

Rising to the challenge
Voco Grand Central, Glasgow – 9-11 June 2026

Day 1: Tuesday 9 June

14:00-15:00	Arrival & Registration (<i>The Grand Foyer</i>)
15:00-17:00	Summer Workshop: Use of technology / AI (<i>The Grand Room</i>) Workshop exploring how Members are using AI and other technology to increase effectiveness.
19:00-19:30	Drinks Reception in the Grand Room, Voco Grand Central
19:30-21:00	Networking dinner in the Grand Room, Voco Grand Central

Day 2: Wednesday 10 June

09:00-10:00	Registration and networking over tea / coffee (<i>The Grand Foyer</i>)
10:00-10:20	Welcome and presentation of the Impact & Innovation Award
10:20-11:20	Plenary Session 1: Perceptions of procedural fairness (<i>The Grand Room</i>) Professor Joe Tomlinson, Administrative Fairness Lab , on public perceptions of fair process (incl. use of AI) and how seemingly small changes can significantly increase perceptions of procedural fairness and deliver wider benefits.
11:20-11:45	Tea / Coffee break (<i>The Grand Foyer</i>)
11:45-13:00	Breakout Session A A1: Challenges presented by AI Use of AI by complainants and the challenges that is presenting to Members, with presentations from the Financial Ombudsman Service and PHSO. A2: Reasonable or unreasonable? Session discussing the current challenges that Members deal with in relation to complainant behaviour, with a presentation from Mary-Anne Webb on the research undertaken for NIPSO into best practice ‘reasonable behaviour’ policies. A3: How to address complaints when you’re in a broken system Presentation from LGSCO on challenges with SEND and homelessness services, adapting casework processes, and external comms and engagement.
13:00-13:45	Lunch

13:45-14:45	<p>Plenary Session 2: Demonstrating impact (<i>The Grand Room</i>)</p> <p>Ed Dallas, Chief Economist Simetrica-Jacobs, presents results of feasibility study into developing an approach to measure and evidence impact of ombudsman schemes.</p>
14:45-14:55	<i>Transition / comfort break</i>
14:55-16:10	<p>Breakout Session B</p> <p>B1: Getting upstream SPSO's reflections on how well Model Complaints Handling procedures work, revising principles and taking a different approach.</p> <p>B2: Driving improvements – working effectively with the regulator The Housing Ombudsman set out how they've achieved coherence in the system by working closely with the regulator, whilst remaining independent.</p> <p>B3: Backlog busting Session with Mike Titchen, a Lean 6 Sigma specialist, about approaches to identifying efficiencies and effectiveness in processes.</p>
16:10-16:40	'Coffee Roulette' networking (<i>The Grand Foyer</i>)
16:40-18:15	Free time
<p>18:45</p> <p>19:00-19:30</p> <p>20:00-22:00</p>	<p>Conference dinner, Glasgow City Chambers Banqueting Hall</p> <p><i>Walk from hotel</i></p> <p><i>Drinks reception</i></p> <p><i>Conference Dinner</i></p>

Day 3: Thursday 11 June

09:00-09:30	Registration and networking over tea / coffee (<i>The Grand Foyer</i>)
09:30-10:30	<p>Plenary Session 3: Regaining / Maintaining Trust (<i>The Grand Room</i>)</p> <p>Session on how the confidence of stakeholders can be rebuilt after failings around governance, complaints handling, or effectiveness have occurred, with Ian Bruce, Ethical Standards Commissioner, and Kirsty-Louise Campbell, Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA)</p>
10:30-10:45	Tea / Coffee break (<i>The Grand Foyer</i>)
10:45-11:55	<p>Breakout Session C</p> <p>C1: Identifying / implementing efficiencies The Pensions Ombudsman provide an update on the productivity gains made through their Operating Model Review, and the Property Ombudsman share how they've increased their output whilst operating as a virtual organisation.</p> <p>C2: Making the case for reform Members share lessons from their campaigns for reform, mistakes, and what worked, with input from FOS and Scottish Legal Complaints Commission.</p>

	<p>C3: How complaints systems need to improve</p> <p>Professor Chris Gill / Complaints Policy Lab uses the case study of social care complaints in Scotland to set out how complaint systems in general need to do more to address power imbalances, restore relationships, and realise learning from complaints, with SPSO highlighting their journey to taking a rights based approach.</p>
11:55-12:00	<i>Transition to plenary room</i>
12:00-13:00	<p>Plenary Session 4: Can the Ombudsman model survive? (<i>The Grand Room</i>)</p> <p>How do ombudsman schemes remain relevant in a time when redress is expected to be instantaneous? What needs to change to retain relevance? Panel session with Professor Chris Gill, University of Glasgow; Paula Sussex, PHSO; Ric Blakeway, HOS; and Doug Melville, CIFO.</p>
13:00-13:05	Closing address
13:00-13:45	Lunch