

COMPLAINTS POLICY

The Carroll Centre wishes to enable service users and members of the public to be aware of how they can provide feedback, so a copy of the following “Complaints Procedure” for resolving complaints should be available at the bookings counter for viewing upon request, and a copy of the notice, ‘Compliments and Complaints’ which follows this policy statement should be displayed on a noticeboard on a public area of the Carroll Centre.

In circumstances where a child or vulnerable adult may be at risk of harm the Carroll Centre’s safeguarding procedures will take precedence over this procedure and any relevant information will be shared with others concerned in the safety and welfare of that person.

PROCEDURE FOR RESOLVING COMPLAINTS

Who Can Use This Procedure?

This procedure is for anyone who comes into contact with trustees, staff and volunteers from the Carroll Centre. This may include service users, donors, statutory bodies and any other member of the public. If you wish to follow this procedure and complain about an aspect of our service, this will NOT affect any services you receive, or wish to receive, from the Carroll Centre.

Informal Complaints

We hope that the majority of complaints can be resolved informally by speaking directly to the person or persons involved. This can be done either by telephone or in a face to face meeting. All complaints will be recorded in writing at this stage. If the complaint is resolved at this stage you will receive a letter outlining the issue and the decisions reached and agreed.

If, however, informal resolution is not possible, you can make a formal complaint in writing.

Formal Complaints

Whom does the complaint concern?

- If the complaint concerns a member of the Carroll Centre's staff or a volunteer, or the Carroll Centre's premises or services, you should complain in writing to:
The Head of Centre, The Carroll Centre, Somers Close, Winchester, Hampshire, SO22 4EJ, or by email to the Head of Centre at an email address which is available at the Carroll Centre bookings counter. In the absence of the Head of Centre, complaints are to be made to the Operations Coordinator.
- If the complaint concerns the Head of Centre, you should complain in writing to the Chair of Trustees at the above address.

HOW TO CONTACT TRUSTEES

- If the complaint concerns the Chair of Trustees, you should complain to the Trustee Responsible for Human Resources (HR), Board of Trustees at the same address.
- If the complaint concerns how the Board of Trustees govern, fund or manage the Carroll Centre, you should complain to the Chair of Trustees at the above address.

What should you include in your complaint?

Including the following details will help us to effectively and quickly investigate your complaint:

- The specific area, service or resource to which the complaint applies.
- Your name and contact details: this is essential as we will not investigate anonymous complaints.
- Outline the nature of your complaint as precisely as possible, this will help us to investigate further and hopefully to resolve the issue. Please include details such as the place and time the incident occurred.
- Please let us know if you have already reported the complaint, and if any action was taken previously.

Please note that we endeavour at all times to treat Carroll Centre service users with respect, and we expect the same standards of behaviour from service users.

What happens after you make your complaint?

We will acknowledge your complaint within five working days of receipt and we will tell you who will be dealing with the matter and when you can expect a full response.

Wherever possible, the Carroll Centre will keep your complaint confidential. Any information about the complaint will usually only be shared with those who need to know in order to help resolve it. There may however be occasions when we cannot provide absolute confidentiality. This may for example arise in circumstances where a child or vulnerable adult may be at risk of harm. In these circumstances the Carroll Centre's safeguarding procedures will take precedence over this procedure and any relevant information will be shared with others concerned in the safety and welfare of service users.

We will handle information in line with the Data Protection Act.

Once the complaint has been acknowledged it will be fully investigated, by discussion with all individuals involved and a written response provided within 20 working days. If this time frame is delayed because of holiday or sick leave you will be informed when your complaint is acknowledged.

What to do if you should wish to take the matter further.

If you are not satisfied with the outcome of the investigation into your complaint, you can further complain in writing to the Chair of Trustees, The Carroll Centre, Somers Close, Winchester, Hampshire, SO22 4EJ.

In most circumstances the Chair of Trustees will meet with you, or appoint another trustee to meet with you to discuss why you are not satisfied with the outcome of the investigation into your complaint and decide what action, if any, should be taken to resolve the matter. If the Chair has been involved at an earlier stage of the procedure, they will appoint another trustee to meet with you. If your complaint involves the Head of Centre or a Trustee, the Chair of Trustees will appoint three trustees to meet to discuss the issue (if the complaint involves the Chair of Trustees, the HR Trustee or another designated Trustee will appoint a committee of three trustees to investigate the complaint).

The meeting will take place within twenty days (unless circumstances make this impossible, in which case you will be informed) and you will be informed in advance of the date of the meeting, which you may attend if you wish to do so. You will then be informed of the Trustees' decision as to what action is appropriate to take with regard to your complaint, and the Trustees' decision shall be final. However, you may also complain at any time to your MP, the Charities Commission or any organisation that funds the Carroll Centre.