**HARBORNE PARISH LANDS CHARITY**

**COMPLAINTS POLICY**

Harborne Parish Lands Charity (HPLC) is committed to providing quality services that meet the individual needs of those who seek our assistance, support or advice. We strive to maintain open and positive relationships with beneficiaries and stakeholders. However there may be times when there is dissatisfaction with the level or type of service received and a complaint is made. We recognise the importance of complaints in enabling us to identify areas where we could make changes or improve our approach. We therefore understand the requirement to have in place robust and effective procedures to ensure complaints are properly managed and acted upon.

HPLC will maintain appropriate systems to enable us to record, manage, respond to and report on complaints. We will ensure that all staff are fully aware of the procedure and receive relevant training. We aim to embed a culture of valuing and learning from complaints. We will promote and publicise our procedure to ensure, as far as possible, an awareness of the right to complain. We intend our complaints procedure to be easy to use and transparent, with clear definitions, timescales and responsibilities.

In accordance with our commitment to equality and diversity we will ensure that information about our complaints procedure is available in appropriate formats. We will treat all complainants fairly and respectfully and endeavour to accommodate any specific needs they may have. We will support complainants by explaining our procedure, offering a range of methods of complaining and providing other practical help such as writing or interpreting.

We acknowledge the role of complaints in providing a form of redress and we will, where possible, seek to re-instate the position the complainant was in prior to the complaint. However we recognise that providing redress by way of an explanation and apology may be the complainant’s preference.

**Complaints Procedure**

Harborne Parish Lands Charity (HPLC) is committed to providing high-quality services. We try to get things right first time, but we know that sometimes things go wrong. We value complaints and use information from them to help us improve our services.

If something goes wrong or you are dissatisfied with our services, please tell us. This Complaints Procedure describes how to make a complaint and tells you what you can expect from us. You can use the form at the end of this procedure to tell us if you:

* Are unhappy with the service you have received from us or the way you have been treated (a complaint)
* Have received a particularly good service (a compliment)
* Have suggestions on how we could improve the services we provide or wish to comment on them (a suggestion or comment)

All formal complaints will be logged and regularly reported to Trustees. Complaints made by staff or volunteers will be dealt with under HPLC’s grievance procedure.

**What is a complaint?**

A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction with any of our services or the service provided by anyone on our behalf. Examples include where you believe:

* Something was done poorly or too slowly
* We failed to do something
* We did something that should not have been done
* We treated you unfairlyor our staff behaviour was not good enough
* One of our policies or procedures needs changing

**What is not a complaint?**

* A first request for a service or to report a fault, for example reporting a repair
* A report of anti-social behaviour, neighbour problems, nuisance or harassment. These issues are dealt with through separate policies and procedures.
* Dissatisfaction with a policy or procedure that has a separate right of appeal, for example our policy and procedure for selecting residents
* A third party enquiry, for example from an MP or Councillor unless s/he is complaining on your behalf
* Issues that are in court or have already been heard by a court or tribunal
* A complaint which has previously been resolved
* A request for information or an explanation of our policies or procedures

**Who can complain?**

Anyone who uses our service or is affected by our services can complain. We understand that you may be unable or reluctant to make a complaint yourself, so you can ask someone to complain on your behalf. If will check with you that you consent to a friend, relative or an advocate complaining for you.

**How do I complain?**

You can complain in person, by telephone, in writing, by email or online. You can also use the form at the back of this procedure.

Our main office telephone number is 0121 426 1600. Our main office address is 109 Court Oak Road, BirminghamB17 9AA. Our email address is info@hplc.org.ukand our website address is www.hplc.org.uk.

Almshouse residents can speak to their Caretaker, Support Officer or Housing Officer. Residents may also contact their Almoner at any stage in the procedure. The Almoner's name, address and telephone number are displayed on the notice board at the scheme. All other complaints should be reported to the CEO.

If you have a complaint, please tell us:

* Your name and address
* As much as you can about the complaint
* What has gone wrong
* How you want us to resolve the matter

**How long do I have to make a complaint?**

Normally you must make your complaint within six months of

* the event you want to complain about
* finding out that you have reason to complain, but no longer than 6 months after the event itself.

**What remedies and solutions does HPLC offer?**

If we have made a mistake we will try to put it right. We may:

* apologise
* carry out work, for example a repair
* review a decision made previously
* review our procedures or policies
* give an explanation
* provide more staff training
* consider compensation

**How does the complaints procedure work?**

Our formal complaints procedure has three stages. If the complaint is about a member of staff it will be dealt with at Stage One; a complaint about a manager will go straight to Stage Two and a complaint about the Chief Executive will go straight to Stage Three. Your complaint will be handled confidentially and will be closed 20 working days after we have sent you our response unless you tell us that you are dissatisfied.

