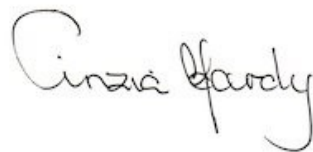


highlights

rural touring scheme

Complaints Policy & Procedure

Updated September 2023
Due for Review September 2025



Signed:

Date: 4 October 2023

HIGHLIGHTS' COMPLAINTS POLICY

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1) AIMS

Highlights Productions aims to provide an efficient, prompt and courteous service to all. We welcome your comments regarding any dissatisfaction with our services and aim to resolve these through our procedure. This policy tells you how to go about making a complaint about our service and what response you can expect from us.

2) DEFINITION

A complaint is defined as any expression of dissatisfaction; however it is communicated. This would include complaints expressed face to face, via a phone call, in writing, via email or any other method. All staff should have sufficient knowledge to be able to identify an “expression of dissatisfaction” even when the word “complain” or “complaint” is not used.

3) POLICY STATEMENT

We take all complaints seriously and see them as an opportunity to improve what we do and how we do it. You can expect to be treated with courtesy and fairness at all times. We will aim to resolve your complaint as quickly and as fully as possible.

4) ADVICE AND GUIDANCE

The Director or General Manager handling a complaint may contact the Trustees for general advice and guidance.

5) PRINCIPLES

- We welcome feedback from our service users. Highlights aims to be an open and accountable organisation.
- Feedback and suggestions are helpful to us in providing an effective and responsive service and in meeting our objectives. Highlights welcomes and values positive and negative comments as we strive for continuous improvement.
- Complaints are valid whether they are recorded in writing or not. We value both verbal and written comments and will report the outcome of any complaint to the complainant. This will require us to ask for contact details if not already included.
- Complaints will be dealt with courteously, quickly and effectively by the most appropriate member of staff.

What kind of complaint can be considered?

Grounds for complaint include:

- Dissatisfaction with standards of service (for example, the quality of information provided, either verbally or in written form, or the manner in which that information was provided).
- Deficiencies in standards of service (which might include problems with accessibility or the provision of information in appropriate formats).
- Discrimination, harassment, bullying and victimisation.
- Other deficiencies in the quality of your experience with Highlights.

What kind of complaint is excluded?

Complaints made to Highlights need to relate to the actions of Highlights staff or other contractors or individuals working as representatives of Highlights.

The nature of what we do means that we often work in partnership or in association with a large number of artists, volunteer promoters and individuals. We cannot respond to complaints about the work of others and suggest that such complaints be addressed to the organisation, group or individual concerned.

We recognise however that these exclusions may still have a bearing on the reputation of Highlights.

In the event of concerns being raised with us that relate to our partners rather than our direct staff, we would support the complaint in contacting the responsible individual or organisation.

6) COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

Written records, including dates, must be made by Highlights at each stage of the procedure.

If possible, any complaints should be resolved informally, without delay, by speaking with the individual concerned or by phoning the Highlights office on 017683 53954. If, however, this does not resolve the situation a formal complaint can be made through Highlights' two-stage complaints procedure.

Stage 1

If the complaint cannot be resolved informally, the complainant should be advised that a formal complaint may be made and the following procedure should be explained to them.

It will help us if all formal complaints are made in writing with as much detail as possible, including any supporting documents or additional information. This helps us to understand the complaint more fully and to respond more effectively. In addition, it is also helpful to include any suggestions as to how the complaint might be resolved or the required outcome.

In all cases, the complaint must be passed on to either the General Manager or Director who will investigate the details of the complaint. If the complaint concerns a member of Highlights' staff, any conclusions reached should be discussed with the staff member involved.

In the event of a complaint about the General Manager or Director, the complaint should be passed to the Chair of Trustees.

The General Manager or Director may discuss the complaint with any relevant parties (i.e. people directly involved in the complaint). However, we undertake to maintain

full confidentiality beyond this and will not discuss the complaint with anyone outside Highlights without first agreeing this with the complainant.

We will acknowledge receipt of a complaint **within five working days** and a full response will be provided **within 15 working days** of receipt of the complaint. If for some reason we are unable to respond within 15 working days, we will contact the complainant to explain why.

Stage 2

If the complaint remains unresolved at Stage One, then the complainant can request that the matter be taken to Stage Two. At Stage Two, the complaint will be reviewed and responded to by the Chair of Trustees or a different Highlights Trustee, as appropriate.

The Chair or Trustee may discuss the complaint with any relevant parties (i.e. people directly involved in the complaint). However, we undertake to maintain full confidentiality beyond this and will not discuss the complaint with anyone outside Highlights without first agreeing this with the complainant.

Any conclusions reached should be discussed with the staff member involved. The person making the complaint will receive a response based on the investigation within four weeks of the complaint being received. If this is not possible then a letter must be sent explaining why.

Once the Chair/Trustee has responded to the complaint the formal internal complaints process is concluded.

7) TRAINING

All staff will receive regular training on the content of the policy and procedure and on how to recognise a complaint and how to record it.

8) REVIEW

This Policy should be reviewed every two years by the Board of Trustees.