



Complaints Policy

Document history

Process	Date
Author: Alison Heron	7 August 2025
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Next review due	29 August 2026

Policy statement: Sew Positive aims to provide its participants and other users with the best possible service. However, we recognise that from time to time there may be occasions when users of our services feel that the quality or level of service provided falls short of what they could reasonably expect.

The complaints procedure

We take complaints seriously. Complaints give us the opportunity to put things right and the lessons learned can often influence our practices.

It is hoped that user dissatisfaction can be remedied on an informal basis. In the first instance we would hope you would raise any complaint directly with the staff concerned.

The complaints process is for all complaints – or expressions of dissatisfaction – from users, including those who have tried, but failed, to access the service. The Complaints Procedure has two stages. Users may write, email or telephone the CEO or the Chair using the contact details given. At any stage, the complainant may be accompanied or supported by a friend, but not a legal representative.

Stage one

The complaint should be made in person or by telephone or email to the Sew Positive CEO, unless the complaint is about the CEO, when the complaint should be addressed to the Chair (and marked confidential).

The complaint should include the following details which will help us to effectively and quickly investigate your complaint:

- Name and contact details: this is essential as we will not investigate anonymous complaints.
- The nature of the complaint as precisely as possible, this will help us to investigate further and hopefully to resolve the issue. Details such as the place and time the incident occurred should be included.

Once a complaint has been received, a letter of acknowledgement will be sent to the complainant within 10 working days.

This will include who is dealing with the complaint, what action is being taken, and when the complainant can expect to receive a full reply - the target time for responding in full to a complaint is 20 working days.

The CEO (or Chair) will investigate the circumstances leading to the complaint and will communicate the results of the investigation to the complainant. If the complaint is found to be justified, the CEO (or Chair) will agree any necessary further action with the complainant. This letter must also inform complainants of their right to ask for a review of the investigation if they are not satisfied with the outcome of Stage One and how to access this second stage.

The CEO should undertake the investigation – or oversee it if carried out by another member of staff. Where the complaint is against the CEO, the Chair or a designated member of the Trustee Board will need to investigate. This may require an interview with the complainant or a member of staff or volunteer.

Once the investigation is complete, a letter detailing its findings should be sent to the complainant. If the matter is complex and will take longer than originally indicated, write to the complainant explaining the reasons why and including an indication of when a response can be expected.

The full response must contain sufficient information to assure the complainant that their complaint has been taken seriously. If the complaint is upheld, the complainant must be given a full apology for their experience and given details, as far as possible, of what is being done to prevent a recurrence of the situation.

Stage two

The complainant will have the right – if dissatisfied with the results of the enquiry – to put their case, in writing or in person, to an appeal panel of two Trustee Board members. The process to be followed in reviewing the complaint is similar to Stage One but now the lead person conducting the review will be the Chair of the Trustee Board or a designated Trustee if the Chair conducted stage 1. The same target timetable applies.

Once again, the response to the complainant must contain an explanation, apology if required, information about remedial actions, and satisfactory assurances that the complaint has been investigated fully. The letter must also inform the complainant that the reviewer's decision is final and that no further appeal is possible.

Reporting

The CEO will keep the Trustee Board informed of the number and nature of complaints, and the outcomes. They will report to the Board on this at least annually.

Contact details

Please ensure all correspondence is marked 'confidential complaint' and contact either:

The CEO
Melissa Santiago-Val
Sew Positive, 1 Fountain Lane, Haslingfield,
CB23 1LT
info@sewpositive.org

The Chair
Jane Webber
Jane.Webber@sewpositive.org