

## **DEPARTMENT OF CULTURE ARTS AND LEISURE**

### **SERVICE STANDARDS**

**&**

### **COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE**

If you would like a copy of this document in another language or format, please contact:

Minister and Permanent Secretary's Office (MPSO)  
Level 9  
Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure  
Causeway Exchange  
1–7 Bedford Street  
Belfast  
BT2 7EG

Email: [dcal@dcalni.gov.uk](mailto:dcal@dcalni.gov.uk)  
Telephone: (028) 90515158

Updated October 2015

## **INTRODUCTION**

The purpose of this booklet is to give you general information about the Department of Culture Arts and Leisure, the standard of service you can expect when you deal with us and our complaints procedure for you to use if things do go wrong.

## **ABOUT US**

The Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure (DCAL) is responsible in NI for the central government role in

- the arts and creativity;
- museums;
- libraries;
- sport;
- inland waterways and inland fisheries;
- linguistic diversity;
- public records; and
- advising on matters relating to National Lottery distribution in NI.

DCAL comprises

- Culture Division;
- Sport, Museums and Recreation Division;
- Corporate Services Division;
- Strategic Delivery Division; and
- Public Record Office for NI (PRONI).

DCAL supports a wide range of Arms Length Bodies (ALBs) including

- Armagh Observatory and Planetarium;
- Arts Council NI;
- Libraries NI;
- National Museums NI;
- NI Museums Council; and
- Sports NI.

DCAL, along with its Irish counterparts, co-sponsors the two North/South Implementation Bodies

- Waterways Ireland; and
- the Language Body, comprising the Ulster Scots Agency and Foras na Gaeilge.

## CONTACT

You can get more information about us on our website at [www.dcalni.gov.uk](http://www.dcalni.gov.uk) or contact us as follows:

Department of Culture Arts and Leisure  
Causeway Exchange  
1–7 Bedford Street  
Belfast  
BT2 7EG

Public Records Office NI  
2 Titanic Boulevard  
Belfast  
BT3 9HQ

Tel: 028 902 58825  
Irish voicemail: 028 905 15252  
Ulster-Scots voicemail: 028 905 15251

Tel: 028 905 34800

### Useful e-mail addresses

Communications	<a href="mailto:communications@dcalni.gov.uk">communications@dcalni.gov.uk</a>
Languages	<a href="mailto:languages.branch@dcalni.gov.uk">languages.branch@dcalni.gov.uk</a>
Sport	<a href="mailto:sport@dcalni.gov.uk">sport@dcalni.gov.uk</a>
Inland Fisheries	<a href="mailto:DCALAngling@dcalni.gov.uk">DCALAngling@dcalni.gov.uk</a>
Inland Waterways	<a href="mailto:InlandWaterways@dcalni.gov.uk">InlandWaterways@dcalni.gov.uk</a>
Arts/Creative Ind.	<a href="mailto:arci@dcalni.gov.uk">arci@dcalni.gov.uk</a>
Museums/Libraries	<a href="mailto:Museumslibraries@dcalni.gov.uk">Museumslibraries@dcalni.gov.uk</a>
PRONI	<a href="mailto:proni@dcalni.gov.uk">proni@dcalni.gov.uk</a>
Minister's Office	<a href="mailto:private.office@dcalni.gov.uk">private.office@dcalni.gov.uk</a>
Human Resources	<a href="mailto:DCAL.HR@dcalni.gov.uk">DCAL.HR@dcalni.gov.uk</a>
FOI	<a href="mailto:foi@dcalni.gov.uk">foi@dcalni.gov.uk</a>
Equality	<a href="mailto:Equality@dcalni.gov.uk">Equality@dcalni.gov.uk</a>

## **OUR SERVICE STANDARDS**

The Department of Culture Arts and Leisure aims to provide our customers with a high standard of service at all times.

Members of the public may, on occasions, need to call at our Headquarters office at Causeway Exchange in Belfast for the issue of fishing permits or licenses. We also have offices located in a number of towns which can attract a number of visits by members of the public. Our local offices are located in Portadown, Castlewellan, Bushmills, Riversdale and Movinagher.

Licences and permits can be purchased from Causeway Exchange, Portadown and Bushmills office. Bushmills also sell day tickets for the River Bush. The opening hours for Portadown and Bushmills are as follows:

Causeway Exchange: Monday to Friday – 9.00am to 5.00pm  
Portadown: Monday to Friday – 10.00am to 4.00pm (closed 1-2pm)  
Bushmills: Monday to Thursday – 10.00am to 4.00pm (closed 1-2pm) and Friday – 10.00am to 1.00pm

All other offices can be visited by appointment only.

### **When you visit our offices**

- DCAL offices will be clean, comfortable and welcoming to visitors;
- Where necessary staff will wear identification badges;
- Callers to DCAL offices will be seen by an appropriate member of staff within 10 minutes of their arrival; and
- Reception will be advised of expected callers in advance.

