

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

This is the official complaints procedure of Holcot Parish Council (hereinafter referred to as “the council”). The council is committed to providing a high-quality service for residents, businesses, and visitors. This procedure explains how to raise a complaint about the council’s administration, procedures, or the way council employees have dealt with your concerns, and how the council will handle it.

Scope

This procedure applies to complaints regarding council administration and procedures. It does not cover:

- Complaints between council employees or between employees and the council as employer (covered by disciplinary/grievance procedures).
- Complaints against councillors (handled under the [Code of Conduct](#)).

Timing of Complaints

- Concerns about council decisions are best raised before a decision is made, by writing to the Clerk or speaking during the public participation section of council meetings.
- Complaints about a council decision already made cannot normally result in reopening the matter within six months, unless exceptional circumstances arise and Standing Orders procedures are followed.

How to Make a Complaint

- Complaints should be made in writing using the council’s complaints form (available from the Clerk).
- You may submit your complaint by email or post.
- Indicate if you wish the complaint to be treated confidentially.

Council contact details:

Contact details for complaints handling:	
Clerk's name:	Ruby Cole
Clerk's telephone number:	07881 458801
Clerk's e-mail address:	clerk@holcot-pc.gov.uk
Chair's name:	Chris Bailey
Chair's e-mail address:	cllr.chris.bailey@holcot-pc.gov.uk
Council's correspondence address:	32 Old Road, Walgrave, Northampton NN6 9QW

Approved by Holcot Parish Council: <i>Signed Copy Held By Clerk</i>		
Signature of Chair		Date: 16th February 2026
Signature of Clerk		Date: 16th February 2026

Complaints Form

(A Word™ version of this form is available at from the Parish Clerk. clerk@holcot-pc.gov.uk)

Your name:	
Your telephone number(s):	
Your email address:	
Your postal address:	
Do you wish your complaint to be treated confidentially?	
What your complaint is about (please provide as much detail as you can, and attach any supporting evidence or information):	
What harm, disadvantage, or loss have you suffered?	
What remedial action would you like the council to take?	
Any other comments:	

Unreasonable Complainant Behaviour

Introduction

We are committed to dealing with you fairly and impartially, and to making our service as accessible as possible. We recognise you may be frustrated and upset by what has happened in the past. We are independent and if we decide to investigate your complaint, we will take a fresh, impartial look at what happened. We aim to treat you with fairness and respect. We ask for and expect the same behaviour from you towards us. We wish to enjoy professional, courteous, respectful contact with all complainants, whatever the outcome of our work.

Unreasonable complainant conduct

We will not tolerate racist, sexist, homophobic or other discriminatory language, or offensive, threatening, aggressive or violent behaviour towards us. If you use such language or behaviour, we will ask you to stop doing so and may take other, proportionate action to protect the wellbeing of our staff and make sure we can keep working effectively. If your use of language is because of a medical condition, we will discuss with you any reasonable adjustments we need to make to how we work with you. However, some language and behaviours are always unacceptable, and we will always draw your attention to this and take appropriate action.

Please remember the person dealing with the complaint is using their time to best effect. This is much harder to do well if you make frequent, lengthy contacts and/or keep sending them the same information. This gets in the way of dealing with your complaint. Please note this also applies to contacting us after our decision on your complaint. We will not continue communicating with you on a closed complaint outside our review or service complaint procedures. Continued contact or attempts to make the same complaint again prevent us from carrying out our work effectively. When necessary, we will restrict access to our service if you keep behaving unreasonably.

Warnings

In most instances if we consider your behaviour is unreasonable, we will explain why and ask you to change it. We will also warn you that, if the behaviour continues, we may take action to restrict your contact with us. Where your behaviour is so extreme that it threatens the immediate safety and welfare of our staff, we may report the matter to the police or consider taking legal action. In such cases, we may not give you prior warning.

Restricting access to the council

A manager will decide whether the circumstances require any restriction of access. They will record the reason for their decision and explain it to you. They will state how long any restriction will apply for before we reconsider. The sort of restrictions imposed could include:

- Restricting telephone calls to specified days and limited times
- Limiting contacts to one form only (for example, a maximum of one letter or email from you a week)
- Requiring you to only contact us using one named person
- Requiring you to formally agree with us how you will behave in future before we continue working on your complaint and/or
- Using an independent advocate to work with you on our investigation into your complaint

After six months we will review whether any restrictions we imposed are still necessary and should remain.

Ending access

It is our decision whether or not to investigate your complaint. If you continue to behave unreasonably or ignore restrictions we have placed on access, we may decide to cease investigation or communications regarding the complaint. In exceptional circumstances we may do so without warning. For example, if you use racist, sexist, homophobic or otherwise discriminatory language we may decide to take action without prior warning. We will write to explain the action we have taken.

New complaints

If we have restricted our contact with you and you make a new complaint, we will decide whether or not to continue with any restrictions we put in place for the earlier complaint.

Approved by Holcot Parish Council: <i>Signed Copy Held By Clerk</i>		
Signature of Chair		Date: 16th February 2026
Signature of Clerk		Date: 16th February 2026

Version	Purpose	Author	Date	Minute Ref
1	New	RC	16/09/2022	22/106
2	Revised	RC	16/10/2023	23/196
3	Updated	RC	16/02/2026	