



A summary of our strategic plan
2015-16 to 2017-18

Making a difference



An overview

We investigate complaints about the NHS in England, government departments and other public services. This includes hospitals, GP and dental practices and organisations like Jobcentre Plus and the courts. We were set up by Parliament. Our service is governed by law, free to use, open to everyone and completely independent.

Our core business is resolving individual complaints. But if we see big or repeated issues, we can highlight these and help to make public services better for everyone.

This summary of our strategic plan explains what we will do over the next three years to help those who need our services and for the benefit of the wider public.

Our focus will be on improving the quality and accessibility of our services, getting better at how we use our insight to bring about change, and continuing to work towards the creation of a more streamlined public ombudsman service.

To read our strategic plan in full, please go to:
www.ombudsman.org.uk

Our strategic aims and objectives

1 We will make it easier for people to find and use our services.

- We will raise awareness of our services through working more closely with organisations in our jurisdiction, consumer organisations and national advice agencies, and target our work for the benefit of those groups most likely to suffer from service failures.
- We will improve access through more on line services and through publishing more information about our service standards and how we assess and investigate cases.
- We will use information from a wide range of sources to spot emerging trends, potential service failures or repeated problems, so we can act to make sure those affected can use our service.



2 We will help more people by resolving and investigating more complaints and providing an excellent customer service for everyone who contacts us.

- We will consistently meet our new service standards, do more to understand the needs of our service users and tailor our services to meet them.
- We will provide excellent services through our investigation methodology that will ask 'why' something has happened, as well as 'what' went wrong, and through the quality of our decision making.
- We will meet demand for our services by increasing productivity for both individual and systemic investigations.
- We will use a wider range of approaches to resolve and investigate complaints to achieve more impact for our work.
- We will seek to align with the Local Government Ombudsman around core service provision where this helps achieve our strategic aims.



3 We will make public services better by working with others to share what we learn from complaints.

- We will generate and communicate insight into service failure based on our casework, including a focus on failures affecting the most disadvantaged service users.
- We will work with commissioners, service providers, regulators, the voluntary and community sector and consumer groups to raise awareness of our findings and to influence improvements in public services.
- We will support Parliament in holding Government to account for service improvement.

4 We will work with others to make it easier to complain about public services and to help public services resolve complaints better.

- We will generate and share insight from our casework with public sector leaders, so they can improve the way they deal with and learn from complaints. We will include a focus on improving the experiences of those who find it hardest to get their voices heard.
- We will use our insight to help increase the capabilities of those who handle complaints in public services.
- We will use our insight to support Parliament in holding public services to account for improving the way they deal with complaints.
- We will work with Parliament and others to achieve public ombudsman services that are better for users and Parliament, and that provide even better value for money for the taxpayer.

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We will make sure our organisation works well to help us achieve our aims.

- We will focus on building our capability and strengthening our focus on performance. In particular we will recruit and develop a diverse, inclusive and flexible workforce able to serve our diverse users.
- We will adopt a structured approach to change that informs how we involve, engage and empower our staff. We will involve our staff, users and wider stakeholders in designing the future.
- We will harness technology to deliver better customer service, knowledge management and efficient ways of working.
- We will deliver better value for money through improved productivity, demonstrable return on investment and greater efficiency. We will share services with other organisations where this helps us achieve our strategic aims.
- We will have a robust and proportionate approach to corporate governance, transparency, risk management and decision making that meets the Ombudsman Association principles and public sector standards of good governance.
- We will be agile in responding to changes in the external environment.

Measuring success

At the very highest level we want to be able to report on:

- The confidence of the public in making complaints and understanding our role within the system through our annual omnibus survey.
- The awareness, accessibility and quality of our services and the quality and impact of the decisions we make through our service user feedback mechanisms.
- The perception of our independence, influence and authority among our stakeholders and partners through our annual stakeholder audit and bodies in jurisdiction research.



Find out more

There are different ways you can find out more about our work and progress in delivering this plan:

Visit our website at: www.ombudsman.org.uk

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Sign up for our e-newsletter by emailing: resolve@ombudsman.org.uk

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Telephone: 0345 015 4033

Textphone: 0300 061 4298

Fax: 0300 061 4000

Email: phso.enquiries@ombudsman.org.uk

www.ombudsman.org.uk

Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman

Millbank Tower

Millbank

London

SW1P 4QP