

# How do I Complain?

The Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority is responsible for a wide range of services. It is our aim to provide services of the best quality but, as part of our commitment to continuous improvement, we hope you will let us know if you are unhappy with any action or policy of the National Park Authority. This will help us learn from any mistakes and improve our services for the future, as well as trying to put things right for you.

This leaflet tells you how to make a complaint to the Authority. Our detailed Complaints Policy is available on request.

David Butterworth, Chief Executive

## HOW TO COMPLAIN

**Minor complaints** can often be dealt with on the spot by discussing it with the member of staff concerned, or with a senior manager within their department who will help you resolve the matter. If your complaint cannot be dealt with there and then, or you are dissatisfied with the response given, you should contact the complaints officer:

The Authority has an effective procedure for dealing with **immediate comments**, for example disagreement with car park charges, or facilities in National Park toilets. These may be passed on to the complaints officer either verbally, using the FREEPOST address, or by using the Comments forms available at National Park Centres and our offices. We will direct them to the appropriate department for immediate action.

We also have a separate procedure for dealing with **complaints against Members**, which are referred to the Monitoring Officer in the first instance. Please ask to see our Explanatory Leaflet for guidance.

If you wish to make a **formal complaint against the Authority**, we ask that this is made in writing and sent to the complaints officer.

Mrs Lesley Knevitt  
Complaints Officer  
Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority  
FREEPOST RLZG-JARG-TXAK  
Yoredale, Bainbridge  
North Yorkshire DL8 3EL

Telephone: 01969 652326 (direct line)  
0300 456 0030 (switchboard)

Email: [lesley.knevitt@yorkshiredales.org.uk](mailto:lesley.knevitt@yorkshiredales.org.uk)

## WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

When a written complaint is received it will be acknowledged immediately and the investigation process will start. There are three **possible** stages to the complaints process:-

### **Stage One**

The first stage of a complaint is for the relevant Directorate to handle. The Director investigates and responds within a target framework of ten working days. If a delay is likely, you will be kept informed.

### **Stage Two**

If you are not satisfied you can, within 28 days of receipt of a written response from the Authority, ask for review of the complaint by the Chief Executive. This might need a little more time but we will try to provide a full response within twenty working days, with the same provision for keeping you informed of progress and any unavoidable delays.

### **Stage Three**

If there is still dissatisfaction you can, within 28 days of receipt of a written response from the Authority at the previous stage, ask for the complaint, and the response of the Authority, to be heard by a small panel of Members of the Authority. Such a request will be considered by the Chief Executive in consultation with the chairman of the Audit & Review Committee. In some instances, such an investigation may be inappropriate, in which event you will be encouraged to take your complaint directly to the Local Government Ombudsman.

An investigation by a Member panel will take longer to resolve, because of the need to bring the panel together, but targets for keeping you informed are still set. The panel consists of three Members, drawn at random and on a rotating basis. At the panel hearing, you will have the opportunity to present your case, covering the grounds for the complaint and reasons for challenging the outcome of the previous stages of the procedure. Witnesses may be called as appropriate. Likewise, the Authority will have the opportunity to present its case, including details of the previous stages of the complaints process. Witnesses may be called as appropriate.

## If you are still unhappy...

In concluding the final stage of the Authority's complaints process, you will be made aware of further avenues for pursuing any remaining dissatisfaction. This would normally be the Local Government Ombudsman:

Telephone: 0300 061 0614 Mon-Fri 8.30am to 5pm  
Address: PO Box 4771  
Coventry CV4 0EH  
Email: [advice@lgo.org.uk](mailto:advice@lgo.org.uk)  
Website: [www.lgo.org.uk](http://www.lgo.org.uk)

**If you have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact Lesley Knevitt at any stage of the process. She will be happy to assist or clarify any points you wish to make.**

YORKSHIRE DALES NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY  
**THE COMPLAINTS PROCESS**

**Informal complaint**

*Discuss with member of staff concerned, or with senior departmental officer as appropriate. If unhappy with the way in which this is handled, a formal complaint may be made.*

**Formal complaint**

