



Polisi Corfforaethol  
Corporate Policy

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Parc Cenedlaethol  
Arfordir Penfro  
Pembrokeshire Coast  
National Park

# Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Authority Complaints Handling Policy

This Document is also available in Welsh

## 1. Our commitment to you

The Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Authority is committed to providing a high standard of service – but we may sometimes get it wrong. If we do, we are also committed to:

- receiving and listening to your views
- dealing with your concern or complaint;
- clarifying any issues about which you are not sure;
- apologising if we get something wrong;
- where possible, putting right any mistake we may have made;
- learning from our mistakes and using the information we gain to improve our services.

## 2. What is a complaint?

A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction or concern about an action, or lack of action, in relation to the standard of service provided (whether by a member of staff, volunteer or contractor) – and which requires a response. The complaint can be written or spoken, and can be made by one or more members of the public.

Complaints against Members of the Authority should be made directly to the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales (see paragraph 9).

A complaint **is not** an appeal against a ‘properly made’ decision, for example against a refusal to grant you planning permission. In that instance, rather than investigate your concern we will explain to you how to appeal against the decision.

Sometimes, you might be concerned about matters that are not decided by us and we will then advise you how to make your concerns known to the appropriate body.

## 3. How do I complain?

You can express your concern in any of the following ways:

- you can get in touch with our Customer Service team on 01646 624800 to either:
  - make your complaint over the phone, or
  - ask for a copy of our Complaints Form;
- you can visit our website ([www.pembrokeshirecoast.org.uk](http://www.pembrokeshirecoast.org.uk)) and complete the [Complaints Form](#)
- you can visit our headquarters at Pembroke Dock, or one of our Centres at Carew, Castell Henllys or Oriel y Parc and ask for a copy of our Complaints Form;

- you can e-mail us at [info@pembrokeshirecoast.org.uk](mailto:info@pembrokeshirecoast.org.uk), or you can write a letter to us at the following address at **(Please handwrite this address on your envelope/label only)**:

Democratic Services Manager  
Freepost RTKR-GGRT-ESST  
Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Authority  
Llanion Park  
Pembroke Dock  
Pembrokeshire  
SA72 6DY.

Please note that, if you're expressing a concern on behalf of somebody else, we'll need their agreement to you acting on their behalf.

#### **4. Informal resolution**

If possible, we believe it's best to deal with things straight away rather than try to sort them out later. If you have a concern, raise it with the person you're dealing with in the first instance so that he or she can try to resolve it for you there and then. If there are any lessons to learn from addressing your concern then the member of staff will draw them to our attention. If the member of staff can't help, they will explain why and you can then ask for a formal investigation.

#### **5. Formal resolution**

- We will formally acknowledge your complaint within 3 working days and let you know how we intend to deal with it.
- We will ask you to tell us how you would like us to communicate with you and establish whether you have any particular requirements – for example, if you have a disability.
- We will deal with your complaint in an open and honest way.
- We will make sure that your dealings with us in the future do not suffer just because you have expressed a concern or made a complaint.

Normally, we will only be able to look at your concerns if you tell us about them within 12 months; this is because it's better to look into the matter while the issues are still fresh in everyone's mind. We may exceptionally be able to look at concerns which are brought to our attention later than this, however you will have to give us strong reasons why you have not been able to bring it to our attention earlier. You will also need to provide sufficient information about the issue to allow us to consider

it properly. In any event, regardless of the circumstances, we will not consider any concerns about matters that took place more than three years ago.

## **6. Investigation**

We will tell you who we have asked to look into your concern or complaint. We will aim to resolve complaints as quickly as possible, and expect to deal with the vast majority within 20 working days. If your complaint is more complex, we will let you know why we think it may take longer to investigate and give you regular updates on how the investigation is proceeding.

The person who is investigating your complaint will aim first to establish the facts and, in some instances, may ask to meet you to discuss your concerns. They will look at relevant evidence, which could include files, notes of conversations, letters, e-mails or whatever may be relevant to your particular complaint. If necessary, they'll talk to the staff or others involved and look at our policies and any legal entitlement and guidance.

