

## July 2023

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## Our findings

### Public service complaints

#### *Statistics*

This month we

- published 17 [decision reports](#)
- upheld eight complaints in full and three in part
- made 33 recommendations for learning and improvement

Findings from investigations published this month highlight how good communication during the complaints process can help complainants understand the decisions being made and how things will be put right. [Read more about the themes and trends from our findings.](#)

## Scottish Welfare Fund reviews

### Statistics

During June we

- responded to 71 enquiries
- made 55 decisions
  - 16 community care grants
  - 39 crisis grants
- upheld 63% of community care grants and 10% of crisis grants.
- signposted an additional 97 applicants to other sources of assistance. Most were calling us instead of their local council in error, with 14 applicants unable to contact their council as no Freephone number was in place.
- received 14 calls from councils seeking advice.



### Stakeholder engagement

We raised one new issue under level one of our [Support and Intervention Policy](#) in June of a council failing to treat applicants with dignity and respect in their case notes. We also escalated a separate issue to level two of the policy as we were not satisfied with the council's response at level one. This issue concerned the quality of their initial decision letters.

### Case studies

We regularly update the [searchable directory on our website](#) with sample cases to share learning from our findings. This month's cases highlight the importance of considering individual circumstances and ensuring applicant's are treated with respect and dignity. Follow the link to find out more!

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## **Pilot of Draft Child Friendly Complaints Guidance**



Following an extensive co-design project with a wide range of children, young people, and other stakeholders, we have launched a pilot to test the draft version of the new approach to handling complaints involving children. This consists of two key guidance documents - the Child Friendly Complaints Handling Principles, and a Child Friendly Complaints Handling Procedure.

[Read more about our Child Friendly Complaints project and pilot](#)

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### **Support and Intervention Policy refresh**

A refreshed version of our [Support and Intervention Policy](#) is now available online. The policy, which was first introduced in 2019, sets out how we use our statutory powers in a structured way to promote improvement. The policy and its principles have not changed but we have combined the accompanying information leaflets into [one helpful guide](#) and added further clarity around what public bodies can expect from us, how and when. We have also made improvements to our internal processes, ensuring we apply the policy efficiently and consistently.

[View our Support and Intervention Policy online.](#)

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We only have 20 spaces left on our August Complaints Investigation Skills course!

This trainer-led course is delivered online via Teams and is aimed at staff who investigate complaints at stage 2 of the [Model Complaints Handling Procedure](#).

[Book now for the 28 or 29 of August 2023!](#)

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