

Your guide to making a complaint

Procedure

NITB's Complaints Procedure

The purpose of NITB's customer complaints system is to provide a procedure for ensuring that all complaints about NITB's services are dealt with in a satisfactory way.

This advice is about a complaint you have in relation to a service or services you have received directly from NITB. If you wish to complain about Tourist Accommodation (hotels, guesthouses, etc) or Tourist Services (visitor attractions, other tourist amenities) see our complaints help section below.

Operating a customer complaints system enables us to improve our services. We will try to ensure we learn from any complaint. Please also let us know if you feel that we have given good service. Your feedback can help us improve our services for everyone.

NITB aims to sort out your complaint as quickly and effectively as possible

For NITB, a complaint is:

An expression of dissatisfaction made to NITB about a perceived failure to carry out a service provided by NITB or the way NITB has carried out a service.

A report on complaints about NITB will be drawn to the attention of the Chief Executive.

Registering Complaints

How do I register a complaint about an NITB service?

The quickest and easiest way to complain is to contact the person responsible for the service. You can make your complaint in person, in writing (via e-mail, fax, letter or by completing NITB's Comments Form) or by telephone.

Telephone: (028) 9023 1221

Fax: (028) 9024 0960

E-mail: pcu@nitb.com

Address: Northern Ireland Tourist Board, St Anne's Court, 59 North Street, Belfast BT1 1NB

If you are not sure who is responsible for the service, you can simply make your complaint to the Policy & Environment Unit. Staff in this Unit will acknowledge your complaint and direct it to the appropriate person.

Response

NITB's response to complaints

Complaints made in person or by telephone:

- The staff member will discuss the complaint with you and try to resolve the matter at that time.
- If necessary, a written record will be made in order to investigate the complaint further. You will then receive a letter within 15 working days (3 weeks) telling you what we have found and what we intend to do.

Complaints made in writing:

- Where possible, NITB will respond to you within 5 working days (1 week) from receipt of your complaint.
- Alternatively, an acknowledgement will be issued advising that your complaint has been received and is currently being investigated. You will then be contacted within 15 working days from issue of the acknowledgement, and either advised of the outcome and what we intend to do, or advised what stage we are at and the anticipated timescale for completing the investigation. Again, once this is complete we will advise you of the outcome and what we intend to do.

At any stage during the investigation we may contact you for further information or clarification.

We can deal more effectively with your complaint if you tell us:

- What the complaint is about
- When it happened
- Who you dealt with
- What you would like NITB to do to put things right

What if I am not satisfied with NITB's initial response?

If you are dissatisfied with the outcome you may refer your complaint to the Chief Executive's Office.

On receipt of a complaint to the Chief Executive's Office, an acknowledgement will be issued within 5 working days advising that your complaint has been received and is currently being investigated.

You will be contacted within 15 working days from issue of the acknowledgement and advised of progress. If the investigation has been completed we will advise you of the outcome and what we intend to do.

If the investigation is not yet complete we will advise you what stage we are at and the anticipated timescale for completing the investigation. Again, once this is complete we will advise you of the outcome and what we intend to do.

At any stage during the investigation we may contact you for further information or clarification.

What happens if I am still not satisfied with NITB's response?

If you believe that your complaint has not been treated properly or fairly by NITB, or you remain dissatisfied, then you may refer your complaint to the Ombudsman (Commissioner for Complaints).

The Ombudsman deals with any complaint of maladministration (poor administration or the wrong application of rules). He does not generally investigate policy, but looks at how the policy is put into practice.

The Ombudsman will normally expect you to have given NITB the opportunity to investigate your complaint before you refer it to him.

You can contact the Ombudsman in any of the following ways:

By telephone: **0800 34 34 24** (this is a Freephone number) or **(028) 9023 3821**

By fax: **(028) 9023 4912**

By e-mail: **ombudsman@ni-ombudsman.org.uk**

By writing to: The Ombudsman
 Freepost BEL 1478
 Belfast
 BT1 6BR

By calling, between 9.30 am and 4 pm, at: The Ombudsman's Office
 Progressive House
 33 Wellington Place
 Belfast

Complaints Help

NITB can help you with complaints

This guide is about a complaint you have in relation to a service or services you have received directly from NITB.

If you have a complaint about tourist facilities such as accommodation, amenities, services, etc, which are NOT provided by NITB, you should put your complaint to the service provider. If you are not satisfied with the outcome, you may refer the complaint to NITB. There are two departments in NITB which deal with these types of complaints.

For complaints concerning:

Tourist Accommodation (hotels, guesthouses, etc)

Please contact our Quality & Standards Department at NITB Headquarters.

Telephone: **(028) 9023 1221**

Fax: **(028) 9024 0960**

E-mail: **qa@nitb.com**

The Northern Ireland Tourist Board (NITB) is required by the Tourism (Northern Ireland) Order 1992 to inspect properties once a year (statutory inspection) to ensure that properties comply with minimum criteria. While NITB is not empowered by legislation to investigate complaints, we do treat them seriously.

Tourist Services (visitor attractions, other tourist amenities)

Please contact our Visitor Information Department at NITB Headquarters.

Telephone: **(028) 9023 1221**

Fax: **(028) 9024 0960**

E-mail: **info@nitb.com**

Other Complaints

Please contact our Policy & Environment Unit at NITB Headquarters.

Telephone: **(028) 9023 1221**

Fax: **(028) 9024 0960**

E-mail: **pcu@nitb.com**