

Àban Complaints Policy (v1.1 March 2026)

Introduction

Written complaints may be sent to the Chief Officer at our normal postal address (Merkinch Welfare Hall, 30 Grant Street, Inverness, IV3 8BN) or by e-mail at info@aban.scot. Verbal complaints may be made by phone on 01463 718989 or in person to any Àban staff member at our premises.

Receiving Complaints

Complaints received by telephone or in person will be noted in writing. The person who receives a phone or in-person complaint should:

- Tell the complainant that we have a complaints procedure
- Tell the complainant what will happen next and how long it will take
- Where appropriate, ask the complainant to send a written account by post or email.

Stage One

In many cases, a complaint is best resolved by the person responsible for the issue. If that person receives the complaint, they may resolve it swiftly. Regardless, the complaint will immediately be passed to Àban's Chief Officer. The Chief Officer will record the complaint and assign an appropriate person to investigate and act. If a specific person is involved, they are informed and allowed to respond. A holding letter acknowledging the complaint will be sent within 3 days, with the aim of a full reply within 10 days. If this isn't possible, a progress report is sent. The reply will detail the investigation, conclusions, and any actions taken.

Stage Two

If unresolved, the complainant can request a Board-level review. Acknowledgement is sent within a week, detailing who will handle the case and when a reply is expected. The Chief Officer or another senior member of staff may investigate, reviewing paperwork and speaking with the original handler. The complainant will be kept informed. A full reply is aimed for within 10 days of the holding letter, or a progress update is given. The reply describes the investigation, findings, and actions. The decision is final unless the Board seeks external resolution.

Variation of the Complaints Procedure

The Board may adjust the procedure for reasons like avoiding conflict of interest (e.g., not assigning the Chair or Chief Officer to handle complaints about themselves).

Monitoring and Learning from Complaints

Complaints are reviewed annually to identify trends and necessary actions.