## **7. Outcome**

If we formally investigate your complaint, we will let you know what we have found and explain how and why we came to our conclusions. If we find that we got it wrong, we'll tell you what and why it happened. If we find there is a fault in our systems or the way we do things, we'll tell you what it is and how we plan to change things to stop it happening again.

If we got it wrong, we will always apologise.

## **8. Putting Things Right**

If we didn't provide you with a service you should have had, we'll aim to provide it now, if that's possible. If we didn't do something well, we'll aim to put it right. If you have lost out as a result of a mistake on our part, we'll try to put you back in the position you would have been in if we'd done things properly.

If you had to pay for a service yourself, when we should have provided it for you, we will try to refund the cost.

## **9. Ombudsman**

If we do not succeed in resolving your complaint, you may complain to the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales. The Ombudsman is independent of all governing

bodies and can look into your complaint if you believe that you personally, or the person on whose behalf you are complaining:

- have been treated unfairly or received a bad service through some failure on our part, or
- have been disadvantaged personally by a service failure or have been treated unfairly.

The Ombudsman expects you to bring your concerns to our attention first and to give us a chance to put things right. You can contact the Ombudsman by:

- phone: 0300 790 0203
- e-mail: [ask@ombudsman-wales.org.uk](mailto:ask@ombudsman-wales.org.uk)
- the website: [www.ombudsman-wales.org.uk](http://www.ombudsman-wales.org.uk)
- writing to: Public Services Ombudsman for Wales  
1 Ffordd yr Hen Gae  
Pencoed  
CF35 5LJ

## 10. Learning lessons

We take your concerns and complaints seriously and try to learn from any mistakes we've made. Our Audit and Corporate Services Review Committee considers a summary of all complaints quarterly. Where there is a need for change, we will develop an action plan setting out what we will do, who will do it and when we plan to do it by. We will let you know when changes we've promised have been made.

