

COMPLAINTS GEARANAN

When things go wrong

Our complaints process

The Crofting Commission's complaints handling procedures are a vital part of ensuring continual improvement to our customer service.

What can complaints be about?

- Delays in responding to your enquiries and requests
- Failure to provide a service
- Our standard of service
- Failure to follow our policy
- Treatment by or attitude of a member of staff

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 we cannot consider

- Action being taken by another organisation
- Previous complaints where a final decision has been made
- A disagreement where a right of appeal already exists, including those to the Scottish Land Court
- A request for compensation only.

Who can make a complaint?

Anyone who is affected by the work of the Crofting Commission can make a complaint. That includes representatives of those affected by what we do.

How do I make a complaint?

You can make a complaint in person, by letter, email, phone or fax. You may wish to download our Complaints Form (at www.crofting.scotland.gov.uk/complaints) or ask us to send one to you.

You can also have somebody make a complaint on your behalf or call a staff member to write out a complaint for you.

Can I remain anonymous?

Complaints can be made anonymously but you should provide us with as much information as possible to enable us to investigate. Please state when contacting us if you would like to remain anonymous and no record of your name will be attached to our files.

We cannot guarantee that we will be able to investigate an anonymous complaint.

When complaining you should 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.

We would also like to know what you would like to happen as a result of your complaint.



HANDLING CUSTOMER COMPLAINTS

Gheibhear tuilleadh fiosrachaidh mun mhodh gearain air an làrach-lìn againn.

Coimisean na Croitearachd

You can find more information on our complaints procedure on our website:

www.crofting.scotland.gov.uk

What happens next?

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

Stage One – Informal Complaints

- These are expressions of dissatisfaction which do not require in-depth investigation.
- We aim to fix problems as soon as possible.
- Decision will be given within five working days or less.

If a solution cannot be found, the complaint can be taken to Stage 2.

Stage Two – Formal Complaint – Investigation

- These are more complex complaints
- We will acknowledge your complaint within three working days of receipt.
- Where appropriate, we will discuss your complaint with you to understand why you remain dissatisfied and what outcome you are looking for.
- A full response will be issued as soon as possible but no later than 20 working days.
- If longer is needed to investigate the complaint thoroughly, we will explain why and keep you updated.

What if I'm not satisfied with the outcome?

If you remain dissatisfied after our investigation, you have the right to seek an independent review from the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO).

Any complaints referred to the SPSO will have been thoroughly investigated by the Crofting Commission first.

The SPSO will assess whether there is evidence to suggest service failure or maladministration not identified by the Crofting Commission. They are the final stage for complaints about most organisations that provide public services in Scotland, including the Crofting Commission.

How long do I have to make a complaint?

Normally, you must make your complaint no later than 6 months after the event you want to complain about.

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.

APPEALS

Gheibhear tuilleadh fiosrachaidh mun mhodh gearain air an làrach-lìn againn.

Coimisean na Croitearachd

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How to contact the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO)

You can **phone** the SPSO directly on

0800 377 7330 (freephone) contact them electronically via www.spsso.org.uk/contact-us or send them a letter addressed to:

Freepost, SPSO

In person:

You must arrange an appointment first by phoning 0800 377 7330.

SPSO, Bridgeside House, 99 McDonald Road, Edinburgh EH7 4NS

Opening Hours: Monday, Wednesday & Friday 09:00-13:00

Tuesday & Thursday 13:00-17:00

Getting help to make a 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 permission to complain for you.

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

Scottish Independent Advocacy Alliance

Tel: 0131 510 9410

www.siaa.org.uk

We are committed to making our service easy to use for all members of the public.

If you have trouble putting your complaint in writing, or want this information in another language or format, such as large font, or Braille, please tell us.

You can call us on 01463 663439 or email us at info@crofting.gov.scot.

You will find a copy of our Privacy Notice at:

www.crofting.scotland.gov.uk/privacy-policy