



# Making a Complaint

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September 2020

We are committed to providing excellent levels of service. We strive to meet the expectations of our customers and visitors and we welcome feedback on where our services and facilities can be improved or where expectations have not been met so that we can improve.

Issues of concern to waterways visitors can usually be resolved promptly by talking them through with one of our staff, either face-to-face or by telephone. However, we recognise that sometimes this may not be appropriate, or you may feel your concerns have not been properly addressed even after talking them through with us.

Here we explain how our complaints procedure works, what you need to do and what you can expect.

## Your Complaint

If we haven't reasonably met your expectations or you wish to make a complaint relating to services or facilities provided by us, you should provide the details of your complaint on our [our webform](#), in an email to [customer.feedback@canalrivertrust.org.uk](mailto:customer.feedback@canalrivertrust.org.uk) or you can call 0303 040 4040 and a member of our customer service team will take the details of your complaint.

Please include all relevant details such as location(s), date(s), people contacted and the other circumstances relating to your complaint. If you have any photographs or documentation to support your complaint, please forward this with the details. All this information helps us to quickly and fully understand the nature of your complaint and begin our investigations.

Once we have received your complaint, we will acknowledge it in writing within five working days. You can normally expect a full written response, from the manager with overall responsibility for the area of your complaint, within 15 working days of this acknowledgement. Our aim is to resolve the complaint to your complete satisfaction at this point.

## Complaint Review

Occasionally, even after receiving our response to your complaint, you may feel that your concerns have not been fully addressed. If this is the case, you can ask for your complaint to be reviewed. At this point it is helpful to explain why you remain dissatisfied following the response or what you believe we could do to resolve the complaint to your satisfaction.

You can ask for a review of your complaint response to take place either by replying to the manager who responded or by using our [our webform](#), emailing [customer.feedback@canalrivertrust.org.uk](mailto:customer.feedback@canalrivertrust.org.uk) or calling 0303 040 4040. If you've already been provided with a complaint reference number it would be helpful, but not essential, to share it at this point.

Your request will be acknowledged within five working days and your correspondence will be passed on, with any other supporting evidence, to a different manager who does not have direct line management responsibility for the area of your complaint. This helps to ensure that your concerns are reviewed from a fresh perspective.

You can normally expect a full written response to your complaint within 15 working days of our acknowledgement. However, it may be necessary for the reviewing manager to request further information from local employees or from parties with an external relationship to the Trust. If we feel it may not be possible to respond to your complaint within 15 working days, we will contact you again and let you know when you can expect to receive our response.

### **Is there anything I can't complain about?**

We always welcome feedback and suggestions for improvement. However, there are certain instances where we won't accept a complaint.

We're unable to investigate a complaint if it's:

- An anonymous complaint
- About one of our policies or public consultations, though your feedback will be noted. For example, our license terms and conditions, licence enforcement policy or our end of garden mooring policy. This does not affect your right to pursue a legal claim outside of the complaints process where you have grounds to do so. If you do wish to pursue a claim, we would suggest that you seek your own legal advice
- To do with legal issues or commercial disputes, though this does not affect your right to pursue a legal claim outside of the complaints process where you have grounds to do so. If you do wish to pursue a claim, we would suggest that you seek your own legal advice
- A complaint that has already completed the Trust's complaints procedure where you are not presenting any new evidence which may affect the original outcome

## The Waterways Ombudsman

We strive to resolve complaints however if after our responses you are still dissatisfied you may refer your complaint to the Waterways Ombudsman for consideration. The Ombudsman is independent and impartial, does not make or influence the Trust's policy and can only investigate specific complaints which have completed the complaints procedure in the last twelve months. There is no charge for using this service. If you would like to know more, please refer to the Ombudsman scheme website at [www.waterways-ombudsman.org](http://www.waterways-ombudsman.org).

### What can be investigated?

Complaints from people who believe that they have suffered injustice because of maladministration or unfair treatment by the Trust. Disagreeing with a decision taken by the Trust is not in itself evidence of maladministration, though failure to consider a decision properly can be. Maladministration includes:

- Doing something the wrong way
- Doing something that should not have been done
- Failing to do something that should have been done

The Ombudsman can consider most complaints which:

- Are referred within 12 months of the completion of the complaint procedure; and
- Concern things that came to the attention of the complainant no more than a year before the complaint was made to the Trust

You should send the Ombudsman full details of your complaint and, if possible, copies of all correspondence between you and the Trust. If you need help or advice to make your complaint, please contact the Ombudsman. You can ask someone such as a friend or solicitor to make a complaint on your behalf. However, you would have to pay any costs involved.

The Waterways Ombudsman  
PO Box 1340  
Warrington  
WA4 9TT

Call: 01925 263970  
email: [enquiries@waterways-ombudsman.org](mailto:enquiries@waterways-ombudsman.org)

Note - as the Ombudsman only works part time, sometimes she cannot respond to calls immediately but will get back to you as soon as she is able.