

**COMPLAINTS HANDLING PROCEDURE**

**ANNUAL REPORT**

**2018/2019**

## 1. Introduction

Crown Estate Scotland's<sup>1</sup> Complaints Handling Procedure (CHP) involves up to two stages for resolution of a complaint - Stage 1 (Frontline) to be handled within 5 working days and Stage 2 (Investigation) to be handled within 20 working days of receiving a complaint.

Any person who remains dissatisfied following Stage 2 (Investigation) can take their complaint to the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO) for consideration.

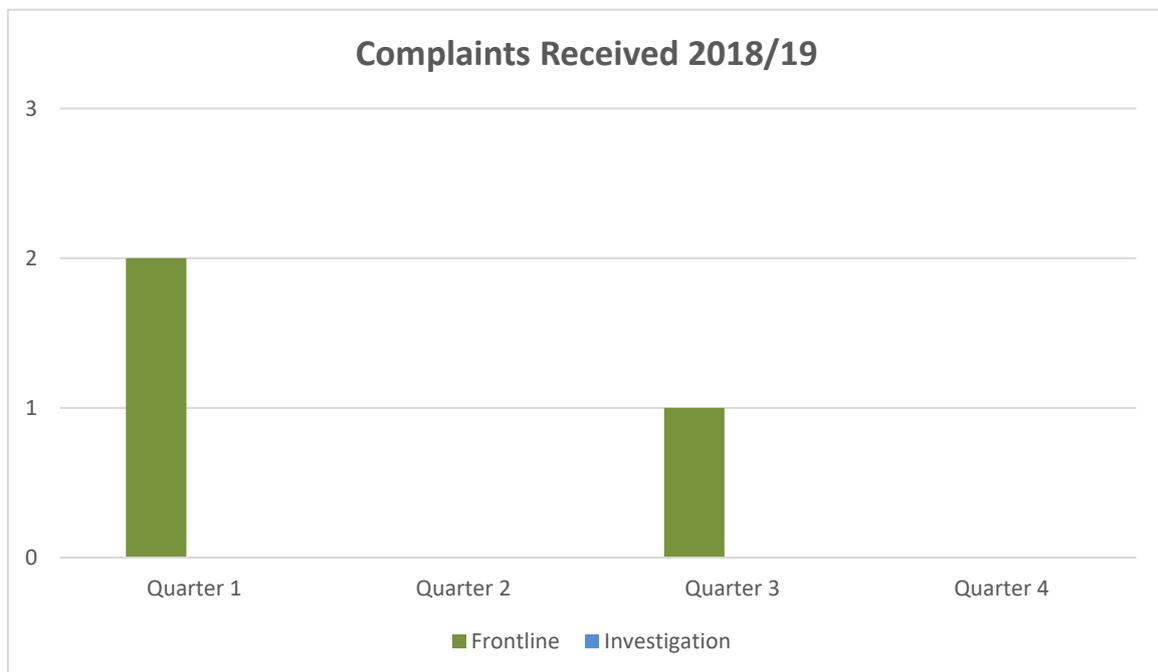
Our CHP can be found at: <https://www.crownestatescotland.com/complaints>

This annual report contains key performance indicators for the period 1 April 2018 – 31 March 2019, which was the first full year of operation of the CHP in Crown Estate Scotland.

If you have any questions regarding this report, or any other complaint matter, please email Helen Howden, Governance Manager [helen.howden@crownestatescotland.com](mailto:helen.howden@crownestatescotland.com)

## 2. Complaints Received

During 2018/19, Crown Estate Scotland received 3 complaints, all of which were dealt with at stage 1 (frontline).



