

# **What is Environmental Standards Scotland (ESS)**

## **Complaints policy**

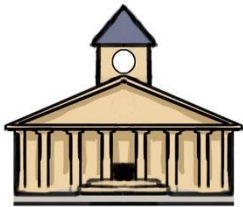
**Easy Read version**



# Who are we?



We are Environmental Standards Scotland (ESS). It is our job to make sure public authorities are following environmental laws. It is also our job to make sure that these laws are working well.



Public authorities are people or organisations that work for the public. These include:

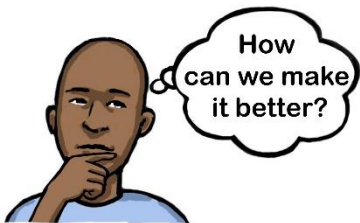
- the Scottish Government
- government departments
- local councils
- the Scottish Environment Protection Agency
- NatureScot



Environmental laws are any laws meant to protect the environment from threats. These include:

- air pollution
- water pollution
- danger to wildlife
- climate change

# Making a complaint about Environmental Standards Scotland



ESS wants to give the best service possible. Complaints are important to us. We will use them to make our service better.



Please tell us if you are unhappy with our service. This Complaints Policy tells you how to make a complaint. It also tells you about our [standards](#) and what you can expect from us.

## What is a complaint?



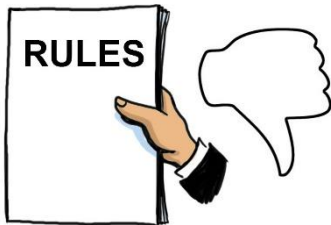
A complaint is when someone tells us they are unhappy about something we have done or have not done.



Asking for information about our work is not a complaint.

# What can I complain about?

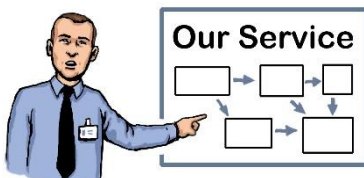
Things you can complain about:



- when you think we have not followed the rules or done our work properly



- if you have been treated badly by a member of our staff



Your complaint may be about more than one part of our service.

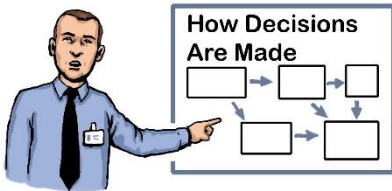
## What cannot I complain about?



Things that are not covered by our complaints procedure include:



- requests for information about Environmental Standards Scotland, including media enquiries



- requests for information about the work we do and how we make our decisions



- trying to reopen an old complaint where we have already given our final decision

## Who can complain?



Anyone can make a complaint.



You can also make a complaint for someone who is unable to make a complaint themselves. They need to give consent for this.

## How can I complain?



You can complain to us over the phone, in writing or by email.



It is easier for us to deal with complaints if you make them right away. So please talk to a member of staff at the service you are complaining about.

If you complain please tell us:

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_



- your full name and contact details (post or email address)
- as much as you can about your complaint
- what has gone wrong
- how you want us to sort the issue

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



Normally you must make your complaint within 3 months of the event you want to complain about. You cannot complain more than 12 months after the event.



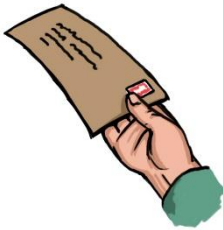
Sometimes we may be able to accept a complaint after the time limit. If you think the time limit should not apply, please tell us why.

## How do I make a complaint?

You can make your complaint by phone, in writing, or email:



Phone: **0808 1964000**



Writing: **Environmental Standards Scotland,  
Thistle House, 91 Haymarket Terrace,  
Edinburgh EH12 5HD**



Email: [enquiries@environmentalstandards.scot](mailto:enquiries@environmentalstandards.scot)



## What happens when I have complained?



We will tell you who is dealing with your complaint. Our procedure has 2 stages.

### Stage 1: Frontline Resolution



We try to resolve complaints and give you our Stage 1 decision in 5 working days or less. This might mean an explanation, an apology or action is taken to fix the problem.



If we cannot resolve your complaint at this stage we will explain why. You can ask us to take your complaint to Stage 2 if you are unhappy.

## Stage 2: Investigation

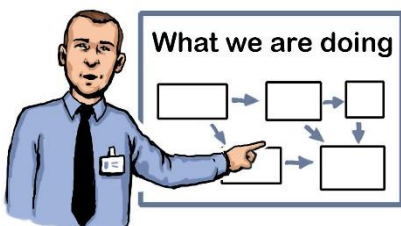


Stage 2 deals with 2 types of complaint: those that have not been resolved at Stage 1 and those that are complicated.

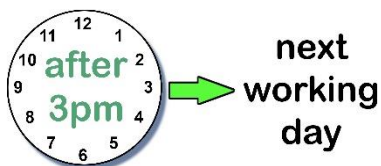
In Stage 2 we will:



- tell you we got your complaint within 3 working days
- discuss your complaint with you to understand why you are still not happy and what result you are looking for
- give you a full response to the complaint as soon as possible and within 20 working days



If our investigation will take longer than 20 working days we will tell you. We will agree a new time scale with you. We will keep you updated on progress.

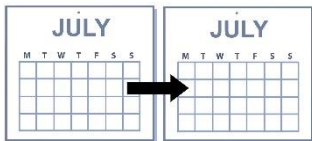


Please note that if your complaint is received after 3pm, day 1 of the complaints process will be the following working day.

## What if I am still not happy?



If you are still unhappy with our decision or with the way we have dealt with your complaint, you can ask the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman to look at it.



**12 months**



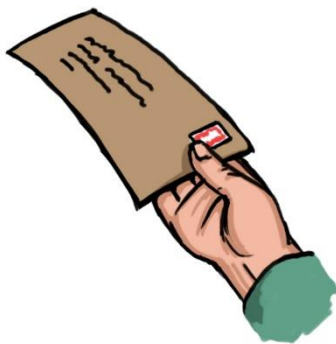
The Scottish Public Services Ombudsman cannot look at:

- a complaint that has not been through our complaints procedure yet (make sure that it has before contacting the Ombudsman)
- events that happened more than 12 months ago
- a matter that has been or is in Court

# Contacting the Scottish Public Service Ombudsman



In person: **Scottish Public Services Ombudsman,**  
**Bridgeside House, 99 McDonald Road,**  
**Edinburgh EH7 4NS**



By post: **Scottish Public Services Ombudsman,**  
**Bridgeside House, 99 McDonald Road,**  
**Edinburgh EH7 4NS**

You can ask for a Freepost envelope by contacting the  
SPSO on **0800 377 7330** or via  
[the SPSO contact form](#).



Freephone: **0800 377 7330**



Online contact: [www.spsso.org.uk/contact-us](http://www.spsso.org.uk/contact-us)

Website: [www.spsso.org.uk](http://www.spsso.org.uk)

## Getting help to make your complaint



You may not be able to make a complaint yourself. You can get someone else to complain for you. This can be a friend, relative, or an advocate if you give them consent.



Scottish  
**Independent  
Advocacy**  
Alliance

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

Telephone: **0131 510 9410**

Website: [www.siaa.org.uk](http://www.siaa.org.uk)



We want to make our service easy to use for everyone. The law says we must help people to access and use our services.



If you need support to make a complaint or want this information in another language or format, such as large font, or Braille, email us at:

[enquiries@environmentalstandards.scot](mailto:enquiries@environmentalstandards.scot)