



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

Debenham Project Complaints Policy and Process

The Debenham project strives to provide a high standard of service, support, activities and advice to those in the community who are living with dementia and also others who may benefit from our services. In the interests of openness and the desire to seek continuous improvement, the Trustees encourage anyone who feels dissatisfied with the service provided to bring this to the attention of the Trustees. In some instances it will be appropriate for an explanation to be given and/or remedial action taken. Where a formal complaint is submitted in writing, a proportionate investigation will be conducted and the outcome communicated back to the complainant in writing.

Confidentiality

1. All complaints will be treated as confidential. Even where the complainant specifically waives their right to confidentiality, the project will comply with its obligations under GDPR legislation to safeguard against the unlawful disclosure of personal data.
2. 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 agency¹.
3. Any meeting of the Trustees, or a sub-committee considering a complaint or inviting the complainant to make representations will exclude the public.
4. Agendas and minutes will not disclose personal data or financial, sensitive or confidential information relating to an individual complainant or a third party.

Complaints process

1. The Trustee Board will appoint three Trustees to form a sub-committee to manage all complaints, whether informal or formal.
2. Enquiries or observations about the Project can be made by telephone (01728 862003), by e-mail to lynden.jackson@the-debenham-project.
3. Any complaint will be passed to the Chair of the Trustee sub-committee

¹ 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.

- for complaints.
4. When a complaint is brought to the attention of the Chair of the Project or a member of the Trustees, the Trustee sub-committee will initially explore the nature of the complaint with the complainant, ascertain their basic concerns and try to resolve their concerns informally.
 5. The sub-committee Chair will inform the other Trustees.
 6. For complaints of a more serious nature, receipt of the complaint will be acknowledged within 5 working days, specifying:
 - a. Who is dealing with the complaint.
 - b. Whether the complainant will have an opportunity to make verbal representations, accompanied by a friend if desired.
 - c. Timeframe for receipt of any response.
 7. It will usually be appropriate for the circumstances leading to the complaint to be investigated informally by the sub-committee on behalf of the Trustees.
 8. For complaints of a serious nature, the complainant will be invited to make verbal representations to the sub-committee. The complainant will be invited to bring a friend to any such meeting.
 9. In normal circumstances, the complainant will be notified in writing (e-mail if appropriate) of the outcome within two months of lodging the complaint. This will include whether or not the complaint is upheld, reasons for the decision, details of any action taken and information about the right of appeal.
 10. The sub-committee will prepare a formal report, for the Trustees, stating the circumstances which resulted in the complaint, the concerns of the claimant, the agreed facts of the case, any points of disagreement and the findings.

Appeals

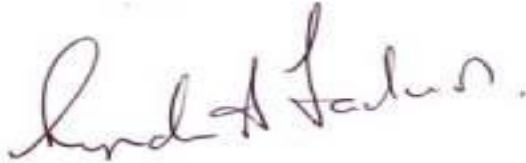
1. If the complainant is not satisfied with how a complaint has been dealt with they can appeal in writing to the Trustee Chair, setting out what they are unhappy with and the grounds. The appeal will be considered by a sub-committee formed of persons not previously involved in the investigation of the original complaint. This will consist of a review of the original investigation and outcome, together with any action taken as a result.
2. Appeals received more than one month after the date of the decision letter/e-mail will not be considered.
3. In the event that the complainant remains unhappy with the Trust's decision, the Chair will ask the nominated trustee to inform the Projects' insurer and explore the avenue of mediation to resolve the issue(s).
4. 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.
5. The Chair of the Trustees, on the basis of a majority opinion of the trustees, will make the decision to proceed to seek to challenge the complaint 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 will continue to be reviewed by the Trustees in the light of experience of use, and will continue to do so.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Lynden A Jackson'.

(Chairman) 26th February 2025