

## Feedback and Complaints Policy

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## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

St Giles Trust (SGT) recognises that however good the practices of an organisation, it is always possible for mistakes to be made, and it is important that people who feel that they have grounds for complaint are able to do so. Therefore, it is important that SGT has an effective complaints procedure that is comprehensive, fair, accessible and transparent.

We do this by;

- enabling people to comment on weaknesses and to let the organisation know about things that have gone wrong or cause concern
- to improve the quality of services provided by taking notice of the views of people affected by the services, building on what is good and changing what needs improving
- to ensure that the organisation takes users' views seriously and will follow up any problems that they bring forward
- to enable users, potential users and carers to challenge decisions
- to protect staff and enable them to deal with complaints consistently

### 1.1 Scope of the policy

This policy and procedure apply to all St Giles Trust employees, volunteers and to employees and organisations who deliver services on behalf of St Giles Trust.

## 2.0 PURPOSE

The purpose of this document is to clarify the process that should be applied if there is a complaint about any service relating to SGT. Complainants will be encouraged to speak openly and freely about their concerns and will be reassured that whatever they may say will be treated with the appropriate confidence and sensitivity. All complaints will be treated seriously and investigated promptly in accordance with the agreed procedures. All staff will have access to the complaint procedure (via Atlas) and access to written guidance on the procedures for making a complaint. SGT is committed to ensuring that lessons learned from the complaints process are used as a means of improving the quality of services provided.

This policy should be applied across the organisation in a consistent and transparent way. We aim to treat any complainants in a manner consistent with our core value of putting the complainant at the centre of the service provided.

### 2.1 Policy Statement

SGT is committed to encouraging people to come forward with any feedback or complaints regarding any of the services delivered by the organisation.

SGT also undertake to monitor all feedback and complaints to ensure that they are used to improve the range and quality of service delivery on a continuous basis. SGT Senior Management Team will receive a quarterly report on complaints received and actions taken.

All complaints will be logged and reviewed by the Support Services Team and will be treated in confidence and stored in line with data protection legislation.

SGT will also ensure that clear information is provided on how to voice complaints and comments. There will be a clear display on how to make a complaint and if required support will be given on how to do this. If English is not a service user's first language, SGT can arrange for an interpreter to assist in completing the complaint form. We recognise that many of our clients have hidden disabilities and will always make it clear that we can organise assistance with completing the form

Complaints will be dealt with promptly and the complainant should be kept informed as to the progress of their complaint. They should be asked if they are satisfied with the outcome at the end of the process, by the relevant Manager, which will again be recorded in the centralised log. SGT will ensure that anyone making a complaint are not disadvantaged or treated less favourably as a result of complaining or giving feedback.

## **3.0 GENERAL GUIDANCE**

### **3.1 Service User Complaints**

Complainants can be current or former service users of SGT. Complaints may be made on behalf of existing or former service users by anyone who has the complainant's consent, for example, a family member, friend, solicitor or advocate. If the complainant does not have the capacity to act, then consent is not needed.

### **3.2 Fundraising Complaints**

This policy applies to any third parties that are fundraising on behalf of SGT

## **4.0 PROCEDURES**

SGT Operates an informal and formal route of making complaints or giving feedback on the services provided.

If anyone wishes to complain or give feedback about the services, they are receiving or any other aspect of their experience they can do this by speaking with their main contact at SGT. Should the complainant not feel comfortable discussing the complaint with their main point of contact for whatever reason, they can escalate this to their main contacts line manager or contact the complaints administrator via the complaints email address on the website.

Staff should use the complaints form as a guide to gather as much information as possible regarding the complaint/feedback along with contact information. Once a complaint has been received this needs to be logged by the complaints team and the Head of Service (HOS) informed who will decide within **4 working days** if the complaint/feedback will be dealt with informally or formally.

## 4.1 Informal Procedure

Once the HOS has decided the complaint/feedback will be dealt with informally they will:

- Allocate this to a team member to deal with
- Inform the complaints administrator who it is allocated to

The complaints administrator will:

- Acknowledge the complaint with **5 working days of receipt**.
- Inform the complainant who will be dealing with them.

