

## Santon Parish Commissioners' Complaints Policy and Procedure relating to Service Complaints Policy

Santon Parish Commissioners aim to provide efficient and effective public services. We accept that any organisation providing a service will, on occasion, receive complaints about service given. This complaints procedure is intended to ensure that all complaints are handled promptly, fairly, consistently and wherever possible, resolved to the complainant's satisfaction. Complaints are an important way for the management of this organisation to be accountable to the public and provide valuable prompts to review our performance and the conduct of people that work within and for it. A complaint arises when we fail to meet one of our standards, or if someone is dissatisfied with something we have done or failed to do. Subject to staff holidays, we will endeavour to acknowledge, within three days of receipt, all complaints that require investigation.

**Important:** *Please note that as the Clerk is the only direct employee, and could be absent at the time of the complaint, there is the potential for a delay in responding to or in dealing with the complaint. Should the Clerk not be available there is the option of contacting the Chairman whose number is on the website:*

[www.santon.org.uk](http://www.santon.org.uk)

### How to complain

You can make a complaint: in person at the Commissioners' Office or by telephone or in writing (including electronic messages). Anonymous complaints will be considered carefully and action taken if appropriate. It is vital to this process that your expectations and/or your desired outcome are stated clearly. The first stage is to make your complaint directly to the staff member that you have been dealing with. In most cases this will resolve the issue quickly and without escalating your complaint any further. If you wish to speak to someone else or you are still dissatisfied you should contact the Clerk to the Commissioners. Should the matter relate to the Clerk, the complaint can be made in writing addressed to the Chairman at the address below but marked "For the consideration only of the Chairman, Private and Confidential". Should you wish to contact the Chairman by phone, the contact details are shown on the website, or contact the office at the phone number given below. The Clerk/Chairman will take a note of your complaint, investigate it and report back to you in writing within as soon as possible but subject to holidays as the Clerk is the only employee and the Chairman also could be on holiday. If a detailed reply is not possible within that period you will be contacted as soon as possible thereafter with an explanation and advised when a full response will be given. In the case of a more complex complaint, which necessitates discussion by the Board of Commissioners or outside parties, we undertake to keep the customer informed at least on a monthly basis. Your complaint, in whatever format, can be sent to:

Mr. H. Benson,  
Clerk to Santon Commissioners,  
Thrang End,  
Fildraw Road,  
Ballasalla.  
IM9 3EG  
Tel. 822761.

E-mail: [comms@santon.org.uk](mailto:comms@santon.org.uk)

**The format of your Complaint:** Your complaint should contain the following information:

- Your name
- Your address
- Your email
- The exact nature of your complaint.
- The identity of the staff member(s) involved (if any)
- Whether there were any witnesses and details as to how they can be contacted.
- Proof of any damage or injury caused.
- Your desired expectations and/or your desired outcome of submitting this complaint.

### **Making a Complaint in Person**

If a customer visits the Commissioners' Office and registers an enquiry or complaint in person, the staff member or members directly involved will be requested to initially deal with the complaint. In most cases this will resolve the issue quickly and without escalating your complaint any further. However, should further specialist knowledge be required, the Authority will try to provide an appropriate member of staff who is qualified to answer the enquiry or complaint at the time of the first visit. This would usually be the Clerk. (In the case of Santon, this must be the Clerk as he is the only employee). Depending on the nature of the issue, the Clerk may set out his understanding of your complaint in writing, and ask you to sign it so there is a written record of the matter.

### **Making a Complaint by telephone**

If a customer would like to make a complaint by telephone, they should initially ask for the member of staff providing the service, if they are not available, and the customer wishes to deal with them directly, we will ask the customer to leave their details and arrange for the staff member to return their call. However, if the customer wishes to speak to a senior officer, they should ask for the Clerk who will then investigate. Depending on the nature of the issue, the Clerk may set out his understanding of your complaint in writing, and ask you to sign and return it so there is a written record of the matter.

### **Making a Complaint in writing**

If the customer would like to make an enquiry or complaint in writing by letter or email, subject to holiday delays, we will endeavour to give a written acknowledgement within 3 working days. The enquiry or complaint will then be dealt with using the same urgency as the other forms of registration.

### **Unreasonable or vexatious complaints**

Your complaint may not be dealt with if it is felt that is unreasonable or persistent, that is, time consuming to manage and interferes with proper consideration of the complaint or vexatious.

Some examples are:

- Refusing to specify the grounds of a complaint, despite offers of help.
- Refusing to cooperate with the complaints investigation process.
- Refusing to accept that certain issues are not within the scope of a complaints procedure.
- Insisting on the complaint being dealt with in ways which are incompatible with the adopted complaints procedure or with good practice.
- Making unjustified complaints about staff who are trying to deal with the issues, and seeking to have them replaced.
- Changing the basis of the complaint as the investigation proceeds.
- Denying or changing statements made at an earlier stage.
- Introducing trivial or irrelevant new information at a later stage.
- Raising many detailed but unimportant questions, and insisting they are all answered.
- Submitting falsified documents from themselves or others.
- Adopting a 'scatter gun' approach: pursuing parallel complaints on the same issue with various organisations.
- Making excessive demands on the time and resources of staff with lengthy phone calls, emails to numerous Commissioners staff, or detailed letters every few days, and expecting immediate responses.
- Submitting repeat complaints with minor additions/variations the complainant insists make these 'new' complaints.
- Refusing to accept the decision; repeatedly arguing points with no new evidence.

You will be advised in writing that your complaint has been deemed in this way.

### **General Data Protection Regulations 2018**

By submitting a complaint you consent to Santon Commissioners, in confidence, sharing details of your complaint with other parties where necessary in order to investigate and resolve the issue.

Ends