

Complaints Procedure

If something has gone wrong or you are unhappy with our care, service or communication, please tell us. We will listen, investigate fairly and try to reach a suitable resolution. Independent help is available through NAFD Resolve.

Effective from: 23 July 2026 **Last reviewed:** 23 July 2026

AT A GLANCE

Raise your concern with us by telephone, in person, through our contact form or in writing. We normally acknowledge a complaint within three working days and aim to provide our full response within fifteen working days. If the matter remains unresolved, eligible clients can use the free and independent NAFD Resolve service.

1. Our commitment

Wealden Funeral Services Ltd aims to provide compassionate, professional and dignified care. We recognise that raising a concern during bereavement may be difficult. A complaint will be treated seriously, sensitively and without defensiveness.

We will:

- listen and make sure we understand the concern;
- treat the complainant with courtesy and respect;
- investigate proportionately and fairly;
- give relevant people an opportunity to explain;
- communicate in plain language;
- keep the complainant informed if more time is needed;
- explain our findings and any action we propose;
- learn from justified complaints; and
- cooperate with the National Association of Funeral Directors and NAFD Resolve where a matter is referred.

Nobody will receive poorer care or service because they raised a concern, made a complaint or helped another person to complain.

AN IMMEDIATE CONCERN?

If the concern affects an imminent funeral, the current care of a deceased person, personal safety or another matter that cannot wait for the normal process, telephone us immediately on 01435 868844 . Tell us that the matter is urgent.

2. Who can complain

We accept concerns and complaints from:

- the person who instructed or contracted with us;
- a family member or other person affected by our service;
- an executor, administrator, personal representative or person with relevant legal authority;

- an advocate, solicitor or representative acting with the complainant's permission;
- a supplier, professional or member of the public; and
- a person raising a safeguarding, professional-standards or public-interest concern.

Where someone complains for another living person, we may need that person's permission before discussing confidential details. We will still consider whether any immediate safety, safeguarding or professional concern requires action.

Our internal procedure is available more widely than NAFD Resolve. Section 11 explains the narrower eligibility rules for that independent dispute-resolution service.

3. What you can complain about

A complaint may concern any aspect of our work, including:

- the care, dignity or identification of a deceased person;
- funeral arrangements, timing, transport or ceremony;
- our conduct, communication, sensitivity or responsiveness;
- an instruction, choice or family concern;
- products, suppliers or services arranged through us;
- prices, estimates, invoices or payment handling;
- our premises, facilities or accessibility;
- privacy, confidentiality or use of personal information;
- website information or accessibility;
- an alleged breach of the Funeral Director Code; or
- the way we handled an earlier concern.

We may need to distinguish between something for which we are responsible and an act or decision of an independent third party, such as a crematorium, cemetery, officiant, doctor, registrar or coroner. We will explain that distinction and, where reasonably possible, help identify the appropriate contact rather than simply passing the complainant elsewhere.

4. How to complain

A complaint can be raised:

- by telephone on 01435 868844 ;
- in person at our Heathfield office;
- through our website contact form;
- by post to 3 Browning Road, Heathfield, East Sussex, TN21 8DB; or
- through an authorised representative.

You do not have to use legal language, complete a special form or put the complaint in writing. If a concern is raised verbally, we may write down our understanding and ask you to confirm it so that important details are not missed.

Please complain as soon as reasonably possible. A prompt complaint makes it easier to protect evidence, speak with relevant people and put something right before a funeral takes place. We will not reject an internal complaint merely because time has passed, although delay may affect what can be investigated or remedied. NAFD Resolve has its own 12-month eligibility period.

5. Information that helps us investigate

Please provide whatever information you reasonably can, such as:

- your name and preferred contact details;
- your relationship to the funeral or arrangement;
- the name of the deceased person;
- the date of the funeral, service or relevant event;
- what happened and when;
- the names of people involved, if known;
- copies of relevant correspondence, invoices or photographs;
- the effect the matter has had; and
- what you believe would help resolve it.