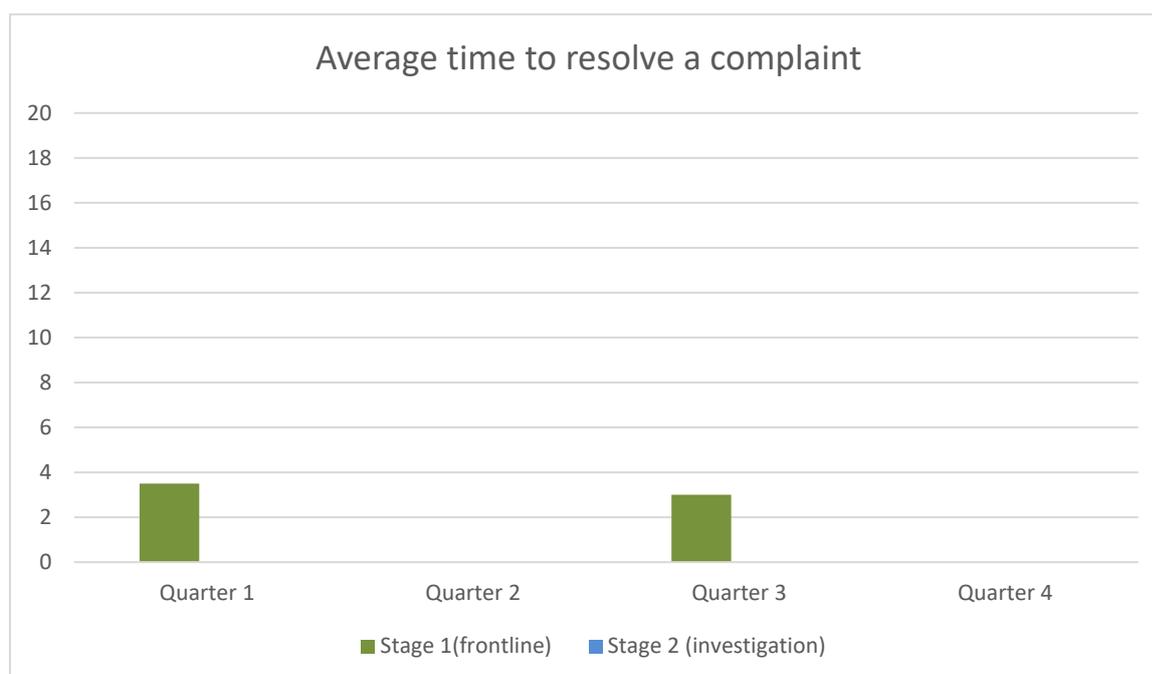
<sup>1</sup> References in this Report to Crown Estate Scotland are to be read as references to Crown Estate Scotland (Interin Management).

The timescales for responding to complaints as set out in our CHP are 5 working days for stage 1 (frontline) and 20 working days for stage 2 (investigation).

The following table shows the number and percentage of complaints closed at frontline (within the 5 day timescale) and investigation (within the 20 day timescale).

Stage	Total complaints	Number closed within timescales in CHP	Percentage
Stage 1 (frontline)	3	3	100%
Stage 2 (investigation)	0	0	-

### 3. AVERAGE TIME TAKEN TO RESOLVE A COMPLAINT



We did not request any extensions to the frontline/investigation working day time limit.

### 4. NATURE OF COMPLAINTS RECEIVED

The complaints received were all from third parties, none of whom were Crown Estate Scotland tenants.

The first complainant alleged Crown Estate Scotland staff were unprofessional and dismissive in not providing the information requested (the information requested was not held by Crown Estate

Scotland).

The second complainant believed that they had been discriminated against by The Crown and that a member of Crown Estate Scotland staff had lobbied the European Parliament to have the law changed to deprive the complainant of certain legal rights.

The third complainant alleged that photographs had taken of a property and the people occupying it by someone thought by the complainant to be representatives of Crown Estate Scotland.

