

GUARDIAN ANGELS DOG RESCUE

Complaints Procedure

The Complaints Procedure has three stages. The first stage is an informal stage and represents a stage that is considered good practice in the handling of grievances within most organisations. Any volunteer or member of the public who has a grievance would normally be expected to first raise their grievance in this way, though this in no way interferes with that person's right to immediately or subsequently raise a formal grievance.

The formal grievance procedure is comprised of two stages: the formal stage requires the formation of a panel to hear the grievance; the appeals stage provides the means and grounds for appealing the outcome of any such hearing.

1. Informal stage: At this stage any volunteer or customer who has a grievance with an action taken by or on behalf of Guardian Angels Dog Rescue should raise their grievance directly and in the first place with the person or persons where this grievance is an issue. It may be that with open discussion and clarification of the issue(s) involved the grievance may be resolved. This action should be raised and completed within six weeks.

2. Formal stage: Any person or persons bringing a formal grievance should notify this in writing to the Trustees of Guardian Angels Dog Rescue via the email address: paws@guardianangelsdogrescue.co.uk. Upon receiving such notice, the Chair of the Trustees will then have the responsibility of establishing a panel to hear the grievance either immediately, or as soon as is practical and within one month of the grievance having been received. However, if the grievance is in relation to the Chair of Trustees the grievance should be addressed to the other members of the Trustees and not involve the Chair.

2.1 The panel to hear the grievance will be made up of three people: the first two will be comprised of one Trustee and one person from the volunteers. The third person will be a neutral person agreed jointly by the person(s) bringing the grievance and the Chair of Trustees. The third person will chair the panel and act as facilitator.

2.2 Following its formation, the appointed panel shall then schedule a date to hear the grievance, ideally within three weeks or as expeditiously as possible.

2.3 Prior to the hearing date, all parties involved will be advised that they may bring representatives, call witnesses, question witnesses and offer a summary of their case. All documents pertaining to the grievance must be with the panel a minimum of five working days before the panel meets to hear the grievance. The decision of the panel will formally be conveyed to all parties within five working days of the panel reaching a conclusion. All recommendations made by the panel will also be passed to the Trustees who are responsible for any action that may need to be taken.

3. Appeals stage If after receiving the panel's decision the person or persons who brought the grievance, or the person or persons who was the object of the grievance, still feels aggrieved then they have twenty-eight days to lodge an appeal with the Chair of the Trustees or, if this person is temporarily unavailable, with a relevant member of the Charity. No appeal will be entertained after this period.

3.1 Any appeal lodged must be in writing and clearly outline the original grievance and any supporting evidence, as well as contain a statement as to the grounds for making the appeal. Such grounds shall be restricted to the emergence of new evidence surrounding the grievance and/or a failure to follow proper procedure in the hearing of the original grievance. If grounds for the appeal are established the Trustees will then arrange a date for the appeal to be heard and

notify all parties of this while also informing all parties of the procedures that will be followed. This should be within one month of the appeal being received. A new panel will hear the appeal. This specially convened panel shall be comprised of 3 people one from the Charity (volunteer or Trustee), one from the complainant and one neutral person.

3.2 Once notified of the decision to consider the appeal, both complainant and respondent may submit written representations to the specially convened panel. If after hearing new evidence, the specially convened panel finds cause to modify the decision reached by the original panel, it may advise the Trustees, but it is the sole responsibility of the Trustees to:

- (a) overturn the original recommendation(s) and find no cause for grievance
- (b) reconsider the disciplinary action recommended by the original panel and substitute a different course of disciplinary action
- (c) uphold the original decision.

3.3 The Trustees will formally notify all parties of its decision within five working days of concluding and this decision will be the final decision by GADR on this issue without prejudice to any party to take the issue further in law.

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