

All Wheel Drive Response North East

Complaints Policy and Procedures

1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to establish a procedure for handling complaints about the services provided All Wheel Drive Response North East, a Charity in the United Kingdom. This policy applies to all trustees, clients, members, volunteers, staff, and stakeholders who wish to make a complaint.

2. Definition of a Complaint

A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction with the services provided by All Wheel Drive Response North East.

3. Procedures

1. **Informal resolution:** All Wheel Drive Response North East aims to resolve complaints as quickly and efficiently as possible. Trustees, clients, members, volunteers, staff, and stakeholders are encouraged to raise any concerns or issues informally, in the first instance, with the person responsible for the service or activity. This can be done verbally or in writing, and the aim is to resolve the matter within five working days.
2. **Formal complaints:** If the matter cannot be resolved informally, the complainant should raise a formal complaint with the committee of All Wheel Drive Response North East. This can be done in writing or via email, and the complaint should include the following information:
 - a) Name and contact details of the complainant.
 - b) Details of the complaint, including when and where it occurred.
 - c) Any relevant documents or evidence.

The committee will acknowledge the complaint within fourteen working days and investigate the matter thoroughly. They may also appoint a senior member of staff to investigate the complaint on their behalf. The investigation will aim to resolve the matter as quickly and efficiently as possible.

3. **Complaints review panel:** If the complainant is not satisfied with the outcome of the investigation, they may request a review by a Complaints Review Panel. The panel will comprise of three members of All Wheel Drive Response North East who were not involved in the initial investigation. The panel will review the complaint and any supporting documentation and may conduct further investigations if necessary.

The panel will aim to provide a written response within twenty working days of receiving the complaint. The response will include:

- a) Findings of the investigation.
- b) Any actions taken because of the investigation.
- c) The outcome of the review.

The decision of the Complaints Review Panel is final, and no further appeal can be made.

4. **Timelines:** We aim to resolve complaints as quickly and efficiently as possible. However, if the investigation is likely to take longer than twenty working days, we will inform the complainant and provide an estimated timeline for completing the investigation.
5. **Confidentiality:** All Wheel Drive Response North East will ensure that all complaints are treated confidentially and sensitively. The complainant's personal information will only be used for the purpose of investigating and responding to the complaint.
6. **Record-keeping:** All Wheel Drive Response North East will keep a record of all formal complaints, including the nature of the complaint, the investigation, and any actions taken because of the complaint. This information will be used to inform improvements to our services and activities.
8. **Accessibility:** All Wheel Drive Response North East is committed to ensuring that our complaints policy is accessible to all clients, volunteers, staff, and stakeholders. We will aid those who require it, including translation services and support for individuals with disabilities.
9. **External Bodies:** If the complainant is not satisfied with the outcome of the Complaints Review Panel, they may contact external to try and resolve the complaint.
10. **Training:** All Wheel Drive Response North East will provide training for trustees, staff, members, and volunteers on how to manage complaints effectively and sensitively. This training will ensure that our complaints policy is implemented consistently and fairly.

11. **Feedback:** All Wheel Drive Response North East values feedback from trustees, clients, members, volunteers, staff, and stakeholders. We will use feedback received through the complaints process to identify areas for improvement and to amend our services and activities, as necessary.
12. **Anti-Retaliation:** All Wheel Drive Response North East prohibits retaliation against any individual who raises a complaint. Any form of retaliation will be considered a serious violation of our policies and will be dealt with accordingly.
13. **Communication:** All Wheel Drive Response North East will communicate the complaints policy to all trustees, clients, members, volunteers, staff, and stakeholders. We will also provide information on how to make a complaint and how complaints will be managed.
14. **Review and Improvement:** All Wheel Drive Response North East will review and update the complaints policy periodically to ensure that it remains relevant and effective. We will also use feedback from trustees, clients, volunteers, staff, and stakeholders to improve the policy and our complaints process.

This policy has been approved by the trustees of All Wheel Drive Response North East and is effective from the 20th of February 2024.