



Dún Laoghaire Rathdown Public Participation Network **Complaints Procedure**

Dún Laoghaire Rathdown Public Participation Network (DLR PPN) is committed to dealing effectively with any complaints you may have about our service.

If we got something wrong, we will apologise and where possible we will try to put things right. We also aim to learn from our mistakes and use the information we gain to improve our services.

When to use this Complaints Procedure

When you complain to us, we will usually respond in the way we explain below. Sometimes, you might be concerned about matters that are not decided by us (e.g. issues relating to your grant application or appeals to the Local Authority) and we will then advise you as best we can about how to make your concerns known. Dún Laoghaire Rathdown operates on a face value basis and does not represent a forum of mediating in situations of dispute between groups.

Informal Resolution

If possible, we believe it is best to deal with things as soon as possible and in the easiest and most direct way. If you have a complaint, raise it with the person you are dealing with. He or she will try to resolve it for you there and then. However, they may need time to look into it, which can take up fourteen (14) working days.

If there are any lessons to learn from addressing your complaint, we will bring them to the Secretariat and the Plenary. If the person you dealt with can't help, they will explain why and you can then ask for your complaint to be formally investigated.

How to Complain Formally

You can complain in any of the ways below:

- You can ask for a copy of our complaint form from the person with whom you are already in contact.
- You can use the online form (only use if applicable). If using this form supporting documents can be set via email or post, details in the form.
- You can email us at enquiries@dlrppn.ie
- You can write a letter to us at the following address: Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown Public Participation Network, Avoca House (Ground Floor), 8 Marine Road, Dún Laoghaire, Co. Dublin A96 X8Y6



What Should You Include in Your Complaint?

- Remember to state your name, address and telephone number (and email, if applicable) and whether you are acting on behalf of someone else.
- Briefly describe what your complaint is about, stating relevant dates and times, if applicable.
- List your specific concerns starting with the most important concern.
- Be clear about what you are hoping to achieve (for example an apology, explanation, etc.)
- State your preferred method of communication.
- It will assist the PPN Team if extra information and/or copies of relevant documents are attached to your complaint.

Dealing with Your Complaint

We will formally acknowledge your complaint within a maximum fourteen (14) working days and let you know how we intend to deal with it.

We will ask you to tell us how you would like us to communicate with you and establish whether you have any particular requirements for example, if you have language difficulties.

We will deal with your complaint in an open and honest way.

We will make sure that your interactions with us in the future do not suffer just because you have made a complaint.

If you are making a complaint on behalf of somebody else, we will need their agreement to you acting on their behalf.

Investigation

We will tell you who we have asked to investigate your complaint. If your complaint is straightforward, we will usually ask a member of staff to look into it and get back to you. In some cases, if the complaint is serious, we may ask someone from outside the PPN to investigate.

We will set out to you our understanding of your complaint and ask you to confirm that we have got it right.

We will also ask you to tell us what outcome you are hoping for.



The person looking at your complaint will usually need to see the files we hold relevant to your complaint. If you don't want this to happen, it is important that you tell us.

If there is a simple solution to your problem, we may ask you if you are happy to accept this.

We will aim to resolve concerns as quickly as possible and expect to deal with the vast majority within 30 working days.

If your complaint is more complex we will:

- let you know within this time why we think it may take longer to investigate
- tell you how long we expect it to take
- give you regular updates on any progress made

The person who is investigating your concerns will aim first to establish the facts. The extent of this investigation will depend on how complex and how serious the issues you have raised are. In complex cases, we will draw up an investigation plan.

In some instances, we may ask to meet you to discuss your complaint. Occasionally, we might suggest mediation or another method to try to resolve disputes.

When investigating your complaint, we will look at relevant evidence. This could include files, notes of conversations, letters, emails or whatever may be relevant to your complaint. If necessary, we will talk to the staff or others involved and look at our policies and any guidance.

Outcome

If we formally investigate your complaint, we will let you know what we have found in keeping with your preferred form of communication. This could be by letter or email, for example. If necessary, we will produce a longer report. We will explain how and why we came to our conclusions.

If we find that we got it wrong, we will tell you what and why it happened. If we find there is a fault in our systems or the way we do things, we will tell you what it is and how we plan to change things to stop it happening again.

If we got it wrong, we will always apologise.



Learning Lessons

We take your complaints seriously and try to learn from any mistakes we have made. Our Secretariat considers a summary of all complaints on a regular basis as well as details of any serious complaints.

Where there is a need for change, we will develop an action plan setting out what we will do, who will do it and when we plan to do it by. We will let you know when changes we have promised have been made.

What to do if you Need Help

Our staff will aim to help you make your complaint known to us. If you need extra assistance, we will try to put you in touch with someone who can help. You may wish to contact someone who may be able to assist you.

What We Expect from You

In times of trouble or distress, some people may act out of character. There may have been upsetting or distressing circumstances leading up to a complaint. We do not view behaviour as unacceptable just because someone is forceful or determined.

We believe that all complainants have the right to be heard, understood and respected. However, we also consider that our staff and volunteers have the same rights. We, therefore, expect you to be polite and courteous in your dealings with us. We will not tolerate aggressive or abusive behaviour, unreasonable demands or unreasonable persistence. To ensure the well-being of the PPN staff, The Secretariat will instruct PPN staff not to engage with aggressive or abusive behaviour, unreasonable demands or unreasonable persistence.

Confidentiality

Your complaint will be dealt with in the strictest confidence and at all times in accordance with data protection legislation.



DLR PPN Complaints Form

A: YOUR DETAILS

Name:

Address:

Email Address:

Daytime Telephone (if applicable)

Evening Number (if applicable)

Please let us know how you prefer to be contacted:

Your requirements

If our usual way of dealing with complaints is difficult for you, please tell us so that we can discuss how we might help you.

The person who experienced the problem should normally fill in this form. *If you are filling this in on behalf of someone else, please fill in section B.* Please note that before taking forward the complaint we will need to satisfy ourselves that you have the authority to act on behalf of the person concerned.



B: MAKING A COMPLAINT ON BEHALF OF SOMEONE ELSE

Their Name:

Their Address:

What is your relationship to them?

Why are you making the complaint on their behalf?

C: YOUR COMPLAINT (Please use the Notes pages if needed)

What do you think we did wrong, or failed to do?

Describe how you, or the person you are representing, suffered or has been affected

What do you think should be done to put things right?



Have you already put your concern to the person responsible for delivering the service? If so, please give brief details of how and when you did so.

If you have any documents to support your concern/complaint, please attach them with this form.

Signature:

Date:

When you have completed this form, please send it to:

Simone Sav, DLR PPN Manager

Avoca House (Ground Floor)

8 Marine Road

Dún Laoghaire

Dublin A96 X8Y6

NOTES:
