

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE



Implementation date	
Review date	

Signed by the trustees:

Karen Lord Chair of Trustees

Jenny Benfield Treasurer

Margarida Littlefair Secretary

Stripey Stork is committed to maintaining high standards across all aspects of its work. However, we recognise that there is always the possibility that we may fail to meet the high standards that we set for ourselves.

People in this Document

General Manager – Nicola Dawes – info@stripeystork.org.uk

Volunteer Team Lead – Ruth Ritter – volunteer@stripeystork.org.uk

Board of Trustees and other staff members – see our website (www.stripeystork.org.uk)

What constitutes a complaint?

We see a complaint to be any expression of dissatisfaction with any aspect of Stripey Stork which is under the control of the Charity, its staff or volunteers.

What to do if you have a complaint

If there is anything to do with Stripey Stork which you feel you need to complain about, please tell us as soon as possible. If we do not know about a problem, we cannot begin to resolve it for you and take action to ensure it doesn't happen again.

Resolving complaints

We will address each complaint in a sensitive, fair, transparent, equitable, professional and unbiased manner through the following complaints handling process.

We will operate at all times from the premise that any person is entitled to express his or her views on our services and that those views should be taken seriously where this is warranted. We will not, however, tolerate any abusive or discriminatory language or behaviour towards any of our staff, volunteers or Trustees, and may decline to investigate a complaint further in such circumstances. At all times we will treat you with understanding and respect. We ask that you do the same for our staff, volunteers and Trustees.

Confidential information in relation to your complaint will be handled sensitively. We are not able to respond to anonymous complaints. We cannot deal with matters for which Stripey Stork is not directly responsible.

Dealing with complaints informally

If you have a complaint relating to your work or the people you work with you should, where possible, start by talking it over directly with the person(s) involved and clearly outline what you feel should be done to alleviate the situation. You may be able to agree a solution informally between you.

If this is not an option, discuss the matter directly with our Volunteer Coordinator or our General Manager.

The people involved will be asked to comply with the best solution identified by all involved. Whether or not the complaint has been resolved, it should be brought to the attention of our General Manager within 5 working days of the complaint being made.

All information will be treated in the strictest confidence.

Dealing with formal complaints

If the matter is serious and/or you wish to raise the matter formally you should set out the complaint in writing to our General Manager at info@stripeystork.org.uk or Stripey Stork, 51a Albert Road North, Reigate RH2 9EL. Please include your full postal and email contact details.

What we will do on receipt of your complaint

- We will record your complaint and then acknowledge receipt of your complaint by email or post within five working days of receipt
- We will advise you how your complaint will be handled, who will be handling it, and when you can expect a reply.
- We will request any further information from all relevant parties. If your complaint involves a member of staff or volunteer, this person will have the opportunity to express their point of view, accompanied by a friend. We will not disclose your name during our investigation unless you give us permission to do so.
- We will inform you of the conclusions of the investigation, take any necessary action to resolve the problem and tell you what that action is (subject to the terms of Stripey Stork's Privacy Policy).
- Where an in-depth investigation is required, we aim to provide a full response within twenty working days. We will advise you if exceptional circumstances make that timescale impossible
- Our General Manager will, if necessary, escalate your formal complaint to the Board of Trustees depending on the complexity or seriousness of the issue.

What if our response does not satisfy you?

If you are not happy with our response, you can request that your complaint is reviewed at Board level. We will then pass your complaint on to our Board of Trustees.

The request for Board level review should be acknowledged within five working days of receipt. The acknowledgement should say who will deal with your complaint and when you can expect a reply. The Board of Trustees may investigate the facts of the case themselves or delegate a suitably senior person to do so. This may involve reviewing the paperwork of the case and speaking with the person who dealt with the complaint initially. The person who dealt with the original complaint should be kept informed of what is happening.

If the complaint relates to a specific person, they should be informed and given a further opportunity to respond. Ideally you should receive a definitive reply within a month. If this is not possible because, for example, an investigation has not been fully completed, then a progress report should be sent with an indication of when a full reply will be given. Whether the complaint is upheld or not, the reply to you should describe the action taken to investigate the complaint, the conclusions from the investigation, and any action taken as a result of the complaint. The decision taken at this stage is final, unless the Board of Trustees decides it is appropriate to seek external assistance with resolution.

External Stage

As Stripey Stork is a registered charity, you can complain to the Charity Commission Regulator at any stage. Information about the kind of complaints the Charity Commission can involve itself in can be found on their website (<https://www.gov.uk/complain-about-charity>).

Review of this Policy and Complaints Received

This policy will be reviewed by our Trustees every 12 months and all complaints received will be brought before the Trustees for review at our regular Board meetings. Through this process of regular review we aim to improve our services to you and to ensure that any lessons learned are implemented within the organisation.

Variation of the Complaints Procedure

The Trustees may vary the procedure for good reason. This may be necessary to avoid a conflict of interest, for example, a complaint about a staff member or trustee should not also have the staff member and/or trustee involved as a person leading the review of that complaint.