



Dedicated to giving practical and emotional support to all in the Debenham area who care for those with dementia.

1st May 2021

Complaints Policy

The policy and system are needed in order to provide for a fair and independent resolution of complaints against the Charity and/or volunteers and other individuals authorised to act on behalf of the Charity.

It is the current Complaints policy of the project that:

1. It is the responsibility of the Chair of the Project and the Trustees to offer and deliver quality support, activities and support to those in the community who are living with dementia, and also others who may benefit, to a standard commensurate with "best practice", but tempered by what can be practically achieved in consideration of the cost, and availability of local resources.
2. The Project seeks to offer "complaint free" care and support but also recognises that there may be occasions when it might not achieve this aim.
3. All complaints will be treated seriously, fairly, and expeditiously irrespective of their source¹.
4. All complaints will be treated as totally confidential by the Project during any investigation.
5. The Project will fully cooperate with any statutory or legal investigations into any incidents that have resulted from a formal complaint or a "whistleblower" referral to a legitimate external agency².
6. The Chair and Trustees are committed to open and transparent management of The Debenham Project and will make available all relevant records requested by any complainants and/or their legal representatives.
7. All complaints will be reviewed by the Chair of the Project and the Trustees in the light of ensuring a positive desire to improve the operation of the Project and to correct any systemic deficiencies.
8. The project will not in any way knowingly discriminate against any complainant or "whistleblower".
9. There is an assumption that there is a reasonable basis for the complaint.

The system for implementing the policy is as follows.

¹ Sources of complaint: Service users and other beneficial participants, volunteers, employees, contractors, statutory authorities, professional bodies, and representatives and members of the local community,

² Legitimate agencies and individuals: Statutory and legally accredited organisations, legal representatives of media organisations, legal representatives of complainants, next of kin and/or attorneys of complainants.

1. When a complaint is brought to the attention of the Chair of the Project or a member of the Trustees, that person will initially explore the nature of the complaint with the complainant, ascertain their basic concerns, and inform the Chair and Trustees.
2. The Chair or other trustee will refer the complaint to the member of the Trustees nominated for handling complaints to make contact with the complainant, investigate, and report back to the Chair of the Project and the Trustees.
3. The nominated trustee will prepare a formal report, stating the circumstances which resulted in the complaint, the concerns of the claimant, the agreed facts of the case and any points of disagreement.
4. The Chair and Trustees of the Project will consider the report and determine what action, including the offer of meeting between the complainant and the Chair, should be taken to try to resolve the situation informally.
5. In the event that this is not possible, the Chair will ask the nominated trustee to inform the Projects' insurer and explore the avenue of mediation to resolve the issue(s).
6. If this is not acceptable to the complainant, on behalf of the Project, the nominated trustee will advise the Project's insurer of the potential for an escalation to legal action.
7. The Chair of the Project, on the basis of a majority opinion of the trustees, will make the decision to proceed to seek to challenge the complainant in court.

The relevant persons and organisations are, currently, as follows.

Complaints and Legal Matters Trustee: Mr. Roger Cockerton. 01728 860140

Chairman of the Trust: Mr. Lynden A Jackson, 01728 860348

Both the policy and the system and current persons and organisations are being reviewed (April 2021) by the Trustees (April 2021) in the light of experience of use, and will continue to be so.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Lynden A Jackson', is written in a cursive style.

27th April 2021