

3.4 Complaints Policy

1. Purpose

Carers' Resource aims to provide a helpful and efficient service for carers and those in need of care and support. If you are not satisfied with any part of our work we are keen to hear about it. Our complaints procedure aims to provide a full resolution to complaints.

2. General Principles

- 2.1 There are no time limits for a complaint, but the sooner you complain the easier it is to deal with the matter effectively.
- 2.2 Making a complaint can be difficult and sometimes stressful. If you need support you can bring someone along to support you, such as a friend, relative or adviser.
- 2.3 You will be treated with respect by the Carers' Resource employees and volunteers throughout the process.
- 2.4 All complaints will be treated in strictest confidence. The Carers' Resource will aim to be fair to all parties.
- 2.5 If you are complaining on behalf of another person we will need to see written permission from the person concerned that they are willing for you to act on their behalf.
- 2.5 There are two methods in which to complain, *informal complaint* and *formal complaint*.

Complaints Procedure

1. The Procedure

1.1 *Informal complaint:* speak or write to the person concerned as soon as possible after the incident which has made you unhappy. It may be that a misunderstanding has occurred, in which case an early discussion with the person concerned may address your issue(s).

1.2 *Formal complaint* – If you do not wish to speak to the person concerned, or you are not happy with the way they have dealt with your complaint, you can make a formal complaint to the Director of Carers' Resource either verbally or in writing. If verbally, we will type up the details of a formal complaint for you to authorise as an accurate record of the discussion.

You should address a written complaint marked "In confidence" to The Director, The Carers' Resource, 11 North Park Road, Harrogate, HG1 5PD. If your complaint is about the Director you should write to the Carers' Resource Chairman marked "In confidence" at the address above.

1.3 We will send a written acknowledgement of your complaint within five working days of receipt, unless the Director is absent, in which case you will be informed of the reasons for the delay and given a date by which you will be contacted by the Director.

1.4 The Director, or nominated representative, will investigate your complaint within ten working days of the acknowledgement being issued, ie within 15 working days of your complaint. This will involve the Director or nominated representative discussing the matter with the other party/parties involved.

You will be offered the choice to be informed by letter of the outcome (within five working days), or to attend a meeting at a mutually convenient time where the Director or nominated representative and the other party/parties are present, to resolve the matter. If you need support you may bring along a friend, relative or adviser.

1.5 If a meeting has taken place the Director or nominated representative will send you a letter within five working days of

the meeting notifying you of the outcome. If for any reason this is not possible then you will be informed of the reason for the delay and notified of a date by which you will be told the outcome.

- 1.6 The written outcome will include a summary of the actual incident, a description of the action that will be taken by Carers' Resource in response to the incident and an apology where appropriate. This letter will ask you to confirm whether you are satisfied with this outcome.
- 1.7 If you are still unhappy about the outcome, you may wish to contact the Chairman of the Carers' Resource, who are responsible for the overall management of the organisation. You can address your letter to the Chairman or to the Board of Trustees c/o Carers' Resource – marked "In Confidence"
- 1.8 Your complaint will be acknowledged by the Chairman/or representative of the Board of Trustees within ten working days of receipt at the Carers' Resource address. They will notify you of the action they will take within 20 working days of receiving your complaint and invite you to a meeting at an agreed place to discuss this further.

Such a meeting will involve a panel of three, two of whom would be Trustees and one of whom would be an independent person who would not be connected in any way to the Carers' Resource. You may bring along a friend, relative or adviser.

You would be notified in writing within ten working days of the meeting of its outcome and this decision will be final.