
News | December 2025

SPSO win Policy into Practice Award

We were delighted to be awarded the Policy into Practice Award at the Scottish Public Service Awards 2025!

This award celebrates projects that turn public policy into real impact for citizens.

Our Spotlight Report on the Scottish Welfare Fund's High Most Compelling (HMC) Priority Rating found fundamental inconsistencies with the way the fund was being delivered locally, negatively affecting some of the most vulnerable people in society.

By sharing these findings and real-life case studies, we brought the human impact to policymakers' attention. Following publication, the Scottish Government awarded £20 million in additional funding to local authorities.

Huge congratulations to our SWF team!

[Read our Spotlight Report on the Scottish Welfare Fund's HMC Priority Rating](#)

Public service complaints

Our findings

This month, the Ombudsman published fourteen decision reports and made 28 recommendations to public bodies. Eleven cases were either fully or partially upheld.

[Read more about our findings](#)

Training

Complaints Investigation Skills

Book a spot on our Complaints Investigation Skills course.

This interactive SPSO trainer-led course equips you with the knowledge to conduct robust investigations, ask the right questions, assess evidence, and make informed decisions.

The course costs £100 pp and lasts around 5 hours.

Don't miss out on our next training slot:

- Tuesday 3 March 2025 (**limited spaces left**)

[Book now](#)

Boost Your Complaints Handling Skills – Updated Training Now Available

Our Good Complaints Handling online training has been refreshed to reflect the updated [Statement of Complaints Handling Principles](#).

This self-guided course is aimed at staff handling complaints at stage 1 of the [Model Complaints Handling Procedure \(MCHP\)](#) but would be useful for anyone involved in complaints handling looking to develop their knowledge.

The course costs £50 pp and takes around 45 minutes to complete.

[Book now](#)

Scottish Welfare Fund

Our findings

Last month, we made 41 decisions, 12 on community care grants and 29 on crisis grants.

Of these, 42% of community care grants were upheld and 35% of crisis grants were upheld.

[Read more in our Scottish Welfare Fund update and case studies](#)

Training

Support your development with our **free online training**, designed specifically for Scottish Welfare Fund staff.

Investigation Skills

Learn how to gather the right information and apply it effectively in decision making.

This interactive course uses real-life examples to reinforce best practice

Analysis and Judgement

Develop the skills needed to assess evidence and reach robust, well-supported conclusions in line with Scottish Welfare Fund guidance

Recent feedback has been overwhelmingly positive, praising the quality and accessibility of these resources. With annual review season approaching, these courses offer a valuable opportunity to support staff development and demonstrate continued commitment to professional growth.

We encourage managers to make use of these materials and to promote them within their teams.

[Access the training courses](#)

Festive opening hours

As 2025 draws to a close, we wish everyone a peaceful festive season, and all the best for a happy and healthy New Year.

Closed from: Thursday 25 December 2025

Reopening: Monday 5 January 2026

Scottish Welfare Fund emergency service open: 29 - 31 December 2025

Please visit our website for full details on opening hours:

- [Public service complaints](#)
- [Scottish Welfare Fund applications](#)
- [Whistleblowing complaints](#)

Our physical office at Bridgeside House will close from Friday 19 December 2025. If visiting in person, you must book an appointment first.