**Informal Complaints**

We aim to resolve most complaints quickly. So, if something has clearly gone wrong, and if we can, we will offer you an explanation, an on-the-spot apology and immediate action to resolve the problem. Informal complaints will usually be dealt with by the member of staff receiving them.

**Stage One**

If you are not satisfied with the response you receive to an informal complaint, you can make a formal complaint. Formal complaints must be in writing, but we can write down what you say if you would prefer this or you can ask someone else to write on your behalf. We will acknowledge receipt of your complaint within five working days and your complaint will be allocated a reference number.

A manager, or, if appropriate, a trustees, will then investigate. We will give you our decision regarding your complaint in writing as soon as possible and within 15 working days unless there are exceptional circumstances. Our response will explain the results of the investigation and the proposed resolution. If the complaint is more complicated and it is not possible to resolve the matter within this time, we will let you know when to expect an answer and why there is a delay.

If you are dissatisfied you can ask, within 15 working days of our decision, for your complaint to be investigated further. Please tell us in writing why you are not happy and what you would like to happen. We will then move your complaint to Stage Two.

**Stage Two**

We hope you will be satisfied with the response you receive to your Stage One complaint but if you are not, please let us know in writing as soon as possible and within 15 working days. Your complaint will then be passed to the Chief Executive.

The Chief Executive will acknowledge receipt of your complaint with five working days and give you a full response in writing as soon as possible and within 15 working days. If the investigation will take longer than 15 days, we will tell you.

We hope that you will be happy with the result, but if you are not, please tell us in writing within 15 working days of receiving our response. Please tell us why you are not happy and what you would like to happen. We will then move your complaint to Stage Three.

**Stage Three**

If you are not satisfied with the response to your Stage Two complaint, please let us know in writing within 15 days of receiving the Chief Executive's decision. Please tell us why you are not satisfied, for example what you feel has not been fully considered, what you think is incorrect or what additional information you have. We will acknowledge your complaint within five working days.

Your complaint will then be reviewed by the Board of Trustees at its next meeting. The Board will investigate and respond to you in writing within 20 working days. If the investigation may take longer than this, we will let you know. This is the last stage of the HPLC complaints procedure.

**External Review of Complaints**

1. **Complaints made by almshouse residents**

If you are not satisfied with the outcome of your Stage Three complaint and you are an almshouse resident, you can ask the Central Residents' Complaints Panel to investigate.

Address: Central Resident’s Complaints Panel, St Peters (Saltley) Housing Association, Bridge Road, Saltley, BirminghamB8 3TE

Telephone: 0121 327 7265

Email: crcp@stpetershousing.org.uk

Alternatively you can wait eight weeks and then ask the Housing Ombudsman to investigate your complaint.

Address: Housing Ombudsman Service, 81 Aldwych, LondonWC2B 4HN

Telephone: 0300 111 3000

Fax: 020 7831 1942

Email: info@housing-ombudsman.org.uk

Website: http://www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk

1. **Other Complaints**

Harborne Parish Lands Charity is regulated by the Charity Commission and the Homes & Communities Agency and complaints can also be made to these bodies.

The Charity Commission

Complaints can be made online at https://www.gov.uk/complain-about-charity

Homes and Communities Agency

Address: 5 St Phillips Place, Colmore Row, BirminghamB3 2PW

**Telephone: 0300 1234 500**

**Email:** mail@homesandcommunities.co.uk.

Website: http://www.homesandcommunities.co.uk

The Independent Housing Ombudsman, the Charity Commission and the Homes and Community Agency will expect you to have exhausted the charity’s complaints procedure before acting on your complaint.

**Unreasonably persistent or vexatious complainants**

Occasionally someone may persist unreasonably with their complaint or continually make complaints that they do not genuinely wish to resolve. A vexatious complainant may make serial complaints about different issues or continue to raise the same or similar matters over and over again. The Chief Executive will decide if a complainant should be deemed vexatious and the complainant will be informed of this. Contact with HPCL staff will thereafter be restricted.

**Anonymous complaints**

Anonymous complaints will not be dealt with through this complaints procedure. However depending upon the nature of the complaint, HPCL may decide that it is necessary to investigate the matter.

**HARBORNEPARISH LANDS CHARITY**

**You can use this form to make a complaint, compliment or suggestion.**

**Are you making a:**

Complaint?[ ]  Compliment?[ ]  Suggestion?[ ]

**Your Details:**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Name |  |
| Address |  |
| Phone |  | Email |

**If you are filling in this form for someone else, please give their details:**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Name |  |
| Address |  |
| Phone |  | Email |

**If this is a complaint, how would you like us to contact you about it?**

Phone [ ]  Letter [ ]  Email [ ]

|  |
| --- |
| **Please provide details of your complaint, compliment, comment or suggestion here**(continue on a separate sheet if necessary)**:** |
|  |

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Your Signature:** |  | **Date:** |  |

Data Protection: We will only share the personal information you give us within HPLC and with other agencies so that we can investigate your complaint more fully.