

**New Forest National Park Authority
Standards Committee**

COMPLAINT FORM

To be used if you wish to make an allegation that a member of the Authority has failed to comply with the **Local Protocol for Members and Officers Dealing with Planning Matters** or **Protocol for Member and Officer Relations** (together referred to as the “Local Protocol”). For any other type of complaint about the Authority’s services, including a complaint that a member has failed to comply with the Members’ Code of Conduct, please refer to the relevant provisions on the Authority’s website.

Your details

1. Please provide us with your name and contact details

Title:	
First name:	
Last name:	
Address:	
Daytime telephone:	
Evening telephone:	
Mobile telephone:	
Email address	

Your address and contact details will not usually be released unless necessary or to deal with your complaint.

However, we will tell the following people that you have made this complaint:

- The member(s) you are complaining about
- The monitoring officer of the authority

We will tell them your name and give them a summary of your complaint. We will give them full details of your complaint where necessary or appropriate to be able to deal with it. If you have serious concerns about your name and a summary, or details of your complaint being released, please complete section 6 of this form.

2. Please tell us which complainant type best describes you:

- Member of the public
- An elected or co-opted member of an authority
- An independent member of the standards committee
- Member of Parliament
- Local authority monitoring officer
- Other council officer or authority employee
- Other ()

3. Making your complaint

On receipt of an allegation, a meeting of the Standards Assessment Sub-Committee will be arranged. This will comprise at least three members, including at least one member of the authority and an independent member as Chair, to undertake the initial assessment of your complaint. The Sub-Committee will assess on the basis of your written submission and any additional relevant material that the Monitoring Officer may produce as to whether your allegation is likely to reflect a failure to comply with the Members' Code of Conduct. None of the members will have had any previous involvement in the matters the subject of your complaint. The sub-committee has a range of options available to it. It may decide to:

- (a) refer the complaint to the Authority's Monitoring Officer for investigation or for other steps e.g. mediation, or
- (b) decide that no action should be taken, if it is considered that the matters complained of could not constitute a breach of the Code, or that any such breach is of a trivial nature.

The Sub-Committee will meet to consider and determine the matter within 20 working days. Where the decision is that no action should be taken, notice must be given to you in writing, with reasons.

Where it is decided that no action should be taken, you may request, within 30 days, that that decision be reviewed. Such review will be carried out by the Standards Review Sub-Committee within three months. The Standards Review Sub-Committee will comprise at least three members of the Committee, including at least one member of the authority and an independent member as Chair. Membership will not include any members who were members of the Standards Assessment Sub-Committee that considered your complaint. The Standards Review Sub-Committee will have the same range of options available to it as the Standards Assessment Sub-Committee.

If either the Standards Assessment or Standards Review Sub-Committee decides that an investigation is required into your complaint, the Monitoring Officer or someone appointed by him will be instructed to undertake it. You will be given further information at that time should an investigation be necessary.

4. Please provide us with the name of the member(s) of the Authority that you believe have breached the Local Protocol.

Title	First name	Last name

5. Please explain in this section (or on separate sheets) what the member has done that you believe breaches the Local Protocol. If you are complaining about more than one member you should clearly explain what each individual person has done that you believe breaches the Local Protocol.
6. A copy of the Authority's Local Protocol for Members and Officers Dealing with Planning Matters and Protocol for Member and Officer Relations can be found on the Authority's website. Paper copies can be obtained by writing to: Member Services, New Forest National Park Authority, South Efford House, Milford Road, Lymington SO41 0JD.

It is important that you provide all the information you wish to have taken into account by the Standards Assessment Sub-Committee, for example:

- You should be specific, wherever possible, about exactly what you are alleging the member said or did. For instance, instead of writing that the member insulted you, you should state what it was they said.
- You should provide the dates of the alleged incidents wherever possible. If you cannot provide exact dates it is important to give a general timeframe.
- You should confirm whether there are any witnesses to the alleged conduct and provide their names and contact details if possible.
- You should provide any relevant background information.

Please provide us with the details of your complaint, and the outcome from this complaints process that you would like to see happen. Continue on a separate sheet if there is not enough space on this form.

Only complete this next section if you are requesting that your identity is kept confidential

7. In the interests of fairness and natural justice, we believe members who are complained about have a right to know who has made the complaint. We also believe they have a right to be provided with a summary of the complaint. We are unlikely to withhold your identity or details of your complaint unless you have good reason to justify the Authority doing so e.g. disclosure of identity is likely to give rise to a risk of harm, intimidation of witnesses or destruction of evidence.

Please note that requests for confidentiality or requests for suppression of complaint details will not automatically be granted. The Standards Assessment Sub-Committee will consider the request alongside the substance of your complaint. We will then contact you with the decision. If your request for confidentiality is not granted, we will usually allow you the option of withdrawing your complaint.

However, it is important to understand that in certain exceptional circumstances where the matter complained about is very serious, we can proceed with an investigation or other action and disclose your name even if you have expressly asked us not to.

Please provide us with details of why you believe we should withhold your name and/or the details of your complaint:

Additional Help

8. Complaints must be submitted in writing. This includes electronic submissions. However, in line with the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act, we can make reasonable adjustments to assist you if you have a disability that prevents you from making your complaint in writing.

We can also help if English is not your first language.

If you need any support in completing this form, please let us know as soon as possible.

This complaint should be submitted to the Independent Chairman, Standards Committee, c/o Member Services, New Forest National Park Authority, South Efford House, Milford Road, Lymington SO41 0JD or by email to memberservices@newforestnpa.gov.uk