Do not delay raising a serious concern because some information is unavailable. We can discuss what is needed. If sending documents to us or the NAFD by post, retain the originals and send copies wherever possible.

6. Stage 1: Discussion and review by Wealden

1. We acknowledge the complaint

We normally acknowledge a complaint within three working days. We will confirm our understanding, identify the person responsible for the review and explain how we will communicate.

2. We address anything urgent

We first consider whether immediate action is needed to protect the deceased person, the complainant, the funeral arrangements, evidence or another person.

3. We investigate

We review relevant records and correspondence, speak with staff and, where appropriate, obtain information from suppliers or other people involved. Wherever practicable, a director or senior person who was not directly involved will lead or review the investigation.

4. We provide a reasoned response

We aim to provide a full written response within fifteen working days of receiving the complaint. The response will summarise the issues, explain the findings and set out any remedy or improvement.

5. We keep you informed if more time is needed

A complex complaint, unavailable witness, third-party enquiry or legal restriction may make the target impossible. We will explain the reason before the target expires, report progress and give a revised response date. We aim to complete our internal process within 28 calendar days wherever reasonably possible.

6. We explain independent escalation

If the complaint remains unresolved, our final response will explain NAFD Resolve and provide the information needed to approach the NAFD.

If the complaint concerns the person who would ordinarily lead the review, another director, suitable senior person or external adviser will be involved wherever reasonably practicable.

7. Possible outcomes

The appropriate outcome depends on what happened and what can fairly put the matter right. It may include:

- an explanation or clarification;
- an apology;
- correcting inaccurate information or records;
- completing, repeating or changing an agreed service;
- taking action before a funeral or ceremony;
- a refund, price adjustment or other financial remedy;
- liaising with a supplier or third party;
- staff guidance, training or supervision;
- a change to a policy, procedure or document; or
- an explanation that the complaint is not upheld, with reasons and information about escalation.

We will not promise an outcome before investigating, but we will consider the remedy sought and explain if we propose something different.

8. Independent resolution through NAFD Resolve

Wealden Funeral Services is a member of the National Association of Funeral Directors and participates in NAFD Resolve .

NAFD Resolve is a free and independent dispute-resolution service for eligible customers of NAFD member funeral directors. It is funded by the NAFD, while independent conciliation and adjudication are provided by qualified professionals from the Centre for Effective Dispute Resolution, known as CEDR.

As an NAFD member, we are bound by the Funeral Director Code and are required to cooperate with and abide by the applicable outcome of the NAFD Resolve process.

You may approach the NAFD if our response has not resolved the complaint, or earlier if you do not feel able to raise the matter directly with us. The current NAFD Resolve scheme rules determine whether and how a case can proceed.

9. Stage 2: Independent conciliation

Where direct discussion does not resolve an eligible complaint, NAFD Resolve may refer it for independent conciliation by CEDR. The scheme information describes conciliation as a private, structured negotiation supported by a trained and accredited mediator.

The conciliator helps the customer and funeral director identify the issues, exchange relevant information and explore possible solutions. The parties remain in control of whether to settle. The conciliator may suggest possible terms but does not impose a decision at this stage.

CEDR states that the conciliator seeks to conclude this stage within 21 days of appointment. If an agreement is reached and signed by both parties, it becomes a binding contractual settlement.

10. Stage 3: Independent adjudication

If the matter is not resolved through discussion or conciliation, the eligible customer may ask for independent adjudication. Current scheme information also allows a customer to choose adjudication without first attempting conciliation in some circumstances.

An independent adjudicator reviews the documents and evidence supplied by both sides and issues a written decision. The adjudicator may request further information before deciding the case.

Under the published NAFD Resolve process, the adjudicator's decision becomes binding on both parties if the customer accepts it. If the customer does not accept it, it is not binding on either party and the customer remains free to seek independent legal advice about other options. The adjudicator's decision concludes the NAFD Resolve process.

11. Who is eligible for NAFD Resolve

Eligibility is determined by the NAFD under its current rules. At the date of this procedure, NAFD Resolve is available where:

- the complainant is the contracted customer of the funeral director;
- the funeral director was an NAFD member when the relevant service was provided; and
- the funeral director provided either a funeral, a direct cremation or burial service, or funeral-related products and/or services costing more than £1,000.

The complaint must normally be made within 12 months of the latest of:

- the date the contract was entered into;
- the date of the burial or cremation; or
- the date the contract was, or should have been, fulfilled.

The NAFD has discretion to extend that period in exceptional circumstances where the member agrees or the complainant could not reasonably have been expected to complain earlier. Contact the NAFD promptly rather than relying on an extension.

CHECK CURRENT ELIGIBILITY

Scheme rules and contact arrangements can change. The NAFD, not Wealden Funeral Services, makes the final eligibility decision. Check the current information on the NAFD Resolve website before submitting a case.

12. Concerns raised by someone other than the client

A person who was not the contracted customer may be ineligible for NAFD Resolve adjudication. That does not prevent them from complaining to us.

The NAFD also accepts concerns from other people about the conduct of its members. A non-client complaint that does not arise from the complainant's own contractual relationship may be considered through the NAFD's professional-standards process. An alleged breach of the Funeral Director Code may be referred to the NAFD Committee for Professional Standards.

The [NAFD complaints page](#) explains both routes and provides its online complaint form.

13. Other complaint and legal routes

This procedure does not remove any statutory right or stop a person seeking independent advice. Depending on the subject, another route may also be appropriate:

- concerns about our handling of personal information may be raised with us under our [Privacy Policy](#) and with the Information Commissioner's Office;
- an accessibility concern may also be pursued under the Equality Act 2010;
- a complaint principally about an independent crematorium, cemetery, officiant or supplier may need to be raised through that organisation's own process;
- suspected crime, immediate danger or a serious safeguarding concern should be reported to the relevant authority without waiting for this procedure; and
- a person may seek independent consumer or legal advice about court or other remedies.

We may pause part of our investigation where continuing would prejudice a police inquiry, court proceeding, regulator investigation or legal obligation. We will explain this where the law permits.

14. Support, representation and accessibility

We will make reasonable adjustments to the complaint process. You may ask us to:

- take the complaint verbally rather than in writing;
- communicate in larger print or another accessible format;
- use a preferred reasonable communication method;
- allow more time because of disability or bereavement;
- communicate with an advocate, relative or other representative with appropriate permission; or
- arrange a suitable meeting or telephone discussion.

Tell us what would help. Our [Accessibility Statement](#) contains further information.

15. Privacy, confidentiality and records

We record complaints so that we can investigate, respond, demonstrate what action was taken and identify improvements. Complaint information is handled in accordance with our [Privacy Policy](#).

Information will be shared only where reasonably necessary, for example with staff involved in the investigation, relevant suppliers, professional advisers, insurers, the NAFD, CEDR, an adjudicator or a public authority. We may need to limit information in a response to protect another person's privacy, confidentiality or legal rights.

Complaint and associated claim records are normally kept for six years after closure, or longer where an unresolved claim, legal hold, insurance requirement or regulator makes that necessary.

16. Contact details

RAISE A COMPLAINT WITH US

Wealden Funeral Services Ltd

*3 Browning Road
Heathfield
East Sussex
TN21 8DB*

Telephone: 01435 868844
Online: use our contact form

INDEPENDENT ESCALATION

NAFD Resolve

Submit a complaint using the NAFD online complaint form .

NAFD Resolve
618 Warwick Road
Solihull
West Midlands
B91 1AA
Telephone: 0121 711 1636

The NAFD states that it normally confirms receipt of an online complaint within three working days. If sending documents by post, send copies rather than originals wherever possible.