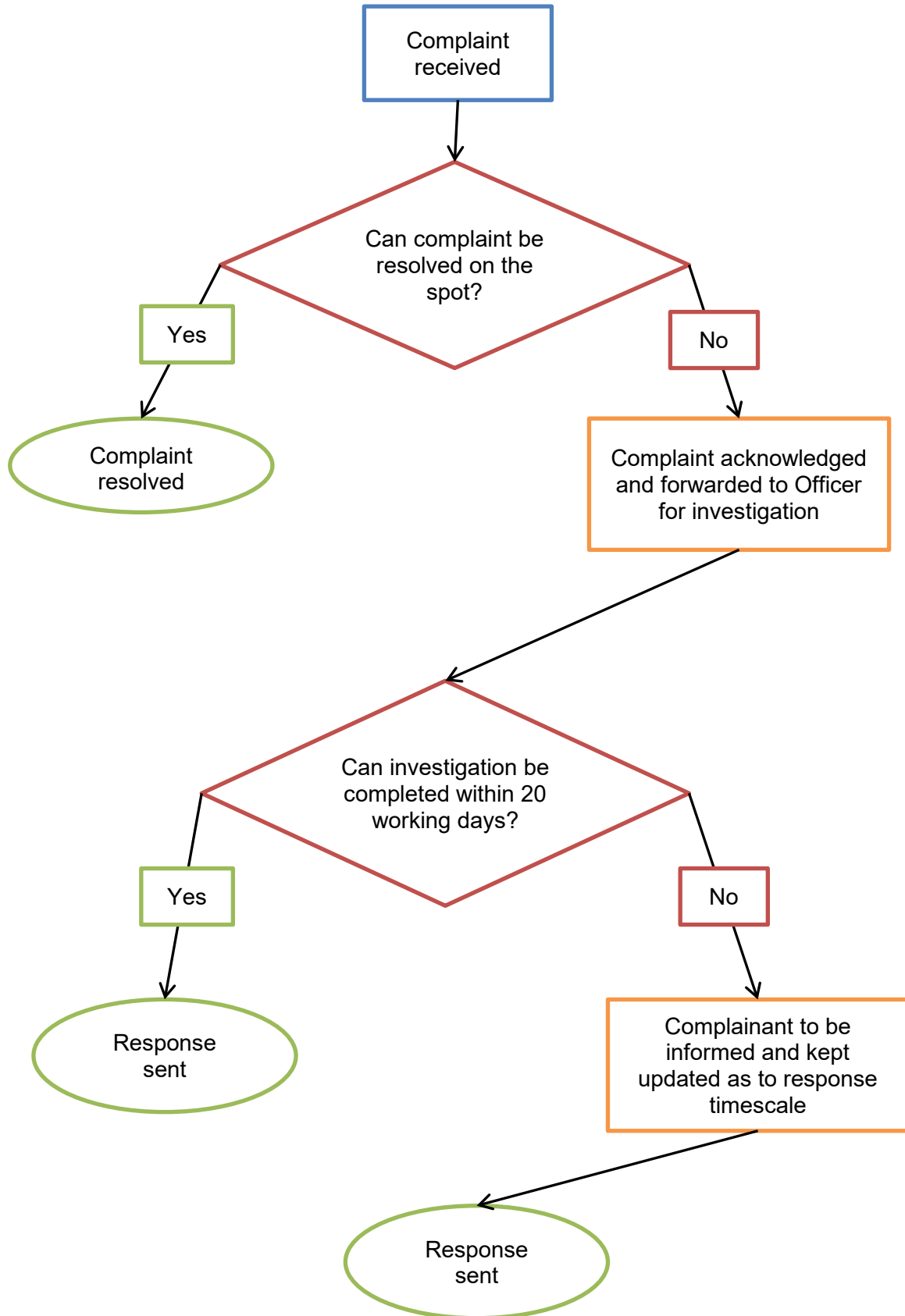
## 11. What we expect from you

We believe that all complainants have the right to be heard, understood and respected. However, we also consider that our staff have the same rights. We therefore expect you to be polite and courteous in your dealings with us. We will not tolerate aggressive or abusive behaviour, unreasonable demands or unreasonable persistence. We have a [separate policy](#) to manage situations when we consider that someone's actions are unacceptable

## **12. Please remember our commitment**

The Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Authority is committed to providing a high standard of service. If you feel we have done something wrong or badly, or that there has been a long delay in dealing with any matter, please tell us about it. Only by doing this can we put matters right and acknowledge any mistake on our part. This will also enable us to improve our services for the benefit of everyone.

## COMPLAINTS HANDLING FLOWCHART



## Appendix A Concern/Complaint form

Please Note: The person who experienced the problem should normally fill in this form. If you are filling this in on behalf of someone else, please fill in Section B.

### A: Your details

Surname:	Forenames(s):	Title: Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms/ if other please state
Address and postcode:		
Your email address:		
Daytime contact phone number:		

Please state how you would prefer us to contact you:

**Your requirements:** if our usual way of dealing with complaints makes it difficult for you to use our service, for example if English or Welsh is not your first language or you need to engage with us in a particular way, please tell us so that we can discuss how we might help you.

### B: Making a complaint on behalf of someone else: Their details:

Please note: We have to be satisfied that you have the authority to act on behalf of the person who has experienced the problem.

Their name in full:	
Address and postcode:	
What is your relationship to them?	
Why are you making a complaint on their behalf?	



**C: About your concern/complaint (Please continue your answers to the following questions on a separate sheet(s) if necessary)**

- C.1 Name of the department/section/service you are complaining about:
- C.2 What do you think they did wrong, or failed to do?
- C.3 Describe how you personally have suffered or have been affected:
- C.4 What do you think should be done to put things right?
- C.5 When did you first become aware of the problem?
- C.6 Have you already put your concern to the frontline staff responsible for delivering the service? If so, please give brief details of how and when you did so:
- C.7 If it is more than six months since you first became aware of the problem, please say why you have not complained before now:

If you have any documents to support your concern/complaint, please attach them with this form.

Signature:

Date:

When you have completed this form, please send it to:

**(Please handwrite this address on your envelope/label only):**

Administration and Democratic Services Manager

Freepost RTKR-GGRT-ESST

Pembrokeshire Coast National Park

Llanion Park

Pembroke Dock

SA72 6DY