact the Corporate Complaints Officer. They will take an independent view of your complaint and make sure it is thoroughly investigated. They can be contacted at:

The Corporate Complaint Officer  
Guildhall  
Wrexham  
LL11 1WS  
Tel: 01978 292201

We hope it won't be necessary to go through these steps but if you are still dissatisfied with the Council's response you can write to the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales. The Ombudsman has a specific duty to investigate complaints against local councils and can be contacted at:

1 Ffordd yr Hen Gae  
Pencoed  
CF35 5LJ

Tel: 01656 641150  
Fax: 01656 641199  
Email: [ask@ombudsman-wales.org.uk](mailto:ask@ombudsman-wales.org.uk)  
Website: [www.ombudsman-wales.org.uk](http://www.ombudsman-wales.org.uk)