



COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

Purpose of the Procedure

Our complaints procedure is intended to ensure that:

- There is an easily accessible, straightforward means of making formal representations to CHARTS, which offers prompt action and speedy resolution
- Everyone involved with CHARTS is confident that any issue or complaint will be dealt with effectively and fairly, even if the outcome is not always to a complainant's complete satisfaction
- We use complaints positively and take action to maintain and improve service quality and responsiveness
- We demonstrate that we care and consider addressing complaints as an important aspect of service delivery.

Definitions

An informal complaint is an initial approach by anyone to CHARTS outlining dissatisfaction with some aspect of our service or actions. Such approaches may be by telephone or by email.

A formal complaint expresses dissatisfaction with the action or lack of action taken by CHARTS on a matter which has been raised as an informal complaint. It should be made by email.

Nature of Complaints

Complaints can be about dissatisfaction with the way CHARTS policies are being carried out. They can also be about staff or trustee attitudes or actions.

Our commitment

We will:

- Take your complaint seriously
- Communicate with you clearly and on time
- Make every reasonable effort to resolve the situation

Informal Complaints

Staff who manage services should deal with initial approaches by people and attempt to resolve their concerns. Many approaches will simply be requests for action, requests for information or suggestions and can be handled as such. Staff should, however, be alert to any indication that the person has a complaint and should err on the side of treating the approach as a complaint wherever that may be appropriate.

Trustees should make any complaint in the first instance to the Secretary of the Board.

CHARTS will aim to take action to satisfy the complainant. The emphasis will be on resolving the complaint whenever possible.

Formal Complaint

If a complainant is dissatisfied with CHARTS' response to an informal complaint, they may write to make a formal complaint. Complaints relating to employees or freelancers should be sent to the Executive Director. If the complaint is about the actions of a trustee, it should be addressed to the trustee responsible for Governance (Liz Hunter, email - Liz@chartsargyllandisles.org).

All formal complaints will be acknowledged within 3 working days according to office opening hours. A full reply to the complaint will be provided within 15 working days, failing which a further letter will be sent explaining the delay and indicating when it was anticipated a reply would be available.

Further Stages

It is hoped that the vast majority of complaints would be resolved in these two stages. However, for any which remain unresolved, a further stage is available. If the complainant is still not satisfied, they can request that the complaint is put before the Board. The decision by the Board is full and final.

In certain circumstances, and if all else fails, it may be appropriate to complain to the Office of the Scottish Charities Regulator (OSCR). More details can be found on OSCR's website, www.oscr.org.uk.

Report to Trustees

A report will be presented to the Board annually by senior staff, listing the number of complaints and the action taken to resolve them, and identifying any themes or trends.

Reviewed 21.11.2025