

Complaints Policy

Staffordshire Wildlife Trust endeavours at all times to provide a first-class service to its members, visitors and customers, but despite these good intentions, complaints may occur.

In order to be efficient and customer-focussed, the Trust has a Complaints Procedure that all staff and relevant volunteers are made aware of at their induction and which will be followed at all times.

Complaints Procedure

Heads of Service should ensure that all new staff and relevant volunteers are made aware of the Complaints Policy during their induction and the standard employee induction form will include reference to it.

In many instances, it will be clear by the language used, or the tone of the communication received, that a complaint is being made; where there is ambiguity, the member of staff first in touch with the member of the public concerned should establish whether that person wishes to register a complaint.

The process of handling a complaint should be seen as something that provides a learning experience for all staff and volunteers involved, as it will have been driven by the receipt of customer feedback.

If concerns or complaints arise from any source, the Trust will deal with them promptly and fairly. An initial, official communication with the complainant should be made within 48 hours of receipt (weekends and Bank Holidays not included). If this communication does not constitute the full response, it should be made clear in the acknowledgement that the matter will be investigated and advised to the complainant within two working weeks; sooner if at all possible.

Complaints should only be handled by Managers, Heads of Service and the Chief Executive; if there is a complaint about the Chief Executive, this will be handled by the Chair, representative of the principle that any complaint about a person will be handled by their line manager, so long as that line manager is at least of manager-status.

Those receiving complaints may well not be able to handle them personally, but they should ensure that they are communicated to the appropriate, more senior person, as soon as possible.

All complaints should be documented and filed in the complaints file, which is

to be found in the office behind reception; Trustees are encouraged to view the file at their convenience and the monthly SLT meeting will have Complaints as a standing agenda item to allow cases to be reviewed.

Letters and e-mails of complaint should be responded to by the same media, and hard copies printed off for the complaints file. Complaints made in person, or by telephone, should be logged on a complaints form, stocks of which are to be found in the complaints file.

Responses to complaints should be as open and honest as possible, but if there are underlying facts that are inappropriate to share with the public, but which help shape the final response given, these should be written up as a file note and filed with the complaint and the Trust's reply.