The allocated team member will contact the complainant directly and attempt to resolve the issue. Notes of any telephone conversations must be kept along with emails and these need to be sent to the complaints administrator to be kept in a centralised log.

## 4.2 Formal Procedure

### Stage One

Once the HOS has decided the complaint/feedback will be dealt with formally they will:

- Allocate an investigating manager.
- Inform the complaints administrator who it is allocated to.

The complaints administrator will:

- Acknowledge the complaint within **5 working days of receipt**.
- Inform the complainant who will be dealing with them.
- If more information is required, this will be requested in the acknowledgment email.

The complaint will be passed onto the investigating manager, and they need to conduct and complete the investigation with **10 working days** from the date of the acknowledgment email/contact.

If during the investigation they need to contact the complainant at anytime they need to take notes of any conversations or emails. Once the investigation report is completed this should be sent to the complaints administrator to be logged and a response sent to the complainant.

A full response to the complaint should be sent to the complainant within **10 working days** from the date of the acknowledgement. In the response an offer to discuss the outcome of the complaint in person should be made. In the event the investigation takes longer to resolve, prompt responses should still be made to any outstanding issues and the complainant kept informed. If the investigation reveals a problem with staff conduct, a recommendation should be made on how this will be rectified. If formal disciplinary action is recommended, the Disciplinary Policy which is available on [St Giles Trust Atlas](#) should be used.

All complaints that are raised where we are working in partnership with other organisations should also follow where applicable that organisations policy and procedures for example if working with a Community Rehabilitation Company (CRC) or National Probation Services (NPS).

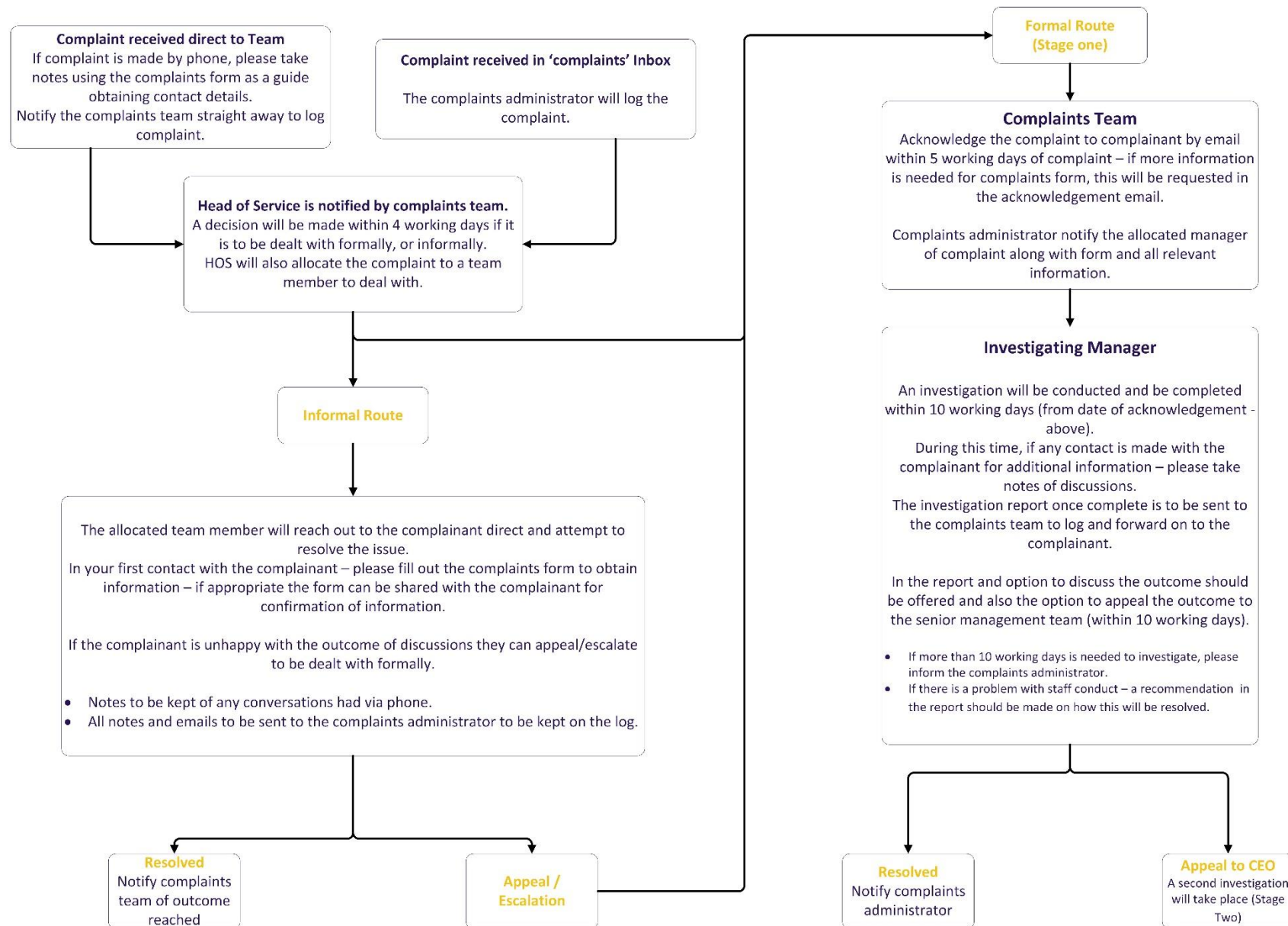
### **Stage Two – Appeals to the Chief Executive**

