

SANDFORD PARISH COUNCIL

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE Adopted 4th September 2025 Review March 2027

1. This is the complaints procedure of Sandford Parish Council, hereinafter referred to as “the council”.
2. The council is committed to providing a quality service for the benefit of the people who live or work in its area or are visitors to the locality. If you are dissatisfied with the standard of service you have received from the council or are unhappy about an action or lack of action by the council, this complaints procedure sets out how you can complain to the council and how we will try to resolve your complaint.
3. This complaints procedure applies to complaints about council services, administration, and procedures and may include complaints about how council employees have dealt with your concerns.
4. This complaints procedure does not apply to:
 - Complaints by one council employee against another council employee, or between a council employee and the council as the employer. These matters are dealt with under the council’s disciplinary and grievance procedures.
 - Complaints against councillors. Complaints against councillors are made under the Code of Conduct and reported to the Monitoring Officer at the Mid Devon District Council.
5. The appropriate time for influencing council decision-making is by raising your concerns before the council debates and votes on a matter. You can do this by writing to the clerk to the council in advance of the meeting at which the item is to be discussed. There may also be the opportunity to raise your concerns in the public participation section of council meetings. If you are unhappy with a council decision, you can raise your concerns with the council, but Standing Orders prevent the council from re-opening issues for six months from the date of the decision, unless there are exceptional grounds and the special process set out in Standing Orders is followed.
6. You can make your complaint about council services, administration, or procedures to the clerk to the council. You must do this in writing and a form is provided below. Please return the form by e-mail if possible. The council’s contact details are set out below. If you are unable to put the complaint in writing, you should contact the clerk to determine if alternative arrangements can be made.
7. You should indicate in your complaint if you wish your complaint to be treated confidentially.

FORMAL COMPLAINTS

8. Wherever possible, the clerk will try to resolve your complaint. If this is not possible, the clerk will normally try to acknowledge your complaint within seven calendar days. The clerk may refer your complaint to the Council.
9. If you do not wish to make your complaint to the clerk, you can make it directly to the chair of the council who will refer your complaint to the Council. The Council comprises, ex officio, of the chair and the vice chair. If more than one of the ex officio positions is held by the same person at the time the complaint is received, the council will appoint a substitute councillor from those remaining and available.
- 10 The clerk or (Council) will investigate each complaint, obtaining further information as necessary from you and/or from staff or members of the council. You may be invited to a meeting to make verbal representations and may bring someone with you when doing so.

- 11 The clerk or the chair of the Council will notify you within 28 calendar days of the outcome of your complaint and what action (if any) the council proposes to take as a result of your (In exceptional cases the timescale may have to be extended. If it is, you will be kept informed)complaint.

REVIEWS

- 12 If your complaint has been investigated by the clerk and you are dissatisfied with the response, you can ask for your complaint to be reviewed by the Council and (usually within eight weeks) you will be notified in writing of the outcome of the review of your original complaint.

OUTCOME

- 13 If your complaint is upheld, the Clerk (or Council) may be empowered to resolve your complaint and to agree any remedial action with you. However, the clerk (or Council) may have to seek authority from the council for the proposed remedial actions. In that case, you will be kept informed of the timetable and process. There is no right of appeal to a complaint finding by the Council.
- 14 If you remain dissatisfied with the response to your complaint you may seek judicial review through the High Court (see <https://www.judiciary.uk> for details). Please note that the jurisdiction of the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGO) does not currently extend to parish and town councils.

Contact details for complaints handling:	
Clerk's name:	Jane Mills
Clerk's telephone number:	07754121280
Clerk's e-mail address:	Parishclerk@ sandfordparishcouncil.gov.uk
Chair's name:	Richard Ward
Chair's e-mail address:	Cllrward @sandfordparishcouncil.gov.uk
Council's correspondence address:	17 Lenwood Country Club Lenwood Rd Northam Bideford EX39 3PN

Date for next review:	<u>March 2027</u>