

# Getting the information and services you need



## Know Your Rights



Comisiynydd Pobl Hŷn Cymru  
Older People's Commissioner for Wales

## Get the information and services you need – in a way that suits you

Being able to access the information and services we need in a way that suits us is important to us all.

But did you know that you have rights to access information and services, which is a crucial element of our human rights?

That's why the Commissioner has used her **legal powers to issue formal guidance to local authorities (councils) and health boards**, setting out what needs to be in place to ensure people can access information and services, and that their rights are upheld.

### What does the Commissioner's guidance say?

In her guidance, the Commissioner has been clear that local authorities and health boards should:

- ensure that people who can't (or don't want to) get online or use the internet have other ways to get to the information they need
- help you to get online or use the internet, supporting you to get connected and to gain the skills and confidence to use the internet safely



## **What does this mean for me?**

Below are some examples of the ways that you should be able to access information and services in your area:

- **Calling your council's 'Connect to' phone service to find information you need**
- **Arranging a face-to-face appointment to get help and support or resolve an issue**
- **Writing a letter to make a complaint about a service, raise a concern or request information**
- **Picking up information leaflets about services in your area at your local library**
- **Receiving a newsletter in the post that provides helpful information and updates**

**Many local authorities are also running projects to help older people to get online and in some areas there are schemes that can provide equipment and devices (such as a tablet computer) or access to wifi, as well as training and support to use them.**

**To find out what is available in your area, you should get in touch with your council or health board. Your local library might also be a good place to find this information.**

## “I’m struggling to get what I need – what should I do?”

If you’re not sure about what’s available in your area or are having difficulties getting the information and/or services you need, you should contact your local authority (or your health board if health-related), who should be able to provide you with assistance and support.

**The Commissioner’s Office can also support you.** The Commissioner’s team can provide you with advice and assistance, and help you to find the right person to help you, which we know can sometimes be difficult.

If you feel that you are not being offered the help you need from your local authority or health board, there are a few things you may want to consider.

In the first instance, you should **contact your council or health board to share any concerns you have** and tell them you need help to access their information or services, or help to get online. This is called an **informal complaint**.

If you are not happy with their response you should **consider making a formal complaint**. Your council or health board should help you with that process, but if you feel you need more advice on making a formal complaint then please contact the Commissioner’s Office.

**Older People’s Commissioner for Wales**

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