

# **Fisheries Local Action Group Complaints Procedure**

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The Fisheries Local Action Group is committed to providing high-quality customer services.

We value complaints and use information from them to help us improve our services.

If something goes wrong or you are dissatisfied with our services or the actions of the Fisheries Local Action Group (FLAG) members or officers, please tell us. This leaflet describes our complaints procedure and how to make a complaint.

## **What is a complaint?**

We regard a complaint as any expression of dissatisfaction about our action or lack of action, or about the standard of service provided by us or on our behalf.

What can I complain about?

You can complain about things like:

- delays in responding to your enquiries and requests.
- failure to provide a service.
- our standard of service.
- treatment by or attitude of a member of staff.
- our failure to follow proper procedure.

## **Who can complain?**

Anyone can make a complaint to us, including the representative of someone who is dissatisfied with our service. Please also read the section on 'Getting help to make your complaint'.

## **How do I complain?**

You can complain in person at the Council Offices, School Place, Kirkwall, Orkney, KW15 1NY, by phone or in writing to the EU Liaison Officer.

It is easier for us to resolve complaints if you make them quickly and directly so please talk to a member of the FLAG or the FLAG staff team. Then they can try to resolve any problems on the spot.

When complaining, tell us:

- your full name and address.
- as much as you can about the complaint.
- what has gone wrong.
- how you want us to resolve the matter.

## **How long do I have to make a complaint?**

Normally, you must make your complaint within six months of:

- the event you want to complain about, or
- finding out that you have a reason to complain, but no longer than 12 months after the event itself.

In exceptional circumstances, we may be able to accept a complaint after the time limit. If you feel that the time limit should not apply to your complaint, please tell us why.

## **What happens when I have complained?**

We will always tell you who is dealing with your complaint. Our complaints procedure has two stages:

### **Stage one – Frontline Resolution.**

We aim to resolve complaints quickly and close to where we provided the service. This could mean an on-the-spot apology and explanation if something has clearly gone wrong, and immediate action to resolve the problem.

We will give you our decision at Stage 1 in writing in ten working days or less, unless there are exceptional circumstances.

If we cannot resolve your complaint at this stage, we will explain why and tell you what you can do next. We might suggest that you take your complaint to Stage 2. You may choose to do this immediately or sometime after you get our initial decision.

### **Stage two – Complaints Panel.**

Stage 2 deals with two types of complaint: those that have not been resolved at Stage 1 and those that are complex.

When using Stage 2 we will:

1. Acknowledge receipt of your complaint within three working days.
2. Discuss your complaint with you to understand why you remain dissatisfied and what outcome you are looking for.
3. Arrange for a Complaints Panel to convene within 20 working days (the Complaints Panel should consist of a minimum of 3 members of the FLAG).
4. The Complaints Panel will evaluate and determine the complaint, the results of the Panel's decision will be recorded in writing.
5. The FLAG team will action the decision of the Panel.
6. The FLAG team will give you a full written response to the complaint as soon as possible and within 10 working days of the Complaints Panel, this response will confirm that the decision is final and that there will no further right of appeal.

## **Getting help to make your complaint.**

We understand that you may be unable, or reluctant, to make a complaint yourself. We accept complaints from the representative of a person who is dissatisfied with our service. We can take complaints from a friend, relative, or an advocate, if you have given them your written consent to complain for you.

You can find out about advocates in your area by contacting the Scottish Independent Advocacy Alliance.

Scottish Independent Advocacy Alliance.

Tel: 01312605380 Fax: 01312605381 Website: [www.siaa.org.uk](http://www.siaa.org.uk)

Our contact details for complaints. Please contact us by the following means:

In person or by mail – EU Liaison Officer, Orkney Islands Council, Council Offices, School Place, Kirkwall, Orkney, KW15 1NY.

Telephone – 01856873535.