

Complaints Policy

Introduction

This policy outlines how Buttle UK will deal with complaints and the procedure by which they should be resolved. We take all complaints seriously and will use information provided in complaints to monitor our work and look at how it may be improved.

How we respond to different complaints

1. Complaints in relation to a decision of a grant application or grant award

Our grant policy is to award grants to beneficiaries based on all the available information and in good faith. The budget we have available at the time of decision will also be a factor in some decisions. Consequently, our decision to award, or not, and the value of the award is our decision alone and is not subject to complaint by the referrer, agency or beneficiary. Consequently, there is no appeals basis in these circumstances.

2. Complaints about the way the Charity has conducted its affairs generally, in any part of the organisation or in relation to a third party acting on behalf of Buttle UK

The Director of Finance & Administration will handle all such complaints in relation to the conduct of the Charity's affairs. The exception to this is where the complaint involves the Director of Finance & Administration directly in which case another member of Buttle UK's Senior Management Team will handle the complaint.

If the complaint relates specifically to fundraising, and the Complainant does not feel that Buttle UK has adequately addressed their concerns, then the Fundraising Regulator exists to adjudicate complaints from the public about charitable fundraising practice.

Our process

Complaints will be handled in an informal or formal manner. We will always try to deal with them informally, mainly by telephone, so that they may be dealt with quickly and in such a way that a satisfactory resolution is achieved.

Complaints may be received by telephone or written communication (web form, email or letter) and will be handled **informally**, namely:

- It will be dealt with efficiently and handled courteously and sensitively
- It will be properly investigated, where appropriate
- There will be a timely and appropriate response

Complaints will be dealt with by the person who it affects and can be escalated to a member of the Senior Management Team at the informal stage.

A complaint will be treated as formal if the resolution is likely to take much longer and will involve significant input from other members of staff to understand the underlying problem.

If a complaint is treated as **formal**, then we will:

- Assign it a number on the Complaints File as soon as it is received by the charity and send an acknowledgment letter within five working days. If there is likely to be a delay (e.g. relevant people are out of the office) this will be clearly explained.
- If there is insufficient information available, the Complainant will be asked to provide as much information as possible so that the complaint can be considered properly.
- Following an investigation, a decision will be made within 20 working days of receipt of the complaint. If further time is needed to investigate the issues, this information and the process being followed will be clearly communicated to the Complainant. A decision made after the review of such a complaint will be final although the Complainant has the right of appeal to the Ombudsman.
- A copy of the final response to the Complainant, together with any other relevant correspondence, will be placed on the Complaints File, held by the Director of Finance & Administration

Staff welfare

We deal with hundreds of customers each year. Almost all interactions are positive; rewarding for staff and appreciated by customers.

We have a legal obligation to protect the health and welfare of our staff. We are committed to protecting and supporting any member of staff who encounters challenging behaviour when dealing with customers. If a member of staff, when dealing with any Buttle UK customer, feels threatened or distressed or has any kind of difficulty when providing our service, they will bring this to the immediate attention of their line manager.

Sometimes a customer's behaviour can cause significant alarm, distress or concern that a criminal act may have taken, or be about to take place. When such situations arise, we will consider reporting the matter to the police or other relevant authorities. We will base our decision on an assessment of risk. The underlying principle will be the need to protect our staff and others from harm or the threat of harm.