

Making a complaint

If any individual or organisation has a concern, an issue, or wishes to make a complaint to St John's Foundation, they should discuss it informally as soon as possible with a member of staff, as providing information or correcting misunderstandings or misconceptions at an early stage may enable the matter to be successfully resolved. In all cases, everything will be done to try and resolve the issue informally and it is hoped that the majority of concerns will be resolved in this way.

If a complainant has difficulty at any stage of this procedure due to a disability, they should ask for assistance. Reasonable adjustments will be made for a person who is disabled and/or their representative.

All complaints are logged for reporting and monitoring purposes. Any issues which are outside routine business or where the stakeholder states they are a complainant, should be recorded by sending details to feedback@stjohnsbath.org.uk or lynn.toman@stjohnsbath.org.uk. It should be made clear whether this was an informal issue that was quickly resolved or whether it was a full-scale complaint that was formally managed. Each complaint is assessed on a case by case basis by the responsible member of staff. All complaints that are escalated up the organisation, where the complainant was not completely satisfied by the outcome or the complaint was in writing should be recorded as a full complaint. Any issues raised through informal channels and quickly resolved with a mutually satisfactory outcome can be recorded as 'near misses' or informal issues and only a few details kept on record.

Details are kept in accordance with the Foundation's privacy policy and a quarterly report is sent to the Chief Executive Officer (CEO). Complaint statistics are reported to the Audit and Risk Committee on a quarterly basis and a summary of complaints by theme presented annually. Any complaints of high consequence are reported to the Board immediately.

There are four stages to the Complaints Procedure: -

- Informal, verbal complaint, concern or issue
- Written complaint
- First appeal
- Further appeal

The Foundation may vary this procedure as appropriate to a particular case.

Informal verbal complaint, concern or issue:

- An informal verbal complaint, concern or issue can be made to any employee.
- Front-line employees who receive an informal verbal complaint, concern or issue should always welcome it and seek to resolve the problem immediately with their line manager's involvement as required.

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- Where further investigation is required, or the complaint is complex in nature, the complainant will be notified and the appropriate senior manager will be informed (often the head of service), who will then deal with the matter.
- After discussing the complaint, the appropriate senior manager will suggest a course of action to resolve the issue.
- If the course of action is acceptable to the complainant, the agreement will be clarified and any follow-up action, such as a confirmation letter or a further meeting, will be arranged.
- If the course of action is not acceptable to the complainant, they will be asked to put their complaint in writing. Any anonymous complaints will not be considered by the Foundation and issues raised that are found to be intentionally malicious will be escalated to the head of service or appropriate senior manager.

Written complaint:

If a problem cannot be dealt with informally, the complainant should put their complaint, concern or issue in writing to the appropriate person as indicated below:-

From or about residents (or their representatives), to the Head of Care and Community Services. Complaints from representatives will only be accepted if the resident has consented to this, either verbally or in writing, or where the resident cannot complain unaided and cannot give consent because they lack the capacity within the meaning of the Mental Capacity Act 2005. The representative must be acting in the resident's best interests (for example, where the matter complained about, if true, would be detrimental to the resident).

Serious allegations concerning the Independent Living Service should be brought to the attention of the Head of Care and Community Services at the earliest opportunity. Such allegations, which may include potential abuse, neglect or theft by an employee, will be reported to the relevant Safeguarding Team, Care Quality Commission and, where appropriate, the Police.

Head of Care and Community Services Lynn Toman
Email: lynn.toman@stjohnsbath.org.uk telephone: 01225 486402

From or about trustees, to the CEO (who will liaise with the chair as appropriate)
David Hobdey email: david.hobdey@stjohnsbath.org.uk telephone: 01225 486410

About employees, to their line manager, the director of their service or Head of HR.
If you do not have the name or contact details for the relevant line manager or director, please contact;

Hazel Nicholls, Head of HR, email: hazel.nicholls@stjohnsbath.org.uk telephone: 01225 486406

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From or about volunteers, to the supervising member of staff, volunteer coordinator or Head of HR

If you do not have the name or contact details for the relevant member of staff or volunteer coordinator, please contact

Hazel Nicholls, Head of HR, email: hazel.nicholls@stjohnsbath.org.uk telephone: 01225 486406

From or about tutors, to the Community Outreach Service Manager

Ricky Bush email address: ricky.bush@stjohnsbath.org.uk telephone: 01225 486453

From or about Outreach attendees, to the Community Outreach Service Manager

Ricky Bush email address: ricky.bush@stjohnsbath.org.uk telephone: 01225 486453

From or about funding recipients, to the Funding Manager

John Thornfield email address: john.thornfield@stjohnsbath.org.uk telephone: 01225 486427

From external organisations/partners, to the Director of the relevant service

Louise Harvey Exec Director for the Foundation Fund

Email: louise.harvey@stjohnsbath.org.uk telephone: 01225 486419

Caroline Bee Director of Finance

Email: caroline.bee@stjohnsbath.org.uk telephone: 01225 486441

From or about tenants of the residential or commercial estate, to the Head of Estates.