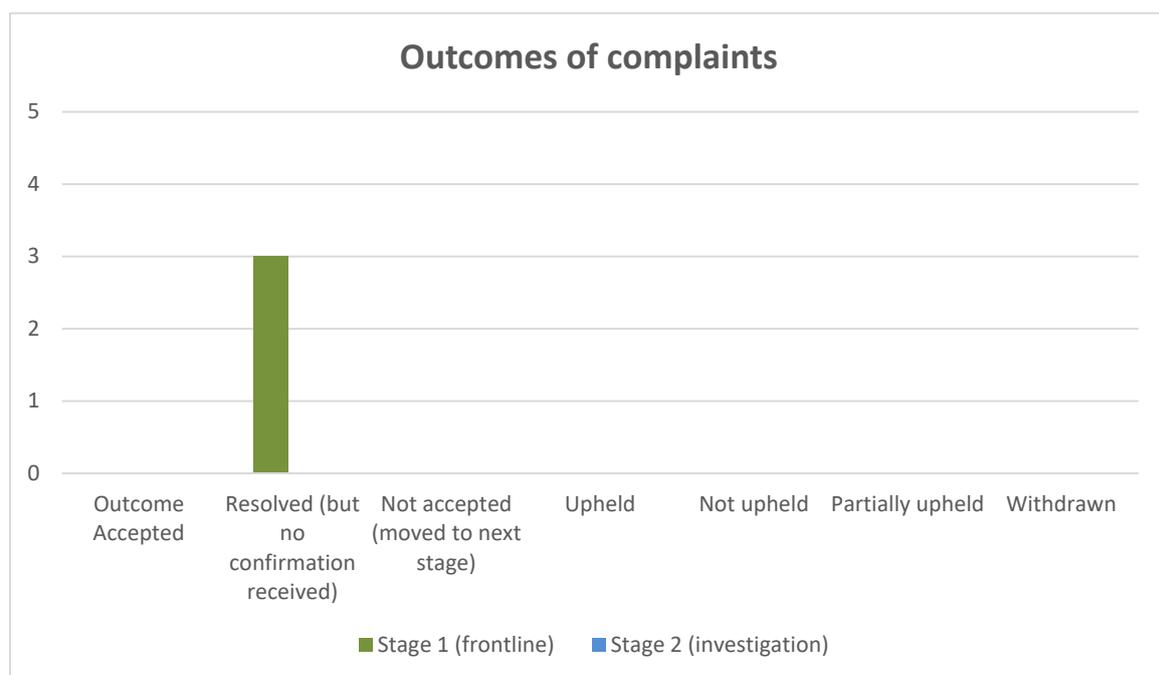
## 5. OUTCOME OF COMPLAINTS

We did not uphold any of the complaints received.

The first complainant was not satisfied that their complaint had been effectively dealt with at stage 1 and asked for a stage 2 (investigation). This was denied on the basis that we had fully answered the complaint, had no further information to make available and could not provide the resolution sought (title to land not forming part of the Scottish Crown Estate). The complainant was advised that they had the right to ask the SPSO to look at their complaint and were given contact details.

When responding to the second complainant at stage 1 we advised (after speaking to the SPSO) that we would not be prepared to conduct a stage 2 (investigation). This was on the basis that we had fully answered the complaint and we could not give the resolution sought (access to land not within the Scottish Crown Estate). The complainant was advised of their right to ask the SPSO to investigate and given contact details.

We advised the third complainant that we had not instructed anyone to take photographs in the area of their property.



The following table shows the above data as percentages of the total complaints closed at each stage.

	<b>Stage 1 – frontline (3 complaints)</b>	<b>Stage 2 – investigation (0 complaints)</b>
Outcome Accepted	n/a	n/a
Resolved (no confirmation received)	100%	-
Not Accepted	n/a	n/a
Upheld	n/a	n/a
Partially Upheld	n/a	n/a
Not Upheld	n/a	n/a
Withdrawn	n/a	n/a

## 6. LESSONS LEARNED

Crown Estate Scotland is committed to shaping our actions and decisions around our core values. These values are critical to our complaints handling process.

Although we did not receive many complaints during the year, we were still able to learn from them. For example, part of one complaint highlighted that we had not properly read the original correspondence (which contained a request for information under the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002) and had replied signposting the complainant to other bodies which had already been consulted by the complainant. We have asked colleagues to take care in ensuring they have properly read correspondence when replying to it.

## 7. TRENDS

This report covers the first full year of the operation of Crown Estate Scotland’s CHP. The chart below will be used in future years to show shows the number of complaints dealt with at stage 1, stage 2 and overall. We have included it in this report to signal our intention to monitor trends as they emerge.

We expect that as staff become more familiar with the CHP and as we draw in to our reporting complaints which are currently captured by our managing agents, that these figures will rise.

### Trends in complaint numbers

