



How to Complain

East Sussex Fire and Rescue Service is justifiably proud of its reputation for serving the public. However, when attending in excess of 10,000 calls for assistance a year, and carrying out Fire Safety inspections, Home Safety Visits and other services, things may sometimes go wrong.

We have set up a confidential, fair and prompt complaints procedure, to help when this happens.

What is a complaint and how can you make your views heard

A complaint is a representation from a member of the public or from an organisation that the Service has either failed to do something, done something wrong or acted unfairly or discourteously.

Matters exceeding more than 12 months prior to the complaint being submitted will not be dealt with unless there are good reasons for the delay.

You can contact the Complaints Officer by:



East Sussex Fire and
Rescue Service
Church Lane
Lewes
East Sussex
BN7 2DZ



Phone: 0303 999 1000



E-mail: enquiries@esfrs.org



We use independent officers

We guarantee that all formal complaints investigations will be carried out in a confidential, fair and proper manner, using independent officers whose aim is to solve your problems and not to defend actions taken by members of the Service.

Dealing with your complaint

The Service Complaints Officer will be responsible for dealing with your complaint and for preparing a response to you on the results of the investigation. As part of that process, an independent Complaint Investigation Officer will be appointed, whose aim will be to establish the facts surrounding your complaint, by interviewing relevant witnesses and parties involved.

Your complaint will be acknowledged within three working days of the Service receiving it.

Complaints are usually dealt with, and a reply sent, within one month of receipt.

If this is not possible, we will write to you before the month has passed, giving you a progress report and telling you when to expect a full reply.

Appeals



If you are dissatisfied with the written response to your complaint, you may appeal in writing, within three weeks, to:



The Chief Fire Officer
East Sussex Fire and Rescue Service
Church Lane
Lewes
East Sussex
BN7 2DZ

A Senior Officer will be appointed to investigate your appeal

If you are not satisfied with the reply to your complaint, you can ask the Local Government Ombudsman to investigate.

Information on how to take your appeal to the Ombudsman can be obtained by telephoning their Adviceline on 0300 061 0614 or from their website at www.lgo.org.uk

The Ombudsman expects that you will first have exhausted our Complaints Procedure, before you contact them.