



COMPLAINTS HANDLING POLICY

OVERVIEW

The Gurkha Welfare Trust (the Trust) views complaints as an opportunity to learn and improve for the future, as well as a chance to put things right for the person or organisation that has made the complaint.

Our policy is to:

- provide a fair complaints procedure that is clear and easy to use for anyone wishing to make a complaint;
- publicise the existence of our complaints procedure so that people know how to contact us;
- ensure everyone at the Trust understands how to respond to complaints;
- ensure all complaints are investigated fairly and in a timely way;
- resolve complaints wherever possible and, where appropriate, restore relationships; and
- gather and use information from complaints to improve our work.

We are committed to making this procedure accessible. We will make reasonable adjustments where required to ensure individuals can raise complaints effectively.

DEFINITION OF A COMPLAINT

- A complaint is any expression of dissatisfaction, whether justified or not, about any aspect of the Trust's work.
- Complaints may come from donors, beneficiaries, supporters, members of the public, or any other person or organisation with an interest in the Trust's activities.
- A complaint can be made verbally, by telephone, by email, or in writing.

CONFIDENTIALITY

All complaint information will be handled sensitively and shared only with those who need to know. We will comply with all applicable data protection legislation.

RESPONSIBILITY AND GOVERNANCE

Overall responsibility for this policy rests with the Board of Trustee-Directors. Day-to-day implementation is delegated to the GWT Senior Management Team.

ESCALATION AND REVIEW

If a complainant is dissatisfied with the initial response, they may request a review of the complaint. This review will normally be carried out by a more senior member of staff or, where appropriate, by the Chair of the GWT Audit and Finance Committee.

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

Written complaints may be sent to:

The Gurkha Welfare Trust
2nd Floor, Cross Keys House
Salisbury
Wiltshire
SP1 1EY
or by email to: info@gwt.org.uk

Verbal complaints may be made by telephone on 01722 323955 or in person to any member of staff, volunteer, or a Trustee-Director.

Where appropriate, complainants may also raise concerns with relevant regulators. If a complainant remains dissatisfied after exhausting the Trust's internal complaints procedure, they may contact the Charity Commission. The Charity Commission generally does not resolve individual complaints but may consider concerns about serious wrongdoing or governance issues within a charity.

If the complaint relates to personal data, it may also be referred to the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO): <https://ico.org.uk/>

RECEIVING AND RESPONDING TO COMPLAINTS

We are committed to training our staff in handling complaints promptly, efficiently, and respectfully.

We will:

- acknowledge receipt of a complaint within two working days;
- aim to resolve complaints within five working days where possible; and
- where this is not possible, provide an update explaining the reason for delay and expected timescales.

Where a complaint is complex or requires investigation, we will inform the complainant of the expected timeframe at the outset and keep them updated as appropriate.

COMPLAINTS TO A REGULATOR

A complainant may contact the Charity Commission at any stage, although it will usually expect the Trust's internal complaints process to have been exhausted first.

The Trust will cooperate fully with any relevant regulator should a complaint be referred to them.

MONITORING AND LEARNING FROM COMPLAINTS

Complaints are registered and reviewed annually to identify trends or recurring issues. Where appropriate, findings are used to improve procedures, training and service delivery.

PERSONAL DATA BREACHES (GDPR)

A personal data breach is a breach of security leading to the accidental or unlawful destruction, loss, alteration, unauthorised disclosure of, or access to personal data.

Further information can be found on the Information Commissioner's Office website: <https://ico.org.uk/>