

Complaints Policy (last updated March 2026)

Our commitment

Future Woodlands Scotland (FWS) is committed to providing high-quality services and activities in support of people, communities and Scotland's woodlands. We value feedback and use complaints as an important way to learn, improve our work and strengthen trust in what we do.

If something goes wrong, or you are dissatisfied with any aspect of our work, please tell us. Making a complaint will not affect the level of service you receive from us, nor will it affect your chances of receiving funding or support from FWS in the future.

This policy explains what we mean by a complaint, how to make one, what you can expect from us and what to do if you remain dissatisfied.

What is a complaint?

We regard a complaint as an expression of dissatisfaction about our action or lack of action or about the standard of service provided by Future Woodlands Scotland.

What can I complain about?

You can make a complaint about any aspect of your engagement with FWS, including:

- your contact with our staff or representatives
- a project, programme or service we have delivered or supported
- advice or information we have provided
- a grant application you have submitted
- a grant or funding award you have received from us.

You can complain if you think that:

- maladministration has taken place (for example, if we have delayed, made mistakes or failed to follow our published procedures)
- we have failed to give you access to information or have provided incorrect or misleading advice or information
- we have not treated you politely, respectfully or fairly
- we have discriminated against you.

Complaints about funding decisions

If your complaint relates to an application for funding, we can only review our decision if:

- we discover (through dealing with the complaint) that we did not follow our published procedures when assessing your application
- you can show that we misunderstood a significant part of your application
- you can show that we did not take account of relevant information that was available to us at the time.



What can't I complain about?

Some matters are handled outside of the complaints process. In particular, allegations of fraud are managed separately to ensure they are investigated appropriately.

If you believe fraudulent activity has taken place in connection with an application for funding or use of funds, please report this to our Finance Coordinator:

- Email: taisiiaruzhytska@futurewoodlands.org.uk

You may also wish to notify the police.

How do I make a complaint?

To make a complaint, please contact us:

- Email: info@futurewoodlands.org.uk

When making a complaint, please tell us:

- your full name and contact details
- as much information as possible about what went wrong (including what happened, when it happened, and who you were dealing with)
- what outcome or resolution you are seeking.

Our complaints procedure

Our complaints procedure has two stages.

Stage one

At stage one we will:

- acknowledge your complaint within five working days
- assign your complaint to an appropriate member of staff
- provide a response within ten working days, where possible.

Our response may include an explanation, an apology, and/or immediate action to resolve the issue. Where appropriate, we will advise you how to escalate your complaint to stage two if you remain dissatisfied.

Stage two

Stage two applies to:

- complaints that have not been resolved at stage one
- complaints that are complex or require detailed investigation.

At stage two we will:

- acknowledge receipt of your stage two complaint within five working days
- where appropriate, discuss the complaint with you to better understand why you remain dissatisfied and what outcome you are seeking
- provide a full written response as soon as possible, and normally within twenty working days.



If our investigation is likely to take longer than twenty working days, we will let you know, explain why, agree revised timescales with you and keep you updated on progress.

What if I am still dissatisfied?

If, after we have fully investigated your complaint, you remain dissatisfied with our decision or with how your complaint was handled, you may be able to ask the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO) to consider your complaint.

The SPSO cannot normally look at:

- complaints that have not completed our complaints procedure
- events that happened, or that you became aware of, more than one year ago
- matters that have been, or are being, considered by a court.

Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO):

- Phone: 0800 377 7330
- Online: www.spsso.org.uk

Getting help to make your complaint

We are committed to making our services accessible to everyone. In line with our equality duties, we will make reasonable adjustments to help you access and use our complaints process.

If you have specific communication needs, or require information in another language or format, please contact us:

- Email: info@futurewoodlands.org.uk

Your personal information

We will handle all personal information in line with our responsibilities under data protection legislation. We will do our best to keep complaints confidential; however, we may need to share limited information internally, or with relevant parties, in order to investigate and respond to the issues you raise.

Under the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act, we may be required to release certain information if requested. Further information is available from the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO):

- Phone: 0303 123 1113 or 01625 545 745
- Email: casework@ico.org.uk

This complaints policy applies to all services, activities, and funding administered by Future Woodlands Scotland.