If the complainant is not satisfied with the response from the manager investigating the complaint, they may make an appeal to the Chief Executive or in their absence the Deputy Chief Executive. The Chief Executive will only consider the appeal if the above stage of the Complaints Procedure has been followed.

Appeals to the Chief Executive must be made within **10 working days** of receiving the full reply provided in Stage one of the Complaints Procedure. A response to an appeal should be sent to the complainant within **10 working days** from the date of the acknowledgement letter. A member of staff should also offer the opportunity for the complainant to discuss the outcome of the complaint in person and offer support. The complaints administrator should be updated at each stage of the process.

If at the end of Stage Two, the complainant is still not satisfied with the response the complainant the complainant can contact the Charity Commission to further their complaint. You can access information on how to do this by visiting <https://www.gov.uk/complain-about-charity>.

## COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE



## 5.0 CRIMINAL OFFENCES

If any investigation gives rise to concern that a SGT staff member, volunteer or trustee has been engaged in any criminal activities the Director of Services, Head of HR, Deputy CEO or CEO may refer the matter to the police.

## 6.0 WITHDRAWAL OF SERVICE

It may, on occasion, be necessary to withdraw our services from a client. If a service user acts inappropriately (e.g., threatening behaviour) or is in need of specialist support it is appropriate for the relevant line manager to withdraw the services of SGT. It is possible that this decision may lead to a formal complaint so any decision to withdraw a service will need to be recorded on the complaints database so that the information is readily available should an investigation be generated.

## 7.0 COMPLAINT CONFIDENTIALITY

Care must be taken at all times throughout the complaints process to ensure that any information disclosed about the complainant is confined to that which is relevant to the investigation of the complaint and only disclosed to those people who have a demonstrable need to know it for this purpose. It is not necessary to obtain the complainant's express consent to the use of personal information for the investigation of complaints. It is good practice; however, to explain to the complainant that information in his/her records may need to be disclosed to relevant personnel dealing with the complaint. SGT will handle information in line with the law. The Data Protection Act 2018 gives the complainant the right to see some of the information held about them such as letters or emails.

Details of any action to remedy a complaint, which involves formal or informal action against a member of staff, **should not** be recorded in a client's files (if applicable) Human Resources will deal with any complaints against staff. In the event of informal or formal action against a member of staff, advice should be sought from the Chief Executive on the response to the complainant.

## 8.0 MONITORING COMPLAINTS, COMMENTS AND USING FEEDBACK TO IMPROVE SERVICES

Each time a formal complaint or comment is made in writing, the member of staff receiving the complaint needs to make the complaints administrator aware so that it can be logged on the centralised

record log. A copy of any correspondence should be sent to the complaints administrator, and the original correspondence stored in the centralised file.

