

HELMSDALE DISTRICT SALMON FISHERY BOARD

PROCEDURE FOR COMPLAINTS

General statement on complaints

- All complaints will be treated seriously and investigated thoroughly, whether they are made by telephone, by letter, or by email.
- Complainants will be treated with courtesy and fairness at all times.
- All complaints will be treated in confidence within the Board.
- Complaints will be dealt with promptly. Written complaints will be acknowledged within 10 working days and a full reply within 20 working days of receipt. If a full reply cannot be provided within 20 working days of receipt, the reason will be explained and notification provided as to when a reply will be forthcoming.
- The number of complaints received, a statement as to the nature of each complaint and how it was disposed of will be published in our annual report.

Complaints Procedure

Any complaint **other than a complaint relating to data handling** should be addressed to the Clerk to the Board by letter addressed to:- The Clerk of the Helmsdale District Salmon Fishery Board, c/o Easter Suddie, Munlochy, Ross-shire IV8 8PA

Any complaint relating to data handling should be sent to the Fishery Manager, who is the officer responsible for data by completion of form accessed [here](#). Alternatively complaints should be sent to the Fishery Manager, The Helmsdale District Salmon Fishery Board c/o Borrobol, Kinbrace, Sutherland KW11 6UB or by email to datahdsfb@gmail.com

For all complaints, a two-stage complaints procedure is in place. At each stage it will help the Board to resolve your complaint quickly if you can provide as much clear detail as possible, including any documents and correspondence and stating that you are making a complaint in line with our procedure.

Stage 1

This is the first opportunity for the Board to resolve a complainant's dissatisfaction, and most complaints should be resolved at this stage. In the first instance, the Clerk will investigate the nature of the complaint in conjunction with the convener of the Board. Where the complaint relates to the Clerk, the convener of the Board and one member of the Board will undertake the investigation. This gives the Board the opportunity to resolve and correct any resulting disadvantage (upholding the complaint); or establish that the action of the Board was correct thereby enabling the Board to explain this to the complainant (not upholding the complaint).

Stage 2

If the complainant is dissatisfied with the stage 1 response, they may request a review by the full board and it would be expected that this would be discussed at the next scheduled meeting of the Board. Given the confidential nature of complaints, the Board might elect to hold this meeting, or part thereof, in private. In this instance the complainant will be given the right to attend the meeting.

Indicative timescales for handling a complaint

Stage 1 - maximum 20 working days

- Acknowledgement within 10 working days
- Full response within 20 working days

Stage 2 – timing will depend on the scheduling of the next Board meeting

- Acknowledgement within 10 working days, with notification of the date and location of the meeting at which the complaint will be discussed.

Extending time limits

We aim to complete all complaints within the timescales above; however, if a complaint is very complex it may occasionally be necessary to extend the time limit. If this is the case we will keep the complainant informed of progress with the investigation, the reasons for the delay, and inform them of the new deadline.

Data Compliance Complaints

The Board maintains a data handling policy, a copy of which is available [here](#). A complainant has the right to make a complaint about the Board's processing of personal data. If a complainant wishes to make a complaint they should do that by contacting the Board in accordance with this procedure.

If they are still unhappy with the way in which the Board have processed their personal data following the outcome of the complaint, they have the right to complain to the supervisory authority in the UK, the Information Commissioner. Their helpline number is 0303 123 1113 and they also have a Live Chat function on their website at ico.org.uk. Their address is Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire SK9 5AF. Further information about how the ICO deal with complaints can be found at ico.org.uk.