

T4P Compliments and Complaints Policy

Policy approved by Trustees: 2022

Date for next review: 2026

***Acknowledgements:** this policy is an adaptation of the HOPE UK Complaints Procedure kindly shared.
Please credit organisations in any further adaptations.*

Definitions

Workers - The word 'workers' will be used to refer to anyone working with T4P in a paid or unpaid capacity. This includes; Associates, Contractors, Employees & Volunteers.

1. Introduction

T4P is committed to working to high standards and with real care. In order to keep our practices thorough and relevant, we welcome comments on what we're doing right, as well as when we get things wrong. We listen to comments, treat them seriously and take them as opportunities to learn and improve the ways we work.

- 1.2 We treat a complaint as: 'any expression of dissatisfaction with our service which calls for a response.'

2. Our policy is:

- 2.1 To provide a fair complaints procedure which is clear and easy to use for anyone wishing to make a complaint.
- 2.2 To publicise the existence of our complaints procedure so that people know how to contact us to make a complaint.
- 2.3 To make sure everyone at T4P knows what to do if a complaint is received.
- 2.4 To make sure all complaints are investigated fairly and in a timely way.
- 2.5 To make sure that complaints are, wherever possible, resolved and that relationships are repaired.

2.6 To take note of compliments and make time to celebrate.

2.7 To gather information which helps us to improve what we do.

3. Source of a complaint

3.1 Complaints may come from any individual, volunteer or organisation who has a legitimate interest in T4P, including the general public if something is perceived to be improper.

3.2 A complaint can be received verbally, by phone, by email or in writing.

3.3 This policy refers to comments regarding:

- the standard of service we provide
- the behaviour of our people delivering that service
- the charity's policy, communications, resources, or decisions about that service

3.4 It does not cover: Whistleblowing complaints (see Whistleblowing and Safeguarding Policies) disputes between the charity/its volunteers/its staff (which must follow our internal Grievance Procedures) complaints which are inappropriate (we will not accept vexatious, malicious, abusive, frivolous or other inappropriate complaints)

4. Confidentiality and Data Protection

4.2 If, in a rare case, the law obliges us to breach confidentiality, please refer to the appropriate policy, eg. in the case of a safeguarding issue refer to the T4P Safeguarding Policy.

4.1 All complaint information will be handled sensitively, telling only those who need to know and following any relevant requirements as outlined in our Data Protection Policy.

5. Learning from Feedback

5.1 T4P records all complaints and outcomes, so that we can identify any emerging issues and trends. The monitoring of complaints allows us to learn lessons so that any appropriate improvements to our work can be implemented.

5.2 Whilst careful not to break confidentiality, associates & trustees should be informed of general principles that can influence better working practices within the organisation.

6. Complaints Procedure for T4P

6.1 Publicised contact details for complaints

6.1.1 Written complaints may be sent to our **Administrator** at **hello@t4p.org.uk**

6.1.2 Telephone conversations can be booked in advance and arranged via phone or email, if someone would rather speak to someone verbally.

6.2 Receiving complaints

6.2.1 Complaints may arrive through channels publicised for that purpose or through any other contact details or opportunities the complainant may have, such as social media. Complaints received by telephone or in person need to be recorded.

6.2.2 The person who receives a phone or in person complaint should:

- Write down the facts of the complaint
- Take the complainant's name, address and telephone number
- Note down the relationship to T4P, e.g. Project participant, volunteer, organisation
- Tell the person that we have a compliments and complaints procedure
- Tell the person what will happen next and how long it will take
- Where appropriate, ask if the person making a complaint would like to send a written account by email so that the complaint is recorded in the complainant's own words.

Resolving complaints about Workers & Trustees

6.3.1 Stage one - Complaints about Workers or Trustees

6.3.1.1 In many cases, a complaint is best resolved by the **Administrator** alongside the **Worker** or **Trustee** responsible for the issue being complained about. If the complaint has been received by that person, they may be able to resolve it informally and swiftly, and should do so if possible and appropriate. Whether or not the complaint has been resolved, the complaint information should be recorded and shared with the **Project Lead Circle** within five days of being received.

6.3.1.2 If it has not already been resolved, the **Administrator** (or an appropriate person if the complaint is about the Administrator) should be delegated to investigate it and to take appropriate action. If the complaint relates to a specific person, they should be informed and given a fair opportunity to respond.

6.3.1.5 Complaints should be acknowledged by the person handling the complaint within five working days. The acknowledgement should say who is dealing with the complaint and when the person complaining can expect a reply. A copy of this Complaints Procedure should be attached. Ideally complainants should receive a definitive reply within a month. If this is not possible because, for example, an

investigation has not been fully completed, a progress report should be sent with an indication of when a full reply will be given.

6.3.1.4 Whether the complaint is justified or not, the reply to the complainant should describe the action taken to investigate the complaint, the conclusions from the investigation, and any action taken as a result of the complaint.

6.3.2 Stage Two - procedure for complaints about Workers

6.3.2.1 If the complainant feels that the problem has not been satisfactorily resolved at Stage One, they can request that the complaint is reviewed at Board level.

6.3.2.2 At this stage, the complaint will be passed to the **Board of Trustees**. The request for Board level review should be acknowledged within five working days of receiving it. The acknowledgement should say who will deal with the case and when the complainant can expect a reply.

6.3.2.3 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 at Stage One. The person who dealt with the original complaint at Stage One should be kept informed of what is happening.

6.3.2.4 If the complaint relates to a specific person, they should be informed and given a further opportunity to respond. Ideally complainants should receive a definitive reply within a month. If this is not possible because for example, an investigation has not been fully completed, 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 the complainant should describe the action taken to investigate the complaint, the conclusions from the investigation, and any action taken as a result of the complaint.

6.3.2.5 The decision taken at this stage is final, unless the **Board** decides it is appropriate to seek external assistance with resolution. This may involve engaging a mediator, to help resolve the issue in a way that works for everyone. This opportunity is outlined in full in T4P's Grievance Policy.

6.3.3 Stage Two - procedure for resolving complaints about Trustees

6.3.3.1 If the complaint is about a Trustee and is not resolved in Stage 1, our procedure is the same as for Workers, except that the Trustee being complained about is not included in the investigation and decision, to avoid a conflict of interest.

6.3.4. The Trustee who has been complained about, cannot lead a Stage Two review. The **Chair of Trustees** will in most cases be responsible for leading the review,

unless the complaint is about them. In which case another Trustee will be delegated this responsibility.

7. Monitoring and Learning

Compliments and complaints are reviewed annually to identify any trends which may indicate a need to take further action.
