

# Broads Authority

15 May 2026

Agenda item number 14

## Annual Summary of formal complaints 2025/26

Report by Head of Governance

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### Purpose

This report summarises the formal complaints received by the Broads Authority, together with the outcome of those complaints, for the year 2025/26.

### Recommended decision

To note the report.

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## 1. Introduction

- 1.1. It is considered good practice for public bodies such as the Broads Authority to have effective, transparent and accessible arrangements in place to deal with complaints, to adequately publicise their complaints procedures, to monitor responses and to make sure lessons are learnt from the outcome of complaints.
- 1.2. The Authority has a separate [Members Code of Conduct](#) and [complaints procedure](#), which clarifies the conduct expected by members and summarises how the Authority deals with such complaints. Following the establishment of a Standards Committee in September 2023, information on complaints under this process is contained within the committee's annual report to the Authority (item 16 on this agenda).
- 1.3. The formal complaints summarised in this report are those made by members of the public and service users during the period 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026, together with a summary of the Authority's responses.

## 2. Broads Authority complaints procedure

- 2.1. The Authority's formal complaints procedure is published on its website at [How to complain \(broads-authority.gov.uk\)](#). The procedure has a number of stages:
  - In the first instance, complainants are advised to contact the manager responsible for the area of work where they have a complaint or comment, so that the matter can be dealt with informally and as near as possible to the point of contact.
  - If it is not possible to resolve the complaint informally, the complainant may submit a formal complaint in writing. This complaint is investigated by the appropriate Director, who has a responsibility to reconsider the matter objectively

and professionally. The complainant will receive a detailed reply in writing identifying whether their complaint is upheld or not. The reply will also explain how to take the matter forward should the complainant remain dissatisfied.

- Finally, if the complainant is still dissatisfied as a result of the Director’s response, they may ask for the matter to be reviewed by the Chief Executive, setting out the reasons why they believe the complaint has not been properly resolved at stage 2. The Chief Executive is required to review the complaint in an impartial manner and may, if he/she sees fit, seek advice from other officers such as the Monitoring Officer, and also seek direction from the appropriate committee, or from independent consultants or advisers if he/she believes that an external view would be helpful. If the formal complaint concerns action that the Chief Executive has taken, it will be reviewed by the Chairman of the Authority. This is the final stage of the Authority’s formal complaints procedure.

2.2. The Authority seeks to provide a remedy to complaints when it is found at fault.

### 3. Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman

- 3.1. The Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman (LG&SCO) investigates complaints by members of the public who consider that they have been caused injustice by the administrative actions (maladministration) of local authorities and other bodies within their jurisdiction, which includes the Broads Authority.
- 3.2. The LG&SCO provides a free, independent and impartial service, and will normally only agree to investigate a complaint if the internal complaints procedures of the appropriate body have been exhausted.

### 4. Formal complaints 2025/26

- 4.1. Six formal complaints were made to the Authority in 2025/26. The subject matter and outcome of those complaints is set out in Appendix 1. Other complaints and issues resolved on an informal basis are not recorded.

### 5. Comparison with previous years

- 5.1. For comparison between the current year and previous years, the number of formal complaints and complaints to the LG&SCO can be found in the table below:

	2025/26	2024/25	2023/24	2022/23	2021/22	2020/21	2019/20
<b>Formal complaints</b>	6	4	7	7	7	5	4
<b>Complaints to LG&amp;SCO</b>	0	0	0	0	0	2	1

## 6. Conclusion

- 6.1. Given the breadth and volume of the Authority's work, the number of formal complaints received in 2025/26 is considered to be small. Officers will continue to record and monitor formal complaints and seek to learn lessons from them, especially if the Authority's actions have fallen below expected standards

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[Broads Plan](#) strategic objectives: n/a

Appendix 1 – Summary of formal complaints 2025/26

## Appendix 1 – Summary of formal complaints 2025/26

Summary of complaint	Final response provided by	Stage reached and summary of response
Land off Mill Road in Stokesby	Chief Executive	This complaint related to a planning issue. The Stage 2 response sent by Director of Strategic Services on 18 July 2025 covered all the issues raised by the complainant and therefore there was no justification for a Stage 3 Review.
Replacement of Broads Authority Rangers' Hut at Reedham Quay	Chief Executive	Stage 3 – A detailed response was sent to the complainant explaining that the Authority had sought and followed legal advice. It did not require consent under s. 38 (6) (a) Commons Act 2006 for the work.
Belaugh early noise disturbance	Director of Delivery	<p>Stage 2 – A detailed response was provided to the complainant. It acknowledged the impact that repeated early-morning disturbance can have and recognised that sleep disruption, particularly where young families are affected, is distressing and should not be dismissed lightly.</p> <p>The Broads Authority did not have statutory powers to investigate, determine, or enforce statutory nuisance under Part III of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 and that the correct authority with the powers to enforce the Act was Broadland District Council.</p>

Summary of complaint	Final response provided by	Stage reached and summary of response
		The Director of Delivery noted the concerns raised for consideration in ongoing site management.
Regulation 9 Duties (Monitoring, Risk Assessment, and Site Protection)	Chief Executive	Stage 3 – The complaint was dismissed on the grounds that the complainant had not submitted any evidence that suggested that the Broads Authority was failing to comply with Regulation 9 (3) of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 in relation to game birds.
Toll calculation for vessel	Chief Executive	Stage 3 – The complaint was dismissed on the grounds that previous responses to the complainant were reasonable based on the information supplied to date in relation to the vessel’s measurements in calculating the toll.
Lack of evidence for deer impact assessments	Director of Resources	Stage 2 – The Authority did not accept the complaint about the report on the Impact of Deer on Wetland Habitats in the Broads National Park (February 2025).

07/04/2026