

KYLE OF SUTHERLAND FISHERIES (KSF)

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

Date approved by Board	March 2016
Date approved by Trust	March 2016
Next review date	June 2022 and biannually thereafter unless otherwise required
Implementation date	June 2014
Responsibility for monitoring and review of policy	Director

This scheme applies equally to the Kyle of Sutherland Fisheries Board and the Kyle of Sutherland Fisheries Trust which, although existing as independent organisations, now operate under the collective umbrella of Kyle of Sutherland Fisheries(KSF) as described in the document, "Organisation Details Summary", reference KSF/POL/G01 & G02. Reference to KSF within this document will be read as if applicable to both the Trust and the Board unless otherwise stated.

General statement on complaints

- All complaints will be treated seriously, 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 and the Trust*.
- Complaints will be dealt with promptly. All complaints will be acknowledged within five working days of receipt 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 reports.

*All complaints received will be dealt with confidentially and in accordance with the requirements of the Data Protection Act 1998.

Complaints Procedure

Any complaint should be addressed to the Director. Complaints can be made by:

- Telephone: 01863 766 702
- Email: info@kylefisheries.org
- By letter: Bank House, Ardgay, Sutherland, IV24 3BG

A two-stage complaints procedure is in place. At each stage it will help us to resolve your complaint quickly if you can give us 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 Director will investigate the nature of the complaint and report his or her findings and recommendations to the Joint Management Group (JMG). This gives the JMG the opportunity to resolve and correct any resulting disadvantage (upholding the complaint); or establish that the action of the Board or Trust as appropriate was correct thereby enabling the JMG to explain this to the complainant (not upholding the complaint). In the case of a complaint about the actions of the Director or a member of the JMG then an independent, nominated member of the JMG will investigate the nature of the complaint and report his or her findings and recommendations to the remainder of the members of JMG.

Stage 2

If the complainant is dissatisfied with the stage 1 response they may request a review by the remaining Board or Trust members as appropriate not previously involved in the Stage 1 determination of the complaint and it would be expected that this would be discussed at the next scheduled meeting of the Board or Trust as appropriate. Given the confidential nature of complaints, the Board or Trust as appropriate 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 to explain the nature of their complaint before the outcome of the Stage 1 determination is presented by a member of the JMG. If the complaint relates to a corporate action of either the Board or the Trust then the Chair may consider identifying an independent party to investigate the complaint and make recommendations to the Board or Trust as appropriate.

Indicative timescales for handling a complaint

Stage 1 - maximum 20 working days

- Acknowledgement within 5 working days
- Full response within 20 working days

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

- Acknowledgement within 5 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.