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**Comments and Complaints Policy**

**November 2023**

At Voluntary Support North Surrey (VSNS) we run our services with our clients at the core of everything we do. In order to provide the best possible service, we need to know what you think of every aspect of the service we provide.

VSNS is very interested in learning from you about what works and about what can be improved in the services we provide. You may have comments about the service you receive from Voluntary Support North Surrey and about our staff and volunteers. These could be about what you like about the service and staff, how you have been helped to bring about positive change in your life, or about what you do not like. You may have suggestions about how we could improve or about changes we could make.

We welcome all comments and suggestions, and if you are in any way dissatisfied, we need to know so that we can investigate and improve services.

**COMMENTS AND COMPLAINTS**

Making a comment or complaint is about telling us about our service or staff. This gives us an opportunity to improve what we do for you and others.

Who can comment or complain?

* Anyone who has used/is using any of our services or someone acting on your behalf
* Relatives or carers or anyone else acting on your behalf
* People who are wanting to use our services
* Organisations who are acting on your behalf or which are involved with Voluntary Support North Surrey

What can I comment or complain about?

You can comment or complain about anything such as:

* Situations where you feel our service has been poor or we have been too slow to respond to you
* The support we provide
* Issues you have with other people, including staff
* You can complain if you feel that you have been treated unfairly

How do I make a comment or complaint?

You can contact us in the way that feels most comfortable for you – whether this be by phone, email, post, or face to face. Contact information is included below.

You can bring someone along with you for support, e.g., a friend, relative or advocate.

**COMPLAINTS PROCESS**

VSNS will ask you if you want your complaint dealt with informally or formally. Most complaints can be dealt with quickly and informally through discussion. The Complaint Form can be found [on the VSNS website](https://www.voluntarysupport.org.uk/about-us/contact-us/)*.*

A formal complaint has two stages:

**Stage 1:**

* A responsible member of staff or the Chief Executive Officer (if the complaint is about the staff member) will acknowledge receipt of the complaint within 5 working days and will be responsible for investigating it.
* You will receive a formal response regarding the investigation and its outcome within 10 working days from the date you received the initial complaint.
* If this takes longer than 10 working days, you will be informed and provided with an update every 10 working days until the investigation is completed.
* Should the complaint be agreed, we will explain what we will do to remedy the situation, and by when. We will also put this in writing to you.
* If you are satisfied with how we have dealt with your complaint, the matter will be closed.

**Stage 2:**

* If you are not satisfied with the VSNS response at Stage 1 and want to take your complaint further, by way of an appeal, you can contact one of the VSNS Trustees. This should be done within 10 working days of receiving a response to the complaint at Stage 1.
* In order for the complaint to be considered at this stage you will be asked to outline the basis for your appeal, if new information has come to light or if the agreed process was defective in some way.

The Trustees will review the information and carry out further investigations. They will do this within 28 days.

**CONTACT INFORMATION**

VSNS can be contacted by: Telephone: 01932 571122 or Email: [info@voluntarysupport.org.uk](mailto:info@voluntarysupport.org.uk)

In person or by post at any of our offices:

* Voluntary Support North Surrey, Community Link, 1st Floor,   
  Ian Goodchild Centre, Knoll Road, Camberley GU15 3SY
* Voluntary Support North Surrey, 6 The Sainsbury Centre,   
  Chertsey KT16 9AG
* Voluntary Support North Surrey, Staines Library, 1st Floor,   
  Friends Walk, Staines TW18 4PG