

King's Lynn Night Shelter

COMPLAINTS POLICY

Introduction

The King's Lynn Night Shelter is a registered Charity whose work involves contact with staff, volunteers, service users (including our residents, or "guests"), other professional agencies and organisations, and the general public. As a Charity we make every effort to ensure that the people with whom we come into contact have a positive experience of our service, but at the same time we recognise that there may be times when people wish to raise a complaint or concern.

Principles

The Charity aims to deal with complaints fairly, openly and as an opportunity for learning and improving service provision. We will carry out a regular review of complaints received and use this to inform our planning.

We will however take a robust approach to complaints which appear to be malicious in content or nature and may be in touch with Police or other third party if these are persistent and might be considered a nuisance or harassment.

This Policy does not attempt to cover concerns or complaints involving safeguarding matters, which are covered by the Charity's Safeguarding Policy including relevant contact details.

Procedures

The Night Shelter's **staff and volunteers** should consult and follow the Grievance Procedure as set out in the Staff and Volunteer Handbooks for any formal complaints or concerns.

Current or former service users, ie anyone to whom the Charity is currently providing support or has provided support as part of its charitable work, are encouraged to raise any concerns informally in the first instance with the staff member on shift who will listen and attempt to resolve the matter. They will note on the Night Shelter's log that a concern has been raised, and their response. If the concern cannot be resolved in this way, or if the service user wishes to raise a formal complaint, they may either write to or ask to speak with the Director or designated deputy, who will respond as soon as possible and usually within two weeks of the complaint being received. This response will be final.

Representatives of professional organisations, and members of the public, are encouraged to raise any concerns informally with the Director in the first instance by telephone or in person so that a conversation

can be had and an attempt made to resolve the concern. Where a concern is raised in writing, this should be addressed to the Director and include the full name and contact details of the person raising the concern. All communications raised in this way will be treated as a formal complaint.

If a formal complaint is received, the Director will review the matter and may contact the complainant or arrange to meet to clarify details. Following this, and usually within two weeks of the complaint being received, they will respond in writing setting out a response, or letting the complainant know if a response will follow at a later stage (if for example further internal investigations need to be carried out, or other parties consulted). This response may include an apology, an indication of any changes made to services or policies as a result of the complaint, or a statement to the effect that no further action will be taken and the reasons for this.

If the complainant is unhappy with the final response given, they should reply in writing to the Director setting out the reasons why they believe the response is unreasonable. The Director will pass this letter together with any other relevant documentation to the Chair or a designated Trustee for reply. Please note that the Trustees will not normally become involved in complaints regarding operational matters, including work with external agencies, and these may be passed back to the Director.

If the complaint is regarding the Director, the complainant should seek to resolve the matter informally in the first instance by contacting the Director with their concerns. If following this they wish to make a formal complaint, this should be made in writing and addressed to the Chair of Trustees either by email or letter including their full name and contact details. The Chair of Trustees will follow the same procedure for formal complaints as set out above.

If having followed this Procedure the complainant is still unhappy with the response received, they may find it helpful to contact the UK Fundraising Regulator or Charity Commission for advice.

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