



## **Lingfield United Trust - Complaints Procedure**

### **Policy**

The aim of the policy is to ensure that the complaints process is flexible and responsive to the needs of individual complaints. The policy seeks to ensure that:

- residents and applicants for grants who complain are listened to and treated with courtesy and empathy
- residents and applicants will never be disadvantaged as a result of making a complaint
- complaints are investigated promptly, thoroughly, honestly and openly
- apologies are given as appropriate
- complaints handling and confidentiality will comply with data protection policies (GDPR) requirements.

Complaints may be made by residents, their carers and families, applicants for grants or their representative.

Lingfield United Trust will not be able to deal with an issue through the complaints process if:

- a complaint relates to a legal matter that is already being dealt with by a solicitor
- the complainant is anonymous, unless there is sufficient documentary evidence to substantiate the complaint.

Residents and applicants for grants should be encouraged to raise minor complaints informally through the clerk in the first instance, preferably verbally, as this can lead to better understanding and very often to a quick resolution of the issue.

If the complaint cannot be solved quickly or if the complaint is more serious, it should be made in writing. A written complaint should include sufficient detail to enable the charity to investigate.

Complaints should be made to the Clerk in the first instance, who will acknowledge receipt of a written complaint within 14 working days. This acknowledgement will indicate the next course of action and the anticipated timescale. The charity will seek to resolve the complaint as a matter of urgency.

If the complainant is still not satisfied with the outcome they have 14 working days to submit a written appeal, and the appeal will be dealt with by the Chair of Trustees who will convene a special meeting within 21 working days of the appeal being submitted.

The Chair of Trustees will respond in writing to the complainant within 14 working days advising of the action taken to resolve the complaint.

If the complainant is still not satisfied with the response then the matter could be dealt with through an Independent Service.

- If a complaint is pursued unreasonably or where a complainant's actions or behaviours are deemed to be unreasonable, Lingfield United Trust reserves the right to close the complaint. A complainant who displays threatening or abusive behaviour or language (whether verbal or written), that causes the clerk or trustees to feel threatened, abused and/or continues to contact the charity with unreasonable demands during/following a complaint investigation, may have their appointment set aside.
- In cases where Trustees consider a complaint is being unreasonable and overly persistent and decide to bring the complaint to an end, they will inform the complainant of their reasons.

**This policy has been approved for issue by the board of trustees of Lingfield United Trust**

Signature: ...  .....

Name Marion Wardell

Role Chairman

Date 1<sup>st</sup> October 2018

**Registered Charity no 1150971**

**Chairman** – Mrs Marion Wardell, 5 Wallace Square, Lavington Park, Petworth, West Sussex, GU28 0FJ tel 01798 867661

**Clerk to the Trustees** – Mrs Marlene Hughes, 'Spindrift', Plaistow Street, Lingfield, Surrey RH7 6AL tel 01342 835250

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