If the investigation reveals a problem with policy, procedure or practice, this should be brought to the attention of the Line Manager, Senior Manager or Chief Executive, and steps taken to remedy the situation as soon as reasonably practicable.

A quarterly report will be presented to the Senior Management Team by the complaints administrator providing details on the number and type of complaints received, outcome, timescale and any recommendations for appropriate changes to policy, procedures or practices. An anonymised version of the type of complaints will also be available to the Quality Group at St Giles Trust in order to manage and maintain quality of service. This information will be used to:

- Identifying and prioritising changes and improvements to existing services
- Identifying gaps in service provision
- Service Reviews
- Review of Policies and Procedures

## 9.0 PROMOTION AND DISPLAY

There will be clear displays in all our own offices on the use and access of making a complaint. The forms will always be available for anyone to access. SGT Staff and Volunteers should be aware of the process, and be able to assist the complainant if required, in explaining how the process works. If the member of staff or volunteer is unsure of the process, then they should speak to their line manager or the Support Services Manager

## 10.0 RELATIONSHIP WITH OTHER POLICIES

This policy has close links to other SGT policies and should be read in conjunction with the following list of policies and any others as appropriate

- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Staff Discipline, Conduct and Grievance Policy
- Child Protection Policy (*SGT is obliged to pass on to Social Services any disclosures or suspicions of child abuse. This affects the nature of the confidentiality of any potential complaint.*)
- Information Security Management System & Data Protection Policy
- PREVENT
- Whistle Blowing



## APPENDIX 1 – DOCUMENT CONTROL SECTION

This policy needs to be formally reviewed on an *annual* basis.

The current version of this Policy, together with its previous versions, shall be recorded below.

Version	Description	
1.0	Date Live:	17.02.17
	Version Notes:	Revision to name of policy and addition of fundraising complaints subheading and updates to language used.
	Reviewed by:	Penny White
	Approved by:	Malcolm Walker
1.1	Date Live:	21.07.2017
	Version Notes:	Update surname White to Hales
	Reviewed by:	Penny Hales
	Approved by:	Malcolm Walker
1.2	Date Live:	December 2019
	Version Notes:	Changed to new brand
	Reviewed by:	Kay Andrews
	Approved by:	Malcolm Walker
1.3	Date Live:	December 2020
	Version Notes:	Changed some wording
	Reviewed by:	Kay Andrews
	Approved by:	Malcolm Walker
1.4	Date Live:	December 2021
	Version Notes:	Changed Flow Chart
	Reviewed by:	Kay Andrews
	Approved by:	Malcolm Walker
1.5	Date Live:	May 2022
	Version Notes:	Changes to the complaints procedures along with how Complaints are allocated too formal an informal
	Reviewed by:	Kay Andrews
	Approved by:	Malcolm Walker
1.6	Date Live:	
	Version Notes:	
	Reviewed by:	
	Approved by:	

# St Giles

Turning a past into a future

## Feedback and Complaints Form

Ref: \_\_\_\_\_



Please let us know if you have any practical needs where we could help; for example, with information in another format or in a different language. You can also download this form off our website [www.stgilestrust.org.uk](http://www.stgilestrust.org.uk) or complete by hand or you can fill it in on screen – then print it off and post it back to us.



### Please give us your details

first name(s)

surname

title

date of birth

Mobile Phone

Email address

### Please tell us what your complaint is about

**How do you want us to put things right for you?**

**Have you spoken to anyone about this complaint previously? If so, can you give us their Details (Name etc)**

**Is there anything else you would like us to consider when reviewing your complaint?**

**Post to ...**

Complaints Administrator – Support Services  
St Giles Trust  
Georgian House  
64-68 Camberwell Church Street  
London SE5 8JB

*(Please note we can arrange for a stamped self-addressed envelope to be sent to you if required please call and ask to speak to the complaints administrator)*

**0207 708 8000**

*Calls are recorded for training and monitoring purposes*

[complaints@stgilestrust.org.uk](mailto:complaints@stgilestrust.org.uk)

[www.stgilestrust.org.uk](http://www.stgilestrust.org.uk)