### **When you phone DCAL**

- All external and internal calls will be answered without delay;
- Telephones will have a voicemail facility if the caller is not available;
- The person answering your call will give his or her name; and

- If the person taking your call is unable to help, he or she will arrange to direct your call to an appropriate person.

### **When you write to or email DCAL**

- We will aim to provide a response to general correspondence within 10 working days. If this is not possible we will send an interim reply within two working days with an indication when a full response can be expected and the reason for the delay;
- We will keep you informed in the event of further delay; and
- All written correspondence will include the name and contact details of the sender.

In accordance with our language policy, we will respect the wishes of anyone who chooses to be known by the Irish or Ulster-Scots version of their name, or who corresponds with the Department in either of these languages.

Requests for information under the Freedom of Information Act or Environmental Information Regulations will be cleared within 20 working days. Requests for information under the Data Protection Act will be cleared within 40 calendar days as prescribed by the respective legislation.

Further details can be found at [www.dcalni.gov.uk](http://www.dcalni.gov.uk) under FOI or by contacting the Departmental Information Manager on 028 9051 5127 or emailing [foi@dcalni.gov.uk](mailto:foi@dcalni.gov.uk).

The Department is committed to providing you with the highest standards of service. Our aim is to get things right first time. However, if you are not entirely satisfied with any aspect of our service, please tell us and we will do our best to resolve the matter as quickly as possible.

## **COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE**

If you have a complaint about the quality of service you receive from our staff we will make every effort to put things right. The procedure below explains how you can make a complaint regarding your experience of the quality of our service, what you can expect when you do so and what you can do if you are still dissatisfied.

### **Informal Procedure**

Our aim is to resolve your complaint quickly and to your satisfaction. In the first instance you should bring your complaint to the attention of the person you have been dealing with who will try to resolve the issue to your satisfaction informally. Your complaint will be acknowledged within 2 working days of receipt and a full response issued within 15 working days. If a full response cannot be provided after this time an interim reply will issue indicating when a full response can be expected.

If you still feel dissatisfied after your complaint has been dealt with informally, you may initiate the Department's formal Complaints Procedure. You can invoke the formal Complaints Procedure without having had the complaint dealt with on an informal basis.

### **Formal Procedure**

#### **Stage 1**

If you wish to invoke the Formal Complaints Procedure, you should write to the Head of the Minister and Permanent Secretary's Office setting out full details of your complaint. Your complaint should be sent to:

Head of Minister and Permanent Secretary's Office (MPSO),  
Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure  
Level 9, Causeway Exchange  
1-7 Bedford Street  
Belfast  
BT2 7EG

Alternatively, you may email your complaint to our generic mailbox at [cm@dcalni.gov.uk](mailto:cm@dcalni.gov.uk).

Your complaint will be acknowledged within 2 working days of receipt. If your correspondence is received by email the response will also issue by email.

The Head of MPSO will allocate your complaint to the Head of Branch responsible for the service you are complaining about. The Head of Branch will arrange to have an investigation carried out into your complaint. The Head of Branch will issue a full response to you within 15 working days of receipt of your complaint.

If a full response cannot be issued after this time an interim reply will be issued indicating when a full response can be expected. You will be kept informed of the progress of the investigation.

## **Stage Two**

If you remain dissatisfied with the outcome of the investigation you may write to the Permanent Secretary of the Department at Level 9, Causeway Exchange, 1–7 Bedford Street, Belfast BT2 7EG.

You should give full details of your complaint and explain why you are dissatisfied with the response you have been given.

The Permanent Secretary will arrange for your case to be reviewed by a Senior Official, normally the Head of Division responsible for the service you are complaining about, who was not previously involved in your complaint.

Your complaint will be acknowledged within 2 working days. The Permanent Secretary will issue a full response to you within 15 working days of receipt of your complaint.

If a full response cannot be issued after this time an interim reply will be issued indicating when a full response can be expected. You will be kept informed of the progress of the investigation.

## NI OMBUDSMAN

If, having received a response from the Permanent Secretary of the Department, you remain dissatisfied with the outcome of the investigation into your complaint you may make a complaint to the NI Ombudsman.

You can, of course, make a complaint to the Ombudsman at any time and our Complaints Procedure is not a substitute for your right to complain. You should note, however, that the Ombudsman will generally expect you to have exhausted all the steps of the Department's internal Complaints Procedure before accepting your complaint. Any complaint to the Ombudsman against a Government Department must be referred to the Ombudsman by a Member of the NI Assembly (MLA) or Member of Parliament (MP).

You can contact the Ombudsman in any of the following ways:

In person: Progressive House  
33 Wellington Place  
Belfast  
BT1 6HN

The office is open 9 00 – 4 30 Monday – Friday

In writing: The Ombudsman  
Freepost  
Belfast  
BT1 6BR

By phone: 028 9023 3821  
Freephone 0800 343 424

By email: [ombudsman@ni-ombudsman.org.uk](mailto:ombudsman@ni-ombudsman.org.uk)

Website: <http://www.ni-ombudsman.org.uk/>