

Complaints Policy

Purpose

The Charity Commission report 'Cause for Complaint' states: 'an effective complaints management system is a proven way of maintaining and building relationships with users, stakeholders, partners and people on whom the charity depends.'

Handling complaints well:

- Demonstrates commitment to the public, users and other stakeholders
- Demonstrates commitment to high standards in all aspects of the provision of a service to the public and other stakeholders
- Helps to identify shortcomings which can then be remedied
- Helps to prevent similar mistakes and shortcomings

Complaints Policy

Jubilee Gardens Trust views complaints as an opportunity to learn and improve, and an opportunity to remedy the situation in direct communication with the complainant/s.

The Jubilee Gardens Trust Complaints Policy aims:

- To provide a fair complaints procedure which is clear and easy to use for anyone wishing to make a complaint
- To publicise the existence of our complaints procedure so that people know how to contact Jubilee Gardens Trust to make a complaint
- To ensure there is a procedure in place if a complaint is received
- To make sure all complaints are investigated fairly and in a timely manner
- To make sure that complaints are, wherever possible, resolved and that relationships are repaired
- To gather information which helps Jubilee Gardens Trust to improve the service it provides.

Definition of a Complaint

A complaint is any expression of dissatisfaction, whether justified or not, about any aspect of Jubilee Gardens Trust.

Complaints may be made by a person or organisation with a legitimate interest in Jubilee Gardens Trust.

A complaint can be received verbally, by phone, by email or in writing.

Confidentiality

All complaint information will be handled sensitively, involving only those who need to know and following relevant data protection requirements.

Responsibility

Overall responsibility for this policy and its implementation lies with the Board of Trustees of Jubilee Gardens Trust.

Review

Signed:

Chair of Jubilee Gardens Trust

Policy was approved on **12th May 2022**

For formal review by the Board of Trustees every **two years**

Date of Review: **Quarter 1 2024**

Complaints Procedure

Contact Details for Complaints:

Written complaints may be sent to:

Jubilee Gardens Trust
c/o South Bank Employers Group
Elizabeth House
39 York Road
London SE1 7NQ

or by e-mail to: mail@jubileegardens.org.uk

Information about Jubilee Gardens and a contact form on which to submit comments or complaints can be accessed by the Jubilee Gardens website: www.jubileegardens.org.uk

Verbal complaints may be made by phone to 0207 202 6900

Or in person to staff of the Jubilee Gardens Trust managing agent, or trustees at the above address

Note: Jubilee Gardens Trust does not employ its own staff. The work of Jubilee Gardens Trust is undertaken on its behalf by a managing agent and contractors. Jubilee Gardens Trust will ensure complaints involving the performance of the managing agent or contractors are dealt with appropriately.

Receiving Complaints

Complaints may arrive through channels publicised for that purpose or through any other contact details or opportunities the complainant may have.

Complaints received by telephone or in person must be recorded. The person who receives a telephone complaint or in person complaint must:

- Write down the facts of the complaint
- Take the complainant's name, address and telephone number
- Note down the relationship of the complainant to JGT, (for example: client, member)
- Tell the complainant that there is a complaints procedure which will be followed
- Tell the complainant what will happen next and how long it will take
- Where appropriate, ask the complainant to send a written account by post or by email so that the complaint is recorded in the complainant's own words.

Resolving Complaints

Stage One

- A complaint should be resolved, where possible, in the first instance by the person responsible for the issue being complained about. If the complaint has been received by that person, they may be able to resolve it swiftly and should do so if possible and appropriate.
- Whether or not the complaint has been resolved, the complaint information should be passed to the Chair of the Board of Trustees within three working days.
- On receiving the complaint it must be recorded in the complaints log. If it has not already been resolved, the Chair will delegate an appropriate person to investigate it and to take appropriate action.
- If the complaint relates to a specific person, they should be informed and given a fair opportunity to respond.
- Complaints should be formally acknowledged by the person handling the complaint within five working days. The acknowledgement should say who is dealing with the complaint and when the person complaining can expect a reply. A copy of this complaints procedure should be attached.

- Ideally complainants should receive a definitive reply within ten working days. If this is not possible because, for example, an investigation has not been fully completed, a progress report should be sent with an indication of when a full reply will be given.
- Whether the complaint is justified or not, the reply to the complainant should describe the action taken to investigate the complaint, the conclusions from the investigation, and action taken as a result of the complaint.

Stage Two

- If the complainant feels that the problem has not been satisfactorily resolved at Stage One, they can request that the complaint be reviewed at Board level. At this stage, the complaint will be passed for investigation/review to the Chair of the Board of Trustees.
- The request for Board level review should be acknowledged within five working days of receipt. The acknowledgement should say who will deal with the case and when the complainant can expect a reply.
- The Chair may investigate the facts of the case themselves or delegate a suitably senior person to do so. This may involve reviewing the paperwork of the case and speaking with the person who dealt with the complaint at Stage One.
- If the complaint relates to a specific person, they should be informed and given a further opportunity to respond.
- The person who dealt with the original complaint at Stage One should be kept informed of progress.
- Ideally complainants should receive a definitive reply within twenty working days. If this is not possible because for example, an investigation has not been fully completed, a progress report should be sent to the complainant with an indication of when a full reply will be given.
- Whether the complaint is upheld or not, the reply to the complainant should describe the action taken to investigate the complaint, the conclusions from the investigation, and action taken as a result of the complaint.
- The decision taken at this stage is final, unless the Board decides it is appropriate to seek external assistance with resolution.

External Stage

The complainant can complain to the Charity Commission at any stage. Information about complaints the Commission can involve itself in can be found on its website at: www.charitycommission.gov.uk/publications/cc47.aspx

Variation of the Complaints Procedure

- The Board may vary the procedure for good reason. This may be necessary to avoid a conflict of interest, for example, a complaint about the Chair should not also have the Chair as the person leading a Stage Two review.
- Closely related complaints from the same source about a similar issue will not be reconsidered.

Monitoring and Learning from Complaints

Complaints are monitored and reviewed annually to ensure procedures are adhered to, to identify trends to inform the development of policy and best practice and identify a need for further action.

Appendix I - Practical Guidance for Handling Verbal Complaints

(Note: Not part of the Policy and Procedure)

- Remain calm and respectful throughout the conversation
- Listen and allow the person to talk about the complaint in their own words. Sometimes a person just wants to let off steam
- Do not debate the facts in the first instance, especially if the person is angry

- Show an interest in what is being said
- Obtain details about the complaint before any personal details
- Ask for clarification where necessary
- Show that you have understood the complaint by reflecting back what you have noted down
- Acknowledge the person's feelings (even if you feel that they are being unreasonable). This can be done without making a comment on the complaint itself or making any admission of fault on behalf of the organisation, for example, "I understand that this situation is frustrating for you"
- Ask the person what they would like done to resolve the issue
- Be clear about what you can do, how long it will take and what it will involve.
- Do not promise things you cannot deliver
- Give clear and valid reasons why requests cannot be met
- Make sure that the person understands what they have been told
- Wherever appropriate, inform the person about the available avenues of review or appeal