Craig Ellam email: craig.ellam@stjohnsbath.org.uk telephone: 01225 486443

Note, in the event that the complaint is about the person to whom you are asked to direct the complaint to, an alternative overall key contact is the Governance & Information Manager (governance@stjohnsbath.org.uk, 01225 486409) or the Head of Care and Community Services, Lynn Toman, (lynn.toman@stjohnsbath.org.uk, 01225 486402).

Written complaints should include comprehensive details of the complaint, for example, the date, place and time of occurrence and the service or person(s) involved. A complaints form can be provided if requested by emailing feedback@stjohnsbath.org.uk. The complaint should include any documents (where applicable) and contact details in the event that more information is required. Every effort will be made to respond to the complainant, in writing, within two working days of receipt and will include the name of the person who will investigate the complaint. A meeting may be held between the complainant and the person looking into the complaint to talk through the complaint and

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to understand what the complainant wishes to achieve. The complainant has a right to be accompanied at the meeting.

Following this meeting, and within 10 working days, the appropriate person to whom the complaint has been made will provide a written response to the complainant, outlining how the complaint is to be resolved and their right of appeal if they are not satisfied with the outcome given at this stage. If the nature of the complaint requires further meetings or further investigation, the 10-day timescale may need to be extended and the complainant will be kept informed and notified of the reasons for the extension.

First appeal

If a complainant feels the response to their complaint is not appropriate, they can appeal, in writing, within five working days of the outcome being communicated to them. The letter must clearly state the specific grounds for appeal. The appeal will be heard by the next level of management or a nominated and impartial employee or the board, whichever the Foundation deems is more appropriate.

If required, a meeting will be held with the complainant in which only grounds identified in the appeal letter will be considered. The complainant may be accompanied.

The individual who has heard the appeal will respond to the complainant in writing within seven working days of the meeting.

Where further investigation is required, or the complaint is complex in nature, the complainant will be notified. The Foundation aims to resolve all complaints within 28 working days of receipt.

Further appeal

If the complainant is still dissatisfied following the decision of the appeal, they can take their complaint to: -

The Charity Commission
Woodfield House
Tangier
Taunton
TA1 4BL
Telephone: 0845 3000218

Residents are also able to contact:-

The Housing Ombudsman Service (for non-care operational concerns)
81 Aldwych
London
WC2B 4HN
Telephone: 0300 111 3000

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Or

Local Government Ombudsman (for care concerns)
PO Box 477
Coventry
CV4 0EH
Telephone: 0300 061 0614

When writing to The Housing Ombudsman Service, the complainant should state their full name, address and telephone number, and set out the details of the complaint. The Ombudsman will only be able to consider a complaint if he/she is satisfied that St John's Foundation's own Complaints Procedure has been fully exhausted and that it falls within his/her jurisdiction. Further information can be found on the Citizens Advice website: <https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/consumer/get-more-help/how-to-use-an-ombudsman-in-england/>.

Where a complainant in receipt of St John's Foundation Independent Living Service remains dissatisfied with the outcome of the Complaints Procedure, they can discuss the matter with the Care Quality Commission (CQC): -

The Care Quality Commission
Citygate
Gallowgate
Newcastle upon Tyne
NE1 4PA
Telephone: 0300 0616161

Advocacy

Complainants may use the assistance of advocacy support at any time throughout the complaints process. If the complainant is a resident, please refer to the 'Resident Advocacy Policy'. If the complainant is a recipient of Individual Crisis Support, they must manage this process through their 'referrer's organisation'. For any other stakeholders, please speak to your contact at the Foundation and / or advise the complaint handler that you will be accompanied to meetings.

Complaints procedure review

A regular review, at least annually or as required, will be undertaken by the governance and exec teams to ensure that the Complaints Procedure remains current and appropriate. Feedback and involvement from employees, residents and volunteers may be sought to assist with the review. Contact details will be checked every six months to ensure they are up to date.

Please read this Complaints Procedure in conjunction with the Complaints Policy.