



Rickmansworth Waterways Trust

Complaint Policy

Document Number P07

Date Reviewed and Approved by the Trustees – Nov 2020

What do we mean by “complaint?”

Generally, a complaint is any communication made by a person with a legitimate interest in the Trust’s activities, a parent or member of school staff for example, which expresses dissatisfaction about the standard of teaching or service, or about the conduct of members of staff or volunteers employed by the Trust. The feedback received from complaints helps us as we strive to improve our services.

Concerns and Complaints

We recognise the difference between a concern and a complaint, and acknowledge that taking informal *concerns* seriously at the earliest stage will reduce the need to raise formal *complaints*. We will aim to handle concerns without the need for formal procedures, and our complaints procedure does not in any way undermine efforts to resolve the concern informally. In most cases the individual delivering the service will receive the first approach, and should be able to resolve issues on the spot, including apologising where necessary.

Who do I complain to?

The person most likely to be available at once is the General Manager, Education Programme Manager or volunteer, and an oral complaint (or expression of concern) may be made to them. But a formal complaint, ideally using the form attached, should be made in writing to the Chairman of the Trustees at the Trust’s registered address.

Dealing with Complaints – Formal procedures

The formal procedures will be invoked when initial attempts to resolve the issue are unsuccessful and the person raising the concern remains dissatisfied and wishes to take the matter further as a complaint. The operation and management of the Trust’s complaints procedure is by the Chair of the Trustees.

There are three main steps in making a complaint:

Stage 1 (informal)

You should contact the Trust first and tell the staff (whether voluntary or permanent) about your complaint. The issues raised will be checked at once and if possible remedial action taken on the spot. Any concerns and complaints can hopefully be successfully resolved in this way: our aim is to ensure that complaints are addressed promptly and resolved informally wherever possible.

Stage 2

Where it is not possible to resolve the matter informally the next step is to write to the Chair of the Trustees at the Trust’s offices. The Chair will either:

- Investigate your complaint
- Ask an independent person to do so

At the end of the investigation, you may be invited to a meeting to get feedback, or you will receive a full written response by post. You may be asked to come and tell the investigation more about the background to your complaint.



Stage 3

If you are still unhappy after this investigation, an independent or external panel may be convened at a mutually convenient time and place. It may be necessary to involve, for example, the local Council for Voluntary Service (CVS), the National Council for Voluntary Organisations (NCVO) or even the Charities Commission, or the Health and Safety Executive (HSE).

Timescales

Stage 1 – We will reply to your complaint within 15 working days

Stage 2 – You should receive a reply within 30 working days

Stage 3 – You should receive a reply within 30 working days

We do not undertake to have resolved the issue fully in those times, because the issues may be serious and we are a very small organisation. But we will at least keep you informed in this way. If more time is needed you will be notified.



RWT Complaint Report

Please complete and return to: -

The Chairman, Rickmansworth Waterways Trust, Batchworth Lock Canal Centre, 99 Church Street, Rickmansworth WD3 1JJ. Receipt will be acknowledged and you will be informed what action will be taken.

Name:

Address:

Postcode:

Email Address:

Phone number:

Please give details of your complaint:



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What action, if any, have you already taken to try and resolve your complaint. (e.g. who did you speak to and what was the response)?

What actions do you feel might resolve the problem at this stage?

Are you attaching any paperwork? If so, please give details.

Signature:

Date:

Official use

Date acknowledgement sent:

By whom:

Complaint referred to: