

Banham Parish Council – Complaints Policy

Introduction

Banham Parish Council is committed to providing a good standard of service. If something goes wrong, we want to hear about it so we can put things right and improve what we do.

This policy explains how you can make a complaint and how we will deal with it.

What is a complaint?

A complaint is when you tell us you are unhappy about:

- The service you have received from the Clerk/Staff/Volunteers
- The way a decision has been made
- The behaviour of the Clerk or Staff/Volunteers
- Other

This policy does not cover complaints about individual councillors' conduct, which are dealt with under a separate Code of Conduct process.

Informal Complaints

We hope that most concerns can be sorted out quickly and informally.

- Complaints should be made to the Parish Clerk
- If your complaint is about the Clerk, please contact the Chairman of the Parish Council instead
- You may speak to a Councillor about the complaint, **but individual councillors cannot resolve complaints themselves.**

Formal Complaints

If your complaint is not resolved, or you wish to make a formal complaint:

If you have raised your complaint verbally, you will be asked to put it in writing using the methods below:

You can make a complaint in writing by:

- Email
- Letter
- Completing the complaint form below

Please send your complaint to:

Clerk to Banham Parish Councillor
9 Grammar School Yard, Church Lane, Banham, NR16 2HR
clerk@banhamparishcouncil.gov.uk

What to include:

To help us deal with your complaint quickly, please include:

- Your name and contact details

- Details of your complaints
- Any relevant dates or information
- What outcome you would like

How we will handle your complaint

Your complaint will be treated in confidence and full details of the complaint will only be given to those councillors/members of staff concerned.

Step 1 – Acknowledgment

We will acknowledge your complaint within 7 working days

Step 2 – Investigation

The Clerk (or another appropriate officer) will look into your complaints

Step 3 – Response

We will aim to respond within 20 working days with:

- An explanation of what we found
- Any action we will take

If you are happy with the outcome, the complaint will be closed, and the Clerk will then report this to the Parish Council at the next meeting.

If your complaint is not resolved

If you are not satisfied with the response to your complaint, it will be referred to a Complaints Panel for further review:

The Complaints Panel

- The Parish Council will set up a Complaints Panel when needed.
- The panel will be made up of councillors, with at least three members, including the Chairman
- The panel has the authority to fully review the complaint and make a final decision on behalf of the Council

You will be informed in writing about the panel, and the date of the meeting. The panel will normally meet within 20 working days of the Clerk being notified.

If this is not possible you will be told:

- The reason for the delay
- The new meeting date

Before the Meeting

- You will be invited to attend the meetings
- You may bring a representative or supporter with you if you wish

To help the process run smoothly:

- You must send the Parish Council any documents or evidence you wish to rely upon **at least 7 clear working days before the meeting.**

- The Council will also share any documents they intend to use, giving you enough time to read them before the meeting.

At the Meeting:

- You (or your representative) will explain your complaints
- Councillors and officers may ask you questions
- The Clerk will explain the Parish Council's position
- You and Councillors may ask questions
- Both sides are given a chance to summarise their views

If a decision cannot be made on the day, you will be told:

- When a decision is expected
- When you will be informed

After the Meeting

- You will receive the panel's decision in writing with 10 working days

The letter will explain:

- The outcome of your complaint
- Any actions the Parish Council will take

The decision will also be formally noted at the next Parish Council meeting.

This process ensures that all complaints are handled fairly, openly, and thoroughly.

Record Keeping

We will keep a record of complaints to help improve our services. Your information will be handled in line with our data protection policy.

Formal Complaint Form – Banham Parish Council

Complaints will be treated in the strictest confidence. Please refer to the accompanying procedure before completing this form.

Your Details

Name (in block capitals):

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Address:

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Email Address:

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Telephone (Day) Telephone (Evening)

Details of Complaint:

Please describe your complaint clearly (include dates, times & any relevant details):

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What would you like us to do to resolve this issue?

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Have you raised this issue with the Council before? Yes No

If yes, please provide details:

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Signature.....**Date**.....