



## **COMPLAINTS POLICY**

*for*

The Buchanan Trust

### **1. Introduction**

I. The Buchanan Trust (the Charity) is a registered charity run for the following purpose:

- To help those who have served in the armed forces, enabling them to transition into civilian life by offering short term accommodation, accredited training, skills, work experience and employment opportunities in the rural and construction sectors.

II. The Charity is based at:

- Estate Office, North Farm, Bosbury, Ledbury, Herefordshire, England, HR8 1JY
- Charity Number: 235867

III. The Charity has adopted this Complaints Policy; this policy shall apply to all staff of the Charity and anyone working on behalf of the Charity.

### **2. Purpose of the Policy**

- I. The Charity will endeavour to provide and maintain an acceptable standard of service in all its work and activities. However, there may be occasions when a problem arises resulting in a complaint or grievance from a beneficiary, service user, tenant, a service provider, a trustee or a member of the public.
- II. The purpose of this policy document, is to set out the procedure of complaints handling by the Charity.

### **3. Policy Statement**

- I. The Charity will review and improve their services where necessary on a regular basis, which involves giving positive messages to volunteers, beneficiaries, partners and others about expressing their views. We will ensure that we:
  - Listen to people's views and concerns;
  - Act consistently on receipt of comments and complaints;
  - Review our actions, building on positive outcomes;
  - Learn from identified shortcomings; and,
  - Consistently improve.

II. The chairman, trustees, directors and volunteers of the Charity, should actively encourage persons to comment on their services, especially their beneficiaries. This will enable improvements in delivery of their services and cultivates trust, openness and accountability.

III. Our success criteria for dealing with complaints will ensure that:

- We operate a clear and accountable procedure with guidance on how to complain;
- We accept complaints verbally (in person or by telephone) or in writing;
- We will promote a positive culture about complaints;
- We aim to resolve matters speedily to the satisfaction of the complainant; and,
- We will monitor complaints to inform the development of policy and best practice.

#### **4. Procedure for informal and formal comments and complaints**

##### **I. Informal Stage:**

- The majority of minor complaints or concerns should be dealt with at the time to the satisfaction of the complainant. Staff or Trustees receiving a minor concern or complaint which they have not been able to resolve to the complainant's satisfaction, should be reported to the Charity chairman and trustees who will deal with it as an informal complaint.
- The Charity will respond to informal complaints that have not been resolved locally and therefore have been escalated, within 10 working days.

##### **II. Formal Stage:**

- The complainant should be asked to put the complaint in writing;
- If the complaint is about service delivery, the Chairman will respond and will consult any other staff necessary, taking statements if necessary, before doing so;
- If the complaint specifically involves work by one or more members of staff, the person(s) complained about should be given a copy of the complaint and invited to reply unless to do so would place someone at risk;
- The Chairman will investigate the complaint and should take statements from anyone involved or who can help. The Chairman should decide whether to uphold the complaint fully, or in part, or whether to dismiss it whilst cataloguing the reason for doing so;
- Every effort should be made to respond to the complainant within 10 working days by the Chairman. A written reply, if so desired by the complainant, should be sent within 28 calendar days;
- Should the complainant not be satisfied with the response, then they have the right to appeal within 14 calendar days against the Chairman's decision to the Board of Trustees for review. The Board will appoint two trustees to form a Complaints Panel and a chairman will be elected. The chairman shall have a casting vote;
- The complainant may be invited to attend and present their complaint with assistance or help as they deem necessary. The complainants aid may:
  - address the hearing but not answer questions on behalf of the complainant;
  - confer with the complainant during the hearing;
  - ask questions of the trustee panel members;

- confer with the complainant during the hearing, in private if requested.
- The Panel should clarify any issues necessary;
- The Panel will reach a decision which may be unanimous or a majority verdict;
- The Panel will respond to the complainant within 10 working days of the Panel concluding, informing them whether the complaint has been upheld fully, or in part, or whether it has been dismissed. The Panel's decision will be final with regards to the charity; but in the event that the complainant is still not satisfied with the outcome, then they have the right to refer the matter to the Charity Commission.

## **5. Complaints Log**

- I. The Charity will hold a Complaints Log, whereby formal complaints are logged, to include the findings, actions taken and outcomes.
- II. The Complaints Log will be reviewed annually by the chairman and board of trustees.

## **6. Charity Points of Contact**

- I. The Buchanan Trust email: [info@buchanan-trust.org.uk](mailto:info@buchanan-trust.org.uk)
- II. The Buchanan Trust address:
  - Estate Office, North Farm, Bosbury, Ledbury, Herefordshire, HR8 1JY

This Policy is approved and endorsed by The Buchanan Trust and is due for review every 12 MONTHS.

Signed:  KARL GILMORE (TRUSTEE / DIRECTOR)

Date: 17<sup>th</sup> July 2023