

Project Report: Health and Social Care Feedback Pathways 2025

Objective:

The primary aim of this project was to comprehensively map all available public feedback channels for local health and social care services. By identifying every touchpoint available to residents, we intended to assess the accessibility, clarity, and efficiency of the current feedback infrastructure within West Berkshire.

Overview: A Fragmented Landscape

The 2025 mapping project identified an overwhelming 140+ unique feedback pathways available to West Berkshire residents. While the high number of channels suggests accessibility, the reality for the public is a complex and fragmented system.

Our findings indicate that the current infrastructure lacks a single "front door," making it difficult for residents to navigate their options effectively.

Critical Findings & Concerns:

- **Public Confusion:** The sheer volume of pathways creates a "paradox of choice." Without a central point of entry, the public is often unclear which service to use for specific feedback or formal complaints.
- **System Inefficiency:** There is currently no single hub or database where these 140+ pathways connect. This lack of integration suggests that data is being held in silos across different organisations.
- **Likelihood of Duplication:** Because the system is not centralised, it is highly probable that complaints are being duplicated across multiple agencies (e.g., PALS, CQC, and Healthwatch), leading to an inefficient use of resources and potential inconsistencies in how cases are handled.
- **Barriers to Use:** A system that is difficult to navigate is inherently not "user-friendly." This complexity may discourage residents from sharing vital feedback, particularly during times of personal or health-related stress.

Mapping the Pathways:

Sector	Primary Channels	Resolution Level	No of
Healthcare	PALS (Hospital Trusts), ICB (Primary Care), GP Practices, Community Pharmacies	Direct & Informal	85
Social Care	WBC Adult/Children Teams, Care Home Support Team	Local Authority	25
Independent	Healthwatch West Berkshire, The Advocacy People	External Support	6
National /Regulatory	CQC, Parliamentary & Health Service Ombudsman	Formal Escalation	11
Digital/Real-time	Friends & Family Test (FFT), Care Opinion, NHS Website	Public/Anonymous	19

Data Trends (2024/25)

Despite the fragmented pathways, consistent themes emerge from the data gathered:

- **Care and Treatment:** This remains the predominant area of concern, accounting for 52.17% of all logged feedback.
- **Advocacy Rise:** Complaints from secondary parties (family/carers) rose from 12.5% to 22%, indicating that residents are increasingly relying on others to navigate these complex systems.
- **Communication Gaps:** Issues regarding poor communication, lack of transparency, and staff attitude remain top-tier concerns across both the health and social care sectors, suggesting that the "human element" of service delivery requires urgent attention.

Conclusion: The Need for Integration -

The mapping exercise concludes that while feedback is essential for identifying safety issues and improving practice, the current West Berkshire landscape is not fit for optimal public use. The lack of a unified link between these 140+ pathways risks data loss, public frustration, and administrative duplication.

To truly empower our residents, we must move towards a more integrated, "single-portal" approach that simplifies the journey for the public while ensuring that every piece of feedback reaches the decision-makers who need to hear it.