



## **Complaints Policy**

### **Introduction**

Harrow Together (HT) is committed to providing high quality services and to act and behave in a manner which reflects the principles of good Charity Governance. HT recognises that everyone has the right to make complaints. We welcome complaints as they offer us a chance to improve services and the way we operate. Your complaint may well improve things for everyone. Whatever the reason for the complaint, HT wants to find out what has happened and to put right any mistakes we might have made quickly, so that we can improve our service to you in the future.

The purpose of this procedure is to enable people using HT's services, building a working relationship or taking part in its activities to be heard when they feel things have gone wrong.

HT recognises that making a complaint can be a difficult process. HT is committed to investigating and dealing with complaints in a sensitive and appropriate way.

Every effort will be made to ensure that the person(s) involved in carrying out any investigation of a complaint will be impartial and that they will follow the rules laid down in the complaints procedure to ensure that justice is achieved in an objective way and confidentiality maintained to the greatest degree possible. (There may be certain circumstances where a disclosure needs to be made – please see HTs Policy on Confidentiality which details these).



## How to make a Complaint

Any person using HT services wishing to make a complaint, can do so by:

- Phone 020 8861 5894 (ask for Harrow Together)
- Writing to Harrow Together, 64 Pinner Road, Harrow, HA1 4HZ
- Email to [info@harrowtogether.org.uk](mailto:info@harrowtogether.org.uk)
- Completing this form: <https://forms.gle/3sY8vsjLMENZyZnS8>

### There are four levels:

- 1) Make an initial complaint.
  - a) Make a complaint using the member / partner organisations complaint policy and procedure
  - b) Make an informal complaint to HT
- 2) Make a complaint to HT using the HT complaints form (see appendix 1)
- 3) An appeal to a panel from the board of HT.
- 4) Finally, use an outside body for arbitration. An example might be Harrow Council.

### Level one

Making an initial complaint.

- a) If the complaint is about a service provided on behalf of HT by a member or partner organisation, the first thing that anybody should do, is contact the organisation providing the service they want to complain about. They should use that organisations complaints policy.
  - b) If the complaint is directly about HT they should make an informal complaint to a director.
- If the complaint is not resolved then go to level 2

### B. Level two

1. The Complainant should make a formal complaint to HT using the HT complaint form, providing full details of the issues about which they wish to complain together with their full name and contact details.

(Note: If the complainant has difficulty in writing a letter, they may, if preferred, make a verbal complaint at an interview with an advocacy service that will detail the complaint in writing.)

2. A director will acknowledge receipt of the written complaint by responding in writing to the complainant within five working days from the date of receiving the complaint.

3. The complaint will be recorded in a complaint form.

4. The Director with the role for quality will investigate the complaint and aim to give the complainant a full reply within 20 working days. If, during the investigation, it is identified that it will

not be possible to prepare a response within this time, the reasons for the delay should be communicated in writing to the complainant, giving an indication as to when the full response will be forthcoming.

5. If the HT director with the role for quality is the subject of the complaint; it should be made in writing to the vice chair of the Board of Directors. In this case, the vice chair will arrange the investigation and a Board Member will conduct it.

6. The HT Director will arrange for an appropriate investigation to be made of the circumstances of the complaint by conducting the investigation personally, or by nominating an officer of HT or a management committee member to conduct the investigation.

7. The person conducting the investigation should not otherwise be involved in any way with the complaint.

8. The investigation will identify the events and issues leading up to and including the circumstances of the complaint and will be compiled into a written report. This will be kept on file. Along with all other written records and correspondence relating to the investigation.

If the complaint is not resolved then go to level 3

### **C. Level three**

1. If the complainant is not satisfied with the full response to the complaint, they may appeal in writing, (or other means of communication e.g. tape recording for people who cannot read or write) stating reasons, to the Chair of the Board of Directors.

2. The Chair, in conjunction, will arrange for a panel of two Executive Committee members to meet and examine the appeal within 10 working days of it's receipt. The panel will also include a third person who is independent of the service, for example, a representative of another voluntary organisation.

(A Board Trustee having conducted the investigation would be unable to participate in the appeal panel.)

3. The complainant may bring to the appeal an advocate or friend for support and may call witnesses to provide evidence at the appeal meeting.

The individual, who has conducted the investigation, will provide evidence to the panel of how the matter has been dealt with and may call witnesses to provide evidence.

4. The panel will then meet without the complainant to decide whether the response was appropriate. It will make recommendations for further action if necessary. The panel's decision will be communicated to the appellant in writing within five working days of the meeting and will be final.



**D. Level four**

If the matter remains unresolved, arbitration by an independent organisation / agency / body could be sought by any of the parties involved, i.e. HT and/or the complainant

**Review**

This document should be reviewed every 3 years

<b>Date Approved / Reviewed</b>	<b>Who</b>	<b>Review Date</b>
18/10/2023	Harrow Together Board	18/10/2026

**Appendix 1**

<b>Complaints Form</b>	
Date of complaint:	
Nature of complaint:	
Details of Complainant: (i.e. name and contact details)	
Action points as a result of the complaint:	
Date Directors informed (if appropriate) and their comments:	
Date complaint resolved:	
Outstanding action points:	
Form completed by